

Armenian Heritage Journey through Eastern Anatolia – 12 Days / 11 Nights

Discover the ancient Armenian kingdoms, sacred monasteries and cultural heritage of Eastern Türkiye on this 12-day, 11-night journey from Kars to Diyarbakır.

Duration: 12 Days 11 Nights

Category: Turkiye Tours

TOUR PROGRAMME

DAY 1

Arrival in Kars | Gateway to Eastern Anatolia (Welcome Dinner)

Arrival at Kars Airport, where you will be welcomed by your professional tour guide and transferred to your hotel. Depending on arrival time, enjoy a leisurely introductory walk through the historic streets of Kars, discovering its distinctive stone architecture and the cultural influences that shaped the city. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Kars was home to Armenian, Turkish, Russian and other communities, leaving behind a remarkable architectural and cultural legacy. Enjoy a welcome dinner featuring traditional regional cuisine. Overnight in Kars.

DAY 2

Kars | Armenian Heritage and Historic Architecture (Breakfast, Dinner)

After breakfast, begin exploring the historical and architectural heritage of Kars. Visit the 10th-century Church of the Holy Apostles, an important surviving monument of Bagratid Armenian architecture, today known as Kümbet Mosque.

Continue to Kars Castle for panoramic views over the city and its surrounding valleys. Explore the historic town, including its stone-built streets and surviving examples of 19th-century architecture. Visit Kars Museum to gain a

deeper understanding of the region's archaeology, history and cultural heritage. Enjoy some free time in the afternoon to explore the city at your own pace. Overnight in Kars.

DAY 3

Ani | The Lost Medieval Armenian Capital (Breakfast, Dinner)

Today is dedicated to one of the most significant highlights of the journey: the ancient city of Ani. Once the magnificent capital of the Bagratid Armenian Kingdom, Ani developed into an important centre of trade, religion, architecture and culture along the Silk Road.

Explore this UNESCO World Heritage Site, including:
- Ani Cathedral, designed by the celebrated architect Trdat.
- Church of St. Gregory of Tigran Honents, renowned for its extraordinary medieval frescoes.
- Church of the Holy Redeemer (Surp Prkich).
- Remains of Gagikashen Church.
- Ancient city walls and monumental gateways.
- Panoramic viewpoints overlooking the Akhurian River gorge and the Armenian border.

Enjoy a relaxed visit, allowing sufficient time for photography, historical interpretation and appreciation of the landscape. Return to Kars in the afternoon. Overnight in Kars.

DAY 4

Kars to Doğubayazıt | In the Shadow of Mount Ararat (Breakfast, Dinner)

After breakfast, depart Kars and travel south towards Doğubayazıt, passing through the dramatic landscapes of Eastern Anatolia. Along the way, enjoy views of Mount Ararat, a mountain deeply connected to Armenian cultural identity, religious traditions and regional history. Visit the magnificent İshak Paşa Palace, an extraordinary architectural complex overlooking the surrounding plains. Explore the palace and learn about its Ottoman, Persian and regional architectural influences. Weather permitting, enjoy panoramic views of Mount Ararat in the late afternoon. Overnight in Doğubayazıt.

DAY 5

Doğubayazıt to Van | Landscapes of Ancient Vaspurakan (Breakfast, Dinner)

Depart Doğubayazıt after breakfast and continue towards Van. Travel through the eastern Anatolian landscape, stopping at Muradiye Waterfall for photographs and a short break. Continue to Van, historically an important centre of the Armenian Kingdom of Vaspurakan. Upon arrival, enjoy a relaxed introduction to the city and its lakeside surroundings. Free time in the afternoon. Overnight in Van.

DAY 6

Van | Armenian Monasteries and the Ancient City (Breakfast, Dinner)

Begin the day with a visit to the historic Varagavank Monastery, also known as Yedi Kilise, subject to local access

conditions. This important Armenian religious complex once played a major role in the spiritual and cultural life of the region. Continue exploring the historical landscape of Van, including the ancient Van Fortress and the remains of Old Van.

Discover the city's layered history, from the Urartian Kingdom to the medieval Armenian communities and later periods. The visit also provides an opportunity to learn about the former Armenian neighbourhoods and religious institutions of Van. Return to the hotel for a relaxing evening. Overnight in Van.

DAY 7

Akdamar Island | The Sacred Church of the Holy Cross (Breakfast, Dinner)

After breakfast, drive towards Gevaş and take a boat across Lake Van to Akdamar Island. Visit the magnificent 10th-century Church of the Holy Cross, commissioned by King Gagik I of Vaspurakan. Admire its exceptional Armenian architecture and elaborate exterior stone reliefs depicting biblical stories, religious symbolism, animals and scenes of medieval life. Enjoy time to explore the island and appreciate the beautiful surroundings of Lake Van. Your guide will explain the historical and religious significance of Akdamar and its importance within Armenian Christian heritage.

Return by boat to the mainland and continue to Van. Overnight in Van.

DAY 8

Van to Muş | Across Lake Van and the Historic Armenian Heartland (Breakfast, Dinner)

After breakfast, depart Van and travel along the southern shores of Lake Van towards Tatvan. Enjoy beautiful views of the lake and surrounding mountains. Continue through the historic region towards Muş, once an important centre of Armenian religious and cultural life. Depending on timing, enjoy a short stop in the Tatvan or Bitlis area before continuing to Muş.

Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel and enjoy a relaxing afternoon. Overnight in Muş.

DAY 9

Muş | The Sacred Monasteries of the Plain of Mush (Breakfast, Dinner)

Today is dedicated to exploring the Armenian religious heritage of the historic Plain of Mush. Begin with an excursion to the site of Surp Karapet Monastery, also known as Glakavank, near Çengilli village. Once one of the most revered Armenian monasteries, Surp Karapet was an important pilgrimage destination and spiritual centre. Although little of the original complex survives, the location remains historically and culturally significant. Continue, subject to accessibility and weather conditions, towards the remains of Surp Arakelots Monastery, the Monastery of the Holy Apostles. Discover the history of these religious institutions and their role in Armenian cultural and spiritual life. Return to Muş in the afternoon. Overnight in Muş.

DAY 10

Muş to Diyarbakır | Historic Bitlis and the Cultural Crossroads of Anatolia (Breakfast, Dinner)

After breakfast, depart Muş and travel towards Bitlis. Explore the historic town, known for its dramatic setting, stone architecture and multicultural past. Bitlis was once home to Armenian, Kurdish and other communities, contributing to the region's rich historical identity. Enjoy a walk through the old town and admire the views of Bitlis Castle. After lunch, continue to Diyarbakır, one of the most historically significant cities of southeastern Anatolia. Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel. Overnight in Diyarbakır.

DAY 11

Diyarbakır | Armenian and Syriac Heritage (Breakfast, Farewell Dinner)

Today, explore the historic religious and cultural heritage of Diyarbakır. Begin with a visit to Surp Giragos Armenian Church, one of the most significant surviving Armenian religious monuments in the region, subject to opening arrangements. Learn about the Armenian community that once played an important role in the city's commercial, religious and cultural life. Continue through the historic streets of the old city, exploring its traditional basalt architecture.

Where access permits, visit Surp Sarkis Armenian Church and the Syriac Orthodox Church of the Virgin Mary. Discover the cultural and religious traditions of the communities that shaped the city over centuries. Enjoy free time in the afternoon. Overnight in Diyarbakır.

DAY 12

Diyarbakır | Ancient City Walls and Departure (Breakfast)

After breakfast, enjoy a final exploration of Diyarbakır. Visit the historic city walls, part of the UNESCO-listed Diyarbakır Fortress and Hevsel Gardens Cultural Landscape. Continue to the historic Ten-Eyed Bridge overlooking the Tigris River.

Enjoy some free time for photography, relaxation and final reflections on the journey. At the appropriate time, transfer to Diyarbakır Airport for your onward flight. End of services.

PRICING

Price	**Contact us for price**

HOTEL PROGRAMME

Day	City	Hotel	Stars
1	Kars	Cheltikov Hotel	★★★★

2	Kars	Cheltikov Hotel	★★★★
3	Kars	Cheltikov Hotel	★★★★
4	Doğubayazıt	Atlıhan Plus Hotel	★★★★
5	Van	Elite World Van	★★★★★
6	Van	Elite World Van	★★★★★
7	Van	Elite World Van	★★★★★
8	Muş	Grand Hotel	★★★★
9	Muş	Grand Hotel	★★★★
10	Diyarbakır	Anemon Hotel	★★★★
11	Diyarbakır	Anemon Hotel	★★★★

INCLUDED IN TOUR FARE

✓ Tour director.
✓ Deluxe air-conditioned transportation with free Wi-Fi access.
✓ Breakfasts, lunches and dinners as indicated in the daily itinerary.
✓ 11 nights of accommodation in the hotels listed in the itinerary.
✓ Entrance fees where admission is indicated as included in the itinerary.
✓ Parking charges, highway tolls and local taxes.
✓ 1.5 L of water per four guests during meals and 0.5 L per person per day on the bus.
✓ Tips for hotel porterage at check-in and check-out and for service at local restaurants.
✓ The 2% accommodation tax applicable from 1 January 2023.
✓ One complimentary single room for the tour manager for groups of 10 or more guests.

NOT INCLUDED IN TOUR FARE

- Meals, transfers, tours and services not listed in the itinerary.
- Items of a personal nature.
- Tips for service staff.
- Airport porterage and baggage trolleys.