The Armenian Monuments Awareness Project fulfills a dream shared by a 12-person team that includes 10 local Armenians who make up our Non Governmental Organization. Simply: We want to make the Armenia we’ve come to love accessible to visitors and locals alike.

Until AMAP began making installations of its information panels, there remained little on-site material at monuments. Limited information was typically poorly displayed and most often inaccessible to visitors who spoke neither Russian nor Armenian.

Over the past two years AMAP has been steadily and aggressively upgrading the visitor experience for local visitors as well as the growing thousands of foreign tourists. Guests to Armenia’s popular historic and cultural destinations can now find large and artistically designed panels with significant information in five languages (Armenian, Russian, English, French, Italian). Information is also available in another six languages on laminated handouts. Further, AMAP has put up color-coded directional road signs directing drivers to the sites.

In 2009 we have produced more than 380 sources of information, including panels, directional signs and placards at more than 40 locations nationwide. Our Green Monuments campaign has planted more than 400 trees and plants at monuments and Braille panels and pamphlets are being prepared for visually-impaired visitors.

Three village rest stops on the AMAP-marked Armenian Silk Road are now being created and, as funding becomes available, we will construct additional major welcome centers that combine clean facilities with tourist information and an economic opportunity to adjoining communities in selling locally produced goods and crafts. AMAP audio tours accessible via cell phones will be a feature at major sites in our next phase. Honored to do the work, we are also pleased that it will produce sustainable income for families in the villages where many of these sites are found.

We are grateful for the support of our sponsors, the Honorary Consul for Italy in Giumri, USAID/CAPS and our general sponsor VivaCell-MTS. Our working partners include ICOMOS-Armenia, the Holy See at Echmiadzin, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Transport, Democracy Today, Historic Armenian Houses and Armenian Green Cross.

This booklet is a snapshot of our existing installations (2008-2009), with text that gives a sample of information that appears on our panels.

We welcome this opportunity to welcome others to Armenia!
The fortress of Garni dates to the oldest periods of inhabitation in Armenia, with the current palace grounds erected in the 1st century. The site, a triangular plot of land jutting out over the Azat River Gorge, is naturally protected on two sides by sheer cliffs that drop 100 meters to the valley floor, connected by the 180 meter long defensive wall.

Its exact origins are uncertain, but excavations have uncovered artifacts dating to the Paleolithic era, while the original walls date to the Bronze and Iron Ages.

The current arrangement dates to the 4th century BCE, in the wake of Alexander the Great’s invasion of Persia, when the Hellenistic culture was first introduced into Armenia. Some of the outer walls and a few foundations date to this period, but its most famous monuments, the temple of Mythra and the Roman baths, date 500 years later.

The compound includes the outer wall and fortifications, garrison and servant quarters, the 1st century temple to Mythra and summer palace, and a 3rd century Roman Bath.

At Garni, AMAP installed 10 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French), 1 Working hours sign and 5 highway directional signs. In addition, we distributed 125 laminated guides for visitors speaking one of six alternate languages (Spanish, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic and Farsi).
GIUMRI: WALKING THROUGH CULTURE TOWN

(Note: AMAP has completed two installations leading visitors on walking tours in Giyumri. In addition to standard-sized information panels, smaller plaques have identified historically-significant buildings, as part of the project’s mandate for preservation. Noteworthy structures have also been identified by the placement of ceramic house numbers.)

From the start the theatre played an important part in the cultural life of the city, with performances by both the amateur troupe and professional players touring the Transcaucasia. In 1868 the first performance of Goethe’s “Faust” was performed and in 1873 a number of women joined the theater . . .

“On August 4, 1912 Giyumri hosted the premier of the first Armenian opera ‘Anush’, by the composer Armen Tigranian. On July 8, 1922 an open air performance of ‘Sasuntsi David’ (producer Armen Armenian) featured 150 actors, who played for more than 10,000 spectators. Many of these performers were orphans from the Near East Relief orphanage of Alexandrapol (the orphanage was the largest in Transcaucasia, finding homes for more than 35,000 orphans).

“In 1924 the city formed the first Armenian opera/operetta theater which developed into the Academic Theater of Opera and Ballet.

“On May 25, 1933 the doors opened for the Theater of Young Spectator, followed in 1935 by the first Soviet Armenian Puppet Theater (dir. Hasmik Ghezalian).

“On September 29, 1972 a new theater building was opened on Sayat-Nova Street. It continues to host performances.”

At Giyumri, in 2008-2009 AMAP installed 24 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French), 10 picture panels, 85 Ceramic markers and 5 directional signs.
Zvartnots: the changing of a nation

The great cathedral, referred to as both Zvartnots and St. Grigor Lusavorich by medieval historians, was built on the spot where it is said Grigor Lusavorich met the mad king T’rdat, initiating the king’s conversion and leading to Armenia adopting Christianity as the state religion (the first nation to do so, in 301).

The name is attributed to a vision Grigor Lusavorich had when establishing the Armenian Church, and has been variously translated as “Vigilant Ones”, “Vigilant Forces”, “Archangels” and “Celestial Beings”. The name may as well derive from the pre-Christian word “Zvartnonk”, given to a spirit believed to raise the dead, though this is not proved.

Inspired by an interpretation of the Apocalypse that predicted the second coming of Christ when the seven main churches of Christianity come together, Zvartnots was built to be the ‘seventh seal of the seventh tier of God’s presence on earth’ (Revelation 11:15-19 of the Holy Bible). One of the tallest churches on earth when it was built, Zvartnots was the most significant architectural development in the Byzantine world.

At Zvartnots, AMAP installed 10 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French), 1 UNESCO sign, 1 Ticket booth sign, 1 Working hours sign and 6 highway directional signs. In addition, we distributed 125 laminated guides for visitors speaking one of six alternate languages (Spanish, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic and Farsi).

Zvartnots
Region of Armenia: Armavir Province
Distance from Yerevan: 15 km
Date of foundation: 8th c BCE – 7th c CE
AMAP installation: 2008

ZVARTNOTS: THE CHANGING OF A NATION

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Though its status rests in its medieval achievements, Noravank also shows signs of having been a place of worship from a much earlier time. A cloistered monastery was built at the site in the early Christian era, the basis of its transition into one of the preeminent communities of prayer, learning and politics in the 13th-14th cc. Noravank is also the location where one of Armenia’s most famous medieval artists lived, worked and is buried.

Noravank was founded by Bishop Hovhannes, abbot of Vahanavank (near Kapan), who moved his bishopric to Noravank in 1205. In the following two centuries the monastery grew with the fortunes of the ruling Orbelian clan of kings, who bequeathed riches on the church, establishing it as the center of the Church in Siunik while commissioning patrimonial sepulchres at the monastery. In legend, Noravank is said to have housed a piece of the True Cross stained with the blood of Christ, found by a mysterious stranger who discovered its origin after it performed a miracle in raising a child from the dead.

Noravank was a major cultural center of its time, closely tied to spiritual and educational centers like the university and manuscriptorium at Gladzor, Tatev Monastery and others.

At Noravank, AMAP installed 10 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 9 highway directional signs. In addition, we distributed 120 laminated guides for visitors speaking one of six alternate languages (Spanish, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic and Farsi).
KHOR VIRAP: THE PIT AND THE PROPHET

Khor Virap and the ancient city of Artashat stand on the left bank of the Arax (Yeraskh) River, overlooking Mt. Ararat. Khor Virap is located next to the site of the pagan temple to Anahit, on hill 6 of the upper city. It was here that King Artashes I, the founding monarch of the Artashesian Dynasty established his capital ca. 189-188 BC, reunited Armenian lands, reforming the country’s economy, culture and political-military systems in the process.

It was here that the 4th century founder of the Armenian Apostolic Church, Grigor Lusavorich (Gregory the Illuminator) was imprisoned for thirteen years before beginning his ministry (with the king T’rdat III) to convert the kingdom to Christianity.

Both Artashes and Grigor were responsible for the identification and survival of the Armenian people; Artashes for reuniting and protecting the borders of the nation’s territory, and Grigor Lusavorich for creating a religious identity that ensured its physical and cultural survival.

The complex includes the ruins of Artashat city (Citadel, Temples, Workshops and Residences, Roman-style Baths and water systems), the Monastery and Khor Virap (“Deep Pit”).

At Khor-Virap, AMAP installed 10 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 4 highway directional signs. In addition, we distributed 125 laminated guides for visitors speaking one of six alternate languages (Spanish, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic and Farsi).
One could say that Armenia’s Armash Fishponds offer one of the most exciting birding opportunities in the entire Western Palearctic, but that would be an understatement that fails to show just how fascinating the area is, a magnet for anyone with a serious interest in birds.

Nestled in the foothills of Mount Ararat, the commercial fishponds of Armash are at the junction of Armenia and Iran, Turkey and Nakhichevan. It is a broad swath of extensive wetland area in the arid lands of south-western Armenia, occupying fish-ponds each between 10 and 100 hectares (24.7 and 247 acres) in size. The terrain is mainly saline semi desert, yet the pools, natural salt marshes, irrigation and drainage channel shores, standing fresh waters and warm artesian springs have turned Armash into a bird paradise.

Armash fishponds are one of the Caucasus’ richest ornithological hotspots and the only place that boasts the largest concentration and variety of birdlife in Armenia.

Extensive reed beds and aquatic vegetation growing along shores and on islet-shaped patches provide refuge and breeding habitats for grebes, egrets, herons, ducks, an array of waders and terns.

For the Bird Tour, at Armash, AMAP installed 3 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French), 1 Working hours sign and 14 highway directional signs. In addition, AMAP installed 1 3-language information panel at Lichk and 1 at Norashen.
Tatev’s name is traced to St. Eustathius, one of 70 disciples who accompanied the Apostle Thaddeus into Armenia in the 1st century. A small church was built over the saint’s relics and the site was frequented by pilgrims as early as the 5th century.

In 844, following the decimation of Armenia’s ruling houses by Arabs, Bishop Davit called the Siunik princes together at the monastery to convince them to grant the monastery estates relics it housed; relics that were meant to protect the kingdom from the infidels. These included relics of St. John the Baptist, St. Stephen, St. Hripsimeh, Grigor the Illuminator and a piece of the True Cross...

By 1830 the monastery had two bishops, 10 vardapets (professors) and two deacons supervising a diocese of 74 villages and 62 priests.

In 1920-1921 the Armenian brigade commander Garegin Nzhdeh stayed at Tatev as he planned the defense of Siunik from Turkish and Bolshevik forces. Restored as a bishopric in 1922, the monastery was then immediately shuttered by the Soviets and badly damaged in the 1931 earthquake, which toppled the belfry and collapsed the dome for Poghos Petros. It was restored to the church in the 1990s and its renovation continues.

At Tatev, AMAP installed 8 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 5 highway directional signs. In addition, we distributed 150 laminated guides for visitors speaking one of six alternate languages (Spanish, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic and Farsi).
AMBERD: THE CASTLE LIFE

A Stone Age settlement at the spot evolved into a Bronze Age & Urartian fortress that protected Armenia’s rulers, most famously during the Roman and Christian eras, when the current castle was built, expanded and rebuilt over successive periods.

Legend places the medieval founding of Amberd with King Ashot “Yerkat” (Iron) Bagratuni in the 10th century.

We have romantic images of living in a castle, reinforced by romantic novels and Hollywood movies, but the truth is life in a castle – for even the lord and his family – was not easy.

Castles must have been noisy - and smelly - places. Live-stock roamed inside the stables, blacksmiths clanged out ironwork in the forges, the soldiers practiced their skills, and children played when lessons were completed. Various craftsmen worked diligently in the inner ward, including those who made armor, cook-ware, hoops for storage barrels and tools including axes.

Holidays were times for letting loose of inhibitions and forgetting the stresses of life. The peasants as well as the castle’s household found time for pleasure, and they are admonished in manuscripts for sometimes behaving too freely.

At Amberd, AMAP installed 5 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French), 5 Hiking trail maps, 8 Hiking trail markers and 16 directional signs. In addition, we distributed 150 laminated guides for visitors speaking one of six alternate languages (Spanish, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic and Farsi).
Karahundj: Mystery on the Armenian Plain

Karahundj (also spelled “Carahunge”, and also known as Zorats Karer or Zorats Kar) is a megalithic composition of Bronze Age tombs (cists, dolmens or tumuli) and over 230 standing stones (menhirs). The two intertwined features (cist graves and standing stones) are the focus of debate in Armenia.

Archeologists and astronomers do not agree on the dating or purpose of the standing stones, but do note their similarity to menhirs and stone circles found in other parts of Eurasia; in Iceland, Ireland, Scotland (Callinish), France’s Languedoc region (Carnac) to the eastern Mediterranean, and, perhaps most famous, the stone circles found at Avebury, England (Stonehenge).

Many of these stones were carved with crosses in the early Christian era, some have been converted completely into elaborate khachkars, the “eye-hole” the only vestige of the stone’s early incarnation. These stones are found in cemeteries, some embedded into church walls, and standing in open fields.

At Karahundj, AMAP installed 6 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 4 highway directional signs. In addition, we distributed 150 laminated guides for visitors speaking one of six alternate languages (Spanish, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic and Farsi).
A church stood in Haghpat village from the 4th century and it is believed that one stood at the site of the monastery as well, possibly built over a pagan temple. The area has revealed substantial artifacts from the Bronze Age and the adjoining Debed River shows human activity dating to the Paleolithic Era.

The complex was largely completed by the mid 13th century, having more than tripled in size and assuming position as one of Armenia’s preeminent monasteries and centers of learning.

The monastery was further decimated by the legions of Timur and then the Ottomans (15th-17th centuries). In 1639 eastern Armenia became a part of Persia. The established peace was favorable for the monastery. The monastery revived and resumed its mantle as a place of learning and as a manuscript center. Its most famous 18th century resident was the courtier and troubadour Sayat Nova (1712-1795).

At Haghpat, AMAP installed 8 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 4 highway directional signs. In addition, we distributed 150 laminated guides for visitors speaking one of six alternate languages (Spanish, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic and Farsi).
Sevanavank

Region of Armenia: Gegharkunik Province
Distance from Yerevan: 62 km
Date of foundation: 4th – 9th CE
AMAP installation: 2009

SEVANAVANK: MONASTERY IN A LAKE

Sevanavank (also known as “Mariamashen” or “built by Mariam”) sits on the peninsula east of Sevan City, at one time an island which archaeological digs have shown to have been inhabited during the Neolithic and Bronze Ages.

An inscription on St. Arakelots states that the church was completed in 874, the date used for the monastery’s founding. An ascetic center for study and prayer, the monastery was renowned for its manuscripts, production of which are recorded well into the 19th century, one visitor in 1850 recorded seeing manuscripts being copied by hand.

Overall, monastery life was strict and for a time the monastery was used to exile errant royals and clergy. Pillaged during Mongol, Timurid and Turkic invasions in the 14th-16th centuries, the monastery’s recovery began after the 1441 re-establishment of the Holy See at Echmiadzin.

Abandoned during the Soviet period, badly damaged in the 1936 earthquake, the monastery was not revived until the 1990s and is undergoing reconstruction. It remains one of Armenia’s most popular destinations.

At Sevanavank, AMAP installed 4 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 2 highway directional signs. In addition, we distributed 150 laminated guides for visitors speaking one of six alternate languages (Spanish, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic and Farsi).
The exact date for the founding of the monastery is unknown, but pre-Christians worshipped at springs at the site, particularly one inside the cave that is now enclosed inside the main gavit.

The ascetic lifestyle of monks is illustrated by the numerous small caves on the cliffs inside and surrounding the site, exposed to the elements and may be reached only by ladder or rope.

At its height in the 13th century, Geghard benefited from patronage by princely families and was a primary pilgrimage site, not least for its reliquaries of the Holy Lance, the spear believed to have been used by a Roman soldier to pierce the crucified Christ (according to New Testament scripture). Another relic was a wooden fragment said to have been a piece of Noah’s Ark.

At Geghard, AMAP installed 7 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 5 highway directional signs. In addition, we distributed 150 laminated guides for visitors speaking one of six alternate languages (Spanish, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic and Farsi).
In the 12th-13th centuries Goshavank became one of the most famous religious and scholarly centers in medieval Armenia, led by one of Armenia’s most accomplished scholars, legal experts and scientists, Mkhitar Gosh (Mkhitar from Gosh, 1130–1213). The monastery was renamed Goshavank upon his death.

Mkhitar Gosh was one of the great intellectual powers of his day, “a humble man of wisdom”, authoring numerous works, including a Codification of Armenian Law, his extremely popular Fables, a number of prayers, theological treatises and other writings. He was twice awarded the title Vardapet (doctor of philosophy) and had a great reputation among politicians and state figures and was a confidant and advisor to the most important rulers of Armenia, including Zakareh the Great. He played a key role in forging an alliance between Armenian princes and the Georgian throne which resulted in the expulsion of Seljuk from the region by forces led by the Armenian commanders Ivaneh and Zakareh Zakarian. At Goshavank, he taught a number of famous scholars and wrote Armenia’s first law code.

The current monastery was built between 1188 and the late 13th century. Chronicles record Mkhitar and his followers establishing the small, wooden church in the name of Saint John the Baptist (St. Karapet). Following this, they laid the foundations for Astvatsatsin in 1191.

At Goshavank/Aghavnavank, AMAP installed 7 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 4 highway directional signs.
Silk Road
(Selim Pass)
Region of Armenia Vayots-Dzor Province
Distance from Yerevan 185 km
Date of foundation 1326 CE
AMAP installation 2009

ARMENIA’S SILK ROAD:
WHERE COMMERCE MADE HISTORY

Selim Pass caravanserai is but one of many in Armenia; overnight spots for caravans laden with goods meant for markets in Europe and the Orient.

Many think of the Silk Road as a single trail but in fact there were dozens of routes connecting East and West, most by land, some by sea. They crossed east to west and north and south, the most popular tracing river valleys and lake shores as they wound their way to their final destinations. You can trace the Silk Road in Armenia by following the caravanserai, or inns, medieval stopping points where caravan riders and their burdened beasts could spend the night. The caravanserai at Selim Pass is a valuable example of caravanserais along the Armenian Silk Road.

The basalt structure consists of an entry hall on the east end and a long hall for animals (13.0 x 26.0 m) divided into three aisles with two rooms for people. Feeding troughs lay between the pillars. The entry has stalactite decoration over the doorway.

To the east of the caravanserai is a large half-buried vaulted chapel.

For the Silk Road AMAP installed in total 13 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 57 highway directional signs. In addition, AMAP is installing 5-language information panels at 13 monuments on the “Silk Road”.

- Selim Pass Caravanserai
- Noratus
- L’chasheh
- Sevanavank
- Dilijan
- Margalovit-Fioletovo
- Kobayr
- Sanahin-Odzun
- Haghpat
- Akhtala
- Bagrashen
- Tsaghats kar
- Ughtasar Petroglyphs
- Moz
- Noratus Caravanserai
The 9th c fortress straddles the ridge between Artabunik (old Yeghegis) and Yeghegis (old Alayaz) villages on an impenetrable spot. The location was so perfectly placed (a buried water pipe carried water from the monastery to the fortress, some 2 km away), no invader was able to penetrate the keep. It is said only when invading forces used a thirsty horse to sniff out the buried pipe that they were able to force the occupiers to surrender.

The long stretch of surviving walls are mostly on the northern end, and they are substantial, with a series of round towers jutting from the thick walls of cyclopian smooth stone. The entire top of the ridge was surrounded by the walls; enough space for hundreds of inhabitants, and there is a citadel at the very peak, a large castle that was reserved for the powers-that-were.

At Smbataberd, AMAP installed 3 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 4 highway directional signs (shared with Tzaghats Kar).
**Tsaghats Kar**

Region of Armenia: Vayots-Dzor Province  
Distance from Yerevan: 142 km  
Date of foundation: 10th CE  
AMAP installation: 2009

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**TSAGHATS KAR: 10TH CENTURY REMAINS**

The buildings of Western group are badly damaged and not preserved well. They are half ruined, built of rough basalt stone and organized in one row, all buildings were surrounded by fortress wall. Historian Stepanos Taronetsi states that the buildings of this group were constructed in 10th century, during Abas Bagratuni (the oldest inscription dates it on 989). The main church is a domed rectangular-altered structure, with 4 annexes in the corners. From eastern side adjoined to the church, there is a columned hall and from the western side - gavit. Along longitudinal walls of the gavit are covered cavity sepulchres. In the southern part of the group of monuments another small church was built.

Further west there are several buildings, including an impressive hall with side niches (the east end roofing is preserved) and foundations for other buildings, including an adjoining vaulted hall, a small gavit-like structure, monk cells and other service buildings. In the area just W of the large hall, among the stones and khachkars, there is a large stone bath tub.

At Tsaghats Kar, AMAP installed 3 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 4 highway directional signs (shared with Smbataberd).
Inscriptions place the medieval founding of the convent to 1321 and the Proshian family, which also commissioned the bell tower in 1330. It was one of the more important cultural, educational and religious centers of Vayots Dzor, continuing into the 14th century despite attacks by Turkish Kara-Koyunlu and Ak-Koyunlu tribes which devastated the region following the collapse of the Mongol Empire. When Gladzor University closed in the 1340s, Spitakavor became the educational center for Vayots Dzor, led in the 2nd half of the 15th century by the famous philologist Vardapet Avaker, some of whose manuscripts survive. Timurid raids completely devastated the complex, destroying the gavit, pulling down defense walls and burning the service structures, none of which were rebuilt. The convent was abandoned in favor of safer places further to the south, though the church continued to celebrate the liturgy until the region was abandoned during the 1604 Shah Abbas exile of Armenians during a Persian-Ottoman war.

The complex is composed of foundations of an inner wall enclosing a small church faced by a now roofless gavit and the bell tower. Foundations of other buildings, khachkars and graves lay scattered around the main buildings. The gorge further divides the site into sections. At the very top of the hill are the remains of Boloraberd fortress.

At Spitakavor, AMAP installed 2 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 4 highway directional signs.
Areni is on the Arpa River, where it begins its descent into the Nakhichevan Plains. Some believe Areni was founded in the time of Genesis by Noah and his sons, who tilled the first grape vines. Excavations have found a number of Bronze, Iron and Hellenistic artifacts, including several large clay pots used in the production of wine.

Also found was a portable pagan altar with an inscription in Greek dated to the year 163. The inscription dedicates the temple that once stood there to the “Olympian Goddess” on behalf of a Roman officer, a certain Amenius Ovalis, a member of the 15th Legion, also known as “Apollinaris” after the god Apollo.

Medieval exports of Armenian wine found its way to Europe; one document shows agents of the Lithuanian king purchasing Armenian wine for the Vilnius court. The vineyards were deserted after the forced migration of the area’s populace to Isfahan in 1604, though the strongest vines survived to the 19th century, when cultivation resumed.

New wineries were established in the 1990s, and though varietals are still in their infancy, they are gaining international notice, especially Areni Country red, Areni Maran and Areni Gedeon, which compare favorably with French table varieties.

At Areni, AMAP installed 3 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 4 highway directional signs.
As part of its commitment to preserve "Green Monuments" and to promote eco-tourism in Armenia, AMAP has designated some sites for marking trails and some for panels detailing the flora and fauna of the surrounding area.

With consultation by noted Armenian botanist Eleonora Gabrielian, AMAP has installed panels identifying plant life in the Garni Canyon, Noravank Canyon and in the Aragats Mountain foothills. Dozens of Armenia’s 3,500 plant species are colorfully represented on panels where visitors are most likely to find the highlighted species.

Additionally, AMAP has marked an ancient trail that for centuries was used as a connecting route linking travelers with the 10th century Amberd Castle and its entry point into the Ararat Valley.

In total AMAP installed 10 5-language information panels (Armenian, English, Russian, Italian and French) and 4 highway directional signs.
While able-bodied guests can enjoy the sites of Armenia through AMAP's assistance in providing colorful panels like the ones on these pages, we are also committed to raising awareness of the need to make tourism convenient for the physically challenged.

Toward this aim, AMAP included production of Braille information panels at major sites in its 2009 installation campaign.

Such an initiative is unique to Armenia, where equal opportunities for all rarely include those whose impairments are not accommodated at public institutions. By placing Braille panels at sites, AMAP hopes not only to contribute to tourism, but to set an example for development of more contemporary social norms regarding those whose participation in society requires certain accommodations.

To achieve this unique aim, AMAP has engaged the expertise of Italy’s Biblioteca Italiana Per i Ciechi “Regina Margherita” – Onlus.

AMAP has contracted with the Monza-based institution for production of Braille information panels that will introduce a new and meaningful concept in Armenian tourism.