

mountaintop Khinalig
reveals its ancient stories



azerbaijan

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Contents:

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|----|-----------------------------|----|
| Map of Azerbaijan | 4 | Khinalig's Heritage | 26 |
| Khinalig and Köç Yolu Reserve | 6 | Local Gastronomy | 30 |
| Reach the Heights of Khinalig | 10 | Top Birdwatching | 34 |
| Natural Paradise | 14 | Köç Yolu Transhumance Route | 36 |
| Architectural Gems | 18 | Plan Your Trip | 40 |
| The People of Khinalig | 24 | Useful Information | 41 |

Welcome to Khinalig! Together with the 'Köç Yolu' Transhumance Route, this ancient mountain village makes up a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A trip here will reveal the intriguing culture, unique language and rare customs of the locals at one of Azerbaijan's top ethnographic and historical sites.

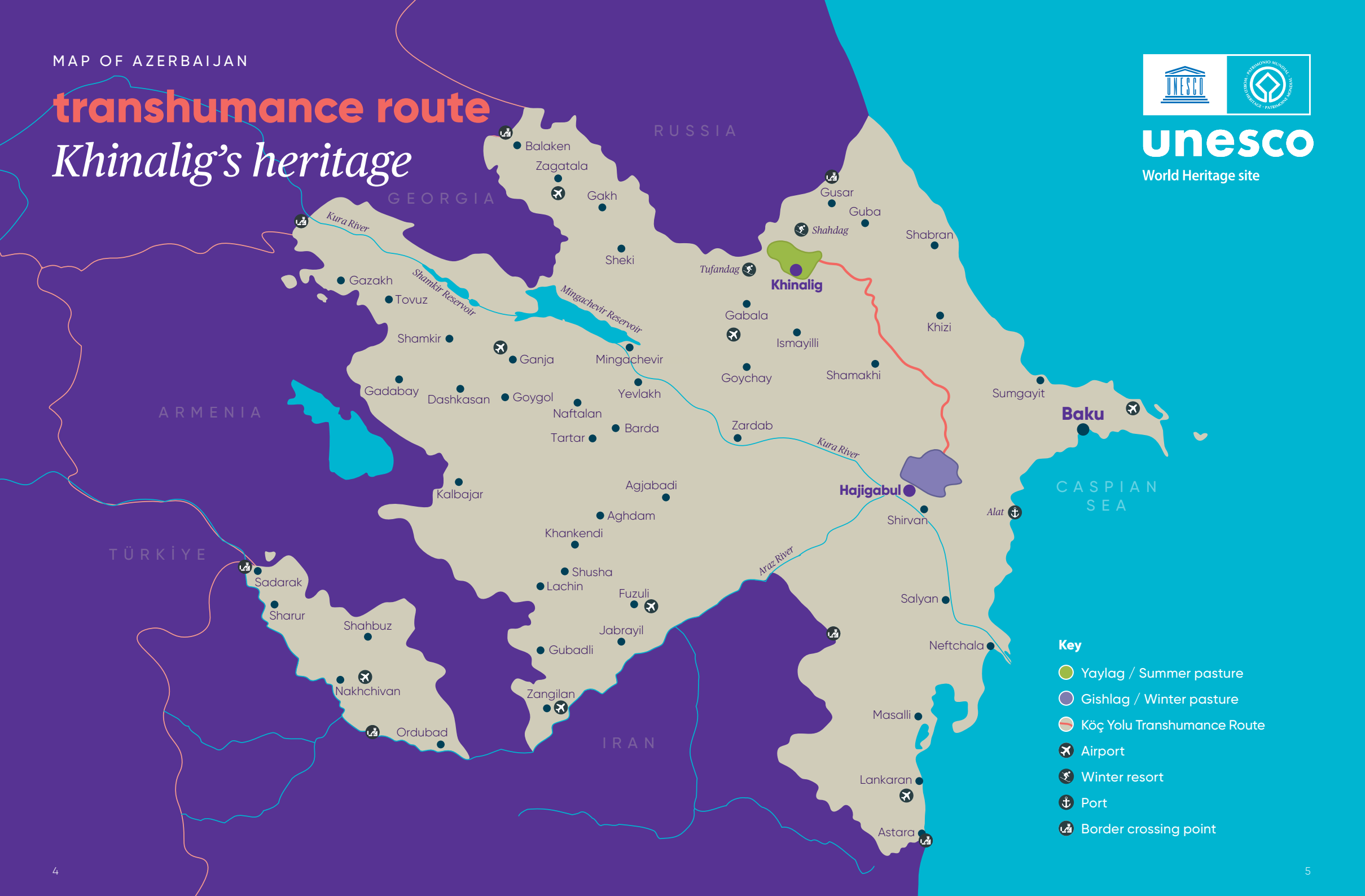
transhumance route

Khinalig's heritage



unesco

World Heritage site



an island of tradition atop a mountain ocean



At first sight, this majestic mountain village resembles an open-air museum. Numerous historical sites can be found here, from places reflecting the specialised lifestyles of ancient people to its sacred sites and sanctuaries. Beyond this, it has unmissable opportunities for birdwatching and hiking enthusiasts.

Located 60 km from the centre of Guba, the territory of Khinalig village was declared as a State Historical, Architectural and Ethnographic Reserve in 2007 and its activities are managed by the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Khinalig houses a host of historical, archaeological, architectural, ethnographic and numismatic sites of great cultural and touristic value. The reserve mainly implements state oversight in the territory of the village, ensuring the preservation and integrity of historical and cultural sites, as well as natural landscapes, and the careful development of the reserve.

When in the remarkable Khinalig, make sure you visit the **Historical and Ethno-graphic Museum of Khinalig**, opened in 2001. Housed in a beautiful renovated building made from local grey stone, it introduces the village's history and highly developed culture. You can also explore over 5,000 exhibits at the **Historical and Archaeological Museum of Khinalig**.

The territory of Khinalig and the seasonal migratory route taken by its inhabitants was declared as the

'Khinalig and Köç Yolu Transhumance Route' State Historical, Cultural and Ethnographic Reserve by a President's Order on 4 September 2023. This measure provides the necessary funding to preserve the area and develop its sustainable tourism experiences.

The same month, in the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee, the territory of the reserve was inscribed onto the **UNESCO World Heritage List** as **Cultural Landscape of Khinalig People and 'Köç Yolu' Transhumance Route**.



- 1 Historical and Ethnographic Museum of Khinalig
- 2 Historical and Archaeological Museum of Khinalig
- 3 Shahdag National Park
- 4 Ateshgah (Fire Temple)

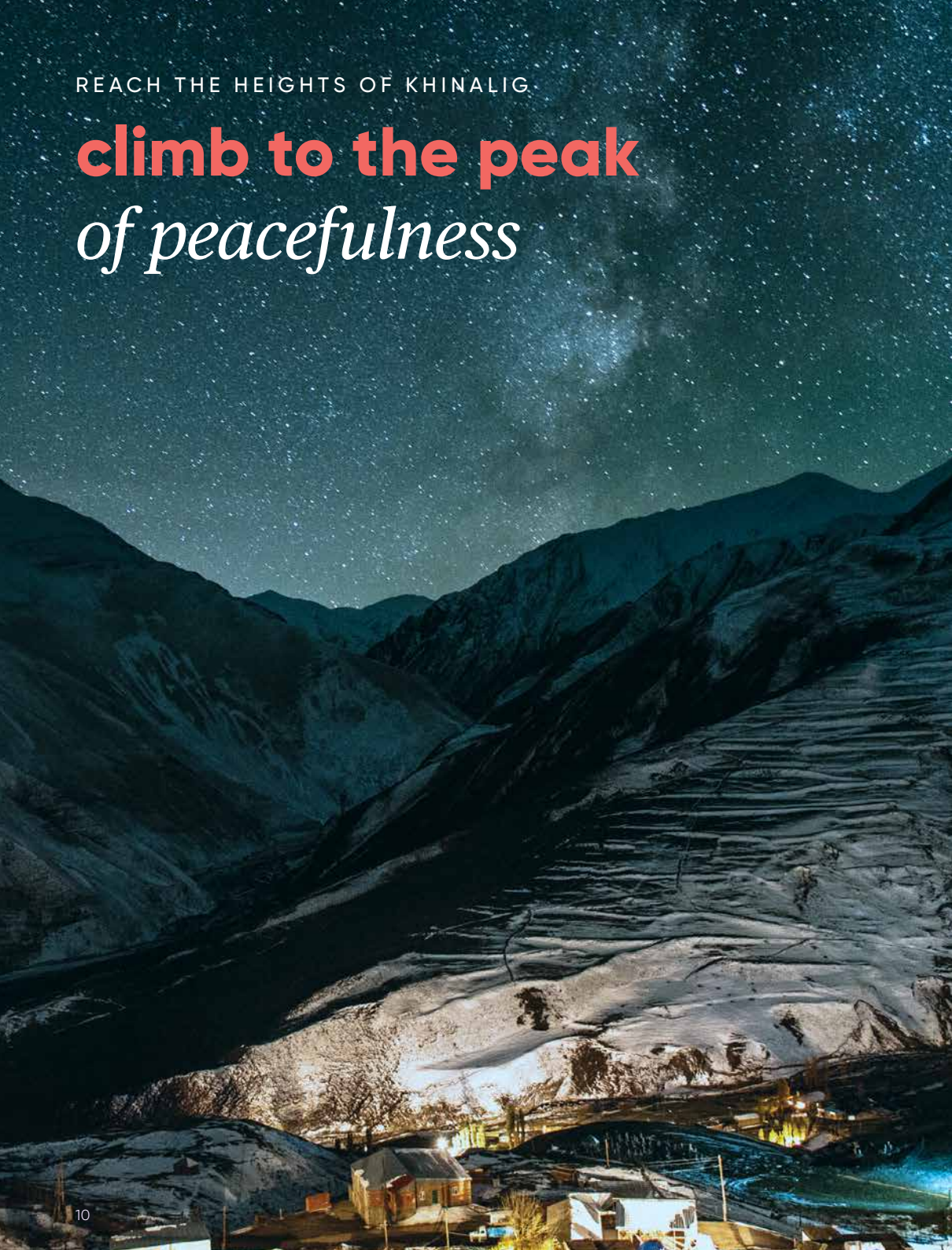
-  Tourist Information Centre
-  Mosque
-  Spring
-  Panoramic Viewpoint
-  Parking
-  Toilet

Shahdag National Park 3
1 km

Ateshgah (Fire Temple) 4
5 km

REACH THE HEIGHTS OF KHINALIG

climb to the peak of peacefulness



REACH THE HEIGHTS OF KHINALIG

If you want to discover a place that every traveller to Azerbaijan must see to experience the country's ancient roots, all while experiencing stunning views of the Caucasus Mountains, then head to Khinalig – an island among mountains. The village's fascinating history, architecture and unique traditions of its people will undoubtedly captivate you.



One of Europe's highest human settlements, the picturesque village of Khinalig in the North of Azerbaijan sits on a mountaintop, 2,200 metres up in the Greater Caucasus Mountains. There are several legends about the origin of its name, one of them recounting that the village was named **Khinalig** since the mountains surrounding the village looked like they were painted with **henna** (*khina* in Azerbaijani) as the sun rose.

The village is surrounded by a series of depressions and plateaus, such as the **Shahduzu** depression, **Shahdag** and **Gizilgaya** plateaux, and the highest peaks

in Azerbaijan above 3500–4000 metres, including Khinalig, Bazarduzu, Tufandag, Shahdag and Gizilgaya. Khinalig also boasts over 5,000 years of history. Although the village is nestled on a steep mountain peak with a harsh climate, which makes it extremely difficult for living, the people of Khinalig have managed to adapt to the land and use the limited natural resources with prudence. The climate in this area does not support the growth of trees, but it is conducive to most cold-enduring varieties. As in other mountainous areas, the climate in the area where the village of Khinalig is located varies according to altitude.

REACH THE HEIGHTS OF KHINALIG



Although there are only a few landscape types in and around the village of Khinalig, since it is located in a high mountainous area, vertical zoning is clearly visible. **Subalpine meadows, alpine meadows** and rocky areas are the main landscape types of the area. However, woods have long been found in the subalpine and alpine areas. Alpine and subalpine meadows are widespread in the areas close to Khinalig and are the main habitats in its ecosystem. These meadows are spread both above and below the village, mainly at altitudes of 1,800–3,200 metres. The mountain meadow ecosystem in the area contains mainly subalpine and alpine plants.

REACH THE HEIGHTS OF KHINALIG

Around the village, there are many **springs** and more than ten **caves**. These caves are mainly composed of lawn breccia karsts. These are sedimentary breccia that consist of shattered fragments of minerals or rock cemented together by a fine-grained matrix. Common features of all the caves include smooth floors and indented ceilings, as well as visible traces of water. Water entering the cave from outside, mainly from above, gradually accumulates on the floor of the caves to form small pools, which only flows out once the pools are full. As a result, a certain amount of water accumulates in small pools and stays for some period. For example, in the lower sections of **Zangar Cave**, alluvial sediments brought by water can be observed. It is possible that many of these caves were used as shelters, places of worship and water reservoirs.



transformative views

whisper of the wild



The village of Khinalig is known all over the world for the River Gudyalchay, which flows along the mountain slopes, its glorious beauty distinguished among the steep cliffs. The area above Khinalig is covered with glaciers almost all year round.

Into enchanting forests

There is a forested area close to the **yaylag** area, not far from the village of Khinalig at an altitude of 2,300 metres, which is a rare phenomenon for this subalpine zone. This area is called **Mugoz** and considered sacred by the Khinalig people. The locals protect this small forest fragment, where felling trees is taboo for the community members. They agree that the forest fragment must be protected permanently, and there are even some religious beliefs surrounding the issue. Similarly, hunting of the surrounding area's East Caucasian tur (*Capra cylindricornis*) and Caucasian snowcock (*Tetraogallus caucasicus*) is forbidden by the local community.



Wander into the wild

The wildlife near the village of Khinalig is rich, consisting of many valuable species. East Caucasian tur (*Capra cylindricornis*), Caucasian chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra* subsp. *Caucasica*), Bezoar ibex (*Capra aegagrus aegagrus*), mountain goat (*Capra aegagrus hircus*), lynx, brown bear and wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), as well as different types of falcons and eagles, which live in this area, are protected by the state. The Khinalig people also have certain spiritual beliefs regarding some of the animals and birds that inhabit the area. The locals are respectful towards nature, with taking and giving back balanced in a way that is always sustainable. Various taboos on hunting certain animals (like Caucasian snowcocks) and felling trees, which are rare at that altitude, are interesting phenomena developed throughout centuries to protect the surrounding nature through beliefs.





Land of rushing rivers

Near the village of Khinalig flow the rivers **Gudyalchay**, **Khinaligchay** and **Michek**. The first two are abundant, while the latter dries up in the summer months. All rivers are fed by snow, rainwater and partly by groundwater. River Gudyalchay has a very large riverbed, with many ditches that irrigate the meadows of Khinalig village, which are located near the riverbed. The Gudyalchay and Gusarchay rivers flow through glacial U-shaped trough valleys in their upper reaches and flow through box-shaped gorges with steep slopes in the middle reaches. The total length of the Gudyalchay canyon is 13 km. In the evenings, this canyon becomes a place of mysticism and wonder as low clouds rush in and shroud the landscape in mist.

Versatile plants

The use of wild plant species is significant in the lifestyle of the Khinalig people, who use **yaylags** (summer pastures) and **gishlags** (winter pastures) for the seasonal movements. Many plants in these areas have been used not only in local cuisine and for household items, but also as medicinal plants. The wild plants' growing season, distribution and use, both in the household and for medical purposes, all hold an important place in the traditional knowledge of the Khinalig people, which is widely applied even to this day. In most cases, these plants are taken directly from nature.



enduring customs *etched into stone*



The word 'unique' is not an exaggeration for Khinalig, where the original architecture speaks for itself. The jaw-droppingly beautiful sites located in the heart of the Greater Caucasus amaze visitors to this day with their fascinating forms and authenticity.

Traditional Houses

One of the attractive features of Khinalig is that the roof of someone's house is another's courtyard. The harmonious interrelation between the village and the surrounding environment can be observed elsewhere: the harsh mountain climate, limiting areas for construction and constant strong winds have led to houses being built closer or often even adjacent to one another. The first thing that strikes visitors to Khinalig is its barren appearance - there are no gardens, dividing walls, fences or gates in the village. The village is composed of only houses and flat roofs that function both as courtyards and streets at the same time. Another historical reason for this densely built urban plan is the defence and protection it offers from enemies.

Khinalig people accept the village as their own, since everything belongs to the community, except the inside of their homes. In the past, some houses could be reached from each other, showing how close the villagers were to one another. Today, the villagers often help each other out in construction works and manage small groups of livestock jointly, according to the **mahalla** concept.





Interiors

Residential houses in Khinalig are usually one or two storeys. Some built on gentler slopes have yards and outbuildings located separately, while both the ground and first floors are used as a living space. Typically, in two-storey houses, the ground floor is used for the everyday needs of the family members, while the fancier first floor is reserved for guests and special occasions.

Wall niches vary in form and size and are used for storing and displaying various household items. More prominent niches were used to store warm bed clothes, such as mattresses, blankets and pillows. Khinalig houses tend not to have much wooden furniture. The functions of furniture are instead found in the wall niches and shelves. As the people of Khinalig are constantly on the move, keeping belongings in rigid wood furniture would be highly impractical. This, as well as the fact that wool is in abundant supply in Khinalig, resulted in the development of the carpet-making industry. A carpet is the first and most important decorative element of the interior of Khinalig houses. Carpets were woven in every household, each family with their own distinctive patterns and choice of colours when designing their carpets. This was not only due to competition among women for weaving the best carpets, but also helped distinguish between carpets and the belongings wrapped inside them when families moved in groups.

Historical Sites

The village is also rich with cultural and historical sites: there are mosques from the 12th and 15th centuries and several historic cemeteries, as well as a large number of shrines, known locally as **pirs**. The Khinalig people have strong religious beliefs and profess Islam, with local characteristics of a local belief system. The variety of sanctuaries reflects a combination of both the local beliefs of Khinalig people in the pre-Islamic times and Islam as locals have found a way of combining the practices of both belief systems. Currently, there are 31 temples and shrines in Khinalig, 16 of which are Islamic, with the rest from the pre-Islamic period. There is a shrine on almost every street in Khinalig and every one of them contains a grave of a saint. The following is a selection of the most popular places of worship among the people of Khinalig.

Abu Muslim Shrine and Mosque

The first mosque in Khinalig is named after Abu Muslim (also known as **Juma Mosque**), known in the entire Caucasus as the man who brought Islam to the locals, and it is still in use. Built on an ancient sanctuary in the highest section of Khinalig in the 8th century, the mosque is believed to be one of the oldest in the Caucasus region. Runes on two different stones to the right of Abu Muslim Mosque are two metres high and are believed to have been made in the 3rd-8th centuries. There is no precise translation of the texts, but they are believed to

be related to the sunrise and the beginning of a new history.

Sheikh Shalbuз Shrine and Mosque ('Sheikh Shalbuз Baba Piri')

This is a mosque and sanctuary named after a venerable saint. According to an old manuscript found in the madrasah, Sheikh Shalbuз is believed to have been a devout man who came to Khinalig from Iraq in the 13th century to educate the village children. Today's shrine used to be a room in which Sheikh Shalbuз would pray in pitch darkness. According to local belief, those who do good deeds can pass between two

stones found here. Otherwise, the stones catch and hold the person. A white stone was put on Sheikh Shalbuз's grave as a sign of respect.

The Shrine of Forty Ascetics ('Girkh Abdal Piri')

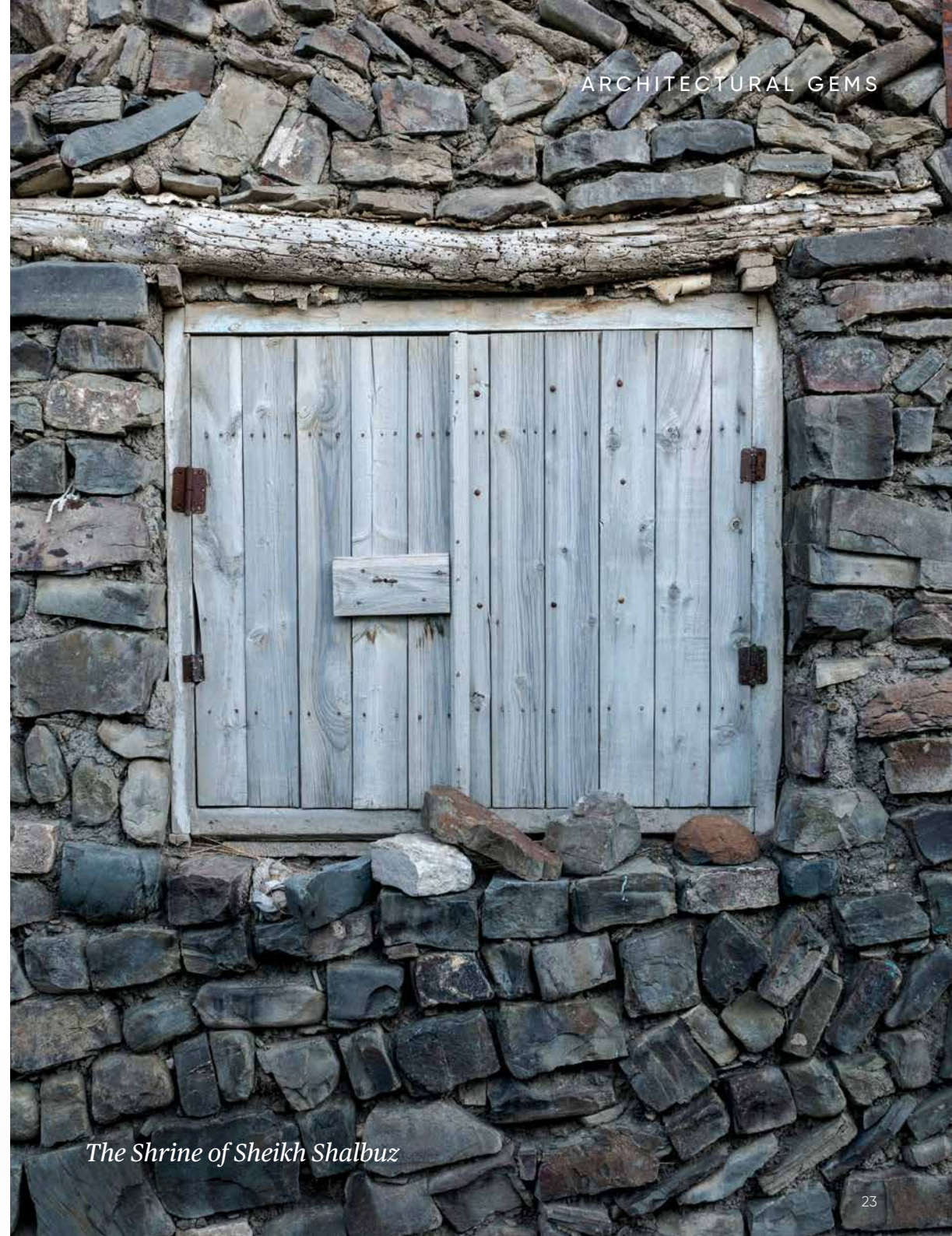
This natural cave is located 2 km away from the village. Often visited by women who cannot conceive, the shrine is related to the cult of water and is visited in summer months. The ritual includes making a toy cradle, which is then hung from the rocks. Women would also bring halva to the cave, which they would then distribute among the people.



Ateshgah (Fire Temple)

A few kilometres from the village you can also visit an Ateshgah, or fire temple, built over an ever-burning flame. Archaeological excavations have revealed **Zoroastrian** traditions from previous millennia, including an Ateshgah tower, which was believed to have been used for fire-worship in the past. It is built on a spot where natural gas burns on the soil's surface. The people of Khinalig and pilgrims visiting the area have

long been worshipping this natural fire, which is associated with many legends. People come here to sacrifice animals and make wishes: women who want to conceive a child visit this place and start digging up the soil around an area where a fire might emerge. If it does, they consider it a good sign. Currently, the fire in the temple burns permanently, but two additional natural flames appear sporadically.



The Shrine of Sheikh Shalbuz

unearth traditions amid warm welcomes



Do not be put off by the snowy, frosty mountain scenery of Khinalig – the warm hospitality of the locals will warm you up with their cheerful welcome and friendly character, shaped by living in unison with nature on the top of a mountain: one day the gleaming mountain sun, the next a snowstorm. Join them for some time and you will be glad you came.

The Khinalig people call themselves **Kattid** (*kattid*), which means *our own people*. They are distinguished by a strong physique, usually of short stature, with chestnut hair and brown or blue eyes. The elderly people here are especially respected by all and play a vital role in organising the socio-economic life of the local community. Since knowledge on how to use resources efficiently, raise domestic animals and keep them healthy in seasonal movements is considered indigenous knowledge transferred from elders to the younger generation, the **Institute of Elders** is considered a fundamental social institution. Furthermore, the elders are actively involved in social life, in preserving some traditions and the socialisation of the population, such as their participation as witnesses when individuals borrow money. During wedding ceremonies, all the elders who are respected by both the groom's and bride's sides of the family attend the wedding. Older women are also considered as the primary means for the transmission and preservation of traditions in Khinalig. They teach young girls the motifs of carpets and stockings verbally, which is the only way these patterns live on – through their transmission from one generation to the next within families. Women keep elements of cultural heritage alive in Khinalig and pass it on to the younger



generation. As a **transhumance pastoral society**, women have long been taking an active part in socio-economic and cultural life. Not isolated from society, they instead have taken an active role in all community activities. The preparation for the migration process, the arrangement of the family's seasonal budget and economic activities and the direct involvement of women in all aspects of daily life in seasonal movements have always been vital. Playing such an active role in daily life, Khinalig women have represented a contrast to the more passive role of women in Eastern societies, which is commonly found in academic and popular literature.



timeless local values *woven into fabric*



From its unique language, which is spoken nowhere else, to its ancient weaving traditions and lifestyle, Khinalig village still preserves its fascinating historical threads, charming visitors from all over the world. Here are a few of these treasured traditions for visitors to discover.



Khinalig's Language

The Khinalig people make up a distinct ethnic group who are thought to be descendants of one of the tribes populating the ancient kingdom of Caucasian Albania. While the people of Khinalig speak Azerbaijani, they have also kept their native language alive. Their exact origins and language, only found today in Khinalig, still pose many questions for ethnographers and linguists. The enigmatic **Khinalug language** is rich in words that describe different parts of the village, almost all features of the mountains, pastures, steep terrains

in its vicinities and various places in the yaylags and gishlags. Together, these words work as a simple solution for orientation and describing the territory. Using this micro toponymy allows them to communicate locations easily, is convenient in various daily situations and plays an essential role in the local community's practical, economic and social life. Among all the various languages spoken in the compact Shahdag mountainous region, Khinalug is the only language that is incomprehensible to other ethnic groups, while all others understand each other with some ease.



Wool

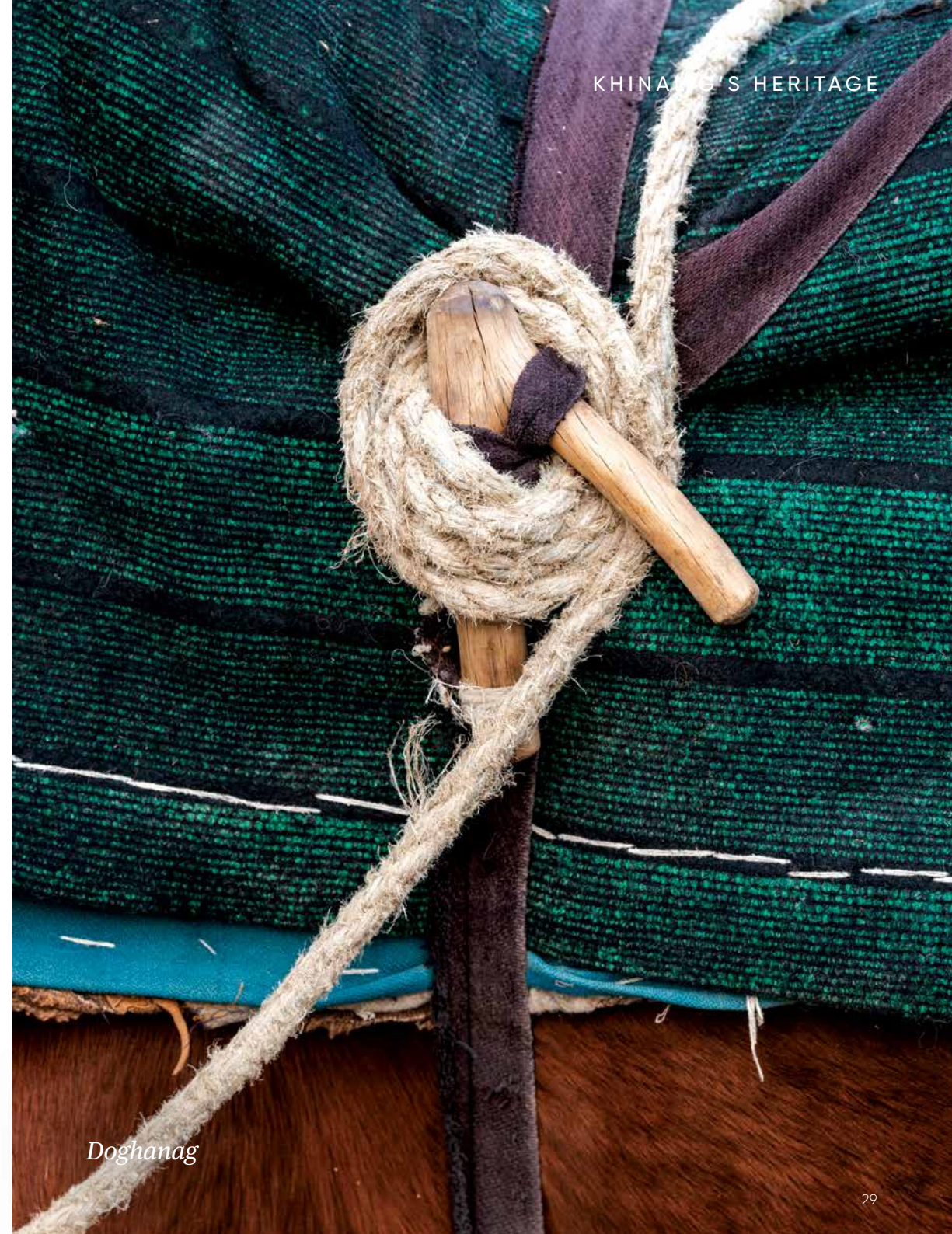
The Khinalig people have mastered using the raw material they had in abundance - wool. The tradition of making carpets, rugs, gloves, socks, bags, woollen shawls and other items is a way of using wool, as well as a necessity, since these items are used to keep houses and people warm during harsh winters. Commercialising wool and woollen products has also been one of the main activities that generates income. Wool was a commodity exchanged for fruit, metal household items and other goods that could not be found in Khinalig.

Knitting dozens of pairs of socks every year in Khinalig families is a centuries-old tradition. All the women of the community help each other make the yarn that serves to weave carpets and socks. Each family has its own sock pattern, with the designs usually passed down from one generation to the next. It is, therefore, possible to know in which family a given sock was woven based on the pattern. If you happen to be visiting Khinalig, pick up some patterned socks for yourself - children will happily show travellers their family's wares.



Customs of Shepherds

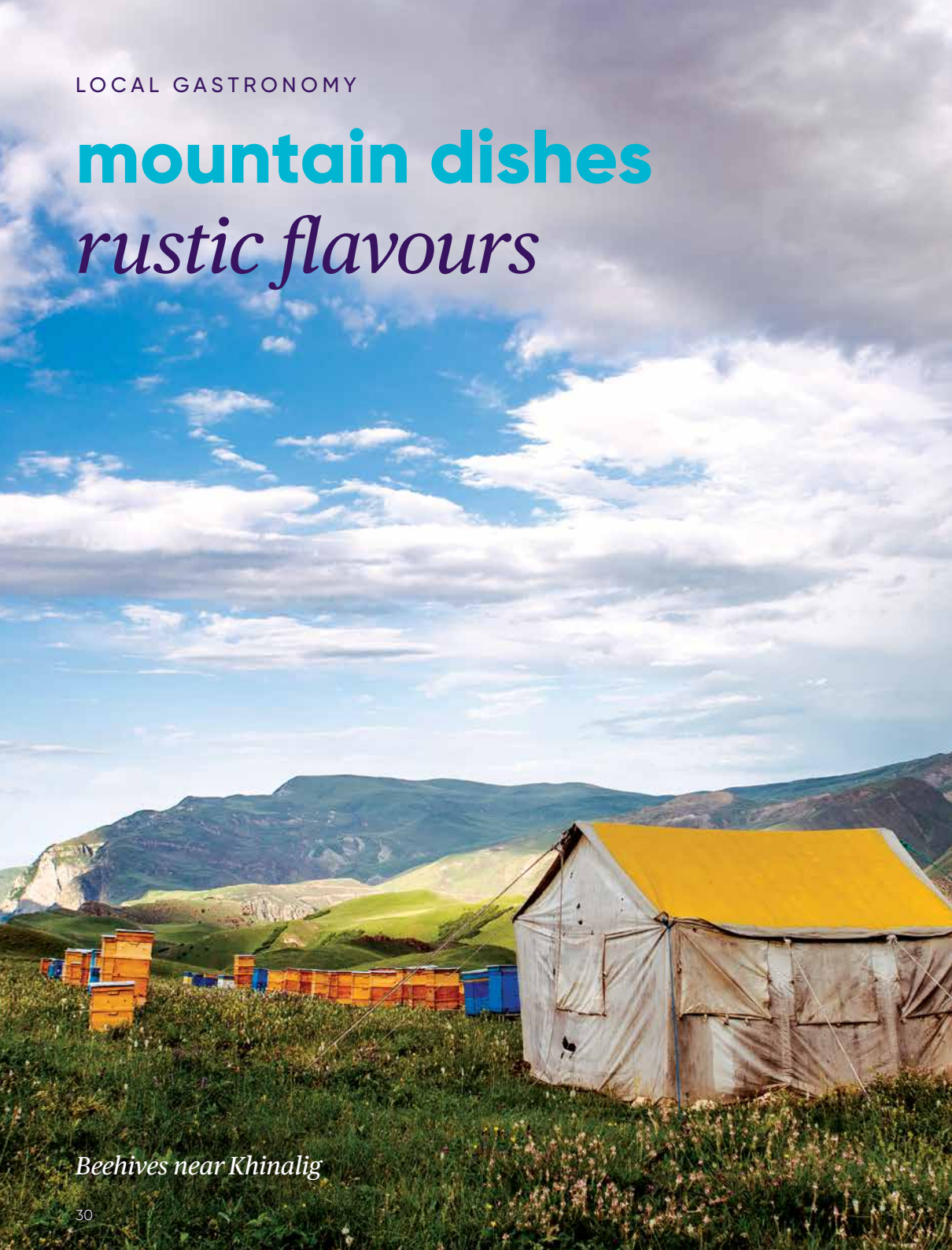
Since the whole lives of Khinalig residents are spent in the mountains, their lifestyle and clothing are also adapted to the climate. For instance, a **yapinji** is a form of symbolic item of clothing still worn by shepherds engaged in pastoralism in Azerbaijan. This multi-functional item is proudly worn by shepherds involved in sheep breeding in both the mountains and lowlands. However, yapinjis are now rarely used and have been almost completely replaced by products of industrial sewing. In addition to the yapinji, another crucial element of the shepherding lifestyle is the **chomag**. A chomag is a lengthy wooden item (of at least 1.7 m) made in a particular way, with a rounded head and the approximate thickness of a human wrist. Every shepherd owns a chomag, used as a personal tool for labouring. When loading horses, they also use **doghanag**, a tool made from forked tree branches.



Doghanag

mountain dishes

rustic flavours



Beehives near Khinalig

Perched in the heart of the mountains, the gastronomy of Khinalig mainly consists of a variety of delicious dairy products, honey, meat dishes and different types of bread, which goes hand in hand with the wonderful warmth and hospitality of the local people. Villagers have also developed their own local knowledge of regional herbs for special curative teas.

Dairy Products

Khinalig people prepare, consume and sell cheese and other dairy products, made mainly in the summer pastures when milk is abundant. The main dairy products are cheese, yoghurt, butter, which is made in special containers called **nehra** by shaking the sheep milk in traditional pottery, and **ayran**, a popular refreshing drink in summer.



Meat Dishes

A special place in Khinalig cuisine belongs to food made by shepherds. These meals include roast meat made with small tree branches as skewers, meat grilled between two large stones, stuffed lamb buried and cooked under the ground or on a fire, and other typical semi-nomadic lifestyle recipes. In autumn, locals celebrate the goat meat season with great merriment.





Breads

The making of different types of breads in Khinalig is a communal activity. Classic Khinalig bread is cooked in a **tandır** in winter and on a **saj** in summer. A tandir is a hearth made of clay, strengthened with goat hair. It is left to dry for three days before being ready to use. **Kherek** (*xəɾək*) is a special type of flatbread made in Khinalig and other mountain villages, which is cooked on both sides on a fire. The dough is made with flour, water and yeast, and a mixture of eggs, yoghurt and water is applied to the bread's surface as a thin layer to make it glossy. Small sticks made from turkey feathers are used to make small holes in the bread to facilitate baking.

Honey

August in Khinalig is when honey season begins. Mountain honey has a unique taste and aroma. Village inhabitants consider Khinalig honey as a panacea for 70 diseases.

Traditional Sweets

Those lucky enough to visit a home are typically invited to share hot tea from a samovar accompanied by homemade jam, while chatting with the family. There is another local specialty, a halva-type sweet called **govut**, made of roasted and ground wheat mixed with butter, sugar and honey, one of the ancient sweets of Azerbaijani cuisine. Govut, eaten with tea, is also a Novruz dessert that is taken to betrothed girls in festive baskets.



a frenzy of birds in secluded spots



Caucasian snowcock (*Tetraogallus caucasicus*)

Partly protected by Shahdag National Park, the high mountain areas around the village of Khinalig, perched picturesquely in the Greater Caucasus Mountains, are ideal to see the best of the region's birds, including endemics to the Caucasus region.

Previously too remote for many tourists, improvements in access have now put Khinalig firmly on the tourist map of Azerbaijan as one of its unmissable sights. The sparsely vegetated mountainous terrain surrounding it is a great place to look for the Caucasian snowcock, Guldenstadt's redstart, alpine accentor, rock thrush and lammergeier (or 'bearded vulture').

Target species

- Alpine accentor (*Prunella collaris*)
- Caucasian snowcock (*Tetraogallus caucasicus*)
- Green warbler (*Phylloscopus nitidus*)
- Guldenstadt's redstart (*Phoenicurus erythrogastrus*) **1**
- Lammergeier (*Gypaetus barbatus*) **2**
- Wallcreeper (*Tichodroma muraria*) **3**
- Red-fronted serin (*Serinus pusillus*)
- Rock thrush (*Monticola saxatilis*)



When to visit

Late spring and summer, but best in mid to late May.

Where to stay

As **Laza** and **Khinalig** are quite familiar with seeing tourists, in both villages there are a number of guesthouse and homestay options.

Explore

the area

Khinalig is one of the fantastic jumping-off points for guided hiking routes through the Greater Caucasus Mountains. Walking along the Khinalig-Galakhudat trail, you can enjoy views of the steep cliffs of Mount Gizilgaya, the vast River Gudyalchay valley and the terraces of land previously used for farming – in short, magnificent panoramas of the Greater Caucasus Mountains. In Guba, Red Village is a unique place to visit to discover the culture and history of Azerbaijan's Mountain Jews. Golfers can also enjoy a round at the picture-perfect National Azerbaijan Golf Club, about 10 km from the city of Guba.

nomadic ways seasonal sway



For centuries the mountain people of Khinalig have traditionally practiced transhumance, the seasonal droving of their sheep herds between yaylag and gishlag areas. The transhumance lifestyle of the people of Khinalig has been dictated by the specific location and climate of their village. Along with the village of Khinalig, this migratory route forms a key part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Köç Yolu

Animal husbandry is the only economic activity in which the Khinalig people can engage, given the vast summer pastures that surround the village, set in a harsh climate and remote location, which leaves little room for agricultural activities. For this reason, historically, the people of Khinalig would spend half the year on one side of the village, and then mountain meadows would move to warmer southern pastures in the winter. Consequently, the people of Khinalig live in constant movement between yaylaks and gishlags, with the Köç Yolu playing the critical role of connecting these two areas. The transhumance settlers of Khinalig and others have used the route for centuries. The paths and process of **köç** are deeply embedded in these people's culture and ethnic identity.

Köç is a rhythmic process between winter and summer pastures. The primary purpose of this movement is to create conditions for the animals to always be in areas with a mild climate. This movement also serves the local population to live in areas with a favourable climate and plentiful vegetation. Seasonal changes between summer and winter have created a rhythmic process in the community's life.

The route connecting the two regions is called **Köç Yolu**, which translates as **The Path of Movement** in Azerbaijani, and the process of switching between two is called 'köç'. It is 200 km long, beginning in Khinalig and ending in the plains of Hajigabul and Gobustan, and passing through five administrative districts – Guba, Shamakhi, Gobustan, Absheron and Hajigabul.

Seasonal Movements

The older people of the village usually dictate the timing of the move, taking various conditions into consideration while making the decision. Usually, the start of the spring move is mid April to May, and the autumn move is around the end of September to October. Depending on weather conditions, the timing of the movement might vary by 10-15 days. Preparations for the move usually start in advance, then when the herds are ready for the move they are organised into groups. Shepherds form small groups consisting of family members and close relatives, with these same groups moving and managing their camps in gishlags and yaylags together.

Knowledge about the locations of these camps, water sources, grazing areas, the condition of the grass, potential dangers and risks, such as road crossing points and unexpected weather conditions, are essential for the transhumance shepherds of Khinalig. They learn this from childhood and pass it on to the younger generation. When moving, the shepherds also have to constantly stay alert to weather conditions, the current state of the grazing areas and the schedule of other herds, among other considerations.



PLAN YOUR TRIP

one path many tales

Road to Khinalig

PLAN YOUR TRIP

When to visit

Dec-Mar: Weather conditions are harsh and snowy during this period. It is a great time to enjoy the snowy mountains and observe the ancient tradition of sock knitting in the homes of local residents.

Apr-Jun: This is the ideal time to enjoy lush nature and magnificent landscapes. Guests can join several hiking routes that pass through Khinalig and even embark on mountain peak hikes of up to 3,000 metres. However, it is important to note that the weather can turn rainy and foggy during this season.

Jul-Aug: The weather becomes even milder, with these months considered the peak season for mountain hiking. With permission from Shahdag National Park and the State Border Service, or through treks organised by local tourism companies and guides, you can participate in hikes to mountain peaks.

Sep-Oct: If the weather clears up and becomes less foggy and rainy, you can go hiking, observe the migration of sheep flocks to winter pastures and enjoy dishes related to the start of the goat meat season.

Nov: The weather becomes increasingly cold and harsh. You can warm up by enjoying traditional meals in the cosy, heated homes of local residents.

Guba

It is possible to get to Khinalig from Baku by car or public transport. If by the latter, first you need to reach the city of Guba and change there. The total distance from Baku to Guba is 167 km. Buses and minibuses from Baku to Guba leave regularly from 08:00 to 17:55 throughout the day from Baku International Bus Terminal Complex, arriving in Guba three hours later. You can buy a ticket in person at the terminal complex or online by registering on avtovagzal.az, which also has more information on the schedule and latest news.

Baku to Guba:

 approximate distance
167 km

 approximate time
2 h 45 min

Khinalig

To get from Guba to Khinalig, first catch intercity bus №1, departing from Guba City Bus Station and arriving at the bus stop near Khinalig Guest House (261 Heydar Aliyev Avenue), a short ride of around 10 minutes. Then the villagers drive the remaining distance of about 55 km to the mountain village of Khinalig in suitable vehicles, starting in front of the Khinalig Guest House. A one-way trip takes about 1 h 30 min.

Guba to Khinalig:

 approximate distance
60 km

 approximate time
1 h 40 min

USEFUL INFORMATION

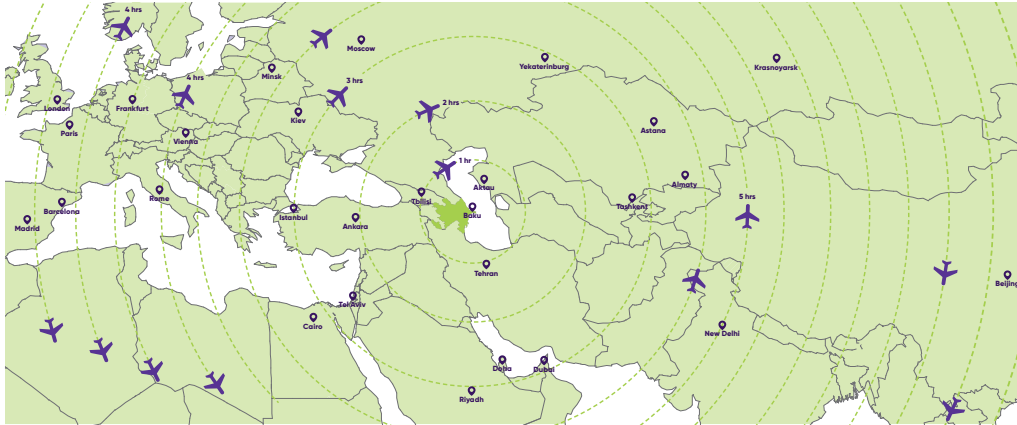
salam Azerbaijan

Country Size

86,600 km²

Population

10 million



When to visit

Dec-Mar: Cold but perfect for skiing.

Apr-Jun: Getting warmer so try walking in the foothills. But take an umbrella in spring.

Jul-Aug: Very warm and ideal for hiking in the high mountains or relaxing on the Caspian coastline.

Sep-Oct: Still warm so perfect for both city exploring and trips to the regions.

Nov: Enjoy the stunning colours in the countryside but wear layers!

Time zone

We're 4 hours ahead of GMT but we don't put the clocks forward in summer, so while we're 3 hours ahead of Western Europe in winter, that drops to 2 hours in April-October.

Religion

While we are a secular country, most of the population follows Islam. Muslim dress code is not enforced nor expected. Alcohol is very widely available. All religions have somewhere to worship.

Language

Our state language is Azerbaijani, which is similar to Turkish. Basic English is understood by most of the population. Russian is widely known, especially in Baku.

Visa

Some nationalities are issued a visa on arrival, while many others can get an e-visa within 3 days via evisa.gov.az. Israeli citizens are entitled to both of these. All others need to apply for a visa at their nearest Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Please check the latest requirements before booking your trip.

Money

Card payments are accepted at most shops and restaurants. Mastercard/Visa ATMs are widely available in all main cities and towns. Exchanging money back is no problem. The manat (AZN) is our national currency.

Accommodation

We have a complete range of options, from luxury and mid-range hotels to rural ensuite bungalows, provincial motels and even private homestays.

Transportation prices

On the bus and Baku metro one journey costs 40 gepiks. Taxis are also widely available as an alternative option.

Driving

An international driving licence is required. Car rental is increasingly available in Baku.

Telephone

The country code is +994, the dial out code from Azerbaijan is 00.

Internet

Hotels are fully equipped with Wi-Fi connection throughout, and big hotels will also have business centres with at least a few computers. Also, Wi-Fi is free in many cafes and restaurants across Baku and beyond. Mobile phone providers offer relatively inexpensive dongles so that you can access the web through 4G mobile networks.

For the latest information on travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, see azerbaijan.travel/covid-19-en



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circ.: 000
October 2023

Published by:
Azerbaijan Tourism Board
134 Uzeyir Hajibeyli Street
Baku AZ1010, Azerbaijan