

Khor Virap, Noravank, Areni village, winery (9-10 hours)

Available - daily

Let's go to the Ararat Valley - the main center of fertility and winemaking in Armenia.

The first stop will be one of the main shrines of Armenia - **Khor Virap Monastery**. Located near the Turkish border, the monastery offers a wonderful view of the biblical **Mount Ararat**. The monastery is located above the underground prison, in which, according to legend, the Armenian king Trdat III imprisoned St. Gregory the Illuminator before he was converted to Christianity by him. The entrance to the underground prison, which has survived to this day, is located in the chapel of St. Gregory, built in 1661. The depth of the underground prison is from 3 to 6 meters. The monastery served as the spiritual center of the Armenian Apostolic Church, where the residence of the Catholicos of all Armenians was located.

An hour's drive from Khor Virap, on the ledge of a narrow winding gorge, is another **Noravank monastery**. Surrounded by sheer red cliffs, the monastery includes a one-of-a-kind two-story church of the Holy Mother of God. On the territory of the monastery, as well as on the walls, you will see a lot of images with traditional Armenian ornaments. Here, on the walls of the vestibule of the Church of St. Karapet, there is a unique **bas-relief depicting Father God**. With his right hand he blesses the Crucifixion, and with his left hand he holds the head of Adam with a dove soaring above it, symbolizing the Holy Spirit. On the territory of the complex there are also **khachkars** created, among other things, by one of the most famous khachkar masters Momik (Khachkar is a type of Armenian architectural monuments, which is a stone stele with a carved image of a cross. The word khachkar is formed from the Armenian roots "khach" - "cross", and "kar" - "stone").



During the tour we will also visit the **Cave of Birds**, which consists of 3 halls and has an area of 500 m². It was in this cave that the world's oldest leather shoes were found, which are more than 5500 years old, a women's skirt attributed to 3900 BC, as well as the world's **oldest winery** (dating back to the 4th millennium BC) .

After the monasteries, it's time to enjoy good Armenian wine. We will visit the **village of Areni**, where many small and medium-sized wineries are located. In one of the **wineries** we will have a guided tour with a tasting.

Price for 1 person, in US dollars (depends on the group size)

Price	Number of participants							
	1	2	3	4	5-6	7-10	11-15	16-20
Full program	263	148	115	95	92	80	66	58
Without winery visit	230	115	82	62	59	47	33	25