



ARMENIA



The destination for this year's MOST trip will be Armenia! We will be traveling from July 21 to August 2. We will be flying, but the exact route we take to get to Armenia may still be adjusted. Currently, the plan is to first take the train to Düsseldorf Airport, then fly to Vienna, where we will stay overnight, and then continue to Armenia. This is the cheapest option. It is possible to take a direct flight, but it is very expensive, costing around 400 euros. If you would prefer to spend that money on a more convenient trip, you can choose that option, but the central plan is to have a layover in Vienna.

On July 21st, we will first take the train to Düsseldorf Airport. Here we will take the plane to Vienna, and we will arrive in Vienna at approximately 18:00.

We will have about 12 hours to spend in Vienna. You can stay at the airport, but there are also shuttle buses to the center of Vienna every half hour, with a return ticket costing only 10 euros. We will organize a night tour of Vienna, visiting all the major sights. Since it will be night, everything will be closed, but most of the sights are large churches and palaces that can be viewed from the outside, and they are beautifully lit at night. Even in Vienna, there are still Russian influences to be found, such as a Soviet war memorial. There are also many places to eat still open at night in Vienna. We will return to the airport in time to catch our flight and then continue to Armenia.



Vienna at night

We will arrive at Zvartnots International Airport July 22st. The old Soviet architecture is clearly visible here and a sight in itself. The airport is located several dozen kilometers outside the center of Yerevan, so we will take a bus to the center and check in at the hostel, where everyone will enjoy a well-deserved night's rest. In Yerevan we will be staying in a hostel.



Zvartnots Airport near Yerevan



The old airport

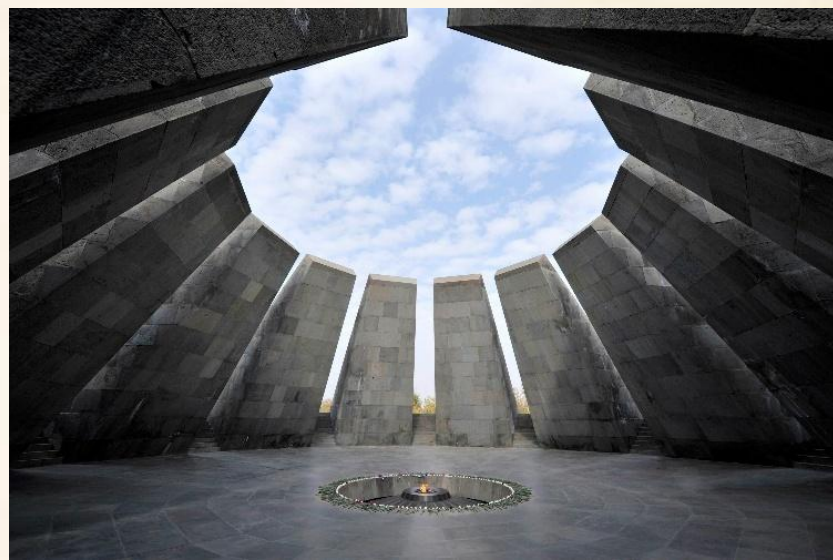
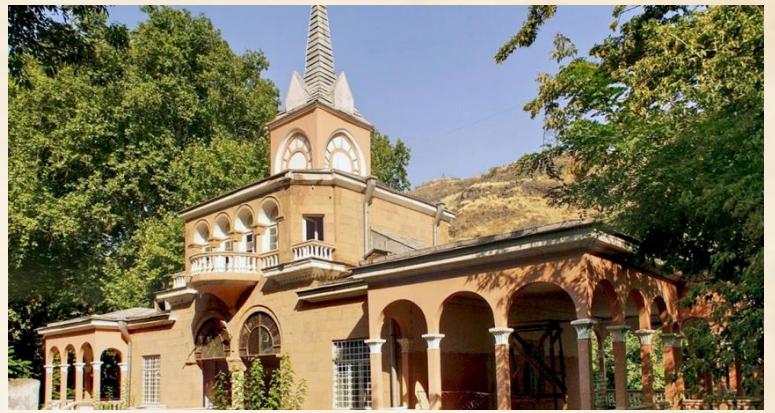


The next day we will explore Yerevan. Yerevan is an ancient city with many buildings made of volcanic stone, which is typical of traditional Armenian architecture. We will visit the most famous sights in the city and also some lesser-known sights.

The morning program is optional because we arrived quite late the day before, so it's understandable if people want to get some more sleep.

During the morning program we will visit the most important landmarks on the western side of Yerevan, such as the Soviet Children's railway, an old theme park/train station that's now abandoned. There are still old Soviet trains and the building is relatively intact.

After that we will visit the Armenian Genocide Memorial and museum. The Armenian Genocide is one of the most important events in Armenian history, so it's a place we must certainly visit.



In the afternoon we will visit the Armenian History Museum, where you have a few hours to admire the museum. You can also choose to leave earlier and have a bit of free time in Yerevan.



We will assemble again at 16:30.

We will visit the Yerevan Cascade, an artistic staircase with 572 steps offering a beautiful view of the city from the top, the 'Mother Armenia' statue and a market where traditional Armenian items are sold.



In the evening, we will have the MOST dinner at a restaurant decorated in the style of the classic Soviet movie 'Кавказская пленница'. Here you'll be able to try the cuisine of the Caucasus. To end the day, we will go to Republic Square, where there is a fountain show every evening.



The next day we will take the bus out of Yerevan to a destination a few dozen kilometers outside the city. First, we will visit a Soviet observatory that is now a museum, and then we will walk for 2 hours to the main attraction that is worth the hike: the Orgov Radio-Optical Telescope. This is a gigantic telescope from the Soviet era, with only a few such telescopes existing in the world. The telescope is no longer in use, and visitors are allowed inside if they apply in advance. So we will be able to walk around the entire site, get a close-up view of the telescope, and also explore the buildings where all the old Soviet equipment and furniture are still intact. There are plans to possibly bring the telescope back into use in the future, so a visit to this telescope as it was during the Soviet era is a unique opportunity.





However, we understand that the long hike may be too much for some, so there will be an alternative program in Yerevan for those people.

The next day we take the bus again. We will head to Lake Sevan, the largest lake in the Caucasus. Here we will visit the Writers House, a Soviet building from the 1930s, and a more than thousand-year-old monastery with a beautiful view of the lake.



You can then choose how to spend the rest of the day: relax or be active. You can choose to relax by the lake for the rest of the day, or you can continue by bus to the town of Hrazdan, where there is unique architecture and monuments to see. We will also visit an abandoned airplane.



The next day we will again take the bus from Yerevan. Our destination for the day is the famous Geghard Monastery, an ancient monastery partially carved into a cave. The bus ride there won't take long, but we will first stop in the village of Garni, where there are several sights, including an ancient Greek temple. This temple is also known as the easternmost building of the Greco-Roman world. We will also have lunch in the village with authentic Armenian food in the garden of a restaurant, and then continue our journey to the monastery. This will be a fairly relaxed day.





The next day could be an intense day, but you can choose for yourself. The plan is to hike Armenia's highest mountain: Mount Aragats. No special training is required, and we won't have to climb rock walls, as we will be hiking to the top of the southern peak, which is accessible for basically everyone. This peak is 3250 meters high, and the hike offers fantastic views of Armenia and is a beautiful walk through the Caucasus Mountains. If you find this too intense, there will be a more relaxed alternative program in Yerevan.





The next day we leave Yerevan and its surroundings, but in the morning we will visit one more sight: the Cathedral of Yerevan. We will also visit the Dutch Embassy in Armenia, where you will likely be able to ask all your questions about Armenia and the connections with the Netherlands.



In the afternoon, we will board the train to Gyumri, which is a city in the northwest of Armenia. It is the second largest city in Armenia and is known as the most beautiful city in Armenia. There is no hostel so the group will be divided over several hotels. Upon arrival, we will check in at the hotels and relax in the evening on a terrace.



Entire cities were flattened by this earthquake. Some buildings are still not fully rebuilt, and we will pass by a few partially collapsed structures. The main sight of the day is not the city of Spitak but a destination two hours' walk away: the Spitak Young Pioneer Camp. This was a summer camp from the Soviet Union. After the earthquake, the camp was no longer used, and today it is completely abandoned and can be explored. Old statues can still be found here, but the most interesting sights are the beautiful mosaics.



The next day we will explore the city of Gyumri. We will see various layers of history, from ancient stone fortresses from the Russo-Turkish War to abstract Soviet monuments. There are also old Soviet amusement park rides in the city park that still work. You can ride them at your own risk.



This fountain is an important sight. It is an architectural oddity and was one of the only structures that still stood in Gyumri after the 1988 earthquake:



In the evening, we will dine in Gyumri and then take the night train to Georgia.



The next morning, we will arrive in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia. We will spend a total of two full days in Tbilisi. You will have a lot of free choices here, but one thing we will definitely visit is the university.

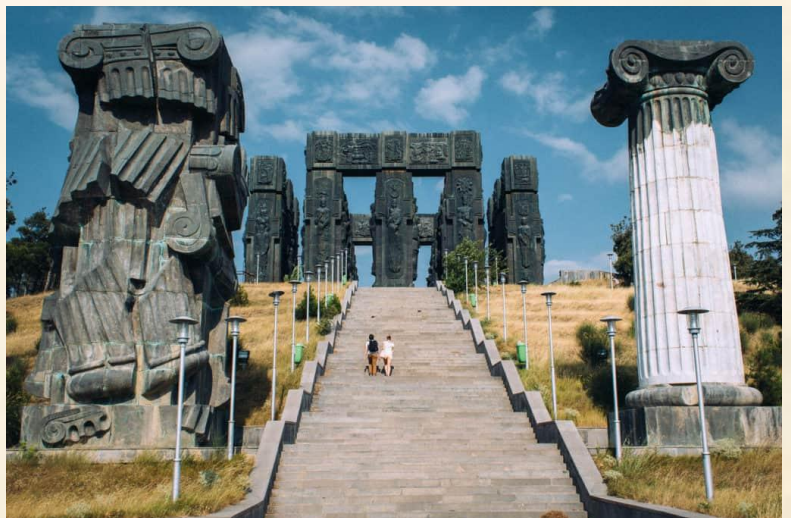




We will be staying in a hostel that's situated in a former Soviet sewing factory:

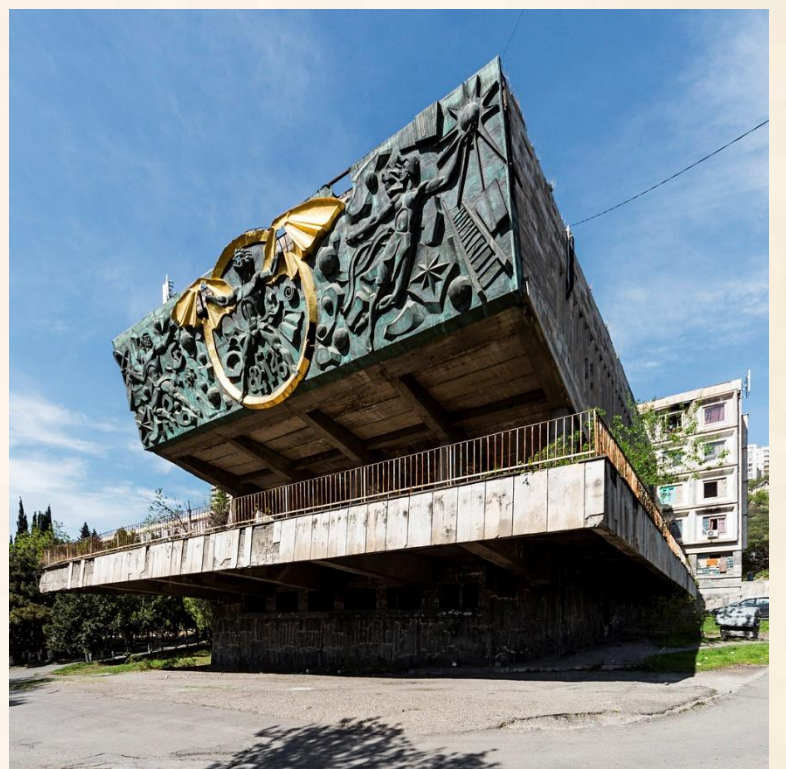


You can explore the city on your own, and we will likely organize an optional tour of the more obscure architectural sights, as seen here:





Some examples of Soviet mosaics in Tbilisi



There are also several places outside of Tbilisi you can visit in one day.

You can for example visit the Stalin Museum. This museum is located in Stalin's birthplace, a town just an hour away by train.

Other places are this monument with mosaic on a mountain, or this beautiful old small town called Sighnaghi.

Even more places will be included in the information booklet everyone who participates will receive.



How much does it cost?



**If you choose for the direct flight
Düsseldorf-Yerevan: €650**

What is included:

- Round-trip flight
- Train to Düsseldorf
- Public transport in Armenia, such as buses to Sevan, Geghard Monastery, etc.
- Night train to Tbilisi
- Accommodation in Yerevan, Gyumri, and Tbilisi
- Museum entrance fees
- The MOST dinner

What is not included:

- Food, except for the MOST dinner, and any sightseeing you choose outside of the regular program.

Keep in mind:

- It is an active trip. Some days include fairly long walks, but these activities are optional.
- The hike to the southern peak of Aragats is doable for basically everyone, but it's still a long hike so you need to be in good condition and also have no fear of heights.
- Euros are not used in Armenia; you will need to exchange money. It's helpful to exchange some money in the Netherlands beforehand.
- Your phone provider won't work in Armenia, so you'll need to obtain a digital SIM card for Armenia.
- Armenian is the official language, but many people also speak Russian. You'll likely be able to have a conversation with most people in Russian. In Georgia there is currently a mostly anti-Russian sentiment, so it may not be wise to speak Russian in public there.
- On sunny days, sunscreen or wearing a hat is important, especially on Mount Aragats.

Quick overview of where we will be staying each day:

July 21	Spend the night in Vienna
July 22	Yerevan hostel
July 23	Yerevan hostel
July 24	Yerevan hostel
July 25	Yerevan hostel
July 26	Yerevan hostel
July 27	Yerevan hostel
July 28	Gyumri hotel
July 29	Gyumri hotel
July 30	Night train to Georgia
July 31	Tbilisi hostel
July 32	Tbilisi hostel
July 33	Home

DETAILED PROGRAM		
	Morning	Afternoon/evening
July 21	Take the train to Düsseldorf	Fly to Vienna Spend the night in Vienna, either at the airport or in the city. There will be a city tour.
July 22	Fly to Yerevan	Take the bus to the city center, go to the hostel and sleep Stay in Yerevan (Olympic Hostel)
July 23	<p>People wake up at 7:45 08:45 Get breakfast in the supermarket next to the hostel 09:00 Start walking 10:05 Arrive at Soviet Children's Railway, abandoned railway station. 11:00 Genocide Memorial and taking a look at the architecture of Karen Demirtchian Sport Complex and the Ararat Brewery Building. (This morning program is optional)</p>	<p>13:00 walk to Republic Square 14:00 Arrive at Republic Square to visit History Museum. You can spend the entire time at the museum or do your own activities, such as visiting the Vernissage Market. 16:30 Meet at Republic Square 17:35 See Aragil former Restaurant, Victory Park, Mother Armenia Monument 18:15 Start walking again 18:30 See Memorial to The 50th Anniversary of the October Revolution 19:05 Climb the Cascade Complex 19:40 MOST Dinner</p> <p>If we have the time, we can see the fountain show at Republic Square. The show is at 20:00-22:00.</p> <p>Stay in Yerevan (Olympic Hostel)</p>
July 24	<p>10:44 bus 519 from Hovannes Shiraz Street 20 to Byurakan ~11:50 arrival at Byurakan See the observatory Get lunch in a supermarket in Byurakan for on the way Walk to orgov Radio-optical Telescope (2 hour walk)</p>	<p>See the Orgov radio-optical telescope Walk back to Byurakan (2 hour walk) Have dinner in Byurakan Bus back to Yerevan</p>

		Stay in Yerevan (Olympic Hostel)
July 25	<p>Leave Olympic Hostel 08:15 walk to Luna Park Bus Stop. 09:02 Arrive at Northern Bus Station Admire the architecture of Northern Bus Station 09:45 Take minibus 311 to Sevan. ~11:00 arrival at Lake Sevan See the lake 12:00 have lunch in Sevan 12:30 visit Writer's House and monastery 14:00 Now people can choose: spend the rest of the day at Lake Sevan OR go the Hrazdan</p>	<p>HRAZDAN PROGRAM: 14:00 Take minibus 326 to Turn to Hrazdan 15:10 Take minibus 270 to Hrazdan Tour of Hrazdan: World War II Memorial - Hrazdan Sundial-Tsovinar Statue- Tu-134a plane-Central Bus Station-Խաչ-Մատուռ հուշարձան(Monument)-World War II Memorial ~18:00 Have dinner in Hrazdan 19:00 Take minibus 270 back to Yerevan, to Yeritasakardan metro station. Arrival back at the hostel 20:45 LAKE SEVAN PROGRAM: People can just relax at the lake, possibly visit the Soviet viewing platform or Sevan town. Have dinner in Sevan town, maybe a seafood place with fish from Lake Sevan itself. Need to return to Yerevan at 17:00 because buses won't go back much later than that. Take minibus 311 to Northern Bus Station, transfer to Bus 261 to Russia Cinema Bus Station 19:58 arrival back at the hostel Stay in Yerevan (Olympic Hostel)</p>
July 26	<p>Meet 9:00 outside hostel 10:00 Bus to Garni See sights in and around Garni such as the pagan temple and the Artsakh War Memorial. We eat lunch in Garni, possibly Sergei Mot</p>	<p>15:00 Bus to Goght Inside Goght: Melo's Monument Tiger Statue Unmarked Monument Geghard Monastery (Total ~3 hour) Eat at Arsenyan's House Bus back to Yerevan 20:00</p>

		Stay in Yerevan (Olympic Hostel)
July 27	Taxibus to Aragats Optional program: Free time in Yerevan. Possible sights to visit will be in the booklet you will receive if you join.	Climb Mount Aragats Eat in Yerevan, possibly at Soviet Club, a Russian restaurant in the style of 1980s USSR. Stay in Yerevan (Olympic Hostel)
July 28	Visit the Saint Gregory The Illuminator Cathedral (opens at 9am), admire the architecture of Cinema Rossiya next to the Cathedral. Embassy Address: Kamar Business Center, 7th floor 2 Vazgen Sargsyan st. 0010 Yerevan	Train to Gyumri (14:25-17:30) Stay in Gyumri
July 29	09:00 Bus to Spitak Young Pioneer Camp	10:30 tour of Spitak town and ruins of earthquake Walk to Spitak Young Pioneer Camp (2 hour walk) Explore and walk back, Eat in Spitak Bus back to Gyumri Stay in Gyumri
July 30	Tour of Gyumri: Iron Fountain, Gyumri Train Station, Soviet theme park Yot Verk Church, Black Fortress and more	Nighttrain to Tbilisi (0:13am-07:13am) Stay in train

July 31	07:13 Arrival in Tbilisi, check in at hostel. After that, free time in Georgia	Free time in Georgia Stay in Tbilisi
August 1	Free time in Georgia	Free time in Georgia Stay in Tbilisi
August 2	Free time in Georgia	flight Tbilisi-Amsterdam

Sign up now!

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