



AMELIA STEWART TRAVEL

Journeys for the curious

GORGEOUS GEORGIA WITH AMELIA

25 MAY – 1 JUNE 2024

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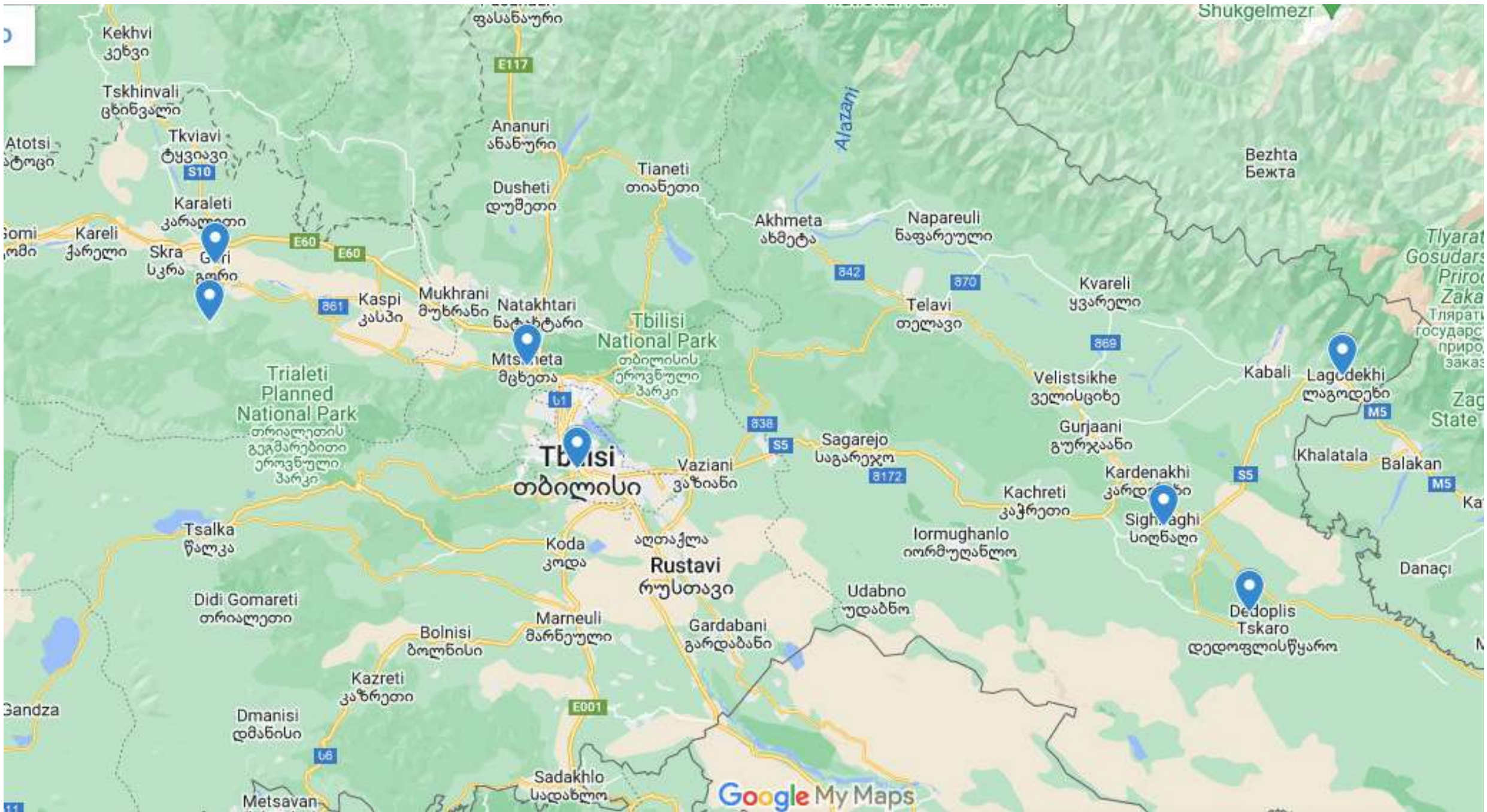
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Itinerary Overview

Date	Location	Accommodation & Room Type	Basis
Days 1 - 4	Tbilisi	Amante/Old House Hotel or similar	B/B
Days 4 - 7	Sighnaghi	Lost Ridge Inn or similar	B/B
Days 7 - 8	Tbilisi	Amante/Old House Hotel or similar	B/B







Tour Introduction

'WHEREVER WE HAD BEEN in Russia, in Moscow, in the Ukraine, in Stalingrad, the magical name of Georgia came up constantly. People who had never been there, and who possibly never could go there, spoke of Georgia with a kind of longing and a great admiration. They spoke of Georgians as supermen, as great drinkers, great dancers, great musicians, great workers and lovers. And they spoke of the country in the Caucasus and around the Black Sea as a kind of second heaven. Indeed, we began to believe that most Russians hope that if they live very good and virtuous lives, they will go not to heaven, but to Georgia, when they die. It is a country favored in climate, very rich in soil, and it has its own little ocean. Great service to the state is rewarded by a trip to Georgia.'

John Steinbeck: A Russian Journal

This tailor-made eight-day tour of Georgia is indeed a little slice of heaven; an insight into a country with an extraordinary history and considerable artistic talent and one in which I've grown to love having spent two and a half years now living in Tbilisi. Your journey will start in the fascinating capital with a deep dive into the historical and cultural aspects of the city. We do some wonderful day trips out to Mtskeheta and Gori before journeying to the Kakheti region for beautiful Monasteries and wineries. There will be day trips to the scenic landscapes of Eagle Canyon and Lagodeki national parks for bird watching and gentle walking and we spend time in the region enjoying the markets and bazaars. The late great chef Anthony Bourdain was particularly taken with the polyphonic singing in Georgia which he described as '... Hauntingly beautiful and otherworldly — kind of like Georgia.'



Amelia holding a kantsi (Georgian drinking horn)



YOUR TOUR LEADER

AMELIA STEWART

I first visited Georgia thirteen years ago and was instantly hooked. The people, the culture, the landscapes - it was a glimpse into a world quite different from the Northern African/Middle Eastern countries that I'd become so accustomed to. I had Georgia on my mind and vowed to return at some point. I've been living in Tbilisi now for two and a half years now, and I love it. The country has changed of course since my first visit, but the people haven't. Georgia now buzzes with possibility. Vast empty Soviet complexes have been turned into thriving cultural and artistic hubs in the capital, the burgeoning food scene is quite astonishing and with a fascinating and complex history and a determined and passionate people, there is never a dull moment. You could say that Georgia is certainly starting to get noticed. Now is the time to visit ☺

During my travels in Georgia, I've had many adventures and met some wonderful people - who now help weave extraordinary experiences into my tours that most visitors wouldn't get the opportunity to experience. During this short but very sweet journey we'll get under the skin a bit - see the other Tbilisi. We'll visit some of the small family run wineries, enjoy delicious home cooked meals and visit off the beaten track Monasteries. The Kakheti region is glorious in Spring - the best time for birds and flowers. I much look forward to hosting you here.

I write stories from Georgia for BBC radio that you can listen to [HERE](#).



Detailed Itinerary

 Day 1 /Sat 25th May

Arrive Tbilisi

 Flights TBC
There are many flight options to consider – please ask for further details.

On arrival in Tbilisi you will be met by Amelia and transferred to your hotel in the capital to settle in. Depending on your arrival time, there will be an orientation tour before supper at a lovely local restaurant before enjoying your first night in the capital. *Airport transfer time approx. 30mins*

 Accommodation: Tbilisi

 Day 2 /Sun 26th May

Explore Old Tbilisi

Today we'll be sightseeing the capital, with a walk through the old town with visits to Metechi church (12th – 13th Century), the district of the Sulfur bathhouses and Sioni Cathedral – the main church of Tbilisi. Narikhala Fortress has great views overlooking the city, and you will visit the National Museum. Some of the tour will be on foot: the best way to walk through the cobbled streets of the Old Town and along Rustaveli Avenue. There will be a few 'insider' surprises along the way today 😊

 Accommodation: Tbilisi



*Svetitskoveli Cathedral by
Amelia*

Detailed Itinerary


 Day 3 / Mon 27th May

Tbilisi – Mtskheta – Ateni - Gori – Tbilisi

We set off north from the capital to explore Mtskheta, one of the oldest towns in Georgia, and its religious heart. Located at the confluence of the Aragvi and Mtkvari rivers, Mtskheta was a crossroad of many trade routes from the 3rd Century BC. Jvari Church (6th Century) is a masterpiece of the early medieval period. Visit the Svetitskoveli Cathedral before we journey north west to Ateni for lunch. We continue to Gori: Stalin's birthplace. Visit the Stalin museum and the house he grew up as well as a local ceramicist before returning to Tbilisi in the late afternoon.

Transfer time approx. 2hrs: 45 mins

 **Accommodation:** Tbilisi

 Day 4 / Tues 28th May

Tbilisi – Signaghi

We depart Tbilisi this morning to head east into the wine growing Kakheti region and the pretty town of Signaghi. We'll stroll the back streets of town, look into the Pirosmani Museum and get up onto the city walls for views overlooking the valley. We'll visit some local craftsmen and women before continuing to Bodbe nunnery. After lunch, we journey to our guesthouse to check in for the following three nights.

Transfer time approx: 2.5hrs

 **Accommodation:** Signaghi




Detailed Itinerary

 Day 5/Wed 29th May

Sighnaghi – Eagle Canyon

After breakfast, we head south to Eagle Canyon where a trail leads you along limestone cliffs dotted with rare endemic flora. The canyon opens up with fantastic views along the ridge down into deep forest – a place to easily while away a few hours watching the griffon vultures nesting, as well as black storks and pheasant. It's a beautiful spot and this time of year makes it perfect for bird watching and plant spotting. On to lunch and a local winery to learn about the process of qvevri wine making before returning to our hotel. *Transfer time: Approx 1.5hrs*

 **Accommodation:** Sighnaghi

 Day 6/Thurs 30th May

Sighnaghi – Lagodeki OR exploring regional Monasteries

Two activity options today:

A For those that want a day walking through pristine rain forest, a local guide will accompany you to Lagodeki national park to explore a trail to a waterfall with a picnic lunch.

B For those that want to dive into the cultural heritage and history of the region, a day visiting some of the gorgeous Monasteries in the area with lunch in a winery. We all meet back at the hotel for supper.

Transfer time approx. 2.5hrs

 **Accommodation:** Sighnaghi





Detailed Itinerary

 Day 7 / Fri 31 May

Telavi and return to Tbilisi

Time to leave the Kakheti region, check out and head to the historic town of Telavi to visit the impressive fortress compound, the 1000yr old plane tree and the local bazaar to stock up on honey and spices.


Lunch here before transferring back to your hotel in Tbilisi for your last night in the capital and final farewell supper in a lovely restaurant.

 **Accommodation:** Tbilisi

 Day 8 / Sat 1st Jun

Tbilisi - DEPART

Morning at your leisure in the capital before transferring to the airport for the flight home.

 **Flights TBC**
There are many flight options to consider – please ask for further details.
Transfer time approx. 30 mins

Please note* There is plenty more to see in Georgia – please ask if you would like to add additional days to the tour.





Itinerary Cost

£2125 per person (based on a group of 8)

Includes

- Amelia to accompany the tour
- Accommodation in hotels as described
- A local guide throughout plus specialist guides en route
- All airport transfers
- Professional driver in a comfortable minibus
- All cultural tours, sightseeing etc as described with some insider surprises incl
- 2 x wine tastings
- Meals throughout in good restaurants
- Water every day in the vehicle

Excludes

- International flights
- Drinks with meals
- Single Supplement £280 pp
- Room upgrades
- Additional Excursions and sightseeing
- Comprehensive Travel Insurance



Practical Information



How to Book & Pay

Please complete and return the Booking Form together with a 20% deposit payment per person to confirm your tour.



Getting there

Niall or Dexter at Dial a Flight are both very helpful and will book your flights for you. Please call 020-8565-3020 and speak to them directly.



Accommodation

Hotels chosen are all lovely 3 and 4* boutique style hotels in good locations.



Guides & support

This tour is accompanied by Amelia along with an experienced local guide. A good guidebook is always recommended, please see the dossier for recommendations.



Food & Drink

Georgia is fast becoming noticed on the International scene for food and wine –make sure you try everything.

Kakheti in Spring by Amelia



Practical Information



Insurance

It's vital that you take out adequate travel insurance to cover your holiday. [Campbell Irvine](#) are good as are [Allianz Direct](#)



Visa requirements

At the time of writing there are currently no visa requirements for UK/US and Canadian passport holders to Georgia.



Inoculation requirements

Further information on Georgia stats for Covid can be found through the [WHO website](#).



Weather

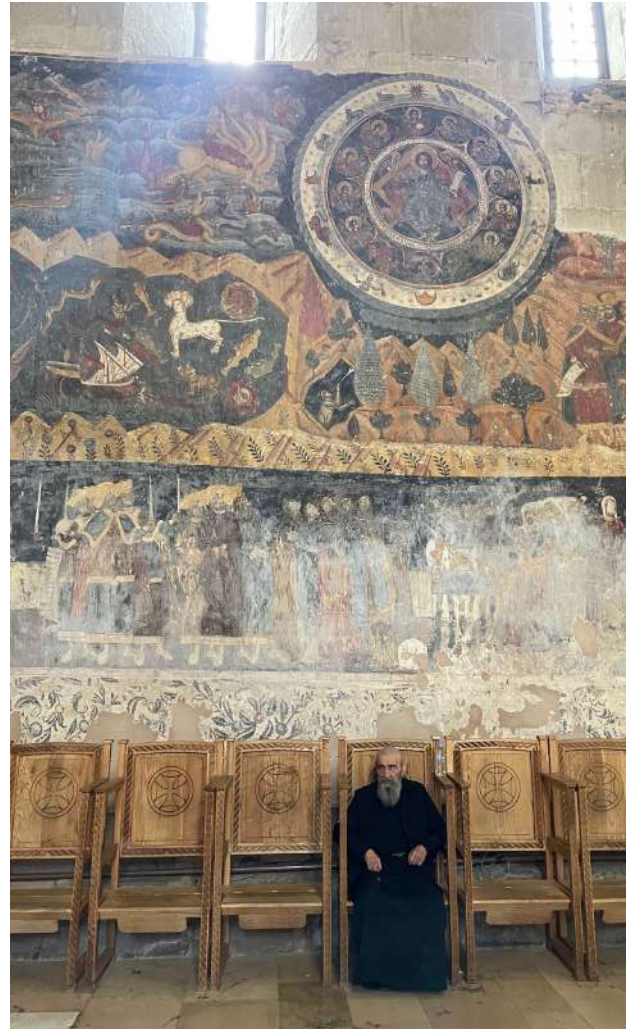
Early summer and Autumn are the best times to visit Georgia. May is best for bird watching and Spring flowers – and being shoulder season, there are less tourists.



Tipping

Further information will be provided on the final documents sent out prior to departure.





www.ameliastewarttravel.com

