

Figures and facts about Georgia

Geography and climate □□ Georgia is a small slice of sumptuous beauty sandwiched between Turkey and Russia, on the coast of the Black Sea. In spite of its proximity Russia, its climate couldn't be more different - think Sicily, not Siberia. □□ Georgia is in the South Caucasus, a region straddling Eastern Europe and Western Asia. Georgia's northern border runs along the crest of the Greater Caucasus mountain range, and includes the southern flanks of the highest mountain in Europe. Georgia's highest mountain, Shkhara, stretches to over 5193 meters - way higher than Mont Blanc. The Caucasus is often said to be the boundary of Europe and Asia. It might be a cliché to say that Georgia is on the crossroads of civilizations, the place where East meets West, but there's an element of truth in that - while Georgian is definitely a European country, it also the most exotic country in Europe. In the South of the country are the Lesser Caucasus, but don't let the name fool you, with peaks reaching over 3000 meters, they are serious mountains. □□ Georgia borders the Black sea, Russia, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Hundreds of years ago it sat on the legendary Silk Road, and now it is it is developing as a gateway from the Black Sea to the larger Caspian and Central Asian regions. □□ Georgia is one of the most diverse and unique countries of Europe. Its climate ranges from alpine meadows and coniferous forests to semi-desert and lush, subtropical coastlines with tea plantations and kiwi fruit. It also has an astonishing array of [National parks](#), from Vashlovani in the east - home to some of Europe's last native leopards, to the Kolkheti wetlands in the west, a mecca for bird watchers the world over. The great wall of the Caucasus mountains protects the country from the cold winds of the north, meaning that Georgia enjoys very warm weather most of the year, and mild winters that rarely go below freezing are the norm in low-lying areas like Tbilisi. □□ Georgia is divided into eastern and western zones by a small mountain range running down the central axis of the country. As well as being an ancient political boundary between the old Georgian states of Colchis and Iberia, it is also the watershed between rivers that empty into the Black Sea on the western side, and the Caspian Sea on the east. The west of the country, watered by the warm waters of the Black Sea, has a subtropical climate, with very mild winters in low-lying areas, and heavy snowfalls in the mountains. This region is home to temperate rainforests and jungle like vegetation. The east is more arid, and has a more continental climate, though still moderated by the moisture from the Black Sea. Summers are hotter and drier here, especially in regions like Kakheti, which contain areas of semi desert. □□ In Georgia we have a legend that, when God was giving out lands to the peoples of the world, we were late, because we had been drinking all night at a party singing His praises. By the time we got there, God had already apportioned all the land, but because he liked us so much he gave us the small piece he was saving for himself. When you come to Georgia, you might just start thinking that the legend is true....□

Facts and

Figures:

Location:	Eastern Europe/Southwestern Asia (Caucasus) Longitude: 40° - 47°E Latitude: 41° - 44° N
Area:	69.700 sq.km (about the size of West Virginia or Switzerland)
Land border:	1655 km
Black Sea coast line:	315 km
Shares borders with:	Armenia: 164 km (to the south) Azerbaijan: 322 km (to the south-east) Russia: 723 km (to the north)

Elevation:	Turkey: 252 km (to the south-west) Highest: Mt, Shkhara: 5068 m; Lowest: Black sea 0 m
Highest mountains:	Shkhara: 5193 m (16,627 ft) Janga: 5059 m (16,597 ft) Mkinvartsveri (Kazbek): 5047 m (16,558 ft) ShotaRustaveli: 4860 m (15,944 ft) Tetnuldi: 4858 m (15,938 ft) Ushba: 4700 m (15,419 ft) Ailama: 4547 m (14,917 ft)

The rivers of Georgia belong to the basins of the **Black and Caspian Basin**. In the **Caspian Sea Basin** flows the **Mtkvari** river with its numerous tributaries (left) the **DidiLiakhvi**, the **Aragvi**, the **lori**, the **Alazani**, (right) the **Paravani**, the **Algeti**, and the **Khrami**. The **Black Sea Basin** rivers include the **Rioni**, the **Enguri**, the **Acharistskali**, the **Bzi** and others. □

Largest lakes:	Paravani: 37.5 sq.km (14.4 sq ml) Kartsakhi: 26.3 sq.km (10.1 sq ml) Paliastomi: 18.2 sq.km (7.0 sq ml) Tabatskuri: 14.2 sq.km (5.4 sq ml) Khanchali: 13.3 sq.km (5.1 sq ml) Jandari: 10.6 sq.km (4.0 sq ml)
-----------------------	---

Glaciers are found only on the Greater Caucasus, and occupy 508 sq. km or 0.7 percent of the country's area. The snow line is between 2800-3600 meters. □

□

Country profile

Country name:	Georgia
Country name in Georgian:	Sakartvelo
Country code:	GEO
Internet code:	ge
Currency:	Georgian Lari (GEL)
Time:	GMT + 4
Capital:	Tbilisi (with population 1,106,700 2009)
Telephony: country code:	995
Tbilisi code:	32
President:	Mikhail Saakashvili
Political structure:	Democratic republic

GDP	19074.9 million GEL (2008)
Population:	4,436,400 (2010); Rural: 44%, Urban: 56%
Population density:	77 per sq.km
Average life expectancy:	70 -75
Ethnic groups:	Georgian 83.8%; Armenian 5.7%; Russian 1.5%; Azeri 6.5%; Ossetian 3%; Abkhaz 1.8%; other 5%
Languages:	Georgian - official: 71%; Russian 9%; Armenian 7%; Azeri 6%; other 7%

Religion: main: Georgian Orthodox: 83.9 %;
Muslim: 9.9%; Russian Orthodox: 2%;
Armenian Apostolic: 3.9%; Catholic:
0.8%, Baptists, Jews

Main cities

Tbilisi:	1,152,500 (metro area 1,370,800)
Kutaisi:	192,500
Batumi:	123,506
Rustavi:	119,500
Zugdidi:	75,550
Gori:	49,500
Poti:	47,150
Telavi:	21,800