

9 Days - Follow the Ancient Silk Road in Uzbekistan



Uzbekistan: Tashkent- Urgench- Khiva- Bukhara- Samarkand- Tashkent



Type: Classic

Tour Overview

Day 01: Tashkent

Welcome to Uzbekistan! Upon clearing immigration and customs, the representative will be waiting at the airport meeting area for the transfer to the hotel.

Day 02: Tashkent

Tashkent, a charming mish mash of austere Soviet-style buildings and classical Russian architecture, has a long history of 2,200 years, and has been the capital of Uzbekistan since 1930.

We'll start by exploring the narrow winding streets of the Old Town. This area is home to Barakkhan Madrasah, Tillya Shaykh Mosque, Kaffal Shashi Mausoleum and the Library of Islamic Literature.

Under a giant dome, we'll find a delightful slice of city life in the traditional Chor-Su Bazaar. It's also a great place to buy souvenirs, watch Uzbek bread baking and taste some local food.

In the modern part of the city we'll visit the Applied Arts Museum and Mustakillik Square. We'll even take a ride on the vibrant, arty Tashkent Metro. The tour of Tashkent ends at Amir Temur Square established on the intersection of two ancient trade roads in the heart of the city.

Today's Highlights: Metro, walk through Chor-Su Bazaar.

Day 3: Tashkent – Urgench – Khiva

A morning flight will take us to Urgench, followed by the drive to Khiva. A visit to this 6th century walled city is like travelling back in time. It is a city of colour thanks to the navy, indigo and cerulean ceramic tiles embedded in the ochre walls of many of the buildings. We'll walk the labyrinth of sand-laden alleyways to find the Juma Mosque whose roof is supported by 213 unique columns of 10th century elm; Tash Hauli, the main palace of Khiva rulers; and Pakhlavan Mahmud Mausoleum, an open-air mausoleum. We'll also visit Muhammad Amin Khan Madrassah, Kalta Minor Minaret, Kunya Ark, Muhamad Rahim Khan Madrassah, Islam Khodja Minaret and Madrassah, and Shirgazi Khan Madrassah.

Today's Highlights: A walk through the old walled area of Ichan Kala



Day 4: Khiva – Bukhara

After breakfast we'll set off on a road trip of seven to eight hours to Bukhara. The drive takes us through the red sand Kyzylkum Desert, the 15th largest desert in the world. It's a dry and desolate, yet beautiful area, populated by nomadic tribes. We'll have stops to stretch our legs on the bank of the Amudarya River and to have lunch in a local café.

Day 5: Bukhara

Today we'll explore Bukhara, Central Asia's holiest city. It is home to buildings spanning a thousand years of history, and a thoroughly lived-in and cohesive old centre that hasn't changed much in two centuries. It is one of the best places in Central Asia for a glimpse of pre-Russian Turkestan.

We'll visit the Ark Fortress - the residence of Bukhara khans, Bolo Hauz Mosque, Samanids Mausoleum, Chashma-Ayub Mausoleum, and some beautiful madrassahs.

At the Poi-Kalyan complex we can see the Kalyan Minaret, also known as the 'Tower of Death'. We'll also visit the Lyabi Hauz complex, a peaceful oasis in the heart of the city containing several impressive Islamic monuments.

Today's Highlight: Walk in the Old Town.

Day 6: Bukhara – Samarkand

The City of the Dead - this is just one of the sights we will see today. Located just outside Bukhara, Chor Bakr Necropolis, as it is officially known, is an unusual and mysterious burial place for the Dzhuybar sheikhs.

We'll also visit Chor Minor Mosque; Sitorai Mokhi Khosa – the summer residence of the last Emir of Bukhara; and Baghautdin Nakhshbandi Mausoleum – an important Muslim shrine and pilgrimage site.

In the afternoon, we'll board the train destined for Samarkand.

Today's Highlight: Exploring the life of the last rulers of Bukhara.

Day 7: Samarkand

No name is as evocative of the Silk Road as Samarkand, which lies at the crossroads of the silk trading route through Europe and Asia.

We'll visit the awe-inspiring restored madrassas standing on three sides of the iconic Registan Square - Ulughbek Madrassah, Sher-Dor Madrassah, and the gold-covered Tillya-Kari Madrassah.

Other highlights include Bibi Khanym Mosque with its ocean-blue domes and exquisite carvings; and Shakhi Zinda Necropolis, which contains monuments dating between 500 and 1000 years old. We'll also visit Gur Emir Mausoleum and Ulughbek Observatory with its interesting underground passages.

Today's Highlight: Registan Square with its ornate portals, patterned minarets and glistening cupolas.



Day 8: Samarkand – Tashkent

We'll continue seeing the sights of Samarkand today. There's the ancient settlement and museum of Afrosiab, and the Tombstone of Saint Daniyar – the restored tomb of the Old Testament prophet Daniyar (Daniel).

At Konigil village there's time to visit the local paper mill which offers a fantastic insight into how traditional paper is still made using old-fashioned techniques.

We'll then either catch the train or drive back to Tashkent.

Today's Highlight: Witness the ancient process of handmade silk paper.

Day 9: Departure from Tashkent

Sadly it's our last day and time to say goodbye. Enjoy a final breakfast before the transfer back to the airport for the onward flight.

Highlights

- Wander through Khiva, a UNESCO-protected site and the most romantic city on the Silk Road.
- Be blown away by the ancient mosques, madrassas and oriental bazaars of Bukhara.
- In spiritual Samarkand stand among the ornate portals, patterned minarets and glistening cupolas of Registan Square.

Duration

- 9D8N

Inclusions

- All services as mentioned in your itinerary
- Accommodation (DBL/TWN room basis) with breakfast
- Flight tickets Tashkent-Urgench (economy)
- Train tickets Bukhara-Samarkand & Samarkand-Tashkent (subject to availability, we reserve the right to change the program and/or substitute trains by other transport)
- Guides services provided in the requested languages, unless otherwise mentioned in the itinerary
- Ground transportation in private, air-conditioned vehicle.
- Drinking water during sightseeing.
- Multi-lingual 24-hour customer support hotline in all destinations.
- Welcome pack on arrival.
- Fully licensed and insured to international standard.
- All applicable local taxes.

Exclusions

- Visa fees Early check-in / late check-out
- Personal expenses
- Photo/video fees at museums
- Tips and gratuities
- Lunches and dinners

Things you need to know

- Additional airfare, airport taxes and fuel surcharges may apply.
- Additional charges may apply if changes or cancellations are made to flight tickets. We will notify you if ticket issuance deadlines are outside our standard terms and conditions.
- Breakfast box in case of very early morning departures.
- For solo traveller the single supplement is already included in the tour price.
- Where an extra bed is not available, a single supplement charge will be added for additional room.
- Where an extra bed is available, an 'Extra Bed' charge will be added.
- Infants under 2 years old are free of charge when travelling with a paying adult.
- Children under 12 years old receive a 30% discount when sharing existing bedding.
- If you have decided to travel on a local holiday or festival, certain rates may be higher. We will let you know right away if this condition applies to you.
- Accommodation is subject to availability until you have confirmed your booking and paid any relevant deposits.
- In the event your chosen hotel is not available, alternatives will be offered.
- Some of our roads can be quite bumpy, especially in remote areas such as Nukus and Termez. As smaller vehicles such as sedan cars or small minivans can only be used in mountain areas, we may need to change the transport several times throughout the tour. For example, we will use smaller vehicles for travelling and larger vehicles for sightseeing. Transfers to the Ferghana Valley may be by train or road, at our discretion.