

## Easter in Armenia

“Why are you looking among the dead for one who is alive? He is not here, he has risen” (Lk 24:5-6).

This year celebrate **Easter** - one of the most important religious holidays and the most beloved spring holiday **in Armenia** on the **Holy Land**, where **Christianity was officially adopted as a first state religion in the world** and where **Noah arrived** once upon a time.

During this 6-day trip you will experience some local Easter customs that are very distinctive for Armenians, and some others that are common around Christians all over the world.

Attend the **Divine Liturgy** on Holy Friday, on Saturday evening prior to Christ's Glorious Resurrection, and have a Sunday Easter feast celebration with traditional Armenian music and dances.

Get in touch with great **heritage** and the array of **culture** that Armenia offers as a travel destination by visiting **UNESCO World Heritage sites**, experience **genuine interaction with people** and create amazing memories, last but not the least, spoil your taste buds with **authentic, diverse and delicious cuisine**.



**Start:** Yerevan, Armenia

**Finish:** Yerevan, Armenia

**Tour Theme:** Easter/Cultural-Religious

**Duration:** 5N/6D

**Physical rating:** (1 out of 5)

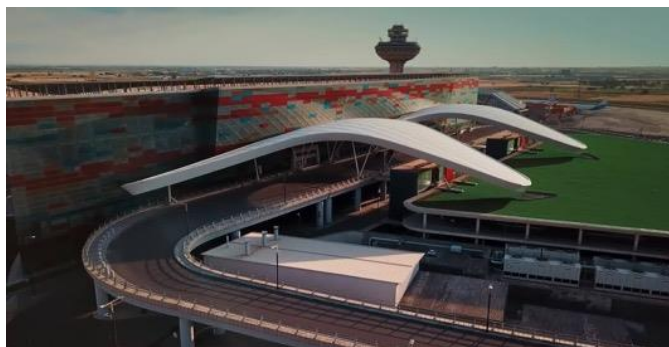
**Group size:** Min 4 Pax

**Ages:** Min 18 or Family

**Tour Availability:** April 17-22

## Itinerary

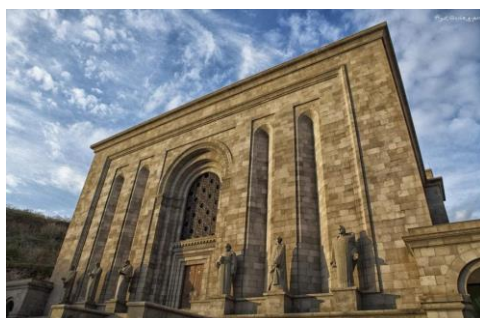
### 17 Apr / Day 1: Arrival to Zvartnots International Airport, Yerevan City Tour



**09:10** / Welcome to **Yerevan**, the capital city of **Armenia**. Our tour leader will greet you at the airport and help you with all the ground handling services. After a welcome briefing meeting with the tour leader, you will check in to your hotel. Rest and get ready for tomorrow program.

**12:15 – 13:15** / Today's program starts by visiting **Matenadaran** - a place where you can feel the spirit of ancient civilizations, get acquainted with the rich ancient history and see unique world ancient manuscripts, including Armenian.

The beginning of the creation of the Matenadaran collection dates back to the 5th century. Here you can see such interesting exhibits as the largest, smallest, thickest and thinnest books (handwritten) in the world. For example, the **biggest manuscript** is "Sermons" written around 1200. The book weighs 27.5 kg and has a size of 75 by 55 cm. The **smallest manuscript** is a church calendar of 16th-century, it's smaller than a matchbox, contains 104 parchment sheets and together with a cover weighs only 19 grams. The **oldest manuscript** stored in Matenadaran is "The Gospel of Veghamor", written presumably in 887. The manuscript is considered the oldest full-fledged Armenian manuscript.



**13:00 – 14:30** / Lunch in Yerevan. (Self-Paid)

**14:30-16:30** / Time to explore the Armenian capital **Yerevan** – a 2805-year-old and modern city, located in the shadow of **the biblical Mount Ararat**. It is one of the oldest cities in the world. You will explore **The Republic Square with its dancing and singing fountains, Cascade, Opera**

**House, North Avenue, parks devoted to 2750<sup>th</sup> and 2800<sup>th</sup> anniversaries** of the city. From the impressive Cascade you have a wonderful view of the whole capital and Mount Ararat.



After free time in Yerevan. Pass by the Republic Square and take pictures with this amazing background. Evening Yerevan is another highlight that should be added to your bucket list. Cafes and bars are full of locals at night. Join them for glass of local Armenian wine. You'll not regret!

**19:00** / Dinner in Yerevan. (Self-paid)

### Accommodation

- Overnight in Yerevan.

### Included Activities

- Matenadaran
- Yerevan City Tour

## **18 Apr. / Day 2: Khor Virap Monastery, Areni-1 Cave, Noravank Monastery, Tushpa Wine Cellar, Participation in Holy Friday Mass at St. Sarkis Church**

**08:00 - Breakfast in the hotel**

**09:00 – Starting the tour**

**10:00-11:00** / The morning starts by heading to the Southern part of Armenia. From Yerevan we move towards **Khor Virap Monastery** (in Armenian stands for “deep dungeon”). Khor Virap's notability as a monastery and pilgrimage site is attributed to the fact that Gregory the Illuminator was initially imprisoned here for about 14 years by King Tiridates III of Armenia. Saint Gregory subsequently became the king's religious mentor, and they led the proselytizing activity in the country. **In the year 301 Armenia was the first country in the world to be declared a Christian nation.**

The walled religious complex also stands before the snowcapped flanks of **Biblical Mount Ararat**, offering a spectacular view of the mountain and cutting a striking silhouette of itself. As mentioned in the Holy Bible, Noah's Arc landed on Mount Ararat, and the history of mankind after the flood started from here and the Ararat Valley.



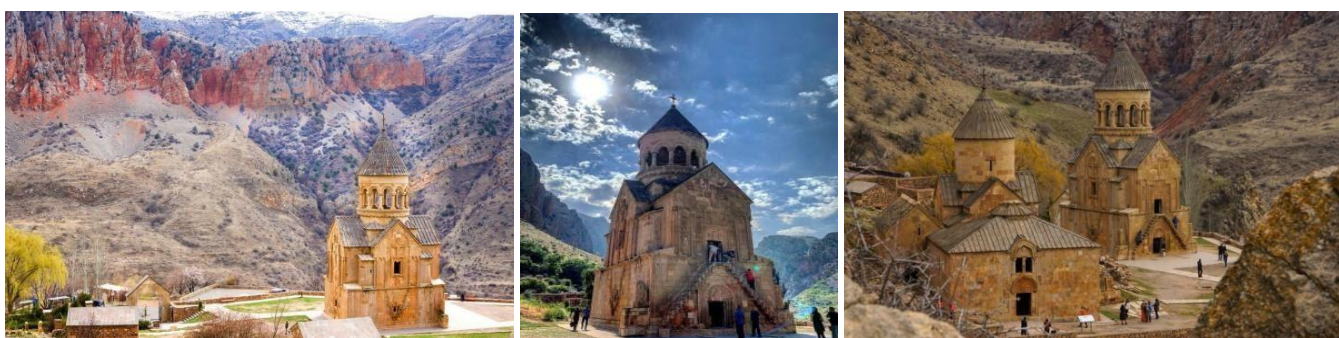
**12:30-13:15** / Our next highlight **Areni-1 Cave Complex** - a multicomponent site, and late Chalcolithic / Early Bronze Age ritual settlement, located near the Areni village. In 2010, archeologist discovered the **earliest known shoe (5500 years old)** at the site. In January 2011 **the earliest known winery (about 6100 years old)** in the world was uncovered in the cave. Later, in 2011 the discovery of a straw skirt dating to 3,900 years BC was reported. In 2009, the oldest humanoid brain was discovered in the cave.



**13:30-14:30** / Lunch will be in Areni. (Self-Paid)

**14:45-15:45** / Then we will continue our tour to Armenian architectural masterpiece **Noravank Monastic Complex**. Noravank means “New Monastery” in Armenian. However, today this name does not fit, as the monastery is already more than seven centuries old. The beautiful Noravank Monastery was built in the **13th century**.

The monastery complex is located on a steep mountain ledge, near the cliff. The territory is “framed” by unusual cliffs of bright red color, which create a very picturesque background for the buildings. Noravank monastery is one of the most visited attractions in Armenia.



**17:00-18: 00** / We will wrap-up the day with a visit to **Tushpa Wine Cellar**. Like many of the boutique wineries making wine in Armenia, Tushpa is a family affair. In 1992 Mihran Manaseryan started making small batches of wine and brandy from estate grown grapes. His children; Abraham, Ani and Karlen modernized the winery and made the first vintages of the new Tushpa line of table wines.

Located in the Ararat Valley, just off the highway to Khor Virap, Tushpa features beautiful views of the vineyards with Mount Ararat dominating the skyline. The estate grows Kangun and Haghtanak. The new winery features a beautiful tasting room and a nice tour of the wine making facilities. Tushpa makes a **Dry Red** and **Dry White wine**.



**19:00** / Back to Yerevan to participate in **Holy Friday Mass at St. Sarkis Church**. Holy Friday at St. Sarkis Church is a solemn and sacred day commemorating the crucifixion and death of **Jesus Christ**. The church holds a special service featuring prayers, hymns, and scripture readings that reflect on **Christ's suffering and sacrifice**. Worshippers gather in deep reverence, participating in rituals such as the Burial Service, symbolizing **Christ's entombment**. The atmosphere is marked by candlelight and sorrowful chants, creating a profound spiritual experience for the faithful.



### Accommodation

- Overnight in Yerevan.

### Included Activities

- Khor Virap Monastery
- Areni-1 Cave
- Noravank Monastery
- Tushpa Wine Cellar
- Participation in Holy Friday Mass at St. Sarkis Church

## Meals Included

- Breakfast at the hotel

## 19 Apr. / Day 3: UNESCO Heritage Site Geghard Monastery, Symphony of Stones, Garni Pagan Temple, NOY Brandy-Wine-Vodka Factory, Participation in the Easter Candlelight Mass

**09:00 - Breakfast in the hotel**

**10:00 - Starting the tour**

**11:00–12:00** / The day starts with departure to the villages of **Goght** and **Garni**. Our first stop is at **Geghard Monastery** - an incredible medieval monastery, being partially carved out of the adjacent mountain, surrounded by cliffs. It is listed as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** with enhanced protection status. Here you might have a chance to enjoy the performance of a fantastic choir in one of the chambers of the monastery with one of the greatest acoustics you ever saw. The choir will leave you with goose bumps and unforgettable emotions.



**12:20–13:00** / Barely recovered from the musical and cultural strong impressions, we take you to **Symphony of Stones** (half of the road to the Symphony of Stones is hiking) where you can listen to the silent music of stones, that the virtuoso nature has created himself.

**Garni gorge** is one of the most exceptional places for tourists to visit and to see amazing natural rocks known as the **“Symphony of Stones”** or **“Basalt organ”**. The rocks have a shape of long hexagonal vertical columns, which are associated with the church organ. Huge stone pillars are located at an altitude of about 50 meters above the ground. It’s hard to believe that neatly and symmetrically sculpted stones are created by nature itself and not by human.



**13:15–15:00** / Lunch will be in a cozy Armenian restaurant with a panoramic view to Temple Garni. Here you will participate in a traditional Armenian lavash baking preparation master class.



**15:00–16:00** / We continue towards **Garni Temple** - the only standing Greco-Roman colonnaded Pagan temple in Armenia and the former Soviet Union. An Ionic pagan temple located in the village of Garni is the best-known structure and symbol of Pre-Christian Armenia. The structure was built in the **1st century AD** as a temple to the **God of Sun Mihr**.



**17:00-18:00** / We return back to Yerevan where we have a guided tour to **NOY Brandy-Wine-Vodka Factory** - one of the best corners of Yerevan city to enjoy your time.

The administrative building of the factory built in **Shustov's times**, has turned into a museum where the information about Armenian brandy making and about the people who had a contribution to the development of the factory is kept.

Here you may take a tour and get acquainted with the glorious past and present of Armenian brandy and wine making and spoil your taste buds by tasting **Portwein 1944-year reserve, Cognac 5- and 10-years reserve.**



**18:00** / Then we will visit the **Saint Gregory the Illuminator Cathedral** where we will participate in a very beautiful and meaningful event, **the Easter Candlelight Mass**. The Easter Candlelight Mass at Saint Gregory the Illuminator Cathedral is a deeply spiritual and uplifting ceremony. Held on **Easter Eve**, the service begins in darkness, symbolizing Christ's death, and culminates in the lighting of candles, representing the Resurrection and the triumph of light over darkness. The event is marked by prayer, hymns, and a sense of community, offering a profound experience of hope and renewal.



### Accommodation

- Overnight in Yerevan.

### Included Activities

- Geghard Monastery
- Symphony of Stones
- Garni Pagan Temple
- Lavash baking Master Class
- Noy Brandy-Wine-Vodka Factory
- Participation in the Easter Candlelight Mass



## Meals Included

- Breakfast at the hotel

**20 Apr. / Day 4: Special Easter Breakfast, Zvartnots Cathedral, Etchmiadzin Holy Mother Cathedral, Treasure Museum of Etchmiadzin, “Armenia Wine” Winery, Wine History Museum of Armenia, Byurakan**

**08:30-10:00 / Easter Breakfast in the hotel with Easter Traditions, Egg fights and delicious food.**

**10:00 / Starting the tour**

**10:30 – 11:30 /** Today’s program starts by visiting **Zvartnots Cathedral** (literally “celestial angels cathedral”) is a 7th-century centrally planned aisled tetra conch type Armenian cathedral. Now in ruins, it is located at the edge of the city of Ejmiatsin, on the background of mesmerizing view to Biblical Mount Ararat. Zvartnots was added to the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2000.



**11:45 – 13:00 /** Our next highlight is the spiritual and religious center of Armenia **Etchmiadzin**. The city is best known as the location of Etchmiadzin Holy Mother Cathedral, the center of the Armenian Apostolic Church. It is unofficially known in Western sources as a “Holy City” and in Armenia as the country's "Spiritual Capital". Along with several important early medieval churches located nearby (St. Gayane, St. Hripsime), Etchmiadzin Cathedral was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000. The Holy Lance that pierced Jesus’s side (also known as the Spear of Destiny and Lance of Longinus) is kept in Etchmiadzin.



Here we will also participate in [the Holy Easter Liturgy](#). The Easter Liturgy at Etchmiadzin Cathedral is a solemn and sacred celebration of **Christ's Resurrection**. As the spiritual center of the Armenian Apostolic Church, the service features ancient hymns, prayers, and a divine liturgy led by the Catholicos. The ceremony embodies faith, hope, and renewal in a deeply meaningful atmosphere.



**13:00-14:00** / Lunch will be in [Agape Refectory](#) - This building is a restored monks' refectory from 1655. It is now an elegant restaurant with classic and modern Armenian food where you will feel yourself back in 17<sup>th</sup> century. Here you also have a chance to wear Armenian national costumes and take pictures.



**13:30 – 16:00** / Our next stop is ["Armenia Wine" winery](#). We'll have a nice wine tasting at the winery. Wine tasting is carried out in a professional tasting room.

In the territory of the winery there is also a [Wine History Museum of Armenia](#). The museum presents the rich history of Armenian winemaking.



16:30 / Our next stop is in [Byurakan village](#).

16:30 – 19:00 / Dinner will be in [Byurakan](#) accompanied by Armenian national folkloric performances after which we head back to busy Yerevan. Here **special Easter program** waits for you, that includes nice performance. **Easter celebration** at Tonatsuyts is a vibrant cultural event that revives ancient Armenian traditions. Held in a festive atmosphere, it features traditional **Easter rituals, folk music, dances, and reenactments of historical customs**. Guests enjoy authentic Armenian cuisine, including Easter specialties like dyed eggs and sweet bread. The event fosters a deep connection to Armenian heritage, emphasizing themes of renewal, unity, and gratitude.



20:00 / Back to Yerevan and rest.

### Accommodation

- Overnight in Yerevan.

### Included Activities

- Zvartnots Cathedral
- Etchmiadzin Holy Mother Cathedral
- “Armenia Wine” Winery
- Wine History Museum of Armenia
- Armenian National Folkloric Performance in Byurakan

## Meals Included

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Dinner in Byurakan at Tonatsuyts

## 21 Apr. / Day 5: Free day and Shopping in Yerevan

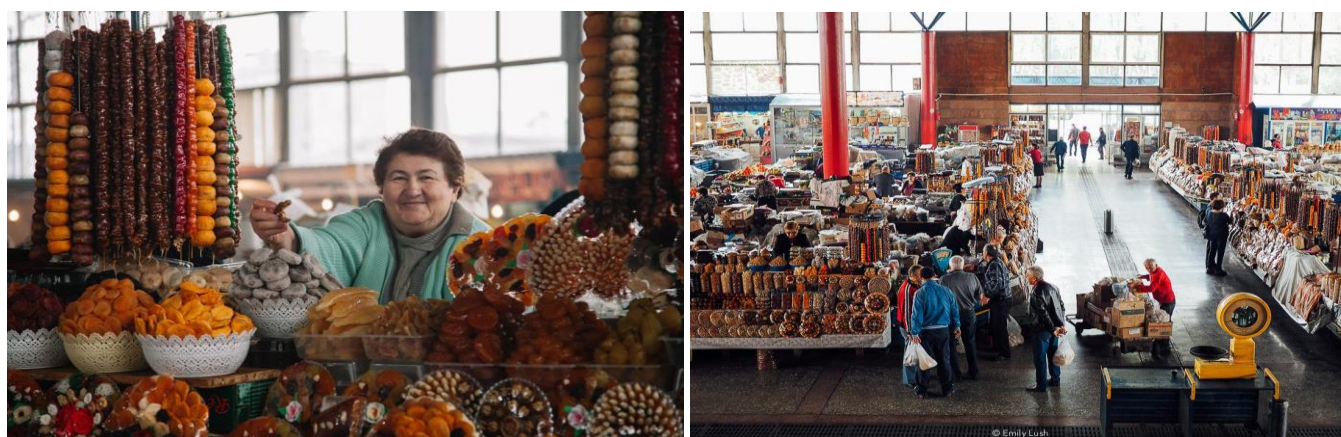
### 09:00 – Breakfast at the hotel

Then we will visit **Vernissage** for souvenirs. Yerevan's Flea Market is probably one of the best open-air markets in the world. It is called Vernissage (varnishing, from French) — a term used for a preview of an art exhibition. A visit to the market will make the day more beautiful. It offers various kinds of nice national souvenirs, jewelry and other traditional items. The Vernissage is the right place to get little taste of Armenia and a special spot to witness the fusion between national traditions and modern taste.



The last stop of shopping tour is Yerevan's "**GUM** Market", which is popularly known as the food museum thanks to the neat and organized display of the products.

Aside from the mouthwatering goods there (fresh & dried fruits, fruit leathers and the much-loved sweet "sujukh", various spices and more), it is worth visiting the market to witness firsthand the famous Armenian generosity and hospitality as vendors offer you to taste their products.



Don't forget to grab some souvenirs and gifts for beloved ones from Armenia!

The first stop of our shopping tour is [Dalma Garden Mall](#) - Yerevan's #1 multi-functional mall that offers great shopping experience and awesome entertainment for adults and kids throughout the year. The shopping center offers a wide choice of stores including international brands, cafes, a modern cinema, playground for kids, food court, entertainment, etc.



[Northern Avenue](#) is a lively pedestrian street in the heart of Yerevan, offering a mix of high-end boutiques, international brands, and local designer stores. It's a perfect spot for fashion, accessories, and unique Armenian souvenirs. Alongside shopping, visitors can enjoy cozy cafes and stylish restaurants, all set in a modern and vibrant atmosphere.



Spend your free day exploring [Saryan Street](#), a vibrant spot in Yerevan known for its cozy cafes, lively wine bars, and delicious restaurants. You can enjoy a relaxing coffee, try local and international wines, or indulge in tasty Armenian and international cuisine. Whether you're looking for a quiet place to unwind or a lively atmosphere to socialize, Saryan Street offers the perfect setting to experience the city's charm.



### Accommodation

- Overnight in Yerevan.

### Meals Included

- Breakfast at the hotel

### 22 Apr. / Day 6: Departure

#### 07:30 – Checkout and transfer from hotel to the airport.

**See you soon in Armenia.** We hope that while looking at Armenia pinned in your travel map, will bring back unforgettable memories and experience during your trip with us!

### Included

- ✓ Accommodation on BB/DBL room basis.
  - Total Hotels– 5 nights
- ✓ Meals – on BB basis (complimentary dinner on day 4)
- ✓ Daily water during trips
- ✓ Transportation and all transfers
- ✓ All museum and entrance tickets as per the itinerary
- ✓ Wine tasting as per the itinerary
- ✓ English speaking Tour Guide
- ✓ Souvenirs
- ✓ Lavash baking master class

### Not Included

- × Air tickets (will be provided upon request)
- × Visas (will be provided upon request)
- × Travel Insurance (will be provided upon request)
- × Personal Expenses
- × Gratitude Tips (optional)
- × Alcoholic beverages and meals that are not specified in the itinerary



## Prices and Policies

\*\*\* Rates are **NET** non-commissionable.

\*\*\* Rates are in **USD** and per person. Rates and rooms are subject to change and availability due to currency fluctuations, increased taxes, holidays and special events and other reasons, and will be confirmed at the time of final booking.

\*\*\* Rooms are on BB/DBL sharing basis. Single Supplement will be provided at extra cost.

\*\*\* Child Policy & Rates: Each hotel has its own policy. Please check with us for the child policy for each hotel at the time of booking.

## Travel Enjoy Respect...