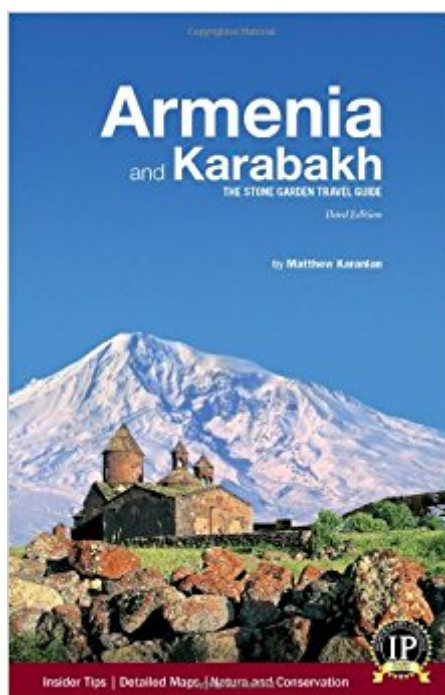


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# Armenia And Karabakh: The Stone Garden Travel Guide



## Synopsis

Armenia has a rich culture and a history that transcends its current borders and dates back 3,000 years. The essence and spirit of this ancient nation is magnificently captured in words and photos in "Armenia and Karabakh: The Stone Garden Travel Guide." "Armenia and Karabakh" is unique as the largest and most colorful guidebook available for these countries. This is also the ONLY travel guide that specializes ONLY in Armenia and Karabakh. Its 320 pages are filled with more than 140 vibrant color images, and 27 detailed color maps. The text -- which is written in a conversational tone that's easy to read-- is comprehensive and filled with the wisdom of authors who are as comfortable in Armenia as they are when they are traveling back home in the US. This is the only travel book on Armenia that is truly an "insider's guide." This is because its author Matthew Karanian, and its photographer Robert Kurkjian, have each lived, worked, and traveled throughout the region for nearly two decades. They spent year after year researching and updating this edition. As a result of their time spent, all of the travel research in this book is original, and when the book recommends a site, or suggests a travel route, it's because the authors have actually been there and know what's worth seeing and what's worth avoiding. Visitors will find that this book is essential gear when traveling throughout Armenia and Karabakh, in the villages, as well as in the cities. This guide is indispensable in helping travelers make the best choices when deciding where to go, what to see, and where to eat and sleep. Short term visitors who don't speak Armenian will be able to communicate with the assistance of the glossary of phrases. Travelers who have never been to Armenia, and also those who have made a dozen trips, will find the information about the country's historic sites to be equally fascinating and readable. Nature and conservation are also featured prominently. "Armenia and Karabakh" is still the only guide to the region that emphasizes environmental awareness and conservation as a primary focus for visitors. The book's beautiful photography and intriguing background information makes this a book for armchair travelers, too. The photographs were all created during the research for the book, and they will help the traveler determine where to visit. In addition to being a valuable field guide for seasoned travelers this book is also an ideal introduction to the region with lots of intriguing facts and interesting anecdotes about the land and people. This quality paperback has a durable binding and is a standard 5.375 x 8.375 inches to easily fit into your backpack while you are traveling. Detailed and full color maps, prepared by the American University of Armenia, cover every region of Armenia. Accurate street maps are included for every major city and town. Color tabs make it easy to locate information in any of the book's nine chapters.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A fresh view on ancient Armenia --Los Angeles Times, Travel Section An excellent guide to a fascinating region, written with real passion for the subject. --CNN Traveller Magazine A top guidebook. --The Washington Times With thorough writing and illuminating photography, Karanian and Kurkjian cover Armenia and Karabakh the only way they could-- magnificently! --Yerevan Magazine HE GOT ARMENIA UNDER THE SKIN, AND WE GET A GUIDEBOOK By Christopher Reynolds April 17, 2013, Los Angeles Times By some measures, Matthew Karanian was a Connecticut Yankee: a 34-year-old litigator in Hartford, American-born and bred. But he had a wild idea. So he took a summer off, headed for the rustic land of his ancestors, and soon found that Armenia was rearranging his life. Now, 18 years after that first visit, Karanian is an expert on the place. His self-published guidebook, *Armenia and Karabakh* (320 pages, \$24.95), has just gone into a third edition. It's based on more than a dozen visits to the country, including a residency from 2002 to 2006. The photographs are by Karanian and Robert Kurkjian. If you live near the California Armenian enclaves of Glendale or Fresno -- or if you've met Karanian -- you may already know that Armenia is a landlocked, mountainous country almost the size of Maryland; that it lies south of Georgia, east of Turkey and west of Iran; and that it broke free from the Soviet Union in 1991. But Armenia is still terra incognita to many Americans. And as Karanian acknowledges, the country faces plenty of challenges. The population, just under 3 million, is decreasing, partly because jobs are scarce. The country's border with Turkey is closed amid tensions that date to the Armenian genocide that began in 1915 under the Ottoman empire. Armenians and others commemorate the genocide yearly with a worldwide day of remembrance on April 24. The Turkish government maintains that those 1.5 million deaths were part of the chaos of World War I, not a genocide.

Meanwhile, a border now separates Armenia from the Armenian culture's most revered geographic feature, Mt. Ararat. The mountain stands in Turkish territory but is visible from much of Armenia. On his first visit to Armenia, Karanian recalls, the capital, Yerevan, was without electricity for most of every day. But the rugged beauty and depth of culture, he said, just turned my life upside down, yielding a stronger sense of ethnic identity and uncovering lost family history. Karanian knew his grandparents immigrated to the U.S. about 100 years ago. But it wasn't until his book research began that he learned his great uncle, Mardiros Kheranyan, was a much-admired cartographer who charted the towns of historic Armenia in painstaking detail. Now Karanian lives and practices law in Pasadena but makes yearly visits to the old country. Every year, he says, he sees better roads, more motorists willing to stop for pedestrians and more global brands, though no McDonald's yet. In a two-part interview in early April (first in person and then online), Karanian took on 10 questions. How many Americans visited Armenia last year? Not enough. That's why I published the book. There were about 850,000 tourist visas issued for Armenia in 2012. More than half, maybe up to 70%, were issued to Diasporan Armenians. What will I find on the sidewalks in the center of Yerevan? There are so many sidewalk cafes in central Yerevan, sometimes it seems you can't go for a walk without falling into one. --Los Angeles Times

**HE GOT ARMENIA UNDER THE SKIN, AND WE GET A GUIDEBOOK**  
By Christopher Reynolds  
April 17, 2013, 8:30 a.m. By some measures, Matthew Karanian was a Connecticut Yankee: a 34-year-old litigator in Hartford, American-born and bred. But he had a wild idea. So he took a summer off, headed for the rustic land of his ancestors, and soon found that Armenia was rearranging his life. Now, 18 years after that first visit, Karanian is an expert on the place. His self-published guidebook, *Armenia and Karabakh* (320 pages, \$24.95), has just gone into a third edition. It's based on more than a dozen visits to the country, including a residency from 2002 to 2006. The photographs are by Karanian and Robert Kurkjian. If you live near the California Armenian enclaves of Glendale or Fresno -- or if you've met Karanian -- you may already know that Armenia is a landlocked, mountainous country almost the size of Maryland; that it lies south of Georgia, east of Turkey and west of Iran; and that it broke free from the Soviet Union in 1991. But Armenia is still terra incognita to many Americans. And as Karanian acknowledges, the country faces plenty of challenges. The population, just under 3 million, is decreasing, partly because jobs are scarce. The country's border with Turkey is closed amid tensions that date to the Armenian genocide that began in 1915 under the Ottoman empire. Armenians and others commemorate the genocide yearly with a worldwide day of remembrance on April 24. The Turkish government maintains that those 1.5 million deaths were part of the chaos of World War I, not a genocide. Meanwhile, a border now separates Armenia from the Armenian culture's most revered

geographic feature, Mt. Ararat. The mountain stands in Turkish territory but is visible from much of Armenia. On his first visit to Armenia, Karanian recalls, the capital, Yerevan, was without electricity for most of every day. But the rugged beauty and depth of culture, he said, just turned my life upside down, yielding a stronger sense of ethnic identity and uncovering lost family history. Karanian knew his grandparents immigrated to the U.S. about 100 years ago. But it wasn't until his book research began that he learned his great uncle, Mardiros Kheranyan, was a much-admired cartographer who charted the towns of historic Armenia in painstaking detail. Now Karanian lives and practices law in Pasadena but makes yearly visits to the old country. Every year, he says, he sees better roads, more motorists willing to stop for pedestrians and more global brands, though no McDonald's yet. In a two-part interview in early April (first in person and then online), Karanian took on 10 questions. How many Americans visited Armenia last year? Not enough. That's why I published the book. There were about 850,000 tourist visas issued for Armenia in 2012. More than half, maybe up to 70%, were issued to Diasporan Armenians. And for the past several years, roughly 15% of all tourist visas were issued to Americans. What will I find on the sidewalks in the center of Yerevan? There are so many sidewalk cafes in central Yerevan, sometimes it seems you can't go for a walk without falling into one. But it's a seasonal thing. In the winter the only thing on the sidewalk is snow. Read the rest of the interview at the website of the Los Angeles Times. ---Los Angeles Times, Travel Section A top guidebook. --The Washington Times With thorough writing and illuminating photography, Karanian and Kurkjian cover Armenia and Karabakh the only way they could--magnificently! --Yerevan Magazine --Yerevan Magazine

**AUTHOR MATTHEW KARANIAN** is a lawyer, writer, and photographer. He first traveled to Armenia in 1995, and he has worked there as Associate Dean of the law program at the American University of Armenia in Yerevan, and as Director of the university's Legal Research Center. He and his students founded Armenia's first English-language law journal, the *Armenian Law Review*. He has also served on the editorial board of the *Armenian International Magazine*. As a legal scholar, Karanian served as a Caucasus Specialist in the Republic of Georgia with the Institute for the Study of International Migration, a Georgetown University research center. He holds law degrees from Georgetown University Law Center, and from McGeorge School of Law, and he practices law in Los Angeles. **PHOTOGRAPHER ROBERT KURKJIAN**, Ph D, is an environmental scientist, consultant, and photographer. He first traveled to Armenia in 1995, and he has served as Director of the Environmental Conservation and Research Center at the American University of Armenia in Yerevan. He is the founder of Environmental Strategies International, a non-profit organization that

works to protect human health and the environment.

For those who have not read it, the Stone Garden guide on Armenia and Nagorny Karabakh is the best available on the region. Filled with beautiful photographs, insightful information, and detailed maps, it is substantially better than other guides available on Armenia and the Caucasus (Lonely Planet, Bradt, Kuperard, etc.). My "odad" mother purchased the second edition for me when I was a teenager (at a time when I did not have the means to travel to Armenia). I read the book over and over until it was worn out! At the time, I could only dream of visiting places like Yerevan, Etchmiadzin, Khor Virap, Lake Sevan, Dilijan, Vayots Dzor, Syunik, etc. The photographs by Matthew Karanian and Robert Kurkjian really brought Armenia and Karabakh to life for me. So many Diasporan Armenians who travel to Armenia are turned off by the post-Soviet reality of the country (poverty, unemployment, etc.). The images of Karanian and Kurkjian, however, dig deeper and go beyond this, showing us a country rich with historic landmarks, breathtaking landscapes, and a kind, friendly, and beautiful people. Indeed, the guide and the images truly paint a portrait of a country with enormous potential for becoming a major tourist destination in Europe. When I finally did travel to Armenia this past month, I did so with the new third edition, which is even better than the second (which I still own). I can say that it was just as helpful and insightful inside the country as it was reading it outside the country.

As an attorney, it's my job, the entire work day, to carefully review documents for accuracy. How could I, therefore, fail to say what an extraordinary find this wonderful gem of a book truly is. Mr. Karanian's photos enliven the vivid text reflecting as "one picture says a thousand words" the prose which, in and of itself, is overwhelmingly written--with love, 'smarts,' and an appreciation for the subject matter and the traveller to Armenia. Whether it's your first trip--as it was mine, recently--or your latest trip, this is THE guide book. I travel quite extensively, all over the world, and I can assure you that Mr. Karanian's coverage of the breadth, history and resolve of these beautiful people and their wonderful country is without equal when compared to the myriad of other guide books I have read, dog-eared and appreciated on my travels over this wonderful planet. Buy it if you, at all, are thinking of travelling to Armenia. You will have to have self-control approaching the robotic to resist the hypnotic effect of this guidebook, and of the land it describes.

got this book for my husband. this will be his second time in Armenia and karabakh. also, his third (!) travel guide.. (what can I say.. he likes reading before visiting a new place). he says this guide is the

best one, most readable and most connected to reality as it is in Armenia 2013.

I've owned all 3 editions of this book, & it just keeps getting better & better. My wife & I travel regularly to Armenia and this guide has helped us discover some hidden gems all over Armenia, as well as some of the newer restaurants and attractions in Yerevan. Excellent photography throughout and very useful information!

We just returned from Armenia and Karabakh last week and found the Stone Garden Travel Guide to be extremely complete and informative. We especially enjoyed seeing the sites in full color before we arrived at the location. The information was detailed and precise which helped my family get familiar with Armenia and Karabakh (two places we had never been before). I would recommend this book to anyone going to Armenia or thinking about a trip to this interesting part of the world.

An absolutely fantastic book! Not just a travel guide, but also great reference book for anything Armenia. Very glad I purchased this book over the Lonely Planet version

I am so thrilled with this book! I've already learned so much from flipping through and it's getting me excited for my travels. The organization, detail, and photos are wonderful. It was delivered so soon after having ordered it-- just in time for my trip!!

Seems most up to date, covering many aspects of history & present situation, political balanced and with many good pics and maps.

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