



Tour: Wine and Gourmont

Duration: 8 days / 7 nights

Characteristics: culture, best wine producers, gastronomy

Suitable for FITs and small groups





Wine making technics have a long history in Armenia. **One of the oldest wineries in the world** was discovered in Armenia. Historically, wineries in Armenia were concentrated along the **Ararat valley** and in actual district of Vayots Dzor. Winemaking took a downward plunge in the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union, but is undergoing a revival, with the addition of **world-class labels**.

A yearly **wine festival**, held in Areni, is popular with the locals and features wines from official wineries as well as homemade hooch of varying quality. Armenian wines are predominantly red and are **sweet, semi-sweet (Vernashen, Ijevan), or dry (Areni)**. In addition to grapes, wines have been made with other fruit, notably pomegranate, apricot, quince, etc.

Armenian cuisine is one of the **oldest cuisines of the world** which has been developed together with Mediterranean and later on also with neighbor countries cuisines. But in spite of the mutual influences there are **certain qualities may generally be taken to characterize Armenian cuisine**.

The preparation of meat, fish, and vegetable dishes in an Armenian kitchen requires stuffing, frothing, and puréeing. Lamb, eggplant, fresh herbs, tan – a kind of liquid yogurt and bread (lavash) are basic features of Armenian cuisine.

BRIEF ITINERARY

Day 1: Departure from homeland

Day 2: Arrival – City tour in Yerevan – Ararat Brandy Factory – Matenadaran

Day 3: Yerevan – Khor Virap monastery – Areni wine region (Areni-1 cave) – winery “Old Bridge” and Goat farm – Winery “Trinity” – Yeghegnadzor

Day 4: Yeghegnadzor – Noravank monastery – “Getnatun” winery – “Zorah” winery – Yerevan

Day 5: Yerevan – “ ArmAs “ winery – Hovnavank monastery –” Ushi – “Armenia” winery – Yerevan

Day 6: Yerevan – lake Sevan – Ghegard monastery – Garni pagan temple – Yerevan

Day 7: Yerevan – Echmiadzin – Zvartnots – “Maran” winery – Vernissage – Yerevan

Day 8: Departure



DESCRIPTIVE ITINERARY

Day 1: Departure from homeland

Day 2: Arrival – City tour in Yerevan – Ararat Brandy Factory - Matenadaran

Arrival in Zvartnots international airport in Yerevan. Meet the guide at arrival hall. Welcome gifts. Private transfer to the hotel. Check in and accommodation.

Breakfast at the hotel. City tour in Yerevan. Stop over the Cascade monument which hosts Modern Art Museum (Botero, Chihuly, Arshile Gorky, Jennifer Bartlett, Lynn Chadwick, Barry Flanagan, and Jaume Plensa), and Genocide Memorial. After lunch visit Matenadaran manuscript museum and Ararat Brandy Factory which has a centaur history. Cognac tasting. Dinner at a traditional Armenian restaurant. Overnight at the hotel.

***Khorovats** – the Armenian word for barbecued or grilled meats, the most representative dish of Armenian cuisine enjoyed in restaurants, family gatherings, and as fast food. A typical khorovats is chunks of meat grilled on a skewer.*

Day 3: Yerevan – Khor Virap monastery – Areni wine region (Areni-1 cave) – winery “Old Bridge” and Goat farm – Winery “Trinity” – Yeghegnadzor

Breakfast at the hotel. Check out and departure for Ararat region. Visit Khor Virap monastery (4-17 cen.) where Armenian first Catholicos had been imprisoned for 13 years. The monastery offers the best and the closest view to Mt. Ararat.

Continue to Vayots Dzor region which is one of the historical and ancient wine producing regions of Armenia. Here world’s ancient winery and leather shoe was found. Visit the cave.

Continue the tour visiting “Old Bridge” winery and goat factory. Lunch at the farm tasting goat barbecue, goat cheese and local wine.

Continue to Aghavnadzor region to visit “Trinity” winery which is an organic winery famous for the quality of rose wine and blow-your-socks off arena wine. Tasting wine and grappa.

If it’s not cold dinner in the yard of local house tasting home – made dishes and participating at Armenian bread ‘lavash’ baking process.

Accommodation in hotel in Yeghegnadzor. Overnight.

***Harissa** is a porridge made of wheat and chicken cooked together for a long time, originally in the tonir but nowadays over a stove.*



Day 4: Yeghegnadzor – Noravank monastery – “Getnatun” winery – “Zorah” winery – Yerevan

Breakfast at the hotel. Check out. Return back to Areni visiting Noravank monastery of 10 – 14 sec. en route which is beautifully located over the Gnisghik river canyon. Visit “Getnatun” winery in Areni which has won golden prize for its Narine brand (which uses Voskehat grapes). Wine tasting.

Lunch and continue tour to Rind village visiting “Zorah” winery which was introduced itself to the international experts in 2012. Its Karas Areni wine was classified among the 10 best new wines of the world in 2012 by Business Week ([top 10 new wines in the world in 2012](#)).

Return back to Yerevan. Dinner at a Carpet Factory participating at Armenian dish Master Class performance by one of the chefs of Armenian Cuisine Traditions development Association.

Transfer to the hotel. Accommodation. Overnight.

Khash, which started off as a laborer's meal, consists of beef or lamb feet that have been slow-cooked overnight in water. It is eaten at breakfast over crumbled dried lavash bread, with crushed garlic and liberal portions of vodka or spirits. Khash is typically eaten in winter.

Day 5: Yerevan – “ArmAs” winery – Hovnavank monastery–” Ushi – “Armenia” winery – Yerevan

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to “ArmAs” winery. A young producer of wines which cooperates with Italian wine making specialists. Produces Areni red wine and rose wine. Tasting.

Continue to Hovnavank moastery 5 - 13 sec. where Johannes the Baptist relics were maintained. The monastery is situated over the beautiful gorge of Qasagh river.

Lunch at a local house in Ushi village with Master Class performance in the yard.

After lunch drive to “Armenia” winery which cooperates with French specialists and develops super – premium wines.

Return back to Yerevan and visit In Vino Wine Bar and Store to taste Armeau – first Armenian ice wine which is offered only in this bar.

Dinner and overnight in Yerevan.

Optional overnight in near Armas winery in a boutique hotel overlooking the Armas Estate and the Mt. Ararat.

Cheese Chechil (tel panir) – braided and pickled string cheese. also chanakh, lori, yeghegnadzor and others made from sheep, cow's and goat milk.

Day 6: Yerevan – lake Sevan – Ghegard monastery – Garni pagan temple– Yerevan



Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to lake Sevan which is the second highest alpine freshwater lake of the world. Visit the monasteries on the peninsula and have a breathtaking view to the lake from the top of the peninsula.

Continue to Garni pagan temple of 1st cen. dedicated to the God of Sun. Lunch in a local house in Garni village which offers the best fish and pork barbeque prepared in Armenian underground stove named "tonir".

Continue to Geghard monastery of 12- 13 cen where the Holy Lance was kept for centuries. The monastery is included in UNESCO World Heritage List.

Return back to Yerevan. Optional dinner in Karberd restaurant of Tufenkian Heritage Historic Yerevan hotel.

Overnight in Yerevan.

*Armenian soups: - **spas**, made from matzoon, hulled wheat and herbs and **aveluk soup** made from lentils, walnuts, and wild mountain sorrel (which gives the soup its name).*

Day 7: Yerevan - Echmiadzin - Zvartnots - "Maran" winery - Vernissage - Yerevan

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to Echmiadzin which is the Armenian Orthodox Apostolic Church centre. Visit the Holy Echmiadzin Cathedral build in 4th cen. and return back to Yerevan visiting the ruins of Zvartnots Cathedral of 7th cen. UNESCO.

Visit also "Maran" winery. It's a boutique winery built on the basis of the biggest winery of Soviet Armenia. It was build by German prisoners of II World War and had 12 cellars 2 of which are in use today. "Maran" winery is famous for its "Bagratouni" e "Bagratouni reserve" brands.

Lunch and wine tasting at the yard of "Maran" winery.

Return back to Yerevan and if week end visit Vernissage open - air handcraft market.

Farewell dinner at the restaurant with live music. Optional dinner in famous "Dolmam" restaurant opened in Yerevan in 1998. It's the most famous restaurant of Yerevan visited by the president of Republic of Armenia and many international famous persons that visited Armenia.

Oppure cena nel ristorante Dolmama famoso ristorante a Yerevan dal 1998. Un posto molto elegante e visitato da quasi tutti i personaggi famosi internazionali che visitano il paese.

*Fishes - **Ishkhan** - Sevan trout (endangered species), served steamed, grilled on a skewer, or stuffed and baked in the oven, **Sig** - a whitefish from Lake Sevan, native to northern Russian lakes (endangered species in Armenia), **Karmrakhayt** a river trout also produced in high-altitude artificial lake.*

Day 8: Departure



Transfer to airport. Departure.

EXPLORE ALSO THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS:

Wine and Gastronomy tour Armenia + Georgia

Wine and Gastronomy tour Armenia + Nagorno Kharabagh