



The Old Town of Tbilisi, Georgia

SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF ART

Armenia & Georgia

Monasteries, Manuscripts, Mountains, and Modernism

with Dr. Keelan Overton

May 22 to June 7, 2023

Nestled between the Black and Caspian Seas at a strategic meeting point between Russia, Turkey, and Iran, the countries of Armenia and Georgia are arguably the most beautiful and historically complex countries of the Caucasus. Inclined toward both Europe and the Islamic world, Armenia and Georgia afford visitors an incredibly rich and layered history, as well as a constant study of contrasts. On this tour, you will learn about the dawn of Christianity alongside Islam and Soviet-period atheism, experience a range of incredible landscapes from snow-capped mountains to barren golden cliffs subtly masking stone monasteries, and explore medieval labyrinths while tasting world-famous wines in progressive bars. Covering monasteries, mountains, manuscripts, modernism, and many things in between, the itinerary offers an incredible range of art and architectural history alongside delicious cuisine, innovative luxury hotels, and stunning hospitality from your Armenian and Georgian hosts. As one of SBMA's signature custom tours, the itinerary offers behind-the-scenes access to museum collections and architectural sites, as well as dialogues with local NGOs and cultural heritage advocates. It is led by Dr. Keelan Overton, a historian of art and architecture, who researched much of this itinerary during the summer of 2019 when she spent a month in the area, along with excellent Armenian and Georgian guides.

The tour is based in the following locations:

- ❖ **YEREVAN, Armenia** at *The Alexander* (five nights) ~ Armenia's first 5-star international luxury hotel is conveniently located in the city center on one of Yerevan's oldest streets and steps away from the Republic Square. The city of Yerevan, which dates back to 782 BCE, is rich in museums and historical sites dating from the city's ancient, Christian, Islamic, Tsarist Russian, and Soviet periods. As one of the oldest cities in the world, Yerevan—now Armenia's capital—displays myriad architectural styles that serve as reminders of its long history.
- ❖ **GYUMRI, Armenia** at the *Villa Kars* (two nights) ~ Travel from 5-star posh to a hotel with a lot of character. This belle époque courtyard mansion was converted into a boutique hotel by the Italian social entrepreneur Antonio Montalto. Each of the 15 wood and tuff stone rooms is finished with Armenian carpets, handicrafts and antiques sourced from the area. Located two hours north of Yerevan, Gyumri's history dates back to the 5th century BCE and showcases the country's best-preserved 19th-century architecture, most of which is made from volcanic black tuff rock with apricot-colored accents and has been lovingly restored following a 1988 earthquake. Villa Kars, the best property in the city, lies in the center of the historic district, and its courtyards, fountains, balconies, and unique rooms provide a tranquil retreat.



Gyumri

- ❖ **DZORAGET, DEBED RIVER VALLEY, Armenia** at the *Tufenkian Avan Dzoraget Hotel* (one night) ~ A historic castle-like property situated in northern Armenia on the way to Georgia, this hotel is next to the Debed River, amidst a dramatic landscape of forests and gorges, and provides an ideal launching point to explore Armenia's most remote monasteries.

- ❖ **TBILISI, OLD CITY, Georgia** at the *Hotel Ambassadori* (three nights) ~ This top hotel is located in the heart of the Old City and steps away from the Mtkvari River and historic churches, mosques, synagogues, and baths. Get lost in the labyrinth of 19th-century streets and contemplate the fine balance between preservation and gentrification. Tbilisi is the capital of Georgia, and the picturesque Old City is a perfect combination of progressive cosmopolitanism, historical richness, and unparalleled natural topography.
- ❖ **KAZBEGI, Georgia** at *Rooms Hotel*, (two nights) ~ This hotel has spectacular views of the snow-capped Greater Caucasus Mountains. Soak in the natural landscape from the comfort of your hotel, and enjoy walks and visits to remote monasteries.
- ❖ **TBILISI, NEW CITY, Georgia** at *Rooms or Stamba* (two nights) ~ Experience a completely different side of Tbilisi in the city's most stylish hotel in the Vera district of the New City. Recently lauded in *Condé Nast Traveler*, these sister hotels reflect the epitome of Georgian design and hospitality and are architectural marvels set in a Soviet-era publishing house.

Carefully crafted by SBMA, Dr. Overton, and our partners abroad, this tour promises rich art and history, gorgeous scenery, novel cuisine, and lots of adventure. The tour is planned during the most pleasant and temperate time of year, after the rains that occur in April to mid-May and before the heat and crowds that arrive in late June. Yerevan, where the tour begins, gets warmer sooner, thus we begin the tour there, then move up to Georgia where early June is most ideal and clearer in the high Caucasus.



Keelan Overton is a historian of art and architecture specializing in the eastern Islamic world. She received her Ph.D. from UCLA. She is an Independent Scholar based in Santa Barbara and divides her time between research, writing, teaching, and leading cultural tours for museums. She is currently a Getty Scholar and teaching at Pomona and has taught in the past at UCSB, UCLA, and Occidental College. She previously held positions as Curator of Islamic Art at the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art in Hawaii, also known as Shangri-La, and Associate Curator at LACMA. Her edited

volume *Iran and the Deccan: Persianate Art, Culture, and Talent in Circulation, 1400-1700* was published in 2020 by Indiana University Press. She is currently working on a book tentatively titled *Iran Unglazed: Local, National, and Global Histories of Persian Tilework*, inclusive of a few case studies in Tbilisi, Georgia and Yerevan, Armenia.



Cathedral in Yerevan

May 22 to May 24, Monday to Wednesday – U.S. to YEREVAN

Depart Los Angeles (or your preferred gateway) in the late afternoon/early evening on May 22. Suggested flights will be sent out once the group has formed. Because you “lose time” during the flights there, most flights from LAX arrive to Yerevan in the early morning, around 1-3 am, on May 24. Your hotel room is booked for the night of May 23 to accommodate early morning arrivals on May 24.

May 24, Wednesday – ARRIVE YEREVAN

Arrive in the early morning—around 1 to 3 am—and transfer (included for those on the suggested flights) to The Alexander for time to rest. Breakfast is available at your leisure. In the late morning, gather for introductions with your study leader Keelan Overton and Armenian national guide. Embark on a **walking tour of the city center, including Republic Square, Abovyan Street, the Moscow Cinema, Opera House, and the iconic Cascade with the Cafesjian Center for the Arts.** After lunch along the **Cascade Park**, home to the city’s famous **outdoor sculpture garden**, visit the **History Museum of Armenia** for your guide’s introduction to the country’s complex past. End at Armenia’s most unique and popular museum, the **Sergei Parajanov Museum**. Learn about Parajanov (d. 1968), director of the incomparable *The Color of Pomegranates* (1968) and Armenia’s most beloved filmmaker, within his beautifully decorated and curated house museum. Both museum visits must be done today and will be condensed to allow some leisure time before our **Welcome Dinner**. *The Alexander* (B,L,D)

May 25, Thursday – YEREVAN to NORAVANK and surrounding and RETURN
Over coffee, attend a **PowerPoint lecture by Dr. Overton** introducing the architectural history of Armenia. Depart Yerevan by private coach for the surrounding areas, beginning with the 13th-century **Noravank Monastery** (UNESCO Tentative List), dramatically set at the end of a winding road amidst sheer golden cliffs. Nearby is the **Areni Cave**, where the world's oldest shoe (estimated to be 5,500 years old) was discovered in 2008. Have lunch and taste



wines at Old Bridge Winery, a family-run operation, and learn about Armenia's longstanding wine industry. Continue to **Armenia's oldest surviving "inn" of the medieval period**, the 13th-century Selim (Orbelian) caravanserai, which is built into the hillside and overlooks a vast valley. Finish with a stop at the **Noratus Cemetery**, which preserves the largest collection of khachkars, or Armenian cross-stones, a potent symbol of the country. Take a **sunset drive along Lake Sevan** before returning to Yerevan for dinner at leisure. A list of recommendations will be provided and a no-host dinner will be planned for those who wish to dine together. *The Alexander* (B,L)

Above: Noravank Monastery, photo by Keelan Overton



Lake Sevan

May 26, Friday – YEREVAN to ETCHMIADZIN and RETURN

Spend the day visiting the spectacular sites dotting the landscape around Yerevan. Begin at the **Khor Virap Monastery** and soak in your closest view of snow-capped **Mount Ararat** (elevation 16,000 feet), Armenia's most sacred site, which is now located painfully across the border in Turkey. Proceed to the **Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin** (UNESCO World Heritage), the home of the **Armenian Apostolic Church**. The cathedral itself is closed for renovations, but we have more than enough to see with the expansive grounds and museums, which lent many key objects to the Metropolitan Museum of Art's 2018-19 groundbreaking exhibition, *Armenia!*



Zvartnots Cathedral, Keelan Overton

After lunch in Etchmiadzin, visit the 7th-century **Saint Hripsime Church** (UNESCO World Heritage), one of the country's oldest and most serene buildings set in a beautiful park. Proceed to the nearby 7th-century **Zvartnots Cathedral** (UNESCO World Heritage), which remains largely in ruins but whose tetraconch plan is easily brought "back to life" in the **spectacular site museum**, where you can appreciate displays of original plans and models and learn about the site's excavation. Return to Yerevan.

A group dinner (with a local preservation specialist as our guest, schedule permitting) will be at Derian or one of the city's many up and coming restaurants, where you will also sample the country's famous flatbread (*lavash*). *The Alexander* (B,L,D)



Khor Virap Monastery and Mount Ararat

May 27, Saturday – YEREVAN to KOTAYK PROVINCE and RETURN

Today will be divided between a **morning day trip** and an **afternoon city tour**. Drive east of Yerevan for about an hour to two of the country's UNESCO World Heritage sites: the 13th-century **Geghard monastery**, portions of which are literally carved out of and into the adjacent rock, and the **Garni temple**, Armenia's only Roman-period site. Have lunch at a restaurant with spectacular views of the Garni temple and the dramatic Azat River valley below.



Blue Mosque, photo by Keelan Overton

Return to Yerevan to see the 18th-century **Blue Mosque**, so called because of its Persian-style blue tiles, and learn about Yerevan's Persian and Muslim past, as well as its more recent "tile diplomacy" with nearby Iran. Briefly visit the **Pak Shuka market** across the street and continue to **Kond (meaning "long hill")**, Yerevan's oldest **neighborhood**, where we will walk the quiet and generally unvisited streets and discuss the future of Kond and its critical preservation with a local specialist (subject to confirmation). End the day with a **duduk (wind instrument) demonstration**. Dinner is at leisure. *The Alexander (B,L)*



Traditional *duduk* instrument

May 28, Sunday – YEREVAN to GYUMRI

Today is Republic Day in Armenia. Check out and depart for Yerevan's world famous **Matenadaran (Meshrop Mashtots Museum of Ancient Manuscripts)**, where you will see the finest examples of Armenian manuscripts and silver bindings. You will also enjoy a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the museum's conservation facilities (subject to final confirmation) and visit the museum's Persian gallery with Dr. Overton. Lunch is at leisure; pick from any number of pleasant sidewalk cafes and sample the city's booming food scene.



Museum of Ancient Manuscripts

Regroup to visit the **Armenian Genocide Memorial & Museum** and learn about this most seminal and tragic period of the country's history (1915). Depart Yerevan and drive about two hours northwest to the city of **Gyumri**, considered the country's creative capital with pottery studios and cute cafes at the foot of lofty black-and-apricot architecture. Although a devastating earthquake in 1988 destroyed Gyumri's Soviet-era buildings, many of the 19th-century buildings remained, due to their high-quality construction and materials. Check into **Villa Kars, a boutique hotel in the heart of the historic district** and have dinner this evening as a group. *Villa Kars (B,D)*

May 29, Monday – GYUMRI

Begin the day with a **walking tour of Gyumri's historic district** with a local architect and heritage advocate. Learn about Armenia's **vernacular and Tsarist period architecture** and soak in belle époque facades in striking contrasts of red sandstone and black basalt. **Meet with Antonio Monalto at his ceramics factory** to learn about his operation and foundation, and to witness the revival of **Kutahya-style ceramics** (Kutahya is in modern Turkey). Lunch is at leisure; take the opportunity to wander Gyumri further and have a casual meal at an intimate cafe, many of which are run by local NGOs. Gather for a visit of Gyumri's **historic railway station, the oldest junction in Armenia (1897)**. This evening, meet with a **local NGO** (schedule permitting) to learn about Gyumri's participation in **Birthright Armenia**, approach to **sustainable and ethical tourism**, and the state of the city in the aftermath of the devastating **1988 earthquake**. We will invite our local hosts to join us for dinner this evening. *Villa Kars (B,D)*



Gyumri

"This traditional city is a dream of architects and artists alike with each corner and neighborhood telling its own story." – Aram Vardanyan, travel writer



Kutahya-style ceramic arts

May 30, Tuesday – GYUMRI to DZORAGET, DEBED RIVER VALLEY

Enjoy a morning at leisure and then gather for a final lunch in the city. Drive northeast to the **Debed River Valley** and check into the **Tufenkian Avan Dzoraget Hotel, a romantic castle-like property next to the Debed River**. The afternoon is at leisure at the hotel, followed by a meeting with a representative from the **Tufenkian Foundation**. Learn about the Tufenkian family's participation in **Armenia's vibrant carpet industry**. Before dinner, listen to a **PowerPoint lecture by Dr. Overton**. Dinner is at the hotel's scenic restaurant. *Tufenkian Avan Dzoraget Hotel (B,L,D)*



Armenian Woman in the Armenian Countryside



Saint Hripsime Church

May 31, Wednesday – DZORAGET to TBILISI (ARMENIA to GEORGIA)

Check out of the hotel and **drive through the scenic Debed River Valley** to Armenia's most remote northern monasteries, both of which are UNESCO World Heritage sites. The **Haghpat monastery**, from the 10th to 13th centuries, is set within lush rolling hills resembling Ireland or Scotland and is one of the most beautiful complexes in Armenia. The nearby **Sanahin monastery** is equally impressive and boasts extraordinary barrel vaulted halls of stone. Enjoy **lunch at a mountainside restaurant with spectacular views of the Debed River Valley**.



Haghpat Monastery and Church

Proceed to the **Armenia-Georgia border**, say goodbye to your Armenian national guide, and greet your Georgian national guide. Continue to **Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia**, and check into **Hotel Ambassadors in the heart of the Old City**. This evening, gather for our **first dinner in Georgia accompanied by polyphonic singers and a Georgian folk show**. *Hotel Ambassadors, Old City (B,L,D)*



Dancers in traditional Georgian attire

June 1, Thursday – TBILISI (Old City)

Start the day with a **morning PowerPoint lecture** by Dr. Overton on the past, present, and future of Old Tbilisi. Set out on a **walking tour of the Old City**, where many stops are in a condensed area and most are brief, allowing us to visit a number of places before lunch. Start with the Anchiskhati Basilica, right next to the hotel, where you will enjoy your first exposure to the Georgian Orthodox Church and its specific aesthetics and liturgical practices. See the 13th-century Armenian church, Jewish synagogue, sulphur baths, Central Mosque, Sioni cathedral, both sides of the Mtkvari river, and the iconic Bridge of Peace (2010). Dip into the **Tbilisi History Museum**, which displays 19th-century photographs of the city and its inhabitants. Take the funicular that soars above the river and city up to Narkala Fortress and walk down. Sit down for lunch at one of Tbilisi's world-renowned restaurants and sample treasures of Georgian cuisine, including *khachapuri* and *khinkali*. End the day at the **Georgia National Museum for a curator-led tour of the ancient Georgian collections**, including exceptional displays of gold. If she is available, we will also **meet with the museum's Iran specialist and study select works of art in storage with her and Dr. Overton**. Dinner is at leisure and it is easy to wander and find a great restaurant in the Old City. *Hotel Ambassadors, Old City (B,L)*



Georgian cuisine: *khachapuri*, *khinkali*, *pkhali*, *dolma*, *satsivi*



Gold jewelry on display at the Georgia National Museum

June 2, Friday – TBILISI to MTSKHETA and RETURN

Begin the day with a trip to **Mtskheta** (UNESCO, World Heritage), the spiritual capital of Georgia. Visit the **Jvari monastery**, dramatically situated on the edge of a cliff and overlooking the town of Mtskheta and its confluence of rivers. Continue into Mtskheta and visit the **Svetitskhoveli cathedral** in the heart of the town, where many notable Georgian kings are buried. Begin to observe fascinating similarities and differences between Georgian and Armenian architecture and liturgical practices. A memorable lunch will be shared at **Chateau Mukhrani**, a nearby **winery/estate**. Proceed to Gori, the birthplace of Stalin and home to the **Joseph Stalin Museum** (est. 1957). Return to Tbilisi for an evening at leisure. Those who wish may join Keelan on a walk to an abandoned Armenian church that she visited in 2019, and she will discuss the benefits and pitfalls of gentrification and tourism. *Hotel Ambassadors, Old City* (B,L)

June 3, Saturday – TBILISI to KAZBEGI

Depart Tbilisi for the drive north along the historic **Georgian Military Road** to the **Greater Caucasus Mountains**. Stop at the **Ananuri fortress**, a castle complex situated alongside a reservoir. **Lunch will be in a private house** with a cooking demonstration of Georgian specialties. Continue to **Rooms Hotel in the mountain town of Kazbegi** (Stepantsminda). Enjoy time to relax at the

hotel and appreciate the stunning views of the snow-capped mountains. A buffet dinner is included at the hotel. *Rooms Hotel (B,L,D)*



June 4, Sunday – KAZBEGI and surrounding areas

This morning, visit the nearby **Gergeti Trinity Church**, possibly one of the most photographed sites in all of Georgia. This excursion involves a hike along a mostly flat road to the church. There is the option to take transportation. Lunch is at leisure.

In the afternoon, those who wish may take 4 x 4 cars to the **village of Juta in the Sno Valley**. Others may wish to experience the hotel and beautiful surrounding landscape or take a walk in the town. *Rooms Hotel (B,D)*

Left: Gergeti Trinity Church

June 5, Monday – KAZBEGI to TBILISI (New City)

Check out and make the return drive to **Tbilisi, where we will stay in the booming Vera district of the New City**.

Experience a completely different side of Tbilisi, a world away from the Old City visited previously. Have lunch in the pretty setting of our hotel's restaurant. Check into rooms briefly, if they are ready, then regroup for a **graffiti walking tour** around the hotel. Drive down **Rustaveli Avenue**—Tbilisi's equivalent of the Champs-Élysées, a bustling wide avenue sprinkled with luxury stores—to **Freedom Square**. Stop at the **Dry Bridge Market, the city's vibrant flea market**, and search for Soviet-era memorabilia and other curiosities. Before dinner, **attend a conversation with a local urban planner who has worked on major projects in Tbilisi and Gori** (pending final confirmation). Dinner is independent; one option is to take a cable train to the historic and fine restaurant Funicular, which offers panoramic views of the city below and mountains in the distance. *Rooms or Stamba Hotel (B,L)*

June 6, Tuesday – TBILISI (New City) to KAKHETI PROVINCE and RETURN

Drive approximately two hours east to **Kakheti, Georgia's world-renowned wine region**. Visit the 4th-century **Bodbe monastery, resting place of the beloved St. Nino** (d. ca. 332), and proceed to the **picturesque hill-town of Signaghi**, a favorite for wine tours. At a **local winery near Telavi, enjoy a wine tasting, cooking demonstration, and lunch**. Learn about the tradition of *qvevri*, or Georgian clay wine barrels (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage). Before returning to Tbilisi, stop at the beautiful park at Tsisssnadali Estate. This evening, we will gather for a **Farewell Dinner at one of the best restaurants in Tbilisi**. Depart for the airport just before midnight (most flights depart early in the morning, around 3 am). *Rooms or Stamba Hotel (B,L,D)*

June 7, Wednesday – TBILISI to U.S.

Depart in the early morning and arrive to LAX in the early afternoon the same day. Suggested flights will be sent out once the group has formed. (Your room is booked for the whole night in case you take different flights or wish to stay longer in Tbilisi.)



Signaghi

HOTEL PHOTOS

The Alexander, Yerevan, Armenia



Villa Kars, Gyumri, Armenia



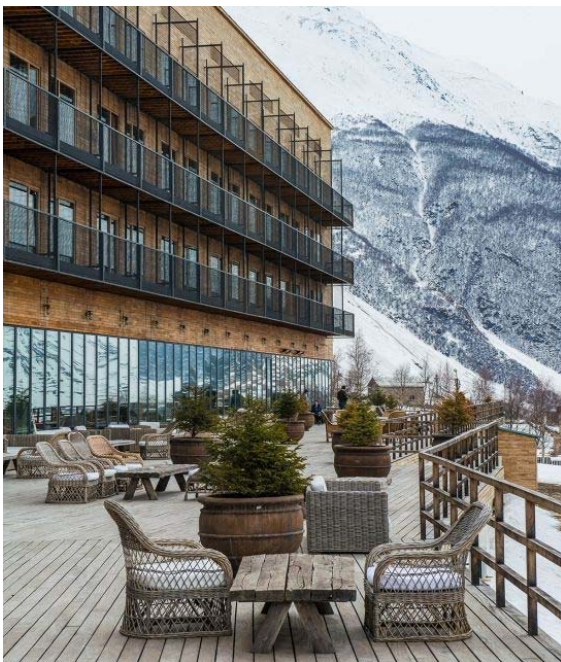
Tufenkian Avan Dzoraget Hotel, Dzoraget, Debed River Valley, Armenia



Hotel Ambassadors, Tbilisi, Georgia



Rooms Hotel, Kazbegi, Georgia



Rooms or Stamba, Tbilisi, Georgia



Tour Costs:

- **Per person, double occupancy:** \$6,720
- **Per person, single occupancy:** \$7,835
- **Plus Museum Donation:** \$500 per person

Included:

- Hotel accommodations for 15 nights
- Breakfast daily; most lunches and dinners, as described; wine with dinner and some lunches
- All entrance fees for included activities, excursions, sightseeing, tours, and special occasions as described
- All land transportation by private coach for included activities
- Airport transfers in Armenia and Georgia for those on the suggested flights
- The services and company of Keelan Overton and SBMA host (with 15 participants) throughout, local Armenian guide, local Georgian guide, and on-site expert guides/scholars at various venues
- Most gratuities to porters, drivers, on-site experts, and restaurant staff for included activities and meals
- Pre-tour gathering in Santa Barbara a few weeks prior to departure
- Pre-departure documentation and materials, including recommended reading list

**FOR MORE INFO OR
TO MAKE A
RESERVATION:**

Phone: (805) 884-6435

Fax: (805) 966-6840

Email: travel@sbma.net

Web: www.sbma.net/travel

Not included: Flights to Yerevan, Armenia and from Tbilisi, Georgia; checked baggage fees and other airline/travel fees; airport transfers in home city; airport transfers abroad and porter tips for those not on the suggested flights; passport fees; optional travel insurance (highly recommended); expenses incurred as a result of delays or deviations; medical tests (i.e. Covid-19 tests) if required; customary tips to one Armenian guide and one Georgian guide; housekeeping tips; items of a personal nature such as room service, not-included meals and beverages, phone or internet charges; and items not specifically mentioned as included.

Air Arrangements: To allow maximum flexibility for travelers, flights to Yerevan and from Tbilisi are not included in the cost of the tour. At the time of this brochure's publication, economy flights could be purchased for around \$1,500 round-trip. A suggested flight schedule will be sent to confirmed passengers once the group has been formed. Please do not book your flights until the minimum group size has been reached and you hear more from SBMA about booking flights. Airport transfers between the airports and hotels in Armenia and Georgia will be included for those on these suggested flights. Flights are subject to change. In the case of flight changes the participant is responsible for any costs for hotels, transfers, and meals required as a result. Trip Cancellation/ Interruption Insurance is strongly encouraged.

Requirements: For your own enjoyment and the enjoyment of the group, we must stress the following requirements. Participants must be physically fit and in active good health. Days will be busy with a moderate amount of walking and standing during tours. Sightseeing excursions may last for a few hours with distances of up to a few miles on foot and participants must be able to keep pace with a larger group, get on and off of buses, and navigate uneven terrain, stairs, and slippery surfaces with ease and without assistance. Good health and stamina plus a sense of adventure and a positive, flexible attitude about delays and inconveniences are also essential. Participants must enjoy being part of a group tour. The right is reserved to decline or retain any person as member of the tour, when such action is determined by SBMA to be in the best interests of the health, safety, enjoyment, or general welfare of the tour group or the individual participant. We reserve the right to ask you for health information before you travel. Visas are not required for either country for U.S. citizens.

Museum Membership Requirement: Travel is a benefit of Museum Membership. Non-members will be required to join at the "Friend" level (\$80 or \$60 for seniors) or higher and will receive full membership benefits for a year. Members at the "Enthusiast" (\$500) level and above receive advance notice about SBMA-custom tours. Membership is separate from the \$500 donation, which is the portion of your tour cost that is tax deductible.

Covid-19 requirements: For the protection of SBMA travelers and to adhere to the requirements of tour operators, suppliers, and the destinations (i.e. countries, hotels, museums, restaurants, many of which are requiring it), tour participants must be fully vaccinated for Covid-19, including boosters if eligible. Other Covid-19 requirements may apply and further details will be sent prior to departure.

Seeing the world while staying safe in the time of Covid-19: Travel has the potential to transform people and places, to have a positive impact on those lucky enough to experience it, and to make one's life richer forever. Our goal is to make those experiences a reality while remaining committed to your comfort, health, and safety. Due to the ever-changing nature of the pandemic, protocols will be adjusted to fit the current health and safety guidelines at the time of travel. Information will be provided to participants before and during travel. SBMA and on-the-ground suppliers will take appropriate measures and reserve the right to make adjustments to respond to up-to-date regulations. Since guidelines change month-to-month, specific requirements for this tour will be shared closer to departure based on the requirements at that time. We ask that all travelers kindly comply with requests from tour staff in the interests of everyone's comfort and safety. Tour leaders reserve the right to enforce rules established for the tour and by any authority such as tour operator, SBMA, government, vendors, etc. Tour members who do not comply can be sent home at their own expense.

Payment Schedule and Cancellation Policy: A \$1,000 per person non-refundable deposit is required to reserve space on the tour. An interim payment of \$1,500 per person is due by check on December 15, 2022 and becomes

non-refundable on January 15, 2023. Final payment is due by check on March 1, 2023 and becomes non-refundable on April 1, 2023. Tour-related donation can be made by check with either the interim or final payment and is not refundable and not insurable. **By placing a deposit on the tour, you are acknowledging acceptance of terms and cancellation penalty, and that you have read the sections on Requirements.** We HIGHLY recommend a travel insurance policy with "Cancel for Any Reason" (CFAR) coverage, as SBMA will not be able to reimburse you in the event of cancellation. If SBMA and/or our operator call off the tour, we would likely postpone rather than cancel the tour and transfer monies paid to the new dates. If you are unable to participate in the future dates, we would attempt to reimburse you what we can, but reimbursements are not guaranteed since our suppliers are not legally obliged to give refunds. We can only refund what we can recover from the vendors. Note that by reserving space on the tour you are entering into a contract with our operators, partners, and suppliers abroad.

Travel Insurance: A confirmation letter and travel insurance information will be sent to you upon receipt of your tour deposit. While optional, travel insurance is highly recommended. Should you cancel from the tour, travel insurance will be your only potential source for reimbursement. In order to get insurance benefits such as coverage for pre-existing conditions and "Cancel for Any Reason" (CFAR), your insurance policy must be purchased within 21 days of your deposit. If you do not purchase insurance and have to cancel, there will be *no flexibility with the cancellation terms for any reason* including but not limited to fear of travel due to Covid-19 or something else happening globally that prevents you from wanting to go when the tour is still going ahead. If the tour can be operated in compliance with U.S. safety guidelines and the destination's government policies, and you make the personal choice to cancel, all cancellation penalties apply. Insurance with CFAR may be your only source of (partial, usually 75%) reimbursement in this situation. Travel insurance is also an important safeguard to protect your investment and additional travel and medical expenses if you contract or show symptoms of Covid-19 prior to departure or during the tour. Travel insurance policies usually include international health insurance that is crucial coverage if you get any illness, including Covid-19. As with any other sickness or injury, we and our suppliers cannot be held responsible or liable in the event that a participant contracts Covid-19, is prevented from traveling due to a positive Covid-19 test, is denied exit from, or entry to, a country or has to isolate abroad or on their return because of health issues, including Covid-19, or due to government/border regulations. Some travelers prefer to insure payments as they are made, rather than the entire tour cost at once. If you do this, it is your responsibility to insure the additional payments as soon as you make them; if you prefer not to have to think about this, please insure the total tour cost. It is crucial that you read and understand all aspects of your policy.

Other Notes: Arrangements, private visits, meetings with individuals, and tour cost are all subject to change. Due to the pandemic, there is a possibility that site, restaurants, and hotels could change; in the off chance this happens, we would find comparable substitutions. Although SBMA and its suppliers will make every effort to adhere to the printed itinerary, on occasion it may be necessary to adjust arrangements because of circumstances beyond our control. Should an itinerary adjustment be necessary, substitution will be made to the best of our ability and additional costs necessitated by such changes may have to be covered by the tour member. If due to weather, flight schedules, or other uncontrollable factors, participants are required to spend any additional days or nights in the destination, they will be responsible for any additional expenses incurred, including hotel, transfers, and meal costs. If a staff member is unable to participate, SBMA will make every effort to find a replacement with similar qualifications and no refunds will be made. Should a participant decide not to participate in certain parts of the program, or are for any reason prevented from joining parts of the tour, no refunds will be made for those unused parts of the program. Depending on the situation, trip insurance may reimburse for missed portions of the tour and SBMA will issue a letter certifying the missed portions and the equivalent dollar amount. Our time in Yerevan is filled with three back-to-back day trips to explore the fascinating surround areas; drives are no longer than 1.5 to 2 hours at a time. May 28 is Republic Day, a national holiday in Armenia and some sites may be closed or partially closed. Suitable alterations will be made if needed. The tour is based on a minimum of 8 and maximum of 20. SBMA's California Seller of Travel License #: 209026

RESERVATION FORM ~ ARMENIA & GEORGIA

RESERVE BY PHONE: (805) 884-6435

or **MAIL FORM TO:** SBMA Travel, 1130 State St, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

or **FAX FORM TO:** (805) 966-6840

or **EMAIL FORM TO:** travel@sbma.net

To hold your space on the tour, a **\$1,000 per person non-refundable deposit** paid by check or credit card is required. Travel insurance information will be sent to you upon receipt of your reservation.

☐ A check made payable to SBMA is enclosed.

☐ Please charge the deposit to my credit card: ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ AMEX

Card number _____ Expires: _____

Name as on card _____ Security Code _____

☐ I/we are not current members; please charge for SBMA membership at the "Friend" level:

☐ \$80 OR ☐ \$60 (senior)

OR ☐ \$500 "Enthusiast" level, which gives you advanced notice about SBMA's most special travel programs and many other benefits. Visit www.sbma.net/support/membership for full Membership details.

☐ I will be sharing a room with _____ OR ☐ Single Supplement

☐ One Bed OR ☐ Two Beds (based on availability)

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Cell _____ E-mail _____

IMPORTANT:

- By placing a deposit on the tour, you are acknowledging acceptance of the terms and strict cancellation penalty, and that you have read the sections on Requirements.
- A confirmation letter and travel insurance information will be sent to you upon receipt of your reservation form and deposit. While optional, travel insurance is highly recommended and can be time-sensitive depending on the benefits desired.