

15th ANNUAL ADVISORY FORUM ON
THE CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

POST-FORUM OPTIONAL TOURS | DISCOVERING ARMENIA BEYOND YEREVAN

September 26, 2026





At a Glance

Following the Forum, participants are invited to continue their encounter with Armenia through a selection of optional full-day excursions. The four routes move through contrasting landscapes and layers of heritage—from the forests of Tavush and the shores of Lake Sevan to the monasteries of Vayots Dzor and Syunik.

The tours are operated separately from the Forum programme and require individual registration via the Tour Operator Hyur Service. The individual tour links you can find at each dedicated tour page.

To book and register for a tour you contact directly Hyur Service directly at:

- WhatsApp: +374 98 40 50 89
- E-mail: contact@hyurservice.com

Please CC us and mention the Cultural Routes Forum when contacting them for tour registration.

Tour	Route	Departure Time	Duration
1	Lake Sevan • Sevanavank • Dilijan	10:00	9 -10 hours
2	Garni • Geghard • Symphony of Stone	10:00	5-6 hours
3	Khor Virap • Noravank • Tatev	08:30	14-15 hours

Tour 1



Forests, Monasteries and Lake Sevan

Yerevan → Lake Sevan → Sevanavank → Dilijan → Lunch stop → Goshavank → Haghartsin → Yerevan

This route leads north-east from Yerevan across two contrasting regions, from the open shores of Lake Sevan in Gegharkunik to the wooded hills of Tavush. The journey begins at Lake Sevan, one of the largest high-altitude freshwater lakes in Eurasia, and continues to Sevanavank, a 9th-century monastic complex on the Sevan Peninsula with sweeping views over the water and the surrounding mountains.

The route then crosses the mountains to Dilijan, often called the "Armenian Switzerland", for a short stop and an optional lunch. From there, the day turns to two of Tavush's best-known monastic complexes. Goshavank, a 12th–13th-century monastery, stands among green hills and is closely associated with medieval Armenian scholarship and khachkar carving. Haghartsin, dating from the 10th–13th centuries, is set deep in the forest of Dilijan National Park, where its churches and refectory make a fitting close to the day.

Practical information

- Departure from Yerevan in the morning; the full route takes approximately 9–10 hours.
- Admission tickets are included in the operator's standard tour.
- Lunch is optional and paid separately.
- Comfortable footwear is recommended, as the visit involves some walking and stairs (about 200 steps at Sevanavank and a downhill path of roughly 600 m at Haghartsin).
- Layers are advised, since it can be windy by the lake and cooler in the forested areas.

Tour information and registration: [Hyr Service](#)

Tour 2



Sacred Landscapes and Living Heritage Garni • Geghard • Lavash Baking

Yerevan → Arch of Charents → Garni Temple → Symphony of Stones → Geghard Monastery → Lavash baking → Yerevan

The journey begins with a brief stop at the Arch of Charents, known for its views of Mount Ararat, and continues to Garni, home to Armenia's only surviving pagan temple. Built in the 1st century and dedicated to the sun god Mihr, this Greco-Roman colonnade stands on a triangular cliff above the gorge of the Azat River.

From Garni, the route descends into the gorge to the Symphony of Stones, a wall of basalt columns whose regular, organ-like forms were shaped by ancient volcanic activity. The excursion then continues to Geghard, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where the 13th-century monastic complex is partly carved into the rock of the surrounding cliffs and its chambers, churches and carved details are set into the mountainside.

The day ends with a traditional lavash baking masterclass. Lavash, the thin Armenian flatbread baked in a tonir, is inscribed on UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage and remains central to the country's daily life and hospitality.

Practical information

- Departure from Yerevan in the morning; the full route takes approximately 5–6 hours.
- Admission tickets and the lavash baking experience are included in the operator's standard tour.
- This is a half-day route, so it does not include a lunch stop.
- Comfortable footwear is recommended, as the visit involves walking and uneven ground at the sites.
- The tour operates in all weather conditions, so clothing appropriate to the day's forecast is advised.

Tour information and registration: [Hyr Service](#)

Tour 3



A Journey to Southern Armenia Khor Virap • Noravank • Tatev • Wings of Tatev

Yerevan → Khor Virap → Noravank → Lunch stop → Tatev Monastery → Wings of Tatev Ropeway → Yerevan

The most extensive of the optional excursions travels south from the Ararat Valley through Vayots Dzor to Syunik, linking three major monastic landscapes in a single journey. The first stop is Khor Virap, followed by Noravank, a 13th-century monastic complex dramatically set among the red cliffs of Vayots Dzor.

From Noravank, the route continues south toward Tatev Monastery, a major medieval spiritual centre overlooking the Vorotan Gorge. The experience concludes with the Wings of Tatev ropeway, crossing the gorge between Tatev and Halidzor and offering a striking contemporary way of approaching this historic landscape.

Across a full day of travel, the route reveals the scale and geographical diversity of Armenia: the open Ararat plain, the red-rock valleys of Vayots Dzor and the deep gorges of Syunik. Monastic heritage is encountered not as a series of isolated monuments, but as part of landscapes historically shaped by faith, movement and settlement.

Practical information

- Departure from Yerevan at 08:30; total duration approximately 14–15 hours.
- The itinerary includes Khor Virap, Noravank, Tatev Monastery and the Wings of Tatev ropeway.
- Lunch is optional and paid separately.
- This is the longest excursion and includes substantial driving time.

Participants choosing this route should be prepared for a very long full-day programme.
Tour information and registration: [Hyur Service](#)

Practical Information



Practical information

The four excursions are full-day group tours departing from Yerevan. According to information provided by the tour operator, standard tours are conducted in both English and Russian and include the services of a professional guide, transport in an air-conditioned vehicle, bottled water and snacks, entrance fees, and passenger insurance. Inclusions may vary depending on the itinerary.

Participants are advised to check the specific page for each excursion before registering to review the latest practical information, availability, inclusions, and cancellation policies. As temperatures in certain regions may be cooler than in Yerevan, comfortable walking shoes and weather-appropriate clothing are recommended. Modest attire is advised when visiting churches and monasteries.

Important: these excursions are optional and take place outside the official Forum program. Participation requires separate registration with the tour operator. Excursion schedules and logistics are subject to confirmation by the operator.