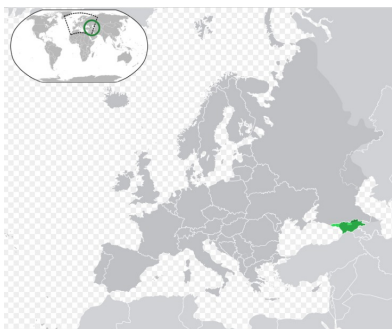
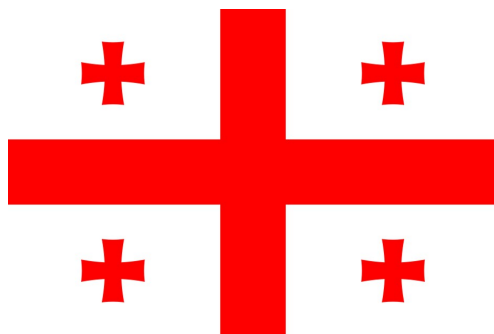


GEORGIA 1. SEPTEMBER – 8. SEPTEMBER 2016

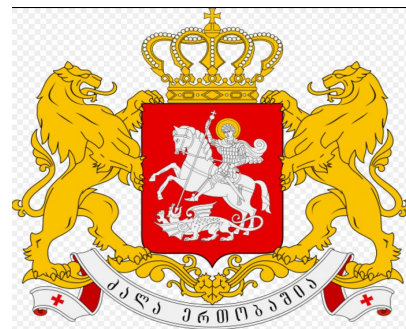
We had booked a trip to Georgia by [Norsk Tur](#) (Norwegian Tour). We drove to [Oslo Airport](#), Gardermoen and parked on [P4](#). The flight went with [Turkish Airlines](#) ([Wikipedia](#)) via [Istanbul Ataturk Airport](#) ([Wikipedia](#)) to [Tbilisi Airport](#). Flight schedule: Gardermoen at. 11:15 - Istanbul kl. 16.05 - Istanbul kl. 21.15 - Tbilisi at. 00:30.



Georgia on the map.



Flag.



Coat of arms

There is archaeological excavations showing that the first people came here 1.8 million years ago, and they spread out across Europe from here.

Excavations also suggest that it was produced wine here 8000 years ago, and Georgia are therefore considered to be the country where the production of wine began. It is grown around 550 grape varieties here. [Kakheti](#) is the most important wine region. [Wine](#) is produced traditionally by fermenting grape juice drained on amphoras that are buried in the ground. Here the fermentation goes on for at least six months, maybe years.

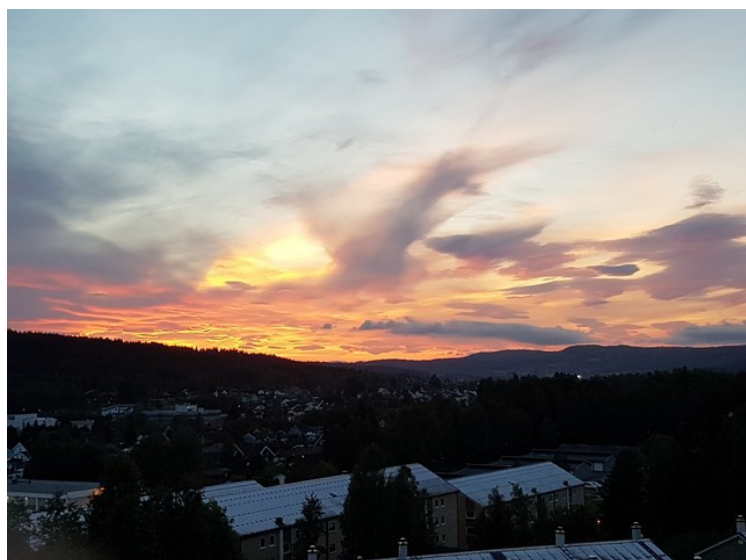
Christianity was introduced as state religion in East Georgia in 330. Georgia has its own independent Georgian Orthodox church. It is considered to be one of the oldest Christian communities.

Georgia has its own [alphabet](#), which is one of a total of 19 in the world. It also has a separate [Georgian language](#) that stands out from the other languages in the area.

[Georgia](#) is located at the crossroads of north and south, east and west, and several trade routes went through the area, including the famous [Silk Road](#). Partly because of this it is the area of the world that has been most often invaded. It has also been part of the Persian Empire, the Roman Empire, Parthia, the Mongol Empire, the Ottoman Empire, Russia and the Soviet Union. There were early several kingdoms in the area. They were collected as one kingdom in the beginning of the 1100s. The greatness period was in the 11-1200 century.

Georgia became independent again on 9 April 1991. Abkhazia and South Ossetia declared themselves independent, but this is not recognized by Georgia.

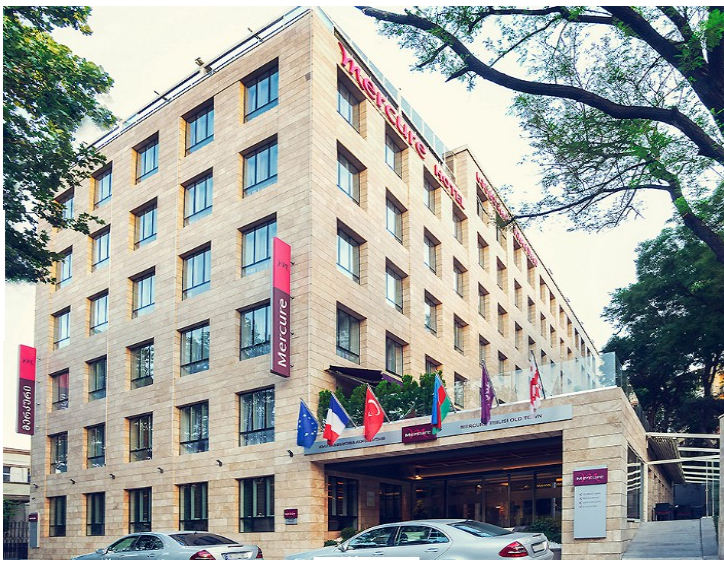
The capital is [Tbilisi](#). It is the largest city with about 1.5 million inhabitants in the city and its surroundings. It was founded around 400 years ago. There are many hot springs in the area.



Evening sky before we traveled from Kongsvinger.



When we got food on the plane, one of the waiters had toque and chef clothes on. It is the first time we've seen that on a plane.



In Tbilisi, we should stay at a hotel called [Mercure Tbilisi Old Town](#)



After we had checked in, we were going on a city tour.



The first thing we notice is the fortress situated on a hill above the town. The name is [Narikala](#). The first part of it was built in the 300s, but was extended several times. In 1827, much of the fortress was destroyed by an earthquake and part of this was demolished.



Across the Mtkvari river ([Kura river](#)) is this church, [Metekhi Church](#), on a hill. It was built from 1278 to 1284. The Metekhi district was one of the first areas that were developed. There should have been built a fortress and a church here in the 400s.



Inside the church.





Next to the church stands an equestrian statue of King [Vakhtang I Gorgasali](#) of [Iberia](#), which was an early kingdom in this area.



It is Vakhtang that shall have founded Tbilisi city.



The church seen from another angle.



Across the valley we see the statue [Kartlis Deda](#) (Mother Georgia) which was erected on the hill in 1958 when Tbilisi celebrated 1500 year anniversary.



Here we sit under cover while the guide tells of Tbilisi.



Here we have moved us to the edge of the hill.



Views to the ancient walls on Metekhi Hill.



Mtkvari river.



This is the [Bridge of Peace](#), which crosses the Mtkvari River. It is a pedestrian bridge that was opened in 2010.



A church up the slope.



The center of town.



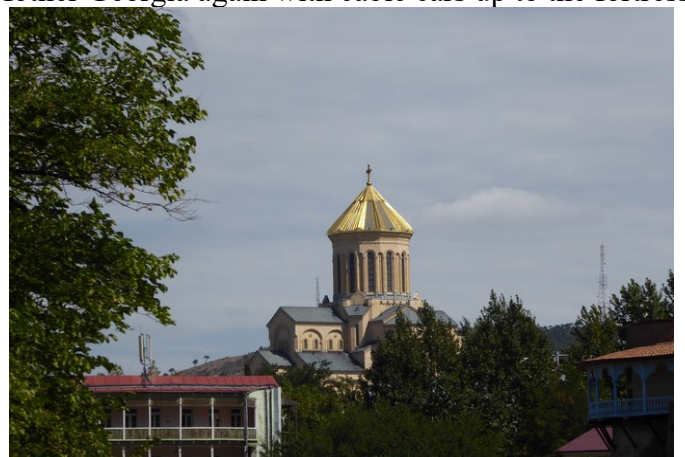
Europa square.



Mother Georgia again with cable cars up to the fortress.



Last image of the equestrian statue.



[Sameba Cathedral](#), which is the main cathedral in Tbilisi.



Latest photo from the hill by the church. We look down at the town square. We went down there afterwards.



So we have walked down to the old town.



Art in the oldtown.



Kiosk.



Statue of Tamada who sit and drink wine from a drinking horn. Tamada is a Georgian toastmaster.



Jazz Cafe Singer



Tourist office in an old tram carriage.



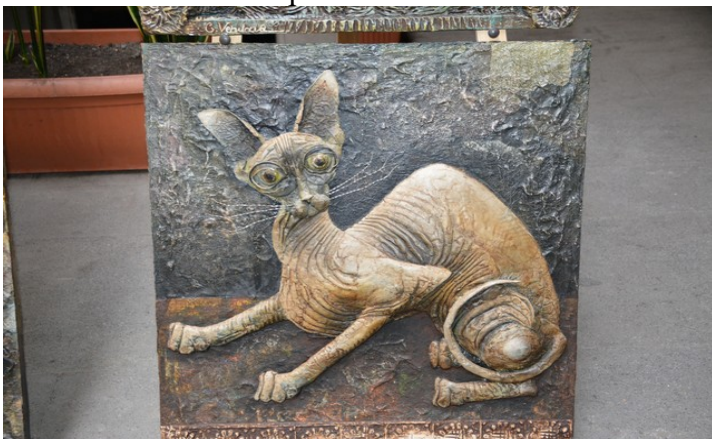
The we came to [Tbilisi History Museum](#). [Link](#).
The museum is housed in an old [caravanserai](#).



Inside the museum.



We fell for these pictures that were exhibited.





This is [Tbilisi Sioni Cathedral](#). It is a Gregorian Orthodox Cathedral which is named after Mount Zion in Jerusalem. It was the main cathedral until the Sameba Cathedral was opened in 2004.



The belfry.



Restaurant street.



So we passed some shops with goods on the streets.



Slippers.



Walnuts dipped in a sweet grape lake and dried.



Eilert bought a [fez](#).



We walked across the peace bridge.



From the brige we could see the [concert hall and exhibition center](#), which is not finished yet. In the background we see the [Presidential Administration Palace](#).



Then we took the [cable car](#) that goes from the Europa square up to the fortress.



Here we view southwards.



View to Europa Square.



This is the top station of the cable car.



A guitar player.



Peace Bridge, the concert hall and the Presidential Palace.



Sameba Cathedral.



Then we went down again.
There were lots of steps.



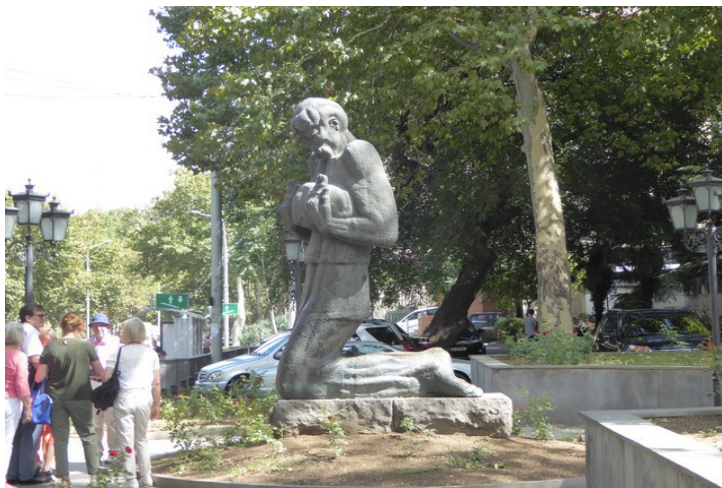
Here we see some of [Narikala fortress](#).



The fortress is not easy to take.



We see the roofs on the [sulphur baths](#). [Link](#).



A statue of [Niko Pirosmiani](#) made by Elguja Amashukeli



We had lunch at a restaurant called [Bread House](#).



Some pictures of those who were in the group.



Popular mineral water in Georgia.

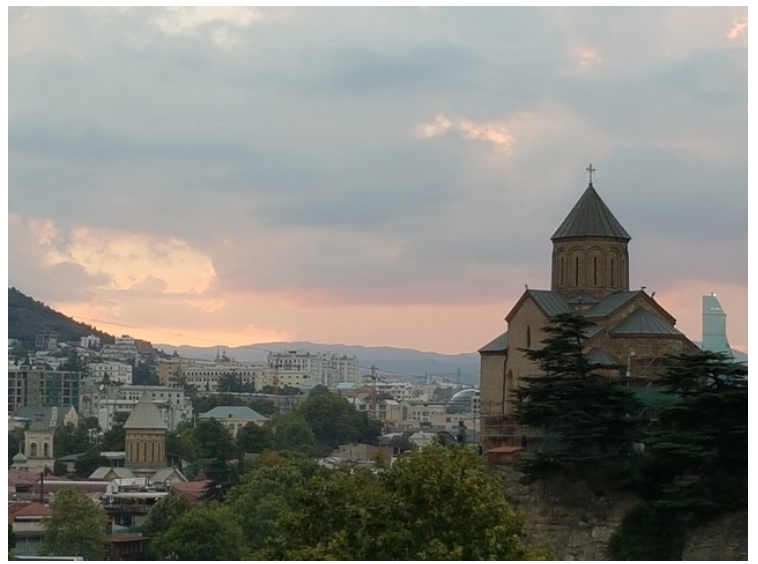


There was a lot of vegetables.





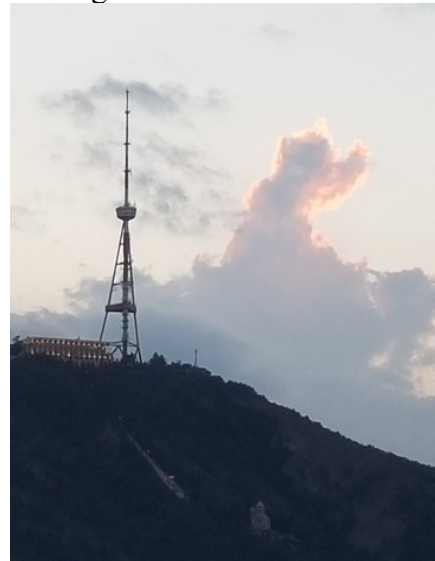
In the evening we ate at the bar on the top floor of the hotel.



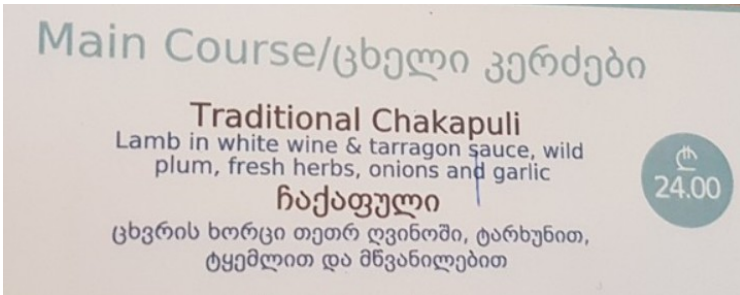
There we had a good view towards Metekhi Church.



Views of the Narikala fortress.



Views to the TV tower.



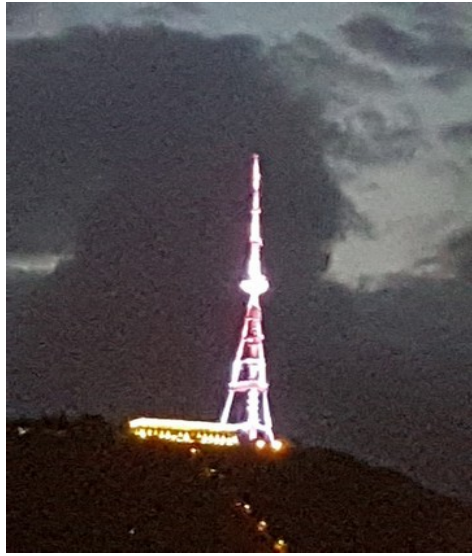
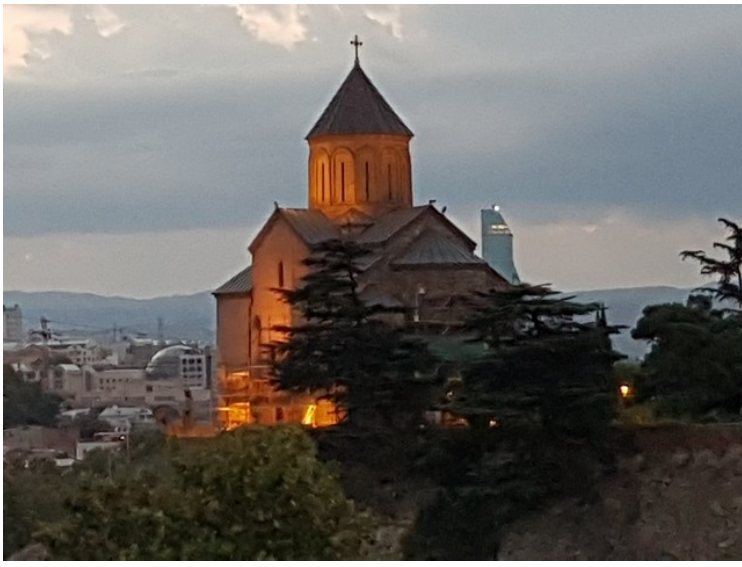
We had this dish.



Accompanied by this wine.



It was dark gradually.



Metkhi hill with Mtkvari River below.