

## Description



### **Yerevan Brandy Company, May 25, 2018**

ARARAT brandies produced by Yerevan Brandy Company embody the Legend itself, the spirit of Armenia, its cultural and historical heritage and the craftsmanship of the Armenian people. ARARAT is the most famous and successful brand of Armenian brandy in the world. We are pleased to invite you to get acquainted with the history of brandy making in Armenia, follow its production phases and enjoy the delicious taste and flavor of different kinds of ARARAT brandies just from the first hand.



### **Matenadaran, May 25, 2018**

On the northern part of Mashtots avenue there is Matenadaran (a book depository), one of the world's most ancient libraries. Its collections comprise ancient Armenian books and miniature paintings that have gained world-wide fame. Among its unique treasures are the works of ancient classical authors and rare manuscripts that have come to our days only in the Armenian translation. Several monuments to the outstanding Armenian cultural figures are located in the courtyard of Matenadaran.



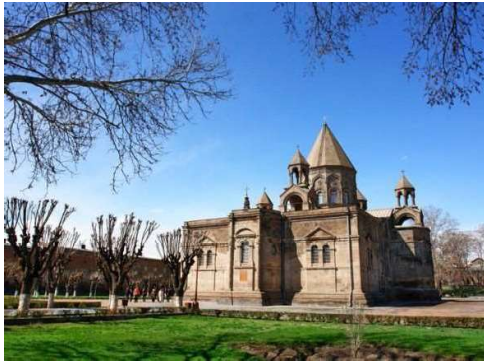
### **Lake Sevan May 26, 2018**

The fascination and the pearl of mountainous Armenia is Sevan Lake, which is one of the world's greatest high altitude freshwater lakes. It is about 1900 m above sea level. The lake is of volcanic origin and is surrounded with mountains of 3000 m and higher. The beautiful landscape and the crystal water serve nice preconditions for excellent rest. The lake is also famous for its peninsula and medieval church complex built in 874.



### **Sevanavank May 26, 2018**

A marvelous scene opens in the north-western part of Sevan Lake, where the peninsula towers over the transparent surface of the lake. Sevanavank monastery was built on the peninsula in 874 by the order of king Ashot Bagratuni's daughter princess Mariam. The silhouette of the churches against the background of the turquoise lake and blue sky casts unexplainable impression on the visitors.



### **Cathedral of Echmiadzin May 27, 2018**

The center of Armenian Apostolic church- St. Echmiadzin is located 20 km far from Yerevan. The Cathedral of Echmiadzin was founded at the beginning of the fourth century and is one of the oldest churches in the world. According to the legend the church was built in the place where apparition of Jesus Christ was seen to Grigory the Illuminator in the dream. The interior of the church is covered with frescoes created by Hovnatanyan family. The residence of the Catholicos and the Theological Academy are situated near the Cathedral.



### **Zvartnots May 27, 2018**

This marvelous temple is a result of skillfulness and brave creativity of Armenian architects of the 7th century. Having been built on several columns it could survive only till the 10th century. When in the beginning of the 20th century this site was being excavated many specialists could hardly accept its reconstruction model designed by famous Armenian architect Toros Toramanyan as it was difficult to believe that such a huge and complicated construction could have been built those days.



### **Tsitsernakaberd May 27, 2018**

The memorial-complex to the victims of the Armenian genocide towers over Tsitsernakaberd hill. At the center of the monument there is the Memorial Sepulcher with eternal flame and twelve, tall basalt slabs leaning over the flame. As a part of the Monument the arrow-shaped 44 meters high granite stele symbolizes the spiritual rebirth and bold spirit of the Armenian people. The Genocide Museum is a special constituent part of the complex. The exhibit contains many large photos taken by the witnesses, archival documents, documentary films and the original documents issued by international organizations .



### **Free Day May 28, 2018**

The tour around the city begins from one of the oldest streets of the city – Khachatur Abovyan street where you can see the contrast between numerous new and old buildings. We enter the Republic Square – the heart of Yerevan, which was designed by architect Alexander Tamanian . The oval shaped square has a stone pattern in the centre, meant to look like a traditional Armenian rug from above. The dancing water fountains are located in front of the National Gallery. The buildings around the square are made of rose and white Armenian tufa stones.



### **Haghartsin** May 29, 2018

Haghartsin monastery situated in the woodlands of Tavush region represents an indescribable example of blend of nature with architecture. It was founded in the 10-11th centuries, though new buildings were added in the 12-13th centuries. Now it consists of St. Grigor, St. Astvatsatsin (Holy Mother of God), St. Stepanos churches and some other buildings. The refectory due to its skillful architectural composition is of great interest. The huge oak tree, which is almost at the age of the monastery, completes the whole scene.



### **Dilijan** May 29, 2018

Dilijan entices people with its unforgettable beauty and mild climate. The city stretches on the banks of Aghstev river, surrounded with mountains and forests. Dilijan has the fame of a health resort. The warm sun, fresh air and natural spas have great healing influence on people. Dilijan is also rich in interesting architectural monuments.



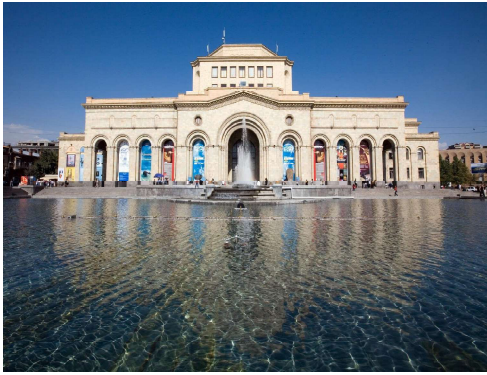
### **Garni** May 30, 2018

Garni temple which towers over a triangular cape, is the unique survived example of heathen culture in Armenia. It is a blend of Greco-Roman and Armenian styles. King Trdat the First ordered building the temple in the first century A.D. and dedicated it to the God of Sun. After adopting Christianity in 301 the pagan temple lost its significance and the fortress of Garni became the summer residence of the kings. Nowadays the ruins of the royal palace and the bathroom with a stunning mosaic work can be found near the temple.



### **Geghard** May 30, 2018

Geghard monastery is the unsurpassable masterpiece of the 13th century Armenian architecture. Some of the churches of the complex are masterfully hewn in a huge rock. From the outset the complex was called Ayrivank (cave monastery), later it was renamed Geghard (lance), as the lance used by the roman soldier to sting Jesus Christ's side, was kept in this monastery for many centuries. Due to its construction Geghardavank serves the best place for singing spiritual songs. The complex is rich in subtle sculptural embellishments and many striking khachkars (cross-stones).



### **National History Museum May 30, 2018**

The History Museum of Armenia is the national museum of Armenia and was founded in 1919 as an Ethnographic-Anthropological Museum-Library. It is located on the Republic Square in Yerevan. The History Museum of Armenia possesses a large collection of 3rd to 2nd millennia BC bronze specimens, which belong to the world treasury of masterpieces. The History Museum of Armenia presents the 4th-5th-century Christian culture of Armenia with the unique architectural, sculptural and ceramic finds, excavated from the cities of Dvin and Ani, from the fortress of Amberd.



### **Khor Virap May 31, 2018**

Khor Virap is the most famous pilgrimage site in Armenia, as it is directly connected with the adoption of Christianity. As a state religion Christianity in Armenia was adopted in 301 due to endeavors of Saint Gregory the Illuminator, who before converting king Trdat the 3rd to Christianity, was imprisoned in the dungeon over which a church of Khor Virap monastery was built in the 17th century. From the monastery one can admire the stunning view of the Biblical Mount Ararat.



### **Noravank May 31, 2018**

Passing a narrow road surrounded by rocks of hundred caves one discovers a scene of harmony of architecture with nature. The monastery enshrined with fine architectural solutions and luxurious embellishments is one of the brightest examples of Armenian architecture of the 13th century. Noravank consists of St. Karapet, St. Gregory the Illuminator churches and St. Astvatsatsin (Holy Mother of God) two-storey church, which is notable for its ideal constructive and sculptural work.



### **Tatev monastery May 31, 2018**

Among the architectural pillars of Zangezour the monastery of Tatev doesn't have its rivals. This used to be wealthiest medieval monastery in Armenia. Besides being a religious center Tatev was also the important strategical center of Syunik king-dom. Being situated on a naturally defended place Tatev Monastery has always been an impregnable fortress for alien. In non-stable political conditions the several secret ways in the territory of the fortress led the way to the canyon and served as a link between the monastery and external world.



### **Tatev Ropeway May 31, 2018**

Church bells were ringing loud in Tatev on October 16 of 2010, heralding the launch of a program to revive a medieval monastic complex and the opening of an aerial tramway called Wings of Tatev. The 5.7-kilometer ropeway was built within 11 months, passes through a deep gorge of the River Vorotan and over hills covered with lush forests. The tramway is supported by three towers between its two terminals. One terminal is on a hill overlooking the village of Halidzor and the other is near Tatev Monastery, on the road to Tatev village. Two cabins operate at once, traveling in opposite directions.



### **Karahunj May 31, 2018**

The scientific expeditions proved Karahunj to be one of the oldest observatories in the world. It is said to be about 7500 years old. Some of the precisely arranged huge stones have holes bored into them, which were used for astrolological observations. The petroglyphs found nearby Karahunj reveal that the early inhabitants in Armenia were well aware of astrology.



### **Areni village May 31, 2018**

The village of Areni is in Vayots Dzor region. This sunny village is famous for its best wine assortments. Due to its specific flavor and delicate taste "Areni" wine has its respectful place among the best Armenian wines. The visit to the wine factory of the village will serve a good testimony to the above mentioned. The St. Astvatsatsin church built by skillful architect and sculpture Momik is in Areni village, too.



### **Sardarapat June 1, 2018**

This memorial sculptural complex is built in the sunny Ararat valley. By allegories it represents the Armenian-turkish battle in 1918 and glorifies the brilliant victory of Armenian people. Near the entrance of the complex there are two huge winged bulls symbolizing the persistence of Armenian nation and the alley fringed by five eagles leads to the Ethnography museum with a rich exhibition of Armenian culture, trades and crafts.



### **Vernissage June 2, 2018**

Vernissage is a large open-air market in Yerevan, Armenia. The name of the market is derived from the French word vernissage. The market lies along Aram and Buzand streets at a length of 350 metres, connecting the Hanrapetutyun street with the Khanjyan street. The market mainly features a collection of different types of traditional Armenian art works.



### **Cascade June 2, 2018**

The Cascade is a giant stairway in Yerevan. It links the downtown Kentron area of Yerevan with the Monument neighborhood. The construction of the cascade designed by architects Jim Torosyan, Aslan Mkhitarian, Sargis Gurzadyan was launched in 1971 and completed in 1980. Inside the Cascade, underneath the exterior steps are a couple of escalators going the length of the complex. The exterior of cascade, in addition to stairs has multiple levels with fountains and sculptures. The stairs afford walkers unobstructed views of central Yerevan and Mount Ararat.



### **Gyumri June 3, 2018**

Gyumri is located in the north-western part of Armenia, in the middle of Shirak valley, 126 km far from Yerevan. From the ethical point of view it is the most colorful city in Armenia. The local traditions are deeply rooted here, national spirit is reflected in everything. Walking along the streets of old Gyumri one still seems to hear the voice of the smiths' hammers, it seems that a cart will appear from the street corner and the carter will call to show around the city. The old houses, a part of which fortunately resisted the devastating earthquake in 1988, speak of the high architectural achievements of the city.



### **Free Day June 4, 2018**

The tour around the city begins from one of the oldest streets of the city – Khachatur Abovyan street where you can see the contrast between numerous new and old buildings. We enter the Republic Square – the heart of Yerevan, which was designed by architect Alexander Tamanian. The oval shaped square has a stone pattern in the centre, meant to look like a traditional Armenian rug from above. The dancing water fountains are located in front of the National Gallery. The buildings around the square are made of rose and white Armenian tufa stones.



### **Noratus June 5, 2018**

The art of khachkar (cross-stone) is the most original manifestation of Armenian medieval culture. Noratus which is truly considered to be a forest of khachkars and open-air museum, displays hundreds of khachkars, the most stunning of which are the so called "embroidered" ones typical to the 13th-14th centuries. This is a unique place, where one can reveal the development of khachkars art in its historical process.



### **Gandzasar June 5, 2018**

Among the monuments of Artsakh Gandzasar monastery has its significant and special place. It is considered one of the pearls of Armenian medieval architecture. It consists of a church, monk cells and other buildings of economic significance. The dome of the cupola of the main church is of great artistic value due to its delicate bas-reliefs. The monastery is built on the peak of Gandzasar Mountain (mountain of treasures).



### **Dadivank June 5, 2018**

According to a legend Dadivank was founded in the 1st century over the tomb of St. Thadeu's disciple Dadi. The survived edifices now belong to the 12-13th centuries. Constructed on a hollow place, Dadivank is surrounded with dense forests. The wall inscriptions of Dadivank contain lots of valuable information about Armenian history. Dadivank is also famous for its two khachkars (cross-stones), which have gained the fame of being masterpieces.



### **Stepanakert June 5, 2018**

Stepanakert is the capital city of Artsakh. It bears the name of great revolutioner Stepan Shaumyan. Stepanakert is constructed by the project of Alexander Tamanyan. The clean, cozy city has many nice buildings and parks. Here one can see the famous sculptural work "We and our mountains", known in the nation as "Grandma and Grandpa".



### **Askeran fortress June 6, 2018**

The fortress of Askeran is in the village of the same name, 4 km far from Stepanakert. It has been an important strategical fort since the 18th century. The formidable ramparts and watchtowers once made the fortress almost inaccessible.



### **Tigranakert June 6, 2018**

Besides Tigranakert which is the fifth capital city of historical Armenia and which was founded by king Tigran the Great, in Western Armenia, in historical Armenia and beyond its borders several other settlements bearing the name Tigranakert were established by Tigran the Great. Such settlement was also Tigranakert city in the north of Artsakh which is located on the right bank of Khachenaget and was founded in the 1st century B.C.



### **Shoushi June 7, 2018**

Shoushi, the former capital city of Artsakh, is ten km far from Stepanakert. Shoushi is considered one of the oldest cultural and religious centers of Caucasus. The city is famous for its impregnable fortress and different historical sites. There is also a mosque of 18th century and St. Ghazanchetsots church restored in 1991-1994.



### **Shaki June 7, 2018**

Shaki fall is in the southern part of Armenia, close to Sisian. The fall, being located in one of the cosiest and nicest corners of Syunik, gloriously opens its striking beauty to all admirers. The air here is full of inspiring melody of water and scent of mountains loading all their wafts.



96, Nalbandian str., Yerevan, Tel. 54 60 40, 56 04 95, Fax 56 58 29: contact@hyurservice.com



**Jermuk June 7, 2018**

The famous health resort Jermuk is in the north-eastern part of Vayots Dzor. Jermuk mineral waters have been famous for their medicinal properties since early medieval. A special drinking gallery has been constructed for visitors, along which pump rooms with mineral water are lined up. The water temperature varies from 30 to 50 degrees C.

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Melkonian Educational Institute Reopening Foundation

328 Bridge Plaza North, Ste. 1H

Fort Lee, NJ 07024

Tel: 201-944-3249

melkonianai@gmail.com

Fax: 201-540-8214

Independence Centennial Group Tour of Armenia & Artsakh

Since 2012 The Melkonian Alumni International, in association with the class of 1965-1972 is organizing reunions and get togethers for Melkonians of all ages, together with friends, and relatives. So far, the group has organized tours to Armenia, Mexico, Hawaii, South Carolina, Alaska, California, and New York.

The next scheduled Group destination is Armenia from May 25, 2018 - June 5, 2018, and Artsakh Tour from June 5, 2018 - June 7, 2018.

\*\* The optional Artsakh Tour is 2 nights 3 days for an added \$275 per person.

This will be a tour of historic significance since it will coincide with the 100th Anniversary of the establishment of the First Republic of Armenia on May 28, 1918 \* May 28, 2018.

1-\*\*Early Bird Special\*\* the price \$1,300.00 if you sign up now through Nov. 15, 2017

You must deposit \$450.00 and pay the rest by Jan 15, 2018.per person.

2- After Nov 15, 2017 the price is \$1475.00, and you must deposit \$450.00 per person.

and pay the rest by Jan 15, 2018.

The price includes:

-Hotel stay from May 25, 2018 through June 5th, 2018 AM.

-Breakfast and either late lunch or dinner

-Tour fees and entry Fees to destinations.

Not included:

- Alcoholic beverages

- Trip to Artsakh is extra

- Your airfare to and from Armenia

- Your transport to and from the airports

Please see attached the list of locations and dates where we will spend time together in Armenia and Artsakh. For further information, and reservations please contact:

Hovannes Kendirian (West Coast)

or

Kevork Kalayjian (East Cost)

(626) 200 9870 direct

(845) 598 2391 direct

(626) 797 1224 fax

(201) 540 8214 fax

ok@okrealtyloan.com

kevorckalayjian@gmail.com

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