

Five Mountain Lakes of Kvemo Kartli

Bareti · Pantiani · Karagoli · Santa · Gokhnari — a Madloba guide

On the Trialeti plateau, in the Tsalka and Dmanisi municipalities, several small mountain lakes are scattered where tourists rarely reach. These are not resort spots: people come here for quiet, picnics and views of Trialeti. Below are five lakes, what makes each one worth a visit, and how to get there.

Lake Bareti

Tsalka district · 1,612 m · 1.24 km² · coordinates 41.660981, 44.176541

The best known of the five. It lies by the village of Bareti; the lake has no permanent inflow, so the water level depends on the season. Good as a one-day hike destination: the shores suit a picnic, the views are open. Inclusion in Algeti National Park is under discussion. Nearby: Tsalka Reservoir and Dashbashi Canyon with its glass bridge.

Lake Pantiani

Dmanisi district · mountain lake · coordinates 41.307036, 44.154390

One of the most searched lakes in the region among Georgian-speaking travellers. A quiet spot off the roads, valued for being untouched. Surrounded by the meadows and hills of Trialeti, good for a picnic and photos in clear weather. Pairs naturally with the Dmanisi archaeological site.

Lake Karagoli

Dmanisi district · clean water · coordinates 41.503186, 44.095119

A hidden gem of the Dmanisi district: clean water, a calm atmosphere, meadows and hills around. Fairly close to Pantiani, so both lakes are easy to see in one trip. The roads are unpaved, best driven in dry weather.

Lake Santa

Tsalka district · 1,736 m · coordinates 41.648008, 44.023737

Stands out for its history. Nearby is the village of Santa, founded by Pontic Greeks in the 19th century. The lake itself is shallow, up to 3 metres deep, about 0.20 km², more a calm natural body of water than a place for active recreation. Worth visiting alongside the story of Tsalka's Greek villages.

Lake Gokhnari

Tsalka district · by the highway · coordinates 41.665326, 44.271347

The most modest of the five. A small lake by the road where the climb into the mountains begins. Not worth a dedicated trip, but works well as a short stop on the way to the other lakes or to Lake Paravani.

Five lakes at a glance

Lake	District	What makes it worth a stop
Bareti	Tsalka	1,612 m, rain-fed, hiking and a picnic
Pantiani	Dmanisi	quiet, clean, for solitude and photos
Karagoli	Dmanisi	clean water, wild nature, no crowds
Santa	Tsalka	shallow, by a Greek village with history
Gokhnari	Tsalka	small, by the road, a short stop

Getting There

All five lie southwest of Tbilisi, on the Trialeti plateau. A car is best: public transport is rare, and the lakes are often reached by dirt roads. From Tbilisi to Tsalka is about two hours. Bareti, Santa and Gokhnari are in the Tsalka district (pair well with Dashbashi Canyon and the reservoir); Pantiani and Karagoli are in the Dmanisi district (pair with the Dmanisi archaeological site). The best season is late spring and summer.

Information is current as of June 2026. Roads to the mountain lakes are often unpaved and weather-dependent: check the approach conditions before your trip and allow extra time. Swimming is not the main draw here, the water is cool and the shores are often marshy.