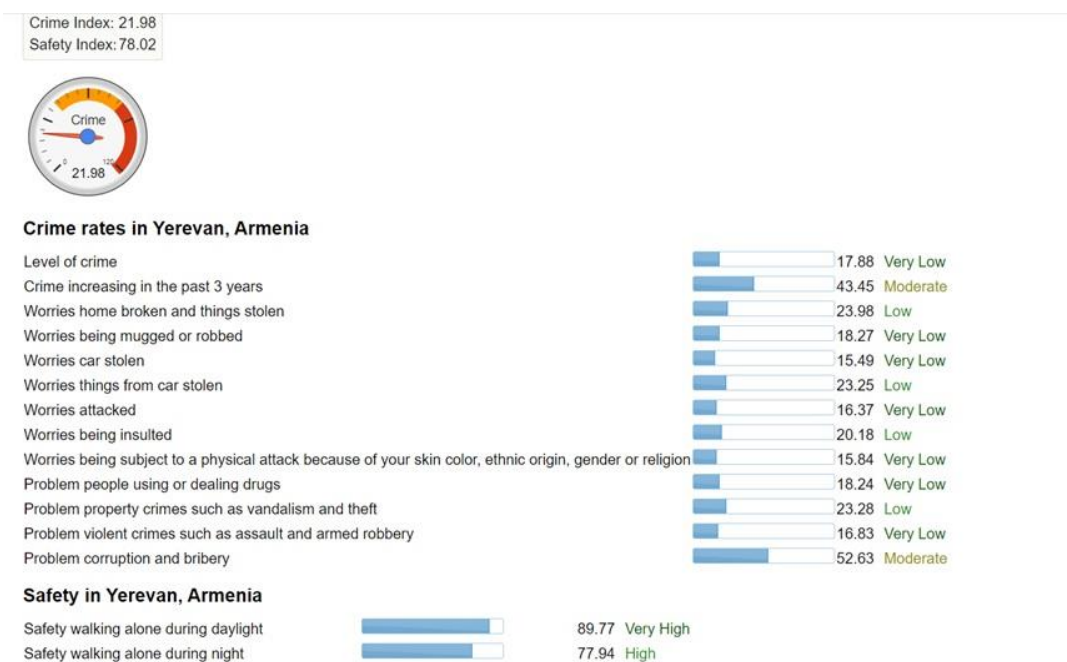




Though travel and study can broaden one’s horizons, such travel should always be undertaken with a clear understanding of the potential risks that may accompany the unwary traveler throughout their travels and/or while living abroad. The purpose of this document is to highlight both the risks and the likelihood of said risks when traveling/ living in Armenia, specifically with reference to the capital, Yerevan. Information for this document has been gleaned from several sources including official travel advisories and less official, though no less authoritative, sources such as the Numbeo Safety Index, where data and information has been collected, reviewed, and quantified into coherent reports and tables. Likewise, as said information has been crowd-sourced from the local citizenry living within the area being analyzed, it has a greater tendency to be both more accurate and up to date.

## Safety

In terms of overall safety, Yerevan has been ranked as being among the safest cities by Numbeo with an overall safety score of 78.02. An overview of issues associated with criminality appear below.



By comparison, London received an overall safety rating index of 46.1 with Moscow scoring higher at 63.5 and Paris lower at 42.9. A side-by-side comparison of the issues surrounding criminality appear below.

**Crime Comparison Between Yerevan and London**

Index	Yerevan	London
Crime Index:	21.98	53.56
Safety Scale:	78.02	46.44

- Level of crime
- Crime increasing in the past 3 years
- Worries home broken and things stolen
- Worries being mugged or robbed
- Worries car stolen
- Worries things from car stolen
- Worries attacked
- Worries being insulted
- Worries being subject to a physical attack because of your skin color, ethnic origin, gender or religion
- Problem people using or dealing drugs
- Problem property crimes such as vandalism and theft
- Problem violent crimes such as assault and armed robbery
- Problem corruption and bribery
- Contributors:
- Last Update:



**Safety comparisons Yerevan vs London**



Concerning the index that was previously cited, cities are ranked based on the psychological perceptions of city residents; that is, the index reflects the overall crime level in each city based on how safe citizens feel. As noted in the table above, issues surrounding criminal activity for Yerevan mostly range from ‘very low to low with only corruption, bribery and increasing crime as being moderate.

Given that crime is low in Yerevan, one might be tempted to assume crime does not exist. Crime does exist, and even though significantly lower than most cities, one should be vigilant to petty crime. Therefore, the following advice should be followed:



1. Keep your valuable in a safe place,
2. Be on guard for pickpockets in very public and high pedestrian traffic places,
3. Avoid getting inebriated and being around inebriated individuals especially around bars and clubs,
4. Count your change if paying in fiat currency (this is just good practice).

Though the above sections apply to all genders, it bears mentioning that women traveling solo will find Yerevan generally safe. According to *Travel Ladies* <https://travelladies.app/safety/armenia/yerevan>, “Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, is generally safe for solo female travelers. The local people are known for their hospitality, and violent crimes are rare. However, like in any urban place globally, standard precautions should be adhered to. That includes avoiding less populated areas during night hours and being aware of your personal belongings at all times to prevent instances of petty thefts.” This same site offers the following safety overviews:

- ✓ Safety at night: Moderate
- ✓ Public transportation: Safe

- ✓ Street harassment: Low
- ✓ Petty crimes: Low
- ✓ Tap water: Low

Regardless of gender, pedestrians should always follow the rules of common sense. Traveling in groups or with a friend and avoiding poorly lit streets and areas are both good rules to follow. If you are LGBT, though same-sex relationships are legal in Yerevan, same-sex marriages are not legal under Armenian law. Overall, public opinion in Armenia has shown a widespread rejection of LGBTQ+ rights.

Homosexuality		Gay Marriage			
 ✓ Legal		 ✗ Not legal			
Censorship	✓ No censorship	Changing Gender	✗ Legal, but requires surgery	Non-binary gender recognition	✗ Not legally recognized
Discrimination	✗ No protections	Employment Discrimination	✗ No protections	Housing Discrimination	✗ No protections
Adoption	✗ Single only	Military	✗ Don't Ask, Don't Tell	Donating Blood	✓ Legal
Conversion Therapy	✗ Not banned	Age of Consent	✓ Equal		

## Spillover from the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been the longest-running in post-Soviet Eurasia. Nagorno-Karabakh, internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan, has been a source of conflict between the two Caucasus neighbours since the years leading up to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Until September 2020, the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and seven other territories internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan were under Armenian-control. In connection with seven weeks of armed hostilities over Nagorno-Karabakh in the fall of 2020, Azerbaijan took control over the seven territories, as well as parts of Nagorno-Karabakh. While the November 2020 ceasefire arrangement has largely held, military actions along the border occur on a regular basis. From September 13-15, 2022 military actions took place along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border, which included damage to Armenian towns near the border.

According to <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/armenia>, “Protests sometimes take place in central Yerevan and other major cities. These are usually organised by opposition political parties or activist groups highlighting topical social and political issues. Although protests tend to be peaceful and usually pass off without incident, you should avoid large crowds and demonstrations, follow the advice and instructions of the local authorities, monitor the media and remain vigilant.” According to the US Department of State, travel in Armenia is rated as being ‘Level 2’ or Exercise increased caution (issued April

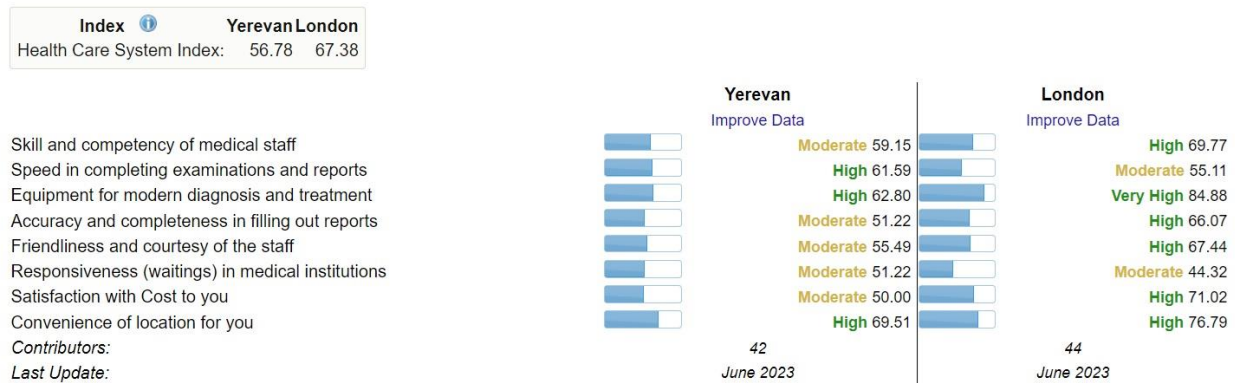


9, 2024). Specifically, it is advised not to travel near the border region with Azerbaijan or in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and surrounding territories due to recent hostilities.

## Healthcare

Based on information gathered over the last three years (up to June 2023), Yerevan had an overall Healthcare' Rating of 56.78 as compared to a rating of 67.38 for London.

### Health Care Comparison Between Yerevan and London



According to InterNations (<https://www.internations.org/yerevan-expats/guide/living-short>), expatriates living in Yerevan will need to have medical insurance, as it is mandatory for all residents. It is also recommended for expats to add or find Medical Evacuation Coverage (MEDEVAC), because whilst most hospitals provide adequate care, it may be necessary to take you out of the country for treatment and the cost of this can be high.

The healthcare system in Yerevan provides national care hospitals, regional hospitals, and primary healthcare providers. In the city, there are numerous hospitals and medical centers, including the internationally recognized Scientific Medical Emergency Hospital, Shengavit Medical Center, Armenia Republican Medical Center, and the Erebuni Medical Center.

If seriously ill and/ or you require an ambulance, the number to call is 103, or 911 for a general emergency.

## Purity and Cleanliness in Yerevan

According to Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of the Republic of Armenia, the state of the environment is vital for the development of the country, in particular, from the ecological, social, educational, tourist and economic points of view. The Ministry of Environment encourages citizens to be more caring and caring towards the environment, in particular emphasizing its purity. The major source of air pollution is from transport emissions. According to <https://www.worldometers.info/water/armenia-water/>, the entire (100%) population of Armenia has access to a safe-drinking water source. Again with reference to Travel Ladies <https://travelladies.app/safety/armenia/yerevan>, "Though Armenia has a

remarkably good quality of natural water, the network used for its delivery can sometimes be old and dilapidated which might affect the tap water quality in some areas in Yerevan. It is generally safe to drink the tap water, but for sensitive stomachs, it might be a good idea to consume bottled water.

For reference, a comparison between Yerevan and London for Purity and Cleanliness has been placed below.

**Pollution Yerevan vs London**

Air Pollution  
Drinking Water Pollution and Inaccessibility  
Dissatisfaction with Garbage Disposal  
Dirty and Untidy  
Noise and Light Pollution  
Water Pollution  
Dissatisfaction to Spend Time in the City  
Dissatisfaction with Green and Parks in the City  
Contributors:  
Last Update:



**Purity and Cleanliness Yerevan vs London**

Air quality  
Drinking Water Quality and Accessibility  
Garbage Disposal Satisfaction  
Clean and Tidy  
Quiet and No Problem with Night Lights  
Water Quality  
Comfortable to Spend Time in the City  
Quality of Green and Parks  
Contributors:  
Last Update:



**Life in Yerevan, Armenia**

Armenia is a small, compact country with distinct regional differences, and its many perks include relatively short distances and very low population density. Overall, the country is eight times smaller than the UK, and as of 2023, the population of the country was slightly less than 2.8 million with 1.075 million living in the capital. The currency is the Armenian dram with 1 GBP equal to approximately 500 drams



**Arrival in Yerevan, Armenia**

Most visitors to Yerevan will arrive by air to Zvartnots International Airport, a mid-size, comfortable airport that is located about twenty-five minutes away from the Armenian capital city. The newly-built airport was constructed to replace the iconic Zvartnots International Airport that previously stood and was a masterpiece of Soviet architecture with its unique design and obscure control towers.

**Getting from Zvartnots Airport to Yerevan City Center**

Airport Express #201 Minibus: One of the best options, and certainly the most affordable one, is taking the Airport Express bus that goes to and from Zvartnots Airport to the centre of Yerevan daily. The Yerevan Airport Express buses depart every half hour from 7 am until 10 pm, daily. After arriving at Zvartnots International Airport, you will need to exit the arrivals area on the ground floor. You will immediately see a sign that says, 'Shuttle Bus,'. It will guide you in between where the taxi stand is and the regular parking lot.

This is where you'll find the Yerevan Airport Express bus. A ticket costs 300 AMD (under \$1) as of November 2023. Please note: many flights arrive in the middle of the night, so this would not be an option then. You will need to take a taxi or have prearranged transportation.

### Transportation in Yerevan

Travelling around Yerevan is best done on foot as much as possible. This way you can really appreciate the architecture and atmosphere on the streets as well as the main sights. However, the city does have a decent transport network. The city metro system is useful and extremely affordable. You just simply buy one-use tokens for each journey you take, which cost 100 AMD (GBP 0.20). There are also marshrutkas (minivans) and buses which run around the city and are distinguishable by numbers displayed on their windscreens. These can be more difficult to navigate simply because nothing is in English. However, if you know the number you need to catch then they are an extremely affordable way of getting around. Though drivers are unlikely to speak English, most are able to speak fluently in Russian. Taxis are everywhere in the city, and you can use apps like Bolt and Uber to get cheap fares and minimise the language barrier. Taxis can cost anywhere between 1000 AMD and 5000 AMD depending on where you're going.

### Exploring Yerevan on foot

Yerevan is often referred to as "The Pink City" because of the rosy stone used to build many of the city's imposing buildings and houses during the Soviet era. However, the origins of the city date back many centuries. It's one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited urban areas, although it's been completely levelled and rebuilt many times from both natural disasters like earthquakes and invading empires.

For a city that is relatively compact and walkable, there are plenty of things to do in Yerevan. In fact, when locals are asked how long a visitor should stay in Yerevan, they say, how much time do you have? You can easily fill in time by gazing at the Soviet-era architecture, wandering through markets and visiting all the museums. Some of the must-see attractions in the Armenian capital include:

- 1) **The Cascade:** The Cascade is a giant stone staircase outside the Cafesjian Museum of Art. It's incredibly unique and each level of the complex showcases different micro gardens and sculptures. A climb to the top of the 570 stairs is completely worth the effort as the unrivalled view sweeps across the city's skyline to Mt Ararat, which can be seen on a clear day. The area is like a public square and is one of the best things to do in Yerevan for free.
- 2) **Opera Theatre:** This is one of the best examples of heavy Soviet architecture and a must see for anyone who enjoys seeing remnants of the Soviet past in the region. It was designed and built by the Soviets in 1930s and holds ballet and opera performances regularly. The surrounding park area is also popular for families to congregate on sunny afternoons and summer evenings.
- 3) **Katoghike Holy Mother of God Church:** This Orthodox church is the oldest in Yerevan, dating back to the 1260s. There's a tiny chapel next to a newer cathedral and it's right in the middle of

the city. You'll find people stopping to pray as they pass the church and it's a nice spot to just observe the local devotion to faith.

- 4) **Republic Square and The History Museum:** This huge imposing square is the heart of the city and where you'll find a lot of the streets' buzz emanating from. In summer, the fountains are full of water and people relax on one of the benches, especially of an evening when the dancing fountains, lights and music are turned on for everyone to enjoy. It's quite impressive and when you enter the square for the first time, it's impossible not to be taken aback by the grand stone buildings, which are very reminiscent of the Soviet era.

**The History Museum of Armenia** is located here and is well worth a visit. This multilevel display showcases various artefacts and history of both the country and the region from the Stone Age all the way up to the present day. It's open every day and costs 2000 AMD (GBP 4.00) for entry.

- 5) **Blue Mosque:** Although the majority of the population is Christian and have been since the first century AD, you might be surprised to find a mosque in the centre of Yerevan. It's known as the Blue Mosque and is the biggest place of worship for the city's Shia Muslim community. The Iran Embassy is technically the guardian of the place, and it will remind you of the tiled mosques that you find in Iran. It's open to the public to enter, except at prayer times. You should dress conservatively before entering.
- 6) **Kond Neighbourhood:** One of the best things to do in Yerevan is to explore the Kond neighbourhood, which is one of the oldest parts of the city and where you can get a glimpse of what the city was like before the imposing Soviet buildings sprung up in the city centre. It's a very rundown part of town and it's not technically a tourist sight but the charm is just in walking the laneways and streets. It is a residential area though so don't be too nosy or aggressive about taking photographs as many people may not understand why you're so interested in their neighbourhood. Still, Armenians are extremely friendly people and although the area is easy to get lost in, there's always someone around to ask directions.
- 7) **Sergei Parajanov House Museum:** Yerevan has some great museums and a lot of them. There's apparently around 50 museums in the city and you can pick and choose from them depending on your interests. That said, a personal highlight of many is the Sergei Parajanov House Museum. An unassuming place that is dedicated to the life of Parajanov, a pioneering artist, author and screen writer of the 20th century. You'll find strange and eccentric artwork and displays, some of which make underlying gestures and commentary about the world we live.
- 8) **Vernissage Market and GUM Market:** Yerevan has some excellent markets. The Vernissage Market is an open-air flea market which is held daily but best to visit on weekends when it's most busy. There's everything from Soviet memorabilia to carpets to jewelry and any souvenir you could possibly want. You can easily spend a couple of hours here looking at each stall.

**The GUM Market** is a large covered fresh produce market where locals come to buy all their food from local vendors. You can find butchers, bakers, farmers as well as vendors with dried fruit and nuts. One of the highlights is watching the traditional Armenian bread, lavash, being made and sold.

- 9) **Genocide Museum and Memorial:** A moving monument up on the hill above the city is dedicated to the 1.5 million victims of the Armenian Genocide. There is an eternal flame inside the concrete monument which you can enter to pay your respects. The Genocide Museum can also be found at the complex, which documents in raw and eye-opening detail what happened to the Armenian people at the hands of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. It's extremely well presented with English descriptions and it's a must-see in Yerevan to fully understand the people of Armenia. It's still considered a contentious international issue, as some countries, including Turkey, do not recognise the genocide as ever happening. This museum and memorial is a bit far to walk from the city centre (45-60 minutes); therefore a taxi might be advised.
- 10) **Erebuni Museum:** The Erebuni Museum was established in 1968. The opening of the museum was timed to coincide with the 2750th anniversary of Yerevan. The Museum stands at the foot of the Arin Berd hill, on top of which the Urartian Fortress Erebouni has stood since 782 BCE. The city-fortress was excavated and turned into an outdoor museum. The museum houses thousands of items to include ceramics, potter's wheels, jars, bronze bracelets, glass, agate beads and many other articles used in the everyday lives the original inhabitants.

### Bar and Cafe Hop

The wine and coffee culture is strong in Yerevan. There are hundreds of open-air cafes and bars, which are most lively in summer when the weather is warm. Cafe and wine bar hopping is almost like a sport in the city too, with locals sitting outside cafes and bars throughout the day and into the night.

Yerevan nightlife would be nothing without a good wine bar and the best of them can be found along Saryan Street, a strip full of bars and restaurants. Here you'll find everything from Armenia's finest wines to fancy cocktails and vegan smoothies, it's basically where you want to be at night in Yerevan. It's also home to In Vino, a wine bar that is considered to have sparked the wine bar revolution in the city less than ten years ago. It's become a sort of wine institution. For the utmost in appreciation of Armenian wines, the city hosts the annual Yerevan Wine Days festival in June. For three exhausting days, festival-goers are treated the best in wine, music, food and entertainment.

When the weather gets cooler, sitting in a cozy cafe or bar with a mug of coffee or glass of wine has been described as one of the best things to do in Yerevan in winter.

### Restaurants



Anyone who has ever visited Yerevan talks about how much time they spent at restaurants and cafes quite simply because the food is very good and there's a great attitude towards people working from their laptops in cafe spaces. Saryan Street is the best place for nightlife in Yerevan because of its many bars and restaurants. Tumanyan Street is another popular place with some of the best restaurants in the city like Lavash Restaurant and The Tolma, although they are a bit more on the pricey side. Some very popular eateries include:

- 1) **The Green Bean:** They have two central locations, one near The Cascade and the other on Amiryan Street. They have an extensive menu with vegan and gluten-free options. It's a very popular place for students and digital nomads to spend time at their laptops.
- 2) **Eat&Fit:** An incredibly beautiful cafe with healthy food and vegan and gluten-free options. It's small, so it fills up quickly, but it's certainly worth it. It's a bit more pricey than Green Bean but with a similar vibe.
- 3) **Karas food chain:** A national food chain that has a very extensive menu with every type of traditional Armenian food, as well as, Georgian food and Western options. There are plenty of outlets in Yerevan and you'll come across them on almost every major street. The menu is in English. For students, they're quick, easy, affordable and all-round good places to go and eat.

### Day Trips

There are plenty of day trips from Yerevan that you can take to explore more of Armenia and get out of the city. In fact, many of the country's tourist attractions can be reached on a day trip from Yerevan, meaning you can use the city as a base for your entire Armenia trip. A list of these include:

- 1) Gegherd Monastery and Garni Temple
- 2) Khor Virap and Noravank Monastery
- 3) Lake Sevan
- 4) Dilijan National Park
- 5) Gyumri
- 6) Tatev Monastery

### Parting words

Regardless of how you spend your free time in Yerevan/ Armenia, the following advice will prove helpful.

1. carry a personal water bottle,
2. carry and use reusable bags for items purchased in shops,
3. prefer map applications to paper maps,
4. do not litter, and recycle your rubbish, if possible,
5. ask locals for recommendations,

6. take your time and stay for longer – this way you can truly relax and get to know your destination better.