



**TWELVE PILGRIMS**  
TRAVEL

Faith Carved in Stone | A Women's Only Tour of

# Armenia

Led by Rev. Emma Langley

**18<sup>th</sup> September - 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2026**



For further information contact:  
[info@twelvepilgrims.co.uk](mailto:info@twelvepilgrims.co.uk)  
or phone: 01638 590 762

# Tour Introduction

Twelve Pilgrims Travel is proud to present this special women only pilgrimage in partnership with the experienced team at Armen Tours. We are offering a unique opportunity to explore one of the world's oldest Christian cultures with exceptional care and attention to detail.

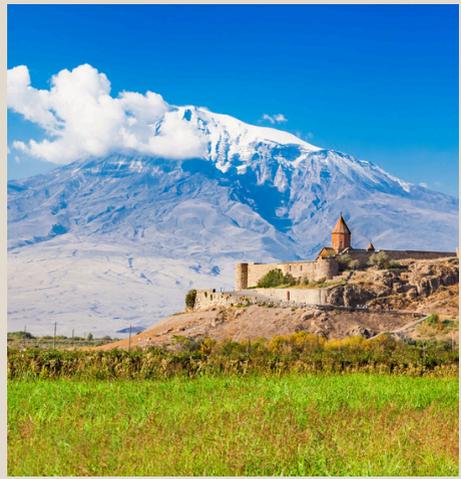
With decades of experience welcoming travellers to Armenia, Armen Tours is known for its outstanding service, deep local knowledge, and warm Armenian hospitality. Every aspect of the journey has been thoughtfully designed to ensure comfort, meaningful encounters, and a smooth travel experience from beginning to end.

Travelling as a women-only group makes this journey especially enriching. Enabling a warm and supportive atmosphere where friendships can flourish, conversations can flow freely, and a shared cultural experience becomes even more meaningful.

Throughout the tour we will visit some of Armenia's most sacred and historic sites, including the spiritual heart of the nation at Etchmiadzin Cathedral, the dramatic cliff-top monastery of Noravank Monastery, the stunning medieval complex of Tatev Monastery reached by the spectacular Wings of Tatev cableway, and the serene shores of Lake Sevan. We will also explore the vibrant capital Yerevan, visit ancient manuscripts at the Matenadaran, discover the classical temple at Garni Temple, and experience the rock-carved wonder of Geghard Monastery.

For further information about this tour, contact Scott Andersen by  
Email: [info@twelvepilgrims.co.uk](mailto:info@twelvepilgrims.co.uk)  
Phone: [01638 590 762](tel:01638590762)

**There will be quite a lot of walking so a good degree of fitness  
is essential.**



# Tour Itinerary

## Day 1:

### Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September: Arrival in Yerevan (15km)

Arrival at Zvartnots International Airport. Transfer to the hotel and check-in.  
Overnight in Yerevan

## Day 2:

### Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September: Yerevan – Echmiadzin – Zvartnots – Yerevan (45km)

11:30 Departure for **Echmiadzin**. Visit to the Cathedral of Echmiadzin with participation in the Sunday Mass. Listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, this cathedral is a place of deep spirituality, the centre of the Armenian Apostolic Church and the cradle of Christianity in Armenia, the first country in the world to adopt Christianity as a state religion. Today, Echmiadzin is the seat of the Catholicos of All Armenians.

**St. Hripsime Church** - Visit to the Church of St. Hripsime, a masterpiece of 7<sup>th</sup> century classical Armenian architecture, renowned for its refined structure and historical value.

**Zvartnots Cathedral** - Stop to visit the ruins of Zvartnots Cathedral, built in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and now part of the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Return to Yerevan. Welcome dinner in a restaurant.

**(B/-/D)** Overnight in Yerevan.

# Tour Itinerary

## Day 3:

### Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September: Yerevan - Museums (20km)

**City tour of Yerevan** - We begin our journey in the capital of Armenia, Yerevan, a city that captivates with its lively atmosphere and millennia-old charm. It was founded in 782 BC.

Yerevan is a perfect blend of tradition and modernity: ancient monuments and centuries-old churches coexist harmoniously with contemporary architecture, lively cafés, art galleries, and fashionable boutiques.

During our visit, we will explore the most iconic landmarks: **Republic Square**, with its dancing fountains and neoclassical buildings clad in pink tuff stone; Mashtots Avenue, the city's main artery, always bustling with shops, bookstores, and markets; the majestic **Opera and Ballet Theatre**, dedicated to the renowned composer Aram Khachaturian, a symbol of Armenian cultural life; and the spectacular **Cascade Complex**, a monumental stairway adorned with sculptures and gardens, offering breathtaking panoramic views of the city and, on clear days, Mount Ararat. Visit to **Matenadaran** - Museum of ancient manuscripts. Lunch at a local restaurant. Next stop will be **Genocide Memorial and Museum**.

**(B/L/-)** *Overnight in Yerevan.*

# Tour Itinerary

## Day 4:

### Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September: Yerevan – Khor Virap – Areni – Noravank – Goris (240km)

**Khor Virap Monastery** - Departure to the Ararat region to visit Khor Virap Monastery, one of the most important pilgrimage sites in Armenia, rich in spiritual and historical significance. The monastery stands on the site where St. Gregory the Illuminator was imprisoned for thirteen years in the “deep pit” that gives the place its name, Khor Virap. St. Gregory is revered for his decisive role in the conversion of Armenia to Christianity in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, marking the beginning of its mission as the first Christian state in history. During the visit, we will descend into the underground cell, symbolically retracing the saint’s suffering and reflecting on his example of faith and perseverance. The monastery offers an unforgettable view of the biblical Mount Ararat, the ultimate symbol of Armenian spirituality and identity, accompanying our moment of prayer and reflection.

**Areni Cave** - Visit also recently excavated very well preserved Copper Age settlement Bird’s Cavern - Areni 1 Cave, which uncovers the secrets of 6000 year old wine production in Armenia. The site boasts incredible items excavated in 2008-2010, among which the world’s oldest shoe (5,500 years old). Explore the unique cavern’s ritual and burial halls.

**Noravank Monastery** - We depart for the Vayots Dzor region, crossing an 8 km long canyon with breathtaking views. Along the way, we visit the magnificent Noravank monastic complex, dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> centuries. Perched dramatically on the edge of a cliff and surrounded by striking red rock formations, Noravank is renowned for both its fascinating architecture and its cultural and spiritual significance.

Lunch and wine tasting at the winery.

**Karahunj** - Along the route, stop at Karahunj, an ancient megalithic site dating back over 7,500 years, considered one of the oldest astronomical observatories in the world. Set amid pristine mountain landscapes, Karahunj bears witness to humanity’s ancient connection with the sky and the search for meaning in life—a place that invites contemplation through its silence and mysterious history.

Drive to Goris. Check-in at the hotel. Dinner at the hotel.

**(B/L/D)** *Overnight in Goris.*

# Tour Itinerary

## Day 5:

### Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September: Goris – Tatev – Selim – Sevan – Dilijan (360km)

**Tatev Monastery** - Continuing our journey, we head to the Tatev Monastery complex, a site of extraordinary beauty and historical importance, dating from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. Tatev was a renowned centre of learning and culture, as well as a major spiritual hub for Armenians. To reach the monastery, we will have the opportunity to ride one of the longest cable cars in the world, known as the “Wings of Tatev.” Here, you will explore ancient churches and monastic buildings, admiring the remarkable architecture and artistic details of this sacred place. This visit will be an unforgettable adventure blending nature and spirituality.

We will also have the opportunity to meet Father Mikayel upon his availability, a charismatic figure of the monastic community, who will share the history, traditions, and spiritual meaning of Tatev, creating a moment of deep connection between faith, culture, and nature. Lunch at a local home.

**Selim Caravanserai** - Today we travel along ancient routes once used by travellers on the Great Silk Road. Our journey takes us to the Selim Caravanserai, a crucial stop for merchants and travellers over the centuries. Built in 1332 by Prince Chesar Orbelian, this medieval structure stands along the Selim (Vardenyats) Pass and served as a safe haven for traders transporting valuable goods such as silk, spices, and precious metals between East and West.

**Lake Sevan** - Departure for Lake Sevan, one of the largest and highest freshwater lakes in the world, located at about 1,900 meters above sea level. Surrounded by majestic mountains, Lake Sevan is often called the “Blue Pearl” of Armenia for its stunning beauty and crystal-clear waters. Stop at the **Noratus cemetery**, also spelled Noraduz, is a medieval cemetery with many early khachkars located next to the village. The cemetery has the largest cluster of khachkars in Armenia. We will also enjoy panoramic views and then head to the Sevan Peninsula, once an island, home to the Sevanavank Monastery complex dating back to the 9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> centuries, founded by King Ashot I Bagratuni in 874. This site represents a harmonious connection between nature and spirituality. Dinner at the hotel.

**(B/L/D)** Overnight in Dilijan.

# Tour Itinerary

## Day 6:

### **Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September: Northern Monastic Trails – Dilijan – Sanahin – Haghpat – Gyumri (230km)**

**Molokan House** - We continue to the mountain village of Fioletovo, home to the historic Russian Molokan community. We will visit the Molokan House - to learn about their Christian faith, traditions, and simple, spiritually grounded lifestyle. We will be welcomed with traditional chai (tea) from Samovar, while listening to authentic stories about how this community, which arrived in Armenia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, has preserved its values and identity to this day.

**Haghpat and Sanahin Monasteries** - Departure for Alaverdi in the picturesque Lori region. Here we visit two unique masterpieces of Armenian architecture from the 10<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> centuries: the monasteries of Sanahin and Haghpat, both UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The name **Sanahin** means “this one is older than that one,” highlighting its greater antiquity compared to nearby Haghpat. The two complexes overlook each other across the deep Debed River gorge like two brothers guarding the valley.

**Haghpat Monastery**, one of the most important religious, cultural, and educational centres of medieval Armenia, was a place of prayer, learning, and manuscript copying—a beacon of spiritual light and knowledge for centuries. Lunch during the tour. Drive to Gyumri. Dinner.

**(B/L/D)** Overnight in Gyumri.

# Tour Itinerary

## Day 7:

### Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September: Gyumri- Aruch (150km)

**Gyumri** - It is the second largest city in Armenia and the capital of the Shirak Province in the northwestern part of the country. It was originally founded as Kumayri, later re-founded as Alexandropol between 1837 and 1924 during the Russian rule, then Leninakan between 1924–90, then as Gyumri. 4% of the Catholic population of Armenia live in Gyumri. The major Catholic Church (2010), Boghossian Centre and Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate are all located in Gyumri and nearby villages (Ashotsk). It is possible to organise meetings and Holy Masses with the representatives of Catholic Church here in Gyumri.

**Khachkar** (cross-stone) workshop making in Gyumri. Visit the unique khachkar's studio in Gyumri, where you will meet a wonderful Armenian, the only Armenian woman-khachkar maker. Tour of the Gyumri and proceed to Yerevan on the way visiting to **Aruch Cathedral** 7th c. Drive back to Yerevan.

**(B/L/-)** *Overnight in Yerevan.*

## Day 8:

### Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September: Past, Present, and Future – Yerevan – Garni – Geghard – Yerevan (85km)

**Garni**- Departure for Garni, about 30 km from Yerevan. Visit this fascinating centre of Hellenistic and Roman culture, once a royal residence of the Arshakuni dynasty. We explore the Temple of Mithra, God of Sun, a magnificent example of 1<sup>st</sup> century AD Roman-Greek architecture, as well as the remains of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC fortress walls and Roman baths. Enjoy the beautiful sounds of Armenian **Duduk in Garni Temple**, an ancient double-reed woodwind flute made of apricot wood. It is indigenous to Armenia and was proclaimed a Masterpiece of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2005. **Symphony of Stones** - The Garni Gorge, with its basalt columns resembling organ pipes, is a natural wonder formed by volcanic activity and erosion millions of years ago, offering spectacular scenery and unique photo opportunities.

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## Day 8:

### **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September: Past, Present, and Future – Yerevan – Garni – Geghard – Yerevan (85km)**

**Geghard Monastery-** The Geghard Monastery is one of Armenia's most captivating sites, set in a deep canyon surrounded by towering cliffs. Dating back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century, its name means "lance," referring to the lance that pierced Christ's body according to tradition. Much of the complex is carved directly into the rock, showcasing extraordinary craftsmanship. As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Geghard offers a unique spiritual and cultural experience. Enjoy quintet **choir in Geghard** for 25 min, spiritual concert of Armenian medieval music in Geghard monastery.

Lunch - Visit a local home to participate in the preparation of lavash, traditional Armenian flatbread baked in an underground oven called a tonir. In 2015, lavash was recognised by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Return to Yerevan

**Yerevan Catholic Church** - Visit the Catholic Church of St. Astvatsatsin, also known as the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, built in 2015. It is the main centre of the Armenian Catholic community and a symbol of unity and dialogue among Christian traditions. We will meet the parish priest, who will share insights into the life and faith of the Catholic community in Armenia. Dinner at a traditional restaurant with folk music.

**(B/L/D)** Overnight in Yerevan.

## Day 9:

### **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September: Departure**

Transfer to the airport.

# Tour Cost

**Price: £2,399 per person**

## **What the price includes:**

- Entrance fees to the sites, khachkar workshop, Choir in Geghard, Duduk in Garni, wine tasting
- Hotel accommodation x 5 nights BB in Yerevan, 1 x night in Goris BMG or similar hotel, 1 x night in Paradise Best Western Dilijan, 1 x Guymri Shiraz Radisson Blu
- English speaking cultural guide
- Bus 30-45 seats (with A/C and bottle of spring water per person per day)
- 5 x dinners, 6 x lunch including water, Armenian coffee and tea

## **Not included in the price:**

- Extras (alcoholic drinks, tips, portorage)
- Wireless audio guide system (Whispers) USD 3 pp per day
- Other meals not indicated in the program
- “Ararat” Brandy 3 types of tasting USD 28 per person

During the tour it is possible to organise meetings and HOLY Masses with the representatives of The Armenian Apostolic Church, with Catholic Church in Yerevan, with Catholic Mekhitarist Congregation of Venice, with Sisters of Mother Theresa, and with Sisters of Mary Immaculate.

For the meeting and Holy Masses the donations are welcomed!

Please note that the cost of the tour may be subject to surcharges - please see the booking conditions.

\*ATOL Protection Contribution provides passenger protection via the ATTF (Air Travel Fund). For further information visit [www.caa.co.uk](http://www.caa.co.uk)

# How to Book

You can book this tour by completing the booking form and submitting it together with your initial deposit of £300 per person.

## Deposit Structure

Due to current airline pricing conditions, bookings are confirmed using a two-stage deposit system:

Deposit 1 – Place Deposit (£300 per person)

- Payable at the time of booking
- Secures your place on the tour
- Fully refundable until flights are ticketed (subject to administration fees)

Deposit 2 – Flight Commitment Payment (dependent on airline)

- Payable within 14 days of booking (or earlier if flight prices require)
- This payment allows us to purchase and ticket your flights
- Once flights are ticketed, this payment becomes non-refundable, except where airline rules permit refunds less any penalties

Please make out payments to our Trust Account:

## PTS Air Travel Trust

- Account number: 83664597
- Sort Code: 40-40-14

Please use your name and surname as the reference.

## Paying the Remaining Balance

A final invoice will be issued approximately 10–12 weeks before departure, and the remaining balance must be paid no later than 10 weeks before departure, unless otherwise stated.

Further travel information, including final flight details, accommodation information, and meeting arrangements, will be sent to you closer to departure.

*Airline schedules and seat allocations are controlled by the airlines and may be subject to change.*

*Normally, tickets are issued electronically and confirmed prior to departure. Final travel documents will be provided before travel.*

## Fitness and Mobility

People of all ages are welcome; however, a reasonable level of fitness is required. Some sites involve uneven ground, steps, and walking over historic terrain. If you have mobility concerns, please discuss these with us before booking.

## Passports, Visas, and Vaccinations

Travellers are responsible for ensuring they hold a valid passport suitable for international travel. Passports must generally be valid for at least six months after the date of return.

**Visa requirements depend on nationality.** British passport holders now require the ETA IL Electronic Visa prior to departure. Please contact [info@twelvepilgrims.co.uk](mailto:info@twelvepilgrims.co.uk) if you're unsure.

No specific vaccinations are required at the time of publication, but you may wish to consult your GP or travel health clinic for personal advice.

## Travel Advice

For the latest official travel advice, please consult the UK Foreign Office website. Should official advice change significantly prior to departure, we will contact you directly.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE (IMPORTANT)

Comprehensive travel insurance is mandatory for all travellers.

Your policy must include:

- Medical expenses
- Emergency repatriation
- Trip cancellation and curtailment
- Cover for pre-existing medical conditions (where applicable)

We strongly recommend purchasing travel insurance at the time of booking, not at a later date, to ensure you are protected should you need to cancel after paying deposits. Travel insurance is widely available through:

- Specialist travel insurance providers
- Your bank or building society
- Reputable comparison websites

## FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Twelve Pilgrims Travel Ltd. is a PTS (Protected Trust Services) client and all monies held and protected in line with ATOL regulations. ATOL No. 12910.

