

Svaneti, Georgia

Mestia Ushguli Trek

Duration — 8 days **(2 nights of camping)**

Svaneti is one of the most beautiful and distinctive regions of Georgia. It is known for its incredible snow-capped peaks, blooming alpine meadows and picturesque settlements with famous medieval defense towers. Svaneti has a unique location with four out of the ten highest Caucasus peaks located in this region. It's where you can find the highest mountain in Georgia, Shkhara, standing at 5,203 meters altitude. It is a hiker's wonderland.



Lamaria church in Ushguli

Svaneti is not only about breathtaking nature. Svaneti is a paradise for lovers of ancient culture and history, folklore and food. The entire region of Svaneti is almost like an open-air museum. This is a place that has almost not changed its appearance over the past centuries. This is a place worth visiting at least once.

This trip is a mix - we have comfortable night staying in guesthouses, but we'll camp 2 nights under the starry sky of the Caucasus mountains.

DAY 1. Transfer to Svaneti

Distance: 450 km Travel time: about 9-10 hours

In the morning (around 8 a.m.) we meet in Tbilisi (at the airport or in the city center) and go to Mestia, the focal point of Svaneti. On the way, we will have a lunch and visit the world's second highest arch dam – Enguri, 271.5 meters high. Arrival in Mestia late afternoon/evening. Hotel accommodation, dinner and overnight in Mestia.

Note: Our trekking tour starts in Tbilisi, but we can also pick you up from Kutaisi.



Mestia at night

DAY 2. Mazeri, Shdughra Waterfall, Ushba glacier

8 - 16 km hiking, 400 -1000 m elevation gain, 400 - 1000 m loss

Breakfast in the hotel. Next, we will go to the village of Mazeri (about 30 min.), from where we will start trekking to glacier at the foot of Mount Ushba (4700 m). On our way we will see the Shdughra Waterfall, which is the highest waterfall in Georgia.

Ushba is distinguished not only among the peaks of Georgia, but also among the peaks of the world. Although it does not rank in the 10 highest peaks of the range, Ushba is known as the "Matterhorn of the Caucasus" for its picturesque, spire-shaped double summit. Due to its steep profile and unstable weather, Ushba is considered by many climbers as the most difficult ascent in the Caucasus.

After the trekking, we will go back to Mestia and have dinner. Overnight stay in the hotel.



Shdughra Waterfall



Ushba glacier

DAY 3. Adishi

6 km hiking, 200 m elevation gain

After the breakfast, we will go to the Adishi village (35 km, about 1,5 hr.). Adishi is one of the oldest villages in Svaneti region. The village is interesting because of its secluded location, thousand-year-old fortified towers and four different churches with unique frescoes from the 10th and 12th centuries. One of the oldest examples of Georgian writing was found in Adishi as well – The Adishi Gospels. Adishi used to be a large community with 5 villages, but only one village has survived. Other settlements were destroyed by various avalanches and landslides.



Adishi village



Camp in a birch grove

From Adishi, we will go up the Adishischala river. After two hours of hike with a slight elevation gain, we will set up the camp in a riverside birch grove at the foot of Adishi glacier. Here we'll cook a dinner on a camp stove and enjoy a wonderful evening surrounded by beautiful majestic mountains. **Overnight: tented camp (2260 m).**

DAY 4. Chkhutnieri pass - Khalde – Ushguli

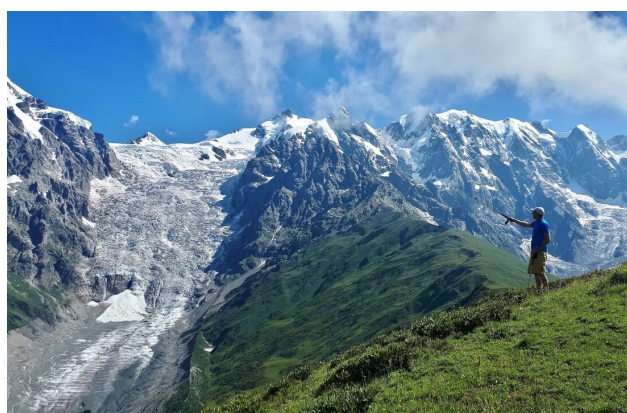
9 km hiking, 500 m elevation gain, 700 m loss

Early in the morning, we will cross the Adishischala river that comes from the Adishi Glacier. Afterwards we will climb the Chkhutnieri pass (2740 m). It will take about 2 hours. The pass offers great views of surrounding mountains and the Adishi glacier. If the weather is nice, we can leave our backpacks at the pass and walk along the ridge north-east towards the glacier for even better views. We will then begin to descend towards the village of Khalde. From Khalde we will

drive to the highest located village in Georgia, that is Ushguli (around 2300 m). In Ushguli, we will stay in an ancient house of our hosts and enjoy a dinner prepared by a hostess from fresh local products. Overnight stay in the guesthouse.



View of Mount Tetnuldi (4858 m) on the way to the Chkhutnieri pass



Chkhutnieri pass

DAY 5. Shkhara glacier

16 km hiking, 540 m elevation gain, 540 m loss

Today we will go to the glacier of the highest mountain in Georgia, Mt. Shkhara (5193 m). This is the place where the main river of Svaneti, the Enguri, starts. It takes about five hours to hike to the glacier and return. On the way we will visit Virgin Mary Church, which is also called Ushguli Lamaria and is one of the most important monuments of Svaneti. After the trekking, you will have some free time in Ushguli. Overnight stay in the guesthouse.



Ushguli



Lamaria Church

DAY 6. Gorvashi Pass and Latpari Lake

9 km hiking, 1080 m elevation gain, 270 m loss

After breakfast in the morning we will climb up to Gorvashi pass (2972m). From here you will have exceptional views over whole Greater Caucasus, the major mountain range of the Caucasus Mountains. You will see Shkhara, Tetnildi, Ushba and even Elbrus (at least on sunny days). To the east, you will be able to enjoy views of Koshtan-Tau and Ailama. Then we will hike along the top of the ridge to a small lake. That is our spot for camp. From here there is a beautiful view of the valleys in the east and the snowy peaks beyond.

Overnight: tented camp (2880 m).



On the way to Gorvashi pass



Latpari Lake

DAY 7. Latpari pass — Mestia

2,5 km hiking, 200 m elevation gain, 240 m loss

From the lake, we will continue walking and soon reach Latpari pass. We will get to our car and drive to Mestia. After checking into the hotel and rest, we can visit the local ethnography museum or a museum dedicated to a local alpinist, Mikhail Khergiani. Also we can see the interior of a traditional Svan house, as well as climb the Svan defense tower. In the evening, we will have a dinner in the hotel. Overnight stay in the hotel.

DAY 7. Departure

Distance: 450 km Travel time: about 9-10 hours

After breakfast, transfer from Mestia to Tbilisi.