

The Caucasus Journey

A comfortable tour to North Ossetia, Ingushetia, Chechnya, and Dagestan



Every trip to the Caucasus reveals something new. It's home to Russia's highest mountains and deepest canyons. Ancient temples, cities with millennia of history, and dozens of ethnic groups with their own cultures and carefully preserved traditions. This is the Caucasus — complex and contrasting, yet at the same time captivating and vibrant.

Experiences you'll have

This program is perfect for getting to know the region: you'll dive into the history and culture of four North Caucasus republics. Each is interesting and unique in its own way. Traveling through ancient mountain villages and modern capitals accompanied by local guides, you'll become acquainted with the traditions and daily life of the highlanders, admire the stunning views of the Caucasus Range, and, of course, sample the local cuisine.

Let's answer the most common question right away: the Caucasus is safe. The RussiaDiscovery team, our friends, and tourists have visited Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, and North Ossetia many times. We can confirm — it's incredibly beautiful, fascinating, delicious, and hospitable.

This is the program of a private tour. Price depends on the number of people in the group:

- 2-3 people – 9.991 USD per person
- 4-5 people – 7.679 USD per person
- 6-7 people – 5.897 USD per person
- 8-9 people – 4.539 USD per person
- 10-17 people – 3.500 USD per person

Itinerary

The journey begins at Vladikavkaz Airport, where you need to arrive by 13:00 on the first day of the program. For your return flight, plan to depart from Makhachkala after 17:00 on the final day of the tour.

New

Caucasus

The Caucasus Journey

Difficulty

Age

Group size

Duration

from 10 y.o.

from 2 to 17

9 days

Accomodation at the trip

6 nights 2 nights

Языки

EN

guide

from 3 500 EUR

Day 1

After meeting your guide at the airport, you will head into

the mountains, stopping for lunch at a café along the way.

You will visit Dargavs, the "City of the Dead" — the largest medieval necropolis of tower-tombs in the North Caucasus.

Crossing the Kakadur Pass, you will arrive in the Kurtatin Gorge. According to legend, this is where the brothers Kurt and Tag lived, ancestors to over 100 Ossetian families. After seeing the reconstructed towers of the brothers, you will ascend to the Dzhivgis Rock Fortress and visit the Alan Holy Dormition Monastery — the highest-altitude monastery in Russia.

By evening, you will return to Vladikavkaz for hotel check-in, followed by dinner.

Route distance: 100 km by car.

Day 2

After breakfast, you will travel to the mountains of

Ingushetia. The Ingush people are renowned as master tower builders — the diversity, number, and seamless integration of these structures into the landscape are astonishing. The latest towers, built in the 17th-18th centuries, are true skyscrapers of Caucasian architecture.

You will visit the DzheyraKh Gorge and explore the Egikal tower complex, which includes about 50 residential and military towers, as well as several crypts. Remarkably well-preserved, they have stood empty since the deportation of their inhabitants.

Next, you will take a walk near the Vovnushki tower complex. It was built on impregnable cliffs in the narrow gorge of the Guloy-Khi River, on a branch of the Silk Road. Nearby, the 10th-century Christian temple of Tkhaba-Yerdy has survived. It is a fascinating example of the interweaving of architectural and cultural traditions.

In the late afternoon, you will arrive in Grozny. After checking into the hotel, you can take a walk through the Chechen capital.

Route distance: 200 km by car.

Day 3

In the morning, after breakfast, you will set off for the

largest high-mountain lake in the Caucasus — Lake Kezenoyam.

On the way, you will make a stop at the largest mosque in Europe, "Pride of Muslims," in the city of Shali. The mosque occupies a five-hectare site. Its dome is 43 meters high, and its four minarets are 62 meters tall. A park with 12 fountains is located next to the mosque. The exterior is finished with white marble, and the interior decoration is done by hand. You will also visit the "Mother's Heart" mosque and see the monument to the "Chechen Robin Hood," Zelimkhan Kharachoevsky, and the "Maiden's Braid" spring.

Upon arrival at the lake, you will have lunch and then explore the surroundings. You will visit the reconstructed ancient town of Khoy. This "town of guards" was founded in the 9th century and served as an eastern outpost of Chechnya. Here you will see examples of Vainakh architecture and the ruins of residential and military towers.

After visiting the town, you will have some free time for activities — you can go horseback riding, boating, or zip-lining. Then, you will check into the tourist complex.

In the evening, you will have dinner at the complex's restaurant.

Route distance: 100 km by car.

Day 4

After breakfast, you will depart for an excursion through

the Argun Gorge. Your first stop will be at the "Meeting Place" spring, where you will learn the story behind this romantic name, followed by a stop at the picturesque Nikhaloy Waterfall. Over many years, a small mountain stream has cut the mountain in two, forming a zigzagging canyon.

During this excursion, you will also visit the Ushkaloy watchtowers carved into the cliffs. These twin towers marked the border between the Chechen societies of Shatoy and Chanti. A toll was charged for passage, and signals about approaching enemies were given from here. Lunch will be at a café in the village of Itum-Kali.

By evening, you will arrive in the settlement of Veduchi, where you will check into a hotel, have dinner, and rest.

Route distance: 90 km by car.

Day 5

After breakfast, you will visit the local history museum in

the village of Itum-Kali. Then, you will explore the "Phakoch" castle complex — a true open-air museum. Here you can see residential and military towers, as well as everyday Chechen objects.

After the tour, you will head to Grozny for lunch. Following hotel check-in, you will take a walk through the Chechen capital. You will visit the "Heart of Chechnya" mosque, stroll through Flower Park and along Esambayev Boulevard.

In the evening, you will have dinner at a restaurant.

Route distance: 170 km by car.
Day 6

After breakfast, you will transfer to Dagestan. You will visit

a viewpoint overlooking the Sulak Canyon — one of the deepest in the world (1920 m). You will stop for lunch at a roadside café.

After lunch, you will take a boat trip on the Chirkey Reservoir. Then, you will transfer to the village of Gunib for hotel check-in. In the evening, you will have dinner and rest.

Route distance: 250 km by car.
Day 7

In the morning, after breakfast, you will head to one of the

most atmospheric places in Dagestan — the ghost village of Gamsutl. It is located on a mountain ridge at an altitude of 1500 meters above sea level. This ancient Avar settlement is over 2000 years old. The village was finally abandoned in 2015, and since then, this picturesque site has attracted photographers and history enthusiasts.

Lunch will be at a café where you can appreciate the features of Avar cuisine.

Next, you will have an excursion to the village of Chokh. Amazingly beautiful, Chokh is one of the oldest villages in the North Caucasus, where a Neolithic site was discovered in the mid-20th century. You will then return to Gunib for a walk through the village. Gunib is primarily associated with the last stronghold of Imam Shamil and his capture. This is where the Caucasian War of 1825-1859 ended. Essentially, Gunib is the unofficial capital of inner-mountain Dagestan. During the tour, you will see the gazebo of Imam Shamil and the historical memorial from the Caucasian War period — the Tsar's Meadow.

Route distance: 50 km by car.
Day 8

In the morning after breakfast, you will transfer to

Derbent, one of the oldest cities on Russian territory. The city's continuous history spans approximately 2000 years, with the first settlements appearing here as far back as 5000 years ago.

Upon arrival, you will have lunch and set off for a walk through the Old Town. You will see the Naryn-Kala Citadel, the historic districts (mahallas) of Derbent, and the walls of the oldest mosque in Russia — the Juma Mosque, built in the 8th century.

In the evening, you will check into a hotel for dinner and rest.

Route distance: 220 km by car.
Day 9

After breakfast, you will transfer to Makhachkala airport

for your departure flights.

Route distance: 120 km by car.

Accomodation at the trip

Accommodation may be changed to a similar category.

Vladikavkaz Hotel 4* (1 night)

The hotel is located in the center of Vladikavkaz, on the bank of the Terek River. You will stay in standard twin rooms with either one double bed or two single beds, a TV, air conditioning, and a private bathroom with a shower. The hotel has a restaurant and provides Wi-Fi.

Edelweiss Grozny 4* (2 nights)

A sports and hotel complex in the center of Grozny. You will stay in a twin room with either one double bed or two single beds, air conditioning, a TV, and a private bathroom with a shower. The hotel features a restaurant, a phyto-bar, a massage room, a swimming pool, and a gym. Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the property.

Kezenoyam 3* (1 night)

A tourist complex on the shore of the eponymous lake. You will stay in standard twin rooms with either one double bed or two single beds, a private bathroom, a wardrobe, and a hairdryer. The complex includes a restaurant and a bar.

Veduchi 3* (1 night)

The hotel is located on the grounds of the eponymous ski resort. You will stay in a standard twin room with either one double bed or two single beds, a private bathroom, a TV, and a desk. The room offers a mountain view.

The hotel features an indoor swimming pool, a fitness center, a restaurant, and a bar.

Sanda Gunib 4* or **Orlinoye Gnezdo Gunib 3*** (2 nights)

You will stay in a twin room with either one double bed or two single beds and a private bathroom.

The Orlinoye Gnezdo tourist complex is located within the "Verkhny Gunib" Nature Park. It features a restaurant, outdoor gazebos, a large walking area, and access to the Gunib Nature Park.

Sanda Gunib Hotel features a café on its premises.

Europa Derbent 4* (1 night)

You will stay in a twin room with either one double bed or two single beds, a private bathroom, and Wi-Fi.

The hotel has a restaurant.

FAQ

What will the weather be like

The weather in the mountainous regions of the Caucasus is unpredictable, with sharp temperature fluctuations. In spring and summer, daytime temperatures can reach +15...+20 °C, while frost and snow are possible in the evenings and at night. In autumn, daytime temperatures average around 10 °C. Please consider the weather when choosing clothing for the trip.

What to bring with me

Documents:

- passport, health insurance policy

Clothing and personal items:

- windproof or waterproof jacket with a hood
- jeans or trekking pants, 2 pairs
- trekking boots
- spare shoes (sneakers)
- t-shirts
- warm fleece jacket/sweater
- scarf or buff
- hat and gloves (for autumn trips)
- umbrella or raincoat
- cap
- sunglasses and sunscreen

- personal hygiene items
- shower sandals
- personal first-aid kit
- camera (optional)

Women are advised to wear pants and skirts below the knee, as well as dresses with modest necklines (no deep cleavage or short sleeves). Men should wear pants.

When choosing clothing, also keep in mind that temperatures in cities and mountains differ. Weather in the mountains can change rapidly, and wet snow may fall when ascending mountain passes above 1,800 meters.

What trasport in used on the route

Comfortable Mercedes Sprinter minibuses are used for groups of more than 7 people, and a Hyundai Grand Starex minivan is used for groups of up to 7 people.

Who will be my guide

Experienced tour guides will accompany you throughout the journey.

Mobile connection on the route

Please note that Tele2 network coverage is practically unavailable on this route. MTS, Beeline, and Megafon have more stable signals. Free Wi-Fi is available in hotels and guesthouses along the route, including the guesthouse in Gunib.

Booking

Caucasus

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from 3 500 EUR

What's included in the price:

— accommodation according to the program

— three meals a day as specified in the program

— transfers according to the program

— transportation service per the program (tourist-class minibus)

— services of an English-speaking guide

— excursions and activities as per the program

— boat trip

Extra charge:

— airfare to Vladikavkaz and from Makhachkala

— single occupancy supplement (upon request)

— horseback riding (+500 RUB per 10 minutes), boating on Lake Kezenoyam (+1000 RUB per 30 minutes), zip line (+25000 RUB per person)

Best price guarantee

Personal tours

Discounts for regular clients

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