



Georgia Rioni River Rafting Adventure

11 Days



The Adventure Company | EST. 1969

MT+SOBEKTM
MOUNTAIN TRAVEL SOBEK

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS
AS THE PIONEER OF ADVENTURE TRAVEL

➤ Georgia Rioni River Rafting Adventure

Blending the beautiful landscapes and sparkling rivers of the Caucasus Mountains with legendary Georgian hospitality, this special adventure is nothing short of true quest. Take in the intriguing history of this crossroads of Europe and Asia, admire the magnificent Orthodox churches and monasteries, and savor the delicious wines and cuisine. Get your adrenaline boost over six days of Class III+ rafting on four different rivers, and visit many attractions in between, from Stalin's birthplace and Vardzia caves to the old towns of Kutaisi and Tbilisi. Each day abounds in spectacular Georgian charms.

Details

Arrive: Tbilisi, Georgia

Depart: Tbilisi, Georgia

Duration: 11 Days

Group Size: 10-12 Guests

Minimum Age: 15 Years Old

Activity Level:



Testimonials

"I have taken 12 trips with MT Sobek. Each has left a positive imprint on me—widening my view of the world and its peoples."

Jane B.

"I've taken six MT Sobek trips and they have all exceeded my expectations. The staff, the food, the logistics and the communications have always been exceptional. Thank you for being my "go to" adventure travel company!"

Margaret I.

GOT QUESTIONS? SPEAK WITH AN EXPERT.

☎ 1-800-974-0300

✉ info@mtsobek.com

Why Take This Trip With Us?

REASON #01

MT Sobek ran the first descent of the Rioni River in 2006 and we work with expert rafting guides in Georgia.

REASON #02

This active trip has been curated to showcase the rich cultural and natural wonders of Georgia and the Caucus. It's the perfect blend for a bucket-list experience!

REASON #03

You'll get to explore remote destinations and raft exciting whitewater rapids, while staying in comfortable hotels and guesthouses.

What to Expect



ACTIVITIES

Scenic canyon rafting on Class II to Class IV rapids, covering 10 to 15 miles per day, with fun technical free-flowing stretches of whitewater. Also includes cultural exploration.



LODGING

Combination of comfortable hotels and guesthouses, complemented by delicious local cuisine.



CLIMATE


Expect moderately cool days in June, with temperatures ranging from 63°F to 84°F.

Meet Our Guides

Our expert guides and trip leaders are truly the key to our trips' success. Many are locals who live in-country year-round; others have made it their second home—all are passionate, enthusiastic and endlessly knowledgeable. Meet two of the guides that might be on your trip.

Local Tour Guide

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Itinerary

DAY 1

ARRIVE IN TBILISI, THE CAPITAL OF GEORGIA

Welcome to Georgia! Your MT Sobek trip leader will meet you at the airport for a shuttle transfer to your hotel in the old town, where labyrinthine cobblestone alleys whisper of the city's past. At 6pm, meet up with your group in the hotel lobby for orientation, then savor the first taste of delightful Georgian fare at the welcome dinner.

Meals: D

DAY 2

DISCOVER TBILISI & HEAD TO THE CAUCASUS

Take in the panoramas of Tbilisi from the towering 4th-century Narikala Fortress, and visit the National Museum or the 6th-century Zion Orthodox Cathedral, rebuilt after invasions by Persians, Arabs and Mongols. Continue to the nearby UNESCO-protected Mtskheta, the former capital of Georgia. In the afternoon, head north to the town of Gudauri in the Caucasus, stopping along the way to marvel at the Russia-Georgia Friendship Monument, a half-circle of stone arches lavishly decorated with tile murals. Enjoy a dinner on your own at one of the local restaurants.

Meals: B, L

DAY 3

GET ACTIVE RAFTING ON THE ARAGVI RIVER

On the scenic drive from Gudauri to the river put-in, consider trying tandem paragliding with a professional instructor. Then continue to the small town of Pasanauri in Mtiuleti province, and start your adventure on the Aragvi River. Paddle through class II and III rapids all the way to the Jinali water reservoir, stopping along the way for a lunch at the petite Meneso village. After settling into the hotel, consider strolling to the nearby Ananuri fortress, a well-preserved castle complex above the Aragvi.

Activity: 6 hours/14 miles rafting; optional tandem paragliding

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 4

VISIT STALIN'S MUSEUM IN GORI & MARVEL AT THE CAVES OF VARDZIA

In Gori, Stalin's hometown, visit the museum that showcases the house of his birth, as well as many personal artefacts. Head on to the 9th-century Rabati Castle, a majestic complex that includes a mosque with a minaret, a synagogue, a Christian church, the rulers' Jakelis' Palace, and a citadel with restored ancient buildings. Finally, admire Vardzia Cave City, a palace-monastery complex built in solid rock over 13 levels as a hideout from the Mongol raids for the 12th-century Queen Tamar.

Activity: 6 hours sightseeing

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Meals: B, L, D

DAY 5

RAFT THE KURA RIVER & EXPLORE ONI VILLAGE

The Kura River, also known as Mtkvari, is the longest river running through Georgia. Starting from the village of Qvabiskhevi, power through Class III and III+ rapids to the storybook town of Likani. After rafting, head back into the Caucasus, to Oni in the upper Racha area. A charming old village with pretty mountain views, Oni holds ruins of medieval fortresses, a synagogue, Orthodox churches, and a town museum; it's perfect for easy wanders or evening strolls towards the mountains.

Activity: 6 hours/9 miles rafting

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 6

FEEL THE RUSH OF THE RIONI RIVER

Get ready to descend down the fast-dropping, constant-action Rioni River. Raft over 18 miles between the tiny towns of Oni and Ambrolauri, powering through Class II to Class IV rapids. Along the way, admire small forested canyons and waterside villages with churches and forts, and stop to refresh with a picnic lunch by the river. In the evening, take in the serene Ambrolauri, once the residence of Imereti kings.

Activity: 6 hours/18 miles rafting

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 7

RAFT THE LOWER RIONI RIVER & ARRIVE AT KUTAISI

Continue rafting the lower section of the Rioni River. Starting from Tvishi village, enjoy stunning mountain scenery, impressive rock formations and lively whitewater as you make your way to the end of the section at Tvishi gorge. Enjoy a lunch, then continue on to the region's capital of Kutaisi, arriving early enough for a walk around the town. The former capital and one of the longest continuously inhabited towns in the world, Kutaisi offers much to see.

Activity: 1.5 hours/7 miles rafting

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 8

SEE THE SIGHTS OF KUTAISI

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Spend today, between river trips, discovering Kutaisi and visiting the main sights in and around town. Marvel at the Bagrati cathedral, a masterpiece of medieval Georgian architecture and see the complex of the Gelati Monastery and Academy, one of the country's most treasured religious and cultural landmarks. Take in the Prometheus caves, with breathtaking stalactites, stalagmites, curtains, petrified waterfalls, cave pearls, underground rivers, and lakes. In the evening, relax over a dinner on your own.

Activity: 6 hours sightseeing

Meals: B, L

DAY 9

TACKLE THE UPPER TSKHENISTSKALI RIVER

Take a scenic ride to Laksuna in the lower Svaneti province for the river run-in. Paddle Class II to Class IV rapids, and enjoy an energizing break over a tasty lunch by the water. Savor four exciting hours on a big river, traveling toward the small riverside town of Tsageri. On the drive back to Kutaisi, make several scenic stops, from strolling along a hanging walkway to visiting the tallest waterfall in Georgia

Activity: 4 hours/13 miles rafting

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 10

RAFT THE LOWER TSKHENISTKALI RIVER & RETURN TO TBILISI

Enjoy the trip's grand finale and the last day of whitewater action. Starting from Tsageri, embark on the final leg of the journey, the lower section of the Tskhenistkali River. Paddle 13 miles and savor one more lunch by the river. Then drive to Tbilisi and settle into the hotel. Enjoy some time to yourself to pack or roam the city streets, then gather with the group for the farewell dinner, another Georgian feast.

Activity: 4 hours/13 miles rafting

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 11

DEPART FROM TBILISI

After breakfast, it's time to head to Tbilisi airport for homebound or onward flights. Consider combining this trip with one of MT Sobek's other adventures in Europe!

Meals: B

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Dates

Jun 28 - Jul 8, 2023

For full terms and conditions please visit www.mtsobek.com/terms. Please note that our itineraries may be subject to change.

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Inclusions & Exclusions

PRICE INCLUDES

- Expertise and services of our experienced adventure guides
- All accommodations as noted in the itinerary
- All breakfasts, almost all lunches and dinners as noted in the itinerary
- Snacks and water between meals
- Additional regional guides and experts on many trips
- Comprehensive Trip Planner with detailed pre-trip information
- Private guided tours at historic sites, museums, wineries and other select attractions as noted in the itinerary
- Special events and other select attractions as mentioned in the itinerary
- All gratuities at hotels and restaurants
- Equipment and experienced guides for activities as described in the itinerary
- Park and other entry fees (unless otherwise noted)
- Fares for trains, ferries and other modes of travel as listed in the itinerary
- Select transfers as mentioned in the itinerary
- Baggage transfers and portorage

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- International airfare, airport taxes, and excess baggage fees
- Alcoholic beverages (MT Sobek provides wine at select events)
- Gratuities for MT Sobek guides and guide-drivers
- Travel Protection Program
- Personal expenses

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➤ Rafting & Kayaking with MT Sobek

At MT Sobek, we take you to premier wilderness rivers and beautiful island locations to experience some of the most breathtaking rafting and kayaking on the planet. In addition to our world-class guides who offer entertaining experiences, you'll enjoy comfortable camping and delicious meals. Here are the key things that set us apart:

- **Expert Guides** ~ Our professional guides are the best in the business. From the first safety briefing to the final high five, you'll be led by experienced guides who have made trip leading their profession.
- **Small Groups** ~ We are proud of our commitment to small group sizes, which don't exceed 20 guests. Our guide to client ratio on river trips is 1:4.
- **Special Permits** ~ With special permits, we are able to gain access to less-traveled regions, far off the beaten path, including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the Salmon-Challis National Forest.
- **Comfortable Camping** ~ After a day of thrills on the river, take it easy as guides cook up tasty meals at your comfortable camp. Enjoy creature comforts in the wilderness!
- **Range of Trip Levels** ~ Our rafting and kayaking trips range from easy to moderate-strenuous, so there is something to suit every level.
- **Sterling Safety Record** ~ We have a sterling safety record on our rafting and kayaking trips and all guests are required to attend mandatory briefings.



Sobek Expeditions was founded in 1973 by Richard Bangs (*left*) and John Yost. Named after the Egyptian River God, Sobek ran more than 40 first descents on some of the world's most famous rivers, including the Bio Bio and the Omo. In 2022, Richard Bangs was named one of the 100 Greatest Explorers of the Last 100 Years by explorersweb.com! Sobek Expeditions will celebrate 50 years of intrepid rafting in 2023.

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➤ A Day on the River

Many guests ask us “what’s a typical day on the river like?” Other than being super fun, here’s what you can expect. On Day 1, you’ll either meet your group and guide in town or on the riverbank, depending on your itinerary. After introductions and a thorough safety briefing, you’ll receive your personal floatation device and step into your raft or kayak. The first stretch of the river is usually gentle and you’ll arrive at camp in the late afternoon. Once you’ve found your tent and settled in, enjoy games and drinks by the river while your guides prepare a delicious dinner. The evening winds down with stories and laughs around the camp fire.

In the morning, awake to the soothing sounds of the river and savor a warm breakfast before setting out for an exhilarating day of rafting and kayaking—led by your expert guiding team. Along the way you’ll have plenty of rest stops and time to explore historic or natural sites along the river’s edge. Then it’s back in the raft for epic rapids and more fun on the water!

River Rafting Terminology



Oar Boat

Classic inflatable raft, equipped with two long oars rowed forward-facing by the guide. Accommodates gear and 2-3 passengers. Perfect for relaxing.



Inflatable Kayak

“Duckies” are your chance to get intimate with the river. Paddle or sit at river level with a double-bladed paddle and be in charge of your own destiny!



Paddle Boat

Up to 6 passengers sit on the perimeter of the raft with legs inside and paddle under the direction of the guide, who sits in the stern of the raft.



Stand-Up Paddleboard

Balance on these surprisingly stable craft, also known as SUP, and propel yourself downstream with a single-bladed paddle.



Gear Boat

Also called the sweep boat, the gear boat carries all the camp necessities, plus all our waste—ensuring that we leave the river as pristine as we found it.



Portage

When rivers become un-navigable, the gear has to be taken out and carried to the next navigable stretch. This is known as portage.

River Rafting Classification

Class I-II Rapids

Sit back and enjoy the scenery. Experience placid river conditions with interspersed wave trains and enjoyable splashes.

Class III-IV Rapids

Things are getting exciting! Begin to see more frequent irregular waves. This level requires a good response to guide commands and efficient team paddling.

Class V Rapids

The highest level of rafting difficulty, likely involving long, continuous rapids. Successful navigation requires great physical fitness and precise paddling.

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