

ITINERARY
GEORGIA & ARMENIA:
CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS, LAKES, AND ANCIENT CHURCHES
April 23 – May 6, 2027



The famous Trinity Gergeti Church, from Stephansminda, Georgia, with the highest Caucasian peak, Mount Kazbek, in the clouds in the background. We'll visit this historic church, and look for some special birds in the vicinity, such as Caucasian Snowcock and Bearded Vulture. Photo by guide Lajos Nemeth-Boka.

We include here information for those interested in the 2027 Field Guides Georgia & Armenia: Caucasus Mountains, Lakes and Ancient Churches tour:

- a general introduction to the tour
- a description of the birding areas to be visited on the tour
- an abbreviated daily itinerary with some indication of the nature of each day's birding outings

These additional materials will be made available to those who register for the tour:

- a detailed information bulletin with important logistical information and answers to questions regarding accommodations, air arrangements, clothing, currency, customs and immigration, documents, health precautions, and personal items
- a Field Guides checklist for preparing and keeping track of the birds we see on the tour
- after the conclusion of the tour, a list of birds seen on the tour

Georgia and Armenia are only just beginning to attract birders, mostly from Europe, but now with this *NEW* tour, our birding friends from the United States can visit this fascinating area, with both countries having not just some great birds, but also an ancient history of churches and wine. Starting in Tbilisi, the capital city of Georgia, we'll be joined by our expert local guide, Dachi Shoshitashvili, as we travel north to spectacular scenery in the Greater Caucasus Mountains. Our main targets here will be Caucasian Snowcock, Caucasian Black Grouse, and White-winged Redstart, but we'll also enjoy such varied species as Bearded Vulture, Red-billed and Yellow-billed choughs, and tiny Red-fronted Serins. Beneath the towering Mount Kazbek, we'll stop at the the 14th century Gergeti Trinity Church and then as we return to

Tbilisi, we'll stop at a pine forest as we search out the charming Kruper's Nuthatch. After another night in Tbilisi, we continue south and cross in to Armenia, the home country of our local guide Berta Martirosyan – an excellent photographer and proud Armenian. Berta will be the perfect guide to lead us through her country, from Lake Sevan, with its waterbirds and colonies of Armenian Gulls, to the Selim Pass, where locals tend their sheep and Radde's Accentors flit amongst the broken boulders. We'll then visit the Norovank Monastery, not only a masterpiece of 13th century building, but also the home of Eastern Rock Nuthatch. In the Mount Gndasar area, we'll search for Caspian Snowcock, visit a winery and also see buried wine pots over 6000 years old. We finish our tour in the Armenian capital Yerevan, with day trips to the Armash Fish Ponds, thick of shorebirds, gulls, terns, and the range restricted White-headed Duck, and Uranots Gorge for White-throated Robin, Persian Wheatear and Gray-necked Bunting. And, we'll also visit the gorgeous Mount Aragats, simply spectacular and rising to over 13,000 feet.

Although we will be visiting several ancient churches and monasteries during the tour, you may want to add a few days at either end to see some of the historical/cultural sights of either Tbilisi or Yerevan. Should you wish to do this, we can arrange optional city tours (at an additional cost). Just ask your tour manager!



*We'll visit the Armash Fish Ponds near the Armenian capital of Yerevan, where we'll see many species of wetland birds.
Photograph by local guide Berta Martirosyan.*

We want to be sure you are on the right tour! Below is a description of the physical requirements of the tour. If you are concerned about the difficulty, please contact us about this and be sure to fully explain your concerns. We want to make sure you have a wonderful time with us, so if you are uncomfortable with the requirements, just let us know and we can help you find a better fitting tour! Field Guides will not charge you a change or cancellation fee if you opt out within 10 days of depositing.

Physical requirements of this tour

- **TRAILS & WALKING:** Moderate amounts of rather easy walking (up to 3 miles per day), some of it on roads, some along lakeshores, or on good trails. Most walking is on fairly flat ground except in the Greater Caucas Mountains, the Mount Gndasar area, and Mount Aragats. Undoubtedly, these mountains are very steep, but we mainly bird from roadsides, or if walking, perhaps just half a mile at a slow pace. Although unlikely, in the mountains there's a chance we'll be walking on snow!
- **POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:** Although there is a fair amount of driving on this tour, nothing is extreme, and the longer drives are on good roads. To access more remote birding areas, like Mount Gndasar, we will take small 4x4

'jeeps' and travel on bumpy dirt/muddy roads. Participants should be able to step up 10 inches into and out of our vehicles (mini-buses, vans, and 'jeeps').

- **PACE:** We will typically start the day with a little birding around our hotel, followed by breakfast (often at about 7:00 a.m., or sometimes at around 9:00 a.m.). We will then be out birding further afield, or on travel days, be heading to our next destination. The exception is Mount Gndasar, where we must make a very early start, perhaps as early as 4 a.m. Lunches will often be at a small restaurant with a pre-arranged menu, hopefully providing quick service and allowing us to spend more time in the field, or on a few days, we will take a picnic lunch.
- **ELEVATION:** We begin our tour in Tbilisi at 1,800 feet, and then head north to Stepantsminda at 5700 feet on the lower slopes of the Greater Caucasus Mountains (Mt. Kazbek towers above the town to 16,581 feet). We begin the Armenian leg of the tour at Lake Sevan, 6,200 feet, and then cross the Selim Pass which rises to 7900 feet. Most of our birding around Yerevan is 3000 to 4000 feet, but one day we will drive up Mount Aragats. It rises to over 13,000 feet, but due to snow we are unlikely to reach over 7000 feet.
- **WEATHER:** Temperatures in both countries are unpredictable and vary tremendously. Therefore peelable layers are a must. You'll definitely need a warm hat, jacket, and gloves for the mountains, and there's even a small chance of snow. As a rough guide, though, in Tbilisi and Yerevan, expect around 65 F in the day and 50 F at night; in the mountains, 50 F by day and down to near freezing at night. However, on our scouting trips we've had several lovely warm sunny days in several areas on this tour.
- **VEHICLE SEATING:** So that each participant has equal opportunity during our travel, we employ a seat rotation system on all tours. Participants will need to be flexible enough to maneuver to the back of the vehicle on occasion. Those who experience motion sickness will need to bring adequate medication for the duration of the tour, as we are not able to reserve forward seats for medical conditions.
- **BATHROOM BREAKS:** Participants must be prepared to make comfort stops in nature for some of this tour, although there will be opportunities to use bathrooms in gas stations from time to time.
- **OPTING OUT:** Where we are staying multiple days in the same lodging, participants can easily opt to sit out a day or sometimes a half-day. This will not be possible on days when we are changing locations.

If you are uncertain about whether this tour is a good match for your abilities, please don't hesitate to contact our office; if they cannot directly answer your queries, they will put you in touch with the guide.

About the Birding Areas



Christian History – Armenia was the world's first Christian nation, with a heritage going back 1700 years. Georgia was the second. There are numerous Christian churches and monasteries of which we will visit a few. For those with a particular interest, you may wish to visit Tbilisi for a few days before the tour begins, or stay on in Yerevan for a few days at the tour's end.

Great Caucasus Mountains – North of Tbilisi, in a high valley in the Greater Caucasus Mountains, is the settlement of Stepantsminda. Mount Kazbek at 15,581 feet towers above the town. In this gorgeous area, with incredibly steep snow-capped mountains all around, live some of Georgia's most sought after birds: Caucasian Snowcock, Caucasian Black Grouse, and in 'good snow' years, Great Rosefinch. Good numbers of Bearded Vulture, Eurasian Griffon and Golden Eagle inhabit the high slopes, while White-winged Redstart and a variety of migrant warblers, thrushes, flycatchers and chats can be found in the lower valleys full of buckthorn. We'll spend four nights in this area, and with the expert advice of our local guide, Dachi, hope to find all these special birds. We will also visit the 13th Century Gergeti Holy Trinity Church, where Wallcreeper are some times found on the building itself, or nearby rocky cliffs.

Lake Sevan – is 6200 feet above sea-level and covers 13,300 square feet; it is the largest lake in the Caucasus Mountains. Much of the shore is now farmed, but our local guide, Berta, knows all the local pockets of good habitat, including a colony of Armenian Gulls, the best bays where migrant ducks gather, and wild bushlands for hoopoes, bee-eaters, and shrikes. We'll also visit reedbeds for Cetti's Warbler, and Eurasian Penduline-Tit.

Selim Pass – one hour beyond Lake Sevan is Selim Pass in the Verdenyats Mountains. It is an area of rock-strewn high-altitude grasslands, with scattered pools, and shepherds wandering with their flocks. We'll bird for an hour or two 7500 feet as we have our first attempts for Radde's Accentor, Blue Rock-Thrush, and Rock Sparrow.

Noravank Monastery – this is a beautiful 13th Century monastery set on a rocky mountain slope. Apart from seeing the monastery, we'll also be looking for Eastern Rock Nuthatch, Blue Rock-Thrush, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear, and Red-billed Chough. Bezoar Ibex are often seen on the nearby cliffs.



*The Eastern Black-eared Wheatear was recently recognized as a unique species, and split from the Western Black-eared Wheatear. We'll look for these handsome birds at Noravank Monastery.
Photograph by guide Lajos Nemeth-Boka.*

Mount Gndasar and the Noravank Gorge – As the weather can be unpredictable in this area, we have arranged two mornings when we can take 4x4 vehicles and head on small tracks deeper into the mountains. It is our only chance for Caspian Snowcock, but with the knowledge of the local wardens, we have a very good chance of seeing at least one pair. Other birds to look for in this area are Long-legged Buzzard, any number of passage migrants, Wood Lark, Common Nightingale, Mistle Thrush, Rosy Starling, Corn, Black-headed and Rock buntings, and Common Rosefinch.

Nearby is Areni Village and cave. This fascinating short tour gives us access to one of Areni's caves, where half-buried wine pots approximately 6000 years old can be seen – it is one of the world's oldest wineries. In the same cave is also the world's oldest leather shoe, also about 6000 years old. We will then visit one of Areni's more modern wineries for a tour, wine tasting, and if it's to your liking, a chance to purchase some of their amazing wines. Areni is about a two hour drive from Yerevan.

Other birding around Yerevan – Armash Fish Ponds are a series of large ponds covering several square miles, with a good dirt track road system linking them together. The flocks of waterbirds that gather here can be amazing, with huge flocks of the more widespread migrant ducks together with lesser numbers of Ferruginous Duck and Red-crested Pochard, and star-of-the-show White-headed Duck. There is also a large variety of shorebirds, with sandpipers, plovers, godwits, Redshank, Ruff, and stints. Collared Pratincole and Slender-billed Gulls can be present in their hundreds, and Pygmy Cormorant is a more localized species to watch for. In the scrubby bush, a variety of migrants occur, including Menetries's Warbler; Cetti's and Great Reed warblers prefer the reedbeds.

Uranots Gorge – a short drive from Armash Fish Ponds lies Uranots Gorge, a deep rocky ravine which is our best chance for Persian Wheatear (rare), and Gray-necked Bunting, but we'll also be on the lookout for Upcher's Warbler, White-throated Robin, Eastern Black-eared and Finsch's wheatears, and any migrants which may just be passing through.

Stone Symphony and Geghard Church – Stone Symphony is a huge columnar basalt geological feature near Garni. This amazing towering cliff is home to several species of vulture, including Eurasian Griffon, Bearded Vulture, and occasionally Cinereous Vulture. Other more common raptors include Booted Eagle and Long-legged Buzzard, while along the river and broken rocky boulders are Western Rock Nuthatch and White-throated Dipper.

Near to Stone Symphony is the Parthenon-like Garni Temple, first build in the 1st century but destroyed by an earthquake in 1679, and re-built in 1969. It's also a good place to watch for flocks of wheeling Alpine Swifts.

Also nearby is the 12th century Geghard Church and Monastery; the church is carved out of a solid rock cliff – leaving a lasting impression!

Mount Aragats – About a one hour drive from Yerevan is Mt. Aragats, the highest mountain in Armenia, rising to 13,418 feet and permanently capped with snow. At this time of year, we will probably only drive the lower slopes, but it's still worth a visit, with Common Quail, Wood and Horned larks, Lesser Whitethroat, Rufous-tailed Rock-Thrush, and another chance for Radde's Accentor and Rock Bunting.



*The endangered White-headed Duck is our goal when we visit Armash Fish Ponds near Yerevan, Armenia.
Photograph by local guide Berta Martirosyan.*

Itinerary for Georgia & Armenia: Caucasus Mountains, Lakes and Ancient Churches

Please note: the weather in Armenia can be very varied and unpredictable, as such, although we will visit all the areas mentioned in the itinerary, we may from time to time and to visit at different time to those mentioned.

Day 1, Fri, 23 Apr. Departure from the US. Participants joining the tour from the US will need to leave today in order to arrive in Tbilisi on Day 2, Saturday, April 24.

Day 2, Sat, 24 Apr. Arrival in Tbilisi. Please plan your flight to arrive in Tbilisi some time today. For those who provide flight information, we will arrange a transfer from the airport to the hotel. There are no birding activities planned for today,

but please meet your guides at reception at 6:00 p.m. We will have a brief orientation and meet our local guide Dachi, followed by a welcome dinner. For those who arrive early, we can arrange an organized City Tour (at an extra cost), or, our hotel is situated near the Metekhi Church, the Mtkavari River, and the 'old town', with its shops, restaurants and bars. For those who just wish to do some birding, expect Common Swift, Laughing Dove, Common Wood-Pigeon, Common Sandpiper, Little Egret, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Hooded Crow, Eurasian Magpie, Eurasian Blackbird, Great Tit, House Sparrow, European Greenfinch and Eurasian Chaffinch. Night at Kopala Hotel, Tbilisi.

Day 3, Sun, 25 Apr. To Stephantsminda. After breakfast, we'll drive north, our exact route depending on local information from Dachi, perhaps stopping at Ananuri Castle, a good place for the distinctive race of Common Redstart, *samamiscus*. However, we'll soon want to be on our way as much spectacular scenery and new birds unfold as we head north. We may also visit an area of pine forest for Krupers Nuthatch and Coal Tit, but depending on the knowledge of our local guide, we may have other sites for this or visit on our return to Tbilisi. Night at Capra Hotel, Stephantsminda.

Days 4-5, Mon-Tue, 26-27 Apr. Greater Caucasus Mountains, Stephantsminda and Gergeti Holy Trinity Church.

From, our base at Stephantsminda, we'll scan the higher slopes of the mountains behind the town, a favorite area for Caucasian Snowcock, and although their eerie calls will be heard, finding them is a different matter, as they blend so well against the rocky mountain slides. This is also the best site for Caucasian Black Grouse and several passerines, including Water Pipit and Twite. With two full days here, we'll have plenty of time to search the blackthorn-filled valleys for uncommon species like White-winged Redstart, and Alpine Accentor. More common birds may include Chukar, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Common Cuckoo, Eurasian Bee-eater, Tree Pipit, Greater-Short-toed Lark, Green Warbler, Caucasian Chiffchaff, Hedge Accentor, Black Redstart, Whinchat, Siberian Stonechat, Northern Wheatear, White and Gray wagtails, White-throated Dipper, Ring Ousel, Common Raven, Eurasian Jay, Red-billed and Yellow-billed choughs, Linnet, Red Crossbill, Red-fronted Serin, and Rock Bunting. Wallcreeper is possible around the 14th century Gergety Holy Trinity Church, while the rocky cliffs are home to Eurasian Griffon, Bearded Vulture, and Golden Eagle. In good 'snow years', Great Rosefinch is a possibility, but it would be lucky indeed to see this species. Eastern Caucasian Tur (a goat-like creature inhabit the steep slopes). Night at Capra Hotel, Stephantsminda.



*Red-fronted Serin is a high-elevation species that we'll seek near Stephantsminda.
Photograph by guide Lajos Nemeth-Boka.*

Day 6, Wed, 28 Apr. Back to Tbilisi. We'll have time to do some final birding around Stephantsminda before making our way back to Tbilisi. Wooded valleys could be holding the first Spring migrants at this time of year, and if we missed Kruper's Nuthatch on our way north, this will be a second chance. Night at Kopala Hotel, Tbilisi.

Day 7, Thu, 29 Apr. To Armenia. After an early breakfast, we'll head south to the border with Armenia (about a 2 hour drive). Although the regulations change frequently, you should be prepared to walk about 300 yards from one border post to the other. Once the formalities have been done, we will bid farewell to Dachi and then meet our Armenian guide Berta, who is fast becoming known as Armenia's best bird photographer. Our first stop this afternoon will be the small town of Dilijan, where we will have lunch and then do some local birding in a nearby forest. We'll be on the lookout for Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Great and Middle Spotted woodpeckers, Eurasian Treecreeper, and Red-breasted Flycatcher. We'll soon continue on, as we hope to arrive on the shores of Lake Sevan by mid-afternoon. Night at Hotel Tufenkian, Lake Sevan.

Day 8, Fri, 30 Apr. Lake Sevan, Selim Pass, and Noravank Monastery. We'll have some time in the afternoon of Day 7 and the morning of Day 8 to bird the shores and around our lodge at Lake Sevan. The numbers and the variety of species vary from year to year, however, we hope to find a breeding colony of Armenian Gulls, good numbers of Palearctic ducks, Eurasian Coot, Great Crested and Black-necked grebes, Purple Heron, Little Egret, and White-winged Tern. We'll also check-out some reedbeds for Cetti's Warbler, Sedge Warbler and Eurasian Penduline-Tit. In the bushes along the shore can be any number of migrants, including Eurasian Hoopoe, Eurasian Bee-eater, Common Chiffchaff, Red-backed and Lesser Gray shrikes, Menetries's Warbler, and Corn Bunting, to name but a few.

We'll then continue to the Selim Pass, where Radde's Accentor and Rock Sparrow are our main target species, before we drop down to the Noravank Monastery, a fabulous 13th century monastery with Eastern Rock and Blue Rock Thrush often feeding right on the buildings. Night at Hotel Arevi or similar.

Days 9-10, Sat-Sun, 1-2 May. The Mount Gndasar area, Noravank Gorge, and Areni Cave and Winery. We are including two days to do this, just in case the weather is bad on Day 9, or if we miss the bird, we'll have a second chance to return. We'll be up very early this morning (perhaps 4 a.m.), as we need to drive to meet our 4X4 Jeeps to negotiate the twisty mountain track. The exact best territories vary from year to year, but the local wardens are experts, and we'll all concentrate on trying to find the cryptic Caspian Snowcock. Other birds in the mountains could include Long-legged Buzzard, Crested and Wood larks, Eurasian Golden Oriole, Eurasian Crag-Martin, Rosy Starling, Mistle Thrush, Common Nightingale, Common Rosefinch, and Black-headed and Rock buntings. A nearby valley may have a nesting pair of Saker Falcon, while another possibility is Finsch's Wheatear.

On one of the days in this area, we'll also visit the nearby Areni Winery for a tour, tasting, and purchase, if you like, and also a cave where 6000 year old pots – evidence of some of the earliest wine making in the world, can be seen. We'll also see the world's oldest leather shoe which is also around 6000 years old. Night on Day 9 at at Hotel Arevi or similar. Night on Day 10 at Silk Road Hotel, Yerevan.

Day 11, Mon, 3 May. Armash Fish Ponds and Uranots Gorge. It should be a big list day today, probably the largest of the whole tour. We begin with a short drive to the fish ponds, where migrant terns, gulls and ducks (including the very localized White-headed Duck, Red-crested Pochard, and Ferruginous Duck) can all occur, some of them seasonally in very large numbers. There is also a good variety of shorebirds, and by walking and driving the raised paths between the ponds, we should get excellent close views of many species, including Pied Avocet, Black-winged Stilt, Common and Little Ringed plovers, Spur-winged and White-tailed lapwings, Black-tailed Godwit, Spotted and Common redshanks, Wood Sandpiper, Ruff, and Little and Temminck's stints. Collared Pratincoles should be present, as well as Slender-billed and Black-headed gulls, Pygmy Cormorant, Glossy Ibis, and Squacco Heron. Western Marsh Harriers hunt along the reedbeds, occasionally flushing a Little Bittern, while in the bushes along the tracks are Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, Rufous-tailed Scrub-Robin, and another chance for Menetries's Warbler.

After our picnic lunch, we'll head to the nearby Uranots Gorge, where we'll be making a special effort for Upcher's Warbler, White-throated Robin, Persian Wheatear, and Gray-necked Bunting. Night at Silk Road Hotel, Yerevan.

Days 12-13, Tue-Wed, 4-5 May. Mount Aragats, Stone Symphony, and Geghard Church. As the weather can be so unpredictable here, we will decide on our daily plan at short notice according to what we think will be the best available choice on that day. At Mount Aragats, we'll be looking for Common Quail, Wood and Horned larks, Rufous-tailed Rock-Thrush, and it's another chance for Radde's Accentor if we missed it at Selim Pass.

The Stone Symphony is a dramatic cliff of hexagonal basalt columns which can be excellent for raptors, including Eurasian Griffon, Egyptian and Black vultures, and Booted Eagle, as well as Alpine Swift, and Western Rock Nuthatch. Nearby is the amazing Geghard Church, carved entirely inside a rock cliff face, and also the Parthenon-like Garni Temple, originally built in the 1st century, but then destroyed by an earthquake and rebuilt in 1969. Night of Day 12 at Silk Road Hotel, Yerevan. On Day 13, day rooms will be available until transferring to the airport for your international departure. For those who wish to stay on and do sight-seeing in the city of Yerevan, this can be arranged at an additional cost.

Day 14, Thu, 6 May. Arrival home. If you're returning to the US, you should arrive today, with time to make onward connections home.

About Your Guides

Originally from England, **Terry Stevenson** has made Kenya his home since 1977. He is the senior author of the *Field Guide to the Birds of East Africa: Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi*—the only guide in the region to have a text and maps opposite plates format; it is also available as an app, with the added advantage of making it possible to hear many of the calls. He is also co-author of *Birds of the Horn of Africa: Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia and Socotra*. Published in 2009, this acclaimed guide is the only one to this region. Most recently (2024) he co-authored *Birds of Greater Southern Africa*, the only field guide covering not only the traditional southern African countries, but also Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique. He is a member of the East African Rarities Committee. On November 30, 1986, he set a new World Big Day record with 330 species *seen* in one day in Kenya, the record stands today.

One of Africa and India's foremost bird-tour guides, Terry has led numerous Field Guides tours across the African continent, Madagascar, India, and all our Hungary & Romania tours to date. He is currently living in a mud-and-cow-dung mansion near Mt. Kenya.

Visit <https://fieldguides.com/guides> for Terry's complete tour schedule; just click on his photo.

Lajos Nemeth-Bóka (pronounced Layosh) is a proud native Hungarian who is widely regarded as the most-travelled wildlife expert of Eastern Europe. He started birding at the age of seven and then extended his field research to Romania, Slovenia, and Croatia in 1991, sometimes spending several weeks on bush-campings. Lajos also feels at home in Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Middle East, and has traveled to some of the remotest areas of Africa. (He met Terry at the top of a hill in Djibouti!) Apart from birds, he is one of Eastern Europe's foremost experts on mammals, butterflies, dragonflies, and other wildlife. He has been a member of 15 entomological expeditions in the Himalayas, Taiwan, and North Africa on which more than 200 species new to science were discovered. Lajos brings a wealth of experience and character to his job and will be outstanding as all-round facilitator on your trip.

Financial Information

FEE: \$6795

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: \$1150

DEPOSIT: \$675

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: October 25, 2026

LIMIT: 12

Other Things You Need to Know

TOUR MANAGER: The manager for this tour is Sharon Mackie. Sharon will be happy to assist you in preparing for the tour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call her!

ACCOMMODATIONS: All accommodations on this tour have private bathrooms. In Tbilisi we stay at the Hotel Kopala.

Note: WIFI access is available at most of our hotels. It is fine for sending written text, but is sometimes unreliable and not suitable for sending/receiving large files and photographs.

Pre-tour hotel: For those arriving in Tbilisi early we recommend the Kopala Hotel (where we stay with the group) but there are numerous other hotels if you prefer. Should you also wish to join an organized city tour our local agent will be happy to arrange that for you.

Post-tour hotel: For those leaving Yerevan late we recommend the Silk Road Hotel (where we stay with the group) but there are numerous other hotels if you prefer. Should you also wish to join an organized city tour our local agent will be happy to arrange that for you.

Tipping for the pre-and post tour city excursions: As our bird guides, Terry and Lajos, will not be on these tours, they will not be able to tip the guide leading these excursions. Therefore, we would like to point out that if you enjoyed the experience it would be quite in order to tip that guide. The amount is entirely up to you, but somewhere around \$10 per person would be perfectly fine and appreciated.

AIR ARRANGEMENTS: The tour begins in Tbilisi, Georgia (Tbilisi International Airport, TBS) and ends in Yerevan, Armenia (Zvartnots International Airport, EVN).

Arrival: Tbilisi, Georgia, in time to **meet the group in the hotel lobby at 6:00 p.m. on Day 2, Saturday, April 24.**

Departure: Yerevan, Armenia, **6:00 p.m. or later on Day 13, Wednesday, May 5.**

Please wait to purchase airline tickets until your tour manager notifies you that the tour is confirmed to operate. At that time, we'll be glad to assist with your flights arrangements at no service fee.

DOCUMENTS: Be sure to verify the latest entry requirements for each country you will visit or transit.

Passport: A current passport is required for international travel. It should be in good condition, valid for at least 6 months beyond your return date, and have at least one blank page for each country on your itinerary.

If you are doing pre- or post-tour city tours, it is vital that you bring your passport while doing the tour.

Visa: No visa is required for US, Canadian, Australian, or EU citizens. No vaccinations are required.

Trip insurance is compulsory for travel to Georgia. See note below in TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE.

TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS: The tour fee is \$6796 for one person in double occupancy from Tbilisi.

It includes all lodging from Day 2 through Day 12, and day-room on Day 13, all meals from dinner on Day 2 through lunch on Day 13, all ground transportation, entrance fees, and the guide services of the tour leader(s). Tipping at group meals and for drivers, porters, and local guides is included in your tour fee and will be handled for the group by your Field Guides leader(s). However, if you would like to recognize your Field Guides leader(s) or any local guide(s) for exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are optional and not expected.

Please note: For those taking the optional pre- and post-tour City tours, tipping is not included, and if you enjoyed these 'extra' excursions, it is perfectly in order for you to tip those guides.

The above fees do not include your airfare to Tbilisi and from Yerevan, airport taxes, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages, optional tips to local drivers, phone calls, laundry, or other items of a personal nature.

The single supplement for the tour is \$1150 for those requesting a single room. If you do not have a roommate but wish to share, we will try to pair you with a roommate from the tour; but if none is available, you will be billed for the single supplement. Our tour fees are based on double occupancy; one-half the cost of a double room is priced into the tour fee. The single supplement is calculated by taking the actual cost of a single room and subtracting one-half the cost of a double room (plus any applicable taxes).

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, please contact us at fieldguides.com/contact-us/. Our office will be in touch with you by email by the next business day (Mon-Fri) with instructions on how to complete our electronic registration form and medical questionnaire. (We are no longer accepting the paper version.)

Please send your deposit of \$675 per person; see <https://fieldguides.com/payment-options/> for our Payment Options. Full payment of the tour fee is due 180 days prior to departure, or by October 25, 2026. We will bill you for the final payment at either 180 days or when the tour has reached sufficient subscription to operate, whichever date comes later.

Since the cost of your trip insurance and airline tickets is generally non-refundable, please do not finalize these purchases until you have received final billing for the tour or have been advised that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate by your tour manager.

SMOKING: Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. If you smoke, please be sensitive to the group and refrain from smoking at meals, and in proximity to the group on trails and elsewhere. Smoking in the minivans is forbidden.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Refund of deposit and full payment, less \$100 handling fee, will be made if cancellation is received up to 180 days before departure. If cancellation occurs between 179 and 90 days before the departure date, 50% of the full tour fee is non-refundable, which would include the full deposit if the final payment has not yet been paid. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable and non-transferable.

Our cancellation policy only applies to payments made to Field Guides for tour (and any services included in those fees). Airline tickets not included in the tour fee and purchased separately often carry penalties for cancellation or change, or are sometimes totally non-refundable. Additionally, if you take out trip insurance the cost of that insurance is not refundable, so it is best to purchase the policy just prior to making full payment for the tour or at the time you purchase airline tickets, depending upon the airline's restrictions.

The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure. In most such cases, full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. Note this exception, however: If you have been advised pre-tour that there is a non-refundable portion of your tour fee no matter the reason for Field Guides cancellation of the tour, that portion will not be refunded. The right is reserved to substitute in case of emergency another guide for the original one.

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE: In order to comply with the requirements of our ground agent in both Georgia and Armenia it is **ABSOLUTELY MANDATORY that you have trip insurance (medical and evacuation)** covering you from your arrival at the airport in Tbilisi until your departure at the airport in Yerevan— including any time spent doing pre- or post- tour extensions.

Because we must remit early and substantial deposits to our suppliers, we cannot offer refunds for cancellations outside of our Cancellation Policy. If a participant is unable to join or continue a tour due to illness, all related expenses will be their responsibility, and no refunds can be issued for missed days. Please wait to purchase insurance until we notify you that the tour is confirmed to operate, as most policies are non-refundable.

For full details, visit our Trip Cancellation Insurance page at <https://fieldguides.com/trip-cancellation-insurance/>.

RESPONSIBILITY: For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant and each parent or legal guardian of a tour participant who is under 18 agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Field Guides Incorporated, its agents, servants, employees, shareholders, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more fully set forth in the Release and Indemnity Agreement on the registration form. Field Guides Incorporated acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles or for any reason whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. You acknowledge and agree that Field Guides Incorporated is not responsible for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. The tour participant shall bear all such losses and expenses. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking a tour. If you have questions about the physical requirements of a tour, please contact our office for further information. Participants should prepare for the tour by reading the detailed itinerary, the information bulletin, and other pertinent matter provided by Field Guides. Each participant is responsible for bringing appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in our bulletins.

THE RECEIPT OF YOUR TOUR DEPOSIT SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE CONSENT TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. EACH TOUR PARTICIPANT AND EACH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A TOUR PARTICIPANT WHO IS UNDER 18 SHALL SIGN AND DELIVER THE RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.

Written June 24, 2026 TS

Peg, 9/26