



emotions are  
**Georgia**

# GEORGIAN CULTURE; **AGES** IN THE MAKING,

*Timeless in Appeal*

საქართველოს კულტურის მემკვიდრეობის  
დაცვის ეროვნული აგენცია



NATIONAL AGENCY FOR  
CULTURAL HERITAGE  
PRESERVATION OF GEORGIA



# A COUNTRY AND ITS CULTURE

What is it that makes Georgian culture...well, Georgian? Certainly the first place to look is Georgia's physical environment. Georgia's rich and diverse topography--from the Caucasus Mountains to the Black Sea shore--has played a major role in shaping Georgian society and its culture. Traveling from region to region, you can't help but admire how well material culture is integrated into the landscape. Cultural elements vary from west to east, from south to north, from lowlands to mountains. They are unique to a single region, yet at the same time are integral to the national culture.

Georgians have been cultivating land since ancient times and are said to be the first growers of wheat and vine. They also extracted and worked copper, gold and iron, eloquent expression of which can be found in Georgian art.

Another critical element to the evolution of Georgia's culture is its place on the map--at the crossroads of east and west. For thousands of years, traders and adventurers have passed through here via the historic Silk Road, contributing their influences on Georgian art, architecture, music, cuisine and more. Diversity and multi-culturalism is a centuries-old phenomenon in Georgia.

While there have been many factors that helped shape Georgian culture, there's one element that has remained steadfast over the centuries, the legendary hospitality of the Georgian people. And that's a cultural tradition you'll feel right down to your bones.

1 The medieval monastery Sapara is located in Samtskhe-Javakheti







# CULTURAL TREASURES

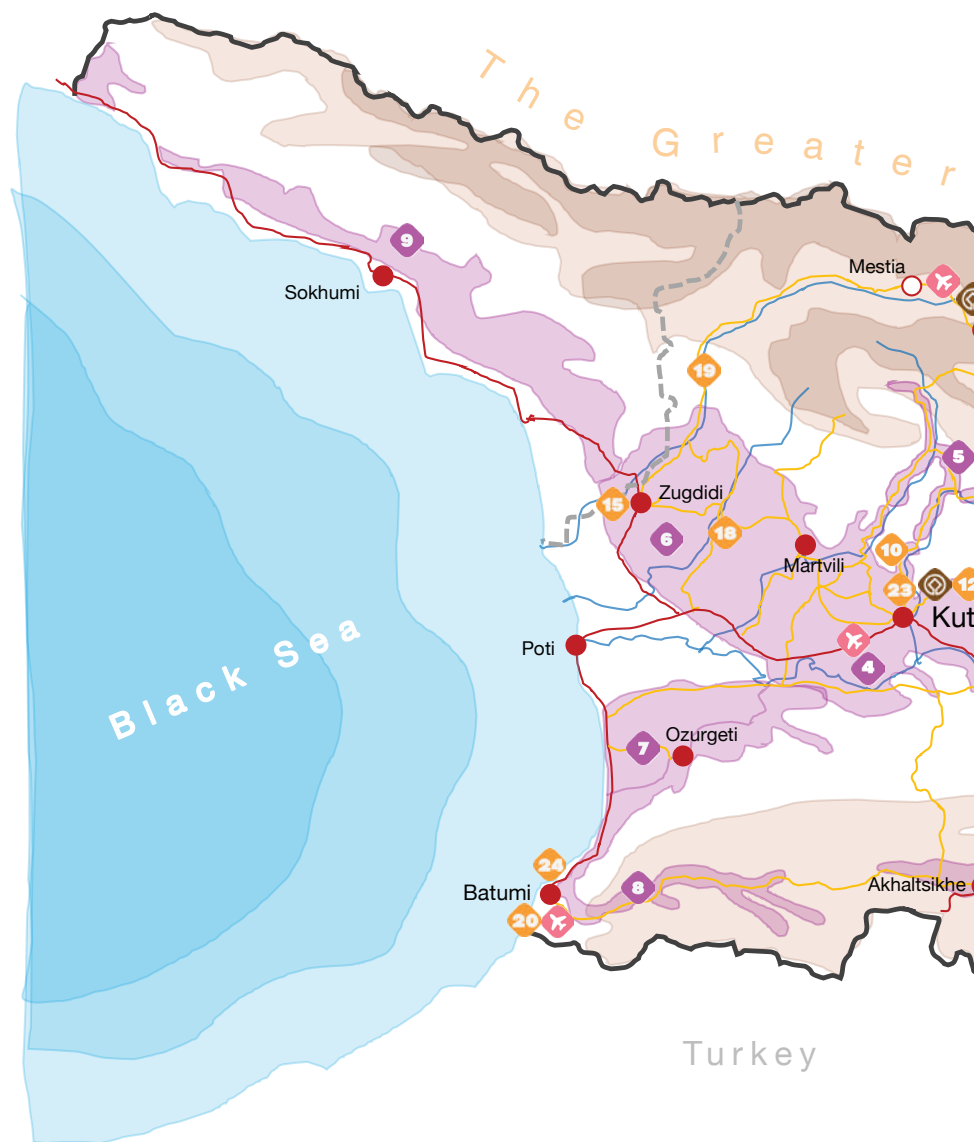
## კულტურული საგანძური

### Cultural Highlights

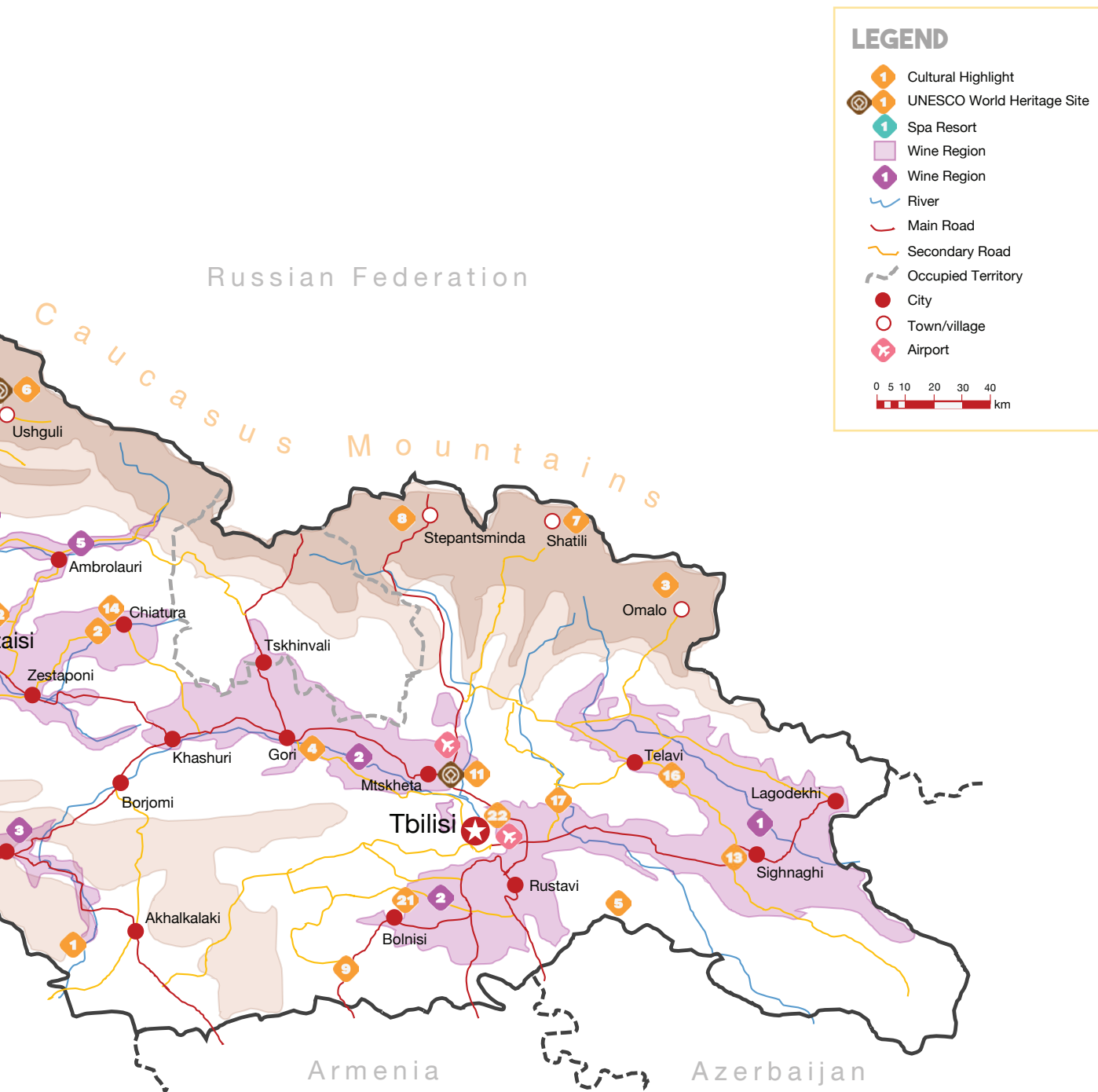
- 1 Vardzia Cave City
- 2 Katskhi Pillar
- 3 Tusheti National Park
- 4 Uplistsikhe Cave Town
- 5 Davit Gareja Monastery Complex
- 6 Upper Svaneti
- 7 Shatili and Mutso Fortified Settlements
- 8 Gergeti Trinity Church
- 9 Dmanisi Archeological Site
- 10 Abandoned Soviet Sanatorium
- 11 Historical Monuments of Mtskheta
- 12 Gelati Monastery
- 13 Signaghi "City of Love"
- 14 Cable Cars of Chiatura
- 15 Dadiani Palace and Park
- 16 Aleksandre Chavchavadze Complex (Tsinandali Park)
- 17 Ujarma Medieval Fortress
- 18 Nokalakevi Archeological Complex
- 19 Enguri Hydroelectric Dam
- 20 Gonio-Apsaros Archaeological Complex
- 21 Asureti and Bolsini Historic Towns
- 22 Old Town Tbilisi
- 23 Old Town Kutaisi
- 24 Old Town Batumi

### Wine Regions

- 1 Kakheti
- 2 Kartli
- 3 Meskheti
- 4 Imereti
- 5 Racha-Lechkhumi
- 6 Samegrelo
- 7 Guria
- 8 Adjara
- 9 Abkhazia









# ECHOES THROUGH THE MILLENNIA

2 The tradition of bringing sheep to the low lands for winter continues in Tusheti





**3** The megalith of Tejisi Church in the Kvemo Kartli region



**4** ©GNM / Ancient relics in the Vani Archaeological Museum

The Stone Age. That's when evidence of civilization in Georgia first appears. The remains of what are believed to be the first Europeans were found just outside Tbilisi-hominids estimated to be over 1.8 million years old. Since 1999, five skulls have been found in the Dmanisi range.

The region of Imereti has been populated since prehistoric times. For the ancient world it was part of the Kingdom of Colchis, the setting of the legend of Jason and the Argonauts and their quest for the golden fleece.

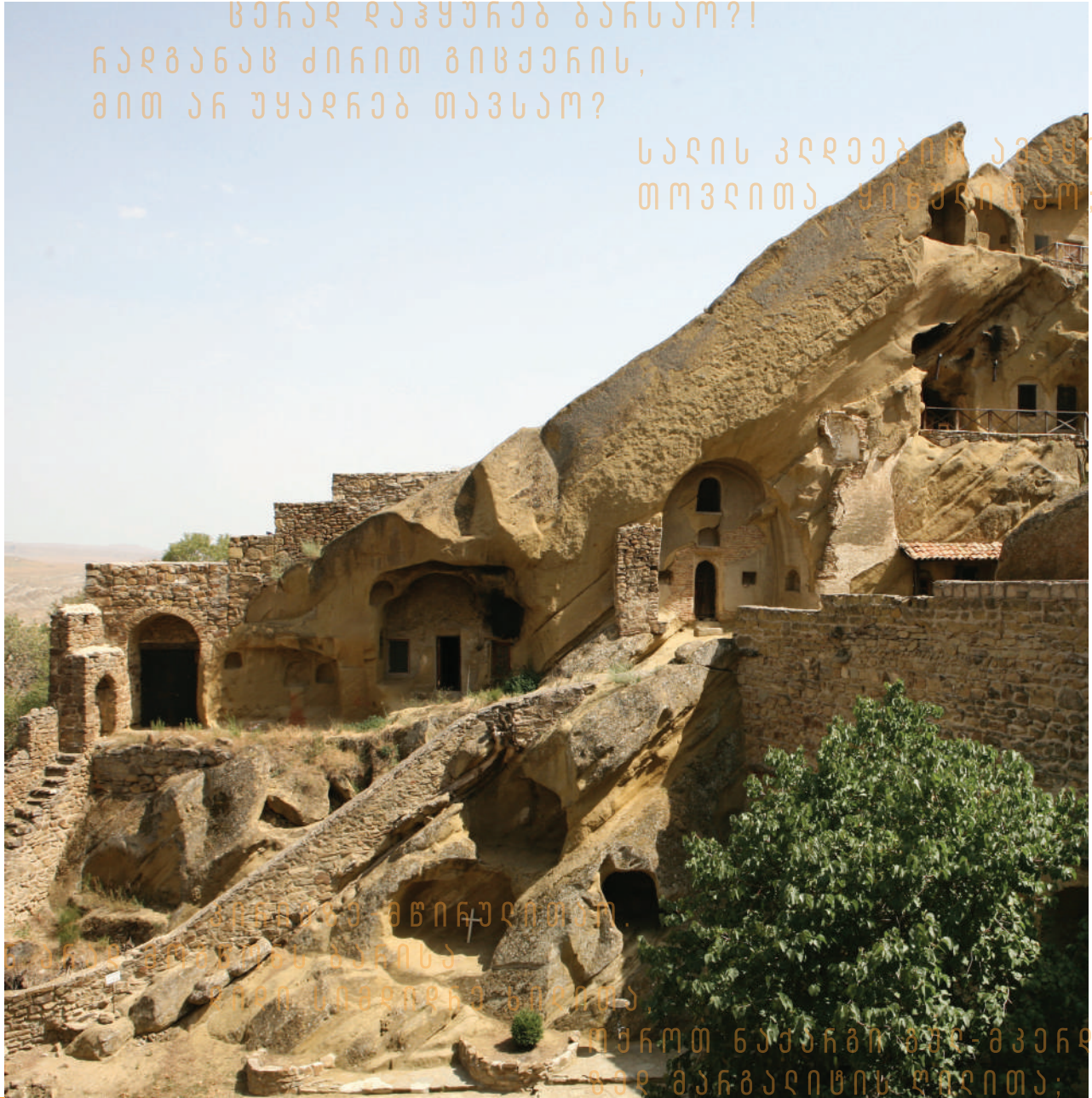
სან ბიზანტიანელებს შორის, თუ-300 მათი მიწები უკვე  
მართონ უკანონო შიშველებს სანა ბაქოთი მთავრობა  
ჩვენი თვალის სინათლეზე, ჩაბიძგე მომხრეები?



მთაო, რად აბრე ჰბუღღიღოღ,

სენარ დანყუბრე ბარსაო?!  
რადბანახ ძირით მიხქარის,  
მით არ უყარეღ თავსაო?

სარის კდრეჯეღიღ აბანოღ,  
თოვღოთა ყიფღიღოღ;



შე

სენარ დანყუბრე ბარსაო?!  
რადბანახ ძირით მიხქარის,  
მით არ უყარეღ თავსაო?  
სარის კდრეჯეღიღ აბანოღ,  
თოვღოთა ყიფღიღოღ;





6 Katskhi Pillar



7 Ancient frescoes in Gelati Monastery, Imereti

Georgia officially adopted Christianity in 326 AD, one of the first countries in the world to do so. This resulted in the construction of some spectacular cathedrals and monasteries that still stand tall today.

These include the Gelati Monastery Complex in Imereti, which was founded by King David Aghmashenebeli in 1106; Bagrati Cathedral in Kutaisi; the Davit Gareja Monastery Complex (Kakheti); and the mind-boggling Katskhi Pillar, where two churches, dating back to the 5th and 6th centuries, sit atop a 40-meter-tall column of rock.

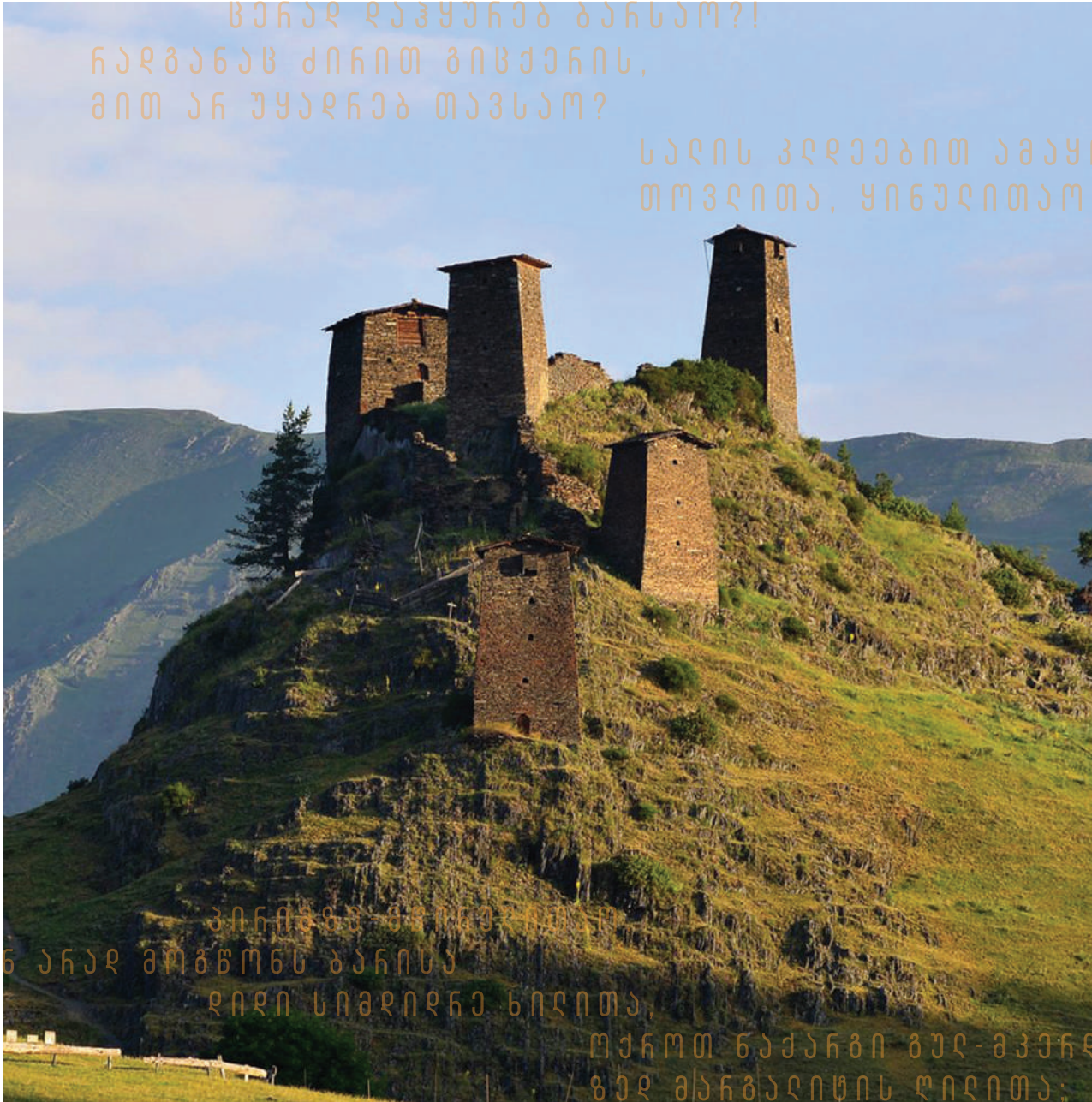
სანდოების კვლევა, თუ-31 მუშაობის მიზნად  
ამთონს ღვაწლენით შეიძლება  
რამთ თვარის სინათლავ, ნაბე  
აღმთ პიტი



მთაშ, რარ აბრე ჰბუღღიღმბ,

ბურარ ღაჰყურეებ ბარსამ?!  
რარბანახ ბიჩიბთ ბიხბურის,  
ბიბთ არ უყარეებ თავსამ?

სარის ჰღღეებბიბთ აბაყმბ,  
თმზღიბთა, ყიბუღიბთამ;



ბიჩიბთ ბიხბურის  
ბიბთ არ უყარეებ თავსამ?  
ღიღი სიბღღიღრა ბიღიბთა,  
მბჩიბთ ბაბურები ბარ-ბაბურები,  
ბარ ბარბაღიღიბთ სიღიბთა;







# UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES



Being designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site is an extraordinary honor. It means that The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) believes a landmark or area is “...of outstanding universal value,” and has cultural, historic or scientific significance. Besides being an honor, being designated a World Heritage Site provides legal protection by the United Nations. Georgia is blessed to have three UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

**11** Frescoes in Gelati monastery, Imereti





**12** Jvari Monastery of Mtskheta



**13** Gelati is a medieval monastic complex near Kutaisi in the Imereti region of western Georgia

The Gelati Monastery Complex in Imereti, was founded by King David Aghmashenebeli in 1106. One of the largest medieval Orthodox monasteries in the world, it is considered a masterpiece of the Golden Age of medieval Georgia.

Located only 25 kilometers northwest of Tbilisi, the historic churches of Mtskheta, rest at the confluence of the Aragvi and Mtkvari Rivers, and consist of the Jvari Monastery, the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and the Samtavro Monastery. This is where Christianity was proclaimed as the official religion of Georgia in 326 AD.

სან ბიზანტიანების შემოსევამ, თუ-311 მანამდე მონღოლებმა  
ამათონს ლავარდით შეიძინეს  
რამთ თვარის სინამდვივეს, ნაბედი  
აქამო პირი



მთაშ, რარ აბრე ჰბეღეღეღეღ,



შენ ახარ შთაბრეღე ჰბეღეღეღ

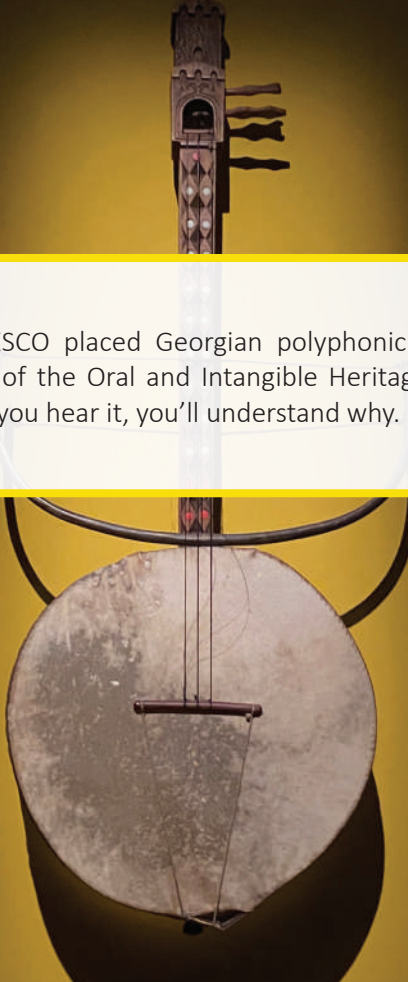
14 Panoramic view of medieval towers in the town of Mestia, Upper Svaneti







# EXPERIENCING THE CENTURIES



In 2001, UNESCO placed Georgian polyphonic singing on its Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity list, and once you hear it, you'll understand why.

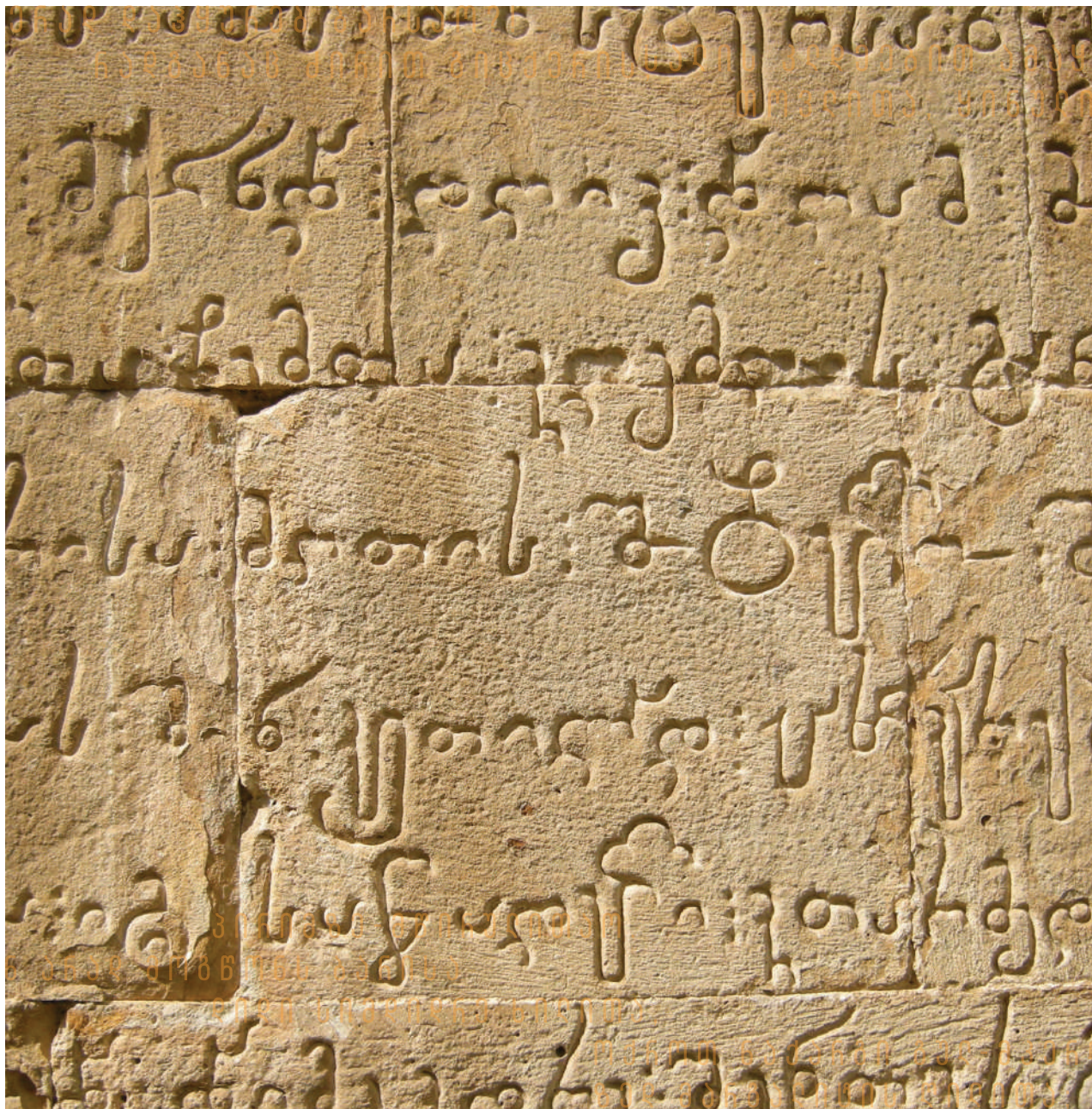
**17** A traditional chuniri, considered to be the national instrument of Svaneti







მით არ უყარაძებ თავესაო?



ოც,  
თა

შე

ო,







# A HUB OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE



**23** Modern architecture in the outskirts of Tbilisi





**24** Up and coming artists bring fresh creative energy to Tbilisi



**25** A Tbilisi Metro escalator becomes a catwalk in a fashion show

Given its dynamic cultural heritage, it can hardly be surprising to see contemporary culture flourishing in modern day Georgia. The streets of Tbilisi virtually crackle with a creative energy that you can feel. Increasingly, public spaces are becoming filled with markets, festivals and other events that embrace the enthusiasm of the moment.

Fashion shows demonstrate how the designers and fashion houses of Georgia have established themselves in the international arena. International film festivals continue to grow in significance on a worldwide scale, while art fairs generate international visibility for emerging artists.

The underground soul of Tbilisi can be seen in the collections of designers such as Situationists or on the colorful murals that every year appears on the gray soviet blocks sponsored by Tbilisi Mural Festival and Niko Movement.

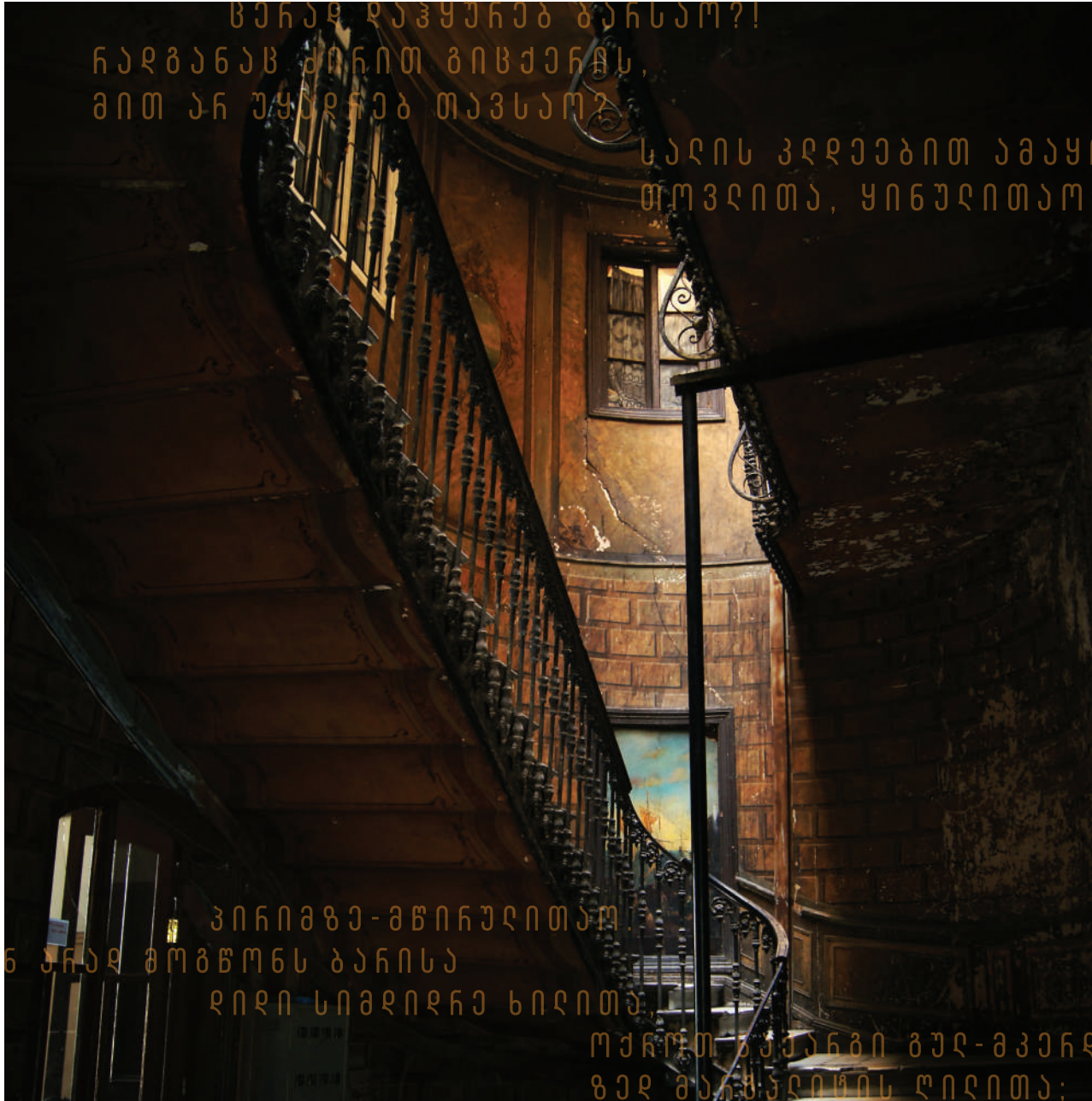
სან ბილსის მუზეუმის გახსნის შემდეგ, თუ-300 მანამ მნიშვნელოვანი.  
ამათონს უკავშირდებიან მუზეუმების სანაბნელო მთავრობა,  
რამთ თანაღობს სინამდვილას, რამდენ მუშაობს მუზეუმის მართვაში?



მთაო, რად აბრე ჰბეღდრეოზ,

ბერად რაჰყურად ბერსაო?  
რადბანახ პირით ბიხქარის,  
ბოთ არ უყურად თავსაო?

სადის ვდრეჯბით აბაყოზ,  
თოვდითა, ყიბეღითაო;



პირიბეჯ-ბერიუდითაო.  
შენ ბერად ბოგეონს ბარისა  
დირი სიბეღდრეა სიღითა,

ოქროთ ბეჯანბი ბუღ-ბეჯარეო,  
ბერ ბარ-ბეღდრის ლიღითა;





**27** Where there once were factories, now are hotels, bars and restaurants



**28** A neighborhood cafe in the city center

The Tbilisi restaurant scene has undergone a renaissance in recent years as innovative chefs put their own spin on Georgian classics. Eateries of all sorts--from white linen formal dining, to intimate cafes, even speakeasies--have been popping up in historic, but now hip neighborhoods such as Vera, Sololaki and Mtatsminda.

New restaurants and bars are embracing the traditional architecture of Old Tbilisi, incorporating much of the hand-crafted detail found in the area's beautiful older homes.

Tbilisi's much-vaunted dance music scene carries on deep into the night. In its dance clubs, techno is the soundtrack to social change, and its underground clubs are emblems of tolerance and progressiveness.

სანთნის რეკონსტრუქციის შემდეგ, ახლა აქაა რესტორნებისა და კაფეების ცენტრი. აქაა ადგილი, სადა შეგიძლიათ შეხვედეთ ადგილობრივი კულინარიის უნიკალურ ნიმუშებს. აქაა ადგილი, სადა შეგიძლიათ დაინახოთ ადგილობრივი ხელოვნების ნიმუშები. აქაა ადგილი, სადა შეგიძლიათ დაინახოთ ადგილობრივი მუსიკის ნიმუშები.



# THE MUSEUMS OF GEORGIA



**29** A medieval stone cross in the Georgia National Museum in Tbilisi





30 ©GNM / Ancient stone carvings at the Bolnisi Museum



31 ©GNM / 15th-century Cloisonné enamel on gold plaque portraying St. George slaying the dragon

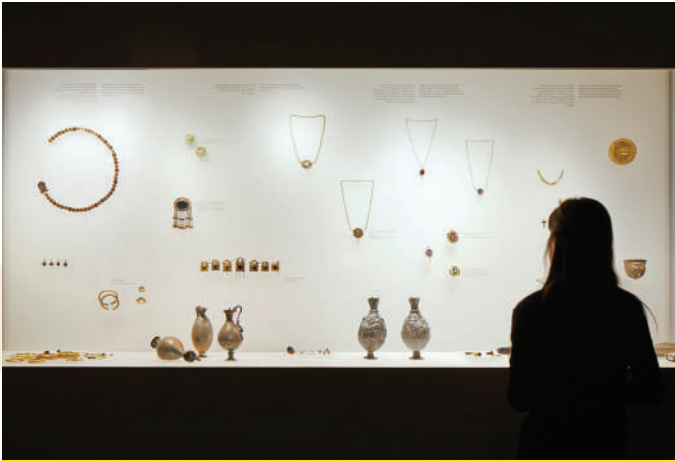
Given Georgia's millennia of history, the vast amount of historic natural and cultural wonders could leave you feeling overwhelmed. The Georgian National Museum, founded in 2004 as the largest museum association in Georgia, consists of 12 museums, the National Gallery, 4 house- museums and 2 scientific centers.

The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia offers another portfolio of heritage sites across the country. The dynamic 12 museum-reserves and 6 museums introduce visitors to the wider spectrum of Georgian culture throughout the centuries.

The collections are astounding: ancient human remains of the first Europeans, unique archeological discoveries, and materials celebrating Georgia's early Christian culture. There are world-class Asian monuments, a rich collection of numismatics, delicate gold and silver jewelry from ancient Colchis, spectacular examples of legendary Georgian Cloisonné enamel and renowned works of various Georgian and European artists that span centuries.







**©GNM / Museum of Georgia**

*(3, Sh. Rustaveli Avenue, Tbilisi)*

Originally founded in 1852, the museum sets the standards for the preservation of Georgian heritage.



**Museum of Fine Arts**

*(7, Rustaveli Avenue, Tbilisi)*

Opened in 2018, the museum houses over 3500 artworks, created by over 80 artists during the last 70 years.



**©GNM / National Gallery**

*(11, Sh. Rustaveli Avenue, Tbilisi)*

Originally a prison, the gallery now has eight modern exhibition halls.



**Open Air Museum of Ethnography**

*(1, Turtle Lake Road, Tbilisi)*

This sprawling museum presents 14 distinct historic-ethnographic areas of Georgia.





©GNM / **E. Akhvediani House-Museum**

*(12, Leo Kiacheli Street, Tbilisi)*

The home of Georgian painter Elene Akhvediani represents a typical Georgian interior, filled with many of the artist's works.



**Tbilisi History Museum - Karvasla**

*(8, Sioni Street, Tbilisi)*

Located in a restored caravanserai, the museum houses over fifty thousand artifacts reflecting Tbilisi's history.

## MUSEUMS OF TBILISI

Here are just a few highlights of Georgian National Museum sites in Tbilisi







**Mestia Museum**

*(7 A. Ioseliani Street, Mestia)*

This sprawling complex was renovated in 2015, and is recognized as a world-class facility.



**©GNM / Vani Archaeological Museum**

*(32 O. Lordkipanidze Street, Vani)*

A spectacular facility in a Caucasus settlement which covers the first millennium BC, and is of global importance.



**Parmen Zakaria Nokalakevi Architectural-Archaeological State Museum-Reserve**

*(Village Nokalakevi, District of Senaki)*

The massive ruins of a medieval city in the region of Samegrelo.



**©GNM / Bolnisi Museum**

*(95, Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani Street, Bolnisi)*

A model of the 21st century regional museum, where science, culture, education and tourism can coexist in one space.



## REGIONAL GEORGIAN MUSEUMS

A number of equally fascinating museums and museum-reserves can be found across the country.

### **Borjomi Local Lore Museum**

*(5 Tsminda Nino Street, Borjomi)*

### **Dmanisi Museum-Reserve**

*(Patara Dmanisi Village, District of Dmanisi)*

### **Dzalisa Museum-Reserve**

*(Village of Dzalisa, District of Mtskheta)*

### **George and David Eristavi House-Museum**

*(Village Odzisi, District of Dusheti)*

### **Gremi Museum**

*(Village Gremi, District of Kvareli)*

### **Kutaisi Historical-Architectural Museum-Reserve**

*(7, Nazarishvili Street, Kutaisi)*

### **Niko Nikoladze House Museum**

*(Village Didi Jikhaishi, District of Samtredia)*

### **Niko Pirozmanashvili State Museum**

*(Village Mirzaani, District of Dedoplistskaro)*

### **Kolkheti Culture Museum**

*(26 May Street, Poti)*

### **Samtskhe-Javakheti History Museum**

*(1, Kharischirashvili Street, Akhaltsikhe)*

### **Sighnaghi Museum**

*(8 Rustaveli blind-Alley, Sighnaghi)*

### **The Great Mtskheta Museum-Reserve**

*(51 Agmasghenebeli Street, Mtskheta)*

### **Uplistsikhe Historical Architectural Museum-Reserve**

*(Village Kvakhvrel, District of Gori)*

More informations about museums and museum-reserves across Georgia is available at:

<http://georgianmuseums.ge/en/museums/>



### **Ujarma Museum Reserve**

*(Village Ujarma, District of Sagarejo)*

This 9 hectare fortress-city includes a palace, church, battle towers residential and agricultural buildings from the 10th through 13th centuries.



### **Vardzia Historical-Architectural Museum-Reserve**

*(Village Vardzia, Municipality of Aspindza)*

A vast and fascinating cave monastery complex from the 12th century.







# AN INEVITABLE IMMERSION

It has been said geography is destiny. It could be argued geography is culture. Georgian culture has been shaped by the Caucasus Mountains and the Black Sea. And by the Silk Road traders who traversed the country linking east and west. Influences both natural and man-made have shaped Georgian culture into a unique and ever-evolving experience.

Once here, feeling the deep beauty and genuine warmth of Georgian culture is inevitable. It's in the art, architecture, music, dance, fashion, food, wine and more. A simple stroll down the street immerses you in it. We invite you to come feel it for yourself.

## **GERGETI TRINITY CHURCH**

Gracefully perched in the shadow of Mkinvartsveri (Mount Kazbegi) sits one of Georgia's most iconic structures, Gergeti Trinity Church. Approaching from a winding access road, you can almost feel the power of human determination behind this 14th century creation. Once on the church grounds, you can take in sweeping views of the town of Stepantsmida (or Kazbegi) below.



# TRAVEL INFORMATION SECTION

## #EmotionsAreGeorgia

### Visa Requirements

The visa policy of Georgia became comparatively liberal, allowing citizens of 98 countries to enter, reside, work and study in Georgia without the necessity to obtain either a visa or residence permit. In addition, the Georgian Government approved the list of 50 countries whose visa and/or residence permit holders may enter Georgia without a visa for an appropriate period and under appropriate conditions.

**For more information please visit the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia**

[www.mfa.gov.ge](http://www.mfa.gov.ge)

### Connectivity

Georgia, with its strategic location at the crossroad of Europe and Asia, features itself as regional logistics and transit hub offering easy access to key markets. There are modern international airports operating

in different parts of the country which accelerate the increase of tourists flows. Flights are operated by various airlines from over 50 directions from/to Georgia. [www.kutaisi.aero](http://www.kutaisi.aero); [www.tavgeorgia.com](http://www.tavgeorgia.com)

### Climate

The climate of the country is extremely diverse. Average temperatures in summer range from 19°C to 22 °C, and in winter from 1.5 °C to 3 °C.

### Electricity

Electrical current - 220 volts, 50 Hz. EU standards plugs work throughout Georgia.

### Currency

The currency in Georgia is the Georgian Lari. ATMs can be found in major towns and cities. Credit and debit cards are widely used in major cities.

### Communication

The country code is +995. Georgia's mobile operators are present in most parts of the country, and there are many Wi-Fi zones that enable visitors to use the internet for free.

### Health

For emergency services, please call 112.

For more information, please visit:

**[www.georgia.travel](http://www.georgia.travel)**

**Hotline 0 800 800 909**

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