

ARMENIA SAFETY GUIDE



Contents

Introduction.....	3
History and Cultural Information.....	3
Sightseeing.....	3
Language.....	4
Climate.....	4
Time zone.....	4
Cuisine.....	4
General Travel Rules.....	5
Passport.....	5
Visa.....	5
Accommodations.....	5
Transportation.....	6
Flying into Armenia.....	6
Financial.....	6
Currency.....	6
ATMs.....	6
Credit Cards:.....	6
Additional Tips.....	7
Communication.....	7
Pharmacy.....	7
Important Phone numbers.....	7
Precautions.....	7
Military activity.....	7
Crime.....	7
Information about NIH.....	8
Program Contacts.....	10
National Institute of Health named after Academician S. Avdalbekyan important contacts.....	10
Global Health elective important contacts.....	10

Introduction

Armenia is a beautiful country located in the South Caucasus region, with a rich cultural history, picturesque landscapes, and a welcoming population. However, like any other destination, travelers should always prioritize safety and security. In this guide, we will cover essential information to help you travel safely in Armenia, including passport and visa requirements, history and cultural information, language, climate, cuisine, accommodations, transportation, financial matters, communication, pharmacy, and important phone numbers.

History and Cultural Information

Armenia is a small country located in the South Caucasus region of Eurasia. Its history dates back to the ancient times, with a rich culture that has been influenced by various civilizations throughout the centuries. Armenia is the first country that adopted Christianity as an official state religion in 301 AD, over 1700 years ago. Today, Armenia is a democratic republic, with a multi-party system and a diverse cultural identity that draws on its ancient roots and more recent influences. Armenia is famous for its ancient monuments, breathtaking natural landscapes, warm hospitality, and delicious cuisine. The total population of Armenia is approximately 2.96 million as of 2021 with a density of 358/mi². Armenia has a predominantly homogenous population with Armenians comprising 98.1% of the population.

Sightseeing

Armenia is a beautiful country with a rich history and culture, and there are many wonderful places to visit. Here are some of the top destinations:

1. Yerevan - The capital city of Armenia has a vibrant atmosphere, beautiful architecture, and many museums and galleries to explore.
2. Lake Sevan - The largest lake in Armenia is a popular destination for swimming, boating, and fishing. It also has several ancient monasteries and churches to explore.
3. Dilijan National Park - This park in northeastern Armenia is known for its lush forests, mountainous terrain, and scenic hiking trails.
4. Geghard Monastery - A medieval monastery carved into the side of a mountain, Geghard is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a popular pilgrimage destination.
5. Khor Virap - This monastery is located near the border with Turkey and offers stunning views of Mount Ararat, the legendary resting place of Noah's Ark.

6. Noravank Monastery - This 13th-century monastery is located in a narrow gorge in southern Armenia and is known for its intricate carvings and stunning architecture.
7. Garni Temple - This ancient pagan temple is located near Yerevan and is the only surviving example of Hellenistic architecture in Armenia.
8. Areni-1 Cave - This archaeological site in southern Armenia is known for its 6,000-year-old wine-making equipment and is believed to be one of the world's oldest wineries.

Language

Armenian is the official language of Armenia and is spoken by the majority of the population. However, English is widely spoken in tourist areas and by younger generations. Russian is also commonly spoken, especially among the older generation.

Climate

Armenia is frequently characterized as a nation with abundant sunshine. The climate is dry and highland continental, with four distinct seasons. Armenia's climate can be described as highland continental, with large variation between summer highs (June to August) and winter lows (December to February). The summer season is usually pleasant, with temperatures reaching 25°C. However, in the Ararat valley, temperatures can soar to 40°C.

In contrast, winters in Armenia can be quite chilly, with temperatures dropping to as low as -5°C in Yerevan. The Ararat Valley and Lake Arpi region experience even colder winters

The average annual precipitation for the entire country is 550 mm.

Time zone

Armenia Time is consistent with UTC +4. The Armenia Time does not have an associated daylight-saving time.

Cuisine

Armenian food is one of the most unique and traditional cuisines in the world. It has a wide range of dishes rich in flavor, prepared using techniques dating back thousands of years. Armenia recently made Forbes' list of the '10 underrated destinations to visit in 2020'. Some popular dishes include dolma (stuffed grape leaves), khorovats (grilled meat), and lavash (traditional Armenian bread). Vegetarians and vegans can also find many delicious options, including lentil soup and stuffed eggplant. The country is provided with safe and clean water. Here you can drink water straight from the water tap without fear for your health; however, it

is not only safe but also delicious, as it comes from mountain springs. You can also find little fountains where you can drink water for free. Food industry corresponds to the highest standards. Any shops and markets always delight their customers with fresh products, fruits, and vegetables, which are abundant in the country.

General Travel Rules

Passport

Foreigners enter the territory of the Republic of Armenia through border-control points. For entry, a foreigner must have a valid passport, entry visa or a document of residency status unless Armenian laws or international agreements define no other procedure.

Please make sure your passport is valid for 6 months at the time of planned departure from Armenia

Visa

Armenian visas are issued for a maximum of 120 days with the possibility to extend for another 60 days if no other term is defined by international agreements of the Republic of Armenia.

List of countries whose nationals are unilaterally exempted from the requirement of obtaining a visa.

<https://www.mfa.am/en/visafreelist>

List of countries, with which Armenia has a visa-free regime according to bilateral and multilateral agreements.

<https://www.mfa.am/en/whoneedvisa>

Holders of all other national passports and travel documents, including UN Laissez-Passer, are required to obtain an entry visa.

More information is presented at the following link: <https://www.mfa.am/en/visa/>

Accommodations

Armenia offers a wide range of accommodation options, including hotels, guesthouses, and apartments. Visitors can choose from budget-friendly options to luxury hotels. It is recommended to book accommodation in advance, especially during peak tourist season.

Transportation

Armenia has a well-developed transportation system, including buses, taxis, and trains. The bus network is extensive and affordable, making it the most popular mode of transportation for locals and visitors alike. Taxi service in Armenia is not very expensive and sometime it is actually a better choice to get around. The price per 1 km is 100 AMD, there is a minimal payment of 600-1200 AMD. The great option is the GG Taxi service, the Armenian analogue of Uber. If you are running an Android and iOS device, just download the GG taxi app from the application store, sign up with your phone number and order cabs by a tap or two. The app offers various types of transportation. Trains connect major cities, but the network is limited. Yerevan also has a City Metro with 10 stations. The operating hours of the Yerevan metro are 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM daily.

Flying into Armenia

Currently, there is one international airport in Armenia, which is situated in close proximity to the capital city of Yerevan, around 15 km to the west. To travel from the airport to Yerevan, you can expect to pay around 2,500-3500 dram using the GG app. However, if you decide to take a taxi, it is necessary to be prepared to bargain with the driver, since they frequently demand double that amount.

Financial

Currency

The Armenian dram (AMD) is the official currency of Armenia. Visitors can exchange their currency at banks and exchange offices, which are widely available in major cities and tourist areas. It is preferable to exchange in city center rather than at Airport. The current exchange rates by banks are available at the following link www.rate.com.

ATMs

ATMs are also widely available in Armenia, especially in urban areas. However, it is advisable to carry cash for smaller transactions in rural areas.

Credit Cards:

Major credit cards, including Visa and Mastercard, are widely accepted in Armenia. Very few places will accept AMEX. Almost all restaurants and supermarkets accept credit cards in Yerevan. However, it is recommended to carry cash for smaller transactions, especially in rural areas.

Additional Tips

Communication

Armenia has a well-developed mobile network, with several providers offering SIM cards. You can purchase a SIM card for use in an unlocked mobile phone. Armenia offers visitors the convenience of free wifi access in all major cities and popular attractions. This service is readily available in public places such as airports, coffee shops, malls, restaurants, hotels, etc..

Pharmacy

It is easy to find a pharmacy in Yerevan. There are pharmacies open for 24h. There are also online pharmacies.

Important Phone numbers

- Police - 102
- Fire Brigade -101
- Ambulance – 103
- Emergency- 911

Precautions

Armenia is overall safe to travel to, with considerably low crime rates and even pickpockets not being that much of an issue. However, it is advised that you remain vigilant at all times, especially when crossing the streets. Use your common sense and general precautions for petty crime etc. like you would anywhere.

Military activity

A ceasefire agreement has been signed between Armenia and Azerbaijan to end the military action in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone. As part of the agreement a Russian peacekeeping operation has been deployed to the area and will monitor Armenian populated areas of Nagorno-Karabakh and the Lachin Corridor.

We advise against all travel within 5km of the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Crime

Crime levels are low. But there are occasional incidents of pick pocketing, bag snatching, theft from cars and burglary involving British or other foreign nationals. Although tourists

and foreigners have not been targeted, there is a risk of being caught up in such events and you should remain vigilant at all times.

Information about NIH

National Institute of Health (NIH) Established in 1963 as a Yerevan State Institute of Advanced Medical Studies of the USSR MoH, NIH named after academician S. Avdalkbekyan was reorganized in 1992 as a public research and education institution under the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia. Throughout decades NIH worked for development of Armenia's health sector through improving clinical methodology and guidelines, delivering education and research, as well as policy, regulatory and institutional reforms.

NIH is Armenia's leading institution collecting, producing and disseminating official statistics, collecting and analyzing cross-sectoral comprehensive data, conducting extensive nationwide surveys, managing and maintaining largest datasets and offering blended professional learning in the health sector. NIH prepares national reports, such as Health System Performance Assessment, Health and Healthcare yearbook. NIH Health Performance Information Centre produces National Statistics on Health Indicators in RA through collection and consolidation of data provided by health facilities. NIH National Health Accounts Department collects and analyzes the healthcare financing indicators producing annual National Health Accounts (NHA) based on the System of Health Accounts - SHA 2011 (2015). NIH is producing official statistics supporting evidence-based policy reforms, and policy monitoring and evaluation. NIH is a recognized producer of Armenia's official statistics in the health sector, and a member of the International Association of National Public Health Institutes. NIH is developing and delivering continuing professional education and training programmes at its 30 chairs of postgraduate education.

	Chair	Profession
1.	Neurology, Neurosurgery and Rehabilitation Medicine	Neurology
		Pediatric Neurology
		Neurosurgery
2.	Pediatrics and Pediatric Narrow Specialties	Pediatrics
3.	Family Medicine	Family Medicine
4.	Psychiatry	Psychiatry
		Child psychiatry
		Narcology

		Psychotherapy
5.	Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Reproductive Health	Obstetrics-gynaecology
		Reproductive Health
6.	Hematology and Transfusion Medicine	Hematology
		Transfusion medicine
7.	Traumatology and Orthopaedics	Traumatology and Orthopaedics
8.	Ophthalmology	Ophthalmology
		Children's praise
9.	Cardiology	Cardiology
10.	Internal diseases	Therapy
		Pulmonology
		Endocrinology
		Rheumatology
		Nephrology
11.	Gastroenterology and Nutrition	Gastroenterology
12.	Cardiovascular surgery	Vascular surgery
		Cardiac Surgery
13.	Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care	Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care
14.	Oncology	Oncology
15.	Infectious Diseases	Infectious diseases
16.	Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery	Plastic and Reconstructive surgery
17.	Clinical Laboratory Diagnosis	Clinical Laboratory Diagnosis
18.	Thoracic Surgery	Thoracic Surgery
19.	Head and Neck surgery	Head and Neck Surgery
20.	Otorhinolaryngology	Otorhinolaryngology
21.	Surgery and Innovative Surgical Technologies	Surgery
22.	Hygiene, epidemiology and tropical diseases	Hygiene, epidemiology and tropical diseases
23.	Public Health Organization and Management	Public Health Organization and Management
24.	Forensic medicine	Forensic medicine

NIH is developing and monitoring clinical guidelines, standard operating procedures and manuals, as well as clinical criteria. NIH is responsible for producing and disseminating annual and bi-annual national reports. It is Armenia's tobacco control focal point and acts as a secretariat for the State Tobacco Control Committee (STCC). NIH implements extensive

healthcare research projects, analysis, primary data collection and households' surveys in collaboration with international development partners. The target of these projects ranges from household costs of healthcare services, and access to and affordability of quality health services, to corruption risks, system response, service satisfaction and health risk factors. NIH has a successful record of implementing international development projects with leading development partners and IFIs active in the sector, including the World Bank, USAID, UN FAO, UNAIDS and WHO, which included survey, assessment and training components.

Program Contacts

National Institute of Health named after Academician S. Avdalbekyan important contacts

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