

**delicious dishes**  
*amazing flavours*



**azerbaijan**

TAKE ANOTHER LOOK

# salam hello



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Welcome to Azerbaijan, a country whose vibrant culinary scene has something to tickle everyone's taste buds: from fruity sauces to succulent mutton-based meals and countless types of aromatic plov. Azerbaijan's rich cuisine and timeless traditions of warm hospitality are bound to leave a lovely aftertaste.

THE WEALTH OF AZERBAIJANI CUISINE

# mouthwatering meals *unforgettable experiences*



Azerbaijani cuisine is a spectacular fusion of flavours whisked together by the different cultures that once travelled along The Great Silk Road. The country's unique geography has also given rise to some of the world's most flavoursome produce: mouth-watering fruits and vegetables, nuts and honey, juices and sweets.

What's more, with its variety of high-end Western-style restaurants, converted old medieval caravanserais and rustic eateries situated in the lush forests of the Caucasus Mountains foothills, the country can offer a huge range of dining experiences. In Baku, you'll discover traditional bistros serving classic local dishes to the accompaniment of soulful local folk music, while in far-flung corners of the country, regional recipes are infused with the aromas of the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus Mountains and Azerbaijan's astonishing eight climate zones. But wherever you dine, one thing never changes: get ready to experience the best hospitality in the Caucasus!

The cuisine of each region of Azerbaijan differs according to the local traditions and features of the countryside.

One of the best ways to discover the regions is by sampling their local dishes. But if you don't have enough time to visit the whole of Azerbaijan, here's a list of must-try meals available throughout the country. Tucking into any of these will make your trip unforgettable.

**1 Dolma**

Traditional dolma is made with meat, rice, and a mixture of herbs rolled into grape leaves. There is also a variety of dolma made with a filling of nuts. Its name comes from the verb 'doldurmaq', meaning 'to stuff' in Azerbaijani. The ingredients vary from region to region and depending on the time of year. For example, in summertime, stuffed aubergines or tomatoes are also considered dolma dishes.

**2 Plov**

Plov is a truly creative dish made from rice, which is served alongside aromatic herbs, dried fruits, meat or fish, and other ingredients. It comes in all varieties and is always around during any Azerbaijani holiday. Some of the most popular types are 'fisinjañ' (with ground meat in a pomegranate and nut sauce), 'shirin' (with raisins and dried apricots), and 'shah', which is encased in layers of buttered lavash bread.

**3 Gutabs**

Gutabs are a sort of folded flatbread stuffed with different fillings – such as meat, an assortment of fresh green herbs, cheese or pumpkin – and cooked on an iron disk called a saj. In Baku and the Absheron region, gutabs are drizzled with melted butter and served with yoghurt and pomegranate. They can also be sprinkled with sumakh, rolled into tubes and eaten with your hands. Azerbaijanis often serve gutabs with ayran – a cold yoghurt drink mixed with salt and herbs.

**4 Kebabs**

Chunks of lamb soaked in a sauce of onion, vinegar and pomegranate juice, impaled on a large skewer and grilled on a mangal – just one of many Azerbaijani kebab combinations! Some are made with lamb or beef, others with chicken or fish. Vegetables such as potatoes, aubergines, green peppers, mushrooms and tomatoes typically add succulence and flavour. The tika and lula kebabs are the two most popular: tika is made from marinated chunks of lamb, whereas lula is prepared from ground meat wrapped around a skewer.

**5 Dovga**

This classic Azerbaijani soup is a healthy concoction of yoghurt, herbs (including coriander, dill and mint) and rice. In Baku and certain regions, dovga is prepared with small meatballs. Served hot in winter and cold in summer, either in a glass or a bowl, dovga can differ across the regions and is regularly on offer at important ceremonies and celebrations. This is a great choice for vegetarians!



Azerbaijan's geographical location at the crossroads of ancient and animated trade routes spanning from North to South and East to West has always helped our bountiful produce reach the global market.

Together with the countless teas and jams, fruits and spices, you'll also find mentions of our delicious sweets in old literary sources such as travellers' notes and researchers' reports. And today our rich assortment of pastries and confectionery continues to delight even the savviest of foodies visiting Azerbaijan from across the world.

**1 Tea**

In Azerbaijan, tea is synonymous with warmth and hospitality. Tradition dictates that you should never allow a guest to leave your house without having offered it. Tea ceremonies have evolved over centuries to include their own rites and rituals. We serve our tea in a special pear-shaped glass called an armudu, often together with lemon and sugar, honey, jam, nuts and sweets. Black tea is the most popular.

**2 Pakhlava**

Our most sinfully flavoursome pastry is the famous pakhlava: layers of dough stuffed with walnuts and coated with honey or syrup. Traditionally, it is eaten during the Novruz holiday together with shekerbura and shorgoghal, but it's also enjoyed throughout the year. Pakhlava has a distinctive diamond shape, symbolising a star, and differs from region to region. We highly recommend trying the regional variations of pakhlava in Sheki and Guba – two cities famous for their sweets.

**3 Shekerbura**

Shekerbura is another irresistibly sweet pastry. Shaped like a half moon with elaborate exterior patterns made using special mini tongs, the inside is most commonly filled with grated hazelnuts and sugar. The tastiest shekerbura is so soft that it disintegrates immediately in the mouth! Like pakhlava, it's one of the symbolic sweets of the much-loved Novruz holiday, during which family and friends join forces to bake them together.

**4 Badambura**

Badambura is a popular Azerbaijani pastry consisting of several layers of flaky dough filled with almonds, sugar, and ground cardamom, baked on a low heat. These sweet treats are known for their distinctive pale appearance. Delicious badambura is traditionally prepared, once again, for the spring holiday of Novruz, although it is avidly consumed throughout the year.

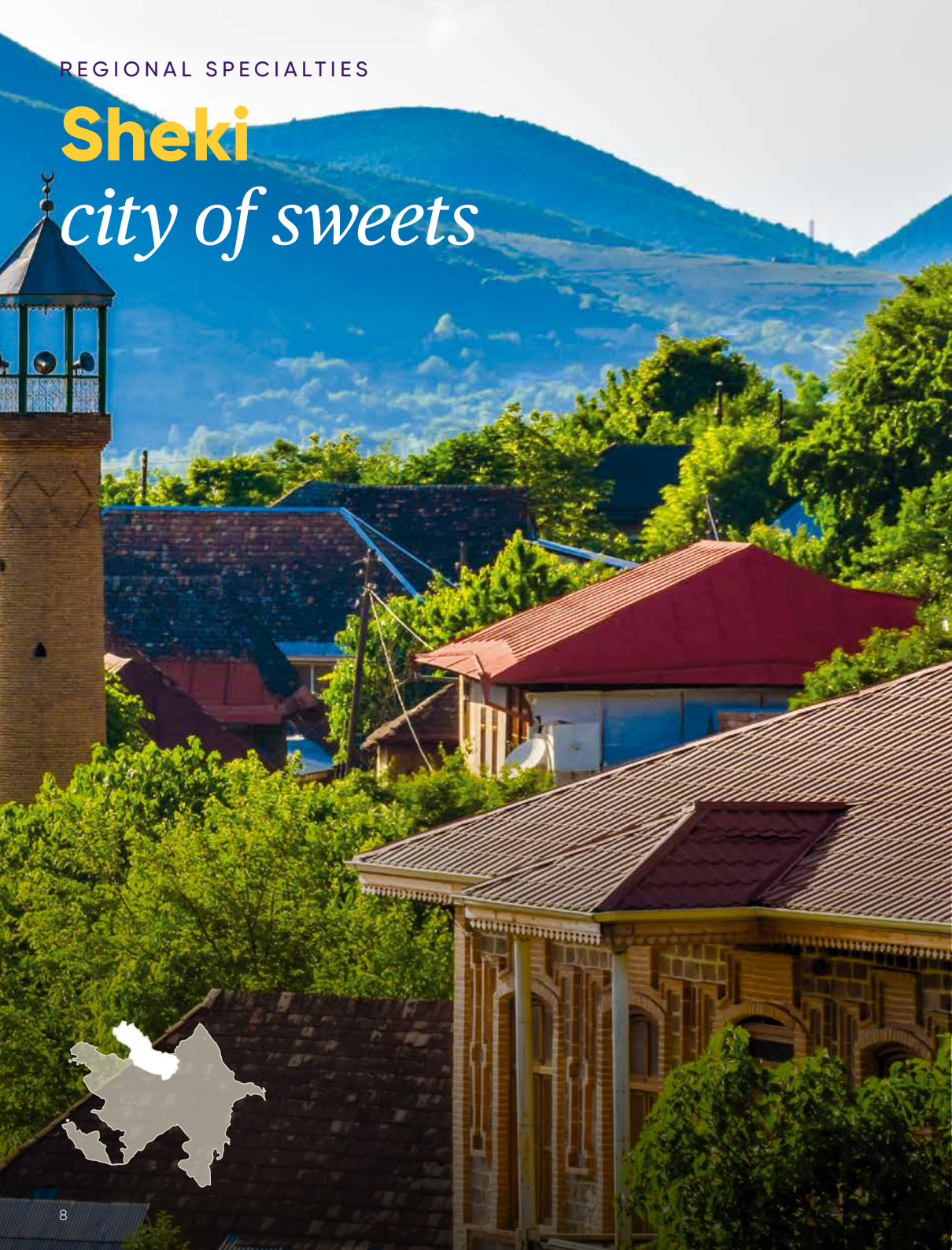


# one journey *thousands of tastes*



# Sheki

## city of sweets



Sheki's residents are known as much for their playful accent and cheeky humour as they are for having an extremely sweet tooth! You'll notice this as you stroll along almost every street.

There, colourful family-run halva bakeries lend character and colour to this former Silk Road city, which is also well worth visiting for its traditional crafts and historical landmarks. Halva is certainly a must-try delicacy: this is Sheki's own super sweet brand of pakhlava made of irishta, which is multiple rice-based layers, ground nuts, and plenty of sugar and honey! However, you mustn't leave without trying piti, Sheki's most famous dish...



### piti

Sheki's signature dish started out as a hearty lamb stew for the city's working class. Now it's popular throughout the country, although for the most authentic pot of piti you should definitely head to Sheki. Chickpeas, chestnuts, saffron and local spices pack the dish with flavour, but the key element lies in the earthenware pots in which piti is cooked and served. What's more, this is actually two dishes in one: first you pour the broth into a separate bowl and enjoy it as a soup starter and then you add in the rest for the main course!

**Where to try**

*in Sheki:* Gagarin; Karvan Restaurant; Nuxa Restaurant

*in Baku:* Burc Qala; Kotanli Restaurant; Sumakh

### masterclasses

#### *in halva-making*

Anyone visiting Sheki would be advised not to leave without a neatly wrapped box of halva. But if you really want to get to grips with this super sweet pastry, call in at one of several traditional sweet shops in town that offer halva-making masterclasses. There, Sheki's pastry chefs will unravel the closely-kept culinary secrets that have been passed down from generation to generation and demonstrate how to craft this dessert made of layers of ground rice, hazelnuts, sugar and syrup.



#### *in dolma-making*

Sheki's Karvansaray is an old caravan-serai that's been lovingly converted into a hotel. Besides being one of the most unique places to stay in North Azerbaijan, the hotel can also put on dolma-making masterclasses to teach you how to prepare this celebrated Azerbaijani dish of stuffed grape leaves and meatballs. Dolma here in Sheki are particularly wonderful, thanks to the local tradition of cooking them in a clay pot called a dopu.



Masterclasses can be booked through private guides or the Sheki Tourist Information Centre.

# Nakhchivan

*unique nature  
& cuisine*



Ask Azerbaijanis about Nakhchivan and they will often think of its distinct cuisine, which is packed with fresh herbs, fruits, vegetables and lamb.

One such highlight is 'govurma shorbasi'. The stewed lamb used in this dish is still stored underground in clay pots, as it has been for years. It is brought up just before cooking and served with beans, potatoes and poached eggs. Ordubad, a town in the east of the region, is known for its puffy omelettes soaked in honey and its bountiful orchards of figs, apricots, peaches and pears. Even Azerbaijan's most delicious lemons come from Ordubad! All of these fruits are dried for winter and sold in Nakhchivan's bustling local bazaar – another place well worth visiting.



## arzuman kofta

This completely unique meatball dish hails from Nakhchivan and is named after its massive size, which will amaze even the most experienced travellers: this is the biggest and heaviest of all the kofta meals in Azerbaijani cuisine and way too much for just one person. The dish is prepared from a full chicken stuffed with a boiled egg and covered by a mix of minced beef and fatty mutton which is rolled into a giant ball, cooked and served with boiled potatoes.

### Where to try

*in Nakhchivan:* Nakhchivan Traditional Cuisine Restaurant, Tabriz Restaurant, Saat Meydani Nakhchivan

*in Baku:* Nakhchivan; Qaynana; Sumakh

# Lankaran

## *from lavash to lavangi*



The cuisine of Lankaran, which is well-known for producing the best tea in the country, is incredibly rich and diverse. A huge variety of dishes are made from rice, meat, fish and vegetables, and accompanied by mouth-watering sweets.

The region has always been multicultural and the local population has done wonders for its traditional food scene. The most famous local dish is lavangi: chicken or fish stuffed with nuts, onions, plum paste or sour fruit leather ('lavashana') and cooked in a tandir (a cylindrical clay oven traditionally used to bake delicious tandir bread). Other dishes worth trying are kulcha, local plov (lentil and pumpkin) and turshu kebab.



## lavangi

In terms of popularity, lavangi stands head and shoulders above Lankaran's other signature dishes. It is made with either chicken or fish that is stuffed with walnuts, plum paste and finely chopped onions, which is then squeezed to remove excess liquid. Given the proximity of the Caspian Sea, fish lavangi is especially popular, particularly when done with kutum. For the most delicious results, lavangi should be cooked in a traditional tandir oven using charcoal.

### Where to try

*in Lankaran:* Khazar Palace; Khan Lankaran

*in Baku:* Chayki; Shirvanshah Museum Restaurant

# Ganja

## hearty cuisine



Azerbaijan's second city of Ganja serves up several special dishes.

While combining its ancient history with a youthful spirit, Ganja has several unique desserts and dishes that make it a no less interesting place from a culinary perspective. If you decide to travel to Ganja, do not forget to try these traditional local dishes: Ganja dovga, the local soup made with yoghurt and various fresh herbs; kata, extra-large meat or herb gutabs with white cheese and, of course, traditional pakhlava.



### pakhlava

The locals make their own style of pakhlava which is much lighter in colour than its Baku counterpart and baked on a copper tray over a campfire. Smearred with a hint of rose and saffron and sprinkled with poppy seeds, this rhombus-shaped pakhlava is extremely tender and simply melts in your mouth. The astonishing aroma of saffron and other ingredients is sure to leave you with a lasting impression. Ganja pakhlava is both a delicious dessert and an unforgettable experience.

#### Where to try

*in Ganja:* Shah Saray Restaurant, Kolorit Cafe

*in Baku:* Jannat Ganja



# Gusar

## *taste of the Caucasus Mountains*



For an authentic taste of the Caucasus Mountains, nowhere beats Gusar in the North East of the country. This region is largely populated by several northern peoples - mountain folk with their own special take on traditional Azerbaijani cuisine.

With the help of the 'kharak', a traditional Gusar bread-making oven, you may try an astonishing variety of flatbreads and even a local type of pizza called 'shakuka'. And whatever you try here, it will certainly be packed with fragrant herbs and berries foraged in the lush forests of the surrounding mountains.



### tskan

The tasty tskan is a local meat pie stuffed with potatoes, cabbage, walnuts, onions, a sprinkling of thyme and lots of butter. Hot, heavy and packed full of calories, it is ideal for the snowy winters and rugged lifestyle of the Greater Caucasus Mountains.

**Where to try**

*in Gusar:* Xutorok; Chateau Qusar

# Baku

## *buzzing with bistros*



Azerbaijan's dynamic capital is a city of contrasts and culture whirled together by the famous Caspian winds.

Here you'll find the country's best restaurants, bars and lounges, which flawlessly fuse Eastern hospitality with a Western state of mind. Despite this international outlook, Baku is also home to an excellent range of cafes and bistros serving traditional national cuisine, as well as several of its own quintessential dishes. These include a special gutab that is filled with camel meat in one nearby village and gurza, a popular dumpling dish named after a snake native to the Absheron.



### dushbara

Dushbara is a traditional dumpling soup, which, while popular throughout the country, is considered a true Baku delicacy. It consists of tiny meat dumplings, boiled together in a broth and is typically served with vinegar and garlic sauce. According to tradition, Azerbaijanis should be able to make the dushbara dumplings so small that twenty-five of them fit into one tablespoon! Preparing dushbara may be time-consuming, but it is a great winter warmer!

**Where to try**  
*in Baku:* Nakhchivan; Sumakh

### *Caviar tasting*

Black caviar has been a symbol of elegance and pleasure in Baku ever since the 19th century when the city began to emerge as a global centre of the industry. You can learn all about it and taste and buy some of the finest products at the luxury boutique of Baku Caviar near the Maiden Tower in the Old City. The company traces its history back to 1954 when the world's first sturgeon farm opened in the seaside town of Neftchala and went on to supply the Kremlin. And it has a strong ecological focus – for every tin of caviar sold, it releases 10 baby sturgeon into the Caspian.



### *Traditional Azerbaijani breakfast in Icherisheher*

What better way to start your day than with a traditional Azerbaijani breakfast among the cobbled streets of Baku's medieval Old City? The pièce de résistance here is pomidor chigirtma, a dazzlingly delicious mix of cooked tomatoes and scrambled eggs, eaten with piping hot tandir bread, fresh honey, cheeses, cream and copious amounts of tea. Enjoy it all in the company of family and friends – this is a Baku experience not to miss!



# where to eat



## Chayki

A family atmosphere on The Seaside Boulevard, complete with a large green garden and a menu that strikes the perfect balance between old and new.

Mon-Fri, 12:00-00:00  
Sat-Sun, 10:00-00:00

24/1 Neftchilar Avenue, Baku  
+99412 504 6464 | [ginza.ru/baku/restaurant/chaykirestaurant](http://ginza.ru/baku/restaurant/chaykirestaurant)



## Baku Cafe

If you want to try traditional Azerbaijani cuisine in a modern way, then you should definitely come here. It offers a wide range of national dishes as well as sweets and tea. In addition to Azerbaijani cuisine, the menu includes dishes from other world cuisines.

Every day, 09:00-00:00

153 Neftchilar Avenue, Baku  
+99412 310 0808



## Sumakh

Bask in the warm atmosphere and admire the exquisite and traditional interior, while award-winning chefs prepare some of Azerbaijan's most colourful and classic dishes.

Every day, 12:00-00:00

20/22 Khojali Avenue, Baku  
+99412 480 2112



## Nakhchivan

The best spot in the city to try traditional Nakhchivan cuisine. The real stars of the show are the wide range of perfectly spiced kebabs, the ornate Ordubad desserts, and the 15 varieties of mouth-watering plov.

Every day, 12:00-00:00

8A Parliament Avenue, Baku  
+99412 480 8585





### Mangal Steak House

A stylish restaurant with excellent, speedy service and a large selection of deliciously satisfying food.

Every day, 10:00-02:00

*3 Aydın Nasirov Street, Baku*  
+99451 228 1011



### Qaynana

Authentic Azerbaijani cuisine, atmosphere and hospitality – all at a reasonable price.

Every day, 08:00-23:00

*126 Kichik Qala Street, Icherisheher (Old City), Baku*  
+99470 434 0013



### Shirvanshah Museum Restaurant

A rare and unique experience: a museum-restaurant where you can enjoy live traditional music, get acquainted with all the tastes of traditional dishes and marvel at the handmade arts and crafts – all produced by local masters!

Every day, 12:00-23:00

*86 Salatin Asgarova Street, Baku*  
+99412 595 0901



### Art Club

A place where fine dining does not just mean great food, but also great artwork and superior service.

Every day, 12:00 – 23:00

*9 Asef Zeynalli Street, Icherisheher (Old city), Baku*  
+99412 492 2013



### Agabala Restaurant

With an exquisite taste of national cuisine and immaculate vintage interior design, you will immerse yourself in the centuries-old traditions of Azerbaijan

Mon-Thu, 12:00-23:00  
Fri-Sun, 12:00-00:00

*95A Khagani street, Baku*  
+99 450 493 0110



### 13 Restaurant

A place designed specifically to be a home away from home: warm lighting, unfinished wood, red brick walls and cosy upholstered furniture. And, of course, delicious, hearty food.

Every day, 12:00-23:00

*2A Mikayil Mushviq Street, Baku*  
+99450 244 0013



### Kotanli

Enjoy family celebrations or romantic candlelit dinners, serenaded by the rhythms of mugham, in what feels much like the Sheki Khan's very own palace!

Every day, 10:00-00:00

*156 Azadliq Avenue, Baku*  
+99412 563 2323



### Gagarin

A favourite place among tourists and locals for sampling traditional Sheki cuisine. Don't forget to order the city's signature dish: piti!

Every day, 09:00-00:00

*Azadlig Street, behind Sheki Palace Hotel*  
+99477 503 3212



### VIP Karvan

A traditional restaurant in charming Sheki that perfectly reflects the local atmosphere, serving a wide selection of Azerbaijani and European dishes.

Every day, 10:00–00:00

*M. F. Akhundov Street, Sheki*  
+99455 792 4671



### Nuxa

A restaurant within the luxury Marxal Restaurant & Spa that never fails to dish up excellent Azerbaijani food. And what better way to enjoy a good meal than on an idyllic mountainside?

Every day, 12:00–00:00

*Kish Village, Markhal Resort & Spa*  
+99412 585 3585



### Xanlar

This rural retreat, nestled in thick forest at the foot of the Caucasus Mountains in laid-back Gabala, specialises in local cuisine.

Every day, 09:00–01:00

*I. Gutgashinli Street, Gabala*  
+99450 536 3634



### Soyuq Bulaq

A traditional restaurant in rural Gabala with a lovely forest setting and delicious organic dishes infused with the flavours of the surrounding countryside.

Every day, 09:00–01:00

*Heydar Aliyev Avenue, Gabala*  
+99455 623 7777



### Xutorok

In amongst the scenic landscapes of Gusar, this hotel and restaurant complex is an ideal pitstop for those driving from Gusar to the Shahdag Mountain Resort.

Every day, 10:00–00:00

*Gusar-Laza Highway, Chilagir, Gusar*  
+99450 525 2151



### Chateau Qusar

Venture here for the spectacular mountain views and first-rate local cuisine at reasonable prices.

Every day, 10:00–00:00

*Gusar-Laza Highway, Chilagir, Gusar*  
+99470 727 2725



### Khazar Palace

A great contemporary location in central Lankaran, serving local cuisine alongside some European favourites.

Every day, 08:00–01:00

*Ashagi Nuvadi Street, Lankaran*  
+99451 754 8787



### Cənnət məkan ('Jannat Mekan')

A vast restaurant and relaxation complex in the beautiful Caucasus Mountains near Goygol. Expect freshly prepared local cuisine, beautiful surroundings and perhaps even a local musician strumming away on the saz (a traditional stringed instrument).

Every day, 07:00–00:00

*Hajikand, Ganja*  
+99470 777 0371

# what to buy at the bazaar



Each day, hundreds of farmers bring fresh produce from the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus Mountains and everywhere in between to bazaars all across the country. Stalls and shelves are bursting with all sorts of goodies: fruits, dried fruits, vegetables, dairy products, meats, spices, herbs, fish and caviar.

Every visit to the local bazaar is not just a shopping experience, but rather a journey into a world of aromas and tastes from the regions of Azerbaijan. Friendly, welcoming sellers will treat you as their guest, always allowing you to try before you buy. And don't forget – haggling will help you save a few pennies for (another!) round of tea and sweets.

## 1 Saffron

Among all the colourful herbs and spices wafting their mesmerising scents around Azerbaijan's bazaars, look out in particular for some of the world's best fresh local saffron. This ruby red spice has been cultivated for centuries in the coastal village of Bilgah on the Absheron Peninsula and is considered the most expensive saffron throughout the country. One gram may set you back 10 manats, but a single piece is enough to transform the colour and aroma of a traditional plov dish.

## 2 Dried fruits and nuts

Other things to look out for in local bazaars are dried fruits and nuts, of which there are so many different sorts. All are extremely healthy and affordable and while they are shipped in from diverse regions of the country, dried fruits from Nakhchivan and nuts from the northwest region are particularly delicious. Finally, be sure to try something called turshu lavash – colourful fruit leathers made from cherry plums. As you drive around the country, look out for them brightening up the roadside.

## 3 Pomegranates

We produce many mouthwatering fruits... But the undisputed king is the pomegranate. And while pomegranates are grown all around the country, the Goychay region is thought to be home to an astonishing 70 different kinds, making it a fitting venue for the annual Pomegranate Festival that celebrates the late-autumn harvest. Pomegranates are ever-present in Azerbaijani cuisine – in sauces, juices, jams and even wine.

## 4 Honey

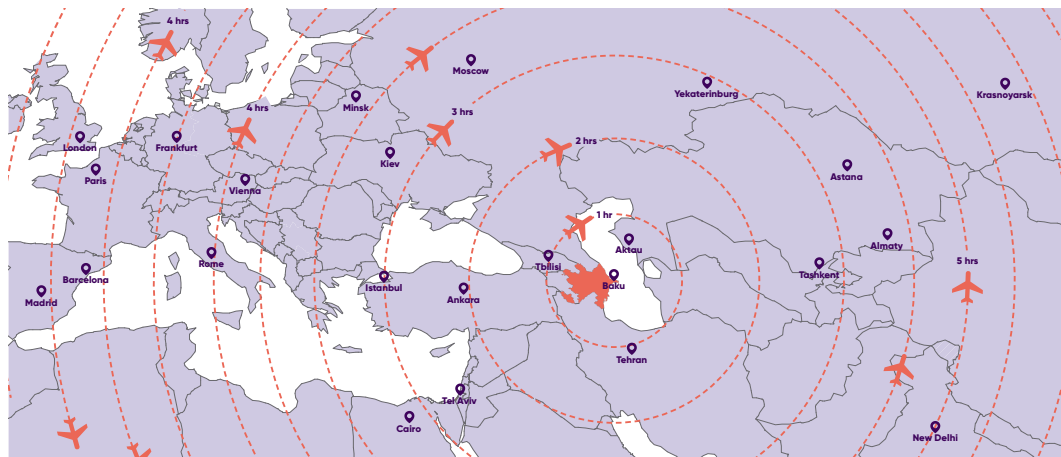
With its stunningly diverse landscapes and all-year-round sunshine, it should come as no real surprise that beekeeping is a thriving activity in the Azerbaijani countryside. Infused with the unique flora of the Caucasus and Talish Mountains, our honey is absolutely delicious!



## PLAN YOUR TRIP

# salam Azerbaijan

Country Size  
**86,600 km<sup>2</sup>**  
Population  
**10 million**



### Visa

Normally, for some nationalities visas are available upon arrival. For others e-visas can be obtained within three days via [evisa.gov.az](http://evisa.gov.az). Currently, due to the COVID-19 pandemic only citizens of the countries eligible for entry to Azerbaijan can obtain a visa upon arrival or e-visa. For others, visas are being issued through Azerbaijan embassies. We advise you to check requirements before booking your trip.

### Money

Our currency is the manat (AZN). Mastercard/Visa ATMs are very widespread and available in main towns. Changing money back is no problem.

### Accommodation

We have a complete range of options, from luxury and mid-range hotels to rural ensuite bungalows, provincial motels and even private homestays.

### Internet

Most good hotels are fully equipped with Wi-Fi throughout, and big hotels will also have business centres with at least a few computers. Also, Wi-Fi is free in many cafés and restaurants across Baku and beyond. Mobile phone providers offer relatively inexpensive dongles so that you can access the web through 4G mobile networks.

### Language

Our state language is Azerbaijani, which is similar to Turkish. Basic English is understood by most of the population. Russian is widely known, especially in Baku.

### Religion

While we are a secular country, most of the population follow Islam. Muslim dress code is not enforced nor expected. Alcohol is very widely available. All religions have somewhere to worship in Azerbaijan.

### How to visit<sup>1</sup>

#### By air:

There are numerous international airports operating in Azerbaijan. Direct flights to the country are carried out from many cities in Russia and other neighbouring countries.

#### By train:

from Russia, Georgia and Ukraine.

#### By car:

from Russia, Georgia, Iran and Türkiye.

<sup>1</sup> For the latest information on travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, see [azerbaijan.travel/covid-19-en](http://azerbaijan.travel/covid-19-en)



**AZERBAIJAN**  
— AIRLINES —

## PLAN YOUR TRIP

### Visit Azerbaijan:

**December – January:** These winter months are the perfect time for a Christmas trip or New Year's celebrations. From the beginning of December, festive cheer takes over Baku's Fountains Square. While snow is a rarity in Baku, the big Christmas tree and markets help to get everyone in the festive mood. For those who love a chilly mountaintop, we could not recommend the ski resorts of Shahdag and Tufandag enough. Snow sports enthusiasts are welcome from December through to the end of March. You can take your pick from the variety of hotels at each resort to suit how you want to see the festive season roll in: snuggled up with your family or on a romantic adventure with your loved one.

**February – April:** These months are the perfect time for exploring the city and taking part in business meetings. Spring in Baku is a special time: this is when nature awakens after its winter hibernation. What's more, this is when we celebrate our favourite Azerbaijani holiday – Novruz – a festival of spring and the coming of the new year. All Azerbaijanis take part in

this traditional holiday with their customs and rituals that provide the perfect opportunity not just to watch, but also take part! While the holiday itself awaits us at the end of March, we begin preparations and celebrations some four weeks ahead. Each Tuesday in the run up to Novruz symbolises leaving the past behind and looking into the future. Novruz is a national holiday, which means no one has to work!

**May:** Right between the spring and summer months, May is an ideal time to explore the historical monuments and natural beauties that Azerbaijan has to offer. Goygol and Maral Gol lakes and the ancient cities of Sheki and Gabala will all delight you with their beauty, and the Hirkan National Park will be sure to attract the ecotourists among you. Be sure to visit the wellness centres for a spa treatment or two – May is a great time to revive your body and soul!

**June – August:** This is Azerbaijan's hottest and sunniest time. Summertime in Baku is the perfect medicine for those who crave respite from the cold winter gone by, especially if you paint your

trip with the exciting colours cast by Absheron sunsets. Baku is lined by long beaches with high-quality facilities to cater to your summer holidays. In the suburbs of the city, resorts have been built around your comfort with great recreation facilities. So, if you are not only in search of sun, sea and sand, but also that holiday mood and tasty food, then head to Baku! But don't forget about the treasures you might find outside of the city centre: summertime is the time for a number of local folk festivals in Gabala, Sheki, Guba and other regions, where you can try traditional food and chat to local people!

**September – October:** The best season for long mountain walks, spa breaks and business travel. Autumn time in Baku is perfect for wandering around the city and for venturing out towards the mountains. Why not pop into the vineyards of Gabala, Ismayilli, Shamakhi or Goygol? Not only will you be invited to take part in the harvest, but you can also taste the delicious local wines!

**November:** This deep autumn month is for sitting back and taking in the beautiful colours that surround us. Be sure to wrap up warm!

### Public transportation

Only the capital, Baku, has a metro system, which operates between 06:00 and 00:00. Stations, trains and facilities are clean and safe, with trains running every two – three minutes. There are three lines – the Red Line from Icherisheher to Hazi Aslanov, the Green Line from Khatai to Darnagul, and the Purple Line from Avtovaghzal to November 8. Buses are an inexpensive way to travel in Baku.

On the bus and Baku underground one journey costs 40 gepiks, taxis are also widely available as an alternative option. Baku has several licensed taxi firms. The most famous of them are Baku Taxi Company and 189 taxi, while UBER and other taxi apps are also available.

### Driving

An international driving licence is required. Car rental is increasingly available in Baku.



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# azerbaijan

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