



Djvari of Mtskheta With its splendid view over the confluence of the Mtkvari and Aragvi Rivers, this temple, constructed in the sixth century AD and named after “djvari”, the Georgian word for cross, is a landmark of early Christianity in Georgia. King Mirian erected the first cross in the country shortly after his conversion to Christianity by St. Nino.



- Day 1 **Arrival in Tbilisi**
- Day 2 **Tbilisi city tour**
- Day 3 **Excursion to Bolnisi and Dmanisi**
- Day 4 **Excursion to Uplistsikhe, transfer to Kutaisi**
- Day 5 **Excursion in the Imereti region**
- Day 6 **Excursion in Kutaisi and Mtskheta**
- Day 7 **Excursion to David Gareja**
- Day 8 **Departure from Tbilisi**

In May 2000, Georgia made international headlines when the remains of a homo erectus were discovered in the country, the earliest evidence of human inhabitants in Eurasia.

The discovery helped push the date for human migration from Africa to Eurasia back to between 1.7 and 1.8 million years ago. The excavation sites near Dmanisi in south-east Georgia lie at the heart of this discovery, and on this tour Georgia Discovery Tours will take you back into the past to walk in the footsteps of those who inhabited the Earth in ages past.

Accompanied by highly qualified guides and expert lecturers, you will discover your inner paleontologist as you explore the excavation sites of the region. Starting with the site where **homo erectus** was discovered, you will then be taken even further back in time to explore the Sataplia region, where dinosaurs roamed fifteen million years ago. Then you will wander around the ruins of the ancient settlement of Vani, which dates back to the seventh century BC, and the even more impressive thirty-one-century-old cave town of Uplistsikhe, where you will find

yourself marvelling at the sophistication of our early ancestors.

The Christian faith was first brought to Georgia by the devout young maiden St. Nino in the fourth century AD. St. Nino is said to have intertwined two branches of a grapevine with her hair to create the form of the unique Georgian cross. After the conversion of King Mirian in the fourth century, Christianity spread rapidly throughout the country. Georgia’s Christian heritage is a wonder to behold.

We will take you to Bolnisi where you will visit a church constructed in the early fifth century AD, then on to the fascinating David Gareja, where Brother David, a monk trained in Jerusalem, founded one of Georgia’s first monasteries in the semi-desert eastern regions of the country. This monastery became the centre of cultural, religious, and intellectual life at the time for a region far bigger than modern-day

THE FIRST EUROPEANS & EARLY CHRISTIANS

A rich and ancient civilization ...



Georgia. The aura emanating from this place is almost overwhelming and is sure to leave an indelible impression upon you. Its caves, frescoes, and the splendid view it offers over the semi-desert region that straddles Georgia and Azerbaijan will round off a wonderful journey back into the past.