

# **MB TRAVEL TOUR**

**212-571-2831 855-326-2840**



## **Azerbaijan**

**Baku - Gobustan -Lahij –Sheki-Guba-Baku**

**9 days / 8 nights**

**Day 1**

**Arrival in Baku. Transfer from Baku Airport and Check inn at the hotel after 15:00. (rest of the day free for exploration) (overnight in Baku)**

**Day 2**

**Baku (B/-/-)**

**Martyr's Lane and panoramic view of Baku / Old City tour (including Shirvanshah's Palace, Maiden Tower, Old Caravanserais, Old city walls and etc), Carpet Museum, Promenade and Fountain Square**

**Tour starts with the view of Baku city, its harbor, boulevard zone and the Caspian Sea from Martyr's Lane. Martyr's Lane is a memorial park located on one of highest hills of the city, is composed of a tomb standing on an 8-pointed star crown of gold-framed glass dome. Elegant network decorating the walls of the tomb gives certain gentleness and air of transparency to the monument. Golden dome shining in nocturnal sky embodies the spirit of martyrs who have sacrificed their lives for the independence of Azerbaijan. Afterwards, move to the Old City of Baku "Icheri Sheher", which is a rare pearl of ancient cultural heritage of Azerbaijani people. Also, it is the historical center of ancient Baku, the former capital of the State of Shirvanshahs and a millennial statehood of Azerbaijan. Here, in a small area of 22 hectares you can see hundreds of historic monuments. In 2000, "The Walled City of Baku with the Shirvanshah's Palace and Maiden Tower" were included in to the UNESCO World Heritage list. Icheri Sheher is a romantic place, which transports you to the Middle Ages, makes you live the spirit of the time and its positive energy. Main sites of this tour are: Shirvanshah's Palace (15th century) - the last residence of Shirvan's rulers, located at the highest point of Icherisheher, the palace was founded in the 12th century and its construction was finalized in the 15th century. The Palace of Shirvanshah's inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List is rightly considered as a 'Baku Acropolis'. Maiden Tower (12th century) - for many centuries the Maiden Tower has been the most prominent piece of the Baku panorama. It is located in the southeast of Baku city fortress, and stands as a 28-meter cylinder. Its bottom part, constructed in the 8th-9th centuries, could have been used as an ancient religious temple, although mainly, it was used as an observatory, a lighthouse and a watch tower in subsequent centuries. A number of other historical sites (Muhammad Mosque, baths of Haji Banu, Agha Mikayil and Gasim Bey, Multani and Bukhara caravanserais, small caravanserai, two-floor caravanserai, fortress walls, Gosha Gala (double gates of the city) and etc.) are also located on this route. At the end you can walk along the central streets of the city and enjoy shopping (time to be spent in the old town - 2 or 2,5 hours). Visiting the new building of the Azerbaijan State Carpet Museum will amaze you with its vast collection of more than 10.000 items. The museum contains valuable historical artifacts and**

works of art from cities and regions, covering the whole centuries old history of Azerbaijan, as well, of course, carpets and rugs with national ornaments and subjects specific to the various schools of carpet weaving of Azerbaijan: with pile (khalcha, khali, dest khali, gebe), pileless carpets (palas, kilim, chechim, sumakh, shedde, varni, zili), as well as variety of carpet objects- khurjun, chul, kheyba, mafrash, ekhar gashlygy, and others. We must mention that in November 2010 "Traditional art of Azerbaijani carpet weaving in the Republic of Azerbaijan" was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative list of the Intangible Cultural heritage of Humanity. Aside from carpets woven in 17th – 20th centuries, a collection of jewelry, ceramics and old metal works is also a part of the exhibition. (Overnight in Baku)

### **Day 3**

#### **Baku (B/-/-)**

**Mud Volcanoes / Gobustan National Park / Bibi-Heybat mosque / Zoroastrian temple – Atashgah, Mardakan defense tower and Yanardag – the flaming hill**

After the breakfast departure to mud volcanoes and Gobustan Historical-Artistic Reserve (70 km south of Baku) – is a unique monument of world importance and was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2007.

The Reserve, which covers the area of ancient petroglyphs – with more than 4,000 of them covering the period from paleolith to the Middle Ages. One the way back from Gobustan, we will make a short stop by Bibi-Heybat Mosque which is a recreation of a mosque built in 13th century and is one of the most visited shrines of Baku. Its main yard is another site worth mentioning as from this very angle we are going see another very old onshore oil field of Absheron peninsula. In the afternoon, continue the tour by driving to Absheron peninsula. Located in Surakhani district (25 km away from Baku), UNESCO World Heritage Site “Ateshgah (Fire-Worshippers Temple)” is an ancient religious temple of fire worshipers built in 17th century. This castle-like place has been described by many foreign travelers and historians. It is one of the sacred places Zoroastrians (fire worshipers) used to visit and still do during their pilgrimage. Mardakan Castle is another place to enjoy the view of Caspian Sea and one of the oldest villages of Baku (Mardakan village) after taking awkward and narrow steps of a 22 meter 14th century watch tower. Here in Mardakan village, once upon a time the locals could use this tower not only for defense and observation, but also to escape through secret underground tunnel which in the old days connected the village with its outskirts. Yanardag. Translated from Azerbaijani language as “Burning Mountain”, Yanardag is a continuously flaming hill which just as Ateshgah is another sight worth visiting. Yanardag fire, height of which varies from 1 to 5 meters at different times, is caused by hydrocarbon gases coming out from below the surface. It is never extinguished, neither in snow nor in rain. (Overnight in Baku)

### **Day 4**

#### **Baku (B/-/-)**

**Diribaba Mausoleum / Lahij / Sheki**

Visiting located in Mereze district (110 km away from Baku)- Diribaba Mausoleum (15th century), is a shrine partly built and partly carved on a huge cliff. Lahij being one of the oldest settlements in Azerbaijan is an isolated place located on height of almost 1400 meters (4600 ft) above sea level and is completely surrounded by mountains. It is well known around for a unique architecture (tough stone house construction method was developed for years due to frequent earthquakes), old sewage system (locals claim it is about 1500 years old), an interesting dialect (along with Azeri, people of Lahij speak also a dialect of Persian language) and craftsmen whose works (mostly copper) were well known within the borders of Caucasus region for years. The art of working with copper has been developed for centuries as a family tradition. A tourist visiting this

place will always find a unique hand-made piece of art to take home as a souvenir:  
(overnight in Sheki)



#### **Day 5**

#### **Sheki (B/-/-)**

**Full day Sheki city tour including: morning visit of the famous farmers' market / old part of Sheki / Khan's Palace / Shabaka – stained glass window workshop / 18th century Caravanserai / WWII memorial hill which offers a good panoramic view of the town / Kish village and the old Albanian church with a tea break in a private house next to the church .Sheki Khan's Palace is one of the major historical sites in Azerbaijan. Built in late 18th century as a summer palace, it is the only remaining structure from the larger splendid complex once surrounded by the fortress walls. Among its main attractions are the outstanding drawings and stained-glass windows which are assembled as a puzzle without a single nail or usage of glue. One square meter of this artwork consists of 4.000 small parts and can range up to 14.000 in more complicated styles. Nearby the Khans Palace, we will have a chance to meet the people who still continue this family tradition of making stained-glass windows and witness the work in process. (Time to be spent – 1 hour) Upper and Lower Caravanserais of Sheki (18th century) served as a temporary homes for traders who were passing by this city which was on one of the silk road routes. Both are huge magnificent structures consisting of more than 300 hundred rooms covering a total area of 6000- Upper Caravanserai and 8000- Lower Caravanserai square meters (time to be spent-1-1,5 h). Church of Kish village (or Church of Saint Elishe in some sources) is an approximately 12th century Caucasian Albanian church located about 5 km away from the city center of Sheki. It was built on a cultic site (found beneath the altar) which dates back to approximately 3.000 B.C. It is also believed that the oldest and first church of Caucasus was built on this same spot by St.Elishe who was sent here in 1st century to spread Christianity and enlighten the people of Caucasus area. (Overnight in Sheki)**

#### **Day 6**

#### **Sheki (B/-/-)**

**Drive from Sheki back to Baku and on the way visit Nij village and Gabala cable way . Nij village is unique place – an old settlement known for being the home of Udi community, who follow Christianity and are believed to be related to ancient Caucasian Albanians. They also have their own ancient language and alphabet. Afterwards, we will continue to the city of Gabala and view its wonderful mountains and “Tufandag” peak from the city cable way. Later, continue to Baku. (Overnight in Baku)**



#### **Day 7**

#### **Baku (B/-/-)**

**Morning drive to Guba city / explore city of Guba including Sakin Khanim mosque, local market and Krasnaya Sloboda – the Jewish neighborhood with its Synagogue and**

old cemetery Today we will start the day early and drive to Guba, which is in 160 km distance from Baku, in northern direction to visit the widely known Krasnaya Sloboda (red town). The city of Guba is divided into the bigger Muslim area and smaller Jewish area, which is called the red town, because of red roofs on the houses. The uniqueness of this area is that Muslim and Jewish neighborhoods co-existed in peace and prosperity for centuries. The Jewish community of this area, which is called the “mountain Jews”, has its own Juhuri language, which is related to an old dialect of Persian language. We will have a pleasant walk through this area and will visit their old synagogues. We will also visit the town bazaar and Sakina Khanim mosque. (Overnight in Guba)



#### **Day 8**

##### **Guba (B/-/-)**

Early morning drive to Khinalug village – a unique place and highest inhabited village surrounded by Caucasus Mountains / afterwards drive back to Baku

Start the day with departure to Khinalug, the highest village in Azerbaijan, which is located at the point of 2350 meters above sea level. It has been an isolated village with its own unique ethnic group, language, alphabet and traditions for hundreds of years. Even nowadays, it's shocking location makes it impossible to reach the village during severe winter days. Khinalug has its unique architecture style where each house is built on top of another and thus, the whole village resembles a stairway on a hill. It is also a popular starting point for hikers in summer time, who start their 3-4 day long journeys to Bazaryurd, Babadag, Shahdag, Tufandag and other peaks at the elevation of more than 4000 meters. Khinalug borders with Shahdag national park, which is a beautiful protected zone with a rich fauna. Afterwards, drive back to Baku. (Overnight in Baku)

#### **Day 9**

##### **Baku**

Transfer to the airport (-/-/-) Check out from the hotel till 12:00. Transfer to the Airport. Departure

##### **Option 1:**

Package price based on double/twin room accommodation based on

Hotel Diplomat 3\* in Baku,  
Sheki Karvansaray in Sheki,

Hotel Quba Retro in Guba:

For group of 6 passengers 1155.00 USD per person

Single Supplement 455 USD per person

##### **Option 2:**

Package price based on double/twin room accommodation based on

Hotel Central Park 4\* in Baku,  
Sheki Palace in Sheki,

Hotel Quba Rixos in Guba:

For group of 6 passengers 1350 USD per person

Single Supplement 535 USD per person

**PRICE INCLUDES:**

**5x overnights in Baku**

**2x overnights in Sheki**

**1x overnight in Guba**

**Catering: as per program (B - Breakfast) All breakfast at the hotels.**

**All transfers and transportation by comfortable vehicle**

**An English-speaking guide as per program**

**Entrance fees 1 bottle of water per person per day**

**PRICE EXCLUDES:**

**Entrance Visas.**

**Meals except mentioned above**

**Alcohol beverages**

**Airline tickets Travel insurance**

**Porters Early Check in/Late**

**Check out Services except described**