

## Social Program



Mtskheta



Old Tbilisi

## **Wednesday, June 11, 2025**

### Arrival Date

16:00 - 18:00 - Guided tour in old Tbilisi;

- Meeting point - in front of Sheraton Grand Tbilisi Metekhi Palace;
- Walking to the center of Old Tbilisi;
- Meeting Point at European Square;

18:00-19:00 - Departure to Mtskheta;  
<https://georgia.travel/cities-towns/mtskheta>

19:00-20:00 - Visiting Svetitskhoveli Cathedral;  
<https://georgia.travel/svetitskhoveli-a-treasure-of-world-art>

20:00-21:30 – Visiting to the Small Family Winery in Mtskheta;

21:30-22:00 - Meeting at the entrance of the Family Winery Mtskheta and arrival at the entrance of the Venue - Sheraton Grand Tbilisi Metekhi Palace.

## Svetitskhoveli Cathedral



According to legend, Mtskheta was founded in the 1st millennium BCE by the ethnarch Mtskhetos, but it was King Parnavaz, the great reformer king, who proclaimed it the capital of Kartli Kingdom (otherwise known as Iberia) in the 4th century BCE. Three of Mtskheta's churches are part of the UNESCO World Heritage List: Jvari Church, Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, and Samtavro Church.

Svetitskhoveli is one of the most complex Georgian architectural monuments, and the largest church structure out of all the churches that have survived to the present day. In the 4th century, the first Christian king of Georgia, Mirian III, commissioned to build a wooden church on the spot where Svetitskhoveli now stands, in the oldest capital city of Georgia, Mtskheta. The current cathedral was built between 1010 and 1029. Svetitskhoveli has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. The church is unique not only for its artistic value, but also since it is considered to be where one of the main relics of the Orthodox world is kept – Christ's Robe.

The very first legend about Svetitskhoveli explains the name of the original church. According to the legend, a Lebanese cedar grew from the place where Christ's Mantle was buried. In the 4th century, following St. Nino's instructions, the building of a church began there, and seven pillars (sveti) were made from the cedar. One of the pillars rose into the sky and only returned to the earth after St. Nino prayed for it. Healing myrrh which was used to heal the sick was oozing from the pillar. This is the origin of the name of the cathedral, which means "life-giving pillar".