

June	◊ Strawberries ◊ Sour cherries (Bal) ◊ Cherries (Keras) ◊ Mulberries (Tut)	September	◊ Apples ◊ Blackcurrants (Sev Hagharch) ◊ Bramble (Mosh) ◊ Rose Hips (Masur) ◊ Raspberry (Mori)
July	◊ Apricots ◊ Peaches ◊ Plums ◊ Watermelons	October	◊ Pomegranate
August	◊ Melons ◊ Grapes ◊ Pears ◊ Figs	November	◊ Persimmon (Arkayanarinj)

## ► FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL HEALTH

As much as Armenians love to claim that the food grown here is fully organic, you should be aware that it often is not. On the contrary, pesticides are commonly used on trees, many plants are fed fertilizers of different types, and much of the food that's off season comes from greenhouses. However, quite a bit of it is very much on the natural side, as well. You will find that many that caused allergies elsewhere do not do so here. However, you might also find the opposite to be true. While a lot of the fruits and veggies are locally grown, do expect a large number of imports, even for things such as apples and pears, which are abundantly available in Armenia.

If you're going to have meat, try to make sure it's fresh; and if you're going to eat beef or lamb cooked medium or rare, make sure you're somewhere with a strong reputation for serving only high-quality meats. The same goes for fish: although landlocked, Armenia does have imported seafood and even sushi restaurants. Don't be shy about trying seafood, including sushi, but make sure that you're going somewhere which has a reputation for high quality and freshness.

Tap water is normally perfectly drinkable in Armenia. However, for those newly arriving to the country, it might take a few weeks for the body to acclimate itself. Don't be surprised if you have an upset stomach. It's best to keep to bottled waters and the use of a filter, especially at first. Different parts of the country also receive their water from different sources, so what tastes amazing in one place might not be so palatable elsewhere. Springs across the country are great sources for when you're on the road, particularly in the mountainous regions.

The importance of bread and salt must not be underestimated. Every table set by an Armenian family will include both of these. They are the cornerstone of every home, and one that doesn't offer you bread and salt (even the poorest can offer these), doesn't respect the tradition of hospitality. It is a great affront to guests. Most common breads you'll see include:

- Lavash: famous Armenian bread baked in a tonir with special tools. Fresh lavash from the tonir tastes like heaven. It is thin and large, used to wrap kebab into a sandwich. If the kebab was also cooked in the tonir, you're in for a very pleasant surprise;
- Matnakash: A thicker bread, the name literally meaning the pulling of a finger.
- Boulki: Sweet breads that often include raisins and other fillings.

## ► ANIMALS AND INSECTS

You will probably need to watch out for certain things in Armenia. Of course, we do not have any of the frightening insects found in places such as Australia, but the ones that do exist could be equally annoying. In certain parts of Yerevan, expect to find scorpions, especially in "valley" areas. Flies are a dime a dozen all throughout the spring and summer. Large mosquitoes don't actually touch you, normally. There are, however, a lot of insects in the forests and plains that will happily suck your blood or leave a sting mark. Bees are all over the country, and many people keep hives on their lands. Enjoy the honey!

Dogs and cats live in the streets and their sounds can be heard all night long. It gets mighty annoying, but there are few shelters, and those like [DINGO](#) are already full. Many people just bring home an animal off the street to keep as a pet. There are vets all over the capital.

## ► FUN AND IMPORTANT PHRASES YOU SHOULD KNOW

There are a lot of fun phrases you will come across when you arrive in Armenia. Which of these do you know already?

- Tsavt tanem – Literally meaning "let me take your pain away" and used both in a positive and negative manner. It often equals affection and literally means the person wishes his/her best for you. It can mean "I hear you" or even "sorry, not what I meant" as well as "back off" if things are escalating
- Aper or quro jan – Brother or sister, literally. It can be used endearingly or as a warning, take note of the tone of voice
- Lav eli – exasperated or annoyed, normally. Means "All right, already"
- De lav – "okay, fine" or full affirmative, depending on tone of voice.
- Esa galis em – "I'm coming" or "I'll be right out," said when you have people waiting for you

## ► NON-ARMENIAN WORDS THAT ARE USED ALMOST DAILY

It may be frustrating at first, but a large number of Russian, and even Turkish, words have made it into colloquial language. It is similar to American slang or Arabic phrases and words used by repats, really. The only difference is that Armenia has had heavy Turkish and Russian influence over the past century. Half the population are genocide survivors, while the other half lived under Tsarist rule before communism. Some of the words you really should know are:

- **Privet:** Hello!
- **Kak dela:** How are you? What's up?
- **Poka (Paka):** Bye!
- **Vsyo:** That's it
- **Voobshe (Vabshe):** At all, in general
- **Sdacha (zdachi):** Manr
- **Marshrutka:** Public minibus
- **Na vsyakiy:** Just in case