GEORGIA - HIGH MOUNTAINS - £1,680

28th June 2020 - 11th July 2020 (14 days)
The stunning scenery and challenging terrain of Georgia will be a revelation to all. It is an underused adventure playground, with high mountains and an ancient Christian culture. It is a land of stunning landscapes, fortified mountain villages, ancient churches, unclimbed peaks, wild natural beauty and hospitable people. Explore the countryside, stopping in small villages and staying in locally owned guesthouses, with breakfast and dinner included. There are two rest days giving the opportunity to explore the mountains on foot. Georgia is also the home of wine and we will be tasting local varieties washed down by local delicacies. Fully supported tour.

HOLIDAY TYPE: Guided
TOUR MANAGER: Greg Woodford
GRADE: Tough
BOOKING STATUS: Accepting
ACCOMMODATION: Guesthouse
BOARD BASIS: Half Board
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS: Land Only
ROAD / OFF ROAD: Road
HOLIDAY STYLE: Moving-on
VEHICLE SUPPORT: Full Vehicle Support
HOLIDAY REF NO: 03494

Holiday Itinerary

Sunday 28th June
Meet at Tbilisi airport for a minibus transfer to the guesthouse in Tbilisi. Option of a walking tour round the old town to explore the historical sites. Stay 1 night. Meals: D

Monday 29th June
Minibus transfer to Betania (25km) before cycling uphill through a stunning mountain range. Overnight in Tsaika, high up in the mountains and on the edge of a lake. 100km (800m total ascent). Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Tuesday 30th June
Today we climb to 2,700m in the Trialeti mountains, where the views are amazing. We stay at this height for nearly 40km, before descending to Akhalkalaki, our overnight. Akhalkalaki is still high up though, at over 1,700m. 110km (900m total ascent). Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Wednesday 1st July
On today’s ride we visit Vardzia, an ancient cave monastery carved out of living rock, built in the XI century by Queen Tamar. Then on to our overnight in Akhaltsikhe. 100km (1,700m total ascent, 800m total descent). Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Thursday 2nd July
Today starts with a minibus transfer for the first 90km towards the top of the Goderdzi pass (2,050m). From here the first 20km of the ride is on a gravel
road (option of staying on the minibus), then on to Khulo village. From Khulo we descend to Batumi on the Black Sea coast and our overnight. 90km (300m total ascent, 1,700m total descent). Stay 2 nights. Meals: B D

Friday 3rd July
Rest day. Spend the day on the beach or explore Batumi, which has many interesting places to visit, or take the cable car for tremendous views of the city and the coast. Meals: B D

Saturday 4th July
A long but largely flat ride along the Black Sea coast to Anaklia, our overnight. 140km (600m total ascent). Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Sunday 5th July
Today we cycle through the Caucasus Mountains with stunning views of the highest peaks to Khaishi, our overnight. 100km (1,000m total ascent). Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Monday 6th July
Cycle to Mazeri then on to Mestia, our overnight. 85km (1,500m total ascent). There is the option of a walk to Shdugra waterfall at Mazeri. Mestia is also, a delightful place to walk around. Stay 2 nights. Meals: B D

Tuesday 7th July
Rest day. Option of treks to Koruldi lakes and the Chalaidi glacier or a chairlift up Hatsvali mountain. Meals: B D

Wednesday 8th July
Cycle to the highest village in Europe, Ushguli (2,100m). We climb over a 2,000m pass with stunning views of the Caucasus mountains, prior to climbing up to Ushguli, our overnight. The final 10km is on a gravel road (option of a minibus transfer). 50km (1,400m total ascent). Stay 1 night. Meals: B D.

Thursday 9th July
Morning walk to old Ushguli, nestled in an inaccessible valley and characterised by a large number of old towers. We then cycle downhill to the Shkhara glacier returning to Mestia, our overnight. 50km (1,400m total descent). Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Friday 10th July
Today we descend to Zugdidi, followed by a minibus transfer to Tbilisi, our overnight. 130km (2,000m total descent). Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Saturday 11th July
After breakfast, a minibus transfer to Tbilisi airport where the tour ends. Meals: B

Meals: B = Breakfast  D = Dinner

Holiday Summary

Accommodation & Meals
Staying in guesthouses carefully chosen to maximise the Georgian experience, sharing a twin or double-bedded room. In the smaller guesthouses bathrooms will probably be shared but the larger guesthouses should have private bathrooms. All breakfasts and dinners are included. Vegetarian meals are available if indicated on the Booking Form.

Vehicle Support
The tour will be fully supported by a minibus that will transfer luggage between the guesthouses and provide support where needed on cycling days. It will also provide transfers from and to the airport.

Passports, Visa & Health
EU citizens must hold a passport that is valid for at least 6 months at the end of the tour. A visa will not be required. Holders of non-UK passports are advised to check whether or not they require a visa. There are no compulsory health related requirements for EU residents but you should contact your doctor at least 3 months prior to travel to obtain any vaccinations and the latest advice to travellers.

Travel Insurance
Our Booking Conditions stipulate that, for holidays outside the UK, travel Insurance is mandatory. Details of the level of cover needed and other conditions you should check are stated in the Booking Conditions. CTC Cycling Holidays & Tours Ltd cannot accept responsibility for any costs that may be incurred due to insufficient insurance cover.

Price
The price of £1,680 is based on a minimum number of 8 people taking part in the holiday; please note Booking Conditions, clause 3. If there are insufficient bookings by 19th April 2020, we will contact you and return all monies paid, although in certain circumstances the holiday may still run at below minimum numbers but at the same price.

Price Includes
- Return minibus transfer from Tbilisi airport to the guesthouse in Tbilisi
- 13 nights guesthouse, sharing room
- 13 breakfasts, 13 dinners
- Minibus support on cycling days
- CTC Cycling Holidays & Tours costs
Price Does Not Include

- Travel to and from Tbilisi airport
- Drinks with dinner
- Lunches or refreshments during the day
- Chairlift or cable car charges on rest days
- Entry fees at any attractions visited
- Any other personal expenses
- Travel Insurance
- Single occupancy supplement (£250, subject to availability)

Payment Schedule

A deposit of £170 per person is payable upon booking, with the final balance of £1,510 per person to be paid ten weeks prior to departure, by 19th April 2020.

Cancellations

Should you be forced to cancel your booking for any reason you must notify us in writing. Cancellation charges are as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written notice received:</th>
<th>Cancellation charge:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 19th April 2020</td>
<td>Deposit (£170)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 19th April 2020 through to departure</td>
<td>100% (£1,680)</td>
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Additional Information

Area Covered By The Holiday

Georgia nestles between Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia. The highest peaks of the magnificent Caucasus mountains run through Georgia and its western flanks border the Black Sea and some amazing beaches. At 2,100m Ushguli is the highest village in Europe and has a population of about 200. It is located in the Upper Svanet region, at the foot of Mont Shkhara (5,068m) – one of the highest summits of the Greater Caucasus mountains. Dotted with medieval Svanetian watchtowers, Ushguli is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Grapevines have been cultivated in the fertile valleys of Georgia for about 8,000 years. With over 500 varieties of endemic grapes and the world’s first cultivated grapevines, the traditions of viticulture are entwined with the country’s national identity. It is believed that the word “wine” is of Georgian origin (“gvino” in Georgian). It also has an ancient Christian culture with many traditions and we will be visiting some of its ancient churches.

Rides & Rest Days

All rides and walks will be led. Some cycling days are quite long and there will always be the option to ride in the minibus. Although the majority of the roads used are surfaced, there are two lengthy stretches of gravel road, both of which have the option of a minibus transfer. There are two rest days, one on the Black Sea coast and the other in the mountains.

Accommodation & Meals

Lunch will generally be taken at cafes or restaurants but occasionally we may need to picnic.

Travel

There is no travel included in this tour, thus it is very important that you note that neither your Tour Manager nor CTC Holidays & Tours are responsible for you in any way until the appointed time at the designated meeting point. Should you fail to arrive at the appointed time for whatever reason, we will not be responsible for any additional expenses you may incur in order to meet up with the tour group. Before finalising travel arrangements to meet the tour, you should ensure that you have read and understood our booking conditions. Should this tour not attract sufficient bookings to reach the minimum operating size, we may cancel the tour at any time up to 10 weeks before departure. It is therefore recommended that you book fully flexible and refundable transport and accommodation, or wait until you have been told the tour will go ahead, as in the event of the tour being cancelled, we will not be responsible for any losses incurred.

There are flights from various UK airports to Tbilisi. The times of the minibus transfers from and to Tbilisi airport and the hotel have still to be agreed.

Group Information

The maximum number of participants will be 20 excluding the Tour Manager(s).

Weather & Clothing

The weather in Georgia in July will be hot. However, we will be in the mountains and bad weather can hit suddenly. On some days will be cycling above 2,000m, so be prepared for cooler conditions.

Cycles & Equipment

As the route has some gravel roads you may prefer to use a bike with larger tyres, such as a touring cycle, cyclo cross or gravel bike. You should ensure your cycle is well maintained, paying particular attention to wheels, tyres and brakes. A low bottom gear (e.g. small chainring the same size or smaller than the largest cog on your rear wheel) is recommended. If you are unsure about gears, please discuss with the Tour Manager. Mudguards are optional but show courtesy to those who are following you in wet weather. Lights are recommended but might not prove essential. New tyres are recommended of at least 28mm diameter. Participants will be expected to carry each day sufficient spares and tools to deal with punctures and minor repairs.

You will not need to carry luggage, but a rack top pack or bar bag may be useful for carrying wet weather gear, spare clothing needed for the day, camera and snacks. Helmets and hi viz are your personal choice.
Maps & Guides
You should carry a map in case you become separated from the group, and further information will be provided on booking.

Travel Insurance & Advice
Before booking you should check the latest travel advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, at [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) or on 0845 850 2829.

Tour Manager's Contact Details
If you require any assistance, or have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact the Tour Manager using the information provided below.

Greg Woodford

Email: gregorywoodford@gmail.com

Mobile: 07508 028457