

A Glimpse of Azerbaijan

Duration
6 days

Guaranteed
2 travellers

Group size
12 travellers

Price
From AUD \$ 1,170



WHAT TO EXPECT

Have a glimpse of Azerbaijan, the nation and former Soviet republic, is bounded by the Caspian Sea and Caucasus Mountains, which span Asia and Europe. Visit the so called land of fire and learn more about its customs and traditions. Discover ancient evidence in form of rock paintings, petroglyphs, ancient statues and temples and be amazed by the countries untouched nature.

Day 1: Arrival in Baku

Welcome to Azerbaijan! A transfer will be arranged to take you from the airport to your hotel. After check in, enjoy some free time to unwind and immerse yourself in this new surrounding. We will stay in Baku for the next three nights.

Day 2: Baku

Visit of the Highland Park and the Old City. The history of the capital of Azerbaijan, Baku, goes back to the antiquity, although the precise date of its origin is still unknown. The territory of the Absheron Peninsula, where the city is located on, has a favourable geographical position: a calm bay, a warm dry climate, fertile soil and natural resources. The Highland Park is located on a hill in the Western part of the city. This is the best spot to overview the city itself, along with the Baku Bay and the Seaside Boulevard. We will get acquainted with the Old City, which is called «Icheri Sheher». Many historical and architectural monuments are concentrated on its territory, including the Palace of the Shirvanshahs, the symbol of the city of Baku - Maiden Tower, Caravanserais, mosques, etc. Our tour goes on with a visit to the Heydar Aliyev Center. The Heydar Aliyev Center was built by world-famous architect Zaha Hadid. An internationally recognized architectural work, the building of the Heydar Aliyev Center has become a signature landmark of modern Baku due to its innovative and cutting-edge design. The Center achieved a famous «Design of the Year Award» back in 2014.

- Meals included: Breakfast
- Activities included: Excursion to the Highland Park and Old City, Excursion to Heydar Aliyev Center

Day 3: Baku

Departure for an excursion to the historical and archaeological reserve of Gobustan, an open-air museum. Gobustan petroglyphs dating back to 5,000-20,000 years, perfectly preserved rock carvings, are a kind of artistic archive of human evolution on planet Earth. Before starting a Gobustan tour, we will visit the interactive museum. Next point of the tour is the area of Mud volcanoes, a rare natural phenomenon appeared in Azerbaijan 25 million years ago (visiting mud volcanoes depends on the season and condition of roads). They occur where tectonic movement allows subterranean gases to escape to the surface. A few of these gas leaks are constantly on fire, shooting small perpetual flames into the

air, however, mud volcanoes never grow to the size of a normal volcano. The tour goes on with the ancient legacy of Zoroastrianism. Located 30 km away from Baku, there is one of the most mysterious sights of Azerbaijan – Ateshgah, The Temple of Fire Worshipers. Part caravanserai, part fire temple, it stands on the site of a natural-gas burning from the earth crust. It is called «the eternal fire». Next on our tour is a magically attractive site, the burning hill of Yanardag. Yanardag is a hillside with a continuously burning natural fire described by Marco Polo back in the 13th century during his visit to the Persian city of Baku. Return to the hotel and enjoy some free time in the evening.

- Meals included: Breakfast
- Activities included: Excursions across the Absheron Peninsula sights, Unique - Excursion to Gobustan archaeological reserve, Unique - Excursion to the mud volcanoes, Spiritual - Excursion to the Temple of fire-worshippers «Ateshgah» and burning hill «Yanardag»

Day 4: Baku – Sheki

Departure for a trip to the regions of Azerbaijan. First point of our journey is the picturesque village of craftsmen called Lahij (visiting Lahij depends on the season and condition of roads). Lahij is a unique monument of Persian urban planning and an architectural object of the Middle Ages. It is a medieval city with cobbled streets and squares, a well-developed water supply and sewerage system. The village is inhabited by tanners, engravers, potters, blacksmiths, wood and metal carvers, who have been passing their knowledge from generation to generation. During the tour we will also visit an ancient bridge connecting two villages, a 16th-century stone water supply and samples of dwellings from the 19th century with frescoes. Our tour continues to Nohur Lake. Surrounded by the forest, the lake is famous for its cleanliness, abundance of fish and amazing turquoise colour. Arrival in Sheki region, accommodation at the hotel and leisure time

- Meals included: Breakfast
- Activities included: Exploring the regions of Azerbaijan, Visiting the village of Lahij and lake Nohur

Day 5: Sheki

Get acquainted with the city of Sheki. One of the most ancient cities of Azerbaijan, located at the altitude of 700 m above the sea level, in the southern foothills of the Greater Caucasus. The city used to be the capital of the Sheki Khanate and was an important staging point on the Great Silk Road. We will visit the summer Palace of the Sheki khans, built in the 18th century, with its magnificent frescoes and exquisite handmade window decorations. One of the main spot of Sheki is the ancient complex called the Upper Karvan-Saray. Our tour of Sheki goes on with a visit to the Albanian Church, which is located in the village of Kish. According to a legend, it is the first Christian church built not only on the territory of Caucasian Albania, but in the entire Transcaucasia. This place is also remarkable for the burials of people found on the territory of the temple. The structure of their bodies is far different from the current inhabitants of this region. In 2003, the church was renovated with the financial support of the Norwegian government and with the personal efforts of Thor Heyerdahl. After this tour we will return to Baku.

- Meals included: Breakfast
- Activities included: Visit of Sheki including Sheki Khan's Summer Palace and the Upper Karvan-Saray, Spiritual - Visit of the first Christian church of Transcaucasia

Day 6: Departure from Baku

After your hotel check out, we will organize your transfer to Heydar Aliyev international airport. Depending on your time of departure, you will get the chance to visit the colourful Eastern Bazaar, called «Yashil Bazar» for a last memorable moment.

- Meals included: Breakfast

Inclusions

Insider Experiences



Unique – Excursion to Gobustan archaeological reserve
Unique – Excursion to the mud volcanoes
Spiritual – Excursion to the Temple of Fire Worshipers «Ateshgah» and burning hill «Yanardag»
Spiritual – Visite of the first Christian church in Transcaucasia

Accommodation



5 nights in 3-4 star hotels

Transport



Airport transfer on arrival and departure
Air-conditioned vehicle

Meals



Daily breakfast

Touring



English speaking tour guide
All entrance fees

Contact your local travel agent