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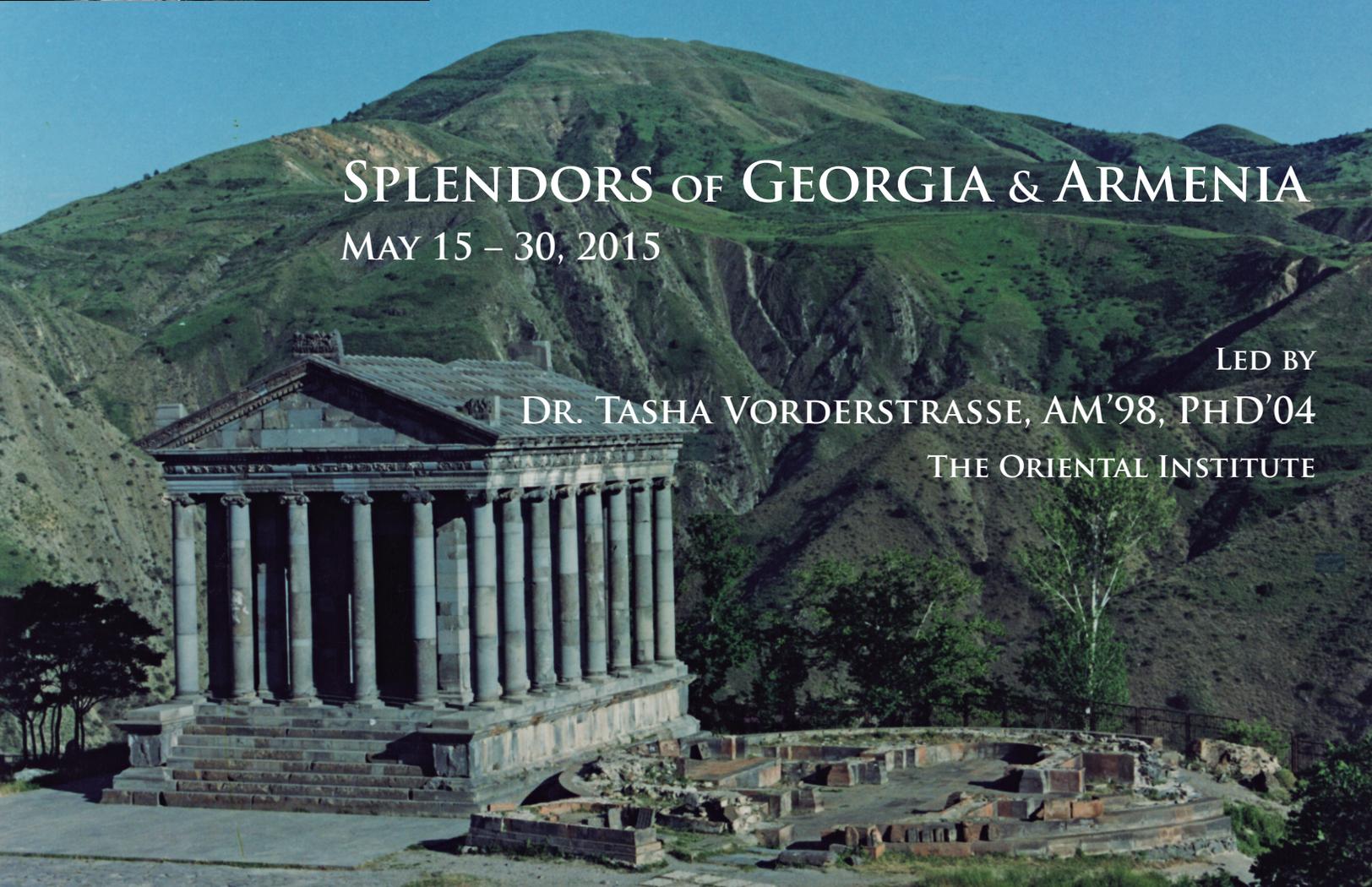


THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO | Alumni
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SPLENDORS OF GEORGIA & ARMENIA

MAY 15 – 30, 2015

LED BY DR. TASHA VORDERSTRASSE, AM'98, PHD'04
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THE SOUTH CAUCASUS is a complex region filled with many languages, peoples, cultures and religions which have come into contact with each other over the centuries. Our Georgia and Armenia journey brings us to medieval churches and ancient ruins, nestled amidst tall mountains. These are lands of contrast and this tour will examine their entire history, allowing us to fully experience them.



Join the Oriental Institute on a unique tour of the archaeology, landscape, and culture of Georgia and Armenia. In Georgia, we will visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Mtskheta, the medieval Byzantine wall paintings, and Stalin's birthplace in Gori. We will also enjoy the opportunity to experience Georgian culture, including musical performances, for which the Georgians are world famous. In Armenia, we will visit some of the many archaeological sites that fill the country, prehistoric standing stones, the magnificent Roman temple of Garni, medieval monasteries, and

a recently discovered Jewish cemetery. Again, we will have the opportunity to explore the heritage of Armenia through its music and dance. Participants in this tour will not only have the opportunity to see the highlights but also experience out-of-the-way places that tourists often do not visit.

Tasha Vorderstrasse, AM'98, PhD'04
The Oriental Institute

FRIDAY, MAY 15:

Depart Chicago this evening.

SATURDAY, SUNDAY, MAY 16 & 17: TBILISI

We will arrive into Tbilisi very early Sunday morning. Our touring will begin late that morning by climbing Sololaki Hill to Narikala Fortress. Slowly we descend to Old Tbilisi, Altstadt. We will stroll through the maze of twisting streets lined with colorfully painted wooden houses stopping at Metekhi Church, an important historical site. We will view historical Abanotubani, sulfur bathes, the 6th-century Anchiskhati Basilica and visit the synagogue. We conclude our first day of touring at the Simon Janashia Museum of Georgia where the country's major archaeological finds are displayed, including a fabulous treasury of gold from ancient Akhagori and Trialeti, and jewelry from the Iberian rulers of the first century AD.

MARRIOTT HOTEL TBILISI (B/L)

MONDAY, MAY 18: TBILISI

Touring today takes us to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Mtskheta, an important religious and trading center and capital of the eastern Georgian kingdom of Iberia from the 3rd century BC through the 5th century AD. First, we will visit at the church of Jvari, one of Georgia's earliest churches. Then we continue to Mtskheta itself, visiting the Cathedral of Svetitskhoveli. We will end the day at the Armazis-Khevi acropolis (also known as the Bagineti archaeological site).

MARRIOTT HOTEL TBILISI (B/L/D)

TUESDAY, MAY 19: TBILISI

We start with a walking tour of the 19th century homes in a historical Tbilisi neighborhood. We continue the day at the Open Air Ethnographic museum, which displays examples of folk architecture and craftwork from various regions of the country. That afternoon we explore local culture by learning about Georgian wine making and enjoying a tasting.

MARRIOTT HOTEL TBILISI (B/L)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20: AKHALTSIKHE

We depart for Bakuriani, stopping to visit the Stalin Museum in Gori. We then continue to Uplis-tsikhe, an unusual medieval cave town that developed over hundreds of years beginning in the first millennium BC. At its height it was an important trade center, occupying 22 acres. The invasions of Tamerlane and the Mongols in the 13th century marked the beginning of its decline. After lunch, a wonderful and scenic drive via the Borjomi Gorge take us into the village of Akhaltsikhe (6,000 feet).

LOMSIA HOTEL (B/L/D)

THURSDAY, MAY 21: AKHALTSIKHE

Our destination today is Vardzia at 10,200 feet above sea level. Here 3,000 caves were carved out of the soft tuff and occupied during the reign of King Giorgi III (1156-84) as a stronghold against the Turks. These caves later became a monastic settlement. Today we will visit some of the 550 remaining structures, in some of which frescoes have survived. This afternoon we explore the reconstructed Rabati Castle and the Samtskhe-Javakheti History museum in Akhaltsikhe.

LOMSIA HOTEL (B/L/D)

FRIDAY, MAY 22: KUTAISI

Touring today begins at the important 14th-century frescoes by Damiane in the charming little church of Ubisi. We then visit Gelati Monastery complex, exploring the Cathedral, Church of St. Nicholas, Bell Tower, Chapel, and the Academy, which was built in 1104.

HOTEL BAGRATI 1003 (B/L/D)



FRONT COVER: Garni Roman temple, Armenia

RIGHT: Zvartnots cathedral, Armenia



Narikala Fortress, Tbilisi, Georgia

SATURDAY, MAY 23: TBILISI

Today we will visit the 9th-century fortress city of Damanisi. Within its walls we will see the remains of workshops, caravanserais, residences, and baths similar in design to those we visited in Tbilisi. We stop at the Sioni Church in Bolnisi, an excellent example of early church architecture. Within its walls we will see the remains of workshops, caravanserais, residences, and baths similar in design to those we visited in Tbilisi. This evening we will gather for a special Georgian dinner.

MARRIOTT HOTEL TBILISI (B/L/D)

SUNDAY, MAY 24: YEREVAN

We will transfer to the border, where our Armenian guide awaits. After completing the formalities, we will begin our touring at two of the finest representatives of Armenian architecture, Haghpat and Sanahin Monasteries, both dating from the 10th-13th centuries. Our touring in Armenia will be in the environs of Yerevan allowing us to use the renovated Marriott Hotel in Yerevan as our base for all but one night of our stay.

MARRIOTT HOTEL (B/L)

MONDAY, MAY 25: YEREVAN

Touring begins with Garni, a Roman temple built on a site that has been inhabited since Neolithic times. Evidence of previous cultures surrounds the temple. We then continue to the 13th-century Geghard, with interesting small rock-cut chapels and hermitage. In the late afternoon we will visit a carpet shop to learn about Armenian carpets. This evening our dinner will be accompanied by a performance of traditional music and dance.

MARRIOTT HOTEL (B/L/D)

TUESDAY, MAY 26: YEREVAN

Today's touring begins at the world-famous collection of illuminated Armenian manuscripts at the Matenadaran and continues with visits to two famous sites, Karmir Blur (Red Hill) and Urartian Erebuni, an Urartian settlement, and the History Museum. In the afternoon we tour the brandy factory "Ararat" and participate in a tasting.

MARRIOTT HOTEL (B/L)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27: SISIAN

Today, we drive to Noravank Monastery, stop to tour a Armenian winery, and have as our last site a place called Zorats Stones—an incredible landscape of tumuli and seemingly endless lines of standing stone circles.

BASEN HOTEL (B/L/D)

THURSDAY, MAY 28: YEREVAN

Our day starts with a 13-mile cable car ride to Tatev Monastery. Our visit will include the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul built between 895 and 906 and restored after an earthquake in 1931, the smaller Church of St. Gregory the Illuminator, the unique architecture Gavazan pillar, and restored Dzit Han oil press. After completing our touring, we drive back to Yerevan.

MARRIOTT HOTEL (B/L)

FRIDAY, MAY 29: YEREVAN

Touring starts at Etchmiadzin, the seat of the Armenian patriarch and place of pilgrimage, then visit the church of St. Hripsime at Etchmiadzin. Our touring will continue at the remains of the 7th-century Cathedral of St. Gregory at Zvartnots. We will then exchange toasts at our farewell lunch and complete our touring with a visit to the cyclopean fortress at Metzamor and its small, but important, museum.

MARRIOTT HOTEL (B/L)

SATURDAY, MAY 30:

This morning we transfer to the airport for our flights home.

PLEASE NOTE: This tour should be considered moderately strenuous. It will require some walking over rough, uneven terrain, or climbing steps without hand rails, and some long driving days. All participants are expected to be physically active and able to walk independently throughout our full touring days. If you have questions about your ability to participate in this tour, please contact the Oriental Institute or Archaeological Tours to discuss your options.



Tasha Vorderstrasse is a Research Associate at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. She received her PhD from the University of Chicago in 2004 and was a Research Fellow at the Netherlands

Institute for the Near East in Leiden before returning to Chicago in 2011. Her work focuses on the material culture of the Near East, Caucasus, and Central Asia and the interactions between these regions and China. She currently excavates in Armenia in an Oriental Institute project.

SPLENDORS OF GEORGIA & ARMENIA

RESERVATION FORM

PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE:

Name # 1 (Legal name, exactly as it appears on passport)

Name # 2 (Legal name, exactly as it appears on passport)

Street address

City/State/Zip code

Home telephone

Other telephone

E-mail address

University affiliation, if applicable

Enclosed is a deposit of \$.....(\$1500 per person, payable to Archaeological Tours)

Please charge my deposit of \$.....to my credit card.

Name as listed on the credit card

Card name and number

Expiration date

Signature

I request a single room. I understand there is a supplement charge.

I will be sharing with _____

I request a roommate and understand a roommate is not guaranteed.

I/We would like to be contacted to discuss my/our flight options.

I/We have read the Tour Conditions and Responsibility clause and agree to all therein.

Signature

Signature

Return this form to:

Archaeological Tours 271 Madison Avenue, Suite 904, New York, NY 10016

For additional information, please call Archaeological Tours at: (Toll free) 1-866-740-5130 or (e-mail) archtours@aol.com



For additional information, please contact the
Oriental Institute Membership Office
(773-834-9777)
oi-membership@uchicago.edu
or
Archaeological Tours
(212- 986-3054 or 866-740-5130)
archtours@aol.com



COST OF TOUR: \$5620
(Excluding airfare from Chicago)

Single Supplement: \$1010
(typical airfare from Chicago: \$1350)

THE TOUR RATE INCLUDES:

- Surface travel by motor coach and as detailed in the itinerary.
- Accommodations are based on two persons sharing a twin-bedded room with private bath as listed or similar.
- Meals as listed in the detailed itinerary, table d'hôte.
B – Breakfast L – Lunch D – Dinner
- Baggage handling for one suitcase per person.
- Arrival and departure transfers on tour dates only.
- Gratuities to tour managers, guides, drivers, and porters.
- A \$600 contribution to the Oriental Institute.

NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR COST: International airfare, passport and visa fees, excess baggage charges, transfers for tour participants arriving or departing on dates other than the tour dates, insurance, beverages, and items not on the menus. If the group number is less than 15 participants, a small group surcharge of \$350 will be added. All rates subject to change.

DEPOSITS & PAYMENTS: A \$1500 deposit is required to book. Final payment is due sixteen weeks before departure.

SINGLE ROOMS: For those traveling alone but who prefer to share with another, we will endeavor to work out congenial rooming arrangements. If impossible, or if a single room must be assigned due to the roommate's canceling or incompatibility, or for any other reason, even if at the last moment or while on tour, the single supplement or prorated thereof must be collected.

INSURANCE: Insurance is available and is recommended. By purchasing trip cancellation insurance within 21 days of your initial deposit, Travelers Insured International, Inc. will waive the usual exclusion for preexisting medical conditions.

CANCELLATIONS: In the event of cancellation, refund in full less a \$350 handling fee will be made until sixteen weeks before departure. From sixteen to twelve weeks before departure, the penalty is \$2000. From twelve weeks until eight weeks before departure, the penalty is \$4900, and after that time the penalty is \$5200 plus any penalties levied by hotels and operators. These penalties could reach 100% for last-minute cancellations. There will be no refund for cancellations on the day of departure or thereafter. In addition, if cancellation is made within 60 days of departure, the airlines require a penalty. Cancellation of the tour by the Oriental Institute: full refund.

NOTE: The Oriental Institute, the University of Chicago Alumni Association, or Archaeological Tours do not accept liability for any airline penalties incurred by the purchase of nonrefundable airline tickets.

RESPONSIBILITY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOURS, a division of LINDSTONE TRAVEL, INC., THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, and the UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION in accepting bookings for the tour, clearly stipulates that it is not liable for the faults or defaults of other companies and persons that may be used in the carrying out of the tour services; also for accidents, baggage losses, delays, strikes, political unrest, riots, and acts of God and war. In the event it becomes necessary or advisable for the comfort or well-being of the passengers, or for any reason whatsoever, to alter the itinerary or arrangements, such alterations may be made without penalty to the operator. Additional expenses, if any, shall be borne by the passengers. The right is also reserved to withdraw this tour; also to decline to accept or retain any persons as members of the tour. No refund can be made for absence from the tour unless arrangements are made at the time of booking. IATA carriers concerned are not to be held responsible for acts, omissions or events during the time passengers are not on board. The passage contract in use by the companies concerned shall constitute the sole contract between the company and purchaser of these tours and/or passengers.

