

Baku



azerbaijan

TAKE ANOTHER LOOK

salam *hello*

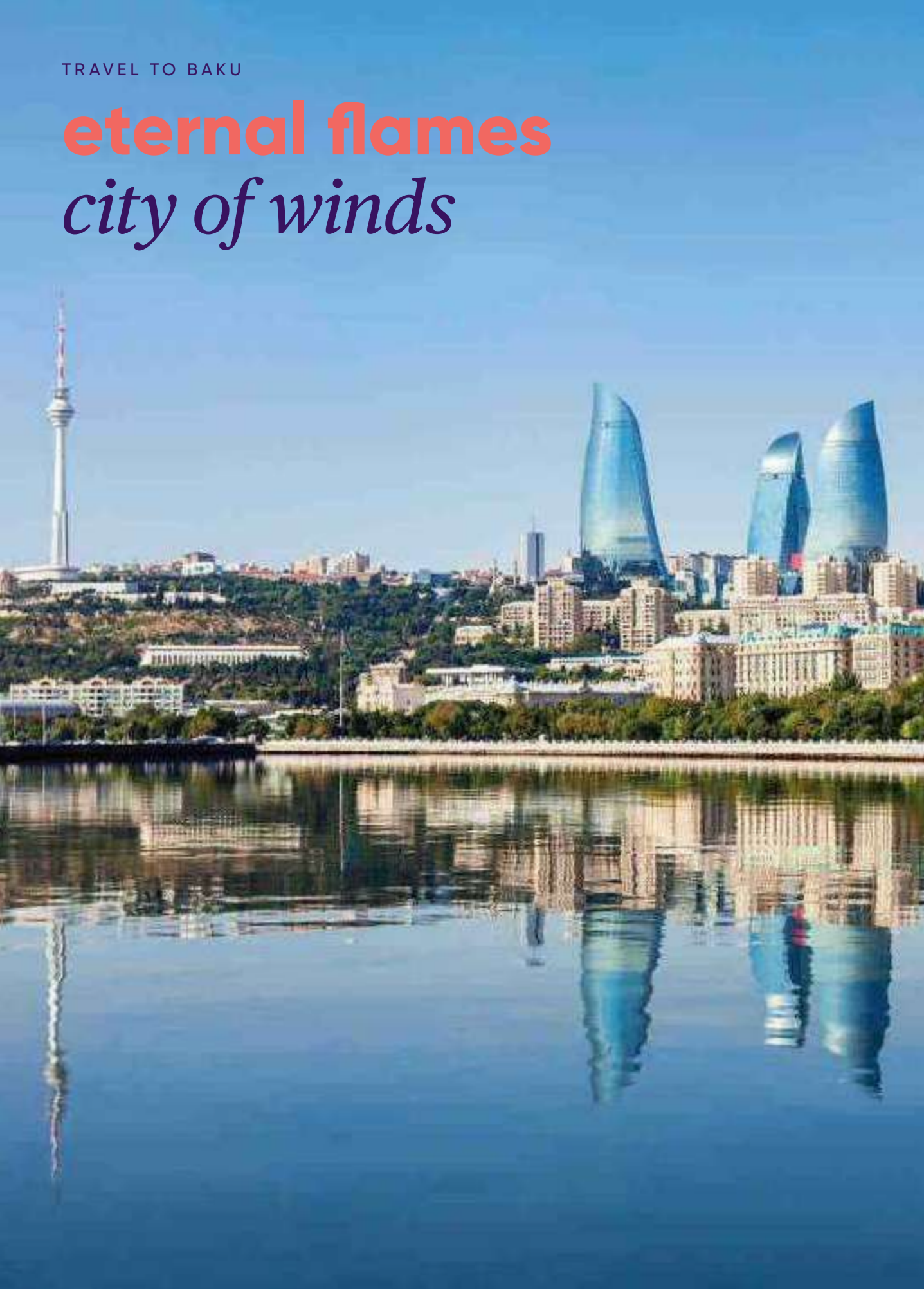


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Welcome to Baku – a truly contemporary city, criss-crossed by history. Here, you will discover a constantly evolving tapestry of life and energy, from bazaar to penthouse.

eternal flames *city of winds*



From the modern elegance of the Flame Towers, standing proudly above to the medieval UNESCO World Heritage Site at its core, there is something for everyone in our stunning capital.

Highland Park

This is one of the most popular strolling spots in the city, offering spectacular views and photo opportunities of the Seaside Boulevard, Bay of Baku, Flame Towers and the entire downtown area. The Highland Park Cafe, located here, is a great place to relax and soak up the atmosphere, accompanied by calming lounge music. Evenings are the best time to visit as you will be able to enjoy the city's unparalleled vistas that magically light up after dark. What's more, it's easy to get here from the Boulevard via the modernised funicular that takes just four minutes, though many prefer the slow and scenic route on foot up 178 steps.



View from the Highland Park

TRAVEL TO BAKU

Baku enjoys all the mystique of being an ancient Silk Road port but can just as easily serve as a well-organised modern transport hub that dominates the Eastern Caucasus region. With great transport links to the rest of the world, over 20 operating airlines and more than 50 direct flights to various destinations across the globe, our capital city always stays connected.



Azerbaijan’s vision of developing excellent domestic and international transport infrastructure is epitomised at Heydar Aliyev International Airport. This aesthetic delight of great architectural ingenuity has even been recognised as the best airport in the CIS for both facilities and service. From here, new multi-lane motorways mean that you can reach the city by car in barely 25 minutes.

Air links are especially frequent to European, Turkish, CIS and Middle Eastern destinations, with some direct flights to as far as Beijing.

**For the latest information on travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, see azerbaijan.travel/covid-19-en*

By plane
Baku’s main gateway, Heydar Aliyev International Airport, is situated just 25 km from the city centre, served by major airlines including Azerbaijan Airlines (AZAL), Aeroflot, Turkish Airlines, Lufthansa, Qatar Airways, Emirates and Fly Dubai, among others. There are two terminals, so check your flight details in advance.

By train
Overnight direct trains are available from Russia, Georgia and Ukraine on a regular basis. The Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway conveniently connects Azerbaijan and Georgia to Turkish and European railway networks.

By car
Azerbaijan’s road transport network has enjoyed massive investment in recent years. The country is connected to Russia, Iran and Georgia. The route from Baku to Tbilisi can also offer an easy and very picturesque journey between the Azerbaijani and Georgian capitals via the historic cities of Shamakhi and Sheki.

By ferry
Direct routes connect Baku via the Caspian Sea with Turkmenbashi (Turkmenistan) and Aktau (Kazakhstan). Boats depart from Port of Baku at Alat, 70 km south of the capital.



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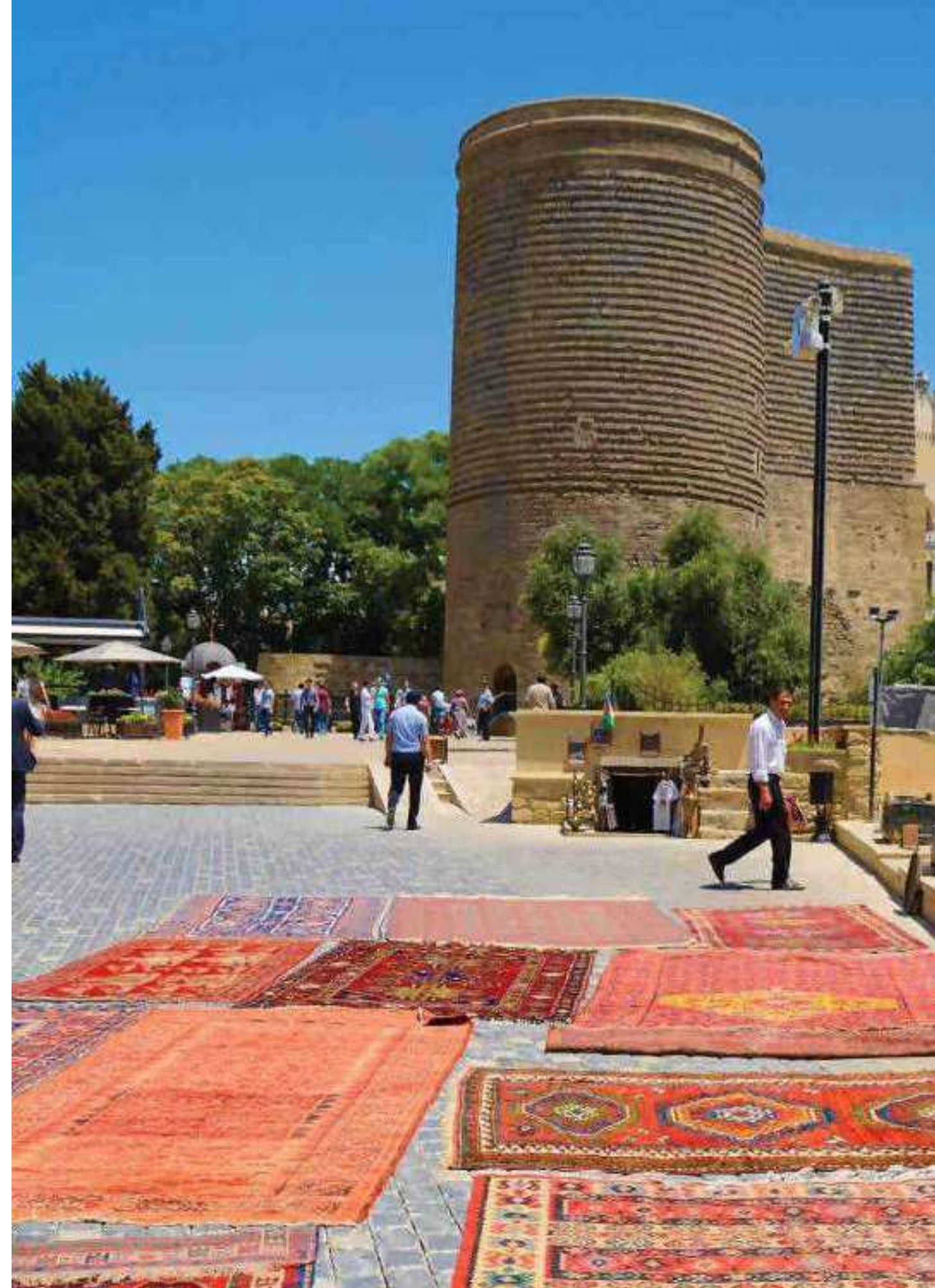
soak up *Baku's history*



Wandering through Icherisheher (the Old City), a UNESCO World Heritage Site whose walls whisper the ancient mysteries of the city, don't be afraid to get lost in its labyrinth of cobbled streets. These may seem jumbled to unfamiliar eyes but in fact they serve historically strategic purposes: these alleyways take you to the main landmarks of the city – the Maiden Tower, old mosques and hammams, and the Shirvanshahs' Palace. A climb to rooftop cafes and bars rewards couples with panoramic views of the city, the Bay of Baku and spellbinding sunsets. Treat yourself to some traditional Azerbaijani cuisine in the restaurants nestled within the Old City.

Don't miss peering inside the Maiden Tower, a much-loved symbol of the city and Azerbaijan. It looks dark and enigmatic, looking out to sea from the southern edge of Icherisheher. The origins of the tower are shrouded in mystery – no-one knows for certain when it was built or what for, or even how it acquired its name – Maiden Tower. From an aerial view it resembles a buta (paisley pattern), a symbolic ornament of Azerbaijan. One theory says it could be a temple of Zoroastrianism, as the buta is a symbol of fire. Later, in the 12th century, it was used as a defensive fortress by the Shirvanshahs, and in 2000 it was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

Occupying the highest spot in the Old City, the Shirvanshahs' Palace is the former home of the Shirvanshahs. It was constructed between the 12th–15th centuries and is not only a timeless example of medieval Islamic architecture but also a contemporary museum. A short distance from here, call into the Magsud Ibrahimbeyov Creative Centre, which contains a museum dedicated to the life and work of Magsud Ibrahimbeyov, as well as the writer's library and a literature room displaying his books. After this, pause by the nearby monument to Aliagha Vahid, one of Baku's most celebrated poets. Look closely and you will notice lots of interesting details speaking of his life and works.





Besides its wealth of historical hotspots, Baku's Old City is also packed with studios and galleries, handicrafts and house museums, and it's even home to one of the city's most popular theatres.

Icherisheher Centre for Traditional Arts

A joint project between the Icherisheher State Historical and Architectural Reserve and The Prince's School of Traditional Arts, Icherisheher Centre for Traditional Arts offers short courses and masterclasses in ceramic painting and pottery, catering for all ages, individuals and groups. Handmade traditional souvenirs and kelaghayi headscarves can also be purchased here.

Mon – Fri, 09:00 – 18:00
Sat – Sun, 11:00 – 20:00
19 Boyuk Qala Street
Free entrance

House Museum of Tahir Salahov

A master of Soviet Realist portraiture, landscape and still-life painting, Tahir Salahov is a world-renowned artist who sensitively captures the rhythms of life. At his former residence you can admire a decent collection of his works, alongside Stalin-era carpets and photos of the artist meeting global figures.

Tue – Sun, 10:00 – 18:00
55/3 Ilyas Afandiyev Street
4 AZN

Vagif Mustafazadeh House Museum

Dedicated to legendary jazz pianist Vagif Mustafazadeh, this museum could be a revelation for visitors wishing to discover the city's rich jazz history, as well as the origins of a local genre called jazz-mugham.

Tue – Sun, 10:00 – 18:00
4 Vagif Mustafazadeh Lane
5 AZN



Qiz Qalasi Gallery

Known also as Q Gallery, Qiz Qalasi Gallery holds numerous exhibitions, curatorial projects, student contests and even international festivals. The gallery's expositions mostly focus on modern art, inspired by local folklore and traditions.

Mon – Fri, 10:00 – 19:00
Sat – Sun, 11:30 – 19:00
8 Qulle Street
Free entrance

ARTIM art gallery

ARTIM Project Space supports young local and foreign art practitioners by providing opportunities to curate and present their work in exhibitions. There's also a great view from the roof which is not to be missed.

Tue – Sun, 12:00 – 20:00
6 Qulle Street
Free entrance

Baku Marionette Theatre

This is something of a hidden gem. The theatre season usually starts in early October and continues until the end of June. So far two plays by great Azerbaijani composer Uzeyir Hajibeyli have been staged: Arshin Mal Alan and Leyli & Majnun. Tickets can be obtained online and at kiosks in the city centre.

20 Muslum Magomayev Street

Ali Shamsi Studio

Another place to call into is the Ali Shamsi Studio, a wonderland of paintings and installations that transport you to another dimension. You will often find the artist and philosopher Ali Shamsi himself there, happy to talk you through the city's art scene.

Every day, 10:00 – 19:00
84 Kichik Qala Street
Free entrance

NUR Art House

Visitors to the contemporary NUR Art House gallery can learn about traditional Azerbaijani handicrafts at the permanent exhibition, while temporary exhibitions examine life and happenings in Azerbaijan and abroad through photos, paintings and performances.

Every day, 11:00 – 19:00
27 Qesr Street
Free entrance

Sacred Relics at Baylar Mosque

Built in 1895, Baylar Mosque is the last mosque to have been constructed in Icherisheher. Inside it houses a permanent exhibition called Sacred Relics, a collection of over 70 Qurans from different periods and different Azerbaijani regions.

Every day, 10:00 – 18:00
47 Ilyas Afandiyev Street
Free entrance

adventures among *the rocks of Gobustan*

The Gobustan State Reserve is located in the Eastern Azerbaijan, among the Boyukdash, Kichikdash and Jingirdagh Mountains. The reserve at Gobustan includes an outstanding collection of more than 7,000 rock engravings. The site also features the remains of inhabited caves, settlements and burials, all reflecting intensive human activity by inhabitants of the area between the Upper Palaeolithic and the Middle Ages.

The well-known Norwegian explorer and traveller Thor Heyerdahl, who repeatedly visited Azerbaijan, having studying the Gobustan petroglyphs came to a sensational conclusion about the kinship of Norwegians and Azerbaijanis. He discovered the similarity between the ships depicted on the rocks and those used by the Vikings, and concluded that the Vikings had migrated to Norway from here.

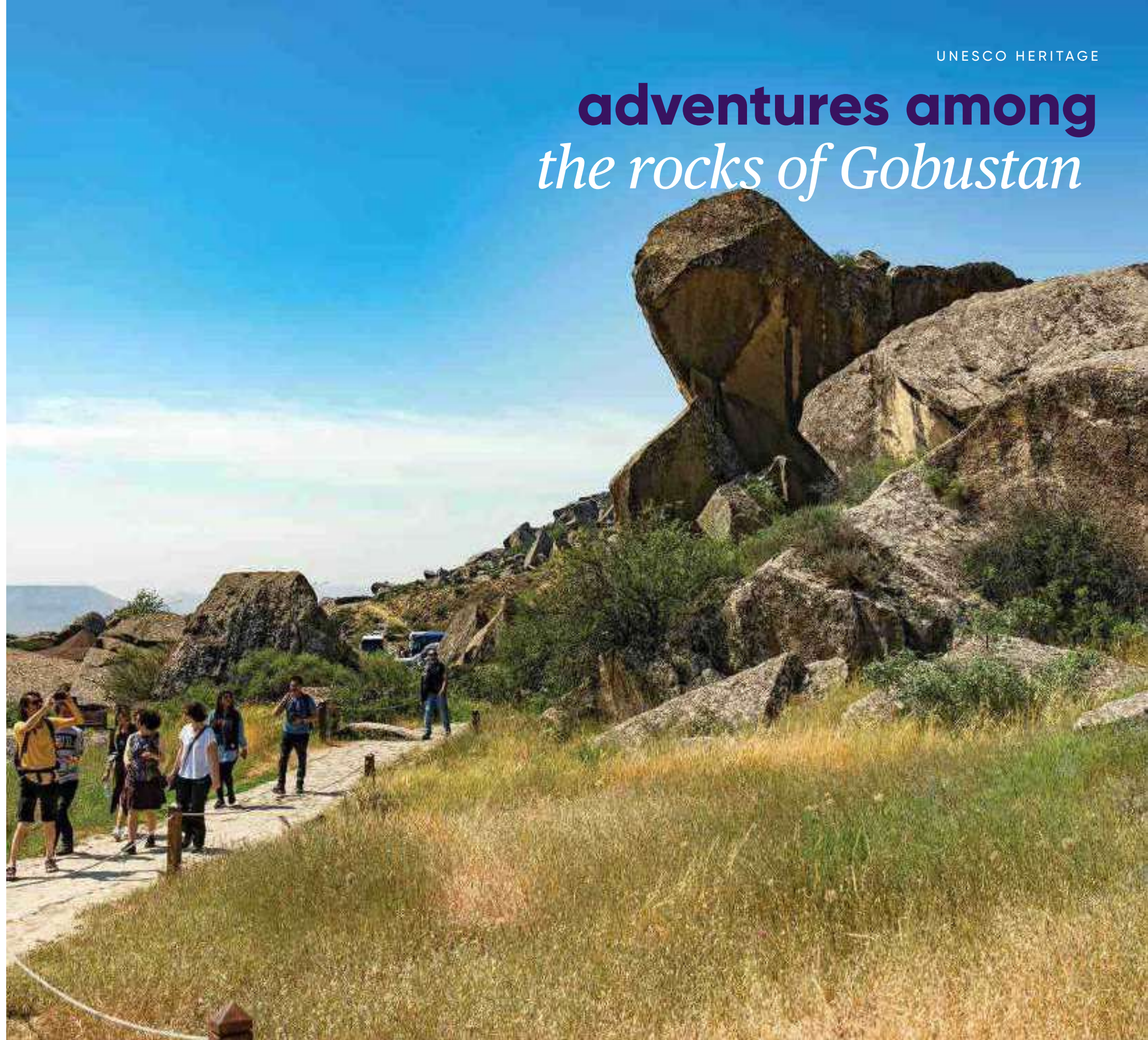
Tours of the site, which covers an area of 537 hectares, begin at the state-of-the-art Gobustan Museum. Personal, group or even off-road tours are available.

Every day, 10:00 – 17:00
Baku, Garadag District, Gobustan settlement
+99412 544 6627
10 AZN
gobustan-rockart.az

Distance from Baku city centre to Gobustan:
56 km / 35 mi / 1 hr by car

How to get to Gobustan:

- Bus 195 from Lokbatan to Gobustan settlement and from there by taxi;
- Baku City Tours buses (see page 40);
- Private car or taxi;
- Group or personal tours with tourism agencies.



from fire-worshipping temples to oil-boom architecture



Yanardag

Yanardag is one of Azerbaijan's famous sights, home to natural flames that have been burning for thousands of years. The territory of the Yanardag State Historical, Cultural and Natural Reserve features a fascinating landscape. Today you can discover this ancient place by taking a tour of Yanardag on off-road electric scooters and learn all about it at the onsite museum.

Absheron Peninsula, Mammadli village
+99451 277 3698



Old City

Baku's medieval core is a UNESCO-protected site surrounded by 12th-century walls, brimming with history and Eastern architecture. Here you will find top attractions, the Maiden Tower and the Shirvanshahs' Palace, as well as a labyrinth of narrow alleyways home to Baku's oldest residents, artists' workshops and traditional restaurants serving classic Azerbaijani dishes.



The National History Museum of Azerbaijan

Located in the former residence of famous oil magnate and philanthropist Haji Zeynalabdin Taghiyev, the National History Museum of Azerbaijan showcases our fascinating history from its very beginnings to the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (1918-1920). Besides offering an insight into Azerbaijani national identity, the museum showcases the key people and events to have shaped the country's history.

4 Haji Zeynalabdin Taghiyev Street
+99412 493 2387



Gala Archaeological and Ethnographic Museum

Located 40 km from Baku, Gala village is an open-air archaeological and ethnographic museum that brings to life a typical medieval settlement of the Absheron Peninsula. The reconstructed village has five mosques, three hammams, over 170 houses, vaults, mausoleums and castle ruins. Beyond its authentic medieval atmosphere, the complex also houses several museums containing tools and weapons found during archaeological excavations, as well as a collection of over 150 samovars!

17 Sulh Street, Gala village
+99412 459 1437
12 AZN

Absheron castles

Scattered around the Northern coast of the Absheron Peninsula, a network of medieval fortress towers were built for defensive purposes between the 12th and 16th centuries during the reign of the Shirvanshahs. Two of them have been restored and are great off-the-beaten-track attractions hiding in Baku's outskirts. The one in the village of Mardakan dates back to the 12th century. Climb to the top for superb views of the Caspian Sea! The other, a 14th-century castle in the village of Ramana, sits scenically atop a hill looking out over Baku's oilfields.

Ateshgah

Baku's extraordinary landscape, rich in oil and subterranean gases, has intrigued travellers since time immemorial and for centuries the Ateshgah Fire Temple in the village of Surakhani has been attracting crowds of thrill seekers. The temple, in the style of the Shirvan-Absheron school, was built by local craftsmen in the 17th-18th centuries with funds from Indian merchants travelling along the Silk Road. Today it houses a well-designed museum.

Atamoglan Rzayev Street
+99412 452 4407
4 AZN

Balakhani

The historical oil settlement of Balakhani, which is well-known as the historical oil-producing area on the Absheron Peninsula, has now turned into a unique open-air art gallery. In the settlement, you'll find monuments and buildings representing the national architecture of different styles and periods. Here, you can take electric scooter tours around the quaint cobbled streets and buy local handicrafts, paintings and much more.

Balakhani settlement
+99451 277 3698

Oil-boom architecture

When Baku's oil industry boomed in the late 1800s, a new architectural layer appeared around the Old City. Blending everything from Gothic to Baroque, Neo-classical and Art Nouveau, these buildings nonetheless blended harmoniously into the urban landscape, leading visitors to nickname Baku the 'Paris of the Caucasus'. However, after the Soviets arrived in 1920, the mansions were nationalised and their secrets and stories remaining hidden until after independence. Since then, local enthusiasts have shaped them into thrilling architectural walking tours. Look out for the Seadet Sarayi (Palace of Happiness), Baku City Hall and Ismailiyya Palace in particular.

Polish heritage

Polish architects made a special contribution to developing Baku's unique architectural style during the time of the first Oil Boom. The most prominent of them was Eugeniusz Skibinski, who breathed new life into the city. In total, Polish architects constructed dozens of stunning buildings in Baku, including Baku City Hall, the Azerbaijan National History Museum, the Institute of Manuscripts, and the Palace of Happiness, among many other luxurious buildings. The grave of the Polish engineer Pawel Potocki and also the house museum of the cellists of Polish origin, Leopold and Mscislaw Rostropowicz, are architectural gems to discover the unique Polish legacy in Azerbaijan by taking a specially designed walking tour.

Bibi-Heybat Mosque

One of our greatest Islamic monuments, the Bibi-Heybat Mosque is a reconstruction of a 13th-century mosque built in honour of the sister of the 7th Shiite Imam, Ali. Sadly, the original was destroyed in 1936 during Stalin's campaign to ban religious worship, but it remained so deeply ingrained in local people's hearts and minds that it was quickly restored after independence. Apart from its amazing history and legends, Bibi-Heybat Mosque is also a great example of the Shirvan architectural school and a major spiritual centre for local Muslims.

Salyan highway, Bibi-Heybat Street
+99412 581 4525



ENJOY ARTS & CULTURE

modern art *vibrant culture*



World-famous architect Zaha Hadid designed the crown jewel in our modern architecture – the Heydar Aliyev Centre – and not a single straight line was used in its design. The Azerbaijan National Carpet Museum, situated on the Seaside Boulevard, is another modern architectural wonder: it's shaped like a rolled-up rug! But Baku is much more than its innovative architecture. Enjoy contemporary galleries and discover unique museum collections.

Heydar Aliyev Centre

Designed by the illustrious architect Zaha Hadid, this is one of Baku's most iconic landmarks. Its shape is characterised by its astonishing flowing, curved style, but besides its extraordinary appearance it houses some of the best art curations in the city. There are four massive floors dedicated to art and culture alongside full-fledged museum exhibitions. 'The Miniatures of Azerbaijan' exhibition will take you on a tour through all of our main sightseeing spots, while 'Pearls of Azerbaijan' showcases our country's unique culture and traditions.

1 Heydar Aliyev Avenue
+99412 505 6001
15 AZN

Carpet Museum

The world's largest collection of Azerbaijani carpets is exhibited in the Azerbaijan National Carpet Museum, which at the time of establishment was the only museum in the world dedicated to the art of carpet weaving. In 2010, the Azerbaijani carpet was proclaimed a Masterpiece of Intangible Heritage by UNESCO. Step inside the amazing rug-shaped building on the Seaside Boulevard, to discover the secrets of Azerbaijani carpet weaving.

28 Mikayil Huseynov Street
+99412 497 2057
10 AZN



National Art Museum of Azerbaijan

The home of Azerbaijani classical fine arts also houses masterpieces dating from ancient times to modern times in Azerbaijan. And the museum's dual buildings themselves are historical monuments dating back to the 19th century. Named after Rovshan Mustafayev, author of over 100 articles in law and human rights, the museum meticulously chronicles items from the 4th millennium BC to the present day. Over 17,000 artefacts can be savoured from painted ceramics, copper and bronze engraved wares to ancient carpets and jewellery. There are also works by Azerbaijani miniature-painters of the 15th – 16th centuries, as well as paintings and sculptures by contemporary artists.

9/11 Niyazi Street
+99412 492 0707
10 AZN



Museum of Modern Art

Baku's Museum of Modern Art has a collection of over 800 pieces, most of which are avant-garde in nature and represent our brightest painters and sculptors of the last 70 years. You can admire the works of artists such as Rasim Babayev, Ashraf Murad and Fazil Najafov, who came of age in the 1960s and 1970s with their paintings and sculptures inspired by the landscapes and colours of Absheron. The contemporary building is open and spacious and includes a children's art room, library, video room, restaurant and art cafe.

5 Yusif Safarov Street
+99412 490 8402
5 AZN



YARAT Contemporary Art Space

YARAT Centre and YARAT Studios form the city's leading creative hubs for contemporary art. 'Yarat' means 'creation' in Azerbaijani, which is exactly what it oozes, hosting regular world-class exhibitions, as well as workshops and talks featuring talented local artists and filmmakers that YARAT showcases and promotes across the region. YARAT has become an epicentre for emerging Azerbaijani artists and creatives.

New Boulevard, National Flag Square
+99412 505 1414
Free entrance

Museum of Miniature Books

Housed in an elegant building not far from the Shirvanshahs' Palace in the Old City of Baku, the Museum of Miniature Books stores around 8,000 tiny printed publications from 76 different countries. The museum has entered the Guinness Book of Records as the largest collection of miniature books in the world. Among them are many rarities: an ancient Quran published in 1672, an edition of Pushkin's 'Yevgeniy Onegin' published in the author's lifetime, and other extremely rare editions. It's open every day except Mondays and Thursdays. Entrance is free but the owner would certainly be glad to receive a mini book to add to her collection!

1st Castle Lane, Icherisheher
+99412 492 9464

Azerbaijan State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre

This imposing building on Nizami Street blends elements of Baroque, Rococo and Moorish styles. Built by the enterprising Mailov brothers in 1911, the building has an intriguing tale, as it was built after one of the brothers had fallen for a touring soprano singer who refused to return to Baku because it didn't have a proper opera theatre. So with the help of talented architect Nikolai Babayev, the brothers created the Opera and Ballet Theatre in an astonishing 10 months. Today, you can watch classic Azerbaijani masterpieces here such as 'Leyli and Majnun', 'Shah Ismayil', 'Arshin Mal Alan' and 'Koroghlu', plus a selection of foreign operas and ballets.

113 Nizami Street
+99412 493 3188, +99412 493 1651

Azerbaijan State Academic Philharmonic Hall

This exquisite pale-yellow building in the Governor's Gardens was inspired by the Monte Carlo Casino and is symbolic from both architectural and cultural points of view. Constructed in 1910-1912 at the height of Baku's oil boom, its original use was as a summer venue for social gatherings of the city's elite. After the Revolution, it began to host local musical ensembles and orchestras and in 1936 it became home to the philharmonic society. Today, concerts continue to be held on a regular basis, making this the top spot for getting to grips with Azerbaijani national and classical music.

10 Istiqlaliyyat Street
+99412 497 3609

Azerbaijan State Academic Musical Theatre

Overlooking the Boulevard in prime central Baku, the history of this building is inseparable from Azerbaijani culture from the fin-de-siecle to today. Reconstructed between 2011 and 2013, the theatre is a symbol of a musical movement that spans three eras from pre-revolutionary Azerbaijan in 1883 through the Soviet years and into post-independence since 1991. Founded by Uzeyir Hajibeyli with the theatre's inaugural performance in 1909 of 'Husband and Wife', many more household names have since emerged in its years of innovative musicals. Today, visitors can enjoy new and traditional Azerbaijani musicals and marvel at the exquisite interior.

8 Zarifa Aliyeva Street
+99412 598 4917

Gazelli Art House

Gazelli Art House is a commercial art organisation dedicated to providing a new setting for contemporary art whilst delivering the message of the finest international artists to a wide audience of both new and established collectors. The gallery invites individuals to engage with contemporary art on a deeper level through bespoke events - building on dialogues and relationships between artists, writers, specialists, students, and novices through exhibitions, talks, workshops and tours.

93 Nizami Street
+99412 498 1230
Free entrance



picturesque parks

urban nature



From national parks to new green spaces, 21st-century Baku offers plenty of great options to escape the crowds and be at one with nature. You can stroll along the Baku Boulevard and enjoy the refreshing sea breeze, visit the mud volcanoes to witness one of nature's mysteries, or unwind at a cultural oasis in the heart of the Absheron Peninsula.

Baku Boulevard (National Park)

There's no better way to get a feel for Baku's relaxed, Mediterranean atmosphere than by strolling the Boulevard, a sweep of Caspian waterfront promenade that forms a gentle arc past the whole length of the central city area. The whole sweep offers potentially hours of pleasant strolling with ever-changing views around the bay and back towards different sections of the city. It has national park status and year by year is being extended along the sea.

If you get tired of walking, hop on a yellow train to the Baku Eye, a giant Ferris Wheel with great views of the city and the Caspian, or explore the New Boulevard on two wheels – rent a bike and challenge yourself against the famous Baku winds. In the evening take a romantic short cruise around the Bay of Baku and look back towards the amazing lights along the waterfront.

Tip: see Baku Boulevard at its best during the half-marathon that takes place in May. It starts on the Boulevard and finishes at the Baku Olympic Stadium.

Don't miss these great Instagram locations:

With its panoramic views of the Bay of Baku and a whole area to explore, **Baku Funicular** is a perfect attraction for Instagram lovers. There's also a staircase that hugs the funicular route for those brave enough!

Mon – Sun, 10:00 – 20:00
One-way tickets cost 1 AZN

The top of the **Baku Eye** ferris wheel offers unparalleled panoramic views of the city. Each cabin holds eight people and one loop takes between 30 and 40 minutes.

Little Venice presents serene scenes of gondolas floating gently along canals between islands and restaurants.

A 10-minute ride costs 3 AZN; one gondola fits four people.
Working schedule: every day

Marvel at stunning views of the city and the Caspian Sea in the rooftop **360° Bar**, perched high on the 25th floor of the Hilton Baku hotel. It is the perfect spot to enjoy inspiring sunset views.

Head to the **spot between the Carpet Museum and the Mugham Centre** for an amazing view of the Flame Towers.

Grab a photo of Baku and its bay from the **Mirvari cruise ship**.

Mon – Fri, 16:00 – 22:00
Sat – Sun, 16:00 – 23:00
Tickets cost 5 AZN



Mud volcanoes

Home to the world's greatest concentration of mud volcanoes, the landscape around Baku can be described as messy, bubbling, and sometimes explosive. Some 700 volcanoes are located in the country and while they never grow to the size of a regular volcano, topping out at around 10 km in diameter and 700 m in height (among the largest mud volcanoes in the world are Boyuk Khanizdag and Toraghay, both in Azerbaijan), they do occasionally get the chance to show off.

Mud volcanoes occur where tectonic movement allows subterranean gases to escape to the surface. A few of these gas leaks are constantly on fire, shooting small perpetual flames into the air, and some believe that these perpetual flames are strongly connected to the appearance of Zoroastrianism in Azerbaijan about 2,000 years ago. Located a 1.5-hour drive from Baku, the mud volcanoes at Dashgil near the Gobustan Reserve are the most popular to visit due to their number and size.

Entrance is free, however a short taxi ride from the Gobustan Reserve may cost about 20 AZN.

Absheron's sanatoriums

Located on the Absheron Peninsula along the Caspian Sea, there is a fantastic variety of sanatoriums with superb settings and phenomenal medical treatments under doctors' supervision. Absheron's healing sanatoriums offer you to come and revitalise your mind, body and soul, while enjoying the breathtaking nature accompanied by the healing sandy beaches and fig groves of Absheron.



Absheron National Park

The Absheron National Park is the last stretch of wilderness on the vast peninsula to the north of Baku. Occupying the easternmost point of Azerbaijan, it's primarily a mecca for birds, but you might also see gazelles, sea snakes and, if you are exceedingly lucky, Caspian seals. It was to protect these small seals that a reserve was first established here in 1969, although the seals that used to congregate regularly at the tip of the park have become increasingly rare over recent years. The park may appear unexciting at first glance, but hidden away within the steppe there's actually plenty of life.

Open every day, 09:00 – 18:00
Entrance costs 2 AZN

Zira Eco Park

Escape the city at this green oasis, which combines a contemporary cultural centre with an area of lush green space, amid the rocky steppes of the Absheron Peninsula. Located about 30 minutes from the city, the two-floor centre allows kids to play chess, try their hand at languages, art and design, visit the carpet museum and cinema, while parents can enjoy the onsite cafe and browse the rich collection of exotic plants, flowers and trees. Meanwhile, outside you can cycle along special bike lanes, visit the mini zoo, and take the kids to the state-of-the-art playground.

Outside you can cycle along special bike lanes, visit the mini zoo and olive oil factory, and take the kids to the state-of-the-art playground. If you are hungry, this is the perfect picnic spot, and the park even puts on kutab-making masterclasses.

Open every day, 09:00 – 18:00
Free entrance

Parks

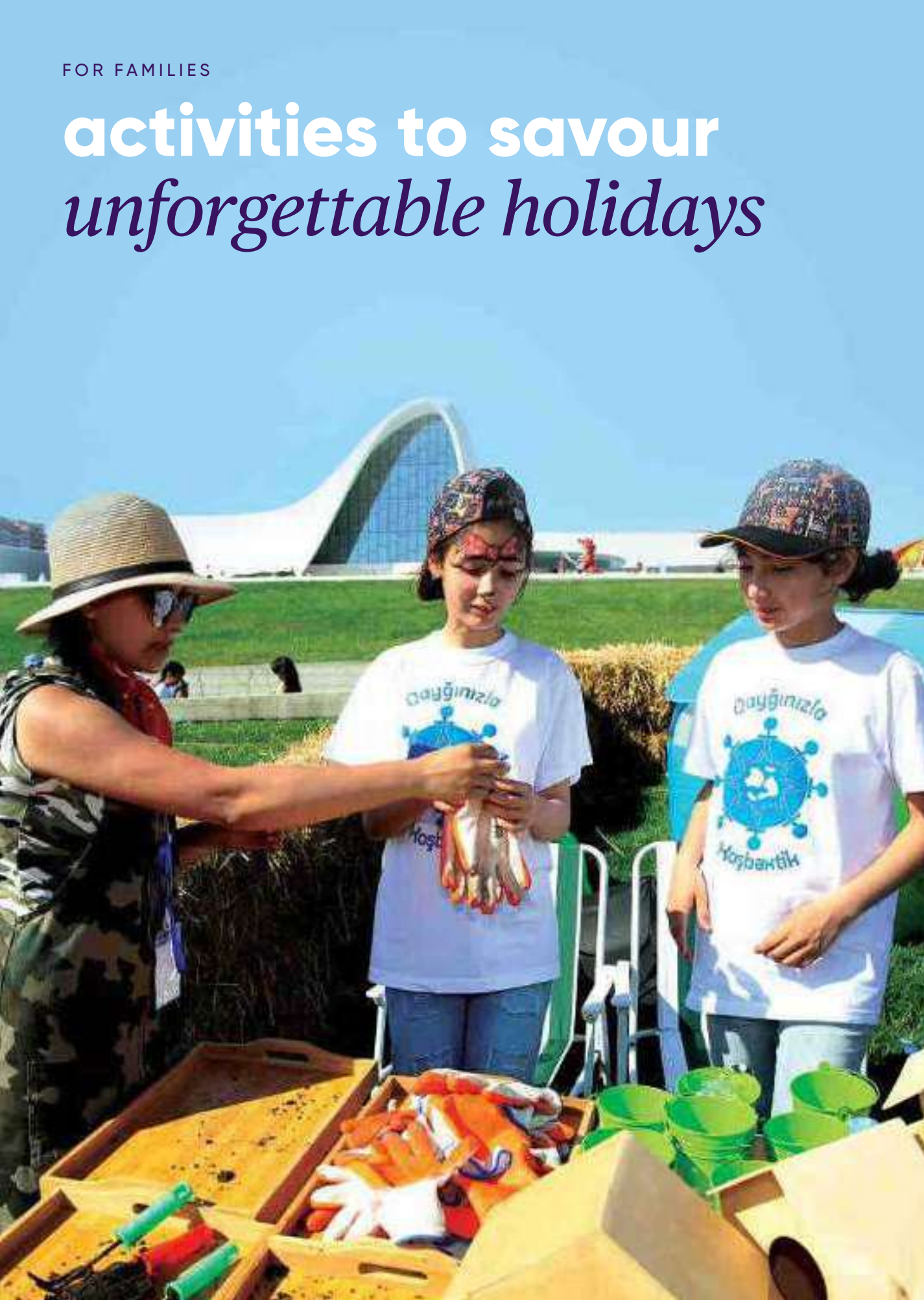
Baku boasts a number of parks dotted around the city. The oldest of them is the Philharmonic Garden located just outside the Old City. Among the modern ones are the fantastic Central Park and Chambarakand Park; visiting them is a wonderful way to escape the urban hustle and bustle without leaving the city centre. The Central Park built on the site of one of the city's oldest quarters, has completely altered the urban landscape – enjoy the fountains, cafes, playgrounds and great views just a 10-minute walk from Fountains Square and the Old City. The Chambarakand Park is located close to the iconic Flame Towers and equipped with comfy benches, fountains and a kids' playground, plus you can enjoy amazing panoramic views of the city.

Caspian beaches

The shores of the Caspian Sea have plenty of excellent beach clubs to enjoy, from the Absheron Peninsula resorts easily reached from Baku to the water sports centre at Shorabad. There, you will find the perfect conditions for learning to kitesurf on the scenic lagoon and once you've mastered the basics you can take your board out into the open Caspian. Both professionals and amateurs can take windsurfing sessions at some Baku beaches. However, if it's tranquillity and romance you are seeking, make your way to less crowded beaches such as Bilgah, Mardakan, Nardaran, Pirshagi and Zagulba.



activities to savour unforgettable holidays



Rest assured that while visiting Baku, you're in safe hands. The city is praised for its low level of petty crime, allowing you to easily explore and discover with minimal concerns. What's more, in addition to its green spaces and nearby national parks, a growing number of sites in Baku and its surrounds offer unforgettable activities and adventures for all the family.

Horse riding

Riding and polo are the perfect sports to let off some steam, keep in shape, and get in touch with some of Azerbaijan's most beautiful animals – horses. Everyone and anyone is welcome to join amateur polo competitions or take a ride across Elite Horse Club near the capital. Alternatively, head to the Omar and Cidir equestrian centres to enjoy more horse riding opportunities in Baku.

Waterparks

Swimming is not the only way to experience the Caspian seaside. The city is home to several waterparks dotted around the Northern coast of the Absheron between the villages of Mardakan and Novkhani. Between them, Dalga Beach, Amburan Beach Club, Bilgah Beach Hotel, and AF Hotel and Aqua Park have a great selection of pools and slides, as well as restaurants, bars, entertainment programmes and nightlife.

Shooting

Want to get your adrenaline pumping without leaving the city centre? At Baku Shooting Centre, which is one of Europe's largest shooting complexes, you can practice your shooting skills and learn how to hit the bull's eye, all while having a blast. During the training and shooting period, each visitor is accompanied by a guide.

Golf

Golf may not be the first thing travellers associate with Azerbaijan but Baku's Dreamland Golf Club is an 18-hole course offering golf enthusiasts plenty of thrills, challenges and impressive landscapes. The course is scenic yet challenging and suited to golfers of all abilities. It is spread across 330 hectares of Baku's lush green suburbs, offering a unique Caucasian golfing experience with a Mediterranean feel. Baku's famous winds present an added challenge!

Kids entertainment

As Azerbaijan's first educational entertainment park, Kinderland offers children aged 4-14 a great opportunity to experience the real world in a safe and fun environment. Spread over 5,000 square metres of the modern flower-shaped Deniz Mall, Kinderland resembles a small version of Baku with its own streets, shops, theatres and even currency. Kids learn by playing at being adults in over 60 carefully adapted real-life activities, from a doctor, fireman or scientist to actor or travel agent. They say that the best way to learn is to do, so let your children find out for themselves at Kinderland! Adults can also enjoy themselves at shops and boutiques while the whole family can eat at one of many cafes and restaurants.



pure tranquillity

oriental treatments



Baku has always catered to mind, body and soul – the city's old hammam culture is legendary, and several old public baths can still be visited. But today the city also boasts a series of excellent five-star hotels with soothing spas proposing a phenomenal range of treatments, relaxing therapies and good old-fashioned pampering.

Gazelli Wellness Club

Located in the city centre, Gazelli Wellness Club has a broad selection of soothing spa services ranging from detox to dermatology, plus physiotherapy and beauty treatments using Gazelli cosmetics. There's also the unique opportunity to undergo Naftalan therapy and bathe in a rare type of crude oil used to treat over 70 diseases, including skin, musculoskeletal, gynaecological, urological and ENT conditions.

93 Nizami Street
+99412 404 9333



visiting

local hammams

Hammams in Baku were traditionally places to gather, relax and socialise. Few of the old ones remain, however centrally located Agha Mikayil, Agha Zeynal and Tezebay hammams are still visited by locals. Head to any of these for the essential Azerbaijani hammam experience, entailing completely immersing yourself in warm water, visiting the steam room and an all-over body scrub, which can be particularly relaxing during cooler months. All hammam procedures should be followed by a tea ceremony with friends.

Tezebay Hamam

Housed in a former oil-boom mansion, Tezebay Hamam was completely restored in 2003 based on modern requirements. It's eccentric, modern and a little more expensive, but offers a wider range of procedures and treatments.

Every day, 09:00 – 23:00 (men's and women's hammams are located next door to each other)
30 Sheikh Shamil Street
+99412 437 3444
91 AZN

Agha Zeynal Hamam

Dating back to the late 19th century, Agha Zeynal is a men's-only hammam that rekindles a spirit of the past and offers all the traditional treatments.

6 Gulle Street, Icherisheher
+99455 639 1999
Men only
13 AZN

Agha Mikayil Hamam

Built by a merchant from Shamakhi in the 18th century, this is Baku's oldest functioning hammam and it continues to conjure an authentic Eastern experience.

Every day, 09:00 – 23:00 (women's days on Mondays and Fridays)
16 Kichik Qala Street, Icherisheher
+99450 345 2144
10 AZN

HamamBath Wellness & Spa Complex

Located in the settlement of Shikhov, the complex offers unique wellness experiences, having various packages for men and women. There's a nearby restaurant serving a mix of European and national cuisine.

14 Salyan Highway, Shikhov settlement
+99412 740 0013
Men and Women
30 AZN



where to eat

From traditional bistros serving local delicacies to chic Western-style restaurants, Baku offers diverse dining experiences to tickle all travellers’ taste buds. You will find plenty of places to sample the best of Azerbaijani cuisine, alongside a growing mix of popular international franchises, contemporary cafes, caravanserais, chocolate shops and steakhouses. Don’t miss relishing a traditional breakfast in Icherisheher, or soaking up the city’s Eastern charm while enjoying tea and shisha.



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.

24/1 Neftchilar Avenue
+99412 504 6464



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 teas. In addition to Azerbaijani cuisine, the menu includes dishes from other world cuisines.

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.

20/22 Khojali Avenue
+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 mouthwatering plov.

8A Parliament Avenue
+99412 480 8585



Burc Qala

A traditional restaurant loved by its reviewers, located in front of the studio of well-known modern artist Ali Shamsi.

15 Kichik Qala Street, Icherisheher (Old City)
+99450 227 0090



Qaynana

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

126 Kichik Qala Street, Icherisheher
+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 classic national dishes, and marvel at the handmade arts and crafts – all produced by local craftsmen!

86 Salatin Asgarova Street
+99412 595 0901



Mangal Steak House

A place offering 15 types of grilled steaks, and where gastronomical artwork is accompanied by superlative service.

3 Aydin Nasirov Street
+99412 505 1011



Prive Steak Gallery

Conveniently located near the Boulevard and Fountains Square, Prive is one of Baku’s best spots for meat lovers, offering everything from juicy steaks to classic beef burgers, together with great service and a classy setting. There’s also live music, fine wines and plenty for vegetarians.

14/A Khagani Street
+99412 598 0555
+99450 268 7338



CafeCity

A chain of local cafes offering Azerbaijani and European cuisine as well as tea, cocktails and delicious desserts.

3 Islam Safarli Street; 112A Inshaatchilar Avenue
+99450 598 8686
+99450 436 7825



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.

2A Mikayil Mushviq Street
+99450 244 0013



Sehrli Tendir

Located in the heart of the Old City, Sehrli Tendir is popular among locals and tourists alike, especially for its traditional Azerbaijani breakfast served with hot tandir bread.

19 Kichik Qala Street, Icherisheher
+99450 403 8888



Scalini

The buzzing atmosphere of this Italian restaurant at Port Baku Towers makes it a great place to relax and unwind with friends, while enjoying fine wines and delicious pasta dishes.

153 Nefitchilar Avenue, Port Baku Towers
+99455 233 0000



Lviv Handmade Chocolate Baku

Head to the Baku branch of this famous Ukrainian chocolate shop for delicious Belgian chocolates, truffles and hot chocolate in the heart of Baku.

42A Yusif Mammadaliyev Street
+99450 555 0170



Harbour Restaurant & Pub

This classy restaurant located between the BP Office and Port Baku Residence combines superb Indian and European dishes with an authentic ambience.

153 Nefitchilar Avenue, Port Baku Towers
+99450 546 5500



Mari Vanna Baku

The very popular Mari Vanna serves excellent Russian home cooking in a cosy interior that oozes nostalgia.

93 Zarifa Aliyeva Street,
+99412 404 9595



Syrovarnya Baku

A stylish restaurant of famous restaurateur Arkadiy Novikov serving Italian and European cuisine. There is also an array of cheese-based dishes thanks to the onsite cheese factory (‘syrovarnya’ means ‘cheese factory’ in Russian). Don’t forget to reserve a table in advance.

2/4 Zarifa Aliyeva Street
+99412 525 0025



Paris Bistro

With its lovely outdoor terrace in the shade of huge plane trees, Paris Bistro exudes the authentic feel and taste of a French cafe.

1/4 Zarifa Aliyeva Street,
+99412 404 8215

what to buy



Traditional souvenirs

Azerbaijan has unique jewellery, homewares and fashion to satisfy all your desires. If it's timeless character and superb craftsmanship you are looking for, somewhere like Resm Jewellery is your answer. If you are left wanting more, dive into the Menzer Hajiyeva Showroom, and discover 'kelaghayi' – the vivid yet contemporary silk headscarves inspired by Azerbaijan's rich history. If it is local handicrafts you are after, head to Chelebi, or the ABAD store in Icherisheher. For whatever you buy there, you will receive a numbered certificate allowing you to discover the story behind the craft on the ABAD website.

Shopping malls

Baku boasts a number of contemporary shopping malls which also offer perfect leisure options. Housed in a state-of-the-art building within easy reach of the city centre, Ganjlik Mall is one of the largest in the capital, selling the best international brands, plus a vast cinema complex, bowling and kids' area. Closer to the city centre, 28 Mall is a short walk from the Central Railway Station, and over in the business hub, Park Bulvar houses a wide range of high-end brands and several chic cafeterias. Located on opposite sides of the beautiful Baku Seaside Boulevard, elegantly designed Port Baku Mall and Deniz Mall are packed with shops selling

From luxury cars to watches, clothes, and cosmetics, Baku offers a myriad of options for anyone in search of some retail therapy. Take a stroll along Neftchilar Avenue, Nizami Street and around Baku's stylish malls to explore upmarket boutiques and indulge in the latest fashion trends. But for a real Azerbaijani experience, lose yourself in the colour and bustle of a traditional bazaar, or visit the Old City to pick out your favourite antiques or traditional hand-woven carpet. Feel the spirit of the Silk Road!

the best brands, plus cafes and restaurants galore, and kids' entertainment centres. Several other smaller malls are located around the city.

Wine shops

With vineyards all over Azerbaijan, including Savalan, Meysari and Sharg Ulduzu, producing a whole spectrum of wines, you're spoilt for choice. Supermarkets generally have a good selection, but head to the centre for greater variety at specialist wine bars, like KEFLI or ROOM, and wine boutiques, such as Absheron-Sharab Wine Store or Wine Garage. Quick tip: buy a few bottles of Mdrasa, made from a grape variety indigenous to Azerbaijan.

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

Every visit to the local bazaar, be it Yashil (Green) or Sharg (Oriental) bazaars, is not just a shopping experience, but rather a journey into a world of aromas and tastes of the regions of Azerbaijan. Friendly, welcoming sellers will treat you as their guest, always inviting you to try before you buy. And don't forget – haggling will help you save a few qepiks for yet another round of tea and sweets. Besides traditional bazaars, you can find excellent local organic produce at competitive prices in the regions of Azerbaijan.

What to look out for in Baku's bazaars:

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 used widely in cooking throughout the country. One gram may set you back 10 AZN, but a single piece is enough to transform the colour and aroma of a traditional plov dish.

Caviar

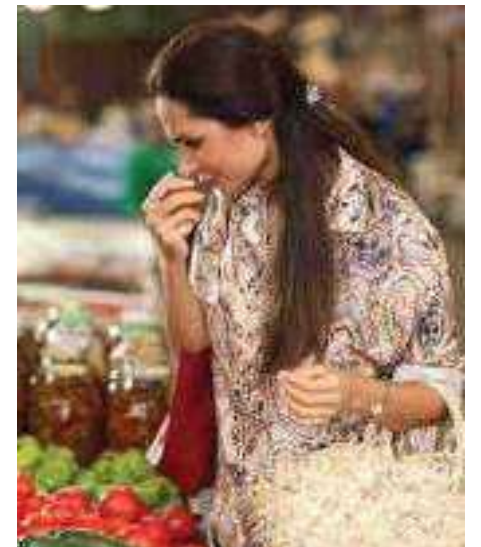
With over 500 km of shoreline along the Caspian Sea, home to many species of sturgeon, Azerbaijan has long been a centre of caviar production. There used to be so much of it that black caviar on toast was a popular snack in the Soviet era, but in recent years overfishing has made it a rare and expensive delicacy. You can still find some, though, in our bazaars and fish markets.

Pomegranates and feijoa

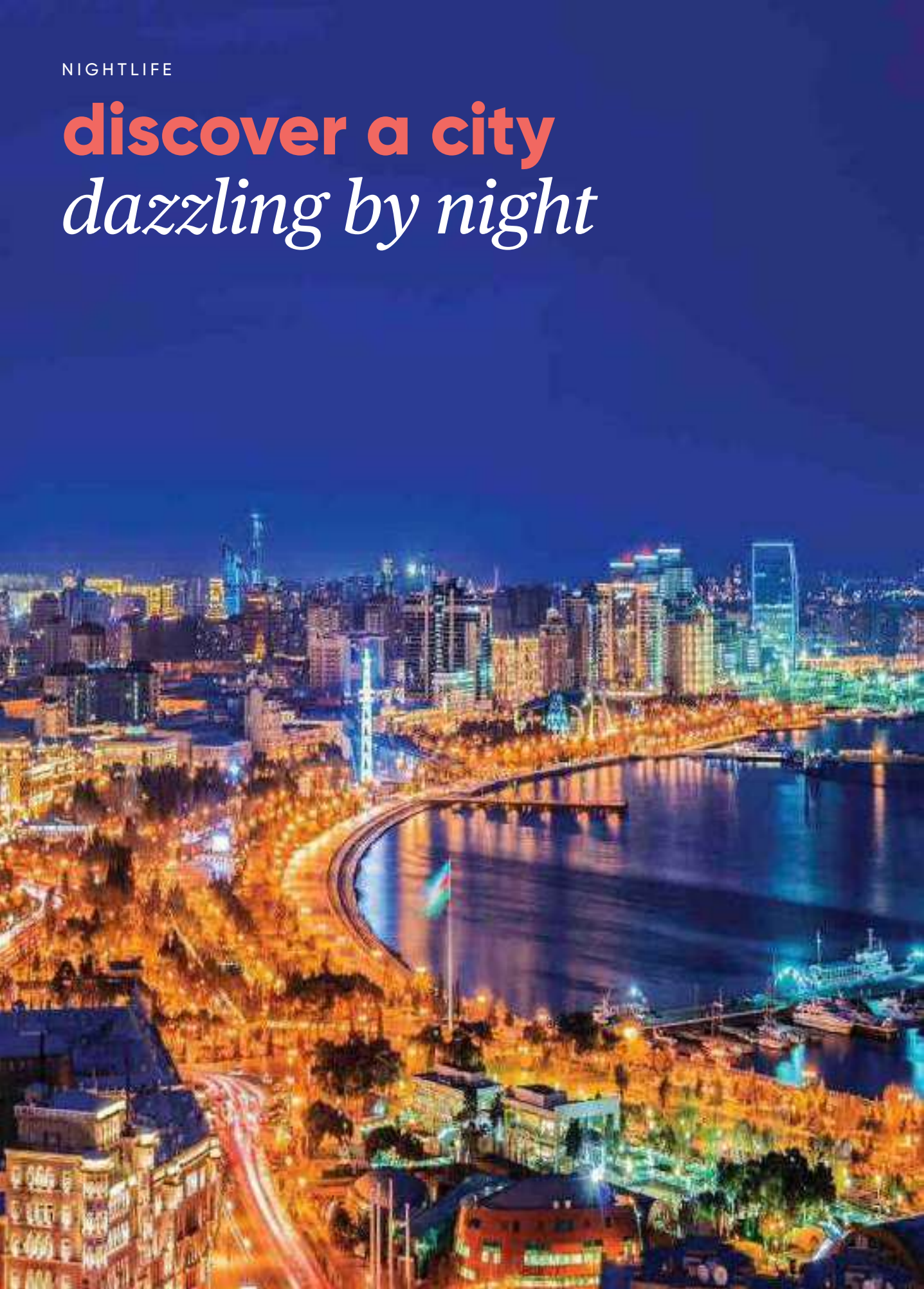
We produce many mouthwatering fruits but the undisputed king is the pomegranate, which is grown all around the country, and especially in Goychay. This region is home to an astonishing 70 different kinds, making it a fitting venue for the much-loved Pomegranate Festival that celebrates the annual late-autumn harvest. Pomegranates are ever-present in Azerbaijani cuisine – in sauces, juices, jams, and even wine. Another very popular fruit is feijoa, which is mainly grown in the subtropical areas of Masalli, Lankaran and Astara.

Honey

With its stunningly diverse landscapes and 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 one of a kind – absolutely delicious!



discover a city dazzling by night



Baku is a city of contrasts, colours and culture, whirled together by the Caspian winds – the ideal spot for vibrant nightlife! Not only is the capital city home to one of the biggest night club scenes in the region, the downtown area is also brimming with bars and lounges that flawlessly fuse Eastern hospitality with a Western state of mind.

With amazing restaurants, exquisite music, locally made wine and more, it's the perfect combination for a romantic getaway.

Dance

Check out Enerji Club Baku, followed by Orange Grove for an incredible night out, or party until morning to the beats of quality DJ music in BarDuck. The lively cocktail bar Hashtag also buzzes with DJ nights and jazz sessions while at Pasifico lounge, inspired by the colours and textures of the deep rainforest's exotic fauna and flora, you can embark on an exciting virtual journey along the coast of South America.

Wine bars

We've been making wine for thousands of years, the varied terrain of our wineries resulting in a myriad of bouquets and flavours. Baku is alive with a smorgasbord of enticing drinking holes across all price ranges, most serving a range of local wines, while specialist wine bars such as KEFLI Local Wine & Snacks and Agora Wine Bar provide truly authentic wine experiences. PORT Wine & Grill also welcomes wine connoisseurs in the city centre. Mellow in the early evening, Room Baku – Fine Art Wine & Dine becomes increasingly lively as the night continues with good music (DJs possible) and great food to complement the fine wines.

More about wine bars at:
azerbaijanwine.com

Pubs and bars

The pubs and bars around Tarlan Abdullayev Street make this a great spot to truly experience our nightlife. Enjoy a sundowner after work on the outdoor terrace of Madrid Restobar on the Seaside Boulevard during summer or chill here with friends at the weekend. And climb to the 25th floor of the stylish Hilton Baku hotel to 360 Bar, whose slow rotation gives ever-changing views of our capital. Don't miss an opportunity to end the night on a high note at one of the many bars and clubs in Baku. For great local and craft beers, head to pubs like Beerbash, Pivnaya Apteka, Paulaner and Crazy Bear.

Jazz clubs

Located away from the tourist crowds in the Old City, enjoy Baku's thriving Jazz community in BEST PLACE Restaurant where local jazz plays twice a week. Exceptional food, innovative beverages and live nightly jazz make Jazz Club by Beer Hall another of Baku's after-dark hot spots, while the celebrated annual Jazz Festival is a great opportunity to dive into the world of jazz at a variety of venues.



enticing festivals *year-round celebrations*



A cultural hotspot offering numerous exciting events, visit Baku for the many festivals, concerts, exhibitions and markets that really bring the city to life! From festive New Year markets to carnivals and concerts, the calendar of events in our capital is packed with lively happenings.

For an updated list of events, please check azerbaijan.travel.

Novruz

Our biggest holiday, Novruz, celebrates the beginning of spring and allows you to see Azerbaijani culture and traditions at their finest. A celebratory vibe can be felt across the city, with lots of music, dancing and dining. Festivities happen everywhere but Icherisheher is the main holiday hub – many of the best concerts, performances, exhibitions and markets take place here. Novruz is also a great time to enjoy Baku's burgeoning art scene as traditional arts and crafts spill out onto the city's streets.

New Year Fair

Every year the New Year Fair 'Cold Hands, Warm Heart' brings a fairy-tale atmosphere to Fountains Square. You will find some of the country's most exciting national brands, as well as cosy cafes dishing up fine local and international cuisine in this charitable project, whose proceeds go towards treating disadvantaged children. There are also entertainment attractions in the evenings and at weekends.

Jazz Festival

Jazz first took root here in the 1930s. Today, many of the new wave of jazz musicians perform at the annual Jazz Festival, which takes place in September–October. Besides being the best place to discover the city's rich jazz heritage, you can also enjoy workshops, exhibitions and performances by foreign jazz maestros.

Colour Festival

Popular among the youth of Azerbaijan, this summer beach event brings together famous DJs and other musical guests. Buy tickets to the festival in advance and party away with the beautiful backdrop of the Caspian Sea. The festival takes place every summer, attracting crowds of young people.

Azerbaijan Grand Prix

The Grand Prix of Azerbaijan is the fastest street race in all of Formula 1. Since 2017, the race has been held on the Baku City Circuit. The length of the track is 6.003 km, making it the second longest track in the Formula 1 calendar, and speeds reach an incredible 360 km per hour. What's more, fans can enjoy three nights of concerts by world stars during race weekend.

Sea Breeze Festivals

Sea Breeze Resort & Residences is closely associated not only with luxurious summer vacations, but also grandiose international pop music festivals. These festivals are among Baku's hottest summer events and take place right on the picturesque coast of the Caspian Sea. Welcoming famous artists and celebrities, they always deliver amazing performances and parties within reach of our vibrant capital.



PLAN YOUR TRIP

Baku City Tour ‘Hop-on Hop-off’

Baku City Tour’s ‘Hop-on Hop-off’ bus offers a fast, convenient way to visit all of the city’s top attractions with a single 24-hour ticket. A key feature is the audio guide available in eight languages: Azerbaijani, Russian, English, German, French, Farsi, Italian and Japanese. Tickets include earphones for the audio guide, a city map displaying the bus route and plenty of additional information about Baku’s attractions. At each stop, the bus waits for two or three minutes, giving time to snap a few quick photos. Or you can hop off to get a fuller impression of the area and its attractions, hopping back on again when the next bus comes along, an hour later.

Details:

Tour duration: 1.5 hrs
Total distance of route: 25 km
Number of stops: 16
Start point: Azadlig Square (next to Park Bulvar Mall) though you can also board the bus from any of the designated stops.
Working hours: Every day, 10:00 – 19:00 (ticket is valid for 24 hours from the moment of purchase)

Ateshgah & Yanardag Tour /
Gobustan Tour

Official group tours organised by Baku Tourist Information Centre

Details:

Duration: 4 hrs
Departures:
Gobustan Tour – every day at 10:00
Ateshgah & Yanardag Tour – every day at 10:00
Tours include: transport, entrance tickets, tour guide service, fast-track entrance, bottled water.

Contact:

info@salambaku.travel
+99451 229 9833

Baku Tourist Information Points

Baku Tourist Info Points offer impartial advice to travellers, as well as free maps, useful leaflets and brochures on the city. They have also pioneered a series of tours to help visitors get the best out of the city and its intriguing surroundings. As well as the main tourist office, there are four tourist info points located around the city.

Baku Tourist Information Centre

14 Bulbul Avenue
+99451 229 9833

Airport Tourist Information Point

Heydar Aliyev International Airport
(Terminal 1, Arrival Zone)

Nizami Tourist Information Point

73 Nizami Street

Boulevard Tourist Information Point

Baku Boulevard area
(next to Park Bulvar Mall)

Tourist Information points:

- Provide impartial information about Baku, including tips on sightseeing, cultural events, shopping, hotels, museums and transportation.
- Offer the possibility of organising guided tours.
- Sell souvenirs and tickets for cultural events and passes for ‘Hop-on Hop-off’ bus tours



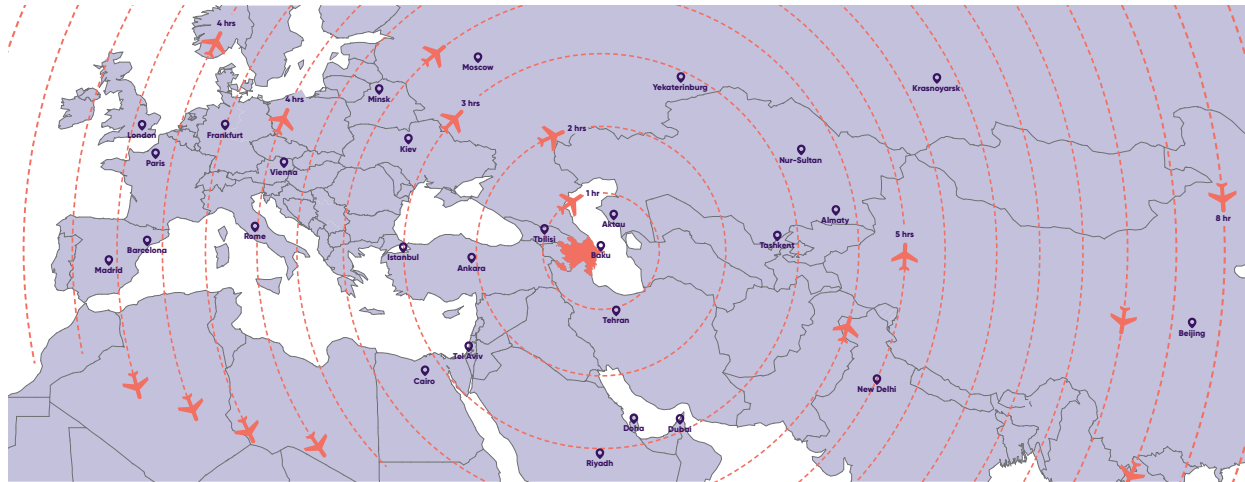
info@salambaku.travel
www.salambaku.travel



PLAN YOUR TRIP

salam Azerbaijan

Country Size
86,600 km²
Country population
10 million



When to visit

Dec-Mar: Cold but perfect for skiing.

Apr-Jun: Getting warmer so try walking in the foothills. But take an umbrella in spring.

Jul-Aug: Very warm and ideal for hiking in the high mountains or relaxing on the Caspian coastline.

Sep-Oct: Still warm so perfect for both city exploring and trips to the regions.

Nov: Enjoy the stunning colours in the countryside but wear layers!

Time zone

We're 4hrs ahead of GMT but we don't put the clocks forward in summer, so while we're 3hrs ahead of Western Europe in winter, that drops to 2hrs in April-October.

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.

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.

Visa

Some nationalities are issued a visa on arrival, while many others can get an e-visa within 3 days via evisa.gov.az. All others need to apply for a visa at their nearest Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Please check the latest requirements before booking your trip.

Money

Card payments are accepted at most shops and restaurants in the country. Mastercard/Visa ATMs are widely available in all main cities and towns. Exchanging money back is no problem. The manat (AZN) is our national currency.

Accommodation

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

Transportation prices

On the bus and Baku metro one journey costs 30 qepiks. Taxis are also widely available as an alternative option.

Driving

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

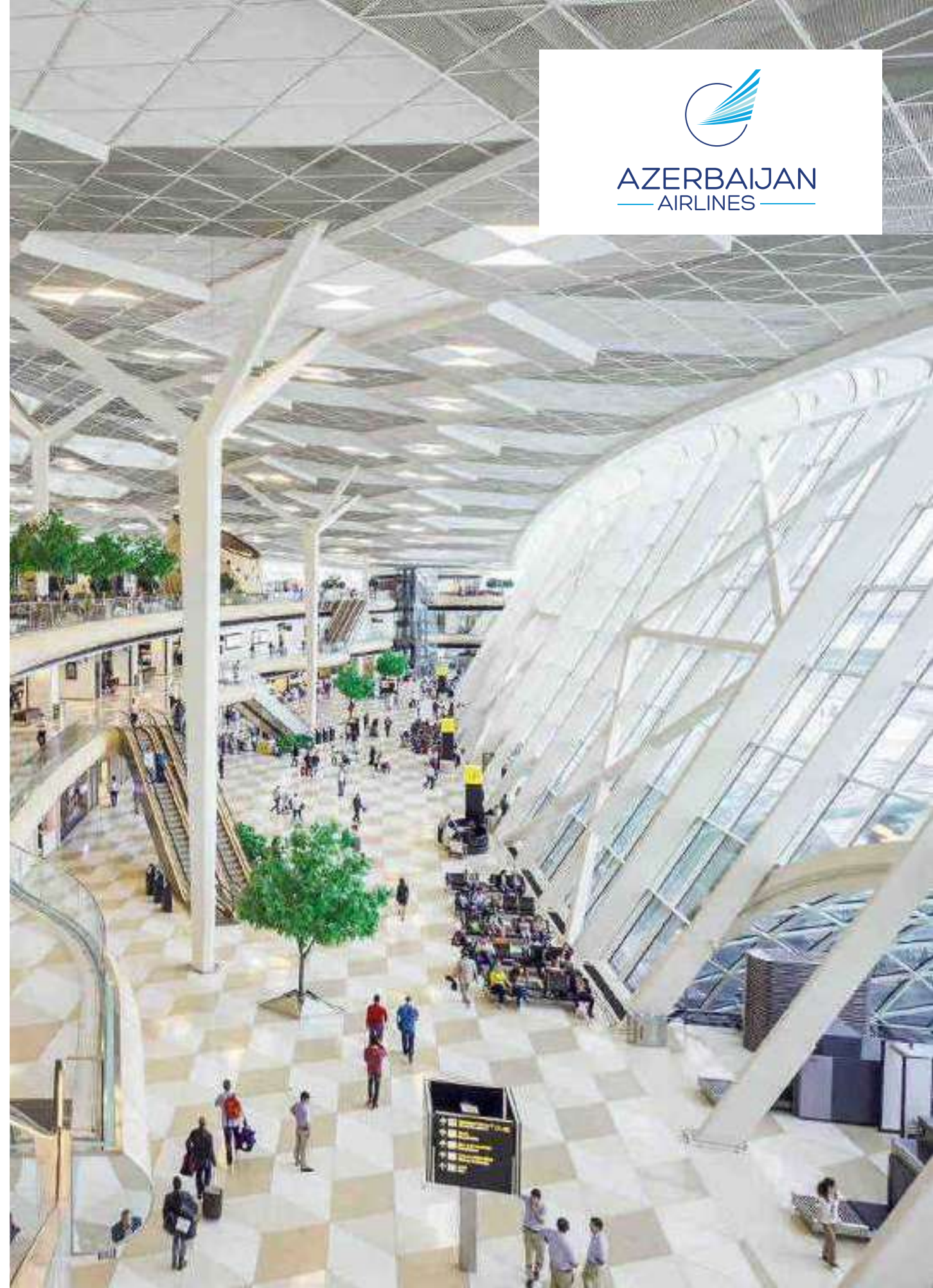
Telephone

The country code is +994, the dial out code from Azerbaijan is 00.

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 cafes and restaurants across Baku and beyond. Mobile phone providers offer relatively inexpensive dongles so that you can access the web through 4G mobile networks.

For the latest information on travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, see azerbaijan.travel/covid-19-en



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@ podcast.azerbaijan.travel



azerbaijan
TAKE ANOTHER LOOK

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