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Georgia's Wild Highlands

9 days / 8 nights / 5 riding

Best airport : Tbilisi

Maximum weight 120kg



Introduction:

Embark on a legendary horseback adventure across the breathtaking Caucasus Mountains, journeying from Tusheti to Khevsureti. This unforgettable trek will take you through ancient trails, high mountain passes, and medieval fortress villages, while showcasing the raw beauty of Georgia's most remote regions. Designed for medium-level riders, the itinerary includes stunning sights such as the scenic Gombori Pass and the highest drivable road in Georgia, Abano Pass. Experience the charm of local culture with stays in family-run guesthouses, traditional meals, and expert guidance from local horsemen. Enjoy an immersive experience that includes the exploration of hidden gems like Shatili and Korsha. Don't miss this chance to ride through history and wilderness on one of Georgia's most scenic horseback treks!

Riding & level:

This ride is designed for experienced riders seeking an immersive escape into nature, perfect for those who are passionate about horsemanship and long for a genuine connection with the great outdoors. As you traverse rugged mountain trails and remote landscapes, you will be challenged both mentally and physically, requiring not only confidence in the saddle but also a good level of physical fitness to navigate the demanding terrain.

Expect long hours in the saddle that will take you through breathtaking vistas characterised by steep ascents and descents, rocky paths, and vibrant alpine meadows. Each day brings the thrill of exploring untouched wilderness, allowing you to witness the untamed beauty of Tusheti and Vashlovani in its most raw form. Whether you are crossing high mountain passes or galloping through lush valleys, this adventure is a feast for the senses.

Guides & group sizes:

Tato, a former diplomat, fell in love with Tusheti over a decade ago and never looked back. Leaving behind city life, he fully dedicated himself to Tusheti and Vashlovani, their people, and their traditions—not just as a career change, but as a calling.

A certified mountain guide with a lifelong passion for horses, he grew up riding through the mountains, learning every trail, river, and hidden corner. To him, horseback riding is more than just a mode of travel—it's a deep connection to nature and a way to experience the land as ancestors once did.

Tato now works alongside his wife, introducing travelers from around the world to the magic of Tusheti and Vashlovani National Parks.

Group size 4-15

The horses:

In Tusheti, Georgia, the primary horse breed is the **Tushetian horse**, a hardy and surefooted mountain breed native to the region. These horses are well-adapted to the rugged, high-altitude terrain, known for their endurance, agility, and resilience.

Tushetian horses are typically small to medium-sized, standing around **13.5 to 15 hands** high. They have strong legs, sturdy hooves, and excellent stamina, making them ideal for navigating steep mountain paths and river crossings. Despite their compact

build, they are powerful and capable of carrying riders for long distances over challenging terrain.

These horses are known for their calm temperament, intelligence, and ability to handle rough conditions, making them the perfect companions for multi-day horseback tours through the breathtaking landscapes of Tusheti and Vashlovani.

Accommodation & meals:

[Guesthouse Lasharai](#), a family-run retreat in Upper Omalo, offers a comfortable and authentic Tushetian experience. Guests stay in cozy rooms with stunning mountain views and enjoy traditional Georgian and Tushetian cuisine made from locally sourced ingredients. The guesthouse also features a café and shop with freshly brewed coffee, homemade wine, and local souvenirs.

As part of the trip you also have two nights camping in beautiful spots with mountains as the backdrop.

As part of the tour, travelers receive transportation from Tbilisi to Omalo and back from Khevsureti to Tbilisi, along with three nights' accommodation in Tusheti, a final night in a family hotel in Shatili.

Itinerary:

Day 1:

Airport Transfer to the hotel. Approximately a 20 mins drive. Free afternoon.

Day 2:

Today you will set off at 7:00am from Tbilisi. Leaving the city behind as you travel through the scenic Gombori Pass and ascend the legendary Abano Pass (2,945m)—the highest drivable road in Georgia. Expect breathtaking views, winding mountain roads, and a true sense of adventure.

Enjoy a picnic or a warm local meal en route, surrounded by the stunning peaks of the Caucasus. By mid-afternoon, you will reach Omalo the heart of Tusheti, where ancient traditions thrive. You will enjoy a visit to Tusheti National Park Visitor Center & Keselo Towers offers an insight into the region's culture and conservation efforts. You will then explore the Keselo Towers, medieval fortifications with panoramic views over Omalo.

Traditional Tushetian Dinner & Family-Run Stay. As the sun sets, enjoy a hearty Tushetian dinner featuring local specialties, followed by a warm stay at a family-run guesthouse, a perfect end to the day's adventure.

Day 3:

After a hearty breakfast at the guesthouse, we prepare for an unforgettable horseback journey through the stunning landscapes of Tusheti. The first stop is Que Overlook, also known as "Eagles' Overlook", a spectacular vantage point offering breathtaking panoramic views of the Tushetian valleys and dramatic mountain ridges. Here, you will enjoy a break to soak in the scenery and capture photos of this awe-inspiring landscape.

By midday, we reach Dartlo, a UNESCO-listed historical village that feels like stepping into the past. Nestled on the slopes of the Pirikita Alazani Valley, Dartlo is renowned for its beautifully restored stone houses and defensive towers, which once served as strongholds against invaders. Enjoy a traditional Tushetian lunch in Dartlo before setting off on a short excursion to Kavlo, a nearby settlement perched high above the valley.

As the day winds down and return to Dartlo, where a delicious homemade dinner awaits you at a cozy family-run guesthouse. Surrounded by the serenity of the mountains, you'll relax and recount the day's adventures before settling in for the night.

Day 4:

After enjoying a delicious breakfast, embark on an exhilarating ride deeper into the enchanting region of Tusheti, where you'll traverse through the picturesque villages of Farsma and Basso. These charming communities are known for their unique architecture and warm hospitality, providing a glimpse into the traditional lifestyle of the local people. As you continue your journey, you'll reach Girevi, the last village before you venture into the untamed frontier leading to Khevsureti, a place characterised by breathtaking natural beauty and rugged mountains.

During your exploration, take a break to savor a delightful lunch amidst nature, surrounded by stunning landscapes that highlight the region's rich biodiversity and scenic vistas. The tranquility of the environment offers the perfect backdrop for relaxation and reflection.

As evening approaches, settle into a cozy and welcoming traditional guesthouse, where you can experience the warmth of local hospitality. Enjoy a homemade dinner prepared with fresh, local ingredients, allowing you to savor authentic flavors while mingling with fellow travelers.

Accommodation for the night will be at a family guesthouse, where you'll have the opportunity to immerse yourself in the culture and lifestyle of the Tushetian people.

Day 5:

Today, you'll embark on an exciting ascent towards Atsunta Pass, signifying the transition between the stunning regions of Tusheti and Khevsureti. This journey promises to be both challenging and rewarding, as you navigate through the rugged terrain that offers breathtaking views at every turn.

As you ride, take the opportunity to enjoy a delicious lunch en route, surrounded by the picturesque scenery of alpine meadows and majestic mountain ridges. The vibrant blooms of wildflowers and the sound of rustling leaves will create an unforgettable dining experience amid nature's beauty.

Upon reaching Kvakhidi, you'll arrive at the campsite, nestled in a breathtaking wilderness spot that allows for stunning vistas of the surrounding landscape. This serene location will serve as the perfect backdrop for the evening's activities.

As night falls, gather around a warm campfire to enjoy a hearty dinner under the stars. The crackling flames and the clear night sky create a magical atmosphere, providing a wonderful setting for storytelling, sharing experiences, and connecting with fellow adventurers. Embrace the tranquility of the wilderness as you unwind and reflect on the day's journey.

Day 6:

Begin your day with a hearty breakfast, fueling up for the adventure that lies ahead as you prepare to tackle the impressive Atsunta Pass, which rises to a breathtaking elevation of 3,431 meters. This ascent demands both determination and enthusiasm, but the reward is well worth the effort. The journey offers some of the most spectacular views in the Caucasus, where the sprawling mountain ranges and dramatic landscapes unfold before your eyes, showcasing the region's natural beauty and grandeur.

After an invigorating morning ride, we will take a break for lunch, allowing you to refuel while soaking in the serene surroundings. As you continue the descent towards Khidotani, you will pass through a series of remote mountain villages. These charming enclaves provide a glimpse into the traditional lifestyles of the local communities, with their unique architecture and welcoming atmospheres.

As the day draws to a close, you will settle in for the night in a comfortable campsite, where you can unwind under the vast expanse of the sky. Once the sun sets, come

together with your fellow riders to enjoy a warm dinner, sharing stories and camaraderie over freshly prepared meals. The accommodation for the night will be tent camping, allowing you to fully immerse yourself in the wilderness experience and enjoy the tranquility of nature.

Day 7:

After a hearty breakfast, you will set off again on your adventure, continuing to ride through the dramatic and rugged landscapes of Khevsureti. The unparalleled beauty of the region is characterised by towering mountains, lush valleys, and pristine rivers, offering endless opportunities for breathtaking photographs and moments of awe.

The journey will take you to Ardoti, where you will stop for a delicious lunch, savoring local flavors and dishes that reflect the region's rich culinary heritage. It is here that you will bid farewell to our trusty horses, transitioning to off-road vehicles that will allow the group to navigate the diverse terrain more easily.

You will check in at a cozy, family-run guesthouse that exudes warmth and hospitality. The welcoming atmosphere and charming decor will make you feel right at home. To commemorate the journey, you will enjoy a celebratory traditional Georgian dinner, featuring an array of delectable dishes that highlight the unique flavors of Georgian cuisine. This meal is not only a feast for the senses but also a perfect opportunity to reflect on the adventures shared and the stunning landscapes traversed.

Accommodation for the night will be at the family guesthouse, where you can relax and enjoy the company of fellow travelers in a comfortable and inviting setting.

Day 8:

After breakfast, you will depart from Ardoti and set off on an exciting journey to visit Shatili, a stunning medieval fortress village that seems to rise effortlessly from the rocky mountainside. This historic village, known for its well-preserved stone towers and strategic position, offers a fascinating glimpse into the region's rich history and architectural ingenuity.

You will continue to Korsha, where you'll discover the impressive Lebaiskar Castle. This ancient fortress, perched on a hilltop, boasts breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape and provides insight into the feudal history of the area. Take your time to wander through its storied ruins and relish the sense of stepping back in time.

Next, you will drive across the picturesque Bear Cross Pass, a route known for its stunning panoramic vistas. Along the way, you'll be treated to awe-inspiring views of the landscape, characterised by dramatic peaks and lush greenery.

You will then head back towards Tbilisi, you'll make a stop at the scenic Zhinvali Reservoir. This beautiful body of water, surrounded by majestic mountains, offers the perfect opportunity to relax, take photographs, and soak in the tranquility of nature.

After this enriching adventure, you will journey back to Tbilisi. You may choose to be dropped off directly at the airport or enjoy an extra night at the guesthouse.

Day 9:

After breakfast airport transfers

Flights & Transfers

Do NOT book flights until you have received the 'Booking Confirmation Email' from saddletravel.com.

You should fly into Tbilisi airport and book a flight that arrives before midday or early afternoon. The airport transfer time is between 20-30 minutes. You'll be able to enjoy a free afternoon at the family guesthouse.

Your departure flight on the final day should be in the afternoon.

Included in the price:

- Nights in the family guesthouse mentioned
- 2 nights camping
- 2 nights in hotel
- Full board
- Professional Guide & Horsemen
- Visits mentioned
- Transportation: Tbilisi → Omalo → Khevsureti → Tbilisi
- Airport Transfers
- Single room in family guesthouse

Excluded from the price

- Travel insurance and trip cancellation insurance are mandatory:
- Flights
- Tips

Travel Checklist:

- ☐ Valid international passport
- ☐ Travel insurance
- ☐ Rain coat
- ☐
- ☐ Pocket money (you can exchange money at the airport upon arrival)
- ☐ A sweater and a jacket
- ☐ 4-5 t-shirts or shirts. Long-sleeved shirts are best. (Take at least 3 long-sleeved shirts!)
- ☐ Riding pants or jeans
- ☐ Riding boots/shoes, with half-chaps or long chaps. (Your boots/shoes will get damp every day.)
- ☐ Cotton socks
- ☐ A spare pair of shoes for the evening
- ☐ Flip-flops/sandals
- ☐ Comfortable summer clothes/mountain wear
- ☐ Hat
- ☐ A small towel for the camping nights
- ☐ Toiletries
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Mosquito repellent spray/lotion

Health

For a peaceful holiday abroad visit: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/georgia>

Consult your doctor at least 8 weeks before leaving so that he can advise you and carry out, if necessary, the necessary vaccinations adapted to your age and state of health.

National currency and tips

Georgian Lari (GEL) The Georgian lari is the official currency of the country of Georgia. It's most commonly converted to the US dollar. The currency code for the lari is GEL, and its sign is ლ.

You can leave tips at your discretion.

Saddletravel.com Cancellation Policy and Conditions

Payment and Cancellation Policy

Your holiday is confirmed with a 20% non-refundable deposit.

The full amount is due 56 days before the departure date.

If you cancel your booking less than 56 days before the departure date of your holiday, Saddletravel.co.uk is entitled to request payment of the full amount, less a refund from the customer as follows:

Cancellation 42 days or more before departure: 50% refund possible.

Cancellation 30 days or more before departure: 30% refund possible.

Cancellation less than 30 days before departure: no refund, full amount due.

Medical / Travel Insurance

All Saddletravel.co.uk customers must take out medical and travel insurance that covers horse riding and trekking as well as cancellation of the holiday. Proof of insurance will be required during the booking process.

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