

Georgia, country of Transcaucasia, is located at the eastern end of the Black Sea on the southern flanks of the main crest of the Greater Caucasus Mountains. Georgia includes three ethnic enclaves – Abkhazia, Ajaria, and South Ossetia.

Tbilisi, a city at the crossroads of Europe and Asia.

Georgia's ancient and vibrant capital city spreads out on both banks of the Mtkvari River and is surrounded on three sides by mountains. The name Tbilisi derives from the Old Georgian word *tbili*, meaning warm. The main sights of the city are clustered in the Old Tbilisi district. While walking down the alleyways you will spot Persian and Ottoman domes neighbouring Soviet towers and Art Nouveau mansions, brutalist monuments and Byzantine arches that are giving a way to sleek modern villas and row houses with traditional, ornately carved wooden balconies.

Stay at ROOMS HOTEL TBILISI. Bringing old and new Georgia together in the cultural district of Vera, the hotel represents the Georgian capital's exciting new wave of young designers. Salvaged wood and industrial windows contrast with polished glass façades. designhotels.com/hotels/georgia/tbilisi

Visit:

Sulphur Baths
(Abano St, Abanotubani)

Abanotubani is the old town of Tbilisi, where according to a legend the King of Iberia founded the new capital after discovering the hot springs. chreli-abano.ge

Badagi
(Roman Miminoshvili St)

The number one company producing traditional Georgian natural products. badagi.ge

Dry Bridge Market
(Kvishketi St)

The Dry Bridge is home to a famous flea market, with antique items, Soviet memorabilia and handmade jewellery for sale.

Lc Queisser
(Giorgi Mazniashvili St)
Art gallery. lc-queisser.com

Eat:

Café Stamba
(Merab Kostava St)
The menu is crafted from fresh, seasonal ingredients produced in collaboration with local farmers. designhotels.com/hotels/georgia/tbilisi/stamba-hotel

Shavi Lomi
(Zurab Kvlivdze St)

Pasanauri
(Griboedov St)

Keto & Kote
(Zandukeli Dead End)

Zakhar Zakharich
(Right Bank, Mshrali Bridge)

Café Littera
(Ivane Machabeli St)

Alubali
(Giorgi Akhvlediani St)

The highlands of Kazbegi

Kazbegi National Park is located on the northern slopes of the mighty Caucasus range, and its protected area covers a total of over 8,700 hectares.

The only major route that connects Kazbegi (former Stepantsminda) with the rest of Georgia is a former military highway, an ancient scenic passage across the Caucasus, stretching from Tbilisi to Russia. The highlands of Kazbegi range from the wide-open spaces to single ridges, weathered peaks and dramatic rocky gorges, rising to the breathtaking summit of Mt Kazbeg (5054 m). Medieval watchtowers, waterfalls and wildlife make this one of the most incredible roads in the world. The steep valleys are great places for bird watching. Hot springs and acidic and carbonated lakes surround the mountain, and earth tremors are fairly frequent. Covered with 135 square kilometres of glacier, Kazbegi is a great place for ice climbing and mountaineering.

Stay at ROOMS HOTEL KAZBEGI. Designed with a rustic minimalism, the front-facing rooms have views over Mount Kazbeg and the Gergeti Trinity Church, while the back-facing rooms overlook the surrounding forests and woodland. The cuisine honours traditional Georgian dishes inspired by the mountainous terrain alongside European fare. designhotels.com/hotels/georgia/stepantsminda

The town of Kazbegi itself is charming and a wonderful base camp for exploring the region further. The village of Juta is one of the highest settlements (2200 m) in the municipality. The Chaukhi massif, located near the village, is situated on the main ridge of the Caucasus mountain range, at the source of the river Bakurkhevi. Sno is one of the region's most prominent cultural hubs, where centuries-old stone masonry and carpentry is still practised and taught by master craftsmen. Gveleti, "place of snakes" in Georgian, boasts some immensely invigorating waterfalls. First drive through the stunning Dariali Gorge, from which a short hike up a narrow footpath leads the way to the waterfall. The isolated location of the Gergeti Trinity Church has

made it a spiritual symbol of the Caucasus region. This architectural complex from the fourteenth century is located in the village of Gergeti at a height of 2200 m. You can hike up to the complex in about two hours, hire a driver, or even rent a horse.

Extra favourites

Borjomi

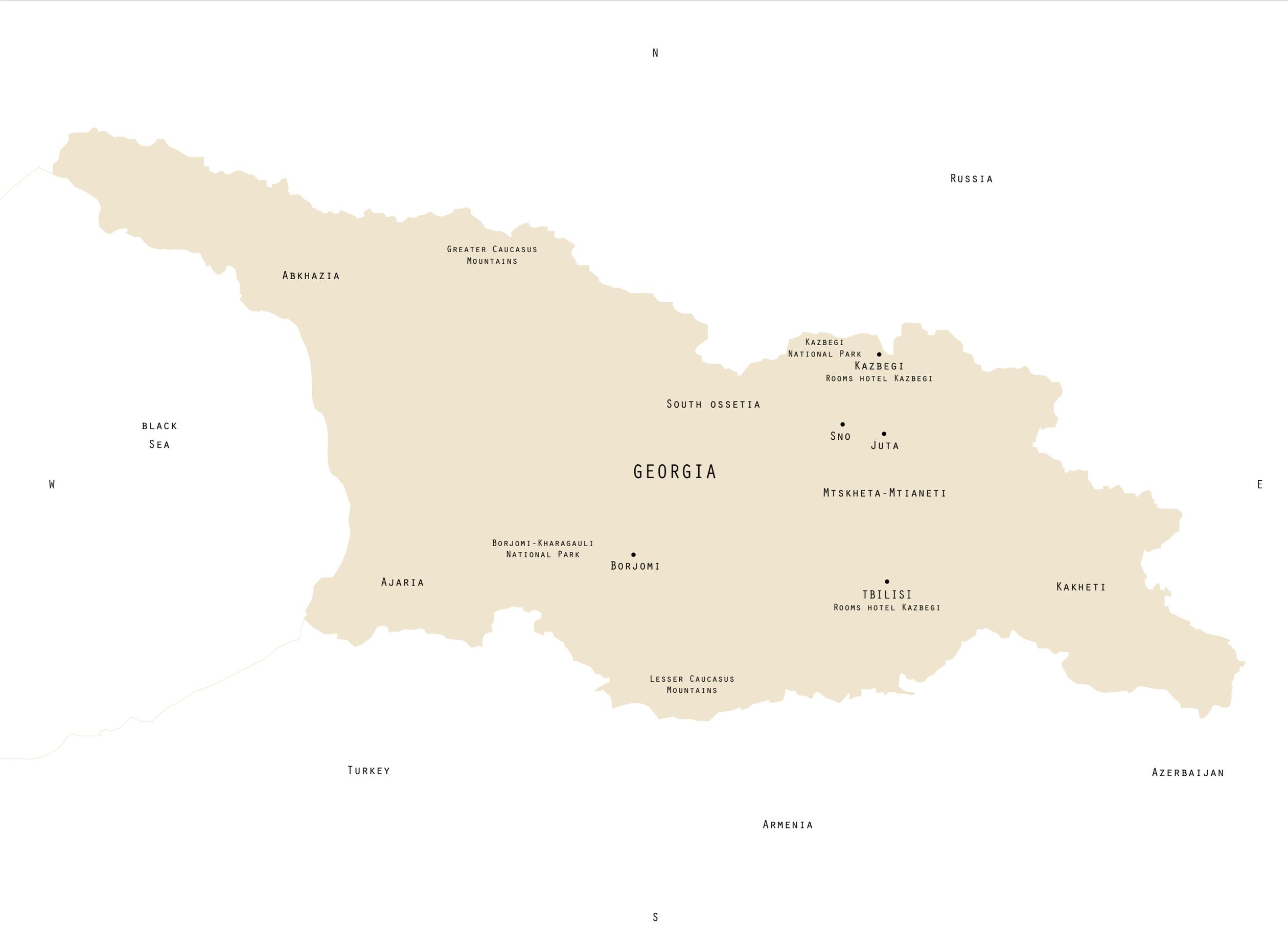
Covering more than 85,000 hectares of native forest and alpine meadows, the Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park is a protected area located 160 kilometres from Tbilisi. It is the first national park created in independent Georgia in 1995. There are rare species of animals and plants within the park's territory and virgin forest.

Borjomi is known for its mineral water of volcanic origin, which is over 1,500 years old. Unlike many other sodium bicarbonate mineral waters, Borjomi does not cool down before it reaches the surface and comes out warm (37.5-40°C), getting enriched "on its way" with a composition of 60 different minerals found in the rock layers of the Caucasus Mountains.

Kakheti

Georgia is said to be the birthplace of wine and the Kakheti province, in the eastern part of the country, is where the heart of Georgian winemaking lies. Wine has always been at the core of Georgian identity. Imagine rich and cultivated vineyards, the tinkling of cowbells, fresh air. Exploring Kakheti means experiencing real Georgian hospitality, savouring a taste of artisanal Georgian wines and revelling in the rich history of the region.

For more information visit georgia.travel



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RUSSIA

GREATER CAUCASUS
MOUNTAINS

ABKHAZIA

KAZBEGI
NATIONAL PARK
KAZBEGI
ROOMS HOTEL KAZBEGI

SOUTH OSSETIA

BLACK
SEA

SNO
JUTA

GEORGIA

W

E

MTSKHETA-MTIANETI

BORJOMI-KHARAGAULI
NATIONAL PARK

BORJOMI

AJARIA

TBILISI
ROOMS HOTEL KAZBEGI

KAKHETI

LESSER CAUCASUS
MOUNTAINS

TURKEY

AZERBAIJAN

ARMENIA

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