



St. Andrew's Uniting Church

Longueville

***EXCLUSIVE AND UNIQUE
PERSONALISED 14 DAY GROUP TOUR***



A R M E N I A

AND

ARTSAKH



Group Leader: Rev. Dr Krikor Youmshajekian

6-22 May 2018

Come along and join us!

Only 4,850.00 Aus. Dollars per person! All inclusive!

50% Deposit by 15 December 2017



Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh)

Sunday 6 May at 21:30 pm: Depart Sydney via Doha to Yerevan QR 909 & QR 285. Hotel accommodation in Doha during transit provided by Qatar Airways.

Day 1- Tuesday 8 May: Arrival to Yerevan/Echmiadzin/Sardarapat/Zvartnots/Yerevan

00:55 am - Arrival in Yerevan's Zvartnots International Airport. Transfer to the hotel.

09:00 am - After breakfast at the hotel, we will start our tour to **Sardarapat Memorial and Ethnographic** museum. An incredible collection of national costumes from every region, handmade carpets, old farming instruments, pottery and furniture are housed under one roof. The museum building itself is impressive and specially located near the memorial devoted to the battle of Sardarabad in 1918. We continue and visit **Echmiadzin**, the spiritual and administrative centre of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Visit the pearls of Armenian architecture - **Church of St. Gayane** (5th-7th century) and the **world's first Christian Cathedral** (301 AD). Echmiadzin is the holy city of Armenia and is the seat of Catholicos of all Armenians, the head of the Armenian Apostolic church. Excursion to the unique **Museum of Echmiadzin Cathedral**.

14:00 pm - Lunch in a local restaurant. Visit the **Church of St. Hripsime** (618 AD) and transfer to Yerevan. On the way back stop at the ruins of one of the most famous temples in Armenia - **Zvartnots Cathedral** (7th century). We return to Yerevan, leisure time.

19:00 pm - Welcome dinner in national restaurant with folk show. (B/L/D)

Day 2 - Wednesday 9 May: Yerevan City Tour

Breakfast at the hotel.

09:30 am - The guide will meet us in the hotel lobby. We will visit **Matenadaran** - Institute of ancient manuscripts. Here are kept more than 15,000 manuscripts and the collection is constantly updated with new discoveries, acquisitions and gifts. We visit the **Tsitsernakaberd Memorial Complex** dedicated to the memory of the victims of the genocide of 1915 and Armenian Genocide Museum. We then visit the Erablur National Cemetery - the graves of soldiers and national heroes who died during the Karabakh war.

13:00 pm - We continue to the **Megerian Carpet Factory**, where we will see a display of antique and one of a kind rugs from the private collections of the Megerians. Lunch.



16:00 pm - Panoramic tour of the capital of Armenia, which is one of the oldest cities in the world. We'll see the **Abovian Street** – one of the oldest and well-known streets of the capital, **the Republic Square**, **Northern Avenue** the **National Opera and Ballet Theatre**, cultural - architectural complex **Cascade**, where we will find sculptures from Botero and other artists. The park is also a part of Cafesjian Museum. Continue to **Victory Park** to see the statue of "**Mother Armenia**" and admire the breathtaking panoramic view of pink city Yerevan.

19:00 pm - Dinner in a national restaurant. (B/L/D)

Day 3 - Thursday 10 May: Yerevan/Khor Virap/Areni/Noravank/Jermuk

Breakfast at the hotel.

09:00 am - The road from Yerevan leads through the plains of Ararat, where suddenly an attractive view of **Khor-Virap Monastery** appears, where the first Catholicos of the Armenian Apostolic Church was imprisoned for 13 years for promoting Christianity. The monastery is located 200 metres away from the Turkish border. It is the nearest spot to Mount Ararat from Armenia. Drive to the **Vayots Dzor** region, which is Armenia's most storied wine growing region. Visit the **cave**, where was found the oldest leather shoe in the world, as well as grape seeds, wine press for stomping grapes, drinking cups and withered grape wines.

13:00 pm – Leisurely lunch in the garden of a local family winery. Here we will have a short excursion and try a variety of traditional home-cooked dishes.

14:30 pm - We visit the **Areni wine factory** in Areni village, which is especially famous for its rich vineyards. After our wine tasting we will drive to visit the **Noravank Monastery** which is built in an inaccessible location in a beautiful natural setting. We continue to one of the most picturesque towns in Armenia – **Jermuk**. En route we visit **Kechut Reservoir** – a beautiful star-shaped spillway. The health-resort and spa town of Jermuk is famous for its hot mineral waters, which have been known for their medicinal properties since early medieval times. Here we will visit Jermuk waterfall, which tumbles down from the height of 70 m.

19:30 pm - Dinner and overnight in Jermuk. (B/L/D)

Day 4 - Friday 11 May: Jermuk/Qarahunj/Tatev/Shushi/Stepanakert

08:30 am - After breakfast we transfer to Syunik Province where we'll visit **Qarahunj** (the Speaking or Singing Stones) – an astronomical observatory and pre-historic megalithic



structure, also known as “**Zorats Qarer**”. It is said that the Armenian Stonehenge is 7500 years old. There are 203 stones, 76 of which have 5-7 cm diameter holes bored through them. The heights of the stones range from 0.5 to 3 metres (above ground) and weight up to 10 tons. We drive to the **Medieval Monastery of Tatev** (9th century) - one of the most famous spiritual and educational centres of the Middle Ages. On the way we will be able to see the rocks surrounding the city of Goris known as “**The Goris Stone Forest**”.

13:00 pm – Lunch in a local restaurant with a fantastic view of the Vorotan Gorge.

14:00 pm – We will take **the world’s longest ropeway** - 5,752 metres long and enjoy the spectacular views of the rugged valley and mountains around the ancient Tatev Monastery. Located 1600 metres high in the mountains it is surrounded by a magnificent canyon. Then transfer to Artsakh, a Caucasian region located between Armenian and Azerbaijan. On the road that connects Armenia with Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) we will visit the town of Shushi. In the middle of the 18th century, Shushi became a city-fortress and is known by its historical monuments. We’ll admire the **Ghazanchetsots St. Amenaprkich Church** and the monument of the Liberation of Shushi - "Tank". Our tour continues to **Stepanakert** - the largest city and capital of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh).

19:00 pm - Dinner and overnight in Stepanakert. (B/L/D)

Day 5 - Saturday 12 May: Stepanakert/Hunot Gorge/Zontikner/Gandzasar/Stepanakert

Breakfast at the hotel.

09:00 am - City tour in Stepanakert. We will visit the famous **statue of Tatik - Papik**, known as “Menq enq Mer Sarery” which means “We are Our Mountains”. It is a large monument from tufa of an old Armenian man and woman and is recognized as a national symbol of Karabakh. We then visit rocky **Hunot Gorge** which is a unique natural and historic-architectural complex to see the mystifying **Zontikner** (Mossy Umbrellas). Then we will transfer to Martakert region.

13:00 pm - Lunch in a local restaurant. Here we will see the **lion carved of the rock** and some other interesting monuments. Then continue to visit **Gandzasar’s** 10-13th century monastery situated in Martakert region. Gandzasar’s most important structure is the imposing Cathedral of St. Hovhannes Mkrkich. It is a large church with a cupola in the inscribed cross plan. The Cathedral was built between 1216 and 1238, and has been hailed as a "crown jewel" and the "encyclopaedia" of Armenian architecture by the famous Russian scholar Anatoly.

19:00 pm - Dinner and overnight in Stepanakert. (B/L/D)



Day 6 - Sunday 13 May: Stepanakert/Khndzoeresk/Selim Pass/Noratus/Sevan/Dilijan

Breakfast at the hotel.

08:00 am - Our trip continues to the cave village of **Khndzoeresk**, which offers the most spectacular view of ancient Armenia. The old city is famous for its canyon and is located at 1580 metres above sea level. We drive to **Selim Pass** to visit the caravanserai, which is situated 2410 metres above sea level.

13:00 pm – Lunch at a local restaurant.

After lunch drive to **Selim Pass** for visiting the caravanserai, which is situated 2410 meters above the sea level. Passing the Selim Pass, built in 1332, we will drive to the village **Noratus**, an ancient cemetery from the Middle Ages. This is the biggest cemetery of Khachkars (cross-stones) in Armenia - the oldest stones date back to the late 10th century. We drive on to **Lake Sevan** which is situated at an altitude above 1900 metres. You can visit **Sevanavank Monastery**, located on the peninsula. This offers magnificent panoramic views of the lake and surrounding mountains. The continuation of the trip will bring us to the forested resort town of Dilijan, which is also called “Armenia’s Little Switzerland” because of its beauty.

20:00 pm - Dinner and overnight in Dilijan. (B/L/D)

Day 7 – Monday 14 May: Dilijan/Violet Village/Sanahin/Haghpat/Akhtala/Dilijan

Breakfast at the hotel.

08:00 am – After breakfast walk along one of the most beautiful and oldest streets of the **Old Dilijan** - Sharambeyan where we will find small art schools and souvenir shops. Visit the 13th century monastery Haghartsin. In 2010 the whole complex underwent massive renovations, which were financed by **His Highness Dr. Sheikh Sultan Bin Mohamed Al Qasimi** (Ruler of Sharjah). After this we set off to the Northern region of Armenia. We visit the **village of Lermontov - Violet**, where Molokans live. Molokans, spiritual Christians, are not a single church, but rather a religious movement with a single root, with differences in attitudes, singing, teaching, studying, following festivals. Transfer to Alaverdi town of Lori Province.

13:00 pm – Lunch in a local restaurant. We then visit the **Monasteries of Sanahin and Haghpat** (10th -13th century), which are among the outstanding works of medieval Armenian architecture. Their national, cultural and artistic merits are so important and valuable that they are now listed as UNESCO World Heritage Property. Lunch in a local



restaurant. We will complete the day at St. Astvatsatsin (Mother Mary) **Church of Akhtala**, which is famous for its Christian multifaceted frescoes and by walking around the territory of Akhtala fortress. We return to Dilijan.

20:00 pm - Dinner and overnight. (B/L/D)

Day 8 - Wednesday 15 May: Dilijan/Vanadzor/Spitak/Gyumri/Yerevan

09:00 am - After breakfast we will visit the first international boarding school in Armenia **UWC Dilijan College**. The College is the 14th member of the United World Colleges (UWC) movement and one of fifteen colleges around the world. Drive to **Vanadzor** known to be settled since the Bronze Age, according to tombs and other historic remains found on the nearby hills of Tagavoranist and Mashtots. We continue to the mountainous city of Spitak for a short city tour. We transfer to **Gyumri**, the second largest city in Armenia, situated in the northwest part of the country.

13:30 pm - Lunch in a local restaurant, where you can taste the famous variety of fish - lake trout, that is called Ishkhan (which means prince). We will walk through the historical centre to see traditional houses and buildings of 19th century. We will visit the main attractions, **Amenaprkich Church** (Church of the Saviour) and **Alexandropol fortress** and absorb the atmosphere of old Armenia. We then transfer to Yerevan.

19:30 pm - Dinner in a traditional restaurant. (B/L/D)

Day 9 - Thursday 17 May: Free day in Yerevan

09:00 am - After breakfast we will visit the TUMO Centre a free of charge digital media learning centre in Yerevan. Since its opening in 2011, the centre has provided thousands of students aged 12–18 an open environment where they can use the latest in digital tools, learn from media professionals, and explore the intersection of technology and art.

For the rest of the day some recommendations: **The History Museum of Armenia** and **he the National Gallery of Armenia**; “**Cafesjian Art Museum**”, which is dedicated to bringing the best of contemporary art to Armenia. A unique place to visit while in Yerevan, where you can see a collection of more than 5,000 works, including one of the most comprehensive glass collections in the world; **NUR Art Gallery**, where you will find unique works of Nur who is capable of creating a completely new form of art with an incredible lightness, playfulness and wit. His pieces of jewellery art full-grown sculptural compositions and every creation is unique, an absolute exclusive one-of-a-kind; **Dalma Mall** or **Yerevan shopping Centre**; **Dalan Souvenir Shop**, located in the heart of the city,



which boasts a collection of handmade items and jewellery – amazing gifts made by Armenian craftspeople for your family and friends. You can follow up your shopping tour in the outdoor coffee shop located right in the green backyard of Dalan. It is possible to arrange dinner at the restaurant, where you can taste delicious national dishes.

19:00 pm – Enjoy classical music concert in Aram Khatchaturian Concert Hall (B/-/-)

Day 10 – Tuesday 16 May: Yerevan/Geghard/Garni/Tsaghkadzor/Yerevan

Breakfast at the hotel.

09:30 am - A trip to the cave **Monastery Geghard** (5th -13th century), which consists of three churches and a huge mausoleum carved into the mountain. For many centuries the church kept the Holy Lance, that had pierced the body of Christ on the cross. We will hear the magnificent choir at the Geghard Monastery. Continuing the tour will bring us to the pagan **Temple of Garni** (77 AD) – the only Hellenistic temple extant in the region. Inspect the "Temple of the Sun" and the ancient royal baths, situated on the edge of the picturesque valley. Then enjoy the melancholic sound of the Armenian pipe duduk played by the local villager.

13:00 pm - Lunch in a local family, where we'll see the baking process of Armenian traditional flatbread, lavash and have opportunity to participate in the process of baking. Transfer to the most popular resort town of **Tsaghkadzor**. After the city tour we'll enjoy the ropeway, an exhilarating ride high up to the mountains. Return to Yerevan.

19:00 pm - Dinner in a traditional restaurant. (B/L/D)

Day 11 - Friday 18 May: Yerevan/Aragats/Amberd/Yerevan

Breakfast at the hotel.

09:00 am – Visit the AMAA Centre and the Armenian Evangelical Church of Yerevan.

10:00 am - We visit the **Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian School**, founded in 1999 by the Armenian Missionary Association of America. Since 2014-2015 academic year, the school has been operating as a full educational complex on Babajanyan Avenue in the Malatia-Sebastia district. The official opening ceremony of the new complex took place on 8 October 2014 in the presence of the President of the Republic of Armenia Mr. Serzh Sargsyan and the leaders of the Armenian Missionary Association of America. It became the first LEED-certified (Leadership in Energy and Environment Design) school in Armenia and the Caucasus.

11:00 am – Head to Mount **Aragats** and reach Kari Lake, located at an altitude of 3200 metres. Lunch in a local restaurant located near the lake.



14:00 pm - We transfer to the Southern slope of **Aragats**, the highest mountain in today's Armenia to visit medieval **fortress-castle Amberd**. It dates back to the 7th century and is one of the fewest well preserved fortresses of that period. Then visit near Amberd visit **Vahramashen Church**, which is located almost atop a deep gorge. Return to Yerevan.

19:00 pm - Dinner in a restaurant. (B/L/D)

Day 12 - Saturday 19 May: Yerevan/Oshakan/Ashtarak/Yerevan

Breakfast at the hotel.

09:00 am - Today we will visit Oshakan village, which has been a holy place since 5th century, the Saint Mesrop Mashtots' tomb - inventor of the Armenian unique alphabet and **Armenian letters Monument** at the foot of Mount Aragats. We will lunch in a private house and then visit to Karmavor Church (7th century), the only church in Armenia preserved with its original roofing.

13:00 pm – Lunch in a private house. Continue to the **Monasteries Saghmosavank and Hovanavank** (13th century) situated at the edge of one of the most beautiful canyons in Armenia. We return to Yerevan for some free time.

19:00 pm - Dinner in a traditional restaurant. (B/L/D)

Day 13 - Sunday 20 May: Yerevan

Breakfast at the hotel.

10:00 am - Today we will attend the **Evangelical Sunday Church Service**.

13:00 pm - Lunch in a local restaurant. After lunch we will visit the famous open air market "**Vernissage**" - a centre of contemporary art and culture, and the Gum market to buy and taste fresh, dried and marinated fruits and vegetables of your choice.

16:30 pm - We will tour and taste at the "**Ararat**" **Brandy Factory**". There will be free time in the afternoon.

19:30 pm - Farwell dinner in "Havana" restaurant, including interesting shows, live music and dancing. (B/L/D)

Day 14 - Monday 21 May at 3:25 am: Depart Yerevan via Doha

1:00 am - Transfer to the airport and departure. (-/-/-)

Optional: Upon request it is possible to catch flight from Yerevan or Doha to other destination of your choice, which will incur extra charges. Please enquire.

Tuesday 22 May at 17:35 pm: Arrive Sydney QR 286 & QR 908

TOTAL PRICE:

4,850.00 Aus. Dollars per person

1000 Aus. Dollars for Single accommodation surcharge

To secure your place

*the copy of your passport and a minimum of
50% Deposit is required by 15 December 2017*

Direct Deposit Details at Commonwealth Bank:

Account Name: Armenia Group Tour 2018

BSB: 06 2295

Account Number: 1043 9190

Please use your name as Reference.

Price includes:

- Hotel accommodation in Dbl/Twin rooms , 9 nights in Marriot Yerevan, 2 nights in Stepanakert, 2 nights in Dilijan and 1 night in Jermuk
- Economy Airfares Sydney-Doha-Yerevan and Yerevan-Doha-Sydney
- To and from Airport Transfers in Doha and Yerevan and hotel accommodation and food voucher in Doha
- Meals FB /as mentioned above
- Comfortable air-conditioned transportation with professional driver for the entire route
- Guide services and professional English speaking Tour Guide
- All entrance fees for museums and historical monuments
- Ropeway “Wings of Tatev”, “Tsaghkadzor” and Lavash master class
- Entrance fee and tasting in “Ararat” brandy factory and “Areni” wine factory
- 0.5 lt still water per person per day
- Visa for Armenia and Karabakh

Price does not include:

- Travel insurance
- Alcoholic drinks
- Personal expenses and other services not specified in the itinerary

The tour and prices are subject to changes before the final order.

If the exchange rate fluctuates more than 1 USD = 130 AUS = 470 AMD GoAemenia reserves the right to review the prices.

NOTE:

During our visits to the major cities, we will visit the Armenian Missionary Association Centres if time permits.

Please have comfortable shoes for short walks and in one or two instances it is advisable to wear hiking shoes.

We will attend one or two concerts in the Opera House subject to availability and when schedules of performances are released.

CANCELATION POLICY:

Cancellation is possible by the Deadline, 31 January, with full refund.

Cancellation 20 days after the Deadline will attract 30% penalty.

Cancellation 40 days after the Deadline will attract 70% penalty.

Cancellation 60 days after the Deadline will attract 100% penalty.

For more information and further enquiries
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