

UZBEKISTAN 8 DAYS



Duration: 8 days / 7 nights

Route: Bishkek - Tashkent – Urgench – Khiva – Bukhara - Gijduvan – Samarkand – Tashkent – out

Day 1. THU. Bishkek – Tashkent (by air)

PM. Arrival in Tashkent in the evening at 19:00 by HY 780. Meeting with tour escort guide. Transfer to hotel for acc. Dinner at local restaurant.

Day 2. FRI. Tashkent – Urgench – Khiva (air+30km.)

AM. Breakfast. Transfer to airport for flight to Urgench by **HY-1051 at 07:00-08:40**. Arrival and drive to Khiva.

***Khiva – Open Air Museum!** Khiva is a well-preserved and fascinating city, its azure-glazed tiles glinting in the midday sun. Khiva is unique because it has very well preserved neighborhoods, beautiful buildings and religious, military and palace structures, in addition to houses of a specific national type. Ichan-Kala and Dishan-Kala, the two parts of the city, contain most of its wonderful monuments. Ichan Kala is positioned within the redoubtable city walls, with history of scholarship and study. Typified by the astounding madrassas and mosques, and their intricate majolica patterns, it is waiting to be discovered.*

Dishan-Kala consists of houses of traders, craftsmen and also has several mosques and a madrassah. It was divided into residential quarters inhabited by people of one and the same profession which was reflected in the names of such quarters.

Ichan Kala in Khiva was the first site in Uzbekistan to be inscribed in the World Heritage List of UNESCO in 1991.

- **Kuhna Ark** – Khivan rulers commanded from this fortress-residence from as early as the 12th century up to the 17th century when the khans expanded the structure to include a mosque, a harem, and a jail. Most of the buildings date from the 17th cent. The fortress covers an area of 130 x 90 m and was enclosed by a fortification wall 9 m high.
- **Mohammed Rahim Khan Medrassah and Square** – the medrassah is mostly dedicated to its namesake, the Khan Mohammed Rahim who managed to keep Khiva independent from infiltration by British and Russian forces until the late 19th century. The square was once the main square of Khivan people.
- **Kalta Minor** – This squat minaret is an iconic symbol of Khiva, mainly because of its exquisite blue and green tile work and the fact that it remains unfinished. It was originally supposed to rival the Kalon Minaret in Bukhara, however the architect fled before seeing it finished, fearing he would be put to death by the khan. Kalta Minor dates from the 19th cent.
- **Juma Mosque** – the old mosque was already mentioned by the Arab traveller Mohammed al-Magisi in the 10th cent. According to the inscriptions above the entrance the mosque was rebuilt

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in the 18th cent. It contains 212 ornately carved columns that support the roof, dating back to the 12th to 15th century.

- **Pahlawan Mahmud Mausoleum** – one of the most popular places of pilgrimage in Uzbekistan. Pahlawan Mahmud ("the strong man") was famous for his extraordinary bravery, physical strength as well as his good nature. He was a furrier, but also a wrestler, doctor, poet and saint. The people gave him the title "Pahlavan", meaning brave and handsome hero, as he defended the poor and is said to have had mystical powers. It was erected in the 18th cent. In the 19th cent. the mausoleum became a necropolis of the princes of the Kungrat dynasty. It is considered as the last great mausoleum building in Central Asia.
- **Islam Khoja Minaret** – 45 m high minaret. built in 1908. However using the same methods as the much older minarets at Bukhara, Wabkent and Konye Urgench. You can see the minaret from every place in Khiva and even from far away in the desert. It is probable that the minaret served military purposes as well. Islam Khoja was great vizier of Khan Asfendijar. He undertook moderate reforms, opened the first secular school and the first hospital and introduced mail and railways. Khan Asfendijar ruled from 1910 to 1920.
- **Shirgiz Khan Medressa** – the oldest Quran school in Khiva. It was built in 1718/19. Tradition says that it was constructed by slaves captured by Shigaziz Khan during his expedition to Meshed from which he returned with five thousand slaves. He promised them to be released when the medressa was completed, but he delayed the completion again and again, asking new services from the hungry slaves again and again. In 1726 the slaves killed him in the unfinished medressa.
- **Medressa Muhammed Amin Khan** – the largest medresse in Khiva. Its facade is made of coloured brick and mosaics. The main characteristics of the building are the hujiras (students' cells). Khan Muhammed Amin was one of the most important khans of Khiva. The medressa was built in 1851/52 and the khan died 1855 in a battle against the Turkmen. The Hungarian traveller Vambery reported that the medressa had 250 pupils.
- **Tash Havli** – the beautiful Tash Havli palace was built by the Khan of Khiva in the 1830s as his main residence. He and his four official wives each had separate quarters in the pillared chambers on the left. Relatives and concubines stayed in other rooms to the right.

Dinner at local restaurant.

Day 3. SAT. Khiva – Bukhara (450km.)

AM. Breakfast. Drive to Bukhara via desert and Amu Darya river. Photo stop en route.

PM. Arrival and acc at hotel.

Dinner at hotel.

Day 4. SUN. Bukhara.

AM. Breakfast.

Bukhara – The Sacred City! One of the most sacred places of Islam, the admired and charming city of Bukhara was also one of the key stops along the Silk Route.

In the Middle Ages, when the region was at its pinnacle, scholars travelled from all over the Islamic world to study here, including two giants of Persian culture, Ibn Sina and Firdausi.

The monuments on show are truly remarkable, from the amazing Kalon Minaret, spared by an enthralled Genghis Khan and bombed by the Red Army, to the small but exquisite Ismail Samani Mausoleum, with its Zoroastrian patterns and intricate brickwork.

The main sights can be seen in a day but this is one place where little seems to have changed from the medieval era, and taking things a little slower lets you soak up the thrillingly authentic atmosphere.

The historic center of Bukhara has been listed by UNESCO as one of the World Heritage Sites. Full day SS of Bukhara:

- **Ark citadel / Registan Square** – From the most ancient times the Ark was the fortified residence of the rulers of Bukhara. Everything could be found there - palaces, temples, barracks, offices, the mint, warehouses, workshops, stables, an arsenal, and even a prison
- **Ismoil Somoni Mausoleum** – was built in the 9th (10th) century (between 892 and 943) as the resting-place of Ismail Samani - a powerful and influential amir of the Samanid dynasty, one of the Persian dynasties that ruled in Central Asia, who held the city in the 9th and 10th centuries. The architects used an ancient tradition of baked brick construction, but to a much higher

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standard than had been seen before. The construction and artistic details of the brickwork, are still enormously impressive, and display traditional features dating back to pre-Islamic culture.

- **Poikalon Complex** – consists of three structures, **Minorai Kalon**, **Masjidi Kalon** & **Miri Arab Madrassa**. Minaret was built by the Karakhanid ruler Arslan Khan in 1127. The mosque was built circa 1514 & madrassah was completed in 1536.
- **Labi Havz** – considered to be the center of the Old City. It means “ensemble near the pool”. The main element of this ensemble is the pool. The ensemble Labi-havz has three monumental structures. These are: **Kukeldash madrassah** (16th century) built by Abdullah II was, at the time, the biggest Islamic School in Central Asia. **Nadir Devanbegi Madrassah** (16th century) was intended to be a caravan saray, but according to the order of the ruler Imam Kulimkhan, was reconstructed into a Madrassah. **Nadir Devanbegi Khanaka** (winter mosque) was built at the same time as the Labi-havz (16th century).
- **Maggoki Attar Mosque** – the oldest surviving mosque in Central Asia, dating back to the 9th cent., reconstructed in the 16th cent. It was built in place of the temple of fire worshipers. Till present time reached the sample recovered in 1546, it is 16th stepped hall under two domes. Portals building are a real masterpiece of architectural decoration.

Dinner and folklore show at Medrese.

Day 5. MON. Bukhara – Samarkand. (280km)

AM. Breakfast. Drive to Samarkand via Giduvan. En route visit ceramic pottery.

PM. Arrival. Acc at hotel.

The name Samarkand conjures a place that floats somewhere between fact and romantic fiction. Its fame reaches back into the fog of time. In 329 BC, Alexander the Great exclaimed, 'Everything I have heard about Samarkand is true, except that it's more beautiful than I ever imagined!'

This city is the jewel in the crown of the Silk Road. It's centerpiece, the Registan, has been carefully restored. This is medieval Samarkand's commercial heart and is dominated by three madrassas facing each other across a square. Their façades are a riot of vibrant majolica and azure mosaics that dazzle the eye. It's best to set aside a whole day to explore these buildings with their gold-leafed interiors, cool courtyards and colourful bazaars. See the extraordinary Ulugbeg observatory, created by Tamerlane's grandson, and visit Gur Emir – Tamerlane's mausoleum. Have tea on a terrace overlooking the Bibi Khanum mosque, built for Tamerlane by his wife as a surprise gift.

In 2001, UNESCO added the city to its World Heritage List as Samarkand – Crossroads of Cultures.

SS incl:

- **Gur Emir Mausoleum** – As a conqueror there are few that are Tamerlane's equal, both in territory and legacy left. Today one can visit his tomb in the beautifully reconstructed Gur-Emir Mausoleum (1404-1405, 15-17 centuries) and reflect on his life while looking at the largest piece of jade (greenstone) in the world.

Dinner at local restaurant.

Day 6. TUE. Samarkand.

AM. Breakfast. Full day SS of:

- **Ulugbek's Observatory** – observatory of Timur's grandson. Only the foundations remain but it is truly extraordinary. Ulugbek was an astronomer, scientist and architect. His scientific and astronomical discoveries greatly advanced knowledge in these fields. The only thing that was preserved is a part of huge sextant – major astronomic instrument, the lowest part of which was in a deep trench (11km).
- **Tomb of Prophet Daniel, Afrosiab** – Amongst other curiosities in Samarkand is the tomb of the Hebrew Prophet Daniel, which is in the cemetery section of Afrosiab next to a pleasant stream. It contains a burial chamber around 18 meters long. After the conquest of Syria the grave was transported to Samarkand under the orders of Amir Temur.
- **Afrosiab** – The ruined site of ancient and medieval Samarkand in the northern part of the modern town. This place always ensured favorable conditions for human settlements. As proof, one can freely walk through the ancient ruins. A museum is in the center of the remains.
- **Shakhi-Zinda Ensemble** – (9-14, 19 centuries) situated on southeastern mound of Afrosiab. This architectural complex consists of 44 tombs in more than 20 mausoleums. The greatest significance of Shah E Zinda is that he was the First cousin of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and resembles the Prophet the most

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- **Registan Ensemble** – Registan became the city square when the life in Afrosiab stopped. Since that time Registan was reconstructed several times. Today it is surrounded by the three medreses **Ulugbek, Sherdor and Tillokori**.

Dinner at national family with Pilav.

Day 7. WED. Samarkand – Tashkent (320km.)

AM. Breakfast. Continue SS of Samarkand:

- **Bibi-Khanym Mosque** – named after the wife of Temur and built between 1399-1404 – is one of best known architectural attractions of Central Asia. The Mosque was erected on Timur's order after his combat of Delhi. The Minaret of the Mosque was supposed to be the tallest.
- **Bazar**

Drive to Tashkent.

PM. Arrival. Acc at hotel.

Tashkent – The Capital of Uzbekistan!

With population of over 2.3 million it translates as “Stone City”. Due to its central location in the region, the city received Sogdian and Turkic influences in its early history, before the Arabs came in the 8th century. After destruction by Genghis Khan in 1219, the city was rebuilt and profited from the Silk Road. The city was conquered by the Russian Army in 1865, and in Soviet times witnesses major growth and demographic changes. Today Tashkent is the largest metropolis in the region, the nation’s capital and home to some excellent museums, operas and fine dining.

Tashkent is the main transport hub for the whole of Central Asia with flight connections linking Uzbekistan with the world, so staying here is an unavoidable but nevertheless worthwhile prospect.

Following the major earthquake of 1966, old part of Tashkent retains many of its historical building.

There are numerous bazaars, madrassas, craft centres, museums, parks, squares and theatres to explore.

Tashkent metro is unique system with art-gallery-like stations.

SS incl:

- **Alisher Navoi Opera and Ballet Theatre** – The theatre was built on the plans of Alexey Shchusev, the architect of Lenin's Mausoleum in Moscow in neoclassical style. The theatre has special significance for Japanese nationals because it was built by the Japanese prisoners of war during the Second World War. A plate acknowledging their contributions is part of the building
- **Monument of Courage** – built to acknowledge the courage of the people at the time of the Tashkent earthquake on 26th April 1966. The whole city was reduced to rubble and then modern Tashkent was built.
- **Amir Temur Monument** – is in the centre of Tashkent. Amir Temur, in armour, is sitting on his horse, holding the reins of his horse with his left hand and greeting the people with his right hand.
- **Mustaqilik (Independence Square)** – the political centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Government buildings and the Senate are located here. **Independence Monument** was erected 1991 as a symbol of the sovereignty of the country. It shows a golden globe and the outlines of Uzbekistan.

Farewell dinner at local restaurant.

Day 8. THU. Tashkent departure.

AM. Light breakfast. Transfer to airport for flight to home country.

Tour price in USD/peron:

Group	May 2017
10	572
Single room supplement	143

Price include:

Accommodation	Hotel	City	Nights
Twin/double room base	Shodlic 3*/ similar	Tashkent	2
Check-in: 14:00	Arkanchi 3*/Old Khiva	Khiva	1
Check-out: 12:00	3*/similar	Bukhara	2

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	Malika 4*/ Siyavush 4*/ similar Registan/ similar	Samarkand	2
Meals	Half board: farewell dinner		
Transport	A/c minibus Toyota Coaster/Mitsubishi		
Entrance fees	As per program		
Guide services	During the tour		
Folklore concert	In Bukhara		
Tourist tax			

Price exclude:

Personal expenses	<i>Luggage overweight; Photo and video at the museums; Alcohol drinks</i>
Visa fee/letter of invitation	
Tips	<i>To guide and driver.</i>
Flights	<i>International and domestic</i>