



LCO Summer Campaign 2009

Volunteer Information Pack

Please read the entire contents of this packet carefully. If there is anything that is unclear or if there is a question unanswered, contact the LCO UKTeam.

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THE EXPERIENCE BASICS (What to expect?)

If our Summer Campaign sounds as if you will see and do things you never did before, you're right! If it also sounds as if you're going to get dirty, sweaty, and be 'roughing it,' you're right again! The LCO Campaign is many things to many people. Some people join to experience something fresh, new, and exciting. Others join to meet interesting people from around the world. Yet others join to preserve historical integrity and give something back to humanity. One thing an LCO Campaign is not, a package tour for the faint at heart. If the idea of hiking the countryside to reach cave dwellings and natural waterfalls, camping in a sleeping bag under the stars, washing clothes by hand in a river, or picking up native folklore in the absence of television appeal to you, then this is the program for you.

Each year, the LCO goes to great lengths to undertake fact-finding missions -- often to remote areas of historic and present-day Armenia. (Geographically speaking, historic and present-day Armenia includes lands of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Syria, and Turkey.) Operating on shoestring budgets, the LCO nevertheless explores compelling locations for a Campaign and goes about preparing the groundwork for the programs that follow. Sites are typically situated in picturesque villages with welcoming native populations. LCO fact-finders select sites that demonstrate a need for historical restoration or support in economic or community development. They then tailor a Campaign to meet the needs of the projects as well as the needs of the indigenous population (not to mention our budget). This includes hiring local specialists, arranging for equipment, supplies to be purchased and delivered to the site, and preparing lodgings that are specific in the number of volunteers these sites can accommodate. We carefully select sites where we feel we can enrich territorial integrity, the lives of native dwellers, as well as that of the program participants.

THE CAMPAIGN SITES (Where exactly will I be?)

- I. The Republic of Armenia: Yeghvard and Azad
- II. The Republic of Mountainous Karabagh: Shushi



I. The Republic of Armenia:

II. The General Hospital of Shushi, NKR

The Shushi Central Regional Hospital was built in 1972 to provide for the medical needs of the inhabitants of the Shushi region. The hospital housed 110 beds, an emergency department, and a medical staff specializing in Internal and Infectious Diseases, Surgery, Obstetrics, Gynaecology, and Paediatrics.

The building also housed the polyclinic and all its departments, including Internal Medicine, Surgery, Neurology, Dermatology, etc. In addition, the building was equipped with x-ray machines, physical therapy equipment and specialists, and laboratories. The Paediatrics and Gynaecological polyclinic was housed in a separate building.

After the capture of Shushi by the Azeri's during the war, the hospital was confiscated and the infrastructure (internal walls, operating rooms, kitchen, and boiler), equipment, furniture, and medical instruments were stolen or destroyed.

Since the cease-fire, the polyclinic has undergone renovation. However, the hospital is currently in a miserable state of disrepair, unable to provide emergency service or attract a professional medical staff because of the unsanitary conditions, lack of modern medical equipment and instruments, emergency vehicles, or furniture. There are only 4

doctors currently on staff, including 1 surgeon and 3 Paediatricians. The residents of the Shushi region are in desperate need of care in the areas of obstetrics, Gynaecology, Anaesthesiology, internal medicine, and radiology. The medical needs of the communities in the Shushi region are growing, as the city and neighbouring villages are experiencing a population growth. In the past four years, our volunteers renovated a number of hospital rooms in the general admissions ward, as well as the delivery rooms. This year, LCO is very excited about continuing the renovation of the surgery rooms of the hospital to meet the growing medical needs of the population. While professional contractors will perform certain aspects of the renovation, our volunteers will perform necessary structural work such as repairing and painting walls, building frames and installing windows and doors, repairing floors, etc.

III. KESSAB, SYRIA

The LCO has been holding campaigns in the Kessab region for the last 14 years. The volunteers who choose to participate in this campaign will be living in the Village of Kaladouran. This picturesque village of 50 Armenian families borders the Mediterranean Sea and is near the city of Kessab, which has a summer population of 3,000. These are the descendants of Cilician Armenia, the last Kingdom of Armenia. Sadly, the Armenian population in this area has been dwindling over the years, and the Arab population is overrunning these villages that were once solely Armenian. Since 1999, the LCO has received grants from the Gulbenkian Foundation to purchase, restore, and preserve these ancient dwellings in their traditional Armenian style. One of the homes will be converted to an ethnographic museum. The following projects will be the focus of our 2005 campaign.

- The continued cultivation of a large parcel of land, including the planting of trees, vegetables, and the maintenance of its irrigation facilities;
- Continuation of the restoration of the Bedrossian and Casseyos homes, a cluster of ancient private homes located in the center of Kessab. The focus here will be on maintaining the Armenian architectural integrity of the original construction;
- Continuation of the operation of a local infirmary started years ago by LCO volunteers of the medical profession to serve the local Armenian population.

Volunteers will live in the Ashkarian home, one of the homes rebuilt by volunteers from past campaigns. Living conditions are quite comfortable – lunch and dinner are enjoyed together at a local cafe in the village of Kaladouran. After a hard day of work in the fields, one may opt to relax at a private beach on the Mediterranean Sea. Kessab does have a few stores and even a night life.

Please note: Unlike the campaigns in Armenia and Artsakh, the Kessab campaign is 3 weeks and offered only in the month of August.

SOME PAST PROJECTS:

I. THE VILLAGE OF SAGHMOSAVAN (ARMENIA)

The village of Saghmosavan is located in the Ashtarak region of the Republic of Armenia. It is some 40 minutes to the northwest of Yerevan, and lies on the banks of the Kazakh River. The awe-inspiring, medieval monastic complex of Saghmosavank is located in this village. This hauntingly beautiful structure can be seen from a distance as one approaches Saghmosavan. The enormous stone monastery and adjacent chapels stand on the edge of a ravine, and Mount Aragadz (the tallest mountain range in present-day Armenia) serves as a backdrop some distance away. The complex is made up of the church of St. Sion, the Gavit (a large ceremonial vestibule), the Library, St. Asdvadzadzin Church and etched obelisks (called khatchkars) inside and around the monastic complex. The complex began with the construction of St. Sion church in the early 13th century (1215) by Prince Vatchè Vatchoudian. Work continued for the remaining structures, and ended in 1255 with the building of the Library by Prince Kourid Vatchoudian. The Old Cemetery, dating from the 13th-14th centuries, is found in the northwest area of the complex. There are a number of notable khatchkars still standing.

The complex is built of dark red colored tufa stone intermingled at places by lighter, cinnamon colored Tufa. (Tufa is a sandstone found in abundance in Armenia. It has sponge-like pores, and comes in a variety of colors.) One of the best examples of Armenian medieval architecture, Saghmosavank has undergone numerous renovations throughout the ages. The 1988 earthquake did considerable damage to the main structure in the form of severe cracks in the walls and the roof. As a result, water leakage (which freezes during the winter months) has aggravated the damage. In previous years, our volunteers completed renovation of the Gavit, the Bell Tower, St. Asdvadzadzin Church, and parts of St. Sion. They dismantled the interior of the Gavit and repaired the weather-worn ceiling and interior. During this repair period, the volunteers discovered a concealed staircase near the main entrance of St. Asdvadzadzin that was probably used long ago as an escape route leading to the bottom of the gorge by the Kazakh River.

Our year 2000 volunteers continued to repair the damage to the monastic complex and renovated the three remaining edifices. This includes St. Sion Church, the Library, and the Cemetery. The volunteers worked under the guidance of such architects as Armen Haghazarian and Alik Ananian to perform the following tasks: clean walls that had been blackened by aging and weathering (St. Sion Church); construct a drainage system to prevent water seepage through the stone walls (Library); remove and replace stones in the rotunda (Library); fill cavities in walls; rebuild the roof; and replace floor slates in the library. In addition, on the northern spread of the monastery, there were pairs of Khatchkars leaning against a structurally weak wall. To preserve the valuable Khatchkars, this wall was demolished and rebuilt and the Khatchkars were carefully reset. Once this phase of the construction was completed, the renovation of the sacramental areas of the Saghmosavank monastery was complete.

In August of 2001, The LCO sponsored the *Patsoum*, or re-consecration, of the Saghmosavank Church. This ceremony served as part of the country-wide celebration of the 1700th anniversary of the establishment of Armenian Christendom. All volunteers serving on a campaign during this time were invited to attend and participate in the celebration.

For additional background about the history of Saghmosavank, refer to: Armenian Art by Patrick Donabedian and Jean-Michel Thierry. Please check out our list of Recommended Armenian Bookstores to order one.

II. THE REGION OF ATERPATAKAN (NORTHWEST IRAN)

One of the first sites on which the Land and Culture Organization established a renovation project were the Armenian monasteries and historical monuments located in the Aterpatakan region in the northwest of Iran. Through the years, starting in the 1970's, five major edifices were undertaken for restoration. These were: the St. Thadé Monastery, the St. Stepanos Protomartyr Monastery, the Dzordzor church, the Shepherd's chapel (Andrevorty) and the St. Sandukht church.

During the late 1970's, immediately following the Iranian revolution, the LCO presence in those regions became difficult. However, through our local friends and collaborators the restoration work continued albeit at a slower pace and without the direct physical involvement of the LCO. We continued to maintain our financial, moral and to some degree our technical input ever since.

With the onset of activities belonging to the 1700th anniversary of Christianity in Armenia, various programs have been developed. Along these lines, in the summer of 2000, a major pilgrimage was organized by the LCO to return to those sites and remember the roots of the LCO by participating in the pilgrimage and restarting our campaigns in the Aterpatakan region. As such, during late July and early August of last year, we organized a pilgrimage of 2 or 3 weeks to visit the monuments mentioned above coinciding with the feast day of St. Thaddeus on July 28, 2000 when many

pilgrims usually visit the monastery. The campaign was such an overwhelming success, that we resumed the campaign in Iran for 2001.

At this time, we are planning a pilgrimage sometime during the summer of 2004 to northern Iran and those historic sites. Please keep in touch with us through our e-mail address, phone number and website for more details to be forthcoming.

ITINERARY

FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS (what are the logistics?)

The LCO provides volunteers with the most up-to-date information available. Airline companies expect to experience scheduling changes in the coming summer months. Since departure dates and times are subject to change until further notice, please check with the LCO UK Team before making any permanent flight arrangements to France.

Officially, the LCO Summer Campaign begins and ends in Paris, France. Thus, all volunteers from are responsible for making their own flight arrangements to and from Paris.

PLEASE NOTE: The LCO offers both a 3-week and 4-week program for our campaigns in Armenia and Syria. However, the 3-week option will not be available to volunteers who selected to participate in a campaign in Karabagh.

COSTS AND WHAT'S INCLUDED

The LCO summer campaigns cost 1100 Euros for 4 weeks or 1000 Euros for 3 weeks.

This price covers:

Round trip airfare from Paris-Yerevan-Paris, or Paris-Kessab-Paris.

All expenses in Armenia or Syria (transportation from/to the airport, all meals, work site lodgings, visa arrangements, insurance, seven hotel nights in Yerevan for those of you going to Armenia or Mountainous Karabagh, group excursions, workshops, etc).

Converging in Paris

Upon arrival at Charles DeGaulle Airport, you will be greeted by our LCO European counterparts (Organization Terre et Culture) at a designated day and time at the specified departure terminal. Once the entire group has congregated and is ready to check in, your Armenia tickets will be distributed to you. (We advise that the group check their luggage as early as possible. The flight is scheduled to leave Paris at **TBC** (please revisit our website or keep in touch with the LCO UK Team for exact terminal and departure time). The flight to Yerevan is approximately 4 ½ hours.

Important: The Paris airport does not have any lockers and hence there is no place for you to check your luggage as you roam around the airport. Do not, under any circumstances, leave your luggage unattended at the Paris airport—even for a few minutes. Your luggage will not only be confiscated, but the airport police may very well destroy it. (This is not a joke – in fact it happened to one of our LCO volunteers on his return leg from Armenia).

DOUBLE CAMPAIGN or EXTENDED STAY IN ARMENIA

Some volunteers simply can't get enough of the homeland in one month's time. For those who choose to participate in July and August Campaigns in Armenia, Mountainous Karabagh or both, please be advised that during the last leg of the first session, you will return with volunteers to spend the final five days in Yerevan. Your hotel accommodations will remain in effect until the August group arrives, at which time you will pick up with your assignments and begin your August session with the new group. Those participating in Double Campaigns may be asked to help Group Leaders with the campaign and help to orient newcomers. Under no circumstances may volunteers participating in Double Campaigns remain at Campaign sites between the July and August sessions.

For those of you who are interested in extending your stay in Armenia beyond our program end date, we would also like to introduce you to a unique new opportunity through the Birthright Armenia add-on program. Birthright Armenia is a new, nonpartisan organization dedicated to building bridges between Armenians in the Diaspora and in Armenia by encouraging work or study programs which create opportunities for immersion into local life. If you meet their outlined criteria, you could qualify for this value added experience and receive a reimbursement for your air travel upon successful completion of all requirements! To learn more about the program, please visit the organization's Web site at www.birthrightarmenia.org.

EXTENDED STAYS IN PARIS

For those of you who want to spend time in Paris prior to the campaign or extend your stay in Paris upon return, you are of course free to do so. Our experience has been that volunteers returning from a Campaign forge bonds that inspire them to want to spend additional time with their newfound friends, and extend their stays after a Campaign. For advice on good accommodation in Paris please contact the LCO UK Team.

Keep in mind that if you arrive in Paris a few days early or stay later, all transportation and lodging expenses are your responsibility. However, we would ask you to please inform us of your departure date and details of where you will be staying in Paris in advance so that we can reach you in case of an emergency. For your reference, the address of the LCO office in Paris is:

Organization Terre et Culture
16 rue Notre Dame de Lorette,
75009 Paris.

THREE WEEK STAYS (what if I can't go for a whole month?)

Taking four weeks off is becoming increasingly difficult for those who aren't on university schedules. We realize how tough it can be to secure such leaves of absences. Although the official LCO Campaign in Armenia is a four week experience, and 99% of our volunteers take part in the Campaign together from beginning to end, we do allow those who cannot take four weeks to join us for only three weeks. All those who need to take part in this shortened Campaign are required to depart from Paris with the group in the beginning of July or August. From there, the LCO will make arrangements for your departure from Yerevan one week earlier. (Thus arrival date in Armenia remains the same and your departure date from Armenia is seven days earlier.) If you're planning a three-week stay, contact the LCO UK Team for approval (spaces are limited), and don't forget to print "three-week stay" on the front of your application form. Those who opt for three-week stays will unfortunately miss the 5 days of sightseeing in and around Yerevan at the end of the Campaign. Those of you who opt for three-week stays may travel alone on the return trip, and no arrangements are made for you upon return to Paris unless you specifically request it.

NOTE: 3-week option is not available to volunteers participating in a campaign in Karabagh.

Please remember to give your itinerary to the LCO UK Team once you have made your flight arrangements.

CAMPAIGN PROFILE

Arrival in Armenia

The LCO group will arrive in Armenia's [Zvartnots Airport](#) very early in the morning (probably 5 a.m.). Yerevan is 4 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time. At the crack of dawn, you'll go through airport Customs (be prepared for a long delay here). After you pass through Customs, LCO representatives will greet you and transport the group to a hotel in the center of the capital city. The travel time by bus from the airport into the center of Yerevan is about 30 minutes. If the skies are not too hazy, you should be able to see the gorgeous, universal symbol of Armenia -- Mount Ararat. Maybe being up at daybreak isn't so bad after all!

Orientation

Upon arrival at your hotel, you will have some time to rest that first morning. After lunch (served at the hotel), you will be given a short tour of the city. This is an ideal time to call home and announce your safe arrival, should you wish to. See our listing under Telephone Calls for details. You will also be given the opportunity to shop for your personal hygiene products and such. You will then attend a brief welcoming program. Attendance is mandatory. You will most likely meet representatives of the LCO in Armenia, the Program Coordinator, and the Group Leader who will join you on your site. During this orientation, you will receive a complete orientation package which includes information about your campaign, itinerary, rules, as well as important contacts. During this session, you'll also be presented with an overview of the history of the LCO, its philosophy, and its past projects. A detailed description of each work site will be presented. (Remember, we do our best to comply with volunteer's site requests, but sometimes overflow requires us to reassign volunteers to sites where they are needed.) During this orientation, volunteers assigned to the same site will

have a chance to get acquainted with each other and their respective Group Leaders. Then, LCO alumni, the Program coordinator and your Group Leaders will answer your questions. It is important that you learn as much as possible about our organization because once in Armenia, and also upon your return home, you will become a representative of the LCO, and spokesperson for the LCO experience.

Part of the orientation session will require a visit to a past LCO site such as Saghmosavank. The group will be bussed to these sites and briefed on the work done by previous volunteers. Then, an official welcoming dinner is planned for the group. After breakfast the next morning, you will break up into your groups. Along with your Group Leader, you will board your bus, and head off to your assigned Campaign site.

The Group Leaders

Each Campaign site has its own Group Leader who has been hand-picked by the LCO. Group Leaders are typically take-charge people who have been LCO volunteers in the past and keep coming back for more. They are most of the time from the Armenian Diaspora, and speak fluent Armenian and English, sometimes even French. They live and work alongside the group, and are part of the Campaign team. They meet with local chieftains, negotiate deals, and are generally responsible for you. We select Group Leaders who are quick on their feet, and know how to have a good time. They are also the types of people who have been entrusted to keep programs running on schedule. If you ever have any questions or concerns during the Campaign, please direct them to your Group Leader first. Should you need to contact our LCO office in Armenia in case of an emergency, the coordinates for the LCO office in Yerevan are:

LCO-Armenia/ Yergir Yev Mushagooyt office,
5 Vardanants Street, first basement,
Yerevan, 375010
ARMENIA
Tel: +374-1-52-91-71.

We are in the process of selecting our Group Leaders for each site from a pool of experienced applicants. **If you are a former LCO volunteer and are interested in becoming a Group Leader for a future Campaign, please contact us. We offer all-expense paid trips to qualified applicants.**

Arriving at Your Campaign Site

Upon arriving at your site, expect a walking tour of the village and an on-site orientation session led by the Group Leader. You will see where you will live, eat, and bathe. You will also visit the worksite and be greeted by locals. This includes hired hands such as cooks, drivers, and draftsmen selected by the LCO to guide you in your daily Campaign activities.

Daily Routines

Our Campaign days usually begin early in the morning. Wake-up is at 7:30 a.m., breakfast is at 8 a.m. In many cases, volunteers walk through the villages or hike the countryside to arrive to their work-sites. For long or arduous journeys, transportation is provided. Work begins at 9 a.m. Here, volunteers take cues from specialists and the Group Leader, both regulate work-site activity. (What kinds of work might you be doing? You could be shoveling and mixing cement, clearing away shrubs to make way for irrigation, transporting tufa stone, or spackling walls.) There will be a mid-day break for lunch, exploring, resting, and playing. Around 2 p.m., volunteers return to the sites and work until late afternoon. We work 5 ½ days per week. For Saturdays and Sundays, you will participate in organized excursions to historic sites. The sites you'll be visiting are mentioned in your orientation package. Please see the appendix attached for some typical excursion destinations.

We do realize that our volunteers are lay people, not architects, scientists or agriculturists. You will be given instructions on how to perform your work activities in a given area. With this said, please let us know if you do have special areas of expertise that the villagers could benefit from in an informal environment during your free-time hours (instructors could teach English, practitioners could treat patients), and if you know how to obtain tax-deductible supplies as donations.

A typical day at the worksite

8:00 – breakfast (fresh apricots, homemade bread and cheese with tea)
8:45 – walk through the village to work site (pick fruit off the trees)
9:00 – work (clean, paint, chizzle, dig, cut...)
12:00 – walk back home for a typical home made lunch prepared with tasty ingredients.

- 1:00 – rest (listen to music, write your diary or take a nap)
- 2:00 – back to work (more painting, digging and carrying stuff...)
- 5:00 – return home for an even yummier dinner. Clean up and swim in the village river, sun dry yourself. Get invited to a villagers' home for coffee, drinks, music...
- 6:30 – organize a soccer tournament with the village youth while others practice hobbies like painting or playing a musical instrument.
- 8:00 – meet the village mayor to discuss issues regarding the development of the village and the region.
- 9:00 - Get invited to a villagers' home for coffee, drinks, music
- 9:30 – have a campfire near the center, in front of an old church. Locals gather and join you in singing and story telling.

Housing

Each site is unique not only in the experience gained, but also as to on-site amenities (or lack thereof). In the past 15 years, sites with basic conditions required that volunteers live in tents, and make use of the great outdoors. While all present sites provide roofed housing, be prepared for the lack of modern conveniences. There, volunteers walk to washstands and outhouses. In some cases, you live in facilities where there are no private bedrooms. These are simply communal quarters—some with matted bunks/cots, so please bring a sleeping bag and appropriate sleepwear. (See our What to Bring list.) All volunteers are responsible for the upkeep of their dwellings and take turns participating in daily chores, such as housecleaning, washing, and helping in the kitchen.

Dining

The LCO makes every effort to ensure that the food you are served is wholesome and palatable. With this in mind, please remember to take precautions of your own. As succulent and fresh as they are famous for being, raw fruits and vegetables in Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh may initially have an adverse effect on your system. Even as you become more accustomed to your surroundings, remember to wash and peel all fruits and vegetables. Remember, you are here for only four weeks, it would be a shame to stay behind because of some illness.

On site in Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh, the LCO hires a cook who prepares three meals a day for the volunteers. You can expect to eat traditional Armenian food, which ranges from omelets to lavash (Armenian flat bread) and tell *banir* (string cheese) roll-ups for breakfast, to stuffed grape leaves, and eggplant casseroles for dinner, and fruits for dessert. Every few days, volunteers take turns having the unique experience of grocery shopping at the indoor/outdoor markets, and will learn how to barter for purchases. Foods prepared on-site will depend on what is available at the local markets, seasonal costs, as well as storage methods at the Campaign site. While you will eat meat like lamb, beef, chicken, and pork, it will most likely not be every day, depending on availability. Please remember that this is a Campaign in a developing country.

As a rule, volunteers dine together, and clean up together. Mealtimes are when major announcements are made. In many cases, your Campaign will be in high altitudes, and you will be using up a lot of energy, so it is doubly important to be present at mealtime to keep up your strength. If you have dietary restrictions, please scroll to our What to Bring portion and check our suggestions under the Nutrition category.

There will be times where groups celebrate special occasions and feast with locals. Armenian hospitality is a marvellous thing you will remember for years to come. Please keep in mind that your stomachs are not accustomed to foods that natives can consume with ease. While it's great to have an open mind about eating dishes you've never tried before, don't be bashful about declining offers of food. Natives may try to insist, but they will not be insulted. Please remember that local alcohol (such as mulberry, pomegranate and apricot brandies, or vodka) is far tastier (and stronger) than anything you have ever consumed at home. Please know your limit and exercise restraint.

While in Yerevan, the group will dine together at local restaurants, and even roadside kebab stands, depending on the itinerary for the day. Meals during these excursions are paid for by the LCO. If you choose to dine on your own, payment will be your own responsibility.

Water for Drinking and Washing

Regardless of your Campaign site, please take necessary precautions to adjust to local water conditions. Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh in particular are famous for their delicious mountain spring and mineral waters. However, when you first arrive in Armenia, Mountainous Karabagh, or Syria, as much as possible, drink bottled water until you adjust. In some cases, running water may not always be nearby, or plentiful. Please conserve. Keep canteens full and fill them when you see safe drinking water. Some of you may wish to bring water-purifying pills, but it is not required.

In Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh, bathing arrangements are made for the volunteers. In some cases, special facilities are built for volunteers. In others, a schedule is set with local families for volunteers to take turns accessing private wash rooms and bath houses. Please be prepared for occasions in which you may not have access to a shower or bath every day. Be primed to improvise with a sponge bath, garden hose, or dip in a river.

Power and Fuel

Armenia is still recovering from an economic blockade from neighboring Turkey and Azerbaijan, as well as the devastating earthquake that affected 1/3 of the country in 1988. Please operate under the assumption that even with proper converters, electricity may be sporadic or unavailable. (The electrical power supply in Armenia is AC 220 Volts, 50Hz via sockets for 2-pin plugs.) Keep this in mind if you intend on bringing a blow dryer or heat disinfecting unit for contact lenses. We strongly recommend that you towel dry your hair instead and invest in chemical disinfecting units. (For all locations, veterans recommend that contact lens wearers bring along a spare pair of eyeglasses since high winds and dustiness is common at work sites.) Torches will be useful after sunset. As for fuel, we use what our group needs, but are considerate about the use for cooking and traveling. Please remember to conserve.

Your Life in the Village

While your first priority must always be your work, there are ample opportunities to get into the swing of life in the village. During your free time, we encourage you to take part in the activities in your host village. The locals are just as curious about you as you are about them. On your off hours, feel free to accept invitations to watch your new neighbours participate in old-fashioned daily rituals such as bread-baking, farming, herding, and bee-keeping. Locals will love interaction with newcomers, and will invite you for coffee and festivities in their homes to get better acquainted. By all means go! But please keep your eye on the clock so that your leisure time does not conflict with your work commitments.

Just a few of the recreational activities LCO volunteers have enjoyed in past years include taking mountain hikes and spontaneous swims, learning about local history and folklore, and participating in local celebrations. The possibilities are really up to you. One year, a volunteer brought construction paper and a few quarts of glitter and taught children arts and crafts during her free-time periods. (They later taught her to make some traditional Armenian handicrafts.) Another couple went prepared to mingle with the locals, and with only ingenuity as their game-prop, kept 20 rambunctious children occupied for hours at a time. You may choose to bring a football or a baseball bat and a mitt to organize and teach the village kids a new game. What about bringing a Polaroid camera with film to take pictures of families and give it to them as a souvenir. These are some ideas. Please feel free to come up with your own. You may bounce some ideas off the LCO UK Team, or once there your Group Leader or Program Coordinator at any time.

Group Exchanges and Visitors Policy

Whenever possible, just before the Campaign is over, each group spends half a day at the other group's work site to see where and how they live, and to exchange their experiences.

If you have relatives or friends in Armenia, not too far from the worksite, you may choose to spend your weekends with them, as long as they pick you up at the work site after work hours on Friday, and bring you back by 9 p.m. the following Sunday night. For reasons of security, no volunteer will be permitted to leave the site alone. Keep in mind that there will be more time at the end of the trip, in Yerevan, to spend time with friends and relatives. Please understand that our policy prohibits volunteers from leaving the group (day or evening) during the work week. Ultimately, we are responsible for your whereabouts.

Excursions

There is much to see and do in Armenia. Your Group Leaders and Program Coordinator will be planning activities that are both fun and interesting. LCO volunteers can expect to go on local excursions (hiking to a nearby cave dwelling, picnicking in the countryside and swimming in a local lake) on weekday evenings and longer ones (bussed to nearby ruins and historic sites) on Saturdays and Sundays. These itineraries will vary depending on the location to which you are assigned. If you know of a specific place you'd like to see, be sure to ask your LCO representatives about it. If it is do-able, we'll try to make it happen. Remember, these activities take place during non-working hours. Please see the additional information on typical excursion destinations.

Back in the City (activities and tours)

At the end of the month, the group will spend five days in Yerevan. This is the only time when you may sometimes depart from the Campaign schedule, if you wish to. Workshops and meetings are planned with artists, repatriates and government officials. All meals are available to you, but attendance is not mandatory to all of them. Tour buses are

available to take you on trips to the most famous sites in Armenia. Normally, the groups visit the ancient temple of Garni, the monastery/caves of Geghard, Etchmiadzin—the Vatican City of Armenia, and Lake Sevan National Park. These trips are also voluntary. If you wish to explore the city on your own and not attend these trips or activities, you must notify the Program Coordinator. Also, if you plan to stay some place other than the hotel specified by the LCO, please notify the Program Coordinator of your whereabouts, and provide them with contact information so that you can be reached in an emergency. On the very last night we ask everyone to join us for a farewell dinner. Here, final announcements will be made regarding the specific meeting time and place for airport departures. Attendance is mandatory.

Currency and Telephone Calls

The Dram is the local currency. At present the exchange rate is approximately 465 Drams/1 US\$ and 650/Euro. These currencies can be exchanged almost anywhere within Armenia. Traveler checks and credit cards are not widely accepted. Banks and exchange bureaus in Yerevan exchange foreign currency, and we advise that you exchange about \$50 before you leave for your work site to account for incidental expenses.

International calls can be made from Yerevan at any post office or in one of the many internet call providers. The cost per minute to call the North America is 100 Drams and Europe about 300 Drams. Please keep in mind that it's not so easy (sometimes impossible) to make international calls from the Campaign sites.

Security

In general, Armenia is quite a safe place. However, just like any new place you visit, be mindful of your surroundings. There will not be much opportunity to dress up as you would at home, so leave your party clothes and valuables at home. Don't flaunt what you have, and don't leave items unattended. As you gain familiarity with your new surroundings, remember your landmarks and travel in groups.

To have a better understanding of the LCO projects, please visit our PAST PROJECTS page on the LCO USA website. www.lcousa.org. UK website coming soon!

PART II -- Administration

ACTION ITEMS (Now that I'm joining, what needs to be done quickly?)

Upon acceptance into the program, the following items must be sent to us by to ensure sufficient time to reserve your place in the Campaign.

PICTURE

As part of the application process, we will need 2 passport size pictures or an electronic version in jpeg format. This will be used as a reference for our records.

VISA

Visas will be arranged for you by the LCO UK Team.

NOTE: Remember, the **expiration date of your passport** must be later than the date of your return.

Medical Form

We recommend you make an appointment with your doctor soon to have the enclosed Medical Form filled out in a timely manner. This process is necessary to ensure a safe and secure environment for ALL participants.

Waiver Form

While we take every precaution to make our work sites safe, we cannot guarantee against accidental injury. Enclosed is a Waiver releasing the LCO from any liability in the event that you are injured during your trip. Please execute this personally and have it witnessed.

Before signing this form, it is mandatory that you read the attached Rules of the LCO Campaign. Returning the signed waiver verifies that you have read the Rules in their entirety and affirms your commitment to abide by these Rules as a condition of participation in the LCO Campaign.

NB: The whole trip is fully insured.

Payment

In order to process your action items, payment should accompany your completed application form. Payment is to be made by transfer to the LCO France central bank account. Details will be made available to the volunteer as and when they commit to the program. Payment must be made no later than one month prior to departure. Please see the costs section for exact prices.

Refund Policy

As mentioned earlier, LCO scouts take great pride (and pains) to go on fact-finding missions in order to select sites that demonstrate a need for development. They then prepare work programs and set up lodgings that are specific in the number of people these areas can accommodate. As a result, we select applicants carefully. This is also why we must maintain a strict policy regarding trip cancellations once spaces have been secured. With this in mind, we do, however, understand that family emergencies or medical mishaps may occur. If you are unable to participate in a Campaign after you have committed to the program, fifty percent (50%) of your payment may be refunded, AS LONG AS you notify us at least two weeks prior to the date of departure. If you must cancel your trip for non-emergency or non-medical reasons at any point before the departure date, we're sorry, but absolutely no refunds can be made.

Membership

Membership in the LCO includes discounts on future Campaign costs, a free subscription to *Tebi Yergir*, access to merchandise such as LCO T-shirts and videos, notifications about year-round events and reunions, eligibility to vote at our annual General Assemblies, and peace of mind that your membership dollars are going toward programs that preserve cultural and territorial integrity! All British Campaign volunteers must be current members of the LCO. If you have not yet paid your subscription or are not yet a member of the LCO, please send a cheque payable to the Land & Culture Organization when you post us your action items. Membership subscription is £15 per year.

Reminder Checklist of the Action Items you must send us

- 2 Passport size photos (could be electronic)
- Bank transfer of full costs

- Membership subscription
- Medical form (completed AND signed)
- Waiver form (signed)

Please send these Items to a member of the LCO UK team. We will provide a postal address.

NOTE: Once we have received these action items, we will make arrangements for obtaining a plane ticket for your round trip flight from Paris to Yerevan or Kessab. (Your airline ticket will be distributed to you at the Charles DeGaulle/Paris Airport immediately prior to boarding the flight.)

RULES OF THE CAMPAIGN (What is expected of me?)

If you wish to fully enjoy your experience with LCO here are some guidelines which we advise you to take on board.

PACE YOURSELF

Remember to take it easy for the first few days, no matter what great shape you think you're in. You'll be amazed at what new muscles will be aching after the first day or two. Those with bad backs should be especially conscious of pacing themselves and the stance used when shovelling and hauling heavy loads. While we encourage you to socialize with each other and the locals, do not stay up all night so that you are too weak to work the next morning. Your Group Leader has the right to establish a "lights out" time. All volunteers must be responsive to morning wake-up calls. It is not the responsibility of the Group Leader to drag you out of bed. You must be out of bed no later than 8:30 a.m. and must eat something for breakfast.

PRECAUTIONS

We know Armenian skin does not typically burn, but at the altitudes we will be working, it will. So, even the most olive-skinned of us need a high-level protection sun-screen (use an SPF 15 at the very min.) and a hat. Remember, at approximately 2,000 meters above sea level, the air is thinner than that to which you're accustomed.

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Whether the food tastes amazing or not (we think it does), it is wholesome and you need your strength. We cannot afford to have people faint at the work site, especially in the hot sun. This is not the time to diet. If you want to lose weight, you will do better by eating hearty meals and getting your workouts from the programs. Try to never eat any unwashed fruit or vegetable. The local residents will often invite you to eat and drink with them. Accept the invitation only after work hours. (Your primary reason for volunteering with the LCO is to work on a designated project. Entertainment is secondary.) Local alcohol is very potent, so temper your intake. **Excessive behaviour** associated with alcoholic consumption is cause for immediate dismissal from the group. Likewise, possession and/or use of narcotics will NOT be tolerated. All meals are included within the price paid to the LCO, however you must take the meals with the LCO. If you decide to eat meals at different times or at different locations than those set by the LCO, you do so at your own cost with the permission of the Group Leader. LCO shall not reimburse you for any cost associated with such meals.

KEEP YOUR WITS ABOUT YOU

Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh are in a transitional period. Learn to be patient. Keep your cool if certain things do not go exactly as planned. No matter which site you select, remember that we are guests of that country. Be flexible and open-minded. We all love adventure—as long as it is safe. Do not associate with radicals or shady characters. We do not wish to cause the LCO trouble and potentially make it difficult for other volunteers in the future. Even though Armenians from all over the world feel a special attachment to the historic Armenian homeland, remember that every ethnic group has a few bad apples—even us. NEVER give anyone money (even if it is in exchange for Dram). Be wary of those who ask for gifts. Typically, those who ask do not need and it is the humble ones who need it the most. Please see our comments about mementos in the section called Recommended Gift Items.

BE ADAPTABLE

This experience will be whatever you make of it. Seek out special memories, mingle with the locals, explore the village, and get to know everyone in your group, not just the ones with the same background as you. Even if you don't speak Armenian, you will be surprised at how well you can get to know each other using gestures and phrases you pick up. It gets to be fun and, in the end, you'll make amazing lifelong friends from all around the globe. Since you will be with each other twenty-four hours a day, you will get to know one another very well—and that means living with everyone's good points and bad ones. Be open-minded and work over any differences in each other's daily habits. Do not be a "stubborn Armenian". Seek out friendships with your fellow volunteers and work to overcome any problems the language or cultural barriers may cause. Avoid creating a clique. Finally, remember you are a representative of the Western world and/or Armenian Diaspora. Carry yourself accordingly. Act maturely and responsibly. Avoid conflicts with local residents. When traveling outside the work site, especially to temples of worship and the city of Yerevan, be respectful.

TAKE INITIATIVE

Even though the LCO is an organized Campaign with Group Leaders, we expect every volunteer to take initiative to make the Campaign run smoothly. Do not look to the leader to always answer your questions...try to find some yourself. Although our leaders are veteran volunteers, they may not have previously served at your location, so remember, they do not have all the answers. They are there to guide and assist the volunteers, and deal with emergencies. Please keep in mind that the representatives of LCO Armenia, LCO France, and LCO USA that help you throughout the pre-Campaign and Campaign time-frames are volunteers just like you. They do not work for you, but with you. Therefore, they are not expected to clean up after you or cater to your every need.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

All of us must roll up our sleeves and pitch in together for the Campaign to run successfully. We work with the general philosophy of a cooperative venture. Every volunteer must pitch in and help each other. If the tools need to be carried back, do not wait for the leader to ask you; pick them up and take them. If you see dirty cups around the site, take them to the stream and rinse them off, even if you only used one. If water bottles are empty and you hear running water in the middle of the night, get up and fill all the water bottles—not just yours. Keep up a strong work ethic. Slacking off not only reflects badly on you, but on the entire LCO organization. Take your commitments seriously or else, in future years, our host countries will not take the LCO seriously.

COMMUNICATE

Test your Armenian-language skills! As you know, the LCO attracts volunteers of Armenian descent who hail from all over the world. As a result, Armenian becomes the universal language. If you know it well (eastern or western), try not to rely on your English at all. If you know a little, use it as much as possible and you will be amazed how much you will improve in one month. If you do not know it at all, ask your fellow volunteers how to say certain key words and phrases. That will be enough to get by. For those of you not fluent in Armenian, please take a look at our section on Communication Tools for information on how to prepare for the language barrier. You may also visit our Links page for interesting sites on Armenian Language.

BE AWARE OF LCO VISITATION POLICIES

If you have relatives or friends in Armenia, be aware of visitation rules: Relatives and friends can pick you up at the site on Friday afternoon through 9 p.m. on Sunday. Before departing, you must inform the Group Leader of where and with whom you are going. While friends and family can visit mid-week after the work day is complete, they cannot take you off-site, and it is forbidden to hitch a ride to meet someone at a designated location. No LCO member can leave work and the group Monday through Friday. Please observe these rules. Make friends and relatives aware of the rules so they do not waste hours driving and be disappointed. We are responsible for you. The LCO Campaign is not like a backpacking trip through Europe, nor is it a tourist adventure. Your number one priority is your Campaign and commitment to the group.

OBSERVE EXCURSION POLICIES

LCO plans hikes and day trips to nearby locations. If you have a special request, talk to your Group Leader so we can try to incorporate them in the few weekends we will have. The Program Coordinator and Group Leaders will discuss itineraries with you during the Orientation session on day one of your trip. We are flexible and can adapt certain aspects of the program. As we've said before, this is not a tourist junket, and there simply is not ample time to see and do everything.

OBSERVE GIFT-GIVING POLICIES

If you want to give a small personal memento to a villager or a child that you become close to during your stay, feel free to do so. We do ask, however, that you save gift-giving until the last day. While it is a nice gesture to give, you are not obliged to and should not feel pressured by anyone. Many veteran volunteers have found that when they start giving early in the month, they were hounded every day thereafter. It will pay to take your time getting to know people. By the end of the month you will have a better feel for who is truly a friend and who needs. That's when the beautiful feeling of giving is worthwhile. Please consult our section on suggested gifts in the What to Bring category.

OBSERVE DUTY POLICIES

Please note that the purchase of all antiques and valuable art (carpets and paintings) must be registered with the Ministry of Culture if you are to transport them out of the country. While you are in Yerevan, your Program Coordinator will advise you on the procedure for obtaining the proper paperwork. Please remember that obtaining permissions from

and making payments to the Ministry of Culture is the sole responsibility of the volunteer. Failure to act on these items will guarantee heavy fines and confiscation of purchased goods upon departure from Armenia's Zvartnots Airport.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A FULLFILLING EXPERIENCE

From past volunteers' experiences we have a few suggestions for prospective volunteers to bear in mind in order to enjoy their trip fully.

HAVE FUN CREATING YOUR OWN ENTERTAINMENT

Remember, you will be in very remote locations, with no modern distractions such as TV sets or video games. We will rely on our own resources for entertainment. So, brush up on your art of conversation, bring a deck of cards, a musical instrument, or a Frisbee. Avoid bringing anti-social items such as a Walkman. Your fellow volunteers rely on you to entertain them as much as you will rely on them for the same. You may bring along a Polaroid camera and snap pictures of children and families in the village and hand it to them on the spot. You will make many of them happy with this type of gifts. You may also choose to teach a group of young children some crafts or a game of football. The key is to be creative and open-minded.

DOCUMENT YOUR TRIP

Keep a journal. Many of you will come home and write articles or give talks and slide shows about your experiences. Having it all written down or tape-recorded will help save every small memory and experience. It will also help when the time comes to complete your LCO Campaign evaluation, and contribute to the LCO newsmagazine, *Tebi Yergir*. Please check our website to find out more. One volunteer video taped his experience with the assistance of the LCO made a 30 minute film entitled *Tebi Yergir, 2002 Datev Experience*.

BE SENSIBLE WITH MONEY

Do not exchange a lot of money at once. You may end up with excess Dram that you may not have time to exchange upon departure.

GET INVOLVED!

Do get involved in village life. Most villagers will be welcoming and one of most memorable aspects of the project will be the personal connections that you make and the feeling of satisfaction from your contribution and what the project achieves.

ABOVE ALL ELSE HAVE FUN!!

Part III: Guide to Preparing and Packing The Checklists

WHAT TO BRING

While the LCO can help make your trip the best it can be, your cooperation and attention to detail is essential. Please use our guide to help make your trip to Armenia as comfortable and memorable as possible. Choose loose, comfortable-fitting clothing for Campaign activities, and a few presentable outfits for touring the countryside and city night-life (plunging necklines and short skirts are not appropriate apparel at work sites or in temples of worship). Most work sites are at high elevations, so even in summertime, temperatures vary from 90° F during the day to 40° F at night. Please pack both light and heavy-weight garments accordingly. Optional items have been asterisked but bear in mind this list is just a guide. If you are unsure about any items please contact the LCO UK Team who will be happy to talk you through what to pack.

Documents

- address book*
- currency (cash, credit card, traveler's checks) Please bring bills in small denominations that are fairly new. Damaged bills or those with writing on them are sometimes difficult to exchange.
- map of Armenia/Yerevan*
- passport and visa
- pens and pencils
- reading material (books, magazines)*
- travel diary or journal

Clothing Items

- 1 smart shirt
- 2 smart trousers/skirts/dress (for sight-seeing/dining out)
- 10 pairs of underclothes
- 8 pairs of athletic socks and 2 pairs of smart socks
- pyjamas (flannel and light-weight-please choose modest attire, there is little privacy)
- 3 pairs of jeans, khakis, sweatpants or work trousers
- 4 pairs of shorts (no short-shorts, please)
- 7 short sleeve T-shirts
- 2 long sleeve sweat shirts or flannel shirts
- 1 heavy sweater, knit or fleece jacket or a hooded wind-breaker
- hat(s) for midday sun protection
- a pair of work/hiking boots
- 1 pair of trainers
- 1 pair of smart shoes
- 1 pair of flip-flops/sandals for walking and the showers/beach
- 2 large bath/beach towels
- 1 wash cloth
- swim suit(s)
- belt(s)

Toiletries (enough quantities to last a month) You can get most of these items on site. However, if you have preference of a specific brand you may opt to bring along. LCO will make time during the first day to allow you a mini-shopping spree for such items that are *italicized* below.

- *bar of soap*
- *body creams and lotions*
- *comb and brush*
- *cologne/after-shave**
- *cotton swabs*
- *deodorant*
- *eye drops**
- *foot powder**

- *hair gel/mousse**
- *hand mirror**
- *insect repellent*
- *lip balm*
- *moistened/alcohol towelettes* (for disinfection)
- personal hygiene items
- *safety pins*
- shampoo and conditioner
- shaving items
- sunscreen
- tissue packs
- toothbrush and toothpaste
- toilet paper (5 rolls, with inner tubes removed)
- sewing kit
- spare pair of glasses/contacts
- solution/cleaners for contact lenses (choose chemical over heat disinfectants as electrical outlets cannot be guaranteed at some work sites)

Equipment

- sleeping bag/fleece blanket
- 2 pairs of work gloves (IMPORTANT)
- a backpack for day trips*
- a thermos/canteen
- torch(es) and batteries
- adapter for electrical appliances (the power supply is AC 220 Volts, 50Hz via sockets for 2-pin plugs)
- all-purpose combination locks (not all work site accommodations have locking doors)
- a calculator*
- a camera (with security strap), film (6 rolls or more are recommended), and batteries
- a laundry bag*
- *laundry detergent* (biodegradable)
- a portable clothesline*
- a Swiss Army knife*
- a travel alarm clock
- a tape recorder, cassettes, batteries*
- a first aid kit* (the site leader will also have one)
- medicine (pain reliever, indigestion, constipation, diarrhea remedy, cold/flu)
- adhesive bandages*
- anti-bacterial spray/cream (Bactine, Neosporin, etc.)
- water purification tablets*

Nutrition

Although balanced meals will be provided, meat can be a rarity at some Campaign sites. Feel free to bring vitamin supplements and other items to reinforce your energy. Some veteran volunteers suggest:

- crackers*
- Granola bars/Power bars*
- instant soup*
- peanut butter*
- vitamins*

Please remember that international customs regulations prohibit the transport of live foodstuffs such as meat, cheese, fruits, or vegetables.

Recreational items

LCO volunteers rely on their own resources and creativity for entertainment during free-time. Consider bringing some of the following:

- a mini backgammon/chess set
- a musical instrument
- playing cards
- songbooks or sheet music
- a soccer ball (they can be bought in Yerevan before you leave for your Campaign site)
- a baseball or tennis balls
- a Frisbee

Sticky items (things to have by your side at all times)

Again and again, veterans tell us that in order to account for the unexpected, they got used to carrying the following items around all the time:

- tissues, baby wipes, and other hygiene items
- a sweatshirt/hat for inclement weather
- a water bottle
- a torch
- a pad and pen

Recommended Gift Items for the Villagers

As stated earlier, if you are thinking about bringing items that you wouldn't mind leaving behind with a local villager you may befriend, we have some suggestions. Instead of bringing candy or gum, consider bringing items not easily obtained in Armenia or Karabagh. Recent volunteers have stressed the importance of practical gifts. Some generous volunteers have even been known to leave everything but the shirts off their backs. Another example, one volunteer received permission to photograph each member of her host village, and later sent each villager his/her photograph. Some gift suggestions:

For adults:

- medicine/first aid kits
- a torch or lantern
- car tools (wrenches, screw drivers, pliers, etc.)
- a sleeping bag
- work boots and footwear of any kind
- a Swiss Army knife or Leatherman utility kit
- sanitary supplies
- batteries of all sizes
- T-shirts
- work gloves
- toothpaste
- make up

For children (lots of things for them at the local market that are both cheap and essential):

- toys (soccer balls, volleyball nets, jump ropes, dolls)
- blank notebooks
- coloring books
- crayons, pencils, and pens
- erasers and pencil sharpeners
- activity kits of any kind

PACKING TIPS

In past years, volunteers have found that the less they bring, the lighter the load, and the easier the trip. We can't emphasize this enough, and it is important to remember that all volunteers are required to handle their own baggage during the trip. Remember to choose a suitcase with locks to keep belongings secure when left in hotel rooms and at work site lodgings.

Some more suggestions:

- Pack a small carry-on bag of "essentials" that contains your money, passport, visa, jewellery, keys, camera, eyeglasses/contacts, medications, toiletries, fragile objects, and other items needed to get through one morning should your luggage stray.
- Line your luggage with plastic to protect contents from leaks/water damage.
- To conserve space, fill shoes with socks and handbags with small items that need extra protection.
- Split up your contents if you're taking more than one piece of luggage so that you still have a bit of everything in case one suitcase gets lost.
- Pack a piece of collapsible baggage inside your suitcase for holding purchases on your return.
- Create an inventory of all the things you plan to take. This will alert you if you're taking too many things, and remind you of what you have brought once you arrive. It will also help jog your memory when filling out customs declarations (and filing insurance claims should there be a loss).
- Label your luggage, both outside and inside. Transparent laminated luggage tags containing your business card work well and avoid advertising the address of your unoccupied home.
- Take carry-on luggage that does not exceed the following size (and weight) restrictions for storage: under airline seats—9" x 14" x 22" ; in overhead compartments—10" x 14" x 36" ; in cabin closets—4" x 23" x 45"
- Be aware of foreign baggage policies. If you are flying to Armenia directly from North America with a layover in Paris of one day or less, you are to check-in 2 pieces of luggage; each bag may not exceed 32 kilos (about 70 pounds). However, if you are coming from within Europe, you are allowed to check in one piece of luggage with a maximum weight of 20 kilos (44 pounds). This means that, for volunteers arriving from outside of Europe who are planning to visit Paris a few days prior to departure to Armenia, they may have difficulty checking in two pieces of luggage. We know this is terribly unfair, but they are VERY strict about applying this policy and the charge for overweight luggage is quite high. Therefore, it is to your advantage to pack prudently and lightly.

SOUVENIR SHOPPING (What's good to get?)

Although room and board is prepaid as part of your payment to the LCO, bring some spending money to cover the cost of souvenirs, snacks and meals not taken with the LCO. Plan to bring at least \$300-\$500 for souvenirs. If you are using U.S. dollars or Euros, which are widely accepted forms of payment, it is preferable to have clean, crisp bills. Travelers check and credit cards could ONLY be used in banks and a few stores.

Wondering what's worth buying?

Armenia is widely known for its award-winning brandies. You can find many local shops in Yerevan that sell such distinctive brands as Ararat, Dvin, and Nairi. Armenian craftspeople are renowned for producing beautiful and intricate merchandise like rugs, backgammon boards, traditional dolls, and eclectic jewellery. Visiting Vernissage is worthwhile while in Yerevan. Craftspeople and merchants from all over the country showcase their wares at the country's largest outdoor bazaar. Vernissage is open all day Saturday and Sunday. If you're interested in purchasing larger scale items (such as oriental carpets and fine art) keep in mind that such merchandise can cost a minimum of \$100-500 each, depending on the quality and location of your purchase. Please note that all purchases of original carpets, artwork, or other valuables must be registered with the Ministry of Culture if you are to transport them out of the country. (This takes several days so make sure you speak to you Program Coordinator for guidance such as providing you with the address and business hours for the Ministry of Culture.)

Please Note: All LCO volunteers are responsible for the registration, approval, and duty payments on souvenir purchases. Failure to secure the appropriate paperwork for your purchases will guarantee heavy fines and confiscation of purchased goods upon departure from Yerevan's Zvartnots Airport.

PREP RESOURCES (Want to find out MORE about the ins-and-outs of a Summer Campaign?)

- Request news clips about the LCO as well as a copy of the LCO news magazine, *Tebi Yergir* (Armenian for "Toward the Land").
- Request a free copy of a sight and sound video you can screen at home. *Beyond Commitment* is a 15-minute documentary produced by filmmaker and veteran LCO-USA Campaign volunteer/Board Member Serj Minassians AND *Tebir Yegir* is a 30 minute DVD about the 2002 Datev campaign prepared by Shant Minas a 3 time former volunteer/site leader. These resources, both informational and visually attractive, explain why so many people join an LCO Campaign, and what they get out of the experience.
- Ask us to connect you with former volunteers who've experienced the campaign (all of the LCO UK Team are). They can walk you through the entire program, and offer you advice from a "been there, done that" perspective.

- For details, contact us at: landandculture@hotmail.com and see the contact section for LCO Team members' phone numbers.

Other Resources

Want to know EVEN MORE about Armenia than what we've provided with this Info Pack? Need tips about the climate and cuisine; people and their professions; lifestyles and living conditions; history? Then check out our LINKS page or look for the following books from the public library or by contacting one of our recommended Armenian Bookstores. Each of the books listed below are quick and snappy reads, written in a simple, direct format. They are also filled with color photos, maps, fast facts, and timelines

Armenia: A Rugged Land, An Enduring People by Lucine Kasbarian (Discovering Our Heritage series, Dillon Press/Simon & Schuster, 1998)

Armenia by Sakina Dhillawala (Cultures of the World series, Marshall Cavendish Publishers, 1997)

Armenia: Then and Now by Lerner Geography Dept. (Then and Now series, Lerner Books, 1993)

The Armenian Earthquake by Chris Engholm (*World Disasters series, Lucent Books, 1989*)

Goodbye Diaspora feature news article by Tony Halpin (Cover story, Armenian International Magazine, February 1993).

For background about Armenian art and architecture, take a look at one of the following books. All offer historical background, full-color photos, and English-language sections.

Armenian Art by Patrick Donabedian and Jean-Michel Thierry (Harry Abrams Publishers, 1989)

Documents of Armenian Architecture by Armen and Agopik Manoukian (23 editions in the series, Oemme Edizioni Publishers)

Treasures of Etchmiadzin Editorial and Photographic Compilation (Etchmiadzin Publishers, 1984)

Please see our website for more information and also links to other useful websites with information about Armenia.
www.lcousa.org

Communication Tools

Need to brush up on your Armenian, but don't speak the language or read the script?

Pick up a copy of *Armenian Dictionary in Transliteration* by Thomas Samuelian. This English-Armenian/Armenian-English dictionary is written in English and focuses on the Western Armenian dialect. Western Armenian dialect is spoken in Armenian communities of Syria, Lebanon, Europe, North and South America, and other nations west of present-day Armenia. Note that the spoken dialect in Armenia is the Eastern.

For those of you who read Armenian script, try the pocket-size *Hippocrene Concise Dictionary—English-Armenian/Armenian-English* by Diana and Susanna Aroutunian. This volume is specifically produced with words from the Eastern Armenian dialect, which is, again, the spoken language in the Republic of Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh.

Find out about Tom Samuelian's new Armenian-learn software program.

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And don't forget to visit our website (www.lcousa.org). UK website coming soon!

Join us this summer, in Armenia!