



NOMADIC SKIES

ARMENIA

TRAVEL THE ANCIENT SILK ROAD & PIGRIMS PATHS.

DISCOVER A LAND OF TRADITION, CULTURE & HISTORY
WITHIN STUNNING MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPES.

SEEKING & TRAVELLING DEEPER

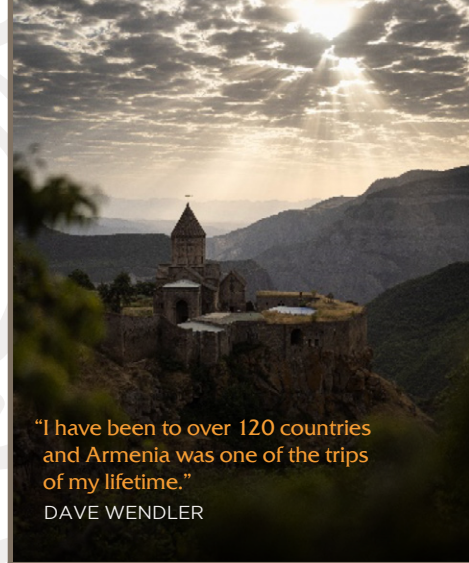
UNDISCOVERED ARMENIA

Trek through the prehistoric and Christian history of this ancient country. Explore the mountains and silk trading routes through landscapes, historic sites and rural communities seldom visited by tourists.

Armenia is an ancient land with a rich culture and identity. A cradle of civilisation which flourished on its fertile high plateaus and gained protection and sanctuary in its mountainous landscape.

It is a land fought over by Byzantine, Persian, Roman and Islamic empires as an important centre and a major component of the ancient Silk Trading Routes. Armenia was also the seat of ancient kings who embraced early Christianity in the 3rd century making Armenia the first sovereign nation in the world to adopt Christianity and a centre for pilgrimage and ecclesiastical architecture, culture and learning.

In modern times, Armenia was part of the Soviet Union and became independent in 1991. For the modern traveller Armenia is an enticing mix of prehistoric, ancient and modern history, culture and tradition within a stunning mountain landscape.



"I have been to over 120 countries and Armenia was one of the trips of my lifetime."

DAVE WENDLER



A JOURNEY UNLIKE ANY OTHER

An internationally led trip bringing together local guides from Humla with international guiding and textile and creative expertise.

- An extraordinary 13 night / 12 day exploration, into the ancient and modern culture and remote landscapes of rural Southern Armenia.
- The journey involves 6 days of pioneering trekking routes between ancient and modern villages far off the tourism beaten track
- Fully supported by vehicles and local staff and cooks but also hosted by local village communities and households.

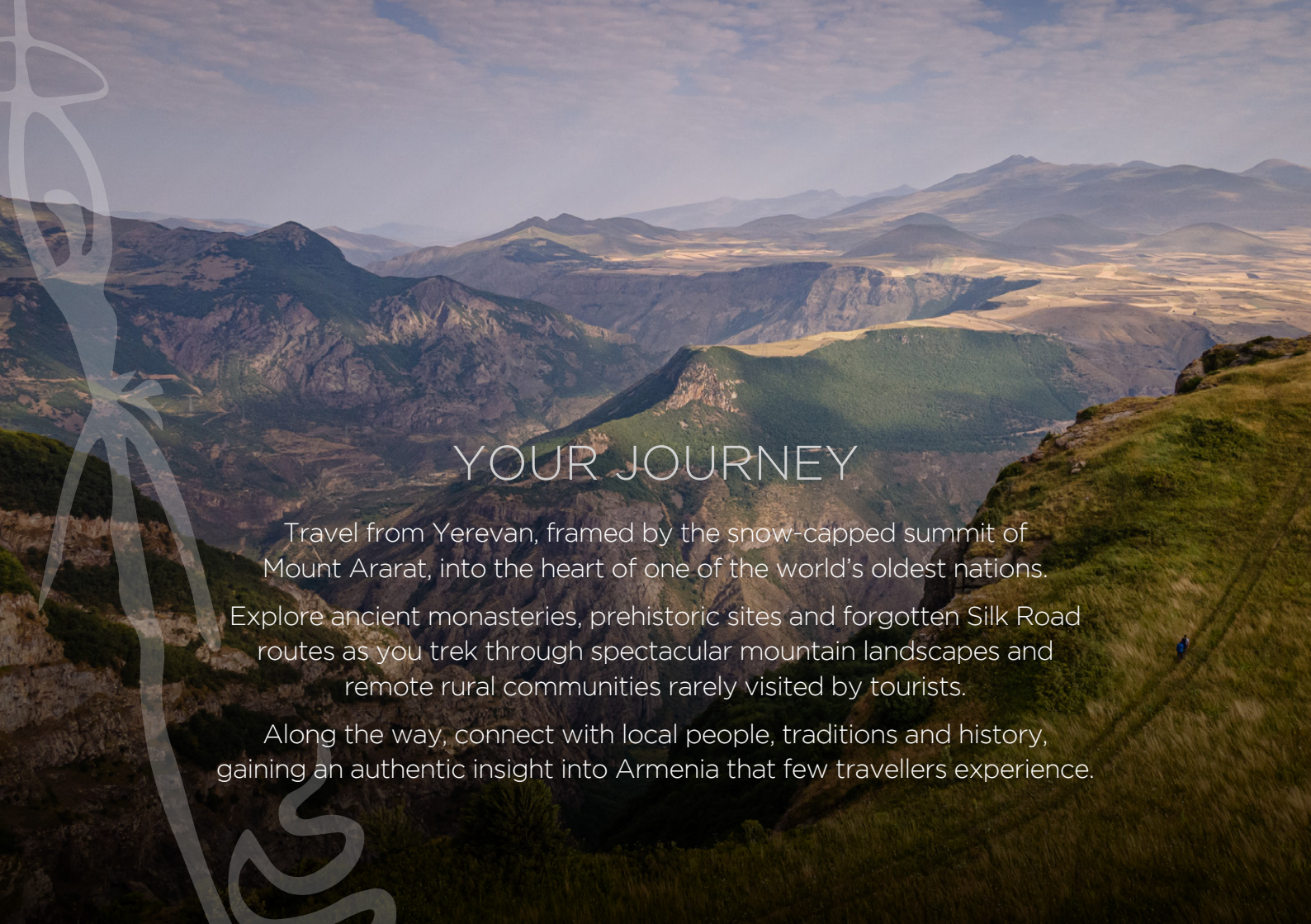
13 days / 12 nights
starting and finishing
in Yerevan



"This was an outstanding tour and right up there with the best we have ever had. This would appeal to anybody with a sense of adventure, looking for real interaction with local communities... highly recommended."

NICK HUDON



A wide-angle photograph of a mountainous landscape. In the foreground, a grassy hillside slopes down towards the right, with a narrow dirt path visible. A small figure of a person is walking along this path. The middle ground is filled with rugged, forested mountains and deep valleys. In the background, more mountain ranges stretch towards the horizon under a hazy, overcast sky. On the left side of the image, there is a faint, stylized white graphic of a person's silhouette, possibly a dancer or a traveler, with long, flowing lines.

YOUR JOURNEY

Travel from Yerevan, framed by the snow-capped summit of Mount Ararat, into the heart of one of the world's oldest nations.

Explore ancient monasteries, prehistoric sites and forgotten Silk Road routes as you trek through spectacular mountain landscapes and remote rural communities rarely visited by tourists.

Along the way, connect with local people, traditions and history, gaining an authentic insight into Armenia that few travellers experience.



A UNIQUE JOURNEY BUILT ON NOMADIC SKIES DEVELOPMENTAL WORK

Nomadic Skies founder, Gavin Anderson, has been undertaking work in rural development in Southern Armenia for the last 10 years. In 2017 Nomadic Skies worked with a small Armenian rural development organisation to investigate opportunities to develop tourism that benefits rural communities in the South of the country.

As a result of this work, Nomadic Skies Expeditions has linked up with local travel professionals, rural development organisations and local communities to offer a unique travel and trekking experience that will take you to the rural heart of this fascinating, beautiful, enticing mountainous country.



"So much more valuable than the mainstream tourist experience. One of the best holidays I have ever had."

GERIANT ROBERTS

HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR JOURNEY

- **Explore Yerevan**, Armenia's vibrant capital, set beneath the snow-capped peak of Mount Ararat and the perfect introduction to this ancient country.
- **Discover Armenia's Christian heritage**, visiting the iconic Khor Virap Monastery, the spectacular 13th-century Noravank Monastery and the dramatic 9th-century Tatev Monastery overlooking the Vorotan Gorge.
- **Step off the beaten track** to explore ancient castles, churches, medieval tombs, carved khachkars, pilgrim caves and historic trading routes.
- **Experience Armenia's 6,000-year-old winemaking tradition** in Areni, visiting one of the world's oldest known wineries and sampling modern Armenian wines.
- **Experience genuine Armenian hospitality** in partner villages, where local families share traditional food, stories and insights into the region's history, from cave-dwelling partisans and Soviet rule to rural life today.
- **Trek for four days** through the Southern Highlands and Vorotan Canyon on little-used mountain paths, following ancient pilgrimage and Silk Road routes through forests, river gorges, abandoned villages and remote farming communities.
- **Forage with local experts** for wild herbs and edible plants before enjoying a camp dinner in the atmospheric ghost village of Old Harzis.
- **Share home-cooked village meals** and dine beneath the stars while staying with local communities in Khachik, Vaghatin and Tanzatap.
- **Explore the haunting ghost villages** of Old Harzis and Old Khot, abandoned during the 20th century and slowly being reclaimed by nature.
- **Visit the remarkable cave settlement of Khndzoresk**, inhabited for over 1,000 years until the 1950s.
- **Discover the mystery of Karahunj**, a 7,000-year-old standing stone complex often described as Armenia's Stonehenge, set against a spectacular mountain backdrop.





YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 : ARRIVAL IN YEREVAN.

The minute you arrive in Yerevan you will realise that you are truly outside Europe. Set on the Ararat Plain beneath the snow-capped peaks of Mount Ararat, Armenia's capital combines a vibrant modern atmosphere with a rich ancient heritage. Your first night will be spent in a high-quality boutique hotel in the heart of the city.

DAY 2 : EXPLORING YEREVAN'S MARKETS, MUSEUMS & CULTURE

Today is dedicated to exploring Yerevan at your own pace. Highlights include Republic Square, the History Museum of Armenia, the Armenian Genocide Memorial and Museum, and the quirky Parajanov Museum (the rebel Armenian film maker and artist). A walk up the Cascade offers panoramic views across the city towards Mount Ararat and is particularly rewarding in the evening.

After dark, the city comes alive with the musical fountains of Republic Square and Yerevan's thriving café culture. In the evening, you will enjoy traditional

Armenian cuisine and music in one of the city's cultural restaurants. Overnight you will stay in Yerevan, in a high quality boutique hotel.

DAY 3: YEREVAN TO THE MOUNTAIN VILLAGE OF KHACHIK

Leaving Yerevan, you travel south towards Areni, a village with a winemaking tradition stretching back more than 6,000 years. En route, there is a stop at the iconic Khor Virap Monastery, one of Armenia's most important religious sites, with superb views of Mount Ararat on a clear day.

In Areni, you will visit the famous cave complex, home to one of the world's oldest known wine production sites, and enjoy a tasting at a specialist organic vineyard. After lunch, the journey continues into the mountains to the remote village of Khachik, close to the border with Nakhchivan. From its elevated position at 1,800 metres, the village enjoys outstanding views across the surrounding hills and the Ararat Valley.

You will have time to explore the village, visit a fascinating family-run museum and meet local residents before enjoying dinner with a village family. As the sun sets behind Mount Ararat, this is a wonderful introduction to the warmth and hospitality of rural Armenia.

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DAY 4: TREK KHACHIK TO NORAVANK (4-5 HOURS) & START OF LONG TREK AT VAGHATIN

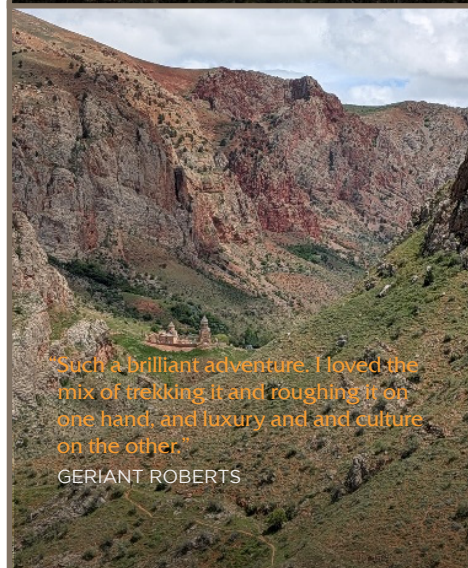
Khachik lies at the heart of the Arpa Protected Landscape, home to thriving populations of Bezoar goat, Caucasian brown bear and, more recently, the rare Caucasasian leopard (also known as the Persian leopard), Europe's last remaining big cat.

After a short morning transfer above the village, your walk begins with superb views towards Mount Ararat and the surrounding Armenian mountains. Following a steady ascent, the route descends towards the dramatic Amaghu Gorge, where leopards have recently been filmed.

The final section of the trek leads down to the road near Noravank Monastery, one of Armenia's finest medieval religious sites. Dating from the 13th century, the monastery is renowned for its beautifully carved khachkars (cross-stones), historic buildings and spectacular setting among red cliffs.

From Noravank, a two-hour transfer takes you deeper into the mountains to the village of Vaghatin, where the longer section of your trek begins. Situated on ancient pilgrimage and Silk Road routes, the village has a fascinating history. Nearby caves once sheltered pilgrims and later served as refuges for partisans resisting Soviet rule. Your camp is set on the old pilgrimage trail overlooking the village. In the evening, you will enjoy dinner with local hosts and a demonstration of traditional Armenian bread-making in a tonir, a wood-fired underground oven.

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"Such a brilliant adventure. I loved the mix of trekking it and roughing it on one hand, and luxury and and culture on the other."

GERIANT ROBERTS



"Our trip to Armenia with Nomadic Skies could not have been better. We were able to experience the beauty of the landscape and the people, often well off the tourist path."

LAURA TIEHAN

DAY 5: TREK FROM VAGHATIN TO OLD HARZIS GHOST VILLAGE (6-7 HOURS)

This morning begins with a visit to nearby Vorotnavank Monastery before heading to the start of the Vorotan Canyon. Following the river on foot, you pass through a beautiful and little-visited landscape of forest, wildflowers and abundant birdlife. This section of the canyon is visited only by Nomadic Skies groups, adding to its sense of remoteness.

One family still lives within the canyon, combining farming and fish-rearing, and there may be an opportunity to stop for coffee before beginning the climb to Old Harzis. Abandoned in the mid-20th century, this atmospheric village sits dramatically above the gorge. Among the ruins are ancient tombs, carved stones, a surviving church and the remains of traditional homes.

After exploring the site, you arrive at camp, which enjoys outstanding views across the gorge, cliffs and surrounding mountains. Dinner is cooked over an open fire before a night beneath Armenia's star-filled skies.

DAY 6: WILD FORAGING & EXPLORING OLD HARZIS

Today offers a more relaxed pace and a chance to explore the landscape around Old Harzis with local experts. Accompanied by villagers with extensive knowledge of the area, you will identify wildflowers, herbs and edible plants that flourish in the surrounding hills.

Some of the herbs and plants collected during the day will be incorporated into your evening meal by the camp cooks. The evening is spent with local hosts and guides, learning more about the history of Harzis and life in this remote corner of Armenia.

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DAY 7: TREK FROM OLD HARZIS TO TANZATAP (6-7 HOURS)

One of the most rewarding walking days of the journey begins with a descent from Old Harzis, passing an ancient Muslim cemetery and crossing the Vorotan River via a beautiful medieval bridge.

The trail then climbs through forested slopes on the southern side of the canyon, offering spectacular views of the gorge and the peaks of southern Armenia. Reaching Tatev, you have time to visit its famous 9th-century monastery, dramatically perched on the edge of the canyon. Although a popular destination, it remains one of Armenia's most impressive historic sites.

Leaving Tatev behind, an old path leads down to the village of Tanzatap. Despite its proximity to the monastery, the village feels a world apart, with few visitors beyond the occasional walker. Your camp is located below Tatev Monastery, whose illuminated walls create a memorable backdrop after dark. Dinner is hosted by a local family with excellent views towards the monastery.

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DAY 8: TREK FROM TANZATAP TO BADZRAVAN (4-5 HOURS)

Today's route follows a high trail through mountain pastures and forests. These upland grazing areas are central to village life, supporting the cattle and sheep that provide a livelihood for many local families.

Crossing these open pastures, you are rewarded with wide-ranging views before descending to Badzravan, which is reached in the early afternoon. Although now a quiet village far from the main tourist routes, Badzravan once stood on important pilgrimage and trading routes. Nearby are the remains of an ancient caravanserai that once provided shelter to merchants and travellers.

Your final campsite overlooks the eastern reaches of the Vorotan Canyon. Those wishing to walk further can visit a nearby waterfall and the ruins of Old Badzravan, destroyed by earthquake and landslide around two centuries ago. Remarkably, the village church survived untouched and is still regarded locally as a place of miracles. Tonight is your final camp dinner of the trek.

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DAY 9: TREK TO OLD KHOT & TRANSFER TO GORIS (3-4 HOURS)

The final day of trekking descends once more into the Vorotan Canyon. Following village tracks through forest and across the river, you make your way to Old Khot, arguably Armenia's most impressive abandoned settlement.

Like Old Harzis, the village was gradually deserted during the 20th century, partly due to concerns about earthquakes and its precarious position beneath towering cliffs. The remains of substantial houses hint at a once-prosperous community. Today, the ruins cling dramatically to the steep slopes while nature steadily reclaims the site.

After exploring Old Khot, you continue to the modern village of Khot, where transport awaits for the journey to Goris. Comfortable beds, hot showers and a celebratory group meal provide a welcome contrast to the previous nights under canvas.

DAY 10: EXPLORATION OF THE GORIS AREA AND BUS TO ANCIENT YEGHEGIS

After a relaxed breakfast, there is time to explore Goris before travelling to the remarkable cave settlement of Khndzoresk. Inhabited until the 1950s, the settlement once supported thousands of residents living in homes carved directly into the volcanic rock. Today it is accessed via a dramatic suspension bridge.

Continuing north, you visit the mysterious standing stones of Karahunj (Zorats Karer). Often referred to as Armenia's Stonehenge, the site is thought by some to have astronomical significance, although its true purpose remains uncertain. Whatever their origin, the stones create a striking scene against the surrounding highlands.

The journey continues to Yeghegis, once a seat of Armenian kings and still rich in medieval churches, carved khachkars and ancient monuments. Tonight you stay at a local eco-hotel and celebrate the near-completion of your journey.

DAY 11: EXPLORING YEGHEGIS & OPTIONAL HIKE TO SMBATABERD FORTRESS AND TSHAGAKHATS KAR MONASTERY.

This morning offers the opportunity for a final walk into the hills above Yeghegis. The route leads to the impressive fortress of Smbataberd and the atmospheric ruins of Tsaghats Kar Monastery, both occupying commanding positions high above the valley.

Dating back to at least the 5th century, Smbataberd was extensively rebuilt during the medieval period and offers magnificent views across the surrounding mountains. After returning to Yeghegis, there is time to explore the village before a second night in the area.

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Every Nomadic Skies Journey is unique and takes advantage of seasonal activities ceremonies and opportunities that arise with our local contacts and interaction.

DAY 12: A FINAL DAY IN YEREVAN

Your final full day is left free to relax, enjoy good food, explore further or shop for souvenirs. In the evening, you gather with the local support team for a farewell meal and a final celebration of the journey

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DAY 13: DEPARTURE FROM ARMENIA

Transfer for your onward journey and departure from Armenia.



"Nomadic Skies offers a unique opportunity to have an authentic, local, off-the-beaten path experience in Armenia. This was our second journey with them and we absolutely loved it."

LEIGH & MIKE GIBBONS



YOUR TRAVEL & BOOKING INFORMATION

GROUP SIZE & LEADERSHIP:

8 to 12 members. The expedition will be led by Gavin Anderson (founder of Nomadic Skies) and local expedition manager Gevorg Gasparyan – an experienced Armenian mountain leader and expedition organiser.

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DURATION & ORGANISATION:

The 13 night/ 12 day expedition will be a journey from Yerevan by vehicle into the spectacular and ancient South of the country. The journey includes 6 nights in hotels (4 nights in Yerevan - 2 on arrival and 2 on departure, one in the southern town of Goris and one in the ancient village of Yeghegis) and 5 nights supported camping. - 4WDs with local staff will set up camps at our designated overnight spots before our arrival by foot.

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LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:

Moderate 6 days of trekking and hiking with an average of 5 to 6 hours walking a day. Some of this will be on small and rough paths.

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CONSUMER PROTECTION

Nomadic Skies is a full member of the UK Travel Trust Association (TTA).

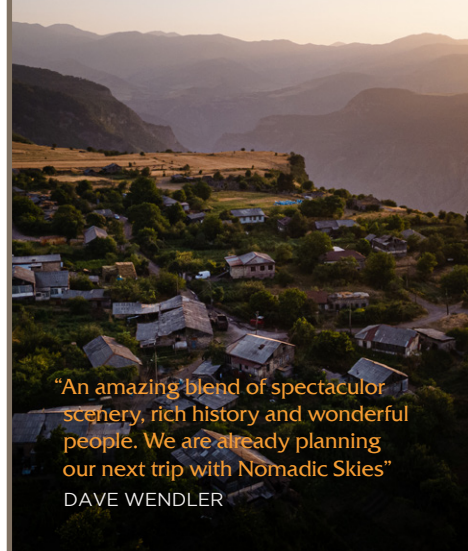
All payments are protected under the TTA Consumer Protection Scheme, and you will receive a TTA Protection Certificate when your first payment is made.

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COST

See our website for current costs. Prices are based on shared accommodation. A single supplement of US\$250 applies if you require a private room where available.

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"An amazing blend of spectacular scenery, rich history and wonderful people. We are already planning our next trip with Nomadic Skies"
DAVE WENDLER

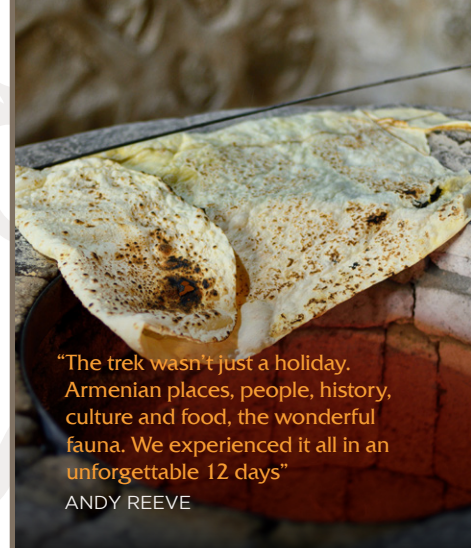


What's Included

- Airport transfers from Zvartnots International Airport Yerevan.
- 4 nights bed and breakfast accommodation in a boutique hotel in Yerevan.
- 2 nights in a boutique eco-hotel in the rural village of Yeghegis.
- 5 night supported camp accommodation during our trek.
- Evening meals in Yerevan.
- All meals during our travel and trekking outside Yerevan.
- Transport outside Yerevan.
- Fully supported camp trekking team.
- International and local guides during the expedition.
- Advice and support for flight booking and pre-travel preparation.
- 100% consumer financial protection through the UK Travel Trust Association.
- International flights (flights from London start at around £300 return and involve at least one flight transfer).

And What's Not

- Lunch during our time in Yerevan (to provide you with more flexibility for exploration).
- Personal travel insurance.
- Tips or gratuities for local staff.



"The trek wasn't just a holiday. Armenian places, people, history, culture and food, the wonderful fauna. We experienced it all in an unforgettable 12 days"

ANDY REEVE





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