

RIDING IN THE CAUCASIAN MOUNTAINS

9 – 19 JUNE 2025



FROM
£3,840 PER
PERSON

Tour Leader: Simon Lawrance


The Ultimate
TRAVEL COMPANY

Life in the Caucasus mountains is unimaginable without a horse. The Caucasian Mountains are the homeland of such breeds of great endurance and beauty as the Kabardo, Tusheti, etc.

Riding a horse through the mountain villages you immediately feel not merely a guest or a visitor, but a participant in that life that used to be led up here and traces of which are still apparent today.

Interesting places, beautiful views, delicious food, wine, and good company will fill the trip with lifelong impressions.

Our ride through the Tusheti highlands offers an almost untouched look into these hearty mountain people's ways of life and their traditions that continue to this day.





Narikala Fortress, Tbilisi

11-DAY ITINERARY, DEPARTING 9 JUNE 2025

9 June London / Istanbul

Suggested flights (not included in the cost of the tour) Turkish Airlines flight TK 1984 departing London Heathrow at 22.15 hrs.

10 June Istanbul / Tbilisi

Arrive Istanbul at 04.05 hrs. Connect to TK 378 departing Istanbul at 06.25 hrs, arriving Tbilisi at 09.45hrs. Transfer and check into the centrally located 4* Mercure Hotel in the old town for the morning at leisure.

Enjoy a walking tour of Tbilisi Old Town. Hidden in its labyrinthine streets are monuments, churches, art galleries, museums and theatres, sulphur bath houses and buildings with gaping holes in their facades that have their own stories to tell. Visit Metekhi Church of the Assumption, the Orthodox church which was built by the Georgian King St. Demetrius II in the 13th century. Visit the Georgian Synagogue, a Jewish house which was built with bricks, in an eclectic style, between 1895 and 1903. Continue to Sioni Cathedral, which is one of the most remarkable examples of Georgian medieval architecture, richly decorated with frescoes and icons in gold and dark turquoise colours. This is followed by Anchiskhati Basilica, the oldest church in Tbilisi, dating back to the 6th century. End at

Narikala Fortress, dating back to the 4th century, when it was a Persian citadel. The fortress dominates the Old Town skyline. Visit one of the city's historic sulphur bath houses for which Tbilisi is renowned. The city has an abundance of hot springs, high in sulphurs and other minerals, with a constant temperature of 38C to 40C, and the waters have long been used as a therapeutic aid for a range of ailments including skin conditions and arthritis.

11 June Tbilisi / Signaghi / Telavi

Check out of the hotel (with luggage) and depart to Kakheti (105 kms) and explore what locals call 'the motherland of wine', the fertile Alazani Valley with its medieval monasteries and unique wineries. The eastern region of Georgia is surrounded by picturesque mountains and filled with historical sights. Famed for its fine vintages, as well as its great food and spectacular mountain views, the area is recognised as a protected landscape. Visit Bodbe Nunnery (9thc), the place where St. Nino, the 4th century female evangelist of Georgians is buried.

Lunch and wine-tasting at local winery. Explore Signaghi fortified town in Kakheti, famous for its wine and carpet making culture. Enjoy breath-taking views of Kizikhi area and unusual Charm

of Signaghi Royal Town. Take a walk-through narrow street of the town shadowed by the wooden balconies richly decorated with the lace of carved ornaments. Continue to the Tsinandali Family Estate and wine cellar, which once belonged to the 19th century aristocratic poet Alexander Chavchavadze. Check into the 4* Esquisse Design Hotel in Telavi on arrival. Dinner at the hotel.



Fortified town of Signaghi

12 June Telavi / Omalo

Check out of the hotel (with luggage) and drive to the North-eastern region of Tusheti, over the Abano Pass at around 3,000 metres. In the Alazani valley, visit the elegant 11th century Alaverdi Cathedral, founded by the Assyrian monk Joseph Alaverdeli, who settled in a former pagan village and converted people to Christianity. Tusheti is an area of 113,000-hectare that includes Tusheti National Park, the Tusheti Protected Landscape, and the Tusheti Strict Nature Reserve.



Horses in Tusheti National Park

Lunch at a local restaurant. Check into the Hotel Samzeo where three nights are spent. The hotel is in Omalo Village, with stunning mountain views, Omalo is the central village of the region, and the first you see coming to Tusheti. The most important and impressive historical object in Omalo is the complex of watch towers called Keselo epically set on a high cliff. There is a small ethnographic museum inside one of the towers too. Dinner at the hotel.

13 June Omalo / Oreti Lake / Omalo

Today you will meet your horses and enjoy a ride to Oreti Lake, located 2,650 metres above sea level. Ride through the forest and alpine meadows enjoying impressive views of the Tusheti region, and beautiful wildflowers adorn the meadows. Enjoy a picnic lunch on the ride. You will be riding around 28 kms today, with an elevation of 1670 m up and down. Return to your hotel. Dinner at the hotel.

14 June Omalo / Shenako / Diklo / Omalo

Today, you will ride to picturesque and remote villages of Shenako and Diklo, both impressive with unique architecture and towers. The only Orthodox church in the region (Sameba church, XIX c.) is in Shenako. Its frescoes have been restored at the beginning of our century. Just next to the church you can see one of above-mentioned sacred places, "nishi". Here, again, one can witness how paganism and Christianity are intertwined in this wonderful place.

Enjoy a picnic lunch on the ride. The ride will be around 21 kms, with an elevation of 450 m up and down. Check into the Sameo Hotel, in Omalo. Dinner at the hotel.

15 June Omalo / Dartlo

Ride to Dartlo village across the peaceful valleys of the Tusheti highlands. Dartlo is a fortified village

that dates to the 17th century. As well as beautiful reconstructed stone houses and clan towers, Dartlo has several heritage monuments including a traditional Sabcheo court, crypts, a monastery, church ruins, Khati shrines, and petroglyphs. This ride will be around 16 kms, with an elevation of 230m up and down. On arrival into Dartlo, enjoy lunch in a nearby restaurant. Check into your guesthouse. Dinner at the guesthouse.

16 June Dartlo / Kvavlo / Dano / Chesno

Full day trekking from one remote village to another, dating back to the 13th century. You will be riding 8 kms with an elevation of 320 metres up and down.

Lunch on the way. Check into your guesthouse located in Chesno. Dinner at the guesthouse

17 June Chesno / Girevi / Omalo

Follow the Pirikita Alazani River to the last populated village Girevi. Ride back to Omalo via Parsma and Dartlo villages. You will be riding around 24 kms, with an elevation of 480 metres up and down. Lunch on the way. On arrival, check into the Samzeo Hotel. Dinner at the hotel.

18 June Omalo / Tbilisi

Transfer back to Tbilisi. En route stop in Alvani, where you will enjoy lunch with a local family. Continue to Tbilisi where you will arrive in the early evening. Farewell dinner at a local restaurant near to the hotel.

19 June Tbilisi / Istanbul / London

Check out of the hotel. Transfer to Tbilisi airport. Suggested flights (not included in the cost of the tour) Turkish Airlines flight TK 379 departs Tbilisi at 10.40 hrs arriving Istanbul at 12.15 hrs connecting to TK 1931 departing Istanbul at 13.50 hrs arriving London Heathrow at 16.00 hrs.

TOUR PRICES PER PERSON

Tour Price	£3,840
Single Supplement	£595

Please note we have not included the cost of the flights in the tour price. Please contact us for prices should you wish to book them through us.

PRICE INCLUDES

- Accommodation throughout as shown in the itinerary
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily.
- All entrance fees, visits, excursions, and transportation as per the itinerary
- Gratuities in restaurants for included meals
- Gratuities to guide/s
- Gratuities to driver/s
- Porterage
- 1x wine tasting
- Mineral water per person per day
- Local English-speaking guide/s
- The services of your tour leader throughout

PRICE EXCLUDES

- International flights
- Alcoholic and any other soft drinks, apart from water
- Travel insurance
- Items of personal expenditure (e.g. telephone calls / laundry etc.)
- Government levies or taxes introduced after costing and publication of this programme on 24/07/24



Dartlo



Omalo



YOUR TOUR LEADER



SIMON LAWRENCE

Simon has been based in the Chipping Norton area of Oxfordshire for 25 years. He has produced and evented horses up to CCI 5-star level, having completed Badminton and Burghley on several occasions. He is a very well-established name in Eventing and hunting circles. Simon has trained with Emile Faurie, Lars Sederholm, Yogi Breisner and Ginny Elliot, and is a member of the British Eventing Coach Programme. He has trained all levels of riders for many years and is a British Eventing accredited UKCC level 3 (eventing specific) trainer, and under 18 Coach for the Central Region. Simon was fieldmaster for the Heythrop Hunt, and Joint Master of Hounds for 14 seasons.



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