

## **Amazing Georgia** **Nine-day tour program**

According to Georgian folklore, God distributed plots on earth. He reserved the best piece of land for himself. Representatives of all the nations of the world came to God and received the land allotted to them.

God finished distributing the plots and was about to rest when an angel informed him that the Georgians would arrive late. God became angry and asked the Georgians what was the reason for the delay. They replied that they were feasting and drinking a toast to God.

God was very glad that the people drank his toast and became tolerant of the Georgians, but there was no land left that could be given to them and He was forced to give the Georgians that piece of land that he had left for himself.

So the Georgians got a small piece of PARADISE

### **Day I** Arrival in Tbilisi;

Tbilisi is the capital and at the same time the largest city of Georgia, located on the banks of the Kura River in the Tbilisi Basin. A noisy, cheerful, faithful to traditions and at the same time actively developing city with a population of one and a half million - this is what the modern capital of Georgia looks like in the eyes of travelers. Tbilisi is especially attractive for its rich history, dating back centuries. You can wander endlessly through the quarters of the old part of the city, inhaling the exciting aromas of national pastries and admiring the ancient architecture of local buildings. Over more than one and a half thousand years of existence, Tbilisi has managed to acquire many historical sights and cultural heritage.наследием.

#### **Check in Tbilisi hotel;**

**After rest, we will explore and find the most interesting places in the Old Town:**

**Abanotubani** - Historic district and concentration of sulfur baths, which formed a separate quarter. Over the entire period of its existence, the baths were repeatedly destroyed as a result of raids by enemy peoples, restored and rebuilt. In the old days, Abanotubani served as the center of public life: the entrance fee to the baths was the same for everyone, and often traders and shepherds relaxing in the springs kept company with famous commanders. Fortress Narikhala the 4th – 20th cc main citadel of the city;

**Narikala Fortress** - mIts walls formed the boundaries of the Old City, whose name translates as “enviable fortress” - Narikalu could not take the entire history of the Silk Road by storm. Now it is a beautiful historical park on the Sololaki ridge: everything is surrounded by greenery, the observation deck offers views of the city and the river.

**Zion Cathedral** - The main temple of Tbilisi was named after Mount Zion in Jerusalem - the place of residence of God and his revelation. Among the relics of the cathedral are the relics of the Apostle Thomas, as well as the graves of kings and hierarchs of the Georgian Church. But the main thing is that the ancient Cross of St. Nino, which brought Christianity to Georgia, is kept here.

**Puppet theater** - This unique temple of art was founded by screenwriter Rezo Gabriadze. A bizarre building to match its extravagant creator: eclectic architecture, a leaning turret, tiles personally painted by Gabriadze. The screenwriter’s motto is emblazoned on the façade: “Let our tears come only from cutting onions.” Indeed, in this place you want to smile and

enjoy life. Every hour a puppet angel appears in the turret: he loudly rings the bell and quickly disappears back. There is a free performance of "The Cycle of Life" at noon and late evening.

**Shardeni street** - A charming street with an elusive flair of old Paris, completely pedestrian. Named after the French traveler Jean Chardin, who traveled through Georgia to deliver jewelry for the Shah of Persia. It was from Chardin's pen that the earliest written and graphic image of Tbilisi came out, which has survived to this day. It's a great place to relax at any time of the day or night: street musicians play, delicious smells of baked goods and smoked meats float from everywhere, lanterns sparkle.

**Welcome dinner** in a traditional Georgian restaurant with national food, wine, dancing and songs.

**Overnight in Tbilisi**



## Day II Kakheti region

**Breakfast at the Hotel;**

**Check out hotel;**

After breakfast we will get ready and go to the Kakheti region, which is eastern Georgia.

**Welcome to the Chavchavadze estate!** The founder of Georgian romanticism, Alexander Chavchavadze, inherited from his father the Tsinandali estate, which he turned into the cultural and intellectual center of Georgia. The estate has not lost this status in the 21st century. Tsinandali still plays a significant role in the cultural life of Georgia; exhibitions, concerts, literary events and master classes are held here. Today, the Tsinandali complex combines a house-museum, an ornamental garden, a historical winery, a cellar, a hotel and a cafe.

**Telavi** is located in the region of Kakheti. The first settlement on its territory appeared at the end of the Bronze Age and developed during the Hellenistic period. In late antiquity, an

urban-type settlement arose. Written sources include Telavi from the 11th century. In the Middle Ages it was one of the most important cities in Georgia with its trade and crafts. In 1758, a philosophical and theological school was founded here, which was transformed into a seminary in 1782.

In the palace of Erekle II there is the Telavi Historical and Ethnographic Museum, where many interesting exhibits are presented: numismatic material, an early feudal sarcophagus, late medieval weapons, collections of the 17-19 centuries, copper heirlooms, military weapons and collections.

Telavi market - Here at the Telavi Food Market you will find a wide selection of local products all year round. Telavi's food market began many centuries ago when the trading caravan city of Gremi was destroyed during the invasions of Abbas I in the 17th century, and Telavi became a new trading center.

**Overnight in Telavi;**



### **DayIII** Kakheti region

**Breakfast at the Hotel;**

**Check out hotel;**

**After breakfast, when the guests have gathered, we will go to the fortified city of Sighnaghi**

The city is surrounded by fortress walls, which were erected in the late 17th and early 18th centuries by King Irakli II to protect residents from enemy raids and looting. The fortress has been preserved almost in its original form. The total area of the fortress wall is 40 hectares and follows the line of the mountain on which the city is located. In this beautiful city, everything around is conducive to a romantic flight of the soul: from narrow winding streets to family hotels and delicious Georgian wine. Nobody knows for sure why Sighnaghi was called the city of love, but there are two versions. According to the first version, the city received its second name thanks to the beautiful wedding palace, which operates in Sighnaghi around the clock. You can get married here even at night. To do this, it is enough to write an application in an hour, take documents and come with two witnesses to the registry office. It will happily seal the union of lovers with marriage.

**Desert and monastery complex David Gareji** The complex was founded in the first half of the 6th century by one of the Assyrian fathers named David. He came and settled in a small natural cave in the Gareji desert with his disciple Lucian. This is how the monastery was founded; in subsequent centuries it was called the David Lavra.

**Overnight in Tbilisi**



#### **Day IV – Khazbegi**

##### **Breakfast at the Hotel;**

In the morning, guests will go to the Caucasus mountains and see one of the most beautiful glaciers of Kazbegi. On the way, they will pass the ancient capital of Georgia, Mtskheta.

**Museum City** Visitors to Mtskheta will quickly understand why it is sometimes called a museum city. With its towering monuments, quaint cobbled streets and idyllic charm, it's easy to see why Mtskheta is one of Georgia's most popular tourist destinations. According to legend, Mtskheta was founded in the 1st millennium BC by the ethnarch Mtskhetos, but it was King Parnavaz, the great reformer king, who proclaimed it the capital of the Kingdom of Kartli (also known as Iberia) in the 4th century BC. Going even further, archaeological excavations have found evidence of human activity in the area as early as the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC.

**Stepantsminda's** greatest draw is Kazbegi Peak, also known as Mkinvartsveri, which has always attracted the interest of mountain lovers. From the highest point of the mountain, 5,054 meters up, the view is truly unforgettable. There are many tourist routes starting from Stepantsminda. You can hike, travel with your own car, or take a jeep tour, depending on which direction you choose. However, there are a few must-see places.

**Gergeti Trinity Church** 14th.c. beautifully situated on the hill with excellent views: you have a chance to see Mt. Kazbegi (5033m) – one of the highest glaciers in the Caucasus.

**Overnight in Tbilisi**



## Day V – Qartli region

Guests will leave Tbilisi for several days and travel to the southern, western and northern regions of Georgia.

**Breakfast at the Hotel;**

**Check out hotel;**

**Gori**, which has a long history, is rich in cultural attractions and beautiful nature. There are many good places for walks, picnics, and small hikes. The most famous attraction in Gori is Uplistsikhe and the home museum of STALIN, the Soviet dictator and tyrant of the twentieth century. Photo stop at Stalin's house and statue;

**Uplistsikhe** is a cave city with a three-thousand-year history. No more than 150 caves have survived from the huge settlement, where the number of grottoes carved into the rock once exceeded 700. According to archaeologists, people lived in Uplistsikhe already in the first millennium BC.

**Kutaisi** - one of the most beautiful and ancient cities of Georgia. Once being the capital of the ancient kingdom Kutaisi has contributed much into the process of Georgian unification. According to the legend Kutaisi/Aia was the final destination of the Argonauts and the residence of King Ayetes. Even though the Golden Fleece was taken from here to Greece.

**Overnight in Kutaisi**





## Day VI – Imereti region

**Breakfast at the Hotel;**

**Check out hotel;**

**Sataflia Cave** – State Nature unique Reserve skillfully hidden in the mountains and contains geologic, paleontological, speleological and botanical monuments. Located at 500 m. above sea level the Sataplia Mountain is famous for its rarest and the most beautiful caves. the underground small river, stalactites and stalagmites and the Dinosaur Plateau with real traces of ancient reptiles printed in huge stones At the moment there are 200 dinosaur footprints known, found in two different layers of the Cretaceous limestone.

After a two-hour tour of Satafli Cave, guests will travel to Svaneti, the highest region of the Caucasus, a 7/8 hour journey.

**Svaneti** is the highest mountainous, historical and geographical region in Georgia and is located in the Northern part of Western Georgia. Svaneti is distinguished by acute expression of individualism. The mountain picks, the cliffs, the fortress-towers, which have become symbols of freedom and a strong soul, have attracted the attention of travelers, tourists and fans of mountain sports. This ancient culture is very interesting with numerous cultural monuments, characteristic frescoes, traditions and impressive nature.

**Overnight in Mestia**





## Day VII - Svaneti region

### Breakfast at the Hotel;

**Mestia**, like the whole of Svaneti, has an ancient history. Mestia is distinguished by its amazing, beautiful nature and abundance of cultural monuments. The stunning and unforgettable beauty of Svaneti, Ushba peak, the highest peak of Georgia Shkhara, a waterfall flowing from the rocks, and high mountain lakes, almost blue as the sky. Svan towers, unique temples, various everyday and religious samples are certainly very interesting, individual and are part of the greatest historical and cultural value of the rich and diverse Georgian culture. It should be noted that the Svan towers were used by the famous Japanese animator Hayao Miyazaki in one of his famous anime - "Laputa: Castle in the Sky." Mestia is an excellent place for lovers of mountain recreation both in summer and in winter; the ski resorts of Khatsvali and Tetnuldi operate here.

**Historical and ethnological museum** which houses manuscripts from the 10th and 12th centuries, religious tracts from the 9th-11th centuries, icons, metal and other artifacts of the 14th -16th centuries, gold coins of the antique and late antique periods, and several Bronze Age treasures.

Special transport will take guests to one of the hard-to-reach villages of Svaneti – Ushguli.

**Ushguli** is located in the lower reaches of Shkhara, near the mouth of the Enguri and Shavtskala-Kvishara rivers. The altitude of the Ushguli settlement varies from 2060 to 2200 meters. Ushguli has been cut off from the rest of Svaneti due to its natural location. Even moving to the nearest community, Kala, which is 7 kilometers away, was quite a challenge. In the memory of the people, there is a legend about the Structure of Devi (In Georgian mythology, Devi is many-headed ogres whose heads can regenerate if any of them are cut off, these malevolent giants live in the underworld or remote mountains) is a rock, which, according to the legend, closed the Enguri valley and flooded the village. To avoid a catastrophe, two rams were thrown from Ushguli and Kala, which hit the rock from opposite angles and destroyed it.

### Overnight in Mestia





## Day VIII Samegrelo region

Breakfast at the Hotel;

Check out hotel;

In the morning, guests will say goodbye to the Caucasus glacier, the secrets of Svaneti and go to the sun-drenched coast of the Adjara Sea. The journey will take 7/8 hours.

**Town Zugdidi** The Dadianis' palace - one of the major cultural centres of the 19th century in Georgia led by the beauties Princess Ekaterina Chavchavadze. The palaces are designed in pseudo-gothic and pseudo-classicist styles.

**Batumi** is located in Adjara, western Georgia. It is a wonderful seaside city with glittering beaches and attractive surroundings. The territory of Batumi was even populated in the Bronze Age. There was life during the antiquity period here, and the population had trade links with neighboring and distant countries. Ancient history, light and dynamic architecture, sunny seaside, boulevard, Batumi Botanical Garden, delicious Adjarian cuisine and many entertaining places, cultural or leisure destinations make this city incredible and it attracts many visitors.

Overnight in Batumi.





**Day IX** Adjara region.

**Breakfast at the Hotel;**

**Check out hotel;**

The program of the 10-day “Amazing Georgia” tour is coming to an end. Before leaving Batumi, guests will visit two more tourist sites: Gonio Castle and Batumi Botanical Garden.

**Gonio Fortress, Apsaros** - (1st century) fortress in Adjara, Gonio-Apsaros Archaeological and Architectural Museum-Reserve is located 12 km from southern Batumi. The fortress of Gonio-Apsaros had a unique strategic significance: . Thanks to its location, the Gonio fortress became one of the pillars of the Roman Empire, and then the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires.

**Batumi Botanical Garden** - One of the largest and richest botanical gardens in the world, it is situated on 111 hectares and was set up in 1912. The garden includes the Colchis Forest Reserve and many different floristic landscapes. There are many species and varieties of plants in the garden. The botanical garden is the best place for nature lovers. There is no similar botanical garden in the world in the sense that the species of plants derived from completely different climatic and landscape zones coexist in Batumi Botanical Garden. In this magical garden, both the palm of the Canary Finch and the Japanese Sakura are equally flourished.

The tour program is fully completed and guests will depart for Tbilisi airport. Travel time is 5/6 hours.

