



2023 ACYOA ASP

Armenia Service Program

July 1 - July 21

TRAVEL FACT SHEET

COST OF THE PROGRAM

The actual cost of the program is \$2,775.00, which includes lodging, ground transportation, most meals, and entrance fees to all sightseeing locations. The first 25 participants to register will receive a discounted rate of \$2,000.00, thanks to the generosity of the Dadourian Foundation, ACYOA subsidies, and fundraising efforts. Your deposit check of \$600.00 is due by APRIL 25. The final payment of \$1,400.00 is due by MAY 25. Please feel free to Jennifer Morris should you want to set-up a payment plan. You may choose to cancel anytime before APRIL 25 without penalty. After APRIL 25, 30% of the total cost of the trip is non-refundable. After MAY 25, the total cost of the trip is non-refundable.

WHAT'S COVERED?

Your participant fee covers all of your lodging, full ground transportation and transfers in Armenia, most meals, accommodations at great hotels - like the Best Western Congress hotel a 4 star hotel in downtown Yerevan, lodging and meals while volunteering at Camp Aragrats, Fuller Center donation fees and lunches, entrance fees to all sightseeing destinations, and tour guides (English and Armenian).

WHAT'S NOT COVERED? The participant fee does not include tips, alcoholic beverages, or airfare. Participants will purchase their own flights separately and work with Diocesan staff to coordinate their arrival and departure times with other participants. It also does not include outings to nightclubs, after-hours cafes, concerts, theater, etc. Please bring cash to cover these additional expenses.

THE DOLLAR & THE DRAM

Your leader will assist you in exchanging US dollars for Armenian dram. The exchange rate as of December 2022 is approximately \$1 = 393 dram. Do not bring travelers checks; they are very difficult to spend in Armenia. ATM machines are now more accessible than in the past; therefore, you will be able to make withdrawals with your credit/debit card. Note that the cash will be in the local currency (dram). As far as budgeting your money is concerned, you can expect a typical restaurant meal to be about 6,000 dram, or \$15.00. Past participants have brought anywhere between \$500 to \$1000 for spending money over the three-week period. The amount you bring depends on your spending and shopping habits.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Based on feedback from participants and in an effort to keep costs down, we have decided to have participants purchase their flights separately from their home city to/from Yerevan. This allows for participants to have more flexibility in arriving early to Armenia or extending their trip to spend time with family or explore independently. It also allows participants to fly directly from their local airport rather than incurring the additional expense of flying to/from New York's JFK airport to travel as a group, and it cuts down on the additional costs when purchasing a block of group tickets. In addition, participants can choose their preferred airlines, select their own seats, and use/gain miles for their travel. Participants will need to purchase their own flights to Yerevan departing from the US on July 1 (or before, just so they arrive in Yerevan by July 2). The program ends on July 21, and flights can be scheduled on July 21 (or later if you choose) to return home. Please consult with Jennifer BEFORE booking your flight, so she can assist you and inform you of who else is traveling from your state so you can coordinate your itineraries and travel together. All participants will be asked to forward their flight itineraries to Jennifer, so she can compile them to share with Fr. Hratch and the travel agency to coordinate transportation to/from the Yerevan airport.

GENERAL PACKING

Most airlines will permit you to check one suitcase (weighing no more than 50 pounds) free of charge and have one carry-on bag, which must fit under the seat or in the overhead compartment of the plane. We are providing you with a list of suggested items to pack, but you may also want to speak with people who have traveled to Armenia for their ideas. Please pack lightly; your goal is to be as mobile and self-sufficient as possible. Be sure to attach name tags to your luggage with all of your contact information. Do not bring alcohol, illegal drugs or anything that could be construed as a weapon. Do not bring your computer; it is unnecessary and often a distraction and your phone should be plenty to keep you connected. There are many internet cafes in Yerevan if needed. Allow yourself to disconnect and truly enjoy your homeland.

CLOTHING

Yerevan summer days are often very hot and dry. The ASP group is always on the move! We take many hikes and do a lot of walking during tours, so be prepared. Also, please pack one or two nicer outfits as you will have an audience with the Catholicos and other dignitaries. Do not bring expensive jewelry, clothing, or high heels. While in Etchmiadzin with the Catholicos, you are expected to dress modestly and in proper church clothes. Should you have any questions, please ask your trip leader before traveling. While in Armenia, you should respect the cultural norms of the country. As ASP participants, you will be representing the Armenian Church and young Armenian Americans in general; therefore, we want you to make a favorable impression. Please take this into consideration when packing. Please do not wear short shorts/skirts, revealing or very tight tops or clothing with text or graphics that may be offensive to others.

WHAT TO PACK

1. **Clothing:** casual, comfortable clothes (t-shirts, shorts, jeans, pants, sundresses, skirts), proper dress for church, sneakers, comfortable shoes, sandals, light jacket/sweatshirt, bathing suit (hopefully, the weather in Sevan will allow you to enter the lake).
2. **Toiletries:** soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, razor, tissues, feminine hygiene products, band-aids, baby wipes, sunscreen, bug repellent, medications, hand sanitizer, etc.
3. **Miscellaneous:** Bible, towels, notebook and pen (to keep a daily journal), battery operated or wind-up alarm clock, sunglasses, camera, laundry detergent to wash clothes in hotel room.
4. **Please Note:** (1) The voltage in Armenia is 220 (50-60Hz). If you are bringing electrical appliances (hair dryers, curling irons, razors, etc.), then you will need a converter. (2) There are full-service laundry facilities in Yerevan should you need them or you can wash clothes in your hotel room and air dry. (3) If you forget something, don't worry; most American hygiene products, snack foods, batteries, etc. are now available in Yerevan for about the same cost as at home.

MEDICAL

You may want to consult your doctor and review the [Center for Disease Control Traveler's Health page](#) (and select Armenia) for the most current travel information. We strongly suggest that you are up-to-date with your routine vaccinations and the COVID-19 vaccine. Consider getting a tetanus shot (or booster) if you have not had one in the last ten years. If you are taking medication, be sure to bring an adequate supply. You should also bring any over-the-counter medication that you may need (cold pills, anti-diarrhea medicine, aspirin, allergy medications, etc.). If you wear glasses or contact lenses and cannot see without them, we suggest you bring a spare pair just in case. The water in Armenia is mountain water – pure, delicious, and safe to drink. If you prefer bottled water, it is available for purchase; otherwise, be sure to bring a reusable water bottle to fill each day. *Should you have any medical concerns during your trip, please inform the leader immediately, and he will consult with the closest medical facility and get you the care you need.*

VISITING FAMILY & FRIENDS IN ARMENIA

If you would like to visit family or friends living in Armenia, we request that you arrange for them to come see you at the hotel. Please be sure to consult with the group leader before making plans for visits, and he will assist in the coordination of your visit. Participants are asked to follow curfew guidelines set by the leader, and return to the hotel each evening for rest. In addition, no guests are permitted to visit your room or stay overnight with you at the hotel.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Your family may contact Jennifer Morris at 248-648-0702 or at jenniferm@armeniandiocese.org if they have any questions or concerns while you are traveling. The trip leader will be Fr. Hratch Sargsyan, pastor of St. Gregory of Narek, Richmond Heights, OH. He can be reached while in the USA at 440-264-3541, while in Armenia at +374-43-232223, or by email at fr.hratch@gmail.com.