FESTIVALS

Renaissance-International Contest Festival. Date: April 13-22. / www.gyumrirenaissanse.am

The Duet- Theater Festival. Date: July 1-8. Organized by the Vardan Atchemyan Dramatic Theater in Gyumri, The Duet is a newly established festival with the idea to present performances with only two actors.

ArtScope- Art and Science Festival. Date: July. / www.gyumri.luys.am/en/products

The aim of the ArtScope Festival is to create links between art and science, introduce different types of interactive art, and lay the foundations for a living art economy. The goal was to inspire visitors to take an active role by participating in various artworks and a treasure hunt.

Gyumri Arts & Crafts Festival. Date: September 20. / www.armenianwinefestival.am

This festival is a celebration of Gyumri's rich history and cultural traditions. One can attend and explore work demonstrations by jewelers, blacksmiths, and carpets weavers, admire comedian and folk group performances, while tasting traditional delicacies at food stands.

TOURIST AGENCIES / GUIDES

- 1. Shirak Tours. Contact: Alexan Ter-Minasyan / 25, Haghtanaki Ave., 3104 Gyumri. Phone: (+374) 312 5 76 59. E-mail: shiraktours@gyumri.am / www.shiraktours.am
- 2. Travel Gyumri Visitors Bureau. Contact: Armen Hovsepyan / 1, Vardanants Square (City Hall), Gyumri. Phone: (+374) 55 59 15 53, (+374) 312 5 51 65 E-mail: info@travelgyumri.com, hovsepyanarmen@yahoo.com / www.travelgyumri.com

MUSEUMS IN SHIRAK

- Museum of National Architecture and Urban Life of Gyumri. / 47,
 Haghtanaki Ave., Gyumri. Situated in an old mansion built by Petros
 Dzitoghtsyan in 1872, the museum houses interesting collections related to
 both history and everyday life of Gyumri, as well as paintings and other
 works of art.
- Shirak Regional Museum. / 118, Myasnikyan Str., Gyumri. /
 www.shirakmuseum.am
 In the eighty years of its existence, the Shirak Regional Museum has
- In the eighty years of its existence, the Shirak Regional Museum has collected tens of thousands of artifacts which represent the material and spiritual culture of the historic region of Shirak. Many of these artifacts are unique and have particular scientific and cultural value.
- The Aslamazyan Sisters House Museum. / 232, Abovian Str., Gyumri.
 Avetik Isahakyan House Museum. / 91, Varpetats Str., Gyumri.
 - ACCOMMODATION

There are plenty of accommodation options for Gyumri visitors, from high-ranking hotels to friendly bed and breakfasts.







5. Hovhannes Shiraz House Museum. / 101,

Varpetats Str., Gyumri.

Haghtanaki Ave., Gyumri.

Ghandilyan Str., Gyumri.

village, Akhurian Region.

6. Mher Mkrtchyan (Frunzik) House

Museum. / 30, Shota Rustaveli Str., Gyumri. / www.frunzik.com

7. Sergey Merkurov House Museum. / 47,

8. The Museum of Railway Techniques. /

Branch). / 216, Abovian Str., Gyumri.

10. Minas Avetisyan Museum. / 1st Str., Jajur

9. National Aesthetic Center (Gyumri

In Gyumri

- 1. Alexandrapol Hotel Palace. / 70, Mayakovski Str. Phone: (+374) 312 5 00 51 /www.alexandrapolhotel.am
- **2. Araks Hotel.** / 31, Gorki Str. Phone: (+374) 312 5 11 99 / www.arakshotel.am
- **3. Alhmas Hotel.** / 1, Garegin Njdeh Ave. Phone: (+374) 312 3 94 45
- **4. Berlin Art Hotel.** / 25, Haghtanaki Ave. Phone: (+374) 312 5 76 59 / www.berlinarthotel.am, www.berlinhotel-gyumri.am. There is an exhibition space inside the hotel, "Gallery25", which frequently exhibits works of prominent Gyumri artists.
- 5. Nane Hotel. / 1/5, Garegin Njdeh Ave. Phone: (+374) 312 3 33 69 / www.nanehotel.am, www.gcc.am
- **6. Vanatur Hotel & Restaurant.** / 70 a, Gorki Str. Phone: (+374) 312 5 07 14, (+374) 93 93 37 35 / www.gyumrihotel.am
- 7. Villa Kars. / 182, Abovyan Str. (Corner of Rustaveli and Abovyan Streets) Phone: (+374) 10 58 45 74, (+374) 93 54 82 25 / www.villakars.com. Gyumri's first boutique hotel, this Art Nouveau building has been saved and resurrected to its former glory, with unique modern comforts and an "Armenian Belle Epoque" style.

8. Voske Blur ("Golden Hill"). / Mankakan Yerkatughi. Phone: (+374) 94 44 94 04, (+374) 312 2 49 59

- Garun Motel. / 1, Marmashen
 Highway. Phone: (+374) 312 3
 13 04
- **10. Kama Motel.** / 3/2, Garegin Njdeh Ave. Phone: (+374) 94 20 12 08, (+374) 312 5 07 77
- **11. Voske Tsiran** ("Golden Apricot"). / 84/1 Gorki Str. Phone: (+374) 312 6 37 77
- **12. Yerazanq Motel.** / 2, Avetisyan Str. Phone: (+374) 94 11 55 14

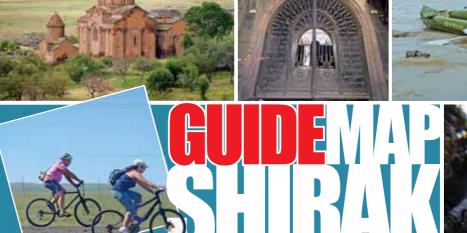
Outside of Gyumri

- 1. "Rublevka" Restaurant/Motel. / 15-1, New District, Maralik, Ani Region.

 Phone: (+374) 93 48 45 91, (+374) 24 26 66 66. A huge gate with a wrought iron fence encloses a plateau with a couple of buildings and a fountain in the middle. The main building houses several restaurants (2 for 140 people each, 4 rooms for 6 people and one luxurious VIP room for 10 people), a spacious lobby with a bar and 3 comfortable double bed rooms. The complex has a mini zoo and horses for rent with a phaeton (carriage).
- 2. "Rancho" Tourist Complex. / Near Tirashen Lake, west from the Marmashen Highway, Akhurian Region. Phone: (+374) 94 01 24 01. Set in a peaceful landscape away from urban areas, "Rancho" is not easy to find. To avoid getting lost, ask for precise directions at the Alexandrapol Hotel Palace in Gyumri. The hotel provides transportation to/from "Rancho" for guests. Designed in an ethno-style, the complex consists of three restaurants (one indoor and two outdoor), a pool with a sauna, a billiard room, an outdoor green area with a children's playground, a small lake/fish pond, stables with horses and a farm with different animals. Possible activities include: horse riding, fishing, hiking, visiting nearby cultural heritage sites, and riding quadricycles in the winter. "Rancho" is an excellent option for all who want to explore the natural and cultural heritage near the Marmashen Monastery complex.
- 3. "Ashotsk" Restaurant/Motel. / Jradzor village, Amasia Region. Phone: (+374) 98 35 08 23. Located next to the road to Amasia, "Ashotsk" opened recently and is surrounded by beautiful nature with multiple possibilities for short hikes. In the main building, there is a big refurbished space used for weddings and other celebrations. A separate cottage with a long terrace houses 3 standard suites with bathrooms and one luxury 2 bedroom suite with a large dining room. Additional amenities and services include a sauna and guided tours to local sacred sites (there are many chapels, crosses and piles of stones scattered on nearby hills).

Bed & Breakfasts

- 1. Ghazaryan's B&B. /Donara and Varduhi Ghazaryan. /142, Frunze Str., Gyumri. Phone: (+374) 312 5 59 15, (+374) 93 45 05 57. E-mail: rose-varduhi@yandex.ru
- The B&B includes 2 bedrooms, a bathroom, WC, TV, Wi-Fi telephone, hot/cold water and a small garden. Full board, transportation and guide services can be provided upon request. Languages spoken: Russian, German, English.
- 2. Sari Tey ("Mountain Tea") B&B. / Knarik Khachatryan. / 31, Karen Demirchyan Str., 3108 Gyumri. Phone: (+374) 312 3 48 64, (+374) 91 45 32 66. E-mail: skyngo@yandex.ru A clean, well maintained 3 bedroom private house designated for 10-12 people max. A fully equipped kitchen, bathroom, WC, TV, telephone, Internet and garden are at the guests' disposal. In the summer, guests can drink locally-brewed beer in the backyard, pick fruits or cook together with the host. Besides being welcoming and helpful, Knarik is an excellent cook and can prepare traditional ethnic food. Guide services and information about the Shirak region can be provided as well. Languages spoken: Russian, English.
- 3. Artush & Raisa B&B. / 1-2, Ayvazovski Str. (off Charles Aznavour 200 m), Gyumri. Phone: (+374) 312 30 815, (+374) 93 350 314. E-mail:artushdavtyan@yahoo.com Artush is an English-speaking local guide. Three guestrooms are available, plus a piano room and a lovely rose garden. Artush can organize tours and excursions in his own car or mini-bus. Languages spoken: English.
- **4. Anahit Khachatryan's B&B.** / 56, Tumanyan Str., Gyumri. Phone: (+374) 94 58 05 10. One spacious, clean, quadruple room with a TV and bathroom. Located on the street behind the Berlin Art Hotel. Languages spoken: Russian, Basic English.
- **5. Melsida's B&B.** / Sayat Nova / Tigran Mets Str. (Center), Gyumri. Phone: (+374) 312 2 13 56. The B&B is in a three-story private house. Accommodation is on the second floor, with a private balcony and entrance.
- 6. Satik's B&B. / Ghorghanian Str. (Old Center), Gyumri. Phone: (+374) 312 5 42 32. The B&B is in a traditional building and is popular with the Peace Corps volunteers.
- 7. SkyMik. / Artur and Alla Mikayelyan / house N.8, Swedish District, Ashotsk. Phone: (+374) 24 42 17 58, (+374) 93 35 21 11, (+374) 55 31 08 61. E-mail: mika-sky@mail.ru. SkyMik Pension, led by ski champions Artur and Alla Mikayelyan, is an ideal place for all who are interested in exploring the adventure tourism possibilities of Arpi Lake National Park and its surroundings. The 4+1 room house is designated for a maximum of ten people and includes one bathroom with a sauna. SkyMik organizes hiking, cycling, canoeing and cross-country skiing tours. Personalized programs are available upon request. SkyMik possesses: 5 kayaks, 10 mountain bikes, plenty of skis for cross country skiing, and 4 tents (3 four-person tents and 1 two-person tents). For guests who are not sports oriented, the countryside near Ashotsk offers many other possibilities, from cultural heritage sightseeing, to bird watching and picking medicinal herbs. Languages spoken: Russian, English.
- 8. Ardenis Ray ("Shakro's Paradise"). /Shakro Ghazaryan. / 1st house, 5th Str., Ardenis village, Amasia Region. Phone: (+374) 93 82 40 05. Located on the shore of Ardenis Lake, Ardenis Ray is a truly unique place. This humble, clean house includes two bedrooms and a shared bathroom and features a great collection of wild and domestic animals (wolves, a deer, a wild boar, two foxes, a jackal, a badger, a rabbit, a foal, a lamb, a Van cat and different species of local birds can be seen all around the house). Shakro will be your best guide at the Arpi Lake National Park, especially if you are interested in birds, butterflies, and rare plants. Additionally, a small garden and lots of different domestic animals offer an authentic rural experience for those interested in agritourism. B&B services include: full board and transfer from / to Ashotsk free of charge. Guide services include: bird watching (with equipment), a botanical tour, a butterfly tour, a horseback riding tour, and cross-country skiing. Languages spoken: Russian. An interpreter is recommended.
- 9. Irina Tatevosyan's B&B. / Irina Tatevosyan. / Darik Hamlet, Amasia Region. Phone: (+374) 93 52 26 65. E-mail: irinatatevosyan@gmail.com. Near the border with Georgia, Darik (5 km north from Zorakert village) conceals a hidden gem a B&B with an organic farm, owned by Irina Tatevosyan. A few years ago, this interesting woman launched herself into the









agritourism business, offering a chance for tourists to stay and work on her huge farm. Feeding and cleaning horses, milking cows, making bread and cheese, and cooking are some of the daily chores in which you can actively participate. If you are not fond of farming, Irina offers walking tours, horseback riding, camping, cycling, picking medicinal herbs, cultural heritage sightseeing, and riding quadricycles in the winter. Accommodation consists of two double bedrooms and two large, hostel type tents with a kitchen. Other B&B amenities include a small exhibition with different archaeological artifacts and old domestic objects, a TV in the salon, a mobile phone, 2 bathrooms, laundry service and a separate shower. The Darik farm possesses several natural and cultural assets worth visiting. Besides stunning landscapes and endless green meadows, there is a small lake suitable for summer swimming and fishing. Irina will be proud to guide you to the nearby pre-Christian archaeological site and tell you many legends related to vishap (dragon) stones and khoyakars (ancient ram shaped tombstones). Also, the Tatevosyan family is a successful breeder of Armenian gampr dogs and Van cats. Languages spoken: Russian, Basic English.

- 10. Vardaghbyur B&B. / Sargis Baloyan, village mayor. / Vardaghbyur village, Ashotsk Region. Phone: (+374) 93 43 83 11.
 E- mail: sargis.baloyan@mail.ru. The village mayor can arrange B&B accommodation in 2 clean, standard double bed rooms with bathrooms.
- 11. Several B&B's in Mets Sepasar village. / Sergey Soghoyan, village mayor. / Mets Sepasar village, Ashotsk Region. Phone: (+374) 94 83 31 90, (+374) 96 83 31 90

FOOD & DRINK

The cuisine of Shirak Province reflects the history and geography of the region with incorporated external influences. In the high, mountainous parts, the food is based on meat and milk products with simple but tasty dishes. The most traditional meals consist of khorovats (grilled meats), basturma (a highly seasoned, air-dried raw beef), eggs with beans, fresh salad made of tomatoes and cucumbers, various pickles, chechil panir (braided and pickled string cheese), homemade butter, matzoon (yoghurt), tan (a sour milk drink prepared by diluting yogurt with cold water), lavash (flat bread) and honey. Shirak is known as the homeland of khash, a heavy dish made of cow's feet, although other cow parts, such as the head and stomach (tripe) may also be used. Formerly a nutritious winter food, it is now considered a delicacy, and is enjoyed as a festive meal, usually early in the morning.

Restaurants in Gyumri

Gyumri has a wide variety of restaurants, ranging from formal dining establishments and casual family friendly eateries, to fast food places. The menu predominantly consists of Armenian, Georgian and Russian dishes.

- 1. "Cherkezi Dzor" Fish Farm & Restaurant. / 1, Karmir Berd (Red Fort), Cherkezi Dzor. Phone: (+374) 99 01 15 19. "Cherkezi Dzor" Fish Farm & Restaurant serves delicious dishes from fresh, ecologically clean trout and sturgeon. Pick what type of fish you want and the chef literally plucks your dinner out of the pool and sets it on the barbecue. The Red Fortress and the valley, where the fish farm is located are historically important. Enjoy a walk around 23 fish ponds or take a horse ride to the "Mother Armenia" Monument.
- 2. "Slavjanski Dvor". / 246/1 Abovyan Str. Phone: (+374)312 6 40 50. "Slavjanski Dvor" offers Armenian, Georgian and Russian dishes. A lovely night view of Vardanants Square and live music on weekends are a big plus.
- **3. "Spitak Varder".** / Haghtanaki Ave. Phone: (+374) 93 20 64 01
- **4.** "Piano" Bar/Restaurant. / 258/2 Abovyan Str. Phone: (+374) 93 90 16 66. A contemporary setting and a beautiful terrace overlooking the plaza with the All Savior Church make this place unique. Includes live music on the weekends.
- 5. "Oasis" Café/Restaurant. / Gorki Park (Central Park). Phone: (+374) 93 73 70 72.
- "Oasis" is a huge glass covered space in the middle of Gyumri Central Park, with water cascades, lush plants and birds, bringing the outdoors to the indoors. It's a family restaurant offering traditional Armenian dishes.
- **6.** "Tashir Pizza". / 2, Sayat Nova, Gyumri. Phone: (+374) 91 45 32 66, (+374) 312 5 50 05. The most popular pizza chain in Armenia offers high quality services, along with tasty and inexpensive fast food.
- 7. "Voske Blur" Restaurant. / Mankakan Yerkatughi. Phone: (+374) 312 3 61 23
- **8. Hatsatun Gyumri.** / 1/1, Haghtanaki Ave. Phone: (+374) 312 5 08 08. "Hatsatun", meaning "bakery" in Armenian, is a fast food restaurant with an Armenian, Georgian and Italian menu.
- 9. "Shara" Restaurant. / 1/5, Garegin Njdeh Ave. Phone: (+374) 312 3 55 63. The rustic and cozy interior design and ambiance of "Shara" Restaurant will take you back in time to the 19th century.
 10. "Pizza di Napoli" Pizzeria. / 1/5, Garegin Njdeh Ave. Phone: (+374) 312 3 30 74. This pizzeria offers a comfortable
- ambiance with a full selection of beverages, particularly local and Italian wines. Free delivery service.
- 11. "Le Café". / 1/5, Garegin Njdeh Ave. Phone: (+374) 312 3 55 63. "Le Café" is a friendly and beautifully designed open air cafe that offers cocktails, beer, food and well-crafted cappuccinos. Note: Le Café doesn't open for the season until May 1st.
- 12. "Poloz Mukuch" Pub. / 75, Jivani Str. Phone: (+374) 94 90 90 38. The pub is named after Mkrtich Melqonian (aka Poloz Mukuch), the most famous of many renowned witty persons from Gyumri. Act like a local and ask for traditional dishes such as khinkali (spicy meat dumplings), dolma, or kebab. A mug of "Alexandrapol" beer, from the local brewery across the street, or a shot of oghi (an Armenian vodka distilled from fruits or berries) is a must.
- **13.** "Voske Tslik" Bistro. / 13, Garegin Njdeh Str. Phone: (+374) 312 4 22 22. "Voske Tslik" is a specialized store of meat products where you can order appetizing shaurma, kebab, and other tasty dishes.
- **14. "Ponchik Monchik".** / 7/9, Sayat Nova Str. and 248/9 Abovyan Str. Phone: (+374) 312 5 60 04. Child-friendly, Ponchik Monchik is one of the favorite places of the people of Gyumri. Famous for its chocolate and vanilla-filled deep fried dough (doughnut style) and meat and potato pies, the cafe is a strictly non-smoking zone and is mainly used for children's parties.



Restaurants outside of Gyumri

- 1. "Simonyan's Palace" Restaurant. / Vardaghbyur village, Ashotsk region. Phone: (+374) 91 82 50 82, (+374) 77 32 28 72. This restaurant is one of the few places along the M1 highway north of Gyumri worth visiting. It has 2 separate dining rooms and offers traditional Armenian food.
- 2. "Tur" Restaurant (4-5 rooms in construction). / 5th Tufagortsneri Str., Artik. Phone: (+374) 24 45 33 99, (+374) 94 23 43 13
- 3. "Tigrani Mot" Restaurant. / 39 g. Tufagortsneri Str., Artik. Phone: (+374) 77 50 92 55
 4. "Karkachan" Restaurant (one room). / Beniamin village, Akhurian Region. Phone: (+374) 93 21 03 06, (+374) 98 55 16 70
- 5. Fresh fish market/eating place. / Mets Sepasar village, Ashotsk Region.6. "Toros Café". / Torosgyugh village, Ashotsk Region.

