

# CENTRAL ASIA



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# CENTRAL ASIA TRAVEL ROUTE MAP



# UZBEKISTAN



# TASHKENT

Tashkent is the capital and largest city of Uzbekistan, as well as the most populated city in ex-Soviet Central Asia.

Tashkent was influenced by the Sogdian and Turkic cultures in its early history, before Islam in the 8th century AD. After its destruction by Genghis Khan in 1219, the city was rebuilt and profited from the Silk Road.

Due to the destruction of most of the ancient city during the 1917 revolution and, later, the 1966 earthquake, little remains of Tashkent's traditional architectural heritage. Tashkent is, however, rich in museums and Soviet-era monuments.

- Excursion along new part of Tashkent:
- Independence Square
- Amir Temur Statue
- Alisher Navoi Theatre Square
- Museum of Applied Arts of Uzbekistan
- Tashkent Metro (Underground)

## City tour along the old part of Tashkent:

- Khazrati Imam Complex consisting of Kaffal Shashi Mausoleum (15th Century).
- Barak-Khan Madrasah (16th Century).
- Muyi-Mubarak Mosque - storehouse of the well-known Koran of Khalif Osman and gold hair of Prophet Muhammad.
- Shopping at CHORSU national oriental bazaar

# SAMARKAND



Samarkand, alternatively Samarqand, is a city in south-eastern Uzbekistan and one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in Central Asia.

The city was taken by Alexander the Great in 329 B.C., when it was known by its Greek name of Marakanda. The city was ruled by a succession of Iranian and Turkic rulers until the Mongols under Genghis Khan conquered Samarkand in 1220. In the 14th century it became the capital of the empire of Timur (Tamerlane). Today, Samarkand is the capital of Samarqand Region and Uzbekistan's second largest city.

In 2001, U.N.E.S.C.O. added the city to its World Heritage List.

Modern Samarkand is divided into two parts: the old city, and the new city developed during the days of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union. The old city includes historical monuments, shops and old private houses, while the new city includes administrative buildings along with cultural centres and educational institutions

## Major places to visit in the city:

- Gure Amir (Shrine of Timur and Timurids)
- Shahi Zinda Ensemble
- Registan Ensemble and Square
- Armenian Church Surb Astvatsatsin
- St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
- Murad Avliya Shrine
- Panjab Shia Madrasa & Mosque
- Nuriddin Basir Shrine
- Ruhabad Mausoleum
- Imam Maturidi Shrine
- Imam Bukhari Shrine
- Mosque Bibi-Khanum two portal
- Hazrat-Hyzzr Mosque

# B U K H A R A



## Major places to visit in the city:

- Bukhara Fortress, the Ark
- Kok-Gumbaz mosque
- Kalyan or Kalon Minor
- Nasruddin Hodja
- Char Minar
- The Magoki-Attari mosque
- Bahoutdin Architectural Complex

Bukhara is nation's fifth-largest city in Uzbekistan. Bukhara is rich in historical sites, with about 140 architectural monuments.

People have inhabited the region around Bukhara for at least five millennia, and the city has existed for half that time.

Suzani textiles from Bukhara are famous worldwide. Suzani is a type of embroidered and decorative tribal textile made in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries. Suzani is from the Persian & Suzan means needle. The art of making such textiles in Iran is called Suzandozi (needlework).

UNESCO has listed the historic center of Bukhara (which contains numerous mosques and madrasas) as a World Heritage Site



# KYRGYZTAN



Bishkek, formerly Pishpek and Frunze, is the capital and largest city of Kyrgyz Republic.

Bishkek is situated at an altitude of about 800 meters (2,600 ft), just off the northern fringe of the Kyrgyz Ala-Too range, an extension of the Tian-Shan mountain range.

Bishkek is a city of wide boulevards and marble-faced public buildings combined with numerous Soviet-style apartment blocks surrounding interior courtyards.

In 1926, the city became the capital of the newly established Kirghiz ASSR and was renamed "Frunze" after Mikhail Frunze, Lenin's close associate who was born in Bishkek and played key roles during the revolutions of 1905 and 1917 and during the Russian civil war of the early 1920s. The city was renamed Bishkek on 5 February 1991 and Kyrgyzstan achieved independence later that year during the breakup of the Soviet Union.

The city is served by Manas International Airport, located approximately 25 kilometres (16 mi) northwest of the city centre.

The Kyrgyz Ala-Too mountain range, some 40 kilometres (25 mi) away, provides a spectacular backdrop to the city; the Ala Archa National Park is only a 30 to 45 minutes drive away.

At Ala-Too Square, there is an independence monument where the changing of the guards may be watched.

Osh bazaar, west of the city centre, is a large, picturesque produce market.



В.И. ЛЕНИН



### **Issyk-Kul**

Issyk-Kul : is an endorheic lake in the northern Tian Shan mountains in eastern Kyrgyzstan. It is the seventh deepest lake in the world, the tenth largest lake in the world by volume (though not in surface area), and the second largest saline lake after the Caspian Sea. Issyk-Kul means "warm lake" in the Kyrgyz language; although it is surrounded by snow-capped peaks, it never freezes.

The lake is a Ramsar site of globally significant biodiversity and forms part of the Issyk-Kul Biosphere Reserve.

### **Fairy Tale Mountain**

Fairy tales in Skazka Canyon, Kyrgyzstan. South of Lake Issyk-Kul, hidden in the hills is a magical place: the Skazka canyon, also called the Fairy-tale canyon. While walking through it, your imagination will go crazy with all the colors and shapes created by the elements.

The fairy tale canyon is a place where the red sandstones have been eroded and shaped by the elements. There is a large variety of shapes from towers to waves to crest-like rocks. Some people see castles... Hence the name fairy-tale.



# B O K O N B A Y E V O

Bokonbayevo is the center of the Tong District of the Issyk-Kul Region of Kyrgyz Republic. The city is very close to eye-shaped Issyk-Kul lake (the second largest saline lake in the world, which never freezes despite its altitude in the Tian-Shan mountains) & Fairy-Tale mountains.

# SONG - KUL

Song Kul, literally "following lake" is an alpine lake in northern Naryn Province of Kyrgyz Republic. It lies at an altitude of 3016 m, and has an area of about 270 km<sup>2</sup> and volume of 2.64 km<sup>3</sup>. The lake's maximum length is 29 km, breadth about 18 km, and the deepest point is 13.2 m. It is the second largest lake in Kyrgyzstan after Issyk Kul Lake, and the largest fresh water lake in Kyrgyzstan. The area is popularly known as "Land of Nomads" and tourist used to stay in the Yurts (is a portable, round tent covered with skins or felt and used as a dwelling by several distinct nomadic groups in the steppes of Central Asia)



# K A Z A K H S T A N



Kazakhstan offers a diverse range of tourism spots, from breathtaking natural landscapes to historical and cultural landmarks.

Almaty: Kazakhstan's largest city, Almaty, is nestled at the foothills of the Trans-Ili Alatau mountains. It is known for its vibrant culture, modern skyline, and historical sites. Visitors can explore attractions such as Zenkov Cathedral, Panfilov Park, Almaty Central Mosque, and the bustling Green Bazaar.



Landscape yet to explore.



# TRIP ITINERARY

## Central Asia - (UZBEKISTAN - KYRGYZSTAN- KAZAKHSTAN) 15-DAYS

### DAY 01: Arrival at Tashkent at 16.05 Flight HY-4

Arrival at Tashkent at 16.05 Flight HY424. After all formalities visit Tashkent Magik city. After dinner, check in the Hotel.

### DAY 02: Tashkent Local Sightseeing

Breakfast at the hotel. Start a guided tour in Tashkent – a city with a long 2200 years history. We will start from the Old City: Khast Imam Ensemble – a religious center of the city consisting of Barakkhan Madrasah, Tillya Shaykh Mosque, Kaffal Shashi Mausoleum and the library of Islamic Literature with original Uthman's Quran of the VIII century.

Explore traditional Chor-Su Bazaar – oldest in Tashkent where you can buy souvenirs, watch Uzbek bread baking process in traditional oven, taste some local food. Visiting modern part of Tashkent: ride by arty Tashkent Metro to Mustakillik Square – symbol of Uzbek capital. We will stroll about local Broadway Street to get to Amir Temur Square – the heart of the city, established on the intersection of two ancient trade roads.

Overnight at the hotel.

### DAY 03: Tashkent to Bukhara (Train)

After breakfast, take the Afrosiab express train to Bukhara (07:28-11:23). Arrival at Bukhara.

Today we'll explore Bukhara, Central Asia's holiest city. Start from Samanids Mausoleum – Shrine of Ismail Samani and other members of the Samanid Dynasty, Bolo Hauz Mosque, Ark Fortress – residence of Bukhara khans.

Continue to the Poi-Kalyan complex with Kalyan Minaret through orient bazaars with trade domes. Finish at Lyabi Hauz complex, a peaceful oasis in the heart of the city containing several impressive Islamic monuments. Overnight at the hotel.

### DAY 04: Bukhara local sightseeing

Breakfast at the hotel. Today we drive outside Bukhara for sightseeing: Sitorai Mokhi Khosa – summer residence of the last Emir of Bukhara, Chor Bakr Necropolis – city of the dead, Bahut Din Naqshband Mausoleum – center of Sufism and most important pilgrimage site. Drive back to Bukhara and visit Chor Minor Mosque. Overnight at the hotel.

### DAY 05: Bukhara to Shakhrisabz to Samarkand ( CAR)

Breakfast at the hotel. We'll drive by road to the hometown of Amir Timur, also known as Tamerlane – Shakhrisabz. In Shakhrisabz we will visit the ruins of magnificent Timur's palace – Ak Saray (UNESCO World Heritage Site). Continue to Kok-Gumbaz Mosque founded by Timur's grandson Ulugbek, and Dorus-Saodat Mausoleum – remains of Timurids family tomb. Continue to Samarkand. Overnight at the hotel.

### DAY 06: Samarkand local sightseeing, Night Stay at Tashkent.

Breakfast at the hotel. We will start sightseeing from Gur Emir Mausoleum (tomb of Tamerlane), continue with iconic Registan Square (which means "desert" in Persian) and three madrasahs (religious study

centers) surrounding the square: Ulugbek Madrasah, Sher-Dor Madrasah, and the gold-covered Tillya-Kari Madrasah.

Visit to Shakhi Zinda Necropolis – ensemble including mausoleums and other ritual buildings of IX-XIV and XIX CC, Ulugbek Observatory, built in XV century by Timurid ruler and astronomer, Bibi Khaym Mosque – built by Amir Timur for his favorite wife in XV century. Overnight in a hotel.

### DAY 07: Tashkent to Bishkek (Flight HY-777 AT 15.20 - 17.30)

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to the airport. Meeting with the guide at the airport. This entire day is dedicated to a guided tour of Bishkek. It includes visiting Pobeda Square (Victory Square), Dubovoy Park (Oak Park), Central Ala-Too Square, the History Museum, National Philharmonic, and many other places of interest. Overnight in the hotel.

### DAY 08: Ala Archa national park Day trip and Osh bazaar

Today we will visit Ala Archa gorge. It is a Natural Park. At the Soviet Time only V.I.P. people had permission to go for a walk here. The Ala Archa gorge is on a spur of the Tien Shan mountain range. It is just 45 km from Bishkek. You can have a short hiking tour to see a panoramic view of the gorge. If you want we can go hiking a little bit longer to see a small scenic waterfall. Afterwards we return to Bishkek. On the visit Osh Market. A traditional dinner will be organized at 7 o'clock. This overnight will be in a hotel.

### DAY 09: Bishkek to Son-kul

After breakfast we start our drive to the second largest lake in Kyrgyzstan – Son Kul Lake. This lake is surrounded by mountains and it is the highest alpine lake in Kyrgyzstan, situated at an altitude of 3013 meters above sea level. Kyrgyz nomads started to come to this wonderful area with their families for rest and relaxation. Herders of the Naryn region come to the lake to use it as a pastureland. After our arrival, you will be free to explore and enjoy the virgin nature of the lake and its surroundings. Dinner and overnight is in nomadic collapsible dwellings - yurts. They are made of a wooden skeleton, covered with felt coverings.

### DAY 10: Son-kul to Bokonbayevo

In the morning you will be transferred to celestial Issyk Kul Lake, the second largest alpine lake in the world (1608m. above sea level). The lake is called "the pearl of Central Asia". You can come up to the lake and to see mountains all around it. On route you will visit Burana Tower (an 11th century minaret) and an open air museum of Balban's (stone warriors). Today you will drive along the whole northern shore and arrive in Karakol town. Also we will visit today a place with ancient stone patterns – petroglyphs. Your dinner will be in a local restaurant. Night is in a guesthouse.

### DAY 11: Bokonbayevo to Karakol

Today we will drive to Jeti Oguz gorge. It's famous for its red rock formations that have a name Seven Bulls – Jeti Oguz. Also you will see the Broken Heart Mountain. We will take many photos there and if you want it is possible to go on top of a mountain (20 minutes) to see a panorama view of the gorge. There are yurts in the gorge and people can offer you to drink Kumis. It is a national drink that is made of mare's milk, and it is an alcoholic drink as a beer. Dinner will be served in the Tamga guesthouse, where you will also spend the night. We will drive there along the southern shore of Issyk Kul Lake. On the way visit Fairy Tale Mountain

### DAY 12: Karakol to Charyn Canyon, Night stay at Saty village.

After breakfast head to Charyn canyon via the Kegen border. This picturesque indigenous locality impresses with its heavenly landscapes. The Canyon depth is 200m. The height of the bluff mountains of the Canyon reaches 150-300m. The Canyon itself represents a monument of nature formed with sedimentary rocks aged more than 12 million years. The landscapes are virtually miraculous there. After the excursion transfer to Saty village. Overnight in the guest house.

### DAY 13: Saty village to Altyn Emel

In the morning visit the first Kolsai lake. Kolsay Lakes in Kazakhstan have been nicknamed the Blue Necklace of the Northern Tien Shan, and anyone who sets eyes on these natural beauties will quickly understand why. When the surface of the waters are perfectly calm they reflect the sky, while in the evening the lakes appear to boil as trout splash about in their crystal waters. Proceed to Altyn Emel. Altyn-Emel is a national natural park located in the Ili river valley in Kazakhstan territory. The Park was founded on 10 April 1996 with the purpose to preserve a unique natural complex, archeological, historical and cultural monuments, rare and endangered species of animals and plants. Visit singing dunes. When the wind is blowing from the West dispersing the sands, one has a feeling that the pipe organ is playing in the heart of the desert. Overnight in the guest house.

### DAY 14: Altyn Emel to Almaty

After breakfast head to Almaty.

### DAY 15: Almaty Local Sightseeing

Full day in Almaty. Visit Medeo and Chimbulak ski resort. Reach Taldyk pass by funicular. Evening visit to Sunkar Falconry. Sunkar has an entertaining summer show with eagles and other birds of prey every day at 5 pm (except Monday). Overnight in a hotel.

### DAY 16: Almaty departure

“Don't believe what your eyes are telling you.  
All they show is limitation. Look with your  
understanding. Find out what you already  
know and you will see the way to fly.”

-Richard Bach, Jonathan Livingston Seagull



I READ, I SEE, I TRAVEL, I BECOME.



TRAVEL MORE

L A D A K H



B A L I



T U R K E Y



V I E T N A M



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