



Easter in Georgia



Easter is the most important holiday for Orthodox Christians. The special services are conducted in almost every church in Georgia during the Passion Week, but most particular days are PASSION THURSDAY and GOOD FRIDAY.

On Thursday the service is held according to Last Supper and on Friday a special ritual takes place in Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, where sacred robe of Jesus Christ is buried.

This tour enables travellers to tour around Georgia, attend all these religious events and get acquainted with Easter traditions in the country.

Best period: Spring time (exact date set annually)

Duration: 6days/7nights

Day 1: Tbilisi

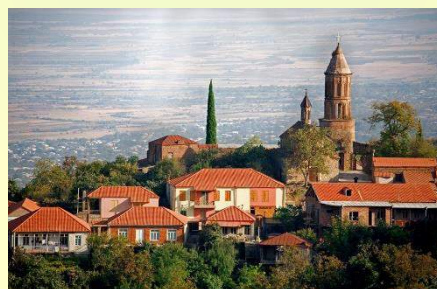
Early in the morning arrive in Tbilisi, meet in the airport and transfer to a hotel. After late breakfast Tbilisi sightseeing tour. During the tour we take you to show you the old city. You can take a glance to the history of the city from early centuries to nowadays by walking in narrow streets of the city and exploring the religious and secular architecture. Here you find different religious buildings – churches, synagogues, mosque, as well as famous 19th century houses with wooden multi-coloured balconies. You visit the sulphur bath which made an unforgettable impression on Pushkin, Lermontov, Dumas. During the tour you enjoy the superb panoramic views of the Old city. This marks the end of the Old Town. Afterwards we visit the stunning treasury of the Georgian History Museum (closed on Mondays), before taking a stroll along Rustaveli Avenue – the main street in Tbilisi.

Day 2: Wine tour

We travel to Kakheti – the famous wine-growing region. In a local village we visit a farmer's house to see a unique wine-cellar. We get acquainted with the Georgian way of wine-making, quite different from the European one and also experience Georgian bread "Shoti" baking and Georgian sweets "Churchkhela" making. Later we visit Bodbe Monastery (4th century) where the Tomb of St. Nino, the maiden who brought Christianity to Georgia, is housed. Then we see fortified town of Signaghi, taste more wines and drive back to Tbilisi.

Day 3: Passion Thursday

Passion Thursday is connected to the Last Supper when Jesus Christ washed his apostles' feet and when Judah betrayed him. According to the New Gospel Last Supper ceremony takes place after service.





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Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgia washes feet to twelve priests just like Christ did with Apostles. We attend the ceremony and later visit an enamel workshop and see how cloisonné enamel is made.

Day 4: Good Friday

Good Friday is connected with Crucifixion, lamentation and burial of Jesus Christ. The Georgian church conducts deposition and lamentation in a special way. A cross is put in front of an altar and a special ritual follows. We attend this ritual in Svetitskhoveli Cathedral. That's the place where Christ's Robe is buried. We can participate in the process and also visit the ancient capital of Georgia – Mtskheta. Another process we attend is that of painting eggs red symbolizing the resurrection of Christ.

Day 5: Holy Saturday

We visit Uplistsikhe Cave Town (1st millennium BC) where the Great Silk Road used to pass. This is an old and interesting complex with dwelling quarters, wine cellars, bakeries, a three-nave basilica church hewn out in rock and even an antic theatre. Afterwards drive along the famous Georgian Military Highway and visit Ananuri complex (17th century). The two churches and the fortress overlooking Zhinvali reservoir. Return back to Tbilisi and have free time before going to the church for Easter ceremony. In the late evening before the midnight we go to the church and together with the all Georgians meet the Easter.

Day 6: EASTER

Drive to David Gareja cave monastery (6th century) located in semi-desert. After seeing Lavra Monastery we walk up for about 50 minutes to Udabno Monastery to enjoy its wonderful painted caves and dramatic views across to Azerbaijan. In the monastery we acquaint with ascetic life of hermits in a deserted place.

Transfer to the airport and departure.

