EXPERIENCE MOLDOVA & ARMENIA TOUR

DAY 1

Day 1: Arrival day in Chisinau, Moldova

On arrival at Chisinau International Airport, you will be transferred to your accommodation in Chisinau. After settling in, you can have a walk through downtown and explore the city centre on your own. In the evening, you will have Welcome dinner at the local restaurant in Chisinau.

HIGHLIGHTS: Chisinau city,

DAY 2

Day 2: Visit of Orheiul Vechi - a 40-thousand-year-old natural amphitheater and Cricova Underground Wine Galleries

The day will begin with **Chisinau city tour**. Chisinau is the main administrative, scientific and cultural centre of Moldova. During the tour, you will discover pieces of history and culture of the city such as the Nativity of Christ Cathedral, the Bell Tower, the Arch of Triumph, the Monument of Stephen the Great, etc.

The journey will continue at **Orheiul Vechi (Old Orhei)** - a natural amphitheater revealing a territory which was first inhabited 40 000 years ago. The Cultural, Natural and Landscape Reserve Orheiul Vechi includes a series of historical and cultural monuments as well as natural landscapes in the gorge of the Raut River. Ancient fortifications, cave monasteries, monks and hermits – here you can follow the history of this region. The remnants of the first human settlements were found in the stone caverns from here. On the rocky hill, you will find the ruins of a strong Geto-Dacian fortification, which acted as a sanctuary for celebrating religious holidays and rituals in this prehistoric community. The originality of Orheiul Vechi landscape is due to the gorge of the Raut River, dug under the form of a canyon in the limestone layers of the former Sarmatian Sea, about 14 million years ago.

The day will continue at Butuceni guesthouse, where you will enjoy a **culinary masterclass** during which you will learn how to cook traditional “placinte” (pies) with sour cherries.

In the afternoon, you will have a **Traditional Moldovan lunch** at the Butuceni guesthouse. Here you will experience local specialties, as “zeama”, “mamaliga”, and “scrob”, along with traditional pastry and a glass of wine.

After lunch, you will discover **Cricova Underground Wine Galleries** – the pearl of winemaking in the Republic of Moldova and a "must" for guests visiting our country. During the excursion at Cricova winery in the tourist electric train, at a depth of 80 m, you will discover the wonders of this place. Cricova underground galleries are formed by over seventy streets covering an area of nearly 120 km, each bearing Bacchic names: Sauvignon, Cabernet, Cahors, etc. The jewel of the underground treasure is the National Collection, including over 600 types of wine totalling about 1 million bottles. Here you will admire the oldest bottle of wine - "Jewish Easter Wine", dating from 1902. You will also visit the unique production of sparkling wine,

where a professional guide will tell you about all the process of producing sparkling wines using the famous French-style Méthode Champenoise. In one of the tasting rooms, the sommelier will explain the rules of wine tasting and help you better reveal the taste and bouquet of each type of wine.

After discovering Cricova Winery, you will be transferred to Chisinau and have free time in the city.

HIGHLIGHTS: Orheiul Vechi - a 40 thousand years-old natural amphitheater, Cricova Underground Wine Galleries,

DAY 3

Day 3: Time travel in Tiraspol – Back in the USSR

In the morning, you will discover the oldest medieval fort of **Tighina Fortress** located in Tighina town and built in the 15th century by the prince of Moldova, Stephen the Great. Originally built as a small wooden fort, it was later fortified in stone by the prince of Moldova, Petru Rares. Occupied by the Ottomans in 1538 (in a campaign lead by the sultan Suleiman the Magnificent), the fort was strengthened in 1541 and became the center of an Ottoman "raya" (in which were included the surrounding Moldavian villages). In the 18th century, the fort was strengthened by Moldovan craftsmen under the direct supervision of Dimitrie Cantemir. Tighina Fortress is an architectural ensemble of irregular quadrilateral plan, surrounded by wide walls, 2-3 meters thick, made of limestone and brick.

The journey will continue with visit at one of the largest fish hatcheries in Europe – **Aquatir Sturgeon Complex**. The complex is equipped with the latest technologies and the fish can reach the size of a man. You will get the chance to see how is processed one of the most expensive culinary delights – caviar. You will have opportunity to taste caviar with a shot of vodka or a glass of sparkling wine.

In the afternoon, you will have a **soviet-style lunch** at the local restaurant in Tiraspol.

After lunch, you will have a **panoramic tour in Tiraspol,** you will set off on a time travel. During the city tour, you will discover Vladimir Lenin’s monument and the tank left from the Second World War. The city seems to be a vestige of the Soviet past.

In the evening, you will be transferred to Chisinau where you check in at the hotel and have free time in the city.

HIGHLIGHTS: Tighina Fortress, Aquatir Sturgeon Farm, Tiraspol city,

DAY 4

Day 4: Discovery of Rustic Art Handicraft Complex and Tipova - one of the Christian cave fortresses

The first stop of this day will be Trebujeni village. Here, you will have an excursion with a delicious honey tasting at the apiary. Trebujeni village will offer you the chance to discover the “sweet” pension named **“Zumzicios”** where actually, a small **bees’ kingdom**, with a bunch of beehives in the garden.

You will continue your journey to **Rustic Art Handicraft Complex -** a museum that holds the largest collection of the Bessarabian carpets, that are recognized by UNESCO as World Heritage. At the museum a brief tour of carpet collection showcase of carpets, traditional costumes, and other handicrafts objects will be organized. Each carpet has its own history, a very interesting past, which will be revealed to you there.

In the afternoon, you will enjoy a **lunch at Hanul lui Hanganu guesthouse**. During lunch, you will discover the taste of delicious dishes cooked following a recipe containing secrets passed down from generation to generation.

After lunch, you will have excursion at the **Tipova Cave Monastery**. Situated near the Tipova village, the monastery with the same name is considered to be one of the oldest monastic establishments on the territory of our country. The heritage, which consists from 18 rooms, dug into the rock at an astounding altitude, represents an impressive museum in the open air. Tipova River, on its flow to Nistru, creates many waterfalls with the heights above 10-16 meters, which a long time ago used to move the millstones of the numerous watermills.

In the afternoon, you will be transferred to Chisinau.

HIGHLIGHTS: Tipova Cave Monastery, "Rustic Art" Crafts Complex, Hanul lui Hanganu guesthouse,

DAY 5

Day 5: Discovery of Gagauzia

You will start the day by travelling to Comrat where you will enjoy a city tour. Comrat is the capital of the autonomous region of Gagauzia, located in southwest Moldova. This is a very interesting territory since the majority of its habitants are Gagauzians. These are the only representatives of Turkic origin that affiliated with the Eastern Orthodox Church. Gagauzians migrated from Bulgaria together with ethnic Bulgarians and settled in Moldova in 19th century. You will see such attractions as the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Museum of Gagauz Culture, Gagauz Art Gallery, Gagauz National University and Alley of Gagauz Glory.

In the afternoon, you will have **lunch at Gagauz Sofrasi Ethno-Touristic Complex**.

After lunch, you will have excursion and masterclass of gozleme at Gagauz Sofrasi Guesthouse. During your visit, you'll have the exciting opportunity to participate in a hands-on **masterclass** where you'll learn to make **gözleme – delicious traditional savory pastries.** It's a fantastic chance to connect with local culinary customs. Adding to the cultural immersion, Sofrasi Guesthouse boasts a collection of traditional Moldovan folk costumes. You'll be able to try on these beautiful garments and take memorable photos, fully embracing the spirit of the region.

You will continue your journey with **Mimi Castle Winery**. located in Bulboaca village - a destination of interest unique in Moldova. Castel Mimi is currently listed among the most beautiful architectural masterpieces in the world of wine. The story of the castle begins at the end of 1893, when Constantin Mimi, the last governor of Bessarabia, plants the first grape vines on the place that would become legend over the years. Here, you will taste Castel Mimi wines and have a fabulous dinner at Castel Mimi restaurant.

In the evening, you will be transferred to Chisinau International Airport where you have flight from Chisinau to Yerevan.

HIGHLIGHTS: Comrat city , Gagauz Sofrasi guest house, Castel Mimi winery,

DAY 6

Day 6: Arrival day in Yerevan, Armenia

On arrival at **Zvartnots International Airport**, you will be transferred to your accommodation. After settling in, you can enjoy your breakfast at the hotel.

You will start the day by travelling to **Ararat Brandy Factory**. This experience introduces guests to Armenia's renowned brandy-making traditions through a guided visit of one of the country's most iconic producers. The tour is complemented by a tasting session, offering the opportunity to sample selected varieties of Armenian brandy.

In the afternoon, you will enjoy **lunch** at the local restaurant (Armenian traditional cuisine).

After lunch, you will have **Yerevan city tour** where you will visit Republic Square, the Cascade Complex, and the Opera House, some of the city's best-known landmarks. You'll also get a chance to enjoy views of Mount Ararat and see how Yerevan combines its long history with a lively, modern atmosphere.

HIGHLIGHTS: Ararat Brandy Factory, Yerevan City,

DAY 7

Day 7: Excursion at Khor Virap, Noravank Monastery, Art Cheese Factory and Zorats Karer

In the morning, you will discover **Khor Virap Monastery** - one of Armenia's most important pilgrimage sites. From here, you will enjoy a stunning view of Mount Ararat, one of the country's most iconic symbols.

Next stop of the day will be **Art Cheese Factory** - a small local producer famous for handmade cheeses and natural products. You will learn about traditional cheese-making methods and enjoy tasting some of their delicious varieties.

In the afternoon, you will be transferred to Areni village and have lunch at the local restaurant.
After lunch, you will enjoy the scenery of **Noravank Monastery**. Set amid dramatic red rock cliffs, this monastery complex is renowned for its striking natural setting and harmonious integration with the surrounding landscape. The visit offers impressive views and a tranquil atmosphere, highlighting one of Armenia's most visually distinctive cultural sites.
Next, you will explore **Zorats Karer** an ancient site made up of hundreds of standing stones, often compared to Stonehenge. You will discover the history and mystery behind this remarkable archaeological landmark.
In the evening, you will be transferred to Goris, where you check in at the hotel and have free time.

HIGHLIGHTS: Khor Virap Monastery, Art Cheese Factory, Noravank Monastery, Zorats Karer,

DAY 8

Day 8: Ropeway Ride, exploration of Tatev Monastery and Orbelian's Caravanserai

The day will begin with the transfer to **Tatev Ropeway**. There, you will go on a ropeway ride. You will ride the Wings of Tatev, the world's longest reversible cable car, admire breathtaking panoramic views of the Vorotan Gorge
and the surrounding mountains as you glide above this stunning landscape.

The journey will continue with an excursion at **Tatev Monastery -** a stunning medieval complex perched on a cliff, with breathtaking views of the surrounding Vorotan Gorge.

In the afternoon, you will be transferred to Gladzor village where you will have a delicious **lunch and Gata Baking masterclass.**

The traveling will continue at the 14th-century **Orbelian's Caravanserai -** an ancient rest stop for Silk Road travelers. You can admire its historic architecture.

In the evening, you will be transferred to Yerevan and have free time in the city.

HIGHLIGHTS: Tatev Monastery, Orbelian's Caravanserai, Gata Baking masterclass, Tatev Ropeway Ride,

DAY 9

Day 9: Visit of Sevanavank Monastery and Dilijan's Old Town

In the morning, you will travel to **Sevanavank Monastery.** You will visit Sevanavank Monastery, perched on a peninsula above Lake Sevan and enjoy panoramic views, explore traditional Armenian architecture, and experience the serene atmosphere of this iconic medieval site.

You will continue your journey to the **Old Town of Dilijan**, with cobblestone streets, traditional wooden houses, and charming artisan shops. You will have the chance to experience the town's rich history and local culture.

Next, you will have a short 1.6 km **hike to a hidden waterfall** in the surrounding forest. You will appreciate the serene nature and capture memorable photos before returning to Yerevan.

In the afternoon, you will enjoy **lunch** at the local restaurant.

After lunch, you will be transferred to Yerevan and check-in at the hotel.

HIGHLIGHTS: Sevanavank Monastery, Old Town of Dilijan,

DAY 10

Day 10: Departure day and visit of Zvartnots Cathedra, Echmiadzin Cathedral and Treasury Museum

The first stop of this day will be at **Zvartnots Cathedra** - 7th-century architectural masterpiece and UNESCO World Heritage site, famous for its unique design and historical significance. You will discover the ruins and learn about its remarkable place in Armenian history.

Next, you will have lunch at the local restaurant.

After lunch, you will visit **Echmiadzin Cathedral** - the spiritual heart of Armenia, the mother church of the Armenian Apostolic Church. You will discover its rich history, stunning architecture, and religious significance.

The journey, will continue at **Treasury Museum**, where you will admire priceless religious artifacts, including ancient manuscripts, ceremonial objects and ornate crosses, learn about the history and cultural significance of these treasures in the Armenian Church.

In the evening you will be transferred to Yerevan and have departure from Armenia.

HIGHLIGHTS: Zvartnots Cathedra, Echmiadzin Cathedral, Treasury Museum,