

BEST OF TAJIKISTAN TOUR

Price: €1,590 per person. Deposit: €500. Payment can also be made in USD or CHF.

Single supplement available for €400 and required for solo travelers.

Guaranteed departures in 2021 and 2022 on the following dates:

19 July - 26 July 2021 | 16 August - 23 August 2021 |

18 July - 25 July 2022 | 15 August - 22 August 2022 |

Kalpak Travel introduces you to Tajikistan, a fascinating country of rugged mountains, turquoise lakes, friendly people, and a mix of cultural influences from ancient Persia to the Soviet Union. This one-week trip will lead you across the country on a packed itinerary which includes everything from the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sarazm to the craft workshops of Istaravshan, as well as time in Tajikistan's vibrant modern capital, [Dushanbe](#).

HIGHLIGHTS

- Sightsee amongst the parks, museums, and monuments of [Dushanbe](#), the capital of Tajikistan
- Visit the ancient ruins of Sarazm, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Discover Iskander Kul, an idyllic mountain lake named after Alexander the Great
- Experience the hustle and bustle of the oriental bazaar in Khujand
- Hike between the Seven Lakes in the stunning Fann Mountains
- Meet master craftsmen in the workshops of Istaravshan



ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Day 1: Arrival in Dushanbe & City Tour

Day 2: Dushanbe - Iskander Kul (140km, c. 4h)

Day 3: Iskander Kul - Seven Lakes - Noffin (210km, c. 6h)

Day 4: Noffin - Penjakent (70km, c. 3h)

Day 5: Penjakent - Istarafshan - Khujand (270km, 6h)

Day 6: Khujand City Tour

Day 7: Khujand - Dushanbe (310km, c. 6h)

Day 8: Departure from Dushanbe

MAP



ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival in Dushanbe & City Tour

Welcome to Tajikistan! Your arrival at the airport is likely to be early in the morning, so we've allowed time for you to transfer to the hotel, check-in, and have a rest, a shower, and breakfast before the day's sightseeing begins.

We will start today's city tour with a visit to the National Archaeological Museum with its famous Sleeping Buddha statue, excavated from the monastery at Ajina Teppa. Our next stop is the Navruz Palace. Initially, this building was envisaged as the largest teahouse in the world but during construction (which involved hundreds of artisans from all over the country) it was decided that it was so ornate it was more appropriate to use it as a palace. Most of the rooms are now used for official government meetings with guests from abroad, or for international conferences, but weddings take place here, too. We will have a tour inside, take lunch, and then see the statue of Ismail Samani. This large gilded monument commemorates the 1,100th anniversary of the Samanid State, the Golden Age of the Tajik nation when science and arts flourished. From there we will walk across to Rudaki Park, dedicated to the great Persian poet Rudaki, who also lived during the Samanid period.

Tonight we will have a welcome dinner in a great Tajik restaurant. Your guide will outline the tour itinerary and give you plenty of opportunities to ask questions.

Hotel Atlas 4 or similar*

Day 2: Dushanbe – Iskander Kul (140km, c. 4h)

Today after breakfast we will drive to Iskanderkul, a lake named after Alexander the Great who conquered this part of Tajikistan almost 2,500 years ago. Triangular in shape, it is considered one of the most exquisite lakes in all of the former Soviet Union. It is nestled in the Fan Mountains at an altitude of 2,200m. The route to Iskanderkul is a delightful one, through rugged mountain scenery. On the lakeshore we will have lunch. We will then take a short hike to a nearby waterfall. The afternoon will be spent at the lake relaxing and doing as you please.

*Overnight in a cottage at the lake (single/ twin room, western toilet, and shower in each cottage)
c. 2,200m altitude.*

Day 3: Iskander Kul – Seven Lakes - Noffin (210km, c. 6h)

After an early breakfast, we will rejoin the main road towards Penjikent. We won't drive that far, however: we'll turn left and follow a mountain road which takes us through the Shing Gorge. This is where we will find the seven pearls of Tajikistan, seven mountain lakes each with their own distinctive color, microclimate, and flora. We will have a photo stop at each of the lakes, which will break up the bumpy journey. The roads are very bad and steep, but luckily we will have skilled and experienced drivers. Near the fourth lake, we will stop in the village of Noffin for lunch in a family guesthouse.

In the afternoon we will further along the valley to the sixth lake, with a short walk in the village of Podrud on the way. From the sixth lake, it will take us less than an hour to hike to the seventh and last lake, Hazorchashma. We will have a rest, enjoy the scenery, and probably meet some shepherds who stay there during the summer months with their cattle. Returning to the car, which will be waiting for us at the sixth lake, we will drive back down to Noffin for dinner and a good night's sleep in the same guesthouse where we had lunch.

Overnight in a family guesthouse (single room cannot be guaranteed, shared western toilet and shower)

c. 2,000m altitude.

Day 4: Noffin – Penjakent (70km, c. 3h)

This morning we will drive back down to the main road and on to Penjakent. The distance is not far, but due to the bad road conditions, we will not reach Penjakent until shortly before lunchtime. Penjakent translates as “the city of five villages” and it is located in the verdant Zeravshan Valley. Dating from the 5th century, Penjakent was a thriving regional hub on the Great Silk Road. We will visit the local market, the mosque, the small local history museum, and the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sarazm, where the ruins date from the 4th-2nd millennia BC.

Hotel Umariyon 2 or similar*

Day 5: Penjakent – Istarafshan – Khujand (270km, 6h)

From Penjakent we will drive north, first to Istarafshan and finally to Khujand. The road to Istarafshan is very scenic, crossing the Shahrison Pass. Today, Istarafshan is well known in Tajikistan for its blacksmiths, who hand-craft knives of particularly high quality. We will visit the blacksmiths’ workshops near the entrance to the market, and also meet a famous wood carving craftsman, who will tell you more about his work and passion. There will be time for us to visit the Hazrati Shoh Mosque and Mugtepa Fortress, too.

From Istarafshan it is a 90-minute drive to Khujand. We will check-in at the hotel and have dinner in what is the second-largest city in Tajikistan.

Grand Hotel 3 or similar*

Day 6: Khujand City Tour

Khujand is situated in the Fergana Valley on the Syr Darya River. It is another ancient city, whose history dates back to the time of Cyrus the Great and Alexander the Great. Khujand is still thriving, and today it has Tajikistan’s biggest market, Panjshanbe Bazaar. Our city tour of Khujand includes the bazaar and the adjacent Maslihaddin Mosque, the Historical Museum of Khujand (which is within the old fortress), and Arbob Cultural Palace.

Grand Hotel 3 or similar*

Day 7: Khujand – Dushanbe (310km, c. 6h)

Today we will drive all the way back to Dushanbe. It is a long and scenic ride on the same road that we took before. Along the way, we’ll stop for lunch, and we expect to reach Dushanbe in the early afternoon, so you will have plenty of free time in the capital. Our farewell dinner will be this evening in a lively city restaurant.

Hotel Atlas 4 or similar*

Day 8: Dushanbe – Departure

Transfer to Dushanbe Airport for your flight back home. We hope you will have enjoyed your trip to Tajikistan and will return soon to discover more places in this beautiful part of the world!

Important notes:

- Travel insurance is required for this tour. You are free to choose any insurance company.
- All listed departures are guaranteed
- Maximum group size is 12 people
- A €500 per person deposit is required at the time of booking, and the balance is due 15 days prior to departure. Terms & conditions: <https://kalpak-travel.com/terms-and-conditions/>
- One local English speaking tour leader will accompany the group for the whole trip
- You can opt to book the whole itinerary as a private tour. We can also arrange extra nights before or after the trip, and suggest private tour extensions in Tajikistan or neighboring countries.
- Most nationalities need an electronic visa to enter Tajikistan. We can get the visa for you and send it to you via email as a PDF document. You will just need to print out the paper and carry it with you. The cost of the visa is 50 USD per person.
- We are happy to suggest flights to get to Tajikistan and back home: please contact us

Price includes

- All transfers by minibus according to the itinerary, including transfers from/to the airport
- Accommodation based on two people sharing a double / twin room
- English-speaking tour leader accompanying the group throughout the trip
- All entry fees as per the itinerary
- Full board (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Price does not include

- International air fares to and from Tajikistan
- Hotel charges for additional services
- Travel insurance policy (required)
- Personal expenses (e.g. souvenirs)
- Alcoholic beverages
- Tips for guides and drivers