

[Destinations in Georgia](#) › Imereti

Region 3 h 30 min by car from Tbilisi 2 h 20 min by car from Batumi Population 533,906 6,516 km²

Imereti is a region — a region of Georgia, about 3 h 30 min by car from Tbilisi and 2 h 20 min from people.

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Imereti

Guide last checked by the GTour desk on 16 October 2026. Latest news for this region is listed below automatically.

Why go

Imereti is west-central Georgia's green heartland, built around the river Rioni and the country's second city, **I** capital with a dense cluster of UNESCO monuments, limestone canyons, show caves and a surreal Soviet spa other.

Because Kutaisi has its own international airport, the region works equally well as a first stop after landing, a on the road between Tbilisi and Batumi.

When to go

- **Late spring (May-June)** – canyons and waterfalls are at their fullest, countryside is green.
- **Early autumn (September-October)** – warm, drier, good light for the gorges and cathedrals.
- **Summer** – hot in Kutaisi itself but fine for canyon walkways and cave visits, which stay cool underground.
- **Winter** – Prometheus Cave, Bagrati and Gelati stay open; some canyon walkways and boat trips close or before travelling.

Check **road status** before heading into the hills in winter, especially toward Okatse and Chiatura.

Getting there

- **By air:** Kutaisi International Airport (KUT) is the main Wizz Air gateway to Georgia, a short drive from t

- **By road from Tbilisi:** around 3 hours on the main highway.
- **By road from Batumi:** around 2.5 hours.
- **By rail:** regular trains connect Tbilisi and Kutaisi; onward travel to outlying sights requires a car, taxi or car hire.

A rental car or a driver gives the most flexibility, since most sights beyond Kutaisi are spread across rural roads and a car can cover the region without self-driving.

What to see

In and around Kutaisi

- **Bagrati Cathedral** – 11th-century hilltop church overlooking the city, rebuilt after wartime damage.
- Kutaisi's green bazaar – the city's working produce and spice market, good for cheese, churchkhela and local honey.

UNESCO and monastic sites

- **Gelati Monastery** – 12th-century monastery and academy founded by King David the Builder, with extensive grounds and a museum.
- **Motsameta Monastery** – small monastery perched on a river cliff, a short detour from Gelati.
- **Katskhi Pillar** – a 40-metre limestone pillar topped by a tiny chapel, home to a single resident monk; view from the top.

Caves and natural sights

- **Prometheus Cave** – a long, lit cave system with a boat section on its underground river.
- **Sataplia Nature Reserve** – preserved dinosaur footprints and a glass-floored viewpoint over the forest.
- **Okatse Canyon** – a steel walkway cantilevered along a narrow gorge.
- **Kinchkha Waterfall** – a tiered waterfall close to Okatse, usually combined in one trip.
- **Martvili Canyon** – boat trips through a turquoise gorge; technically just across the border in Samegrelo but worth a visit.

History and curiosities

- **Vani archaeological site** – excavations of an ancient Colchian city, with gold finds now displayed locally at the Vani Museum.
- **Tskaltubo** – a Soviet-era spa town known for radon mineral baths and large abandoned sanatoriums, now just ruins.
- **Chiatura** – a mining town famous for its network of Soviet cable cars climbing the cliffs above the valley.

Borjomi and Vardzia lie further south and belong to a separate region; see the dedicated [regional guides](#) for details.

A three-day plan

Day 1 – Kutaisi and the monasteries

Arrive in Kutaisi (by air, rail or road from Tbilisi, about 3 hours). Visit Bagrati Cathedral and the green bazaar. Then head to Gelati and Motsameta (around 20-30 minutes each way from the centre).

Day 2 – Caves and canyons

Morning at Prometheus Cave and Sataplia, both within about 30-40 minutes of Kutaisi. In the afternoon, continue to Okatse Canyon and Kinchkha Waterfall.

Waterfall (roughly 1-1.5 hours from Kutaisi); add Martvili Canyon if starting early, as it sits a further 40-50 n

Day 3 – Tskaltubo, Katskhi and onward

Spend the morning at Tskaltubo (15-20 minutes from Kutaisi), walking the sanatorium park or taking a radon hour from Kutaisi) before heading onward to Batumi (about 2.5 hours) or back to Tbilisi (about 3 hours).

Where to stay

- **Kutaisi** – the main base, with city hotels, guesthouses and apartments near the centre and the bazaar; best wanting walkable access to Bagrati.
- **Tskaltubo** – quieter, spa-oriented guesthouses and restored sanatorium hotels, suited to travellers interest

GTour’s verified register lists hotels and guesthouses for Imereti below, checked for standards and accurate loc

Eat and drink

- **Imeretian khachapuri** – the region’s round, cheese-filled bread, the everyday version found across Georg
- **Imeruli cheese** – a mild, brined cheese used in khachapuri and eaten on its own with bread and greens.
- Market produce from Kutaisi’s green bazaar – walnuts, pkhali, pickles and seasonal fruit.
- Local wines from western Georgia, generally lighter than the better-known Kakhetian styles; worth asking

Practical notes

- **Money:** card payment is widely accepted in Kutaisi; carry cash for rural sites, small guesthouses and marl
- **Connectivity:** mobile data coverage is reliable in Kutaisi and along main roads; expect weaker signal insi
- **Roads:** main routes are paved and in reasonable condition; side roads to Katskhi, Chiatura and some cany than distances suggest. Check [road status](#) in winter.
- **Safety:** Tskaltubo’s abandoned sanatoriums have unstable floors and should be entered with care or with c paths can be slippery when wet.

Quick answers

How many days does Imereti need? Two full days cover the main sights comfortably; three allows a slower

Can I fly directly into the region? Yes, Kutaisi International Airport (KUT) is Georgia’s main Wizz Air gate

Is Martvili Canyon part of Imereti? It sits just across the border in Samegrelo but is usually visited as part

Do I need a car? A car or driver is strongly recommended, since most sights lie outside Kutaisi on rural road

Is Imereti a good stop between Tbilisi and Batumi? Yes, it sits roughly midway and works well as a one- c

Are Borjomi and Vardzia part of this region? No, they belong to a separate region further south.

Latest news for Imereti



NEW OPENINGS

Tbilisi's Telegraph Hotel Opens in Converted Brutalist Building

26 October 2026 · David Kiknadze



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Georgia visa and entry 365-day stay, e-visa and

26 October 2026 · Nino Gelashvil



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25 October 2026 · Mariam Lomidze



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Above Tbilisi: Hot Air Ballooning Over the Kvemo Kartli Steppe

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Imereti is the green heart of western Georgia — soft hills, river gorges, cave systems and a capital city when most of Europe's capitals were villages. It is the region travellers cross on the way to the Black Sea. Those who stop find some of the country's most rewarding sights within an hour of each other.

The UNESCO-listed Gelati monastery holds the tomb of King David the Builder and twelfth-century frescoes. Nearby, the Prometheus and Sataplia caves open into halls of stalactites and dinosaur footprints. A sanatorium of the Soviet spa era stands in a park of radon springs — one of the most photographed abandoned buildings slowly returning to life.

Imereti's cooking is its own: the cheese-filled Imeretian khachapuri, walnut-rich pkhali and a light fish soup. Kakheti's. Kutaisi's international airport makes the region a natural first or last stop in Georgia.

PLACES TO VISIT IN IMERETI · 19

TOWN

Baghdati

ATTRACTION

**Besik Gabashvili Park in
Kutaisi**

ATTRACTION

Irine's Park

TOWN Khoni	CITY Kutaisi	ATTRACTION Kutaisi Aerial Tramway
ATTRACTION Kutaisi-Boulevard	TOWN Martvili	RESORT Sairme
VILLAGE Shubani	VILLAGE Sulori	TOWN Tskaltubo
VILLAGE Vartsikhe	VILLAGE Zekari	TOWN Zestaponi

VERIFIED PLACES IN IMERETI

WINE MARANI ZEKARI	HOTEL Sairme Hotels and Resort	WINE Revishvili's Cellar
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WINE

Dimis Perdobi

WINE

Akaki khoravas wine cellar

WINE

Zemarani winery

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Facts and travel times: Georgian National Tourism Administration. Text and selection: GTour.

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GTour — Gateway to Georgia

Castle in Old Town, 3 Betlemi Rise, Tbilisi

+995 577 416 314 · info@castle.ge

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