



# Armenia

Status: Republic in southern Caucasus  
Area: 11,484 sq. miles  
Population: 3,056,382 (2015 estimate)  
Currency: Armenian Dram (474 Drams = U.S. \$1)



In 1992, newly independent Armenia issued its first postage stamps in 70 years, depicting Mt. Ararat, Scott 430a-c.



A 1921 250-ruble dark blue featuring Soviet symbols and Armenian designs, Scott 285.



The high-denomination of an inflationary era 1922 set of surcharges, 500,000 on 10,000 rubles, Scott 333.



In 2012, Armenia started an ongoing definitive series of stamps, each depicting a single letter of its modern 39-letter alphabet in upper and lowercase. This is letter No. 17 from 2014, Scott 985.

A 1997 stamp notes the 225th anniversary of the first Armenian printing press, Scott 550.



Armenians are an ancient people that history records struggling against an expansive Babylonia more than 3,000 years ago. Later, Assyrian attacks led them to organize into a state around Lake Van. Although this state declined as major powers competed for control of the southern Caucasus, the rugged mountainous terrain allowed Armenians to maintain much autonomy and to maintain their distinctive culture. Conversion to Christianity in the first decade of the 4th century allows Armenia to claim to be the world's oldest Christian nation.

In about 387 A.D., Armenia was divided between the Roman and Persian empires. In the west, the Romans were followed by Byzantium and the Ottomans as rulers of western Armenia. In 1801, the Russians expanded south of the Caucasus Mountains to challenge the Persians, and by 1828 were masters of eastern Armenia.

As a result of the October 1917 revolution, Russian troops withdrew from Transcaucasia. After a brief occupation by the Central Powers, three former Russian states — Armenia with Azerbaijan and Georgia — went their separate ways, with Armenia declaring its independence on May 28, 1918. After the Bolsheviks had routed the White Russian forces north of the Caucasus, their army moved into the former Russian Caucasus. On December 3, 1920, Armenia was proclaimed as a Soviet Republic.

Hoping to end the political strife among them, the Bolsheviks again merged Armenia with Azerbaijan and Georgia on March 12, 1922 to form the Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (TSFR). In 1936, Joseph Stalin redrew the map of the Caucasus again recreating the individual republics. Nagorno-Karabagh and Nakhchivan, areas claimed by Armenia, were assigned to Azerbaijan with the special status of autonomous republics. Responding to the breakup of the Soviet Union, Armenia declared its independence on August 23, 1990, one of the first Soviet republics to do so.

Russian postal service to Tbilisi was established in 1805, and in 1830 limited service was extended to Yerevan. In December 1857 Russia issued its first postage stamps, which became valid in Transcaucasia on March 1, 1858. Although Armenia declared its independence in May 1918, it continued to use Czarist stamps without overprints until October 1919, when inflation and a stamp shortage forced it to surcharge 1-kopeck stamps to satisfy the 60k rate. In December 1921 special stamps were issued for the Soviet Republic. Armenian stamps remained in use until September 15, 1923 when TSFSR stamps were introduced. These were replaced by Soviet stamps in January 1924. The new Armenian Republic issued its first postage stamp on May 28, 1992. It depicts Mt. Ararat.



A 2015 stamp depicting a Forget Me Not flower, one of eight, for the centennial of the Armenian Genocide in which as many as 1.5 million Armenians were killed by the Ottoman Empire. Modern-day Turkey has never officially acknowledged the holocaust, which lasted about eight years.



An unissued variety of an Armenian stamp that was printed in Paris (dated 1921) for the philatelic market. It is not acknowledged by the Scott catalog system, but it is noted in the German Michel catalog.