Tbilisi Travel Guide

Discover Tbilisi: Where Ancient Meets Modern

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Things to do in Tbilisi

Landmarks & Monuments

Tbilisi's landmarks tell the story of a city at the crossroads of empires, featuring ancient fortresses, modern architectural marvels, and iconic structures that define the city's skyline.



Must See

Narikala Fortress

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

This **ancient fortress** dominates Tbilisi's skyline, dating back to the 4th century. Perched on a steep hill overlooking the Mtkvari River, it offers *breathtaking panoramic views* of the old town and modern city. Originally built by the Persians, expanded by the Arabs and Mongols, the fortress has witnessed the entire history of Tbilisi. Access via cable car from Rike Park or hiking trail. The site includes restored walls, towers, and the **St. Nicholas Church** built in the 1990s. Sunset visits are particularly spectacular.



Top Pick

Bridge of Peace

30 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

An **architectural masterpiece** designed by Italian architect Michele De Lucchi, this bow-shaped pedestrian bridge connects Old Tbilisi with the new district across the Mtkvari River. Made of steel and glass, it features *spectacular LED light shows* every evening that create mesmerizing patterns. The 150-meter bridge symbolizes Georgia's connection between past and future. Walk across for stunning views of the riverside, Metekhi Church, and Narikala Fortress. Best visited at night when the illumination system creates a magical atmosphere.



Top Pick

Kartlis Deda (Mother of Georgia)

30 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

This iconic **20-meter aluminum statue** stands atop Sololaki Hill, overlooking the city since 1958. The monument depicts a woman in traditional Georgian dress, holding a *sword in one hand for enemies* and a *bowl of wine in the other for friends*, symbolizing Georgian national character. Designed by sculptor Elguja Amashukeli, it has become the city's most recognizable symbol. Located near Narikala Fortress, accessible by cable car or hiking trail. Excellent photo opportunities and city views.



Top Pick

Metekhi Church

30-45 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

Perched dramatically on a cliff above the Mtkvari River, this **13th-century church** is one of Tbilisi's most photographed landmarks. The church complex includes the equestrian statue of King Vakhtang Gorgasali, founder of Tbilisi. The site has served various purposes through history, including a fortress and prison. Its *distinctive cylindrical dome. The church’s principal exterior is faced with carved stone. The riverside location offers stunning views of the old town, Narikala Fortress, and Bridge of Peace. Particularly beautiful during golden hour.*

Tips for Landmarks & Monuments

- **Cable Car:** Purchase tickets for the aerial tramway connecting Rike Park to Narikala Fortress for stunning aerial views
- **Best Photography:** Visit landmarks during golden hour (sunset) for the most dramatic lighting
- **Combined Visits:** Many landmarks are within walking distance in the Old Town - plan a walking route to see multiple sites efficiently
- **Night Visits:** Several monuments like the Bridge of Peace are illuminated beautifully at night

Museums & Galleries

Tbilisi's museums showcase Georgia's rich cultural heritage, from ancient artifacts and medieval treasures to Soviet history and contemporary art, offering deep insights into this fascinating nation.



Must See

Georgian National Museum

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

The country's premier museum houses an **extraordinary collection spanning from prehistoric times to the modern era**. Highlights include the spectacular *Gold Treasury* with pre-Christian gold artifacts, the Soviet Occupation exhibit documenting Georgia's complex 20th-century history, and archaeological finds from ancient kingdoms. The museum network includes several branches across Tbilisi. World-class displays cover Georgian archaeology, ethnography, natural history, and art. The Gold Fund features stunning examples of ancient Georgian goldsmithing, including jewelry from the 3rd millennium BCE. Essential for understanding Georgian civilization.



Top Pick

Museum of Soviet Occupation

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A powerful and sobering museum documenting Georgia's experience under **Soviet rule from 1921-1991**. Part of the Georgian National Museum, it presents comprehensive exhibits on deportations, repressions, resistance movements, and daily life under occupation. Features *authentic documents, photographs, personal testimonies, and artifacts* from the Soviet period. The exhibition addresses difficult historical topics including Stalin's purges, the 1989 protests, and Georgia's fight for independence. Essential for understanding modern Georgian identity and the country's complex relationship with Russia.



Top Pick

Open Air Museum of Ethnography

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Located on Turtle Lake's hillside, this **open-air museum showcases traditional Georgian architecture and lifestyle** from different regions. Over 70 authentic buildings including houses, farms, wine cellars, and watchtowers have been relocated here from across Georgia. Each structure represents a specific region's architectural style and cultural traditions. Visitors can explore *traditional interiors, tools, textiles, and agricultural equipment*. The museum hosts folk festivals, craft demonstrations, and cultural events. Beautiful setting with panoramic city views. Best visited in good weather for extensive outdoor walking.

Notable

Museum of Fine Arts

1.5-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Georgia's principal **art museum features an impressive collection of Georgian, European, and Asian art**. Holdings include medieval Georgian icons, works by renowned Georgian painter Niko Pirosmani, Persian miniatures, and European masters. The Shalva Amiranashvili Museum receives visitors in its renovated second building at 1 Lado Gudiashvili Street, opened in October 2024. Collections span paintings, sculptures, decorative arts, and graphics from the 10th century to contemporary period. Special exhibitions regularly showcase both local and international artists. The *Pirosmani collection is particularly noteworthy*, featuring naive art that has gained international recognition.

Tips for Museums & Galleries

- **Museum Card:** Ask about combination tickets if planning to visit multiple branches of the National Museum

- **Guided Tours:** Many museums offer English-language guided tours - highly recommended for historical context
- **Photography:** Check photography policies; some museums prohibit flash or charge fees for cameras
- **Timing:** Visit Open Air Museum in morning or late afternoon to avoid midday heat during summer
- **Closed Days:** Most museums close on Mondays - verify opening hours before visiting

Religious Sites

Tbilisi's diverse religious architecture reflects centuries of coexistence between Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and other faiths, featuring magnificent churches, mosques, synagogues, and cathedrals.



Must See

Holy Trinity Cathedral (Sameba)

1-1.5 hours No Booking Needed

Map

The **largest religious building in Georgia and the Caucasus**, this magnificent cathedral was consecrated in 2004. Rising 84 meters high, its golden dome dominates Tbilisi's skyline. The cathedral complex combines *traditional Georgian architectural elements with modern construction techniques*. Interior features stunning frescoes, marble floors, and elaborate iconostasis. The grounds include bell tower, residences, theological academy, and beautifully landscaped gardens. Located on Elia Hill, it offers panoramic city views. The cathedral symbolizes Georgia's religious revival after Soviet atheism. Free entry, but **modest dress required**.



Top Pick

Sioni Cathedral

30-45 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

Named after Jerusalem's Mount Zion, this historic **cathedral dates from the 6th-7th centuries** and served as Tbilisi's main cathedral until Sameba was built. The current structure reflects multiple reconstructions after destruction by invaders. Houses the *precious cross of St. Nino*, who brought Christianity to Georgia in the 4th century. The cathedral features beautiful frescoes, traditional Georgian church architecture with a distinctive dome, and serves as an active place of worship. Located in the heart of Old Tbilisi near the Mtkvari River. Important pilgrimage site for Georgian Orthodox faithful.



Notable

Anchiskhati Basilica

30 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

The **oldest surviving church in Tbilisi**, built in the 6th century by the Georgian king Dachi of Iberia. Named after the Anchi icon of the Savior brought here from southern Georgia. The three-nave basilica represents early Georgian Christian architecture with *simple yet elegant design*. The church has survived multiple destructions and reconstructions throughout its 1,500-year history. Interior features blend ancient stonework with later additions. Adjacent bell tower added in the 17th century. Located in Old Tbilisi, it remains an active parish church. Anchiskhati is Tbilisi’s oldest surviving church; older Georgian churches include Bolnisi Sioni, built in 478–493.



Optional

Jumah Mosque

20-30 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

The **only functioning mosque in Tbilisi**, serving both Shia and Sunni Muslim communities - a rare example of shared worship. Built in the 1890s on the site of earlier mosques, featuring *distinctive blue-tiled minaret. The church’s principal exterior is faced with carved stone.*. The mosque reflects Tbilisi's multicultural heritage and religious tolerance. Interior includes separate prayer spaces for different Islamic traditions. Located in Old Tbilisi near the sulfur baths district. Visitors welcome outside prayer times with respectful attire. The building's architecture shows Persian influences. Symbolizes Georgia's history of peaceful coexistence between different faiths.

Tips for Religious Sites

- **Dress Code:** Cover shoulders and knees; women should bring headscarves for church visits
- **Active Worship:** Many sites hold regular services - be respectful of worshippers and religious ceremonies
- **Photography:** Ask permission before photographing inside religious buildings; flash usually prohibited
- **Behavior:** Maintain quiet, respectful demeanor; avoid visiting during services unless participating
- **Free Entry:** Most religious sites have free admission but welcome donations

Ancient & Historical Sites

Explore Tbilisi's ancient heritage through archaeological sites, historical districts, and preserved structures that reveal layers of civilization from early settlements to medieval times.



Must See Book Ahead

Abanotubani (Sulfur Baths District)

2-3 hours Book Ahead

Map

The **historic heart of Tbilisi**, literally meaning 'bath district', where hot sulfur springs have attracted visitors since the city's founding. Legend says King Vakhtang Gorgasali founded Tbilisi here after his falcon fell into hot springs. The district features *distinctive domed bathhouse structures* with Persian-influenced architecture, some dating to the 17th century. Natural sulfur water flows at 37-47°C with therapeutic properties. Choose between public and private bath experiences. The area includes Orbeliani Baths with stunning colorful tile facade. Surrounded by narrow cobblestone streets, cafes, and souvenir shops. Essential Tbilisi experience.



Notable

Dry Bridge Flea Market

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A **fascinating outdoor antique and flea market** operating since Soviet times along the dried-up riverbed. Vendors sell an eclectic mix of *Soviet memorabilia, antiques, artworks, vintage cameras, coins, jewelry, books, and curiosities*. Browse items ranging from Stalin-era propaganda to traditional Georgian crafts, vintage watches, musical instruments, and grandfather's collection. Excellent for unique souvenirs and gifts. Bargaining expected and part of the experience. Active mainly on weekends when hundreds of vendors set up stalls. Popular with collectors, tourists, and locals seeking vintage treasures. Cash only marketplace.

Tips for Ancient & Historical Sites

- **Sulfur Baths:** Book private rooms in advance during peak season; bring swimsuit, but towels usually provided
- **Bath Etiquette:** Traditional scrub massage (kisa) is vigorous - communicate comfort level to attendant
- **Flea Market:** Visit on Sunday mornings for largest selection; bring cash and practice bargaining
- **Authenticity:** Some 'antiques' may be reproductions; buy what you like rather than investment pieces

Squares & Streets

Tbilisi's vibrant public spaces, from grand Soviet-era boulevards to charming cobblestone streets, serve as the city's living room where culture, commerce, and community converge.



Top Pick

Rustaveli Avenue

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Tbilisi's **main thoroughfare and cultural spine**, named after medieval Georgian poet Shota Rustaveli. This grand boulevard stretches through the city center, lined with *elegant 19th-century buildings, theaters, museums, shops, and cafes*. Key landmarks include the Opera House, Parliament, Rustaveli Theatre, National Museum, and Tbilisi State University. The avenue witnessed major historical events including the 1989 protests. Wide sidewalks perfect for strolling, people-watching, and experiencing city life. Home to upscale boutiques, international brands, bookstores, and restaurants. Evening promenades are popular local tradition. Central metro stations provide easy access.



Notable

Freedom Square (Liberty Square)

30 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

The **central square of Tbilisi**, historically known by various names reflecting Georgia's political changes. The square features the *prominent St. George statue atop a column*, erected in 2006 symbolizing Georgia's patron saint and independence. Surrounded by important buildings including Tbilisi City Hall and luxury hotels. The square serves as gathering point for celebrations, protests, and public events. Underground passage leads to metro station. Popular meeting spot for locals and tourists. Christmas markets and festivals held here. The square connects Old Tbilisi with Rustaveli Avenue and modern city center.



Notable

Shardeni Street

1 hour No Booking Needed

Map

A **charming pedestrian street in Old Tbilisi** named after French traveler Jean Chardin who visited Georgia in the 17th century. The narrow cobblestone lane features *beautifully restored buildings with wooden balconies, art galleries, wine bars, and restaurants*. Perfect example of Old Tbilisi architecture and atmosphere. Street comes alive in evenings with outdoor seating, live music, and vibrant nightlife. Mix of traditional Georgian restaurants and trendy cafes. Popular area for romantic dinners and evening strolls. Connects to other historic streets and Meidan Square. Representative of Tbilisi's successful blend of preservation and modern entertainment.

Tips for Squares & Streets

- **Walking Tours:** Join free walking tours that start from Freedom Square to learn history and context
- **Evening Visits:** Shardeni Street and Rustaveli Avenue are most atmospheric in evening
- **Photo Opportunities:** Old Tbilisi streets offer excellent photography, especially morning and late afternoon
- **Restaurant Reservations:** Popular Shardeni Street restaurants fill quickly on weekends

Neighborhoods & Districts

Each of Tbilisi's distinct districts offers unique character, from the bohemian charm of Sololaki to the Soviet modernism of Saburtalo, revealing different facets of city life.



Must See

Old Tbilisi (Dzveli Tbilisi)

Half day to full day No Booking Needed

Map

The **atmospheric historic quarter** where Tbilisi's soul resides, featuring narrow winding streets, traditional wooden-balconied houses, and ancient churches. This area encompasses *Abanotubani baths district, Shardeni Street, Meidan Square, and historic religious sites*. Architecture reflects Persian, Armenian, and Georgian influences from centuries of multicultural coexistence. Many buildings lovingly restored, others maintaining authentic decay. The neighborhood is pedestrian-friendly with cobblestone lanes leading to hidden courtyards, wine bars, galleries, and traditional restaurants. Home to the city's best-preserved heritage architecture. Essential for understanding Tbilisi's character and history.



Notable

Fabrika

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A **creative hub in a converted Soviet sewing factory**, now Tbilisi's most popular hostel and cultural space. The industrial complex houses *artist studios, galleries, design shops, cafes, bars, and coworking spaces*. Graffiti-covered walls and raw industrial aesthetic create edgy atmosphere. Courtyard serves as gathering spot for Tbilisi's creative community and international travelers. Regular events include art exhibitions, film screenings, concerts, and markets. Represents Tbilisi's thriving contemporary culture and youth scene. Excellent for meeting locals and other travelers. Open to public beyond hostel guests. Located in Chugureti district, easily accessible.



Optional

Vera District

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

An **upscale residential and cultural neighborhood** developed in the 19th century, featuring elegant architecture and leafy streets. Home to *Mziuri Park is beside Chavchavadze Avenue in Vake; it should not be listed as a Vera attraction.*. The district showcases beautiful Art Nouveau and neoclassical buildings. Popular with creative class and expatriates. Quieter than downtown with excellent cafes, wine bars, and boutique shops. The area offers authentic local atmosphere away from tourist crowds. Includes the historic funicular railway to Mtatsminda Park. Well-connected by public transport. Represents Tbilisi's sophisticated cultural life.

Tips for Neighborhoods & Districts

- **Walking Shoes:** Old Tbilisi's cobblestones require comfortable footwear
- **Get Lost:** Wandering randomly through Old Town often leads to best discoveries
- **Local Life:** Visit neighborhood markets and bakeries for authentic experiences
- **Safety:** All mentioned neighborhoods are safe for tourists day and night

Parks & Gardens

Green oases throughout Tbilisi offer respite from urban energy, from hilltop parks with panoramic views to botanical gardens showcasing diverse flora in dramatic gorge settings.



Top Pick

Mtatsminda Park

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A **hilltop amusement park with spectacular city views**, perched 770 meters above sea level on Mount Mtatsminda. Access via historic funicular railway from the city center, itself a charming experience. The park features *rides, restaurants, cafes, and observation platforms* overlooking Tbilisi's sprawling cityscape. Especially popular in evenings when city lights create magical atmosphere. Includes Ferris wheel, roller coaster, and family attractions. The funicular upper station houses restaurant with panoramic terrace. TV tower visible nearby. Popular with families and couples. Best visited at sunset for stunning views and dinner. Operating since Soviet times, recently renovated.



Top Pick

Tbilisi Botanical Garden

1.5-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A **hidden gem in a natural gorge** behind Narikala Fortress, this 128-hectare garden was established in 1845. The unique location in the *Tsavkisis-Tskali river gorge creates microclimates supporting diverse plant species* from Georgia and worldwide. Collections include over 4,500 taxa with sections for Caucasian flora, Japanese garden, tropical greenhouse, and medicinal plants. Waterfall, bridges, and winding paths create romantic atmosphere. Former palace of the Queen visible within grounds. Relatively undiscovered by mass tourism, offering peaceful escape. Beautiful in all seasons, particularly spring with flowering trees. Steep terrain requires moderate fitness.



Notable

Rike Park

1 hour No Booking Needed

Map

A **modern riverside park** opened in 2010 on the left bank of the Mtkvari River, symbolizing Tbilisi's contemporary development. Features *futuristic architecture including the Music Theatre and Exhibition Hall with distinctive tubular structures*. The park offers open lawns, walking paths, fountains, and excellent views of Old Tbilisi, Narikala, and Metekhi Church across the river. Lower station of the aerial cable car to Narikala Fortress located here. Popular gathering spot for locals and tourists, especially evenings. Hosts outdoor concerts and events. Modern playground for children. The park connects to Bridge of Peace. Represents Tbilisi's architectural ambitions under architect Massimiliano Fuksas.



Optional

Turtle Lake

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A **peaceful reservoir on Tbilisi's outskirts** surrounded by forest, popular for recreation and relaxation. Located on Mount Mtatsminda's slopes, approximately 6km from city center. The lake got its name from *abundant turtle population in its waters*. Circular walking path around the lake takes about 30 minutes. Paddle boats available for rent in summer. Several cafes and restaurants with terraces overlooking water. Popular picnic destination for families. The cable car connects Turtle Lake with the Vake Park area. Adjacent to Open Air Museum of Ethnography. Best accessed by taxi or cable car. Offers cool respite during hot summers.

Tips for Parks & Gardens

- **Funicular Tickets:** Purchase round-trip tickets to Mtatsminda Park; funicular operates until late evening

- **Botanical Garden:** Wear comfortable shoes for hilly terrain; bring water especially in summer
- **Best Times:** Visit parks early morning or late afternoon to avoid crowds and heat
- **Picnics:** Turtle Lake and Botanical Garden are excellent picnic spots - bring supplies from city
- **Combined Visits:** Link Botanical Garden with Narikala Fortress visit via walking path

Fountains & Public Art

Tbilisi's public spaces come alive with artistic installations, sculptures, and decorative fountains that add character and beauty to streets, squares, and parks throughout the city.



Top Pick

Rezo Gabriadze Puppet Theatre Clock Tower

15-30 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

A **whimsical clock tower** created by renowned Georgian artist and filmmaker Rezo Gabriadze, attached to his puppet theatre in Old Tbilisi. The tilted tower features *ornate decorations, angel figure, and hourly puppet show* where an angel emerges to strike the bell. An angel strikes the bell hourly; the “Circle of Life” puppet performance runs at 12:00 and 19:00. The tower's crooked, fairytale-like architecture and golden accents make it instantly recognizable. Located on Shavteli Street near Freedom Square. The adjacent Gabriadze Theatre hosts exceptional puppet performances combining art, satire, and Georgian culture. The tower has become one of Tbilisi's most photographed and beloved landmarks. Free to watch the hourly show from the street.



Optional

Chronicle of Georgia

1 hour No Booking Needed

Map

A **massive monument complex** on the Tbilisi Sea reservoir overlooking the city, created by sculptor Zurab Tsereteli. Sixteen 30-meter tall pillars decorated with *reliefs depicting Georgian history, biblical scenes, and national heroes*. Often called Georgia's 'Stonehenge,' this monumental work remains somewhat unfinished but impressively grand. The pillars feature scenes from Georgian history, Christianity, and culture in high relief. Located outside the city center, requiring taxi or car to reach. Less visited by tourists, offering unique perspective on Georgian national identity. The monument's elevated position provides panoramic views of Tbilisi Sea and surrounding area. Best photographed in golden hour light.

Tips for Fountains & Public Art

- **Clock Tower Shows:** Plan to arrive a few minutes before the hour to catch the puppet performance
- **Chronicle Visit:** Combine with Tbilisi Sea for picnic and swimming in summer months
- **Photography:** Both sites offer excellent photo opportunities; golden hour provides best lighting
- **Street Art:** Explore Fabrika and surrounding neighborhoods for contemporary murals and graffiti art

Transportation

Navigate Tbilisi efficiently using its metro system, buses, cable cars, and funicular railway, each offering unique perspectives on the city while connecting major attractions.



Essential

Tbilisi Metro

N/A - Transportation No Booking Needed

Map

A **Soviet-era metro system** opened in 1966, featuring two lines connecting major city areas. Stations showcase *impressive Soviet architecture with chandeliers, mosaics, and marble*. The system is efficient, safe, and affordable with frequent trains. Metromoney is optional: accepted bank cards can also pay the metro fare. The transport app additionally offers QR tickets. Key tourist stations include Rustaveli, Liberty Square, Avlabari (for Sameba Cathedral), and Station Square (for railway station). Trains run approximately 6am to midnight. Signs in Georgian and English. Metro provides fastest way to cross the city and avoid traffic. Deep stations with long escalators typical of Soviet construction. Air-conditioned trains in summer. Essential transportation for visitors.



Recommended

Aerial Tramway (Cable Car)

10-15 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

A **modern gondola lift** connecting Rike Park with Narikala Fortress, opened in 2012. The short ride offers *spectacular aerial views of Old Tbilisi, the Mtkvari River, and surrounding hills*. Glass-bottomed cabins provide thrilling perspectives. Journey takes about 2 minutes covering significant elevation. Operating daily with frequent departures. Tickets sold at both stations (Rike and Narikala). Popular with tourists and locals alike. Particularly beautiful at sunset and after dark when city lights illuminate. Provides easy access to fortress without steep hiking. Can be crowded during peak times. An attraction in itself beyond mere transportation.



Useful

Funicular Railway

15-20 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

A **historic mountain railway** Operating since 1905, the funicular climbs from 22 Chonkadze Street, in Mtatsminda, to Mtatsminda Park. The charming *vintage funicular cars transport passengers up steep slopes* offering increasingly impressive city views during ascent. Restored and modernized while maintaining classic character. Operates daily with regular departures. Round-trip tickets recommended. The lower station features Art Nouveau architecture. Mid-station stop at Pantheon of Georgian Writers on Mtatsminda's slopes. Allow approximately five minutes for the funicular ride. Essential for accessing Mtatsminda Park and enjoying panoramic vistas. Popular romantic activity, especially evening rides. Represents Tbilisi's belle époque heritage.

Tips for Transportation

- **Metro Card:** Purchase reloadable MetroMoney card at any station; works on metro and some buses
- **Rush Hours:** Avoid metro during morning (8-10am) and evening (6-8pm) rush hours if possible
- **Taxis:** Use Bolt or Yandex taxi apps for reliable, affordable service; cash payments accepted
- **Walking:** Old Tbilisi and central areas best explored on foot despite hills
- **Bus System:** Less tourist-friendly than metro; download TTT app for bus routes if needed

Tours & Activities

Enhance your Tbilisi experience with guided tours, cooking classes, wine tastings, and unique activities that provide deeper cultural insights and memorable experiences.



Must See Book Ahead

Georgian Wine Tasting Tours

2-4 hours Book Ahead

Experience Georgia's 8,000-year wine heritage through tastings, cellar visits, and educational tours. Georgia is the *birthplace of wine with UNESCO-recognized qvevri winemaking tradition*. Multiple venues offer tastings including Wine Underground, Vino Underground, and G.Vino. Learn about unique Georgian grape varieties like Saperavi and Rkatsiteli. Traditional qvevri method uses clay vessels buried underground for fermentation. Many tours combine wine education with Georgian cuisine. Options range from casual bar tastings to full-day wine region excursions. English-speaking sommeliers explain Georgian wine culture. Essential experience for understanding Georgian identity and hospitality traditions.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Georgian Cooking Classes

3-4 hours Book Ahead

Learn to prepare traditional Georgian dishes with hands-on cooking classes led by local chefs. Popular classes teach *khachapuri (cheese bread), khinkali (dumplings), pkhali (vegetable dishes), and traditional sauces*. Most classes include market visits to select fresh ingredients, providing insights into Georgian produce and food culture. Small group settings allow personal attention. Classes typically conclude with enjoying the prepared meal with Georgian wine. Learn cultural stories and traditions behind dishes. Various providers offer classes from home kitchens to professional cooking schools. Suitable for all skill levels. Take home recipes and techniques. Excellent for food enthusiasts and cultural immersion.



Top Pick

Free Walking Tours

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Discover Tbilisi's history and culture with knowledgeable local guides on tip-based walking tours. Tours typically cover *Old Tbilisi, major landmarks, hidden courtyards, and local stories*. Guides share insights about Georgian history, Soviet era, independence, and contemporary life. Most tours start from Freedom Square and last 2-3 hours. Themes include Old Tbilisi highlights, Soviet heritage, or architecture tours. No advance booking required though registration recommended. Operating principle is 'pay what you think it's worth' at tour's end. Excellent way to orient yourself on first day. Guides provide restaurant recommendations and local tips. Available in multiple languages.



Notable

Traditional Dance Performances

1-2 hours Book Ahead

Experience **spectacular Georgian folk dance and music performances** showcasing the country's rich cultural traditions. The *Georgian National Ballet and other ensembles perform energetic dances with elaborate costumes*. Performances include region-specific dances, from mountainous Khevsureti war dances to graceful Kartli celebrations. Live traditional music accompaniment features unique Georgian polyphony singing and indigenous instruments. Shows typically last 1-2 hours at various venues including Rustaveli Theatre and specialized concert halls. High-energy performances demonstrate remarkable athleticism and precision. Essential cultural experience revealing Georgian pride and heritage. Advance booking recommended for popular shows. Some restaurants offer shorter performances during dinner.

Tips for Tours & Activities

- **Advance Booking:** Reserve cooking classes and wine tastings several days ahead, especially during high season
- **Group Tours:** Join small group tours for better experiences and interaction with guides
- **Local Guides:** Hire licensed guides for personalized tours; many available through hotels or online platforms
- **Combination Tours:** Many operators offer combined experiences like wine + cooking or city tour + folk show
- **Tipping:** For free walking tours, typical tips range 10-20 GEL depending on group size and satisfaction

Day Trips & Excursions

Venture beyond Tbilisi to explore Georgia's diverse attractions including ancient capitals, mountain monasteries, wine regions, and stunning natural landscapes, all easily accessible for day excursions.



Must See

Mtskheta

Half day No Booking Needed

Map

Georgia's **ancient capital and spiritual heart**, located just 20km from Tbilisi, designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. This sacred city houses *Svetitskhoveli Cathedral (11th century) and Jvari Monastery (6th century)*, two of Georgia's most important religious monuments. Svetitskhoveli, where Christ's robe is supposedly buried, showcases masterpiece Georgian church architecture. Jvari Monastery perches dramatically on a hilltop at the confluence of two rivers, offering spectacular views. The compact old town features cobblestone streets, traditional shops, and churches. Mtskheta served as Georgia's capital until 5th century. Essential pilgrimage site and excellent introduction to Georgian Christian heritage. Combine with Jvari for perfect half-day trip.



Must See

Kazbegi (Stepantsminda)

Full day No Booking Needed

Map

A **spectacular mountain town at the base of Mount Kazbek** (5,047m), one of Georgia's highest peaks, located 150km north of Tbilisi along the dramatic Georgian Military Highway. The iconic *Gergeti Trinity Church sits at 2,170m elevation* with breathtaking mountain backdrop, one of Georgia's most photographed sites. Journey follows stunning mountain scenery through gorges and past fortresses. The town offers hiking opportunities, mountaineering base, and Caucasus mountain culture. Road passes Ananuri Fortress and Gudauri ski resort. Winter brings snow-covered landscapes; summer offers green valleys and wildflowers. Full-day trip with 3-4 hours driving each way. Tour operators available or self-drive option. Essential for mountain lovers and photographers.



Must See

Kakheti Wine Region

Full day No Booking Needed

Map

Georgia's **premier wine-producing region** east of Tbilisi, featuring rolling vineyards, traditional wineries, and picturesque towns. Visit *Sighnaghi (hilltop town with stunning views), Bodbe Monastery, and numerous family wineries* offering tastings and cellar tours. Experience traditional qvevri winemaking still practiced by many producers. The region produces majority of Georgian wine including famous Saperavi and Rkatsiteli varieties. Combine wine with Georgian cuisine at local restaurants. Towns like Telavi and Kvareli offer historical sites. Visit during September-October grape harvest for special atmosphere. Full-day tours available through numerous operators or self-drive. Essential pilgrimage for wine enthusiasts and most popular day trip from Tbilisi.



Top Pick

Gori & Uplistsikhe

Full day No Booking Needed

Map

Combine ancient cave city with Stalin's birthplace on this historically rich day trip 80km west of Tbilisi. Uplistsikhe is an *incredible cave town carved into rock dating from Early Iron Age*, once major religious and political center on Silk Road. Explore cave dwellings, churches, theater, and tunnels. Gori houses the controversial Stalin Museum in the dictator's hometown, displaying personal items, gifts, and his original house. The museum provides insight into Soviet propaganda and Stalin's legacy. Complex history requires thoughtful approach. Combine both sites for full historical perspective spanning millennia. Half to full day trip. The contrast between ancient and Soviet history makes fascinating combination.



Notable

David Gareja Monastery

Full day No Booking Needed

Map

A **remote monastery complex carved into desert hillside** on the Georgia-Azerbaijan border, 60km southeast of Tbilisi. Founded in 6th century by St. David Garejeli, one of Thirteen Assyrian Fathers who strengthened Christianity in Georgia. The complex includes *cave monasteries with remarkable frescoes, hermit cells, and stunning semi-desert landscapes*. Lavra monastery most accessible; adventurous hike to Udabno monastery offers painted caves and border ridge views. Unique arid environment contrasts with Georgia's green regions. Remote location provides spiritual atmosphere and solitude. Border issues occasionally limit access - check current status. Half to full day trip best with tour guide familiar with area. Wear comfortable hiking shoes.

Tips for Day Trips & Excursions

- **Tour vs Self-Drive:** Tours provide guides and hassle-free travel; self-driving offers flexibility but requires confidence on mountain roads
- **Marshrutkas:** Shared minibuses provide budget option to Mtskheta and other destinations from Didube Bus Station
- **Early Start:** Begin day trips early to maximize time at destinations and return before dark
- **Weather Check:** Mountain roads to Kazbegi can close in bad weather; verify conditions before departure
- **Combination Tours:** Many operators combine multiple sites (e.g., Mtskheta + Gori + Uplistsikhe) in full-day tours

Food & Dining

Real, highly-rated Restaurants in Tbilisi, sourced from Google Places (rating above 4★).



See360 Restaurant★★★★★ 4.9 (3,922)

1-2 hours

Map

See360 Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.9★ from 3922 reviews. Located at 0105, 24 Betlemi St, T'bilisi 0105, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 8:00 – 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Tuesday: 8:00 – 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 8:00 – 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 8:00 – 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 8:00 – 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 8:00 – 11:30 AM, 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Sunday: 8:00 – 11:30 AM, 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM



Ethnographer restaurant★★★★★ 4.9 (6,848)

1-2 hours

Map

Ethnographer restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.9★ from 6848 reviews. Located at T, 105 Akaki Beliashvili St, T'bilisi 0159, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Tuesday: 12:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Wednesday: 12:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Thursday: 12:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Friday: 12:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Saturday: 12:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Sunday: 12:00 PM – 1:00 AM



ode ოდე★★★★★ 4.9 (9,859)

1-2 hours

Map

ode ოდე is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.9★ from 9859 reviews. Located at 18 Atoneli St, T'bilisi, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 1:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Tuesday: 1:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Wednesday: 1:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Thursday: 1:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Friday: 1:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Saturday: 1:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Sunday: 1:00 PM – 1:00 AM



Satchashnike - Restaurant, Pub & Grill★★★★★ 4.9 (2,628)

1-2 hours

Map

Satchashnike - Restaurant, Pub & Grill is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.9★ from 2628 reviews. Located at 60 Merab Kostava St, T'bilisi 0180, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Tuesday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: Open 24 hours
- Sunday: Open 24 hours



Bistro Conili★★★★★ 4.9 (812)

1-2 hours

Map

Bistro Conili is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.9★ from 812 reviews. Located at 23 Abano St, T'bilisi 0105, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 11:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 11:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 11:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 11:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Friday: 11:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 11:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 11:00 AM – 11:00 PM



47 Restaurant★★★★★ 4.9 (424)

1-2 hours

Map

47 Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.9★ from 424 reviews. Located at 47 Kote Afkhazi St, T'bilisi, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: Closed
- Tuesday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Sunday: Closed



Restaurant Hide★★★★★ 4.8 (4,696)

1-2 hours

Map

Restaurant Hide is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.8★ from 4696 reviews. Located at Vakhtang Gorgasali Square, T'bilisi, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Wednesday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Thursday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Friday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Saturday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Sunday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM



Tbilisimo★★★★★ 4.8 (924)

1-2 hours

Map

Tbilisimo is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.8★ from 924 reviews. Located at 38 Vertskhli St, T'bilisi 0162, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 10:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 10:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 10:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 10:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Friday: 10:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 10:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 10:00 AM – 11:00 PM



Madre★★★★★ 4.8 (1,066)

1-2 hours

Map

Madre is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.8★ from 1066 reviews. Located at 5 Besiki Square, T'bilisi 0108, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Tuesday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 3:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Saturday: 1:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Sunday: 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM



ONO Restaurant★★★★★ 4.8 (365)

1-2 hours

Map

ONO Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.8★ from 365 reviews. Located at 45a Merab Kostava St, T'bilisi 0179, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Tuesday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Sunday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM



OtsY★★★★★ 4.8 (889)

1-2 hours

Map

OtsY • ოცი is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.8★ from 889 reviews. Located at 20 Ioane Shavteli St, T'bilisi 0105, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Friday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 1:30 – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 1:30 – 11:00 PM



Restaurant Usakhelouri★★★★★ 4.8 (4,984)

1-2 hours

Map

Restaurant Usakhelouri is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.8★ from 4984 reviews. Located at 17/19 Abano St, T'bilisi, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Friday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 1:00 – 11:00 PM



Craft Wine Restaurant★★★★★ 4.8 (1,137)

1-2 hours

Map

Craft Wine Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.8★ from 1137 reviews. Located at 54 Egnate Ninoshvili St, T'bilisi 0112, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Tuesday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 3:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Saturday: 3:00 PM – 1:00 AM
- Sunday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM



Khinkali Collection★★★★★ 4.8 (5,615)

1-2 hours

Map

Khinkali Collection is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.8★ from 5615 reviews. Located at Freedom Square, 19 Aleksandr Pushkin St, T'bilisi 0105, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Tuesday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Wednesday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Thursday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Friday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Saturday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Sunday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM



RESTAURANT SENE★★★★★ 4.7 (1,383)

1-2 hours

Map

RESTAURANT SENE • რესტორანი სენე is a highly-rated restaurant in Tbilisi, rated 4.7★ from 1383 reviews. Located at 50 Zviad gamsakhurdia embankment, T'bilisi, Georgia.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Tuesday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 12:00 PM – 2:00 AM
- Saturday: 12:00 PM – 2:00 AM
- Sunday: 12:00 PM – 1:00 AM

Practical Information

Seasonal Guide to Tbilisi

Spring (April-May): Ideal visiting season with *mild temperatures (15-25°C), blooming gardens, and fewer crowds*. Perfect for walking tours and outdoor activities. Easter celebrations add cultural richness. Occasional rain showers.

Summer (June-August): Hot and humid with temperatures reaching 30-35°C. Peak tourist season with vibrant street life, outdoor concerts, and festivals. Best for evening strolls and rooftop dining. Can be uncomfortably hot midday. Higher prices and crowded attractions.

Autumn (September-October): Excellent season with *pleasant temperatures (18-25°C), grape harvest in wine regions, and beautiful fall colors*. September is harvest time (Rtveli) - perfect for wine tourism. October offers comfortable sightseeing weather. Generally considered best overall time to visit.

Winter (November-March): Cold with temperatures 0-10°C, occasional snow. Fewer tourists mean lower prices and authentic local atmosphere. Christmas and New Year bring festive decorations and celebrations. Indoor attractions like museums, theaters, and sulfur baths particularly appealing. Nearby ski resorts accessible.

Recommendation: May and September-October offer optimal combination of weather, cultural events, and manageable crowds.

Getting Around Tbilisi

✈ Airport Transfer

- **Bus 337:** The airport bus to the city center (Station Square), 1 GEL per ride, which includes 90 minutes of free transfers; pay with a Metromoney card or a bank card. Journey about 35-45 minutes. Most economical option.
- **Taxi/Ride-Share:** Bolt or Yandex apps are usually cheaper than airport taxis (about 30 minutes to the city center). Official airport taxis charge roughly 40-60 GEL. Book through apps for best rates.

Within the City:

- **Metro:** Two lines covering major areas. Frequent, reliable, air-conditioned. Operating 6am-midnight. Requires MetroMoney card (purchase at any station). A single journey costs 1 GEL (including 90 minutes of transfers).
- **Buses:** Extensive network but less tourist-friendly. Use the Tbilisi Transport app for routes. Same Metromoney card or a bank card, 1 GEL per ride (90 minutes of free transfers).
- **Taxis & Ride-Share:** *Bolt and Yandex are essential apps* - affordable, reliable, GPS-tracked. Rides within the city are cheap; the apps show the fare before you book. Drivers rarely speak English; apps handle addresses. Cash and card accepted.
- **Walking:** Old Tbilisi and central areas best explored on foot despite hills. Comfortable shoes essential for cobblestones and steep streets.
- **Cable Car & Funicular:** Scenic transportation options connecting specific areas (Rike-Narikala, Vera-Mtatsminda). Function as attractions themselves.

Day Trip Transportation:

- **Marshrutkas:** Shared minibuses from Didube, Navtlughi, and Ortachala stations. Budget option to Mtskheta, Gori, etc. Depart when full.
- **Organized Tours:** Convenient for mountain destinations like Kazbegi. Include transportation, guide, and sometimes meals.
- **Car Rental:** Available from 40 GEL/day. International license accepted. Mountain roads require confident driving. Parking challenging in Old Town.

Important: Download Bolt and Yandex apps before arrival. Purchase MetroMoney card at any metro station for seamless public transport.

Shopping in Tbilisi

What to Buy:

- **Georgian Wine:** Take home bottles of Saperavi, Rkatsiteli, or unique orange wines. Wine shops throughout city; *Vinotel and Nicolas offer excellent selections*. Prices from 10-100+ GEL per bottle. Airport duty-free also available.
- **Churchkhela:** Traditional candle-shaped candy made from nuts and grape must. Colorful, delicious, authentic souvenir. Markets and specialty shops.
- **Spices & Sauces:** Adjika (spicy paste), khmeli suneli (spice blend), tkemali (plum sauce). Available at Dezerter Bazaar and specialty shops.
- **Carpets & Textiles:** Traditional Georgian rugs, especially from Tusheti region. Also handwoven textiles and embroidered items.
- **Ceramics & Pottery:** Hand-painted plates, bowls, wine vessels. Traditional designs and modern interpretations available.
- **Cloisonné Enamelwork:** Traditional Georgian craft creating colorful metal decorative items.

- **Soviet Memorabilia:** Dry Bridge Market offers medals, badges, posters, cameras, and Soviet-era collectibles.
- **Honey & Natural Products:** Georgian honey varieties, bee products, herbal teas from mountain regions.
- **Jewelry:** Traditional Georgian crosses, enamel jewelry, silver work. Artisan shops in Old Tbilisi.

Shopping Areas:

- **Dry Bridge Flea Market:** Antiques, art, Soviet items, curiosities. *Best on weekends*. Bargaining expected.
- **Dezerter Bazaar:** Large covered market for spices, dried fruits, churchkhela, cheese, and food products. Authentic local atmosphere.
- **Rustaveli Avenue:** Modern shopping with international brands, bookstores, wine shops. Higher-end retail.
- **Gallery 27:** Curated Georgian designer boutique featuring contemporary fashion and accessories.
- **Airport Duty-Free:** Convenient for wine and last-minute purchases, though prices higher than city shops.

Bargaining Tips:

- Bargaining expected at markets and flea markets, less common in established shops
- Start at 50-60% of asking price, settle around 70-80%
- Friendly negotiation part of experience; remain polite and good-humored
- Cash provides better negotiating position than cards
- Multiple item purchases strengthen bargaining power

Pro Tip: Visit Dezerter Bazaar in morning for freshest products and fullest selection. Bring cash for market purchases.

Annual Events & Festivals

Major Festivals:

- **Tbilisoba (October):** City's main festival celebrating Tbilisi's founding. *Street celebrations, concerts, wine, traditional food, parades, and cultural performances* throughout Old Town. Dates vary annually; Tbilisoba 2026 is scheduled for October 3–4.
- **The 2026 festival ran April 30–May 3, over four days; remove the accompanying “week-long” description:** International and local jazz artists perform at various venues. Week-long celebration of jazz music.
- **Tbilisi International Film Festival (December):** Showcasing Georgian and international cinema. Screenings, premieres, and filmmaker discussions.
- **Art-Gene celebrates Georgian folk music, dance and crafts at the Ethnographic Museum; usually held in summer (check the dates):** Contemporary art festival with installations, performances, and exhibitions across the city.
- **New Wine Festival (May):** The 2026 New Wine Festival took place at Mtatsminda Park on May 9, 11:00–18:00, presenting wines from the 2025 harvest.
- **Rtveli (September-October):** Grape harvest season throughout Georgia. Many wineries host harvest celebrations and traditional festivities.

National Holidays:

- **New Year (January 1-2):** Major celebration with fireworks, street parties, and family gatherings.
- **Orthodox Christmas (January 7):** Religious observance with church services.
- **Epiphany (January 19):** Traditional blessing of water ceremonies at rivers.
- **Mother's Day (March 3):** Celebrating mothers and women.
- **Orthodox Easter (April/May - varies):** Most important religious holiday with midnight services and celebrations.
- **Independence Day (May 26):** May 26 commemorates the 1918 declaration of independence and establishment of the Democratic Republic of Georgia.
- **Mariamoba/St. Mary's Day (August 28):** Important religious holiday with church services.
- **Mtskhetoba (October 14):** Celebrating Mtskheta and Svetitskhoveli Cathedral.
- **St. George's Day (November 23):** Honoring Georgia's patron saint with religious observances.

Cultural Events:

- **Tbilisi Opera & Ballet Season:** September-June with regular performances of classical and Georgian works.

- **Open Air Season (May-September):** Concert series at various outdoor venues featuring local and international artists.
- **Gallery Openings:** Contemporary art galleries host regular exhibition openings, particularly Thursday-Saturday evenings.

Note: Many businesses close on national holidays. Plan accordingly and make restaurant reservations for major celebrations.

Five Sample Day Itineraries

Day 1: Old Tbilisi Highlights

Morning (9am-12pm):

- Start at *Freedom Square*, walk down Shavteli Street to Gabriadze Clock Tower (catch hourly show)
- Explore *Old Tbilisi* winding streets, wooden balconies, hidden courtyards
- Visit *Anchiskhati Basilica* (oldest church) and nearby Shardeni Street
- Coffee break at atmospheric Old Town cafe

Midday (12pm-2pm):

- Lunch at traditional restaurant (*khinkali and khachapuri essential*)
- Walk through *Meidan Square* area to sulfur baths district

Afternoon (2pm-6pm):

- Take *cable car from Rike Park to Narikala Fortress* for panoramic views
- Visit Mother Georgia and the ridge viewpoints; Narikala's interior remains closed for restoration, with no confirmed reopening date.
- Descend through *Botanical Garden* (beautiful alternative to cable car down)
- Visit *Abanotubani sulfur baths* - book private room for authentic experience (2 hours)

Evening (6pm onwards):

- Stroll across *Bridge of Peace* at sunset
- Walk along Mtkvari River embankment to *Metekhi Church* for photos
- Dinner at Shardeni Street restaurant with outdoor seating
- Return to Bridge of Peace for evening light show

Day 2: Culture & Museums

Morning (10am-1pm):

- Visit *Georgian National Museum* - focus on Gold Treasury and archaeological exhibits
- Explore *Museum of Soviet Occupation* (same building complex)
- Walk along *Rustaveli Avenue*, admiring architecture

Afternoon (1pm-5pm):

- Lunch at restaurant near Rustaveli
- Visit *Rustaveli Theatre or Opera House* (exterior and lobby)
- Explore *Dry Bridge Flea Market* for Soviet souvenirs and antiques (best on weekends)
- Coffee at Fabrika creative hub, explore artist studios and street art

Evening (5pm onwards):

- Take *funicular to Mtatsminda Park* for sunset views
- Dinner at panoramic restaurant atop the hill
- Optional: Attend *Georgian folk dance performance* at theater (book in advance)

Day 3: Mtskheta & Wine Day

Morning (9am-12pm):

- Travel to *Mtskheta* (20km, 30 minutes by marshrutka or taxi)
- Visit *Jvari Monastery* on hilltop - spectacular views of river confluence
- Explore *Svetitskhoveli Cathedral* in Mtskheta town center
- Walk through old town, visit craft shops

Afternoon (12pm-6pm):

- Return to Tbilisi, lunch break
- Afternoon *wine tasting experience* at wine bar (G.Vino, Vino Underground, or Wine Underground)
- Learn about Georgian wine traditions, qvevri method, and grape varieties
- Alternative: Join organized half-day tour to Kakheti wine region if time permits

Evening:

- Leisurely dinner at wine-focused restaurant
- Evening stroll through Vera district's elegant streets

Day 4: Modern Tbilisi & Cooking

Morning (9am-12pm):

- Visit *Dezerter Bazaar* - explore spices, produce, churchkhela
- Metro to Avlabari station for *Holy Trinity Cathedral (Sameba)*
- Explore cathedral complex and grounds with city views

Afternoon (12pm-5pm):

- Join *Georgian cooking class* (book in advance)
- Learn to make khachapuri, khinkali, and traditional dishes
- Enjoy lunch of your prepared meal with wine

Evening (5pm onwards):

- Visit *Rike Park* and futuristic architecture
- Walk to nearby *Metekhi Church* area for golden hour photos
- Dinner at modern Georgian restaurant showcasing contemporary interpretations
- Optional: Experience Tbilisi's nightlife in Fabrika or Bassiani club

Day 5: Nature & Relaxation

Morning (9am-1pm):

- Taxi to *Open Air Museum of Ethnography* near Turtle Lake
- Explore traditional Georgian architecture from different regions (2-3 hours)
- Walk to *Turtle Lake* for lakeside relaxation

Afternoon (1pm-5pm):

- Picnic lunch at Turtle Lake or restaurant meal
- Optional activities: paddle boat rental, hiking trails, or simply relaxing by water
- Return to city via cable car for aerial views

Evening (5pm onwards):

- Final sulfur bath experience if not done earlier
- Farewell dinner at best restaurant (Shavi Lomi, Barbarestan, or Café Gabriadze)
- Last evening walk through illuminated Old Tbilisi

- Souvenir shopping on Shardeni Street

Flexibility Tips: These itineraries are suggestions - adjust based on interests, energy, and weather. Allow time for spontaneous discoveries. Book activities requiring reservations (cooking classes, wine tastings, folk shows) in advance.

Best Photography Locations

Iconic Viewpoints:

- **Narikala Fortress:** *Ultimate panoramic views* of Old Tbilisi, Mtkvari River, and city sprawl. Best at **sunset (golden hour)** or after dark for city lights. Access via cable car or hike.
- **Bridge of Peace:** Photograph the illuminated bridge at **night** from riverbanks. Also walk across for views of Metekhi Church and old town.
- **Cable Car Ride:** Capture *aerial shots of Old Tbilisi* during ascent/descent. Glass-bottom cabins offer unique perspectives.
- **Funicular Upper Station:** Sweeping **360-degree city views** from Mtatsminda. Best at sunset or evening.
- **Metekhi Church Cliff:** Dramatic riverside location with Narikala backdrop. Photograph from Bridge of Peace or Rike Park. **Golden hour** ideal.

Architectural Photography:

- **Old Tbilisi Streets:** *Colorful wooden balconies, laundry lines, cobblestones*. Best streets: Shardeni, Leselidze, Botanikuri. Early **morning light (8-10am)** before tourist crowds.
- **Gabriadze Clock Tower:** Whimsical tilted tower. Catch **hourly puppet show** on video. Photograph from Shavteli Street.
- **Abanotubani Baths:** *Distinctive domed structures*, especially Orbeliani Baths with colorful tiles. Best from elevated positions. **Morning or late afternoon** light.
- **Holy Trinity Cathedral:** Massive golden dome against sky. Wide-angle lens essential. Best from **gardens below** or distant vantage points.
- **Anchiskhati & Sioni:** Ancient churches in Old Town context. Include surrounding architecture for atmosphere.

Hidden Gems:

- **Leghvtakhevi Waterfall:** Small waterfall in gorge behind sulfur baths district. *Secret spot* with romantic atmosphere. Access via stairs near baths.
- **Botanical Garden Paths:** Lush greenery, bridges over gorge, peaceful atmosphere. **Spring flowers** particularly photogenic.
- **Courtyard Interiors:** Old Tbilisi's hidden courtyards with vines, balconies, and authentic life. Respectfully photograph from public areas.
- **Turtle Lake Reflections:** *Mirror-like water surfaces* on calm days. Best **early morning** before crowds.
- **Fabrika Street Art:** Vibrant murals and graffiti at creative hub. **Midday** light works well for colorful walls.

Timing Recommendations:

- **Golden Hour (Sunset):** Narikala Fortress, Metekhi Church, Mtatsminda viewpoints, Bridge of Peace area
- **Blue Hour (Dusk):** Bridge of Peace illumination, city lights from viewpoints, Old Town evening atmosphere
- **Morning (8-10am):** Empty Old Tbilisi streets, markets, churches with soft light and fewer people
- **Midday:** Bold architectural details, street art, colorful scenes
- **Night:** Illuminated bridges and buildings, city lights, atmospheric Old Town lanes

Instagram Hotspots:

1. Narikala cable car with Old Tbilisi backdrop
2. Colorful wooden balconies on Leselidze Street
3. Bridge of Peace at night with LED lights
4. Gabriadze Clock Tower puppet show
5. Metekhi Church from riverside
6. Abanotubani brick domes and Orbeliani tiles

7. Mother Georgia statue silhouette
8. Fabrika courtyard graffiti walls
9. Rustaveli Avenue architecture
10. Traditional Georgian feast (supra) table spreads

Photography Tips: Respect locals' privacy when photographing streets. Ask permission for close-up portraits. Tripods welcome at most locations except inside churches. Golden hour (1-2 hours before sunset) provides most magical lighting. Arrive early at popular spots to avoid crowds in shots.

Electricity & Adapters

Voltage: 220V

Frequency: 50Hz

Plug Types: *Type C (European 2-pin) and Type F (European 2-pin with grounding)*

What You Need:

- **US Travelers:** Need adapter for 2-pin European plugs. US devices (110-120V) require voltage converter unless dual-voltage (check device specifications).
- **UK Travelers:** Need adapter from UK 3-pin to European 2-pin.
- **European Travelers:** Most European plugs work directly without adapters.
- **Universal Adapters:** Recommended for travelers from multiple countries or with various device types.

Where to Buy Adapters:

- Airport duty-free shops (more expensive but convenient)
- Electronics stores in Tbilisi city center
- Hotels may provide adapters on request (limited supply)
- Better to purchase before arrival for peace of mind

Power Reliability:

- Electricity supply is reliable throughout Tbilisi
- Power outages rare in urban areas
- Modern hotels have backup generators
- No special precautions needed

Pro Tip: Most modern electronics (phones, laptops, camera chargers) are dual-voltage (110-240V) and only require plug adapter, not voltage converter. Check your device's power label to confirm.

Georgian Cuisine Guide

Must-Try Dishes:

- **Khachapuri:** *Georgia's iconic cheese bread*, available in regional varieties. **Imeretian** (round, cheese-filled), **Adjarian** (boat-shaped with egg on top), **Megrelian** (cheese inside and on top). Order as appetizer or main.
- **Khinkali:** *Soup dumplings* filled with spiced meat (or mushroom/cheese). Hold by topknot, bite small hole, suck broth, then eat (leave topknot on plate). Typical order: 5-10 pieces per person.
- **Mtsvadi:** Georgian *grilled meat skewers*, typically pork or lamb, marinated and cooked over grapevine wood. Simple but delicious.
- **Badrijani Nigvzit:** *Fried eggplant rolls* with walnut paste, garlic, and herbs. Excellent vegetarian option.
- **Pkhali:** *Vegetable pâtés* made from spinach, beets, or beans mixed with ground walnuts and spices. Usually served as appetizer selection.
- **Lobio:** *Bean stew* cooked in clay pot (ketsi), often served with mchadi (cornbread).
- **Satsivi:** *Chicken in walnut sauce*, traditionally served cold. Rich, complex flavors with coriander and garlic.
- **Chakapuli:** *Lamb or veal stew* with tarragon, plums, and white wine. Spring specialty with fresh herbs.

- **Churchkhela:** Traditional *candle-shaped candy* made from nuts and grape must. Snack or dessert.

Sauces & Condiments:

- **Tkemali:** *Sour plum sauce* - Georgian ketchup, served with everything
- **Adjika:** *Spicy red pepper paste* with herbs and garlic
- **Bazhe:** *Walnut-garlic sauce* for fish and vegetables
- **Satsebeli:** *Tomato-based sauce* with herbs and spices

Georgian Wine Culture:

- **Red Wines:** Saperavi (bold, full-bodied), Otskhanuri Sapere, Tavkveri
- **White Wines:** Rkatsiteli (most common), Mtsvane, Kisi, Khikhvi
- **Orange/Amber Wine:** *White grapes fermented with skins in qvevri* (clay vessels), Georgia's unique contribution to wine world
- **Ordering:** Wine sold by carafe (½ liter or 1 liter) or bottle. House wine usually excellent and affordable
- **Toasts:** Traditional Georgian feast (supra) involves elaborate toasting system led by tamada (toastmaster)

Dining Tips:

- **Portion Sizes:** Georgian portions are generous - consider sharing dishes
- **Bread:** Fresh bread (puri) arrives at start, often baked in tone (clay oven)
- **Ordering:** Start with cold appetizers (pkhali, badrijani), then hot dishes, then grilled meats
- **Vegetarians:** Excellent options available - Georgia's Orthodox fasting traditions created diverse vegetarian dishes
- **Meal Times:** Lunch 1-3pm, Dinner 7-10pm (Georgians dine later). Many restaurants open continuously
- **Tipping:** 10% appreciated for good service; not mandatory but increasingly expected in tourist areas
- **Cash vs Card:** Most restaurants accept cards; smaller establishments prefer cash

Restaurant Recommendations by Type:

- **Traditional Upscale:** Barbarestan, Shavi Lomi, Culinarium Khasheria
- **Traditional Casual:** Machakhela, Pasanauri, Zakhar Zakharich
- **Modern Georgian:** Café Littera, Azarphesha, Ezo
- **Khinkali Specialists:** Pasanauri, Zakhar Zakharich, Machakhela
- **Wine Bars:** Vino Underground, 8000 Vintages, Pheasant's Tears
- **With Atmosphere:** Café Gabriadze (puppet theater theme), Shavi Lomi (romantic courtyard)

Street Food & Snacks:

- Fresh *khachapuri from bakeries* (1-3 GEL) - perfect quick lunch
- *Churchkhela* from markets and street vendors
- Roasted *sunflower seeds* and nuts
- *Fresh fruit* from street vendors (seasonal)
- *Lobiani* (bean-filled bread) from bakeries

Allergy Note: Walnuts feature heavily in Georgian cuisine. Inform servers of nut allergies. Gluten-free challenging but possible with mchadi (cornbread) and meat/vegetable dishes.

Tourist Passes

Tbilisi City Card

Currently, Tbilisi does not offer an official comprehensive city tourist card. However, several **combination options exist**:

- **Museum Network Tickets:** The *Georgian National Museum* operates multiple branches. Inquire at main building about multi-museum passes for savings.
- **Transportation Card:** *MetroMoney Card* works on metro and buses. Reloadable, convenient, and essential for public transport. Available at all metro stations (2 GEL card deposit + credit amount).
- **Tour Packages:** Many agencies offer *multi-day tour packages* combining city sights with day trips at discounted rates compared to booking separately.
- **Wine Tasting Passes:** Some wine bars offer *tasting flights or multi-location passes* for wine enthusiasts.

Money-Saving Tips:

- Many churches and outdoor attractions are **free** (Narikala Fortress, parks, neighborhoods)
- Free walking tours operate **tip-based** - excellent value
- Metro and marshrutkas are **extremely affordable** public transport
- Museum admission prices generally **low** (5-15 GEL) compared to Western Europe
- Look for **combined tour packages** through reputable agencies for day trips

georgia.travel

Georgian National Museum Network

The **Georgian National Museum** unites several museums under one organization. Main locations in Tbilisi include:

- *Simon Janashia Museum of Georgia* (archaeology, history, Gold Treasury)
- *Museum of Soviet Occupation* (same building)
- *Art Museum* (Rustaveli Avenue)
- *Open Air Museum of Ethnography* (Turtle Lake area)
- Several other specialized museums

Admission: Each museum charges separate entry (typically 5-15 GEL). *Ask about combination tickets* if planning multiple visits. Students and children receive discounts with ID.

Hours: Generally Tuesday-Sunday 10am-6pm. *Closed Mondays*. Verify specific hours before visiting.

museum.ge