

ASIA · MOUNTAINS · HIKING · WINE · FOOD · HISTORY · SACRED SITES



Georgia

Georgia squeezes the high Caucasus, Black Sea beaches and cliffside monasteries into a country smaller than Scotland. Tbilisi's sulphur bathhouses sit below a fortress in a hillside old town, Svaneti's medieval stone towers stand beneath glaciers, and Kakheti's farmers still ferment wine in buried clay qvevri, a tradition stretching back some 8,000 years.

 **The UK Foreign Office (FCDO) advises against all travel to parts of Georgia.**
Read the latest FCDO travel advice before planning a trip. Your travel insurance may be invalid if you travel against FCDO advice.
FCDO advice last updated 15 September 2026.

 CAPITAL Tbilisi	 CURRENCY Georgian lari (GEL) £1 ≈ GEL 3.46	 LANGUAGE Georgian, Russian English	 BEST TIME May–Jun, Sep–Oct
 DAILY BUDGET £30–£140 ££ Moderate	 PLUGS Type C, F 220V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 5h direct ~£200–£450 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+4 standard time

Georgia sits where Europe and Asia blur, with the Greater Caucasus walling off its northern edge and the Black Sea lapping its west. It adopted Christianity in the fourth century and writes in its own curling alphabet, so its churches and street signs feel unlike anywhere else. Most first trips use Tbilisi as a base: a day trip to Mtskheta, a drive up the Georgian Military Road to Kazbegi, then east to Kakheti's vineyards. With more time, head west via Kutaisi to Svaneti's tower villages and finish on the coast at Batumi, or go south to the cave city of Vardzia.

Georgians treat hospitality as a duty, and a supra feast led by a tamada (toastmaster) can run for hours, fuelled by wine and fiery chacha. Costs are low by European standards, with guesthouse rooms and long meals far cheaper than at home. Much travel is by marshrutka minibus or shared taxi along winding roads, so journeys take longer than they look. High passes stay snowbound into early summer, making July to September the window for serious trekking. Visitors are often surprised by Tbilisi's creative nightlife, its converted Soviet factories and the quality of the country's natural wines.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

SACRED SITE

Gergeti Trinity Church, Kazbegi

A 14th-century church on a ridge at about 2,170 metres, framed by the glaciated 5,054-metre cone of Mount Kazbek. Hike up from Stepantsminda in around 90 minutes, or continue towards the Gergeti glacier.
- 2

CULTURE

Upper Svaneti

Medieval defensive towers rise from villages beneath some of the Caucasus's highest peaks. Base yourself in Mestia, then trek or drive to Ushguli, at around 2,100 metres one of Europe's highest permanently inhabited settlements.

3

FOOD

Kakheti wine country

Georgia's main wine region spreads across the Alazani valley below the Caucasus. Visit family cellars to taste amber qvevri wines, and stay in hilltop Signaghi, ringed by 18th-century walls with views to the mountains.

4

HISTORY

Vardzia

A 12th-century cave monastery carved into a cliff above the Mtkvari river during Queen Tamar's reign, once home to hundreds of monks. Tunnels, cells and a frescoed church survive across many levels of rock.

5

SACRED SITE

Mtskheta

Georgia's ancient capital, 20 km from Tbilisi, where the 11th-century Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and the hilltop Jvari Monastery have been UNESCO-listed since 1994. Jvari's view over the river confluence is the classic shot.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Tbilisi

≈ 1.3 million people

Carved wooden balconies, sulphur baths and a cable car to Narikala fortress share the old town with converted Soviet factories and wine bars. Allow at least three days.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Batumi

≈ 235,000 people

A Black Sea resort of glass towers, casinos and a long seafront boulevard. Fun for a couple of days; the botanical garden and Adjarian khachapuri are the real draws.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Kutaisi

≈ 161,000 people

The ancient capital of western Georgia, now a budget-flight hub. Use it as a base for Gelati Monastery, the Prometheus Cave and Martvili Canyon before heading up to Svaneti.

Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

When to go to Georgia

Best time: **May–Jun, Sep–Oct.**

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

Jul

Aug

Sep

Oct

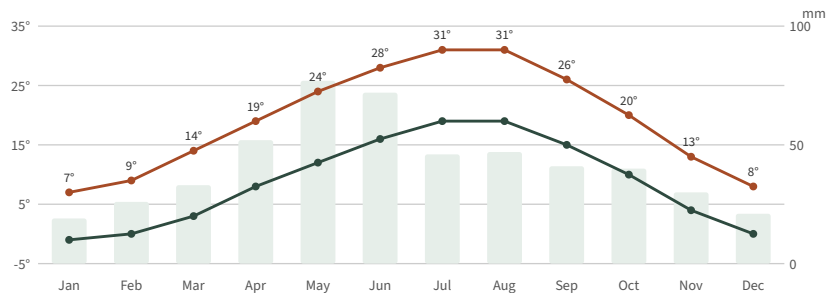
Nov

Dec

■ Best ■ Good ■ Mixed ■ Poor

Average climate in Tbilisi

— High °C — Low °C ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Jan	Alilo On Orthodox Christmas, 7 January, Alilo processions with flags and icons wind through Tbilisi and other towns, singing carols and collecting gifts for those in need.
Sep–Oct	Rtveli The grape harvest, when Kakheti's families pick, press and celebrate; many guesthouses and wineries welcome visitors to join in, with feasting to follow.
Oct	Tbilisoba Tbilisi's city festival, usually held over an October weekend, fills the old town with food and wine stalls, folk music and craft markets.

How much does Georgia cost?

SHOESTRING £30 per person / day ≈ GEL 104 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £65 per person / day ≈ GEL 225 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £140 per person / day ≈ GEL 485 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
--	--	---

Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Khachapuri Cheese-filled bread in many regional forms; the Adjarian version is a boat-shaped loaf topped with molten cheese, a raw egg yolk and butter.	Khinkali Twisted dumplings filled with spiced meat and broth. Hold the topknot, bite and slurp the juices, then leave the doughy knot on the plate.	Badrijani nigvzit Strips of fried aubergine rolled around a garlicky walnut paste and studded with pomegranate seeds, a fixture of every supra table.
---	---	---

Getting around

Marshrutkas (minibuses) and shared taxis leave Tbilisi's stations for every corner of the country, cheaply but on informal schedules. Comfortable trains run from Tbilisi to Batumi, and an overnight service reaches Zugdidi for Svaneti. Small planes fly to Mestia when weather allows. Bolt works in Tbilisi and Batumi, and Tbilisi has a cheap metro. Car hire is easy, but local driving is assertive.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE  C F 220V — bring a UK-to-C/F adapter	EMERGENCY NUMBERS Telephone: 112 (ambulance, fire, police) Source: FCDO “Getting help”
DIALLING CODE +995	TIME ZONE UTC+4 (standard time)

TAP WATER

Generally safe to drink

DRIVING

On the right

TIPPING

Many restaurants add a 10–15% service charge, so check the bill. Where none is added, leave about 10%; tipping guides and drivers is welcome.

ETIQUETTE

At a supra, follow the tamada's toasts and never toast with beer, traditionally reserved for enemies. In churches, women cover their heads and wear skirts, and men avoid shorts.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Tbilisi International Airport (TBS), Tbilisi; Kutaisi International Airport (KUT), Kutaisi; Batumi International Airport (BUS), Batumi

Visas & entry for Georgia

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can visit Georgia without a visa for up to one year.

To stay longer or to travel for work or study, you must apply for a longer-term visa. Contact the Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for more information.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Hepatitis A

Tetanus

Typhoid

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Hepatitis B

Measles

Rabies

Tuberculosis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

A yellow fever certificate is only required if you arrive from (or transit through) a country with yellow fever risk — not if you fly direct from the UK.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Georgia

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Mon 23 Nov 2026

Saint George's Day

Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Sat 2 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Thu 7 Jan 2027	Christmas Day
Tue 19 Jan 2027	Epiphany
Wed 3 Mar 2027	Mother's Day
Mon 8 Mar 2027	International Women's Day
Fri 9 Apr 2027	National Unity Day
Fri 30 Apr 2027	Good Friday
Sat 1 May 2027	Holy Saturday
Sun 2 May 2027	Easter Sunday
Mon 3 May 2027	Easter Monday
Sun 9 May 2027	Day of Victory over Fascism
Wed 12 May 2027	Saint Andrew's Day
Mon 17 May 2027	Day of Family Sanctity and Respect for Parents
Wed 26 May 2027	Independence Day
Sat 28 Aug 2027	Dormition of the Mother of God
Thu 14 Oct 2027	Holiday of Svetitskhovloba, Robe of Jesus

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Georgian

ENGLISH	GEORGIAN	SAY IT
Hello	გამარჯობა	<i>gah-mar-JOH-bah</i>
Thank you	მადლობა	<i>mad-LOH-bah</i>
Please	გთხოვთ	<i>g-TKHOVT</i>
Excuse me	ბოდიში	<i>boh-DEE-shee</i>
How much is this?	რა ღირს?	<i>rah GHIRS</i>

Know before you go

Carry lari in cash for marshrutkas, village guesthouses and markets; cards are widely accepted in Tbilisi and Batumi but much less so in the mountains.

Abkhazia and South Ossetia lie outside the Georgian government's control. Check the FCDO travel advice before planning any route near them.

Snow keeps high trekking routes and the road to Tusheti closed until early summer; for Svaneti, Kazbegi and Tusheti treks, aim for July to September.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.