

## Classification of Georgian Resorts According to Selected Geographical Characteristics

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**Abstract:** Georgia is one of the world's most diverse countries in terms of natural and climatic conditions, making it exceptionally rich in resort and recreational resources. The diversity of its mineral waters, climatic zones, and landscapes is determined by its geographical position at the junction of tropical and temperate zones, the influence of the Black Sea, and significant altitudinal variation. More than seventy landscape types are found within its small territory, ranging from humid Colchic forests and semi-arid steppes to nival-glacial landscapes in the high mountains.

This paper provides a classification of Georgian resorts based on key geographical characteristics, emphasizing the relationship between natural diversity and recreational potential. The study highlights the role of climate, mineral and thermal waters, and landscape structure in shaping the country's therapeutic and tourism value. The unique combination of marine, mountain, and balneological factors determines the wide functional variety of Georgian resorts—from seaside and climatic to mountain and ski types.

**Keywords:** Georgia, resort, recreation, geography, landscape diversity, mineral waters

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Georgia is a country of resorts and recreational areas, where mineral waters and climate represent the main therapeutic factors. Their diversity is determined by the country's geographical location and geological structure. The climatic conditions are notable for their pronounced therapeutic properties and are used in the treatment of various pathologies (Saakashvili, Tarkhan-Mouravi et al., 2011).

Georgia's natural diversity is exceptional worldwide, especially within the subtropical and temperate zones. More than seventy types of natural landscapes are represented here. In the lowlands and plains, one can find both humid Colchic forests and semi-humid steppes and shrublands, as well as semi-arid light forests and semi-deserts. In the mountainous regions, several natural zones are represented — from humid subtropical hemihypsometric zones to nival-glacial landscapes (N. Elizbarashvili, 2016). Such diversity is related to several key factors, including its geographical location (at the junction of tropical and temperate zones), the proximity of the unfrozen Black Sea, and altitudinal zonation (ranging from sea level up to 5200 m).

By the number of landscapes, Georgia ranks 12th in the world and 1st in Europe. It is preceded only by large countries such as China, the United States, Russia, Australia, Mexico, India, Canada, Brazil,

Argentina, Turkey, and Chile. However, if the number of landscapes is compared relative to the country's area, Georgia ranks first globally in landscape diversity (Landscape and ... of Georgia, 2000). In our opinion, this indicator is one of the key determinants of Georgia's tourism and recreational attractiveness.

Georgia's climate is generally moderate and comfortable. It is characterized by warm summers and mild winters. In the mountainous regions, air temperature decreases with altitude, creating very pleasant recreational conditions during the summer months. Along with the aesthetic appeal of marine resorts (the combination of sea and mountain air, landscapes rich in vegetation), the Black Sea has important balneological properties. Its water is characterized by relatively low salinity and cooler summer temperatures compared to other subtropical or tropical seas, making it more comfortable for recreation. Moreover, the comfort of the Black Sea is enhanced by the relatively slow coastal currents (0.9 km/h), low storm activity during the resort season, and the absence of dangerous marine fauna.

Georgia is world-renowned for its resorts and is among the most distinctive countries in this regard. Here, one can find seaside resorts with magnetic sand beaches, as well as locations notable for therapeutic mineral and thermal waters, mountain-climatic, climatic, and ski resorts.

Georgia is also rich in hydromineral resources. More than 2,000 mineral waters are found across the country, over 1,700 of which have natural outlets, while more than 300 are obtained from boreholes. The chemical and physical characteristics of these mineral waters indicate that most of them possess significant therapeutic properties (Saakashvili, Tarkhan-Mouravi, 2011).

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

The methodological basis of this study relies on the principles of geographical analysis and synthesis, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the spatial organization and diversity of Georgia's resort systems. The research integrates both traditional geographical approaches and modern analytical tools, enabling the identification of territorial patterns and interrelations between natural and anthropogenic factors influencing the country's recreational potential.

Cartographic and geoinformation methods played a central role in the research. The application of GIS technologies allowed for the processing, mapping, and spatial visualization of complex datasets related to climate, topography, hydrography, and geological structure. This facilitated the classification of resorts according to key geographical parameters such as altitude, climatic zone, landscape type, and hydro-mineral resources.

Comparative geographical analysis was used to reveal the similarities and distinctions among the main categories of resorts—marine, mountain, balneological, and climatic. Through this approach, the dominant therapeutic and recreational factors of each resort type were determined, as well as the interconnection between geographical diversity and functional specialization.

The synthesis of analytical results formed the foundation for the proposed geographical classification of Georgian resorts, reflecting the spatial differentiation of natural conditions, ecological balance, and socio-economic value. This integrated methodological framework provides both theoretical and practical significance for the sustainable development and planning of Georgia's resort network.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Georgia, 103 resorts and 167 resort areas are officially registered. All types of therapeutic resorts known worldwide are found in Georgia.

	Type	Number	%
1	Climatological–Balneological	12	11.6
2	Climatological	45	44.0
3	Balneological	27	26.0
4	Mud Therapy	2	1.9
5	Balneological–Climatological	17	16.5

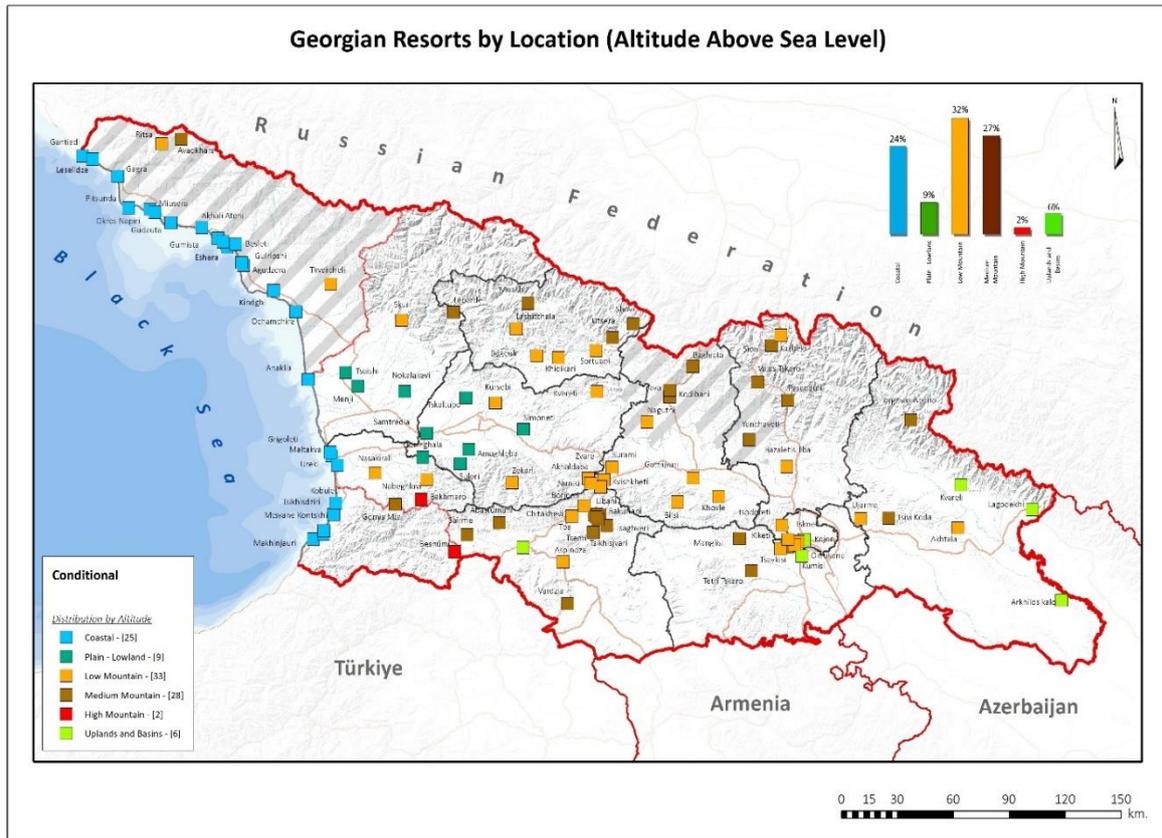


Fig1. Georgian Resorts by Location

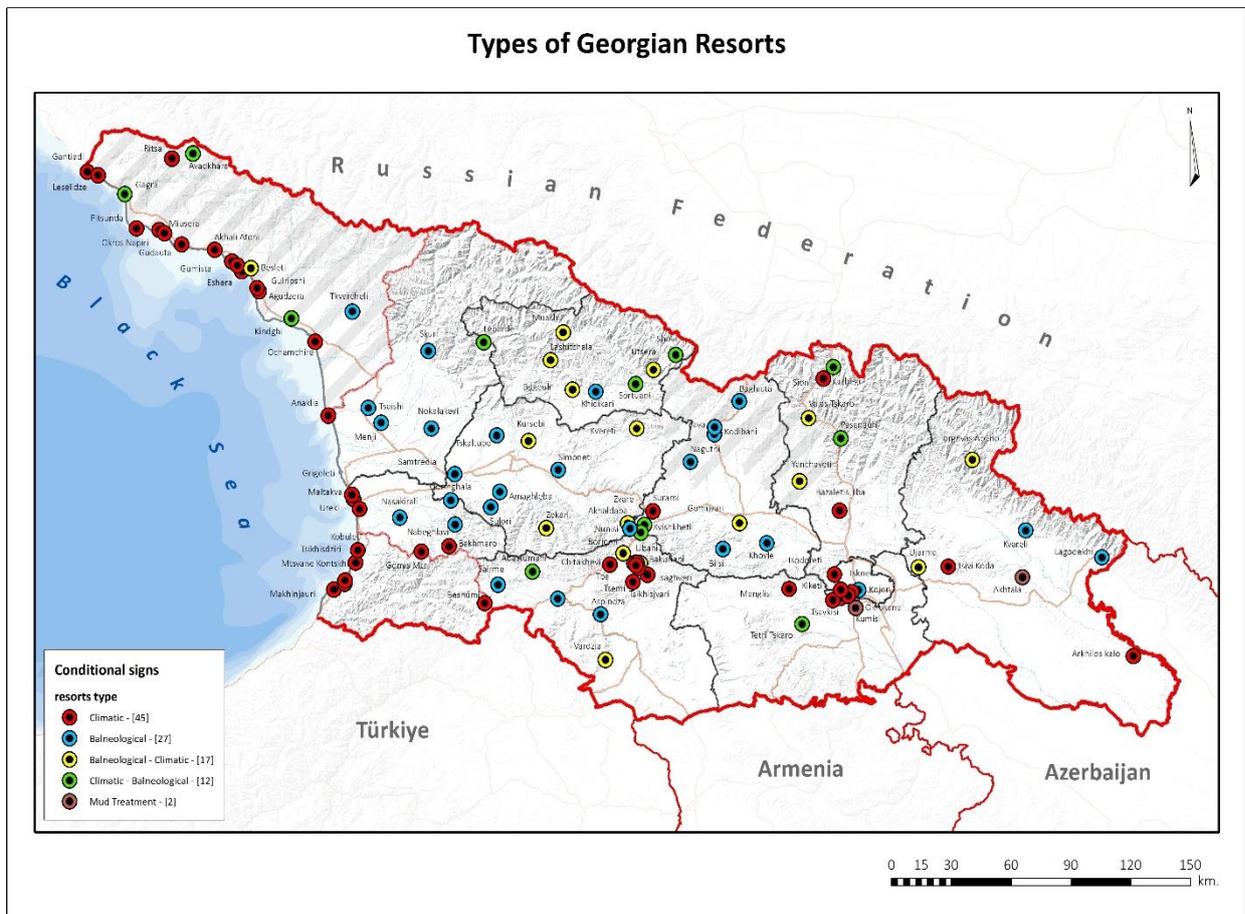


Fig2. Types of Georgian Resorts

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Thus, the vast majority of Georgia's resorts (70%) are of climatological (almost half) and balneological profiles. This situation clearly reflects Georgia's climatic diversity and the abundance of mineral (thermal) waters, as well as the scale of its mountainous relief and magmatic geological formations, which is manifested in the number of climatological and balneological resorts important for human health.

	Location	Number
1	Coastal	25
2	Valley–Lowland	9
3	Low Mountain	33
4	Medium Mountain	28
5	High Mountain	2
6	Plateaus and Basins	6

Thus, the vast majority of Georgia's resorts are located in coastal areas and in low and medium mountain zones. The number of resorts in valleys, plateaus, basins, and high mountain areas is significantly smaller. This situation is related to the high therapeutic and health-improving potential of the Black Sea and its coastal zone, as well as the widespread presence of mineral waters and recreational vegetation (coniferous and mixed forests) in the low and medium mountains.

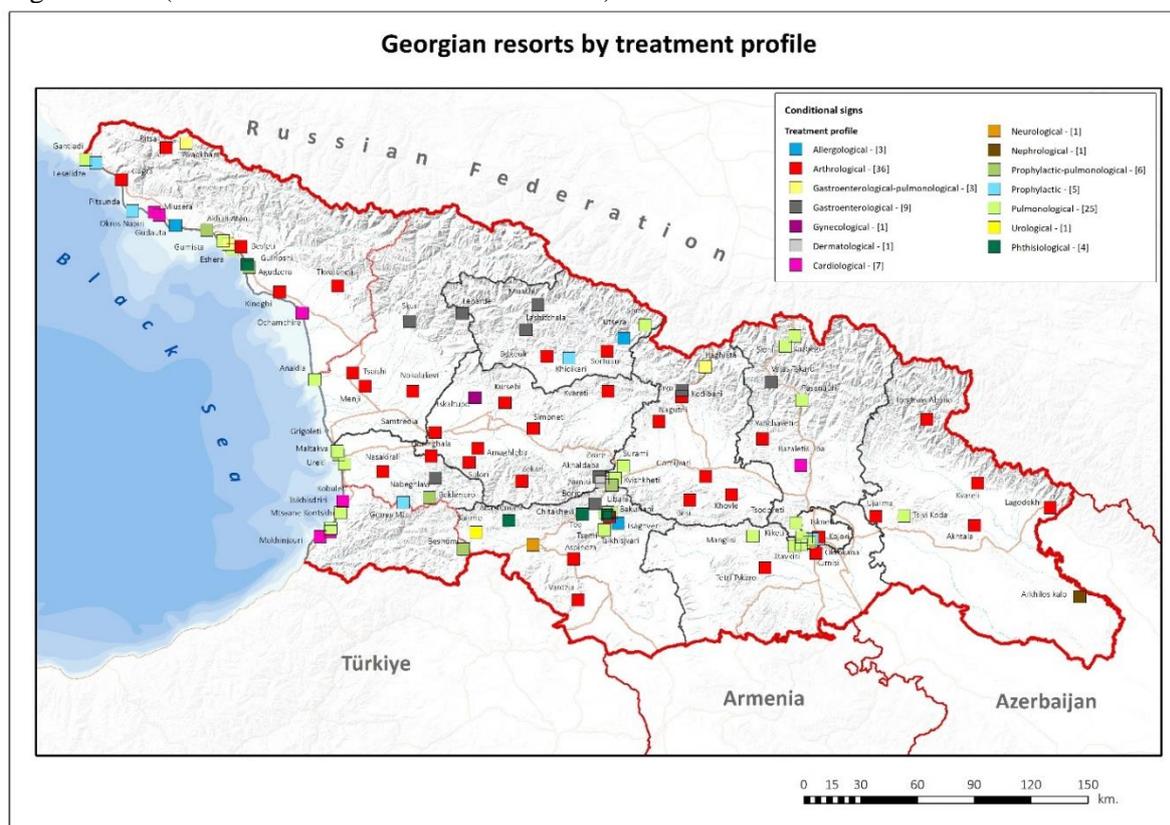


Fig3. Georgian resorts by treatment profile

Treatment profile	Number
Phthisiatric, Pulmonary, Arthrological	4
Pulmonological	25
Gastroenterological, Pulmonological	3
Arthrological	36
Nephrological	1
Neurological	1
Cardiological	7
Allergological, Pulmonological	3
Preventive	5
Gastroenterological	9
Gynecological	1
Dermatological	1

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Urological	1
Allergological	3

At most of Georgia's climatological resorts, it is possible to treat several diseases simultaneously. However, based on the main therapeutic profile and the number of resorts, those specializing in arthrological and pulmonological (lung and respiratory system) treatments stand out.

It is very important that several dozen mineral waters in Georgia are used for the treatment of arthritis-related diseases. Arthritis is a collective term that encompasses over 100 different diseases. These diseases have different causes, and accordingly, various forms of arthritis are distinguished. Each form is characterized by joint inflammation—in some forms, the inflammatory process manifests from the onset, while in others, it appears during disease exacerbation. Arthritis is a progressive disease that damages the joints. As a result, movement becomes limited, and discomfort and pain are felt in the affected joints. Its various forms occur in people of all ages, including children (<https://toduaclinic.ge/blog/artriti>)

Among the 102 resorts and resort areas in Georgia, 45 have a climatic profile (44%), 27 have a balneological profile (26%), 17 have a balneo-climatic profile, 12 have a climatic-balneological profile, and 2 have a natural mud treatment.

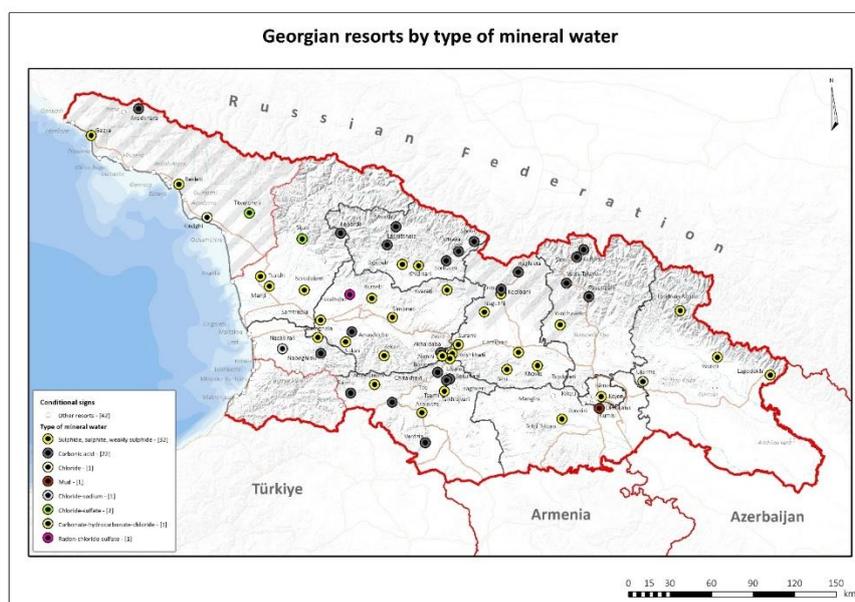
According to the resorts alone, there are 27 climatic profiles (almost half). 12 have a balneological profile, and 16 resorts have a balneo-climatic profile.

Therapeutic resorts in Georgia play a significant role in the prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation of various diseases. Their importance is determined by the combination of favorable climatic conditions, mountainous relief, and abundant mineral waters. Climatological resorts utilize environmental factors such as altitude, air composition, temperature, and humidity, which are particularly beneficial for respiratory, cardiovascular, and musculoskeletal disorders.

Balneological resorts rely on the medicinal properties of mineral and thermal waters, rich in chemical elements like calcium, magnesium, sulfur, and bicarbonates. These waters exhibit anti-inflammatory, analgesic, and regenerative effects, making them effective for conditions such as arthritis, nephrological, dermatological, and gastrointestinal diseases. Several mineral springs in Georgia are specifically used for treating arthritic disorders, helping to reduce inflammation, relieve pain, and improve joint mobility.

The integration of climatic and balneological therapies creates a holistic therapeutic environment, enhancing both physical and psychological health. Thus, Georgia's resorts represent a unique intersection of natural geography and medical science, highlighting the potential of environmental and mineral resources in supporting public health and individualized medical care.

About 2 thousand mineral springs have been identified and studied, most of which are distinguished by their high balneological purpose.



**Fig4.** Georgian resorts by of mineral water

### 4. CONCLUSION

Georgia officially has more than 100 resorts, distinguished from each other by various recreational and geographical characteristics. They include coastal (marine-balneological), balneological, balneoclimatic, mountain-climatic, mountain ski, and resort-climatic types. The present study examined and discussed the geographical features of Georgia's resorts, which are characterized by traditional usage, high recreational potential, and development prospects.

Based on the analysis of scientific literature, archival materials, and cartographic sources, their geographical, medical-geographical, and historical-cultural characteristics have been highlighted.

The vast majority of Georgia's resorts are located in coastal areas and in low and medium mountain zones. Resorts are significantly fewer in valleys, plateaus, basins, and high mountain regions.

At most of Georgia's resorts, it is possible to treat multiple diseases simultaneously. However, based on the main therapeutic profile and the number of resorts, those specializing in arthrological and pulmonological (lung and respiratory system) treatments are the most prominent.

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