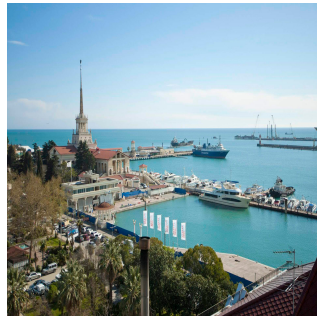
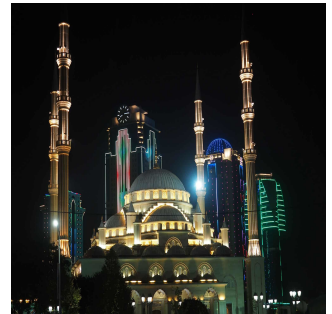


# From the Caspian to the Black sea

Travel to the North Caucasus



This two-weeks program is designed for you to experience a full beauty of several different regions in the south of Russia. Diversity of cultures, customs and traditions, mountain villages, the highest peaks, waterfalls, mineral water springs and unpolluted nature — the journey from the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea will become a lifetime experience. In this journey we have collected all the best that you can see, feel and try in the Caucasus.

# Experiences you'll have

## Hiking and jeep tour in the Caucasus Mountains

The Caucasus Mountains fascinate with beauty, wild nature, snowy peaks, hospitable people and delicious cuisine of different republics.

During only two weeks you will visit several regions in the south of Russia: different republics and regions located among mountains. You will get acquainted with variety of cultures and traditions and see the most picturesque natural sights.

Top 10 of what is waiting for you in the journey:

The Sulak Canyon in the Republic of Dagestan — it is even deeper than the Grand Canyon in the USA  
Sarykum sand dune, which is considered to be one of the highest in the world and is hundreds of thousands of years old  
Gara Bashi station on Elbrus — 3850 meters above sea level!  
Derbent city in the Republic of Dagestan — one of the oldest cities of Russia  
Grandiose mosques of Chechnya — you will see the ultramodern mosque of Aimani Kadyrova in Argun and the largest in Europe mosques "Pride of Muslims" in Shali and "Heart of Chechnya" in Grozny  
Lake Kezenoy Am — you will rest on the bank of one of the most beautiful Alpine lakes of the Caucasus  
Dargavs or "Dead city" in the Republic of North Ossetia — the biggest necropolis in the Caucasus  
Landmarks of Dzheirakh gorge in Ingushetia including ancient castle and tower complexes Erzi, Egikal and "Vovnushki"  
Kislovodsk Park — the second largest in Europe, where the length of the eco trails is about 100 km  
Sochi — the center of Winter Olympics 2014

**We accept bookings for groups of 6 or more**

**Border permit is required for this tour. Personal data should be submitted minimum 45 days before the date of arrival**

## Itinerary

The journey begins in Makhachkala, where you should travel to on your own. The program finishes in Sochi — please, keep this is in consideration when buying return tickets.

We are ready to help with the tickets purchasing. If necessary, leave a comment in the application.

### Day 1

**You will be met at the railway station or airport of**

Makhachkala. After that, you will have a sightseeing tour around the city.

Makhachkala is the capital of Dagestan. The name of the city means "the country of mountains". People of more than 30 nationalities live in this region. The city lies on the shores of the Caspian Sea.

During the excursion, you will see Rasul Gamzatov Central Avenue, Russian and Avar Drama Theaters. Also, you will visit the Dagestan Museum of Fine Arts, Central Square, Central market of the city and walk along the coast of the Caspian Sea. Also in the program: visiting the International Sea Port of Makhachkala, Juma Mosque, Anji Arena Stadium and Anji-Arka mountain with its magnificent view of the city.

You will have lunch at a national café and then start a trip to Derbent — one of the oldest cities in Russia. On the way you will visit the Sarykum sand dune, which is considered to be one of the highest in the world (if the weather permits). Its height is more than 250 m, and the size and shape of the peaks are constantly changing under the influence of the wind. The age of this natural sight is estimated in hundreds of thousands of years.

Caucasus

## From the Caspian to the Black sea

Difficulty



Group size

from 4 to 10

Duration

15 days

Accommodation at the trip



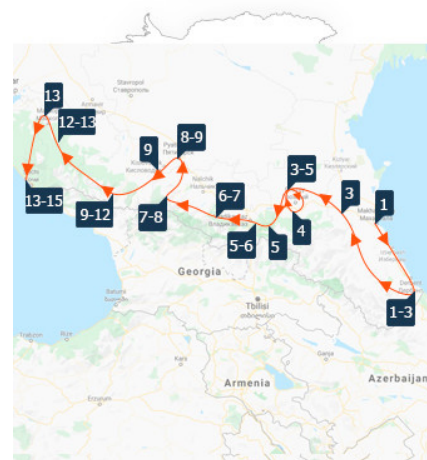
13 1 nights  
nights

Языки



guide

from 2 500 EUR



**Upon arrival to Derbent you will stay at a hotel. In the**

evening, you will have dinner at a local restaurant (on your own). Dishes of national cuisine will be offered to you: “khinkal” served as the first or second course, “kurza” and “chudu” that are made of different herbs, cottage cheese, vegetables, and eggs.

By the end of the evening, you will return to the hotel and have rest.

**Day 2**

**After breakfast you will go for a sightseeing tour around**

Derbent. Ancient mosques and madrasahs, temples and synagogues, magnificent medieval baths and impressing khan palaces still remain in this old city. One of the places that you will visit is a 2500-years-old citadel “Naryn-Kala”. It is included on UNESCO's World Heritage List. From the ramparts you can see the endless horizon of the Caspian Sea.

**In the afternoon you will have lunch in one of the local**

restaurants in the Old City. Next you will continue the tour and visit the House & Museum of Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, the Juma Mosque and a synagogue. Also, you will see the Armenian Church — here, there is the Museum of Applied Arts. The tour will finish at Kubachi Museum, where you can see handmade jewelry and other local handicrafts.

**In the evening, you will have dinner on your own and**

return to the hotel.

**Day 3**

**In the morning, you will have breakfast and check-out of**

the hotel. The first stop will be at Madjalis settlement, where you will visit the Kaitag Culture center.

**Next you will see the Sulak Canyon, which is one of the**

deepest in the world (1 920 m above the water level). For lunch, you will have a lunchbox with you. After that, you will travel to Chirkeisk Hydro Power Plant (HPP) which is standing on the Sulak River. This power station has the second highest dam in Russia (232,5 meters).

**Then you will have a transfer to Grozny, the capital of the**

Chechen Republic (170 km). On the way you will stop at Argun settlement to see Aimani Kadyrova Mosque. This is the first mosque in Russia, made in the style of high-tech. It is designed to receive 15 thousand people. To congregation's convenience there are 26 entrances. During the day, depending on the weather, the arches of the mosque change colors: from light gray to turquoise-blue.

**Upon arrival to Grozny city you will be accommodated in a**

hotel. In the evening you will have dinner on your own.

**Day 4**

**After breakfast you will move to the mountain Lake**

Kezenoi-Am, which is one of the most highland in Russia. It is located at the border of three republics at an altitude of 1869 meters above sea level. The lake is stunning with its beauty. Several rare species of fish listed in the Red book inhabit this lake.

**You will have lunch at the café by the lake on your own.**

Then you will have free time at the lake. You can take walks and enjoy the picturesque landscapes, take a boat trip or horse rides (extra charge).

On the way back to Grozny you will visit another majestic mosque "Pride of Muslims" in Shali. It is the biggest mosque in Europe. More than thirty thousand people can be in the mosque, and including the surrounding area, about 100,000 believers can pray here at the same time. The white marble used in the construction came from the Greek island of Thassos. The interior decoration and lighting system of the "Pride of Muslims" is also impressive. In the center there is a 8-meter chandelier made with Swarovski stones, and the cornices and wall ornaments are decorated with gold.

**Then you will have a transfer to Grozny. Here you will have**

a city tour and see, that a sad story of the Second Chechen War is far in the past. Now the capital of Chechnya is a safe and calm city. You will visit the center of modern art, see the great mosque "Heart of Chechnya" and enjoy a panoramic view of Grozny from the 33rd floor of the Grozny City hotel.

**In the evening you will have dinner on your own. We advise**

you to try the Chechen pies "chudu" with various fillings.

**Day 5**

***Please, pay attention — the territory of Ingushetia lies in a***

*border zone. Only citizens of the Russian Federation are allowed to pass there with no restrictions. For foreign citizens, including the CIS countries it is necessary to get a border pass — it takes about 40 days to prepare the documents.*

**After breakfast at the hotel you will check out and start**

travelling to Ingushetia. The route will pass via the Assine gorge. You will start by of the most exciting and exotic tower complexes among the ancient defensive structures of Ingushetia.

**First, you will visit the monument "Vovnushki" — the**

complex of three towers located among mountains. For lunch, you will have a lunchbox. Then you will get acquainted with the most ancient Christian temple Thaba-Erdy, which is close to the border with Georgia. The date of its construction varies within the 700 years, from VIII to XIV centuries. It is certainly one of the oldest Christian temples in Russia.

**The program will continue with visiting the castle complex**

Egikal. It is located in Targimsk basin at the foot of Mountain Tsey-Loam. They say, it was the cultural, political and economic center of the middle Age. In the evening, you will stay at the hotel and have dinner on your own.

**Day 6**

**The real pearl of Republic of Ingushetia is Dzheirakh gorge.**

It is like an open-air museum: there are 92 landmarks here, some structures date back to the 2nd century B.C. Here you will see the castle complex Erzi. In translation from the Ingush language "erzi" means "eagle". Erzi is a beautifully preserved nine towers on the slope of the mountain above the Armhi River. The towers and walls of the complex are built with the help of river boulders and stand without foundation, directly on the rocks. The height of the battle towers reaches 25-30 meters, the width of the walls is 6 meters. Historians date the construction of the complex to the 17th century.



### **Further you will move to the Republic of North Ossetia. You**

shouls cross the border and get all necessary permissions. Then you will have lunch in a café and will visit the famous Kurtatin gorge with magnificent mountain passes.

### **The excursion will end with a visit to Dargavs or "Dead**

city" — the biggest necropolis in the Caucasus. Dargavs is a complex of 99 semi-underground and land stone charnel houses serving as family tombs.

### **By the evening, you will check-in at the hotel in the**

mountains and have dinner on your own.

#### **Day 7**

### **This day you will have a transfer to the Elbrus region**

(around 4,5 hours). On the way you will stop for bathing in the complex of hot mineral springs Geduco (if desired, additional fee for the entrance ticket). You will pass to the Baksan gorge — one of the most famous not only in Kabardino-Balkaria, but also in the entire Central Caucasus. The road here rises up to 2500 meters, almost to Elbrus. It connects local villages with the capital of the Republic - Nalchik city. This is the highest mountain road of Kabardino-Balkaria.

Upon arrival to Terskol you will have lunch and check-in at the hotel. After a little rest you can take a walk to Narzan meadow and taste 3 different kinds of Narzan or visit the local market and buy some souvenirs. In the evening you will have dinner on your own. We recommend to taste traditional dishes of the local cuisine: "hychiny", fried tortillas with potato and cheese or meat inside, and "shashlik", meat prepared on fire.

#### **Day 8**

### **After breakfast you will leave the hotel and move to the**

Azau glade, where you will start your ascent on the slopes of the great dormant volcano by the cable cars. You will go up to the Gara Bashi station (3800 m high). The views opening here are really fascinating. If the weather is good, you will see the snowy mountains, stretching for 300 miles. You will have a great opportunity to memorize all this beauty by taking some photos.

### **Then you will descent and have lunch in a café. Next you**

will continue travelling to Pyatigorsk (about 3 hours). Here a short excursion around the town is waiting for you. You will see a small underground Lake Proval on the southern slope of mount Mashuk, visit Tsvetnik Park, enjoy the view from the Aeolian harp and taste Narzan mineral water .

### **In the evening you will stay at the hotel and have dinner**

(extra charge). A variety of traditional Russian cuisine is almost endless - you can try the real "shchi", "pelmeni" or pickles. All kinds of European and Chinese cuisine are also popular in the city's cafes.

#### **Day 9**

### **After breakfast you will check-out and move to Dombay.**

On the way you will stop at Kislovodsk, the main city of the Caucasian Mineral Waters area. Here you will have a walking excursion around Kislovodsk Park. It has the second largest park territory in Europe (1000 hectares) and over 250 species of trees. You will pass by the famous Mirror pond and river Olkhovka, where there is the bridge named "Lady's Caprice". During the tour you will see Cascading staircase, stroll through the Resort Boulevard and learn the history of the resort city.

### **Then you will continue your way to Dombay via the Gum-**

Bashi pass with fascinating views of the mountain range. Upon arrival to Dombay resort you will stay at the hotel and have dinner (paid additionally).

#### **Day 10**

### **Today you are going to ascent on Mount Mussa-Achitara by**

the cableway. From here you will see a breathtaking panorama of snow-capped peaks, glaciers sparkling on the sun, fast flowing rivers and murmuring waterfalls. Weather permitting, you will see fabulous two-headed Elbrus.

### **You will have lunch in a cafe in the mountains (extra**

charge). After coming back to the resort, you will have free time. In the evening you will have dinner (extra charge) and rest.

#### **Day 11**

### **After breakfast you will travel with jeeps to the alpine**

camp Alibek, located in the most famous gorge of the area. The road goes through hundreds-years old pine forest.

The first stop will be is mountaneers' cemetery where courageous conquerors of Dombay mountains rest. Having left the cars, you will walk to the river by foot and see Alibek waterfall. It is not a big one, but definitely one of the most beautiful ones. Also, you will walk to the edge of Alibek glacier and reach the shore of Lake Tur located at 2200 m high above sea level. From here you will see the Great Caucasus Mountain Range and its great peaks: Ertsog, Belala-Kaya and Sulakhat. If you are lucky enough you will see wild oxen.

By the evening you will return to the hotel, have dinner (extra charge) and rest.

#### **Day 12**

### **Today you will move to the Republic of Adygea (around 5,5**

hours). On the way you will stop at Lower-Arkhyz village. This monument of ancient architecture is one of the first temple complexes in Russia and is located at the foot of the Bolshoy Zelenchuk river. On the territory of the complex there are three medieval Christian churches. In the X-XIII centuries the capital of the ancient North Caucasian state of Alanya was situated in this area.

### **You will have lunch in the national cafe and then will**

continue your way to Adygea. In the evening, you will arrive to the village of Hajok, check-in the hotel and have dinner (extra charge).

#### **Day 13**

### **Today an walking excursion to the Lago-Naki plateau is**

waiting for you. The main feature of the plateau is the fact that it is located in different climate zones. You will walk through a broadleaf forest, admire Alpine meadows and finally reach the glaciers.

### **The program includes a visit to the Azish cave (extra**

charge), as well as a visit to the Caucasian Biosphere Reserve (walking distance up to 2 km). During the program you will have lunch at the national cafe.

### **This natural massif has received the status of a world**

heritage site. The central position is occupied by one of the oldest and most famous Caucasian reserve in the country, created in

1924. This area is famous as the largest mountain-forest zone in Europe: forests occupy at least 60% of the total area. In the local flora there are more than 3000 species. The animal world is also surprising: 25 species of animals are listed in the Red book of Russia.

#### **After excursion you will be taken to the railway station of**

Maykop. From here you will depart by train to Sochi at 6:35 pm (you will have a lunchbox for dinner with you). At 11:35 pm you will be met at the railway station in Sochi and taken to the hotel.

#### **Day 14**

#### **Today you will get acquainted with the "southern capital of**

Russia" during a walking tour of the city. Sochi is located on the Eastern shore of the Black sea in the Krasnodar region. The city attracts tourists with its mountains, endless sandy beaches, hot summer days, palm trees, modern infrastructure and vibrant nightlife.

#### **You will visit Fort Alexandria, Church of Archangel Michael,**

the Pushkin's library, the monument to Cannon, the Museum of Sochi, that preserves a great collections of paintings, graphics, sculpture, numismatics, weapons, archaeology, rare books, applied arts, household items and others.

#### **After lunch in a café (extra charge) you will continue the**

city tour. You will visit the Winter Theatre, walk to the Sea port. Here you can have a boat trip (extra fee). In the evening you are welcome to Gala dinner.

#### **Day 15**

#### **Today at 2 pm you will be taken to the airport of Adler,**

from where you will have a flight back home. Before it you can have an excursion to the Olympic Park with a story about the objects built for the 2014 Olympics Games (extra charge).

## **Accommodation at the trip**

In Derbent you will stay for two nights (days 1-3) in the **"Europe" Hotel**, located within walking distance from the waterfront and the city center. It offers a restaurant, a 24-hour front desk and free Wi-Fi. Standard room includes one double or two single beds, a flat-screen TV, a refrigerator, air conditioning, a bathroom with free toiletries.

In Grozny you will spend two nights (days 3-5) in the **"Gorodok" Hotel**. The air-conditioned rooms with a garden or city views have a flat-screen TV and a refrigerator, as well as a private bathroom with free toiletries and a hairdryer. On the territory of the hotel there is a sauna and a cafe of national cuisine.

In the republic of Ingushetia you will stay for one night at the **"Armkhi" Hotel** (days 5-6). It is located in Armkhi village, at an altitude of about 1300 m above sea level. The complex has a developed resort infrastructure: there are indoor and outdoor swimming pools, a sauna, a SPA-center, an Alpine restaurant, a paintball court. The standard twin room has two single beds, a desk, a chair and bedside tables, air conditioning, a TV, a tea set, free Wi-Fi. It offers views of the Caucasus mountains. The spacious bathroom offers toiletries and cosmetics, slippers, a hairdryer (on request).

In the Elbrus region you will spend one night in one of the hotels in Terskol village (days 7-8). The next day you will stay at the hotel of Pyatigorsk. From 9 to 12 days you will live in a hotel at the Dombay resor. The next night will be held at the hotel in the village of Kamennomostsky (days 12-13). The final two nights of the trip you will spend in one of the 3\* hotels in Sochi.

*The cost of the trip includes comfortable accommodation in hotels 3\*.*

However, you can choose also hotel 2\* if desired. In this case, the cost will be cheaper. Please, leave a comment on the application, if it is necessary for you.

## FAQ

### Who will be my guide

Experienced guides will accompany you throughout the tour.

### Meals

The price of the program includes breakfasts in hotels, lunches on days 1-13, and dinners on days 13 and 14. The rest of the dinners, as well as lunches on days 14 and 15, you will need to pay extra.

### Required data for border permit

To participate in tour it is necessary to submit the following information not later than 45 days before start of the tour:

- copy of passport
- full name of employing Company and job position
- address of current residence
- city of birth (with country indicated)
- phone number

The issue of border permit is included in the tour.

### What to bring

For feeling comfortable during the journey you should bring:

- wind jacket
- synthetic trekking trousers
- mountain trekking boots
- sandals
- thermal underwear if possible
- gloves, hat, cap
- underwear for a change, swimsuit, socks
- 30 liters backpack
- rain cape that can protect backpack as well
- sunglasses and sunblock
- first aid kit
- hiking sticks

## Booking

Caucasus

### From the Caspian to the Black sea

Difficulty



Group size

from 4 to 10

Duration

15 days

Accommodation at the trip



13 nights 1 nights

from 2 500 EUR



**What's included in the price:**

- twin accommodation in hotels 3\*
- breakfasts at a hotel, lunches or lunch-boxes lunches (except on days 14,15), dinners at days 13, 14
- transportation services according to the program
- English-speaking guide services (or Russian-speaking guide + an interpreter)
- eco-fees and entrance tickets to museums
- food for staff and entrance tickets for guides
- border pass order
- visa support
- ticket to the train Maykop-Sochi

**Extra charge:**

- [international and domestic flights to Makhachkala and from Sochi](#) (starting at 155 EURO for a round-trip ticket)
- dinners except day 13, 14, lunch on days 14, 15
- single accommodation in hotels (445 EURO per person)
- additional services at the hotels (sauna, luggage delivery)
- accident insurance
- tickets to a cableway to Elbrus, Mussa-Achitara and an entrance ticket to the Azish Cave
- excursion to the Olympic Park



Best price  
guarantee



Personal  
tours



Discounts for  
regular clients



Gift  
cards