

# LIFE IN ARMENIA

FOR DIGITAL NOMAD FAMILIES

## ARMENIA GOES INTERSTELLAR

HOSTING AUSTRIAN SPACE FORUM  
MARS ANALOG SIMULATION

## ESCAPE THE CONCRETE JUNGLE

HOW IJEVAN'S NATURAL PARADISE  
IS THE ULTIMATE OFFICE UPGRADE

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APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup> 2023 | NO. 3 | LIFE IN ARMENIA



# MATHEW ZEIN

## EDITOR'S LETTER

Seven years ago, I visited Armenia with my wife for tourism, but little did we know it would be a trip that would change our lives forever. Armenia had us under its spell, and before we knew it, we were fully captivated by its “imperfectly perfect” charm.

Fast forward a decade of life with my wife as digital nomads, and we were ready to start a family. As fate would have it, we found our forever home in Armenia, where we welcomed our first son in 2022.

In a world where the digital nomadic lifestyle is rapidly on the rise, Armenia offers a unique opportunity for remote workers. With this in mind, I started “Life in Armenia,” hoping I can inspire others to consider Armenia as their next and maybe final destination in their digital nomad journey.

If we can spread the word about how attractive Armenia is for digital nomads and remote workers, we can attract thousands of enthusiastic professionals from all over the world, and that alone is a national income like no other, and countries have already started competing over it.



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THE BLUNDERS AND WONDERS  
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# THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE HILARIOUS FOR DIGITAL NOMAD FAMILIES IN ARMENIA



**EKATERINA  
NIKITINA**

CEO AND FOUNDER  
OF MARKETORING



# **THE BLUNDERS AND WONDERS OF ARMENIAN ETIQUETTE**

## **THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE HILARIOUS FOR DIGITAL NOMAD FAMILIES IN ARMENIA**



As a digital nomad who recently moved to Armenia from the United States, I have had the opportunity to immerse myself in a new culture and learn about the customs and traditions of this beautiful country.

My name is Ekaterina Nikitina, aka Kat, and as a Russian-American digital marketing expert specializing in cross-cultural marketing, I understand the importance of adapting to new cultural norms. I moved to Armenia in 2021 to be with my Armenian husband, and I am grateful that my business allows me to work remotely from anywhere in the world.

### **Your Only Escape Plan is to Hope they Run Out of Food Before you Run Out of Time!**

One thing that struck me immediately upon arriving in Armenia was the warmth and hospitality of its people. Armenians love to treat visitors like family, and they will go out of their way to make you feel at home. I quickly learned that it could be considered impolite to decline an invitation to someone's home or not eat their food when offered.

To show appreciation for their hospitality, bringing a small gift like chocolates, pastries, flowers, or wine is customary. And when entering someone's home, removing your shoes is polite.

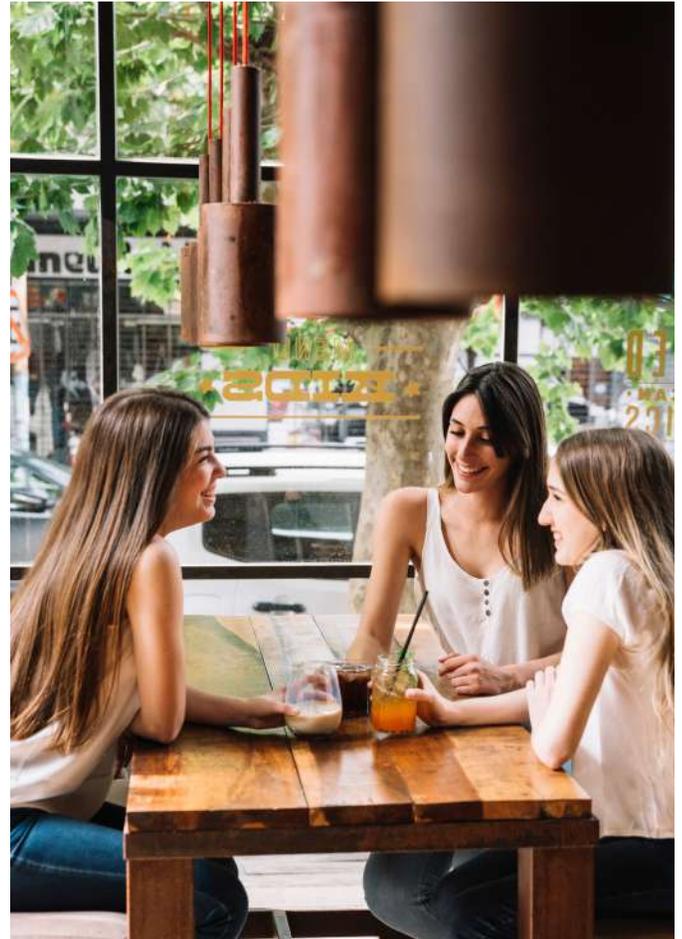
As a digital nomad family, you may find that you're invited to more social gatherings than you have time for or that people are constantly trying to feed you more food than you can handle. It's important to be gracious and polite in these situations. An open heart and a big appetite are what you need to make unforgettable memories with Armenians.

## **The Bill Battle where The Winner Pays**

If an Armenian invites you to a restaurant, they usually insist on paying the bill. It's considered impolite to ask to split the bill, so it's best to accept their hospitality graciously. And if you want to reciprocate, you can offer to pay for the next meal.

While it may seem unusual to Western digital nomads, it's important to remember that these customs reflect the kindness and generosity deeply ingrained in Armenian culture. By accepting their hospitality, you show respect and appreciation for their traditions and build deeper connections with the people you meet.

On your 3rd meeting, roll up your sleeves, and prepare for the battle over who will pay the bill and break the tie.



## **Tongue-Clicking, Cheek-Kissing**

Armenians also have unique ways of greeting each other. As someone from Russia, where we typically only give one kiss, and from America, where people are often hesitant to violate personal space, I found myself stumbling when Armenians gave me three kisses on the cheek. But I soon learned to embrace the cultural differences and appreciate the warmth of their greetings.

Talking about uniqueness, the Armenian way of nodding their heads to indicate “no” is indeed unique and can be confusing for outsiders. Rather than nodding their head right and left, as is common in many cultures, Armenians tilt their head slightly to the side and make a clicking sound with their tongue.

Learning to adapt and respect these cultural customs, digital nomads relocating to Armenia can truly experience the richness of Armenian culture and build meaningful connections with its people.

# Armenian Language Bootcamp

Learning the Armenian language or even just a few phrases can go a long way in building relationships with locals. While many Armenians speak Russian or English, knowing some Armenian phrases can help you connect better with them. Even basic phrases like “barev dzez” (hello), “shnorhakalutyun” (thank you), and “vonc ek” (how are you?) can make a significant difference in building relationships.

Armenians appreciate when visitors make an effort to learn about their culture and language, and it shows that you are invested in building meaningful connections. I remember how excited taxi drivers got when I treated them with a few Armenian words here and there, and it was always a great conversation starter.

## Cross-Cultural Collaboration

When it comes to working with Armenians, one may wonder if there are any cultural barriers that could hinder a smooth collaboration. However, based on my personal experience, I can say that Armenians are quite flexible and open-minded when it comes to adapting to different styles and ways of doing things.

As an example, I recently hired a couple of Armenian specialists for my marketing business, and I was pleasantly surprised by their communication skills and engagement. Although we speak different languages - I primarily communicate with

them in English or Russian - I found it easy to express my ideas and listen to theirs. They could understand and respond to my requests and feedback promptly and effectively, which helped us achieve our goals more efficiently.

### All in all

As a digital nomad in Armenia, I have found that embracing the hospitality of its people, respecting cultural norms, and trying to learn the language can make all the difference in building relationships and enjoying my time in this beautiful country.

The more you immerse yourself in the local culture, the more you will appreciate Armenia’s unique traditions and customs, and the richer your experience will be.



ESCAPE  
THE CONCRETE JUNGLE

# HOW IJEVAN'S NATURAL PARADISE IS THE ULTIMATE OFFICE UPGRADE



**MATHEW  
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF

## TREEHOUSES AND CO-WORKING SPACES

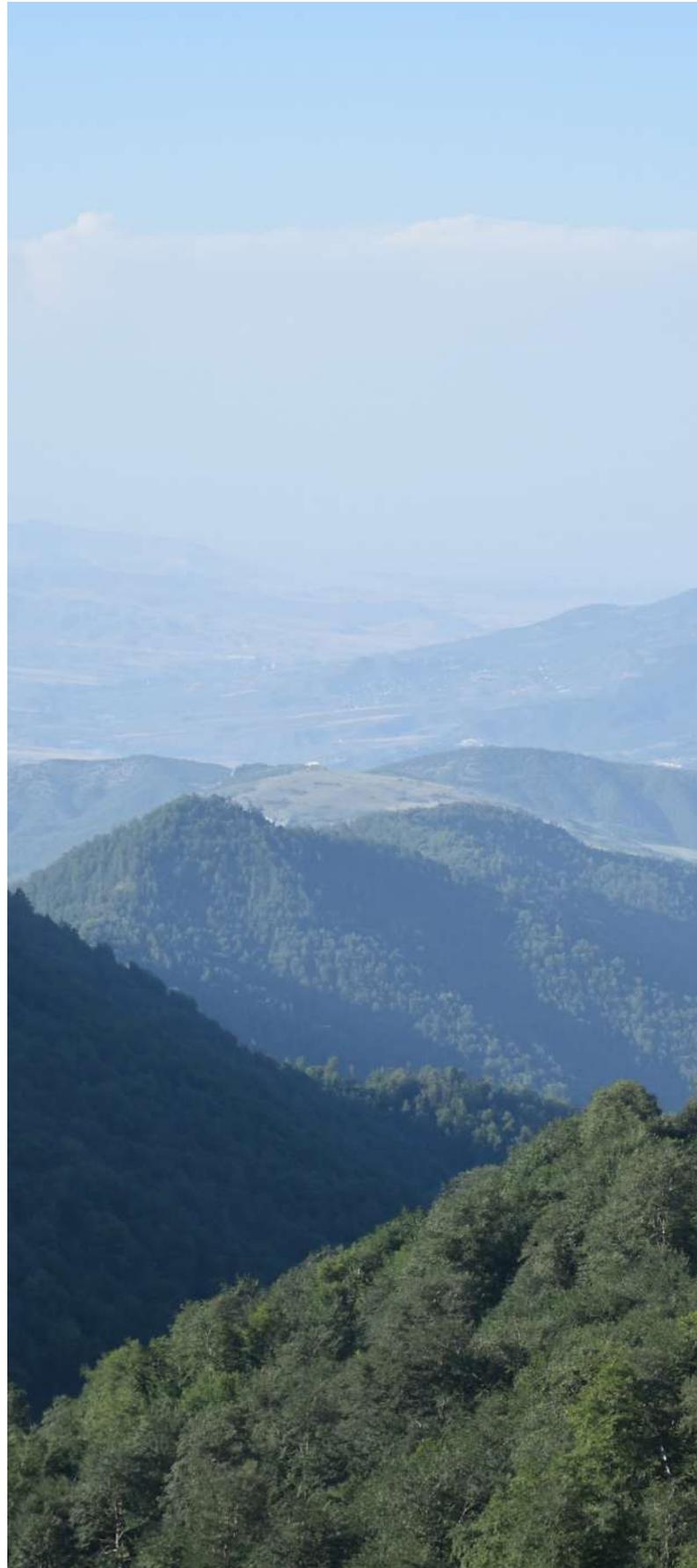
### IJEVAN'S UNIQUE TAKE ON DIGITAL NOMADISM

The rise of digital nomads has been a significant trend over the past decade. With the ability to work remotely, digital nomads can live and work from anywhere with an internet connection, making them a desirable group for cities to attract. As a result, many cities have implemented various initiatives to attract digital nomads, from co-working spaces to visa programs specifically tailored to remote workers.

The benefits of becoming a digital nomad destination are significant. Digital nomads often travel in groups, meaning that their spending power can have a **substantial economic impact on a city**. They also tend to be highly skilled professionals who bring new ideas and perspectives to a city's economy and culture. Furthermore, attracting digital nomads can enhance a city's reputation and increase its visibility on the global stage.

However, not all attempts to attract digital nomads have been successful. Poor organization and a lack of infrastructure can deter digital nomads from settling in a city. Nevertheless, successful programs have emerged in recent years, leading to the creation of national programs that governments have adopted on a larger scale. Tallinn in Estonia and Dubai in UAE are prime examples of how successful digital nomad programs could go.

The question of whether Armenia can compete with such developed countries in terms of attracting digital nomads is an interesting one, particularly when considering the potential of **smaller Armenian cities outside the capital**.



## Escape the Concrete Jungle

While Armenia may not have the same level of infrastructure and resources as countries like Estonia and Dubai, the country is home to stunning landscapes. For digital nomads **seeking inspiration and inner peace**, Armenia's natural scenery could be a significant draw.

Last month, I had the opportunity to meet with the deputy governor of Tavush province, Narek Ghushchyan, and the head of the macroeconomics department at ASUE, Sos Khachikyan. For hours, we discussed the exciting prospect of attracting digital nomads to Tavush province, particularly Ijevan City, a hidden gem nestled in the heart of nature.

Ijevan could be a paradise for digital nomads seeking inspiration, tranquility, and a break from the hustle and bustle of urban life. Imagine working under the shade of a tree, with the gentle murmur of a nearby stream providing a calming background melody. **Ijevan offers this and more**, making it the perfect destination for remote workers.



In recent years, there has been a growing trend of digital nomads seeking locations offering more than just a desk and an internet connection. They want a space that allows them to connect with nature and take a break from the stress of modern urban life. The forest provides the perfect backdrop for this type of remote work, allowing individuals to work in a relaxed environment. Of course, working in a forest may not be for everyone, as it requires **certain amenities and infrastructure to make it practical**, and that's what we discussed in some detail.

In our meeting, we addressed the fact that attracting digital nomads requires **more than just a breathtaking location**. Reliable internet access, comfortable accommodations, equipped co-workspaces, and networking opportunities are also essential components of a successful digital nomad destination.

## Building Momentum

Dreaming big can be tempting, but the small steps often lead to real progress. As we discussed our plans to attract digital nomads to Ijevan, I shared my belief that starting small is the key to success. As my friend Stefan Papp, an Austrian digital nomad living in Armenia, says, “**Dream big but start small.**”

Starting with a small group of digital nomads and providing them with the necessary facilities to work and live can be an effective strategy for building a community of remote workers in the area. By offering a welcoming and supportive environment, these initial digital nomads **can be ambassadors for Ijevan**, spreading the word about the unique advantages of working in a forested paradise.

One of the great things about digital nomadism is it's a lifestyle that often **involves networking and sharing experiences** with others. This means that once the initial group of digital nomads has established a presence in Ijevan, they will be able to connect with other like-minded individuals and encourage them to join the community. We don't necessarily need to invest or undertake big projects to turn Ijevan into a digital nomad hub. In fact, I believe that starting with a small project and a limited number of people can yield better results. We can gradually expand our efforts, **one digital nomad at a time.**

For instance, we could create co-workspaces in scenic outdoor settings



with high-quality amenities and services. To make Ijevan an attractive destination for digital nomads worldwide, we could offer them certain advantages, such as free access to co-workspaces and discounted accommodation rates. During our recent meeting, we discussed our plans to make Ijevan a prime destination for digital nomads starting this summer.

I can't share all the details just yet; all I can say is that, hopefully, Ijevan will host digital nomads this summer and provide them with a high quality of life. We'll do our best to take this plan into reality.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN  
ARMENIA

# HOW LIVING IN ARMENIA CAN HELP DIGITAL NOMADS FIND THEIR SENSE OF PURPOSE



**STEFAN  
PAPP**

AUSTRIAN  
DIGITAL NOMAD



## MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN ARMENIA

# HOW LIVING IN ARMENIA CAN HELP DIGITAL NOMADS FIND THEIR SENSE OF PURPOSE

In a developed country, many citizens often follow a routine: Rushing out to work in the morning, returning to their stylish home in the evening, and continuing that routine the next day. If you work harder than others, your home may be bigger one day, or if you prefer adventure, you can afford better vacations.

In Armenia, you can follow the same lifestyle. And [with a low tax rate, the time for your next big home can be even shorter](#). If you have money, you do not miss anything in Armenia. But is life all about money? Having meaning in life is what makes one's existence blissful. In Central Europe or the US, there is often not much to do if your goal is to improve your environment. Everything is arranged, and the few things left are often hard to change.

However, [Armenia can also be where you can do something good](#). Nobody in Armenia will deny that various things in Armenia can be improved: Some Armenians live in poverty, waste management is emerging, and various old soviet style buildings are not energy efficient.

## Philanthropy

Armenia is a perfect opportunity to give more meaning to your life. Because [you can become a harbinger of change](#) and not just one small individual in a completed system that does not require much from you.

One of the reasons is the small size of the country. It is [easier to reach decision-makers](#) than if you lived in a more populous country. You meet other ex-pats and then realize together there are many things to contribute. You see improvements in Armenia over time, and these continuous changes encourage you to contribute.

There is a fever among many ex-pats to [make improving Armenia a meaning in life](#). In my bread-and-butter job, I create platforms to provide data to data scientists to help find more insights. My work creates profits, but I consciously decided to use some of my time and money to do something meaningful in Armenia. So, the idea that I can do something where [people directly benefit from my contribution](#) is thrilling.

Since I moved to Armenia, I have also met many people involved in projects to improve Armenia. I felt that they felt they lead a purposeful life. Many of them seemed much happier than some business people I met who earn a lot of money.

# Pitfalls

It is tempting to improve Armenia, but there are also some pitfalls to observe when you come to Armenia and want to join a movement to change things in the country. Knowing them in advance might help.



## Finding the right mission

In an event organized by Repat Armenia, the speaker addressed a common issue with NGOs or people who want to help. When foreigners come to Armenia, they see things they could do to help. However, the critical question is what you think you can provide matches to what villagers need. For example, if people in a village are hungry, they might not need new bibles.

It is better to [ask first what people need before providing real solutions](#). And this is relatively easy. Visit villages and organizations already providing help and ask, “How can I contribute?”

## Ignoring the people

Some people who want to do good may oversee that they need the approval of politicians and local supporters. You might have grand plans and see your ideas’ potential, but will everyone be as excited as you? Or some people could feel threatened by some ideas?

Many people have done philanthropic projects in Armenia. Talk with them! Find out what their challenges had been and how they solved them. Some challenges might not be explained in an article and are best brought up by someone who experienced them.

## Reality distortion

Feel free to open Google Maps and look for Albert Einstein and Nikola Tesla in Armenia. You will find a small town. Some time ago, a group of entrepreneurs dared to dream big: “We will create one of the largest research centers in the region and make this town famous.” I saw slide decks with ideas of giant statues, parks, and research buildings. Streets in the town have been renamed so far, but the extensive research centers have yet to be realized.

Dreaming big is great. But sometimes, you must [start small and work your way up to fulfill your vision](#). Do not think you can change the world overnight.

## Know-it-all-Mentality

In many countries, you ask people if they are experts in one field, and everyone raises their hand. Then, you ask the same people if they are experts in a completely different field, and everyone in the same group raises their hands again.

Various people working in Armenia have complained about a know-it-all mentality by various individuals. As a result, some people do not want to disclose if they are unsure about things and overplay it by faking to be extra confident.

It is, of course, important to highlight that this pattern does not apply to all Armenians. But progress is often stalled if some individuals with a problematic attitude are in influential positions. Many people have learned ways to deal with difficult mindsets. Again, talk with people and find out how they managed to navigate around them.



## Not understanding funding

Many agencies and NGOs provide funding to others and help bootstrap projects. While some individuals claim that raising money is the slightest problem, it is still essential to understand how the process works. Also, one option is to partner with those with experience with NGOs.

## How can you help?

Helping others in Armenia is a great chance to build meaning in life. I have seen many individuals involved in philanthropic activities, and it is always great to see these people thrive. The best thing one can do is to **start small and stay grounded**: First, ask the most critical question: “How can I help?” and, based on that, find something where you can bring your expertise. Never underestimate the rewarding feeling of doing something good.

# HOSTING AUSTRIAN SPACE FORUM MARS ANALOG SIMULATION



**MATHEW  
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF



## ARMENIA GOES INTERSTELLAR

### HOSTING AUSTRIAN SPACE FORUM MARS ANALOG SIMULATION

Just as Noah's Ark was a vessel for survival and a symbol of hope during the great flood, the space mission aiming to explore Mars is the vessel of life pushing the boundaries of what we know and understand as humans about our existence.

AMADEE24- is a **Mars analog simulation taking place in Armenia** this year to simulate human-robotic surface activities. The mission is taking place in Armenia, the land where Noah's Ark was said to have come to rest on Mount Ararat.

Noah's story and the present continuous efforts to reach the yet unreachable in outer space speak to humanity's enduring desire to survive and explore. So while the stories may be separated by thousands of years, they are both united by a common thread of human resilience and determination to overcome the unknown.

## Armenia is going interstellar!

That's right, the small country in the South Caucasus is about to embark on a mission of galactic proportions by hosting the Austrian space forum's Mars analog simulation. Armenia is now preparing to simulate life on the red planet, with participants from around the world coming together to explore and test the limits of human survival in the Martian environment.

Soon, the rocky terrain of the Ararat Valley will be transformed into a Martian landscape, complete with simulated habitats, rovers, and space suits. The Austrian space forum's simulation will provide a **unique opportunity for scientists, engineers, and astronauts-in-training** to test their skills and push the boundaries of what we know about Mars.



When I first heard about the Austrian space forum Mars analog simulation in Armenia, it reminded me of the movie “Interstellar,” where a group of astronauts travel through a wormhole to find a new habitable planet for humanity. Just like in the movie, the Austrian team is exploring new frontiers in space, testing technology, and human endurance in a hostile environment.

The simulation offers a glimpse into a possible future where humans are able to travel and live on other planets. It’s exciting to think about the technological advancements that will be made as a result of this research and the potential for discovering new life beyond our planet.

## **AMADEE24- Takes a Rocky Turn!**

I was invited by the National Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (NCIE) earlier last month, where I had the chance to meet the CEO, Mr. Hayk Margarian, and the CEO of the National Center Foundation, Mr. Grachia Margarian. In the meeting, I was introduced to the details of AMADEE24-, managed by the Austrian space forum and hosted by the NCIE.

I had several questions regarding the mission and the choice of Armenia as the host country. Mr. Hayk Margarian kindly explained to me that **Armenia’s landscape resembles that of Mars**, which makes it an interesting location for the Austrian Space Forum to conduct its mission. It is also the first time the mission is being conducted in a rocky country, unlike desert countries. In addition to the landscape, Armenia was selected because of its appropriate healthcare and security systems, which are necessary to ensure the safety of the crew and the mission.



Furthermore, Armenia has a rich scientific and space heritage. Many space solutions and technologies in the Soviet Union originated from Armenia, including the first rovers launched to Mars, which were built by a team led by Alexander Kemurdzhian. Armenia also launched its first space satellite into Earth's orbit in May 2022.



## INNO Armenia

I was also informed that NCIE has planned a full innovation and entrepreneurship week in Armenia, INNO Armenia 2023, to connect local scientists and research teams with their international peers.

Mr. Margarian highlighted the significance of the upcoming INNO Armenia 2023 event which will feature the official signing of an MOU with the Austrian Space Forum for the AMADEE-2024 Mars Analog Mission to be conducted in Armenia under the coordination of the National Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

The event's first two days will take place at the Yerevan Tumo Center for Creative Technologies. They will focus on panel discussions related to TTO creation in Armenia and the country's scientific progress in nanotechnologies, bioinformatics, and AI. The event will also cover ways to transition toward a sustainable economy that can drive overall economic development in Armenia.

On the third day, experts will discuss Armenia's educational and entrepreneurial landscape in detail. The INNO Armenia 2023 event will also involve the participation of Armenian regions. The best outcomes would be the exchange of the real experience between the experts to implement the TTO as fast as possible, as well as eventual signing of contracts between different participants of the Armenian ecosystem.

# A Warm Welcome for Foreigners

Regarding foreigners living in Armenia, I asked whether they could participate in INNO Armenia 2023. Mr. Margarian clarified that all events in Armenia are typically **open to residents regardless of citizenship**.

He further elaborated that many Armenians in the diaspora are not Armenian citizens but actively contribute to the country's development. Armenia strives to offer **equal opportunities to citizens and noncitizens** living in the country, exemplified by its flat tax regimes that apply equally to all residents.

The goal is to attract individuals with international expertise to Armenia, and to this end, the NCIE has launched a new government program to engage highly skilled professionals, whether Armenian or non-Armenian, in the local labor market. The **program reimburses up to %70 of the salaries** paid to these professionals by their employers, and more than 20 companies have already applied, with over 300 experts seeking support.



## Innovation is in the Air!

What does this experiment have to do with digital nomads considering relocating to Armenia in the future? The simulation project is a testament to Armenia's growing reputation as **a hub for innovation and technology in the region**, and it has positive implications for the country's digital nomad community.

Overall, digital nomads considering relocating to Armenia in the future can look forward to a country that is vibrant, dynamic, and committed to technological innovation, as evidenced by its participation in the Austrian Space Forum's Mars Analog Simulation.

One thing is for sure: the simulation in Armenia will be an out-of-this-world experience for all involved.



TOP MYTHS ABOUT  
ARMENIANS DEBUNKED

# ARMENIANS ARE ONLY GOOD AT DANCING ALL YEAR ROUND



**ANUSH  
BICHAKHCHYAN**

ARMENIAN BLOGGER



## TOP MYTHS ABOUT ARMENIANS DEBUNKED

### ARMENIANS ARE ONLY GOOD AT DANCING ALL YEAR ROUND

How would you describe Armenian dance? Romantic? No! Passionate? It can be, but it's not quite accurate. Dynamic? Close enough. [Life! Yes, Armenian dance is life!](#)

Upon visiting Armenia for the first time, or even just watching videos of Armenian streets, one cannot help but notice the lively dancing, particularly during spring and summer. However, [there is much more to Armenian culture than just dancing.](#) To prove that, let me first take you to the beginning of the history of Armenian dances, which have always been more than just a way of simply taking delight in the movement.

There are only a few nations with such a diversity of national dances. Whether performed for celebration or contemplation, Armenian dances are an awe-inspiring sight to behold, like Uzundara, or Bride's first dance on her wedding; Yarkhushta, the epic war dance to strengthen the army's martial spirit or Shalakh, the symbol of our sacred victory.

We do love to dance, that's a fact, and, yes, we can turn any small occasion into a party with dances and music. But [what Armenians can also do is create.](#) The 21st century changed nothing in the traditions and passions of Armenians. For landlocked Armenia, human capital has become the country's most valuable asset, and at this time, Armenia appeared at the crossroads of technologies.



Armenia is a place where technology not only embraces the human touch but also learns how to dance. “Tech is human, and tech can dance.” This notion was exquisitely expressed during the opening ceremony of Digitec22 this year, where those powerful words echoed through the halls.

In Digitec, the largest tech event in Armenia, the 4th floor was occupied by students from tech schools, the future of Armenian IT, obsessed with robotics, engineering, machine learning, and artificial intelligence. They created tech solutions, and they danced on the last day of the event, proving they were true Armenians and [could dance their way to the top](#).

Why not? A small country with a little over 2,8 million people has an impressive startup ecosystem with companies that have received Series A funding with a total amount of more than [\\$200 million only in 2022](#) and 1 unicorn company, Picsart, that has passed the \$1 billion valuation mark.

Furthermore, soon this year, Armenia will host AMADEE-24, the Austrian Space Forum’s next Mars analog simulation. Armenia’s Ararat Province was chosen as the AMADEE-24 simulation location for its geological and topographic similarity to Mars. For a month, [Armenia will be the hub of Mars research](#), and for a month, the country will be in the global spotlight. And guess what? We will meet our guests with traditional music and dances, and, who knows, we may even see astronauts dancing Kochari side by side with Armenians.

So the question was, “Are we good only at dancing?” We are definitely good at dancing, but Armenians have so many talents yet to discover. Do we dance whenever we gather? We certainly do because Armenian dance is [a character, a story, a passion, and a power](#).

Watch Armenian Berd or Yarkhushta; you will feel an uncontrollable, fierce fire in your chest. This is how Armenian dances work, even if you are just a spectator. Those dances keep us alive and make us feel part of one. There is no better way to influence a human, foster and shape a strong national profile, feel national roots, and ensure the survival of a nation than a dance.

“Dance expresses the typical characteristics of every nation, especially its traditions and degree of civilization.” Komitas



AHEAD OF THE CURVE

# THE BRITISH INVESTOR WHO PREDICTED ARMENIA'S RISE AS A DIGITAL NOMAD DESTINATION SEVERAL YEARS AGO



**MATHEW  
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF



## AHEAD OF THE CURVE

### THE BRITISH INVESTOR WHO PREDICTED ARMENIA'S RISE AS A DIGITAL NOMAD DESTINATION SEVERAL YEARS AGO

Since dedicating myself to promoting Armenia as a digital nomad destination, I've had the pleasure of meeting a diverse array of fascinating individuals from around the globe who have either relocated to Armenia or have an interesting story about the country.

Jack Thorogood is one of those individuals whose life journey has led them to Armenia somehow. The savvy British businessman and investor had **anticipated Armenia's emergence as a hub for digital nomads years ago** and has already facilitated the relocation of around 150 digital nomads to the country. Naturally, I had many questions by the time we met: How? When? and most importantly, Why? - all of which Jack was open to answering during our one-hour talk.

In 2021, Jack Thorogood finally visited Armenia for the first time. However, this was not his initial encounter with Armenians. He has **worked collaboratively with local tech talents for the past six years**. With his expertise in the digital nomad lifestyle, Jack had a keen foresight for Armenia's potential as a digital nomad destination. This vision inspired him to establish a permanent office for his company, Native Teams, in Armenia.



## Small Country with Big Potential

Firstly, I was curious about what drew Jack to this small country. What was it about Armenia that caught his attention? According to Jack, Armenia is a great location for digital nomads. The country boasts breathtaking natural beauty, and its welcoming population makes it an attractive destination, especially in Yerevan, which is increasingly becoming **well-equipped to cater to digital nomads and tech workers**. Moreover, a thriving local pool of tech talent makes it easy to collaborate and build a team.

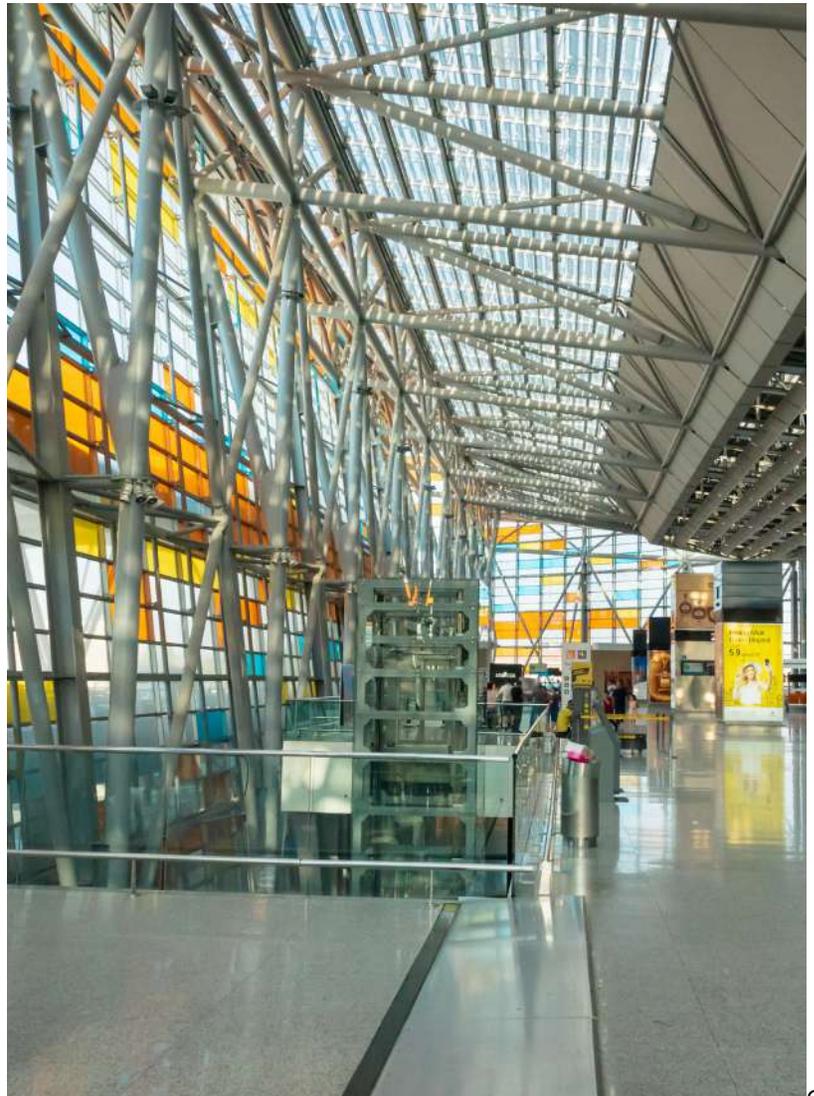
It is also a relative place of calm in a fascinating but sometimes fractured part of the world. It's not perfect, and I've seen first-hand how tragedy can strike in the form of conflicts, but it is a safe country that feels, at times, quite biblical in both traditions and landscape.

The country is definitely sharpening up its offering for digital nomads and the tech sector in general. It's clear from the entrepreneurial nature of service providers and the government's early and quite inspired approach to taxation in the digital sector.

## One Flight Away!

Jack believes that Armenia offers a hassle-free relocation process for digital nomads due to its relaxed visa and travel policies, requiring fewer nationalities to apply for visas. Additionally, the tax and social security system is also comparatively less burdensome than in other countries.

However, a significant concern for digital nomads planning to move to Armenia is the availability and cost of accommodation and office spaces. Following the conflict in Ukraine, Armenia has experienced a surge in accommodation demand, leading to pricing inflation. Unfortunately, there is no immediate solution to this problem. It might be best to **consider it as a natural phenomenon that will eventually subside**.



## Jack's Business in Armenia

“

From so many European countries now, Armenia is just a low-cost flight away .”

Jack Thorogood

Native Teams offers payment and employment solutions for freelancers, remote workers, and their employers. Shortly, it's a platform for digital nomads, with several international offices worldwide and +100 team members.

Despite having an interest in 45 countries now, Jack did choose Armenia to launch a back office for his company, where he employs 15 team members, mainly on the tech and product sides of the business. It's also worth mentioning that the platform has helped somewhere around 150 so far move to and work in Armenia.

Meeting Jack was sufficient evidence that Armenia is gaining popularity among digital nomads, increasingly choosing it as their destination. Although the current numbers may seem modest, as awareness about Armenia grows, more and more professionals are considering relocating here. With Jack's help, 150 digital nomads so far, and hopefully, 15,000 soon.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP SPIRIT  
IN ARMENIA

# CAN PEOPLE DREAM BIG IN ARMENIA? MEET NAREK VARDANYAN



**MATHEW  
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP SPIRIT IN ARMENIA

### CAN PEOPLE DREAM BIG IN ARMENIA? MEET NAREK VARDANYAN

As the digital nomad lifestyle becomes increasingly popular, more and more families are looking to join the movement. When these families search for their next destination, they often take into account factors such as the quality of education, the availability of comfortable accommodation, and the level of infrastructure. But there is another crucial factor digital nomads must consider when relocating: **the local entrepreneurial spirit**.

Entrepreneurship is at the heart of the digital nomad culture. Many digital nomads are ambitious entrepreneurs who seek to turn their ideas into successful businesses. When choosing a destination, they look for a community that fosters creativity, innovation, and collaboration. They want to be surrounded by other like-minded individuals who share their passion for entrepreneurship.

While it's true that Armenia may not have the same level of global recognition as some of the more well-known "lands of opportunities," the country has a vibrant startup scene that is worth paying attention to. Many Armenian entrepreneurs have established thriving startups, becoming **key players in their respective industries worldwide**.

As a country, Armenia may not be the first place that comes to mind when you think of global business success. However, this perception is changing, as Armenian entrepreneurs are putting their country on the map as a hub for innovation and growth.

## Introducing Narek Vardanyan

Meet Narek Vardanyan, the brilliant mind behind the most successful crowdfunding campaigns worldwide. Originally from Armenia, Vardanyan founded TCF, a company that he built from the ground up to become the number-one crowdfunding agency on Indiegogo and Kickstarter. It's an impressive feat for anyone, particularly for someone who failed their **first crowdfunding campaign and raised only 1\$**.

Narek turned his initial failure in crowdfunding into a learning opportunity and embarked on a mission to interview successful crowdfunding campaigners worldwide. With the insights he gathered, he authored "57 Secrets of Crowdfunding," which became a **bestseller on Amazon in its category**. Armed with this newfound knowledge and lessons



learned from his past failure, Narek launched next crowdfunding campaigns and raised millions of dollars, kickstarting his journey to success in the crowdfunding industry.

## Breaking Boundaries from Armenia

From Armenia, along with his creative team, Narek went on to lead successful campaigns for international entrepreneurs. Notable among these is the UV Mask, which raised \$4,164,225; the CIGA titanium timepiece, which raised \$2,613,895; and the Volterman smart wallet, which raised \$2,954,036, among tens of others.

Despite these challenges, Narek's success serves as an inspiration to entrepreneurs from Armenia and beyond, proving that with the right mindset, approach, and support, it's possible to achieve significant global success **even from a small country**.

## Beyond Crowdfunding

When I interviewed Narek at TCF's HQ in Yerevan a while ago, he was not content to rest on his laurels. Back then, he was working on his next big project, Prelaunch. It is a platform designed to enable entrepreneurs to validate their product concept before investing their time, resources, and money into a full-scale launch. It's designed to help startups refine their ideas, identify potential challenges, and develop a strong foundation for long-term success.

Last month, Prelaunch raised \$1.5 million in investments to further develop its product and services with a \$10 million cap.

What impresses me is not the fact that Narek and his team are achieving success on this new project because he has enough experience and skillful people and resources to make it happen, but the fact that dreaming big is not impossible while living in Armenia



# What's in it for Digital Nomads Relocating to Armenia?

Narek's success story from Armenia can be an important factor for digital nomads considering relocating to Armenia. His success showcases the **potential for entrepreneurship and innovation in Armenia**, indicating that the country has a dynamic and thriving business ecosystem.

This is particularly relevant for digital nomads, as many entrepreneurs or freelancers rely on a robust business environment to succeed. By moving to Armenia, digital nomads may be able to tap into this thriving entrepreneurial culture and build meaningful connections with local businesspeople.

Additionally, Armenia's relatively low cost of living, beautiful landscapes, and rich cultural heritage make it an attractive destination for digital nomads looking for a change of pace. With high-speed internet connectivity and a range of co-working spaces, Armenia can provide a **comfortable and conducive environment for remote work**.



# A WALKTHROUGH IN THE TAXATION LIABILITIES FOR DIGITAL NOMADS WORKING FROM ARMENIA



**NERSES  
ISAJANYAN**

MANAGING ATTORNEY  
CO-FOUNDER OF VARDANYAN & PARTNERS

## EXPERT ADVICE

# A WALKTHROUGH IN THE TAXATION LIABILITIES FOR DIGITAL NOMADS WORKING FROM ARMENIA

Since more individuals are embracing the digital nomadic lifestyle, it's important to understand the legal and taxation implications of working remotely from Armenia.

As long as you don't have an Armenian employer, working from Armenia as a digital nomad does not require a work or residence permit. Digital nomads can stay and work in Armenia for the duration of a valid visa or during a visa-free period, depending on their country of citizenship.

Visas can generally be granted for up to 120 days and extended by another 60 days, totaling 180 days. Nationals of visa-free regime countries can also stay for up to 180 days. In order to stay longer than 180 days, a residence permit may be required.

## Tax Residents vs. Residents

Obtaining a residence permit (temporary, permanent, or special) does not automatically make you a "tax resident," as tax residency is regulated by tax laws, not immigration laws. According to the Armenian Tax Code, an individual is considered a tax resident of Armenia if they spend more than 183 days in Armenia during a calendar year. A digital nomad may need a tax residency certificate from Armenian tax authorities as evidence of their tax residency status.

If you're considered a tax resident of Armenia, you will be subject to taxation on your worldwide income. In some cases, exemptions may be available under international agreements to avoid double taxation, which Armenia has with around 50 countries.

On the other hand, if you are not an Armenian tax resident, you will only be subject to Armenian taxes on income derived from Armenian sources. It's possible to hold a residence permit without being a tax resident and vice versa.



# Special Tax Regimes in Armenia

In Armenia, medium and large businesses pay taxes at normal rates, while smaller businesses can take advantage of special tax regimes that reduce the tax burden and the paperwork.

## General Tax Regime

Unless a company opts for a special tax regime, it will be subject to the following:

- 18% corporate income tax (CIT) filed annually
- 20% value-added tax (VAT) filed monthly

The VAT rate is 0% if the goods or services are exported.

## Turnover Tax

Turnover tax is a form of a sales tax, with tax rates normally in the range of 1.5% to 5%, replacing CIT and VAT. Only small businesses with annual sales of less than AMD 115 million (approximately \$290,000) can qualify for this tax regime. Turnover tax returns are filed quarterly.

## Micro-businesses

Micro-businesses, defined as businesses with annual sales of less than AMD 24 million (approximately \$60,000), are exempt from CIT and VAT. However, a list of businesses cannot take advantage of this tax system, such as traders based in the capital city of Yerevan and many service businesses.

Companies can opt for turnover tax or micro-business regimes within 20 calendar days following the company's registration.

# Roadmap for Digital Nomads Relocating to Armenia

Here are the steps that a digital nomad can take when relocating to Armenia:

**Research the tax laws and regulations in Armenia:** It's important to understand the tax laws and regulations in Armenia before relocating. This will help you plan and prepare for your tax obligations.

**Determine your tax residency status:** Depending on how long you plan to stay in Armenia, you will need to determine your tax residency status. If you plan to stay for more than 183 days, you will be considered a tax resident and will be subject to taxation on your worldwide income.





For digital nomads who become tax residents

**Keep track of your income and expenses:** You will need to keep track of your income and expenses to file your tax return accurately. Make sure to keep receipts and other documents that support your income and expenses.

**File your tax return:** You will need to file your tax return by April 20th of the following year. If you have Armenian-source income, you will need to file a tax return even if you are a non-resident.

Normally, an Armenian entity will withhold any taxes from income paid to a foreigner. So, the requirement to file tax returns applies only to those who receive Armenian income from entities that are not registered taxpayers (tax agents), for example, rents collected from individuals.

**Consider working with a tax professional:** If you are unsure about your tax obligations in Armenia, consider working with a tax professional who can help you navigate the tax laws and regulations.

A LOOK INTO THE LIFE OF  
A DIGITAL NOMAD FASHION ENTREPRENEUR

# HOW BIAYNA OHANYAN BUILT A SUSTAINABLE FASHION SUPPLY CHAIN ACROSS CONTINENTS WHILE LIVING IN ARMENIA?



**MATHEW  
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF



## A LOOK INTO THE LIFE OF A DIGITAL NOMAD FASHION ENTREPRENEUR HOW BIAYNA OHANYAN BUILT A SUSTAINABLE FASHION SUPPLY CHAIN ACROSS CONTINENTS WHILE LIVING IN ARMENIA?

Despite the prevailing notion that Armenia is primarily a haven for IT industry digital nomads, I had the pleasure of meeting a captivating individual who proved the opposite earlier this month. Biayna Ohanyan, a creative designer who spent a decade in California working for top corporate employers, made the bold decision to relocate to Armenia and pursue her passion for sustainable fashion.

### Why Follow the Crowd When You Can Follow Your Passion?

Biayna is a digital nomad fashion entrepreneur who has chosen to run her brand from Armenia while setting her sights on global markets. Despite the domination of the IT industry in the country, she has chosen to follow her passion for fashion and creativity.

Why was I keen on meeting Biayna and learning more about her journey? What makes her stand out from hundreds of thousands of other fashion designers worldwide? In fact, I wanted to meet her and write her story, hoping she inspires many others to follow the same steps and consider Armenia as their destination for various industries.

What sets Biayna apart is her unwavering commitment to her vision. Drawn to Armenia for its spiritual essence, she uses her imagination to create stylish and sustainable fashion. Her brand of bags, made from cactus leather sourced from Mexico and Italy and manufactured in China, is a testament to her ability to connect three continents seamlessly. And despite living in Armenia, Biayna is a true global citizen who markets her products in the United States, showcasing the power of cross-border entrepreneurship.



## Biayna's Take on Entrepreneurship in Armenia.

Biayna's honesty and determination struck me as we discussed her brand and journey. Despite facing challenges and obstacles after relocating to Armenia, she never gave up on her dreams. **She acknowledged that it was far more difficult than she anticipated**, but her faith in her abilities propelled her forward.

Rather than succumbing to the pressure of relocating to a fashion industry hub, Biayna followed her intuition and passion. She remained focused on her unique talents, understanding that this was the key to achieving her goals. Living the ultimate digital nomad lifestyle in Yerevan, she allows **the stunning nature of Armenia to serve as her inspiration**. From

Dilijan to Jermuk, Tatev in Syunik, Qobayr in Lori Province, and beyond, she travels to the most breathtaking locations and finds solace in Mother Nature's beauty.

The story of Biayna's brand is about finding moments of internal serenity and soulful satisfaction that come from love, art, music, poetry, literature, nature, and colors. With beautiful historical monuments and graceful architectural shapes to vibrant liberal arts and music, and literature, Biayna finds that spirituality is palpable in Armenia, and residents can feel it in their hearts, bringing creativity to life.

## The Location - Independent World

As we discussed how easy it was for her to coordinate the business between Mexico, Italy, China, and the USA while in Armenia, she explained that in this era of boundless connectivity, location no longer restrains our potential. Though the absence of in-person interaction may hinder establishing long-term relationships and trust, these can be cultivated with time.

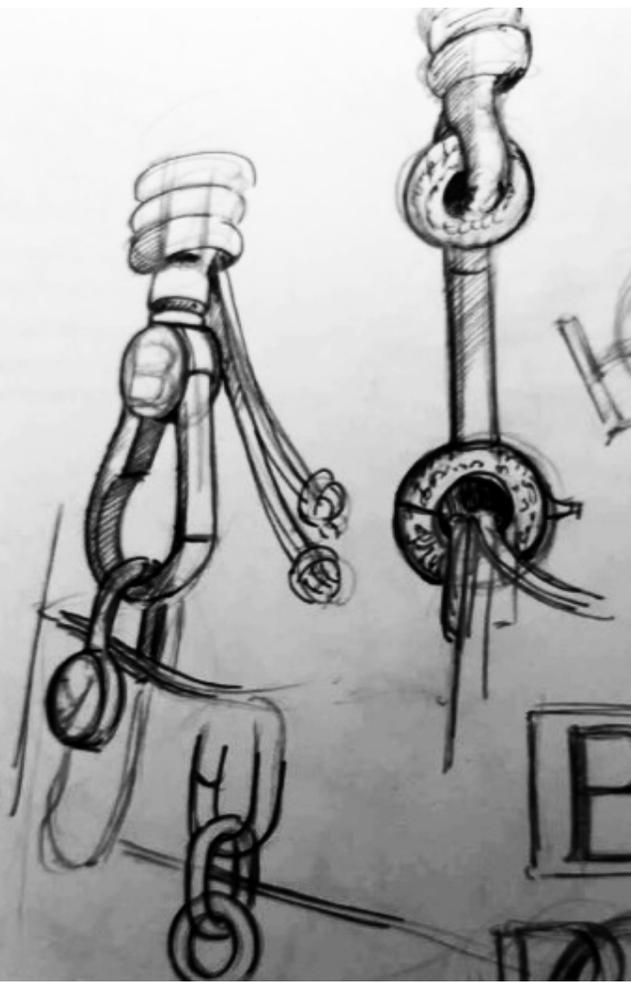
Gone are the days when the success of an e-commerce venture hinged on its physical location. In today's digital landscape, almost everything can be discovered, selected, and agreed upon remotely using many digital tools and communication channels.

The malleability of this digital age opens up limitless possibilities for expansion, choices, and solutions. The internet's ability to disseminate information instantaneously from every corner of the world keeps everyone in step with global trends.

**“ I've been giving up at least once a week. But it seems my persistence might pay off in the end.”**

**Biayna Ohanyan**



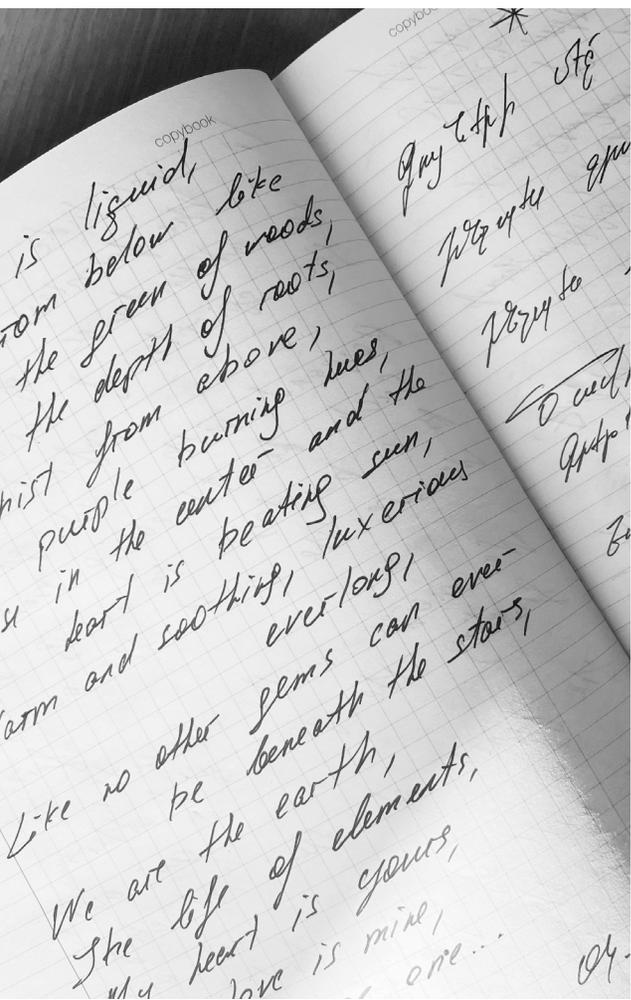


## Biayna's First-Tier Team

Armenian family values always amaze me with their emphasis on close-knit relationships. Many digital nomads seek to imbibe these values in their children, as they recognize the importance of strong familial bonds.

Drawing from her parents' lessons, **Biayna sees them as her first-tier team**. How wonderful is that? She has also been fortunate enough to be surrounded by talented friends who have aided and encouraged her along the way, especially in areas that fall outside her expertise.

It seems like digital nomads choosing Armenia to be their home don't always have to be IT professionals. Some people are moving to Armenia to pursue their careers in various fields. Still, most importantly, they're all relocating with one goal in mind, and that's to enjoy what Armenia has to offer them while living with their families.



WINE-DERFUL  
ARMENIA

# DISCOVERING THE HIDDEN WINE GEMS OF ARMENIA



**STEFAN  
PAPP**

AUSTRIAN  
DIGITAL NOMAD

## WINE-DERFUL ARMENIA

### DISCOVERING THE HIDDEN WINE GEMS OF ARMENIA

During the winter, I went to Austria to visit my friends and took a bottle of Armenian wine with me. It was a long evening, and we opened many bottles of wine from various countries. However, everyone loved Armenian wine the most.

When wine lovers discuss the origins of their favorite drink, they may not think of Armenia as the first country that comes to mind. It is hard to find Armenian wines in international rankings, which is a pity as **they are a hidden gem**, and more people should know about them. Armenian wines come in standard colors: red, white, and rosé.

As Armenia is a small country, wine-making is not about mass production. Also, there are logistical challenges. One winemaker told me that exporting wines to Europe is expensive. In Armenia, Areni and Voskehat are the most well-known grapes. However, several other grape varieties exist, such as Kndoghni and Haghtanak.



### How to Start Your Wine Journey

If you want to impress your guests, I would suggest choosing a Zorah wine. It has been advertised as made according to traditional wine-making methods, which fits well with Armenia's claim to be the **oldest wine-producing country**.

One wine that I love is the Voskevaz Haghtanak. It is full-bodied, and I enjoy drinking this wine with a good steak or red meat. You can also pair Oshin or Karas Areni with red meat. Some wines are unknown to many people yet, such as Krya Wines.

The second step is to visit wineries. Many of them will guide you through their wineries where you can learn more.

## Armenian Wine as an Investment

A few first-class wines are available. So, if you buy first-class wines like La Divine Hin Areni, will they increase in price if supply becomes scarce? Some winemakers believe this is a good deal. Armenian wines are still rare; you might experience a price increase if you keep certain vintages.



## Call to Action

The one thing I ask of every wine lover is to rate Armenian wines on platforms such as Vivino. If you visit restaurants in Europe or the USA, ask if they have Armenian wines. Armenian wine will be better known if more people are aware of it.

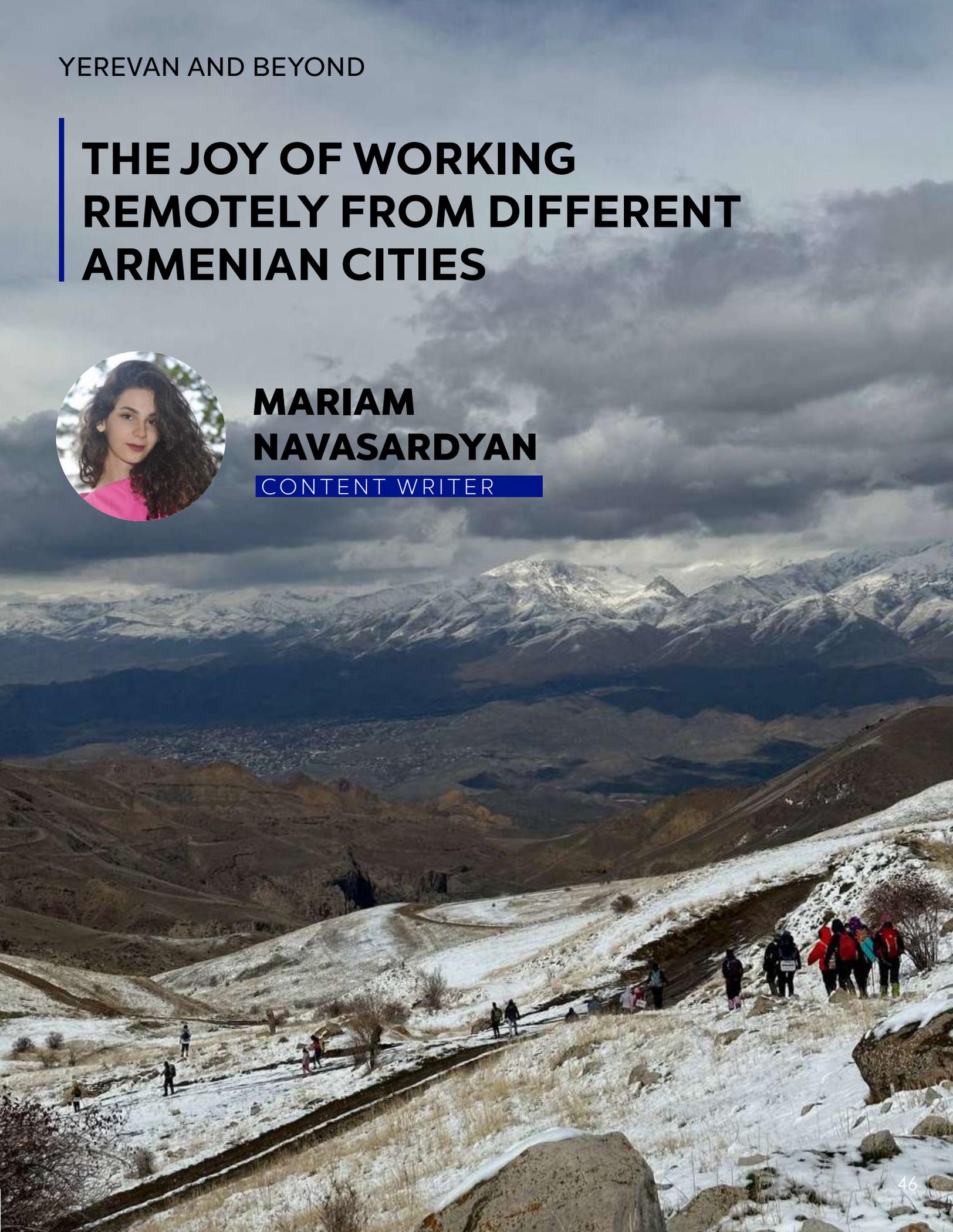
YEREVAN AND BEYOND

# THE JOY OF WORKING REMOTELY FROM DIFFERENT ARMENIAN CITIES



**MARIAM  
NAVASARDYAN**

CONTENT WRITER



## YEREVAN AND BEYOND

# THE JOY OF WORKING REMOTELY FROM DIFFERENT ARMENIAN CITIES

Armenia may be a small country on the map, but it's a big world within itself, making it an ideal destination for digital nomads who travel with their families. Living in Armenia, one can alternate between enjoying nature's tranquility and the excitement of city life based on their mood and preferences.

Even for digital nomad families with school children. Local public and private schools typically have one long and two shorter breaks each year, making it easier for families to take advantage of this time off. This advantage can be even more significant if [your child is homeschooled online](#).

## Embracing the Contrasts

Now, let me tell you something about myself, an unripe teenager who didn't know that she won the jackpot, being born in the Armenian countryside. Growing up in a rural area surrounded by mountains, where the teen scene wasn't very active beyond going to school and hanging out with friends afterward, I longed for the excitement and variety of city life in Yerevan. I eagerly anticipated the day I could finally escape my tranquil nest and plunge headfirst into the city's frenetic activity, where I could use the boundless reserves of motivation I had built up over the years.



Yerevan provides everything you need to [live an ambitious and fulfilling life](#), including a diverse group of friends and coworkers, ample opportunities for professional development, and an abundance of exciting entertainment options ranging from dance clubs and bars to the opera, theater, cinema, and art galleries.

Now that I've turned my life 180 degrees by relocating from a little, underdeveloped city to the nation's bustling capital, I truly am in another universe. It dawned on me that [Armenia is a microcosm of the larger globe](#), containing everything a person could need at any time. Despite everything the city offers, urban living can never provide you the same sense of tranquility, closeness to nature, and internal balance that countryside living does.



## **Why Being a Small Country is an Advantage?**

Another benefit that Armenia provides is that it is not a particularly large country. Only a few hours of driving will take you to a completely different climate, ecosystem, and population. Because of this, we may use the weekends to recharge our bodies, minds, and souls by going on [endless trips throughout our tiny planet](#).

I cannot imagine my hectic, chaotic, rushed life without my most anticipated weekends, which are for going to the mountains, canyons, or forests and walking nonstop while being silent and taking deep, cleansing breaths of fresh air to release any accumulated negativity and make room for renewed optimism.

By committing oneself to work and progress, obtaining new energy from nature, and recovering, the Armenian way of life [promotes a sense of balance between work and enjoyment](#). One can satisfy their thirst for urban excitement and new learning experiences before retreating to nature to recharge their souls.

## A Home Away From Home

It is a common misconception that villagers in Armenia are not welcoming to outsiders, but this is far from the truth. In fact, Armenian villagers are known for their [hospitality and warmth towards visitors](#).

When I was a kid, and my family would spend the summers at our property in the countryside, we'd occasionally host backpackers and hitchhikers from other countries. And if my father happened to notice them, he would convince them, bring them home, feed them [without even speaking the language](#). Our household treated every such occurrence as a holiday. And the idea that this was accomplished via nothing but good intentions has always been a source of wonder for me.

## Not Just Me!

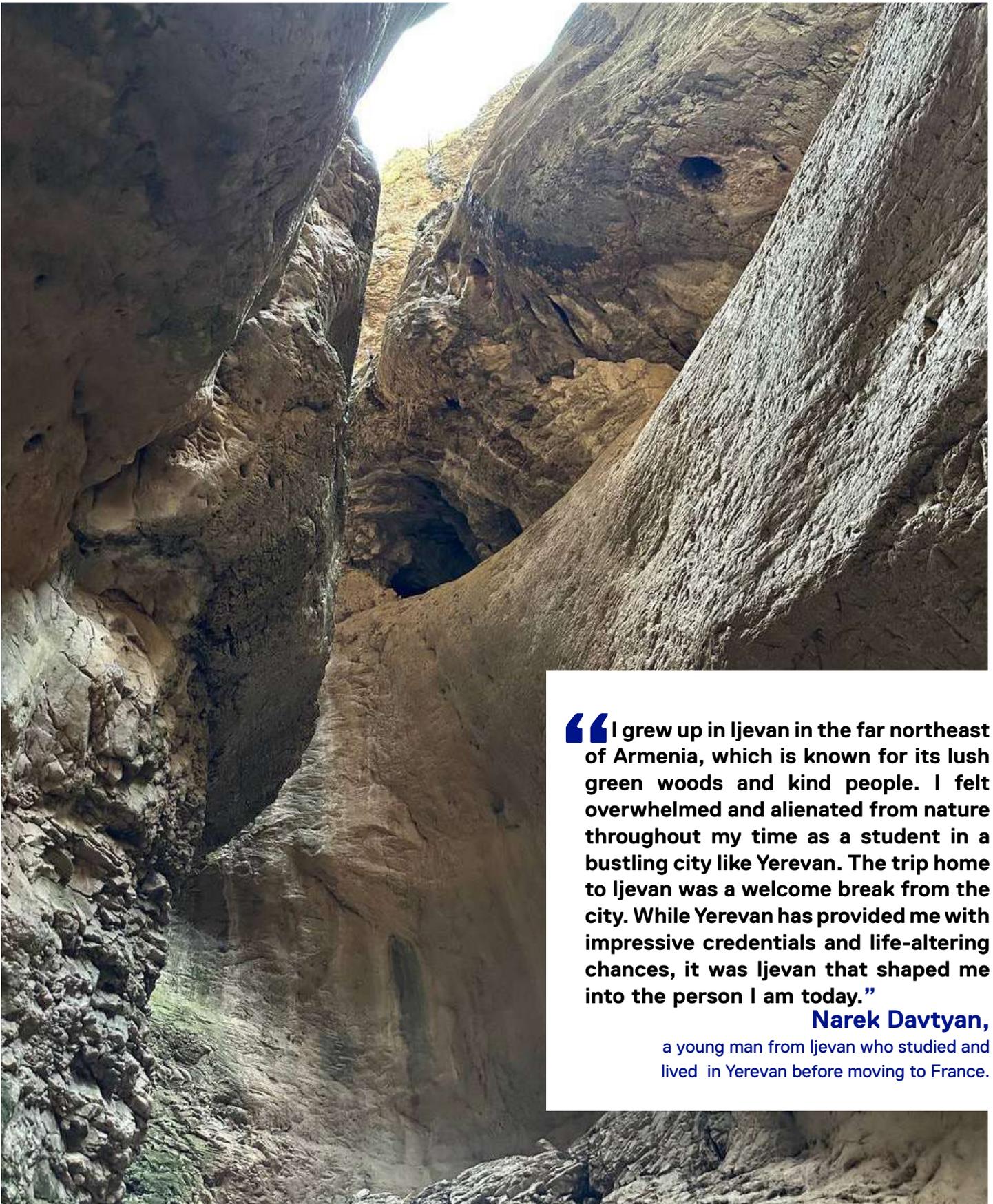
While writing this article, I wanted to ensure that my perspective on Armenia and its ability to balance urban and countryside living was not unique to me. Therefore, I contacted a couple of my friends from Armenian cities outside of Yerevan and asked for their opinions.



**“ My grandparents own a small country house near Vanadzor. Thus, in the summer and autumn, I am lavished with various fun-filled holiday opportunities to enjoy my time: gathering raspberry and black currant, harvesting rose hips, walnuts, mushroom hunting, climbing mountains, etc. With this in mind, the town dressed in green encapsulates the idea of inner peace and tranquility. Interestingly enough, I miss my hometown a lot when I go from Vanadzor to Yerevan. When I go from Yerevan to Vanadzor, I miss Yerevan a lot. Thus, both cities are dear to my heart because they are both parts of my homeland, and I am connected to them with many strong ties and memories.”**

**Anna Grigoryan**

a young woman from Vanadzor who has lived and worked in Yerevan for almost 10 years.



“I grew up in Ijevan in the far northeast of Armenia, which is known for its lush green woods and kind people. I felt overwhelmed and alienated from nature throughout my time as a student in a bustling city like Yerevan. The trip home to Ijevan was a welcome break from the city. While Yerevan has provided me with impressive credentials and life-altering chances, it was Ijevan that shaped me into the person I am today.”

**Narek Davtyan,**

a young man from Ijevan who studied and lived in Yerevan before moving to France.

What are you waiting for? Pack your bags and welcome to Armenia, the next stop on your digital nomad adventure and a place where you and your loved ones can experience life to the fullest.

# CREDITS AND SPECIAL THANKS



TOURISM COMMITTEE  
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

**ArMEniA**  
The Hidden  
Track

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE TOURISM  
COMMITTEE AT THE MINISTRY OF  
ECONOMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA  
FOR BEING COLLABORATIVE AND  
PROVIDING THE DIGITAL MEDIA (PHOTOS  
AND VIDEOS) TO USE IN THE MAGAZINE.

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**NCIE**

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE NATIONAL CENTER  
OF INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR  
BEING COLLABORATIVE AND PROVIDING  
THE INFORMATION AND IMAGES ABOUT  
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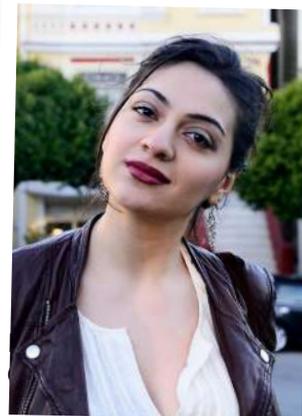
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APRIL 2023



# LIFE IN ARMENIA

FOR DIGITAL NOMAD FAMILIES

APRIL 15TH, 2023 | NO. 3 | LIFE IN ARMENIA

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