

## Echmiadzin, Museum "Treasures of Echmiadzin", Zvartnots, Alluria winery (6-7 hours)

Available - every day except Monday

The day will be mainly devoted to the Christian culture of Armenia. We will visit the spiritual center of Armenians **Saint Ejmiatsin**. The first stop will be the **Church of St. Hripsime**. Hripsime, a martyr, for spreading Christianity in Armenia and refusing to marry Trdat III, was tortured and killed. A temple was erected on the site of the death of St. Hripsime in the 7th century. This temple is also a striking example of cruciform central-domed structures.

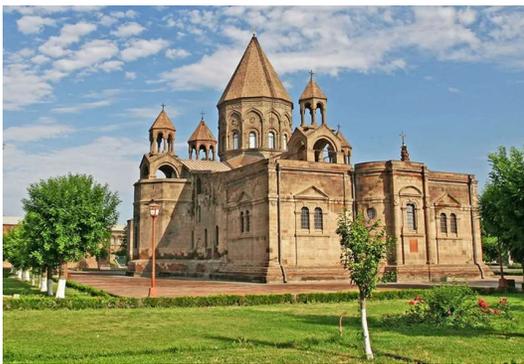
The **Mother cathedral** (the cathedral is closed for restoration, let's take a look at the outside) is one of the oldest Christian buildings in the world. The temple was founded in the 4th century, immediately after the adoption of Christianity in 301, at the place indicated by the first Catholicos Gregory the Illuminator. It is the Etchmiadzin Cathedral that is the spiritual center of the Armenian Apostolic Church, as well as the residence of the Catholicos of All Armenians.

The **museum "Treasures of Etchmiadzin"** presents unique holy relics. One of the most famous treasures is St. Geghard (placed in a silver reliquary) that pierced the side of Christ, the **relics of Noah's Ark** (also placed in a reliquary created in 1968), as well as many other valuable works of art.

In Etchmiadzin we will also visit **the Alluria winery**, where high quality wine is produced. We will walk through the winery, in good weather we will also walk through the vineyards, after which there will be a tasting of the best wines of the manufacturer. If desired, a traditional lunch will be served there, at the winery.

On the way back, we will stop by the **Temple of Zvartnots** (or the Temple of Vigilant Forces or Sleeping Angels). The temple was founded in the 7th century and was the largest temple of early medieval Armenian architecture. In the 10th century, the temple collapsed during an earthquake. The ruins of Zvartnots were discovered by excavations in 1901-1907.

The Cathedral, the churches of Ejmiatsin and the ruins of the Zvartnots temple are included in the UNESCO list of World Cultural Heritage sites.



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, with the lunch	230	147	93	110	105	96	88	84
Full program without lunch	197	114	60	77	72	63	55	51