**TRIP TO AZERBAIJAN - 7 DAYS**

**Itinerary**

**Embark on an unforgettable journey to Baku, Azerbaijan, where history, culture, and modernity converge. Over the course of this seven-day adventure, students will explore the vibrant capital city, delving into its ancient roots and contemporary landmarks, as well as experiencing its pivotal role in World War II. From the ancient rock carvings of Gobustan to the awe-inspiring Flame Towers, this tour offers a balanced blend of historical exploration and cultural immersion. Along the way, students will visit significant sites, such as Baku’s Old Town, the Heydar Aliyev Centre, and the Fiery Mountain, while learning about the rich cultural heritage of Zoroastrianism, Azerbaijan’s contributions to global events, and the cinematic history that has shaped the city’s identity. Prepare to be captivated by Baku’s stunning landscapes, intriguing monuments, and the stories that have shaped this fascinating city.**

**Day 1. Arrival in Baku**

**Upon arriving at Heydar Aliyev International Airport, the group will be welcomed by the local guide and escorted to their hotel in central Baku. After checking in, students will have time to unwind and adjust after their journey. The evening will be left free for rest and preparation before the programme begins.**

**Overnight in Baku.**

**Day 2. Baku City Tour & Old Town Exploration**

**Highlights: Upland Park, Flame Towers, Baku Seaside Boulevard, Crystal Hall, Aquatic Sports Palace, Flag Square, Old Town (Icheri Sheher), Maiden Tower, Shirvanshahs’ Palace, Azerbaijan State Carpet Museum.**

**After breakfast at the hotel, the group will embark on a city tour showcasing the modern and historical highlights of Baku. The day will begin with a visit to Upland Park, offering breathtaking panoramic views of the city and the Absheron Peninsula. From this elevated point, students can appreciate the city’s layout and iconic landmarks such as the Flame Towers, a striking symbol of Baku's transformation into a vibrant modern metropolis, especially when illuminated at night. The tour will continue with a stroll along the Baku Seaside Boulevard, one of the city’s most popular attractions. Stops will include notable landmarks like the Crystal Hall, host of the 2012 Eurovision Song Contest, and the Aquatic Sports Palace, which served as a venue during the 2015 European Olympic Games. Students will also visit Flag Square, once home to the world’s tallest flagpole, and learn about its significance.**

**In the afternoon, the group will explore Baku's Old Town, or Icheri Sheher, a UNESCO World Heritage site. This historic quarter, with its maze of narrow streets and ancient architecture, offers a glimpse into Baku’s rich past. Key highlights include the iconic Maiden Tower and the Palace of the Shirvanshahs, both remarkable examples of medieval Azerbaijani architecture.**

**The day will conclude with a visit to the Azerbaijan State Carpet Museum, a treasure trove of the country's traditional art form. Students will gain insight into the history, styles, and techniques of Azerbaijani carpet weaving through an impressive collection of intricately crafted carpets spanning various eras and regions.**

**Overnight in Baku. Breakfast, dinner.**

**Day 3. Gobustan Rock Art Museum & Mud Volcanoes**

**Highlights: Gobustan National Park, Gobustan mud volcanoes, Yashil Bazaar, Heydar Aliyev Centre.**

**After breakfast, the group will travel to Gobustan National Park, located approximately 70 km from Baku. Renowned for its ancient petroglyphs, Gobustan is home to rock carvings that date back over 40,000 years. These prehistoric illustrations depict scenes of daily life, animals, and human figures, offering a glimpse into Azerbaijan’s early human history. Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site since 2007, Gobustan is one of the world’s most significant archaeological treasures, and students will learn about the culture and traditions of ancient civilizations through these remarkable artefacts. The itinerary also includes a visit to the nearby mud volcanoes, a natural wonder unique to Azerbaijan. The country boasts the highest concentration of mud volcanoes in the world, where gases and mud erupt from the ground, creating intriguing geological formations.**

**Later, the group will explore Yashil Bazaar, a vibrant traditional market in Baku. Students will experience the lively atmosphere of this oriental market, where they can observe and perhaps sample a variety of local produce, including fresh fruits, vegetables, and aromatic herbs.**

**The day will conclude with a visit to the Heydar Aliyev Centre, an iconic architectural landmark in Baku designed by the renowned architect Zaha Hadid. This futuristic structure, housing a museum and exhibition spaces, has become a symbol of modern Azerbaijan. Recognised as the ‘Design of the Year’ in 2014, the centre stands out for its innovative design and cultural significance.**

**Overnight in Baku. Breakfast, dinner.**

**Day 4. Zoroastrian Legacy & Yanardag**

**Highlights: Yanardag (Fiery Mountain), optional visit to a Russian school.**

**After breakfast, the group will delve into the ancient legacy of Zoroastrianism in Azerbaijan with a visit to Yanardag, or the Fiery Mountain, located 27 km from central Baku. This natural phenomenon, where a steady flame fuelled by subterranean gas burns continuously on the mountainside, creates an awe-inspiring sight. These flames, believed to have been burning for over 5,000 years, were a significant source of inspiration for ancient fire worshippers. Azerbaijan, often called the "Land of Fire," owes this name to its numerous natural gas vents and burning landscapes.**

**During the visit, the group will learn about the importance of fire worship in Zoroastrianism, a religion that originated in the region and emphasised the duality of good versus evil. Discussions will explore the Zoroastrian reverence for eternal fire and the worship of Ahura Mazda, the supreme god of good.**

**In the afternoon, the group will have some free time to relax and explore the city at their own pace. For those interested, an optional visit to the Russian School for an exchange opportunity is available. This visit provides a unique chance to interact with local students and learn more about the educational environment in Azerbaijan.**

**Overnight in Baku. Breakfast, dinner.**

**Day 5. WWII Memorial Sites in Baku**

**Highlights: "1941-1945" Monument, Monument to Richard Sorge, Monument to Azi Aslanov, Monument to Mehdi Huseynzade.**

**Today’s tour delves into Azerbaijan's pivotal contributions during World War II, highlighting key monuments that commemorate its heroes and their critical role in defeating fascism.**

**The day begins at the "1941-1945" Monument near the Russian Embassy, dedicated to the 681,000 Azerbaijanis who fought in the war. Among them, 128 were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. This memorial underscores Azerbaijan’s essential contributions, particularly in providing oil that fuelled the Soviet war effort.**

**Next, the group will visit the Monument to Richard Sorge, a legendary Soviet intelligence officer born in Baku. Sorge’s crucial warnings about the German invasion of the Soviet Union, though initially ignored, played a significant role in Soviet intelligence history. Designed by Vladimir Tsigal, the monument’s striking depiction of Sorge’s intense gaze symbolises his unwavering dedication.**

**The tour then proceeds to the Monument to Azi Aslanov, a celebrated tank commander and two-time Hero of the Soviet Union. Located at the Alley of the Shahids, this memorial honours his leadership during pivotal battles, including Stalingrad, and his role in the liberation of Belarus and the Baltic States. Veterans gather here annually on May 9 to pay homage to his valour.**

**The final stop is the Monument to Mehdi Huseynzade, a Soviet intelligence officer who operated under the partisan name "Mikhailo" in Yugoslavia and Italy. Situated on Bakikhanov Street, the monument commemorates his daring missions and posthumous recognition as a Hero of the Soviet Union.**

**This comprehensive exploration of wartime monuments offers a profound insight into Azerbaijan’s contributions to World War II and honours the enduring legacy of its heroes.**

**Overnight in Baku. Breakfast, dinner.**

**Day 6. Baku Iconic Locations in Soviet Movies**

**Highlights: Maiden Tower, Fountain Square, Nizami Street, Soviet film locations in Baku.**

**After breakfast, the group will set out on an engaging tour exploring Baku’s iconic locations featured in Soviet films. Baku served as a backdrop for several famous movies, with many scenes, particularly in the Old City, bringing films like The Diamond Hand (1969), Amphibian Man (1962), and Tehran-43 (1981) to life.**

**The tour will include visits to the Maiden Tower, Fountain Square, Nizami Street, and other landmarks where these films were shot. Along the way, students will hear fascinating stories about how the city was transformed for various productions and discover the significance of these locations in cinema history. This experience will offer a unique blend of film heritage, stunning architecture, and cultural insight.**

**In addition to exploring film sites, the group will have the opportunity to soak in the lively atmosphere of Baku’s vibrant cafes and restaurants, adding a relaxed and enjoyable dimension to the day.**

**Overnight in Baku. Breakfast, dinner.**

**Day 7. Departure**

**After breakfast at the hotel, the students will check out and transfer to Heydar Aliyev International Airport for their return flight home.**

**Breakfast.**

**Included**

* Hotel accommodation 4\*\*\* - [Central Park](https://www.best-of-caucasus.co.uk/en/central_park_hotel_baku.html), Auroom or similar
* Meals according to the programme (breakfasts - 6, dinners - 5)
* English-speaking guide from the arrival of the group to the end of the trip
* Transport, [view our fleet](https://www.best-of-caucasus.co.uk/en/our-transport.html)
* Entrance tickets to museums and tourist sites according to the programme
* One bottle of water per person per day
* Guided airport transfers
* E-visa

**Price**

Below is the estimated cost of the trip excluding flights. We can provide a detailed calculation based on the size of your group. The approximate cost of air tickets from the UK to Baku is from £450 per person. The cost of air travel depends on your departure city and trip dates. Our company will assist with booking flights.

The cost per person in pounds sterling, taking into account free places and the number of participants in your group.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **10 people 2 free of charge** | **15 people ​2 free of charge** | **20 people ​2 free of charge** |
| £745 | £695 | £645 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **25 people 3 free of charge** | **30 people ​3 free of charge** | **40 people ​4 free of charge** |
| £625 | £595 | £555 |

**request a no-obligation quote**

<https://www.best-of-caucasus.co.uk/en/school-azerbaijan-7-days.html>

