

TREASURES OF THE SILK ROAD

Classic tour

Uzbekistan's ancient cities - 8 days/7 nights

Itinerary: Tashkent – Khiva – Bukhara – Samarkand – Tashkent



An eight-day very bright and detailed Cultural Uzbekistan Tour is a journey full of unforgettable impressions and mysterious oriental romantics. This tour to Uzbekistan will give you an opportunity to learn more about the history of ancient cities – Samarkand, Shakhrisabz, Bukhara and Tashkent, which were situated on the legendary Great Silk Road. In Tashkent, you will visit a modern center and Old Town with the religious center Khast-Imam and one of the city's oldest bazaars "Chorsu". You will visit Amir Timur's native town – Shakhrisabz, take a walk along the Ark Fortress-Citadel in Bukhara and appreciate at true value the beauty and greatness of the Registan architectural ensemble and cathedral mosque of Bibi-Khanum in Samarkand.

Day 1. Tashkent.

Arrival in Tashkent international airport. Meeting with guide. Transfer to the hotel. Accommodation. Overnight in Tashkent.

Day 2. Tashkent – Khiva

Breakfast.

Transfer to the airport to take domestic flight to Khiva. Arrival in Khiva - the only "Museum under the open sky" in Central Asia that has been completely preserved up to the present day (35 km, 30 min). Accommodation in a hotel, located inside or nearby Ichan-Qala" - the historical center of Khiva which has been inscribed into the UNESCO World Heritage List. City tour around the architectural complex "Ichan-Qala" (12-19th cc.): Kunya-Ark khan's castle - the inner citadel of Ichan-Qala (16-17th cc.), Kalta Minor Tower (Short minaret) that would have become the biggest and tallest minaret in Central Asia (19th c.), Muhammad Amin-Khan - the biggest medieval medressa in Khiva (1845-1855 yy.), Djuma Mosque with 212 wooden columns and a minaret 32,5 m height (10th c.), Tash-Hauli (Stone courtyard) palace looking like a fortress with a high battlements, towers and fortified gates (19th c.), Ak-Mosque (White Mosque) - a small quarter mosque by the gates of Palvan-Darvaza (1838-1842), necropolis of Pahlavan Mahmud - the cultic center of Ichan-Qala (1810-1913 yy.), residence of Islam Khodja (1910 y) - the vizier of last khan. Ensemble consists of the smallest

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medressa in Khiva and a minaret whose top platform has a height of 45 m and is the highest observation point in town. Free time.

Overnight in Khiva.

Day 3. Khiva - Bukhara (450km)

A.M. Breakfast at hotel. Breakfast at hotel. Departure to Bukhara via Kuzil Kum Desert and Amu Daria river'panorama. Lunch-picnic at the route. Overnight at hotel.

Day 4. Bukhara

Breakfast. City tour: mausoleum of the Samanids - the most ancient brick building in Central Asia, a masterpiece of world architecture (9-10th c.), the mausoleum of Chashma Ayub that belongs to esteemed "places of trace" left by saints (14th c). The legend says that once the bible prophet Job (Ayub) visited this place. Visit to the museums of Imam Al Bukhari and "The Museum of Water". Bolo-Houz Mosque - the only monument of medieval Bukhara (beg. of 20th c), Ark - the center of Bukhara statehood (4th c BC), silk carpet shops, complex Poi Kalon ("Beneath the Great"): Kalyan Minaret - the main symbol of sacred Bukhara that symbolized authority and power of spiritual governors. (12th c), Kalyan Mosque - its area of 130 x 80 m surpasses Bibi-Khanym mosque in Samarkand, Miri Arab Madrassah - active madrassah is one of the most esteemed spiritual Islamic universities (16th c), Taki Zargaron - the dome of jewelers (15-16th cc), Ulugbeg Madrassah - one of the 3 madrassahs constructed by grandson of Tamerlan - Ulugbeg (15th c), Abdulaziz-khan Madrassah - a traditional madrassah with 2 floors of hudjras and a mosque on the central axis (mid. of 17th c), Tim of Abdullah-Khan madrassah (1588-1590), atlas shops, Magoki-Attari Mosque - the most ancient mosque in Bukhara (12th c) is considered a masterpiece of Bukhara architecture, Khanaka and madrassah of Nadir Divan-Beghi - a massive rectangular structure that was a place for the refuge and meditation of Sufis (17th c), Kukeldash Madrassah (16th c) - one of the biggest Bukhara madrassah, Lyabi-Hauz ensemble - the largest artificial reservoir of medieval Bukhara - is very popular among travelers (14-17th cc), Chor Minor ("Four minarets") is an unusual madrassah built by Caliph Niyazkul (18th c). Overnight in a quiet and cozy Bukhara hotel.

Day 5. Bukhara

A.M. Breakfast. Visit of neighboring monuments of Bukhara monuments. Necropol of Bakhaouddin Nakchband, Summer residence of Emirs of Bukhara.

Lunch at local restaurant.

P.M. : Visit of Chor Bakr Complex and free time for shopping.

Dinner at local restaurant

Overnight at hotel.

Day 6. Bukhara – Samarkand

A.M. Breakfast. Trip by car to Samarkand. Arrival Samarkand & accommodation at hotel.

Lunch at local restaurant.

Visite of Samarkand's monuments: Gur Emir Mausoleum - Tamerlan's tomb (14-15th c.) that was built for Temur's grandson Muhammad-Sultan and the tombs of three other Temurids - sons of Temur - Miranshah and Shahruh and his grandson Ulugbek, Ruhabad Mausoleum ("House of Spirit") - the legend says that under the dome there is a box with seven hairs of Prophet Muhammad (14th c.),

Dinner at local restaurant

Overnight at hotel.

Day 7. Samarkand

Breakfast. City tour: Registan Square ("A sandy place") - the major square of Samarkand: Ulugbeg Medressa - Sheikh Khodja Akhrar and poet Djami were among outstanding graduates of the medressa (15th c.), Sher-Dor Medressa ("Having tigers") (17th c.), Tillya-Kari Medressa ("Coated by

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gold") - the rich gilding on the dome, walls and mihrab surpassed all other famous buildings in Central Asia (17th c.). The mosque named after Hazret-Hyzz - an Islamic saint and eternal wanderer. He was esteemed as giving richness and good luck in far voyages and trade (19th c.), cathedral mosque Bibi-Khanym that was named after the oldest wife of Tamerlan (14th c.), the architectural complex Shahi-Zinda (Alive king) - necropolis on the slope of the Afrosiab hill is connected with Kusam ibn Abbas - the cousin of Prophet Muhammad (11-15th c), Siab bazaar. Free time to spend at leisure. Overnight in the capital of Tamerlane's Empire.

Day 8. Samarkand - Tashkent (310km)

AM. Breakfast. Transfer to the railway station. Departure to Tashkent. P.M. Arrival. Accommodation. Visit of Independence Place and Tamerlan Square. Dinner at restaurant. Transfer to airport.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Tashkent, Opera and Ballet Théâtre (under confirmation).
- Khiva, Presentation of ethnographe on Art and Culture of Khiva region (for the groupe from 10 people).
- Fashion show of traditional cloths of Uzbek women and folkloric concert; Presentation of the head of the embroidery workshop. Passage to the Jewish quarter of Bukhara and meeting with rabbi.
- In Shakhrisabz, meeting with sellers of dried fruit on the mountains;
- In Samarkand, visit of the paper workshop, Visit of Reghistan Place.

HOTELS IN THE CITIES

Cities/Nights	ECONOMY	COMFORT	LUXE
Tashkent, 2 nights	Shodlik Palace**** Hotel Uzbekistan***	Shodlik Palace**** Hotel Uzbekistan***	Hotel Sharq****
Khiva, 1 night	Old Khiva** Hotel Shaherezade**	Hotel Bek*** Hotel Arkanchi****	Asia Khiva****
Bukhara, 3 nights	Komil Boutique*** Hotel Kabir**	Grand Emir Residence*** Komil Boutique***	Omar Khayyam***
Samarkand, 2 nights	Malika Prime*** Hotel Konstantin****	Hotel Konstantin **** Malika Prime***	Samarkand Superior****

*Hotels mentioned or similar

PRICE OF PACKAGE (price per pax, in euro)

	ECONOMY*	COMFORT**	LUXE***
2 pax	1 055	BY QUERY	
4 pax	860		
6 pax	810		

*Meals not included

**Compleat pension

***Compleat pension (alcoholic drinks included)

Note : Payment methods: cash, credit cards (Visa), bank transfer.

SERVICES INCLUDED IN TOUR PRICE:	SERVICES NOT INCLUDED IN TOUR PRICE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic flight : Tashkent-Urgentch • Accommodation based on TWN rooms • Meals – According price of package • Entrance fees for Sightseeing spots mentioned. • Overland transportation by AC coach • All airport-hotel-airport transfers • English speaking guide for the whole tour • All sightseeing as specified in the itinerary • 1 bottle of mineral water per day per pax 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International airfares • Visa fees • Meals – According price of package • Camera and Video charges during the sightseeing • Personal expenses • Medical insurance • Extra payment for choosing single room € 90 • Tips for guide and drivers

❖ Programme can be booked from 2 pax, max 20 pax

General Information about Uzbekistan



Location of Uzbekistan

The Republic of Uzbekistan is situated in the central part of Central Asia between two rivers: the Amudarya and Syrdarya. The Turan Lowland lies to the northwest, and the Tien-Shan and Pamir-Alay mountain ridges are located in the southeast of the territory. The Kyzyl-Kum Desert defines the Northern part of the country. Uzbekistan borders Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan.

Terrain

Mostly flat-to-rolling sandy desert with dunes; broad, flat, intensely irrigated river valleys along the course of the Amu Darya, Sirdaryo (Syr Darya), and Zarafshon rivers; the Fergana Valley in the east surrounded by mountainous Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan; the shrinking Aral Sea in the west.

Elevation extremes

Lowest point: Sariqarnish Lake - 12 m.

Highest point: Adelunga Mountain - 4.301 m.

Climate

The climate of Uzbekistan is extremely continental with a great number of sunny days. The average monthly temperature in January ranges from -10°C to $+3^{\circ}\text{C}$. Summer is hot and dry. The average monthly temperature in July varies from $+35^{\circ}\text{C}$ to $+45^{\circ}\text{C}$. Autumn is relatively warm and is the season when delicious fruits and vegetables are in abundance in the numerous bazaars (markets). The average annual temperature is 13°C .

Tourist seasons

Because of the peculiarity of climate, first half of tourist season falls on spring months: March, April, May, and the second half is in August, September and October. Also there is tourist activity in winter months for the lovers of mountains and winter sports (ski, snowboard).

Visa for Uzbekistan

Please check list of embassies at <http://mfa.uz/en/consular/consular/>

Public holidays

January 1 - New Year
March 8 - International Women's Day
March 21 - Navruz (Central Asian New Year)
May 9 - Memorial/Remembrance Day
September 1 - Independence Day
October 1 - Teacher's Day
December 8 - Constitution Day.

There are other religious holidays with varying dates:

Ramadan Khait
Kurban Khait

Cuisine

There are over one thousand dishes in Uzbek cuisine. Fruits and vegetables grown under the tender oriental sun are taste fantastic. There are about 100 varieties of Uzbek plov, prepared in a different way in every region. The caloric content and ecological cleanliness of local ingredients is unique. Uzbek cuisine can not be described, it has to be tasted.

Uzbekistan Currency

All payments must be made in "Sum", the national currency of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Currency exchange offices are available in every city of Uzbekistan. All foreign currencies may be converted in main offices of banks. Preferred currencies - US dollars and Euros.

Land use

Arable land: 9%
Permanent crops: 1%
Permanent pastures: 46%
Forests and woodland: 3%
Other: 41% (1993 est.).

Clothing

Very light and loose clothing (preferably cotton or natural fibers) is recommended for daytime use, with a light jumper and/or casual jacket for the cooler evenings. Because of the large amount of sightseeing on foot in dry, dusty and sometimes rough areas (i.e. dirt, cobblestones, etc.), comfortable, solid walking shoes with strong soles and support are essential. You may be required to remove your shoes upon entry to some religious sites. There are no special clothing requirements for visiting Islamic religious sites, except that you should take care to cover most parts of your body including your arms and legs.

Above all travelers are encouraged to dress for comfort rather than fashion. Valuable jewelry and any clothing requiring special attention should be left at home.

Due to the very high danger of sunburn, your clothing should offer as much protection as possible.

A hat with good shade protection and sunglasses are essential.

In some areas the average visitor may appear extremely wealthy to local people. A lavish display of jewelry, bulging handbags and wallets, and a neck full of cameras will make you stand out in a crowd. Be discreet and respectful of the local culture and traditions and carry a minimum of valuables.

Luggage

A shoulder bag with a strong strap or a small rucksack is the most practical way of carrying cameras and personal belongings during your stay. Your entire luggage should be secured with a padlock. Always make sure that all cases and bags are clearly labeled. The label should carry your name and destination details but not your home address. It is a good idea to label your luggage on the inside. This will enable airport authorities to identify your luggage should it become lost, or the labels removed. Never leave your luggage unattended at airports or train stations.

Your free airline luggage allowance is 20 kg per person, plus one additional piece of 'carry-on' hand luggage on domestic flights within Central Asia, except to Turkmenistan, where the maximum baggage allowance is 10 kg. Because you will be traveling in some areas where travel conditions are rather basic, travelers are strongly urged to restrict their luggage to one main suitcase or backpack and one carry-on overnight bag.

As recommended under CURRENCY and SECURITY, an important part of your luggage will also be your money wallet for safely carrying your travel documents.

Health

You will be traveling in areas which are largely free of major infectious diseases, so there are no official vaccination requirements for foreign visitors. However, we strongly advise you to consult your physician or Vaccination Centre for current health warnings and recommended vaccinations.

As it is practically inevitable in areas where water is high in mineral and metallic salts (as is the case with Central Asia) one should be prepared for minor gastric conditions. Consult your physician or pharmacist for recommended remedies. Throughout the areas you will be travelling, one of the main health warnings is dehydration. At all times maintain a steady intake of non-alcoholic liquids.

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Sunburn is another major problem. Bring adequate suntan lotion and a wide brimmed hat. If desired, you may also bring a supply of vitamins, throat lozenges, throat gargle to prevent basic infections, cold/flu tablets, aspirins, Band-Aids, antiseptics and antibacterial cream. Please advise us if you have any allergies or particular medical ailments which may require special attention during the trip, and if your doctor has prescribed any medication, make sure that you have sufficient supplies to last the duration of your holiday.

Important: Please, ensure that you carry in your hand luggage any medicine you may require in case your suitcase is separated from you.

Insurance

Since this type of service in Uzbekistan is still developing, it is recommended to carry insurance from company of your home country.

Security

Individual safety boxes are not always available in Uzbekistan hotels. An essential part of your luggage is a comfortable money wallet, which may be worn under your clothing. At all times you should carry your main documents (i.e. currency, traveler's checks, air tickets, passports, visas etc.) While it is highly unlikely you will encounter any physical danger, minor thefts in crowded public places may occur and every precaution should be taken to avoid losing anything of value. In accordance with local laws, you will be required to hand in your passport to the hotel reception on arrival to allow registration of your passport details by the hotel. Your passport will normally be available again after a few hours. Do not forget to collect it before departure.

Photography in Uzbekistan

No obstacles are presented to visitors who wish to photograph places of historical interest. Photography inside some religious monuments and in airports, railway stations or near military installations may not be allowed. If in doubt ask your local guide. Please also note that there is a fee for photography in most sightseeing places (not included in your tour price).

Film and batteries are available in major cities, but we recommend you purchase your supply before arrival, particularly if you have the latest model or a sophisticated type of camera that requires a specific type of film and/or batteries.

Drinks

Local mineral water contains a higher level of minerals than western spring or bottled water and the taste can be rather "salty" (these mineral waters are considered healthier than European spring or mineral waters).

Imported spirits and wines are available, however in some places the provenance of some spirits and wines is questionable and the prices inflated. Accordingly, you are advised to purchase your favorite alcohol duty free prior to arrival.

Shopping

Travelers in Uzbekistan will be pleasantly surprised by the interesting jewelry, clothing and local handicrafts. Books, postcards and maps are other popular souvenirs. There are restrictions on exporting carpets from the country, ask your Tour Guide for detailed up-to-date information on this matter, before purchasing one.

Psychology of bargain

In the East haggling is turned into art. While haggling, you may speak loudly and don't give a sign that you are hesitating in your triumph. No doubt, sellers never lower their price to the level of your offer, however, in most cases, you can lower the price up to 15% if you negotiate.

Incidentals

You will be responsible for covering the cost of your hotel incidentals such as phone calls, room service, mini-bar in your room and laundry. Before departing from all hotels on the tour, please ensure that you have checked with the front desk for any personal charges that the hotel may have made to your room.

Tipping

Travelers may wish to express their appreciation - a reward for extra service - to the porters, waiters, drivers and guides. The degree of appreciation may vary, and our policy is to leave this to your discretion. This is usually given individually in an envelope at the end of the tour/service.

Sports in Uzbekistan

Many new state provided stadiums, sport complexes, pools, sports clubs, and private fitness clubs cater to the great demand for physical exercise. "Sportsman" is a widely used term here. Uzbekistan has produced Olympic champions in kickboxing, boxing, wrestling, gymnastics, and chess, who have brought home medals from Atlanta, Sydney, and Lillehammer.

Dilshod Aripov - world champion wrestler

Mahamadkodir Abdullaev, Sergey Mikhailov, Rustam Saidov, Ruslan Chagaev, Artur Grigoryan Olympic and World champions in boxing

Iroda Tuliaganova - WTA tennis champion

Oksana Chusovitina - world champion gymnast

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The President's Cup, an international tennis tournament, draws WTC star players

Tashkent golf club, the only 18-hole venue in Central Asia, complete with guest rooms, will host international tournaments in the future.

Tourism in Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan is a member of the executive council of the WTO.

Over 4000 historical architectural monuments and sites, around 500 travel companies and organizations with partners in 50 countries worldwide, 5- and 4-star of International chains, private hotels of all categories.

68 museums, arts and crafts masters, shops, folk dance and music ensembles, silk and cotton fashion designers, certified city guides and private guides through Uzbekistan, culture tourism, eco tourism, specialized tours, nature tourism, and resorts.

Transport in Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan Airways: Airbus fleet to over 45 worldwide destinations international airports:

Tashkent, Samarkand, Urgench domestic airports: Bukhara, Qarshi, Termez, Navoi, Zarafshan, Nukus, Fergana, and Namangan. Railway 7000 km; TGV express trains from Tashkent to Samarkand and Bukhara and to most major cities. Bus and minibus service.