

## BEST OF UZBEKISTAN TOUR 2023

Price: €1,840 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 on the following dates:**

**31 Mar – 8 Apr 2023 | 7 Apr – 15 Apr 2023 | 19 May - 27 May 2023 | 9 June - 17 June 2023 |  
28 July - 5 Aug 2023 | 1 Sep - 9 Sep 2023 | 22 Sep – 30 Sep 2023 | 13 Oct - 21 Oct 2023 |  
3 Nov - 11 Nov 2023 |**



*Experience the best of the Silk Road cities during Kalpak Travel's classic Uzbekistan tour. Now protected as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, these ancient settlements were formed by nomads and conquerors, and the flourishing of Islam and the great Timurid Empire left a permanent architectural legacy. Mosques, madrassas, fortresses, and unforgettable landscapes await, with views ranging from fertile valleys to open steppe and never-ending deserts...*

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Tour modern [Tashkent](#), Uzbekistan's capital and the largest city in Central Asia.
- Explore the remarkably well-preserved city of [Khiva](#), an open-air museum surrounded by mud brick walls.
- Visit ancient Khorezm with the ruins Ayaz Kala and Toprak Kala.
- Visit the charming Old City of [Bukhara](#), a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Be wowed by the spectacular Registan and the other architectural wonders of [Samarkand](#).
- Experience the hustle and bustle of Uzbekistan's bazaars.
- Learn about traditional crafts such as making paper from mulberry in Samarkand.

## ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Day 1: Arrival in Tashkent and City Tour.

Day 2: Tashkent – Khiva (flight, 7:15 AM – 8:45 AM).

Day 3: Khiva City Tour.

Day 4: Khiva – Bukhara (450 km, c. 7h).

Day 5: Bukhara City Tour.

Day 6: Bukhara - Samarkand (train, 3:50 PM – 5:20 PM).

Day 7: Samarkand City Tour.

Day 8: Samarkand City Tour.

Day 9: Departure from Samarkand.

## MAP



## ITINERARY

### Day 1: Arrival in Tashkent and City Tour.

Welcome to Uzbekistan! Transfer to the hotel and early check-in at the hotel. You can have a rest after your long flight, take a shower, and have breakfast before meeting your group and guide in the late morning in the hotel lobby. Today, you will begin an authentic journey deep into the remarkable history of Uzbekistan.

Where better to start than a tour of [Tashkent](#)? The largest city in Central Asia is a curious blend of Islamic and Soviet influences. Visit the Old City area of Tashkent where you will find the Khast Imom Complex which contains the ancient holy Quran of Caliph Osman. Experience the bustling crowds of traders at Chor-Su Bazaar. Visit Amir Temur Square to view the statue of the great conqueror and next to it, the grand Independence Square. We complete the city tour of Tashkent with a visit to the Applied Arts Museum.

**Please note:** If you arrive a day early, we can book an extra night for you at the hotel.

*Hotel Wyndham 4\* or similar*

### Day 2: Tashkent – Khiva (flight, 7:15 AM – 8:45 AM).

Early morning flight to Urgench. From the airport, we depart towards Toprak and Ayaz Kala, clay ruins of ancient Khorezm in the desert. First, we drive one hour to Toprak Kala, the ancient capital city of Khorezm around the 2nd century AD). From there it is another shaky one-hour drive to Ayaz Kala. According to archeological excavations, the Ayaz Kala fortress dates from the 2nd century BC. It was part of a system of border fortresses that stretched as a chain from east to west and which defended the Khiva oasis from the desert side. We will have a look at the ruins in the desert and then drive one and a half hours back to Urgench, where we will have lunch.

In the afternoon, transfer c. 30 minutes to Khiva. Check-in at the hotel. Before dinner, we will have an introduction walk in the old town. Dinner in a local restaurant inside the old town of Khiva.

*Hotel Asia 3\* or similar*

### Day 3: Khiva City Tour.

A jewel of desert architecture, [Khiva](#) is one of the most important centers of ancient Khorezm. Locals believe that Shem, son of Noah, founded the city when he discovered a freshwater spring in the middle of this vast desert. Archeologists believe the city was founded some 2,500 years ago. Today, Khiva is the most architecturally intact and tightly packed of Central Asia's Silk Road cities. Its intense blue-and-green tile work ranks as some of the most ornate in Uzbekistan, and the entirety of the Ichan-Kala - the inner city - is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It also has the feel of a movie set or an open-air museum. Khiva is full of incredible architecture, and today we will get the chance to see it all. The focus of our tour is the walled Ichan-Kala, within which are preserved more than 60 historic monuments and hundreds of centuries-old houses. You will also have time on your own to wander around this fabled town. During dinner, we will have a folklore performance of traditional Khorezmian dances and songs on kush-nay, a musical instrument very specific to the Khorezm region.

*Hotel Asia 3\* or similar*

### Day 4: Khiva – Bukhara (450 km, c. 7h).

We will check out from the hotel after breakfast and depart around 8:00 AM to Khiva. It is a long but scenic ride through the Kyzylkum Desert, but the roads are shaky in places. On the way, we will stop for lunch in a small restaurant, and also have time to stretch our legs. At the end of this arduous drive, we will be rewarded with the magnificence of Bukhara. We will arrive in the evening, just in time for dinner in the Old City, and check-in at the hotel.

**Please note:** Flight and train schedule Khiva-Bukhara is available only on relatively short notice. If a flight or a train is available, we will use that instead of road transfer.

*Hotel Paradise Plaza 4\* or similar*

### **Day 5: Bukhara City Tour.**

[Bukhara](#) is the second of our UNESCO World Heritage Site stops. The city's very name -Bukhara - conjures up images of the exotic Orient. For centuries, it was an important trading post and center of scholarship. The Old City has been well preserved and is crammed full of minarets, mosques, and madrassas. Its once notorious canals and pools, the source of many an epidemic, have now been drained, but the most famous, Lyabi-Hauz, is still there. Today it's an oasis shaded by mulberry trees in the heart of the city. Your guide will show you Bukhara's unmissable sights, and you can soak up the atmosphere wandering through the labyrinthine alleyways. Highlights of today's walking tour in Bukhara include the Poi Kalon complex, the Ark Fortress, Bolo Hauz Mosque, the Ayub Mausoleum and spring, the bazaars inside Bukhara's unique trading domes, and the Samanid Mausoleum. The guided tour will end in the early afternoon and you will have some free time. Later, we will visit a family house restaurant in the old town for a cooking master class on a traditional Uzbek dish called "plov".

*Hotel Paradise Plaza 4\* or similar*

### **Day 6: Bukhara - Samarkand (train, 3:50 PM – 5:20 PM).**

Today morning you can choose to spend some free time in the city or to visit a couple more sights near Bukhara. First, you may visit the Mausoleum of Naqshbandi, 15 km outside the city center. There are many orders in Sufism, all of which have been represented at different times in what is now Uzbekistan. The Naqshbandiyya order has a great and long-lasting influence, and the memorial place is still a popular place of pilgrimage for Sufis. From here, we will visit the summer residence of the last Emir of Bukhara. In Persian it is called Sitorai Mokhi Hossa, "the place where the moon meets the stars". Return to Bukhara for lunch.

Our high-speed train departs from Bukhara at 3:50 PM and we arrive in Samarkand at 5:20 PM.

Transfer to the hotel for check-in and dinner. After dinner, on the way to the hotel, drive by Registan Square for an evening view of the magnificent madrasahs.

*Hotel Rabat 3\* or similar*

### **Day 7: Samarkand City Tour.**

Sublime [Samarkand](#) evokes an almost mythical past full of romance and intrigue. This was the domain of Emperor Timur, one of history's greatest (and most ruthless) conquerors. His vast empire rivaled any, stretching across the Eurasian steppe. He ruled his kingdom with an iron fist, whilst at the same time patronizing the arts and literature. Much of Samarkand's Timurid-era architectural heritage has been preserved, allowing us to see how the city might have been at the peak of Timur's power. We will start the day with a visit to the Gur-e-Amir, the mausoleum where Timur is buried. Our guide will tell stories from Timur's life and how and why he began to build in Samarkand. We will then go to the Registan, Samarkand's central square, which is undeniably Uzbekistan's most famous landmark. This focal point of medieval Samarkand is framed by three beautiful madrassas (religious schools): Ulugbek, Sherdor, and Tillya Kori. Next, we will stroll through the spacious courtyard of the Bibi-Khanum Mosque, an impressively tiled structure that is said to have been gifted to Timur by one of his wives. After lunch, we will have time to explore Siyob Bazaar, where fruit and vegetables grown in the rich soils of the Zarafshan Valley are sold in a colorful market. You may explore the city on your own during your free time this evening.

*Hotel Rabat 3\* or similar*

**Day 8: Samarkand City Tour.**

After breakfast, we will check out from the hotel and continue to explore the fairytale city of Samarkand. We go first to the Shah-i Zinda, a magnificent tiled necropolis; and then visit Ulugbek's Observatory, which was once the biggest research center in Central Asia. Ulugbek was decades ahead of the West with his observations of the solar system and the Earth, and we will learn more about his story in this prestigious setting. Our next stop will be the Konigil Paper Mill. Here you will see the process of making paper from mulberry tree bark, just as it was done in 8th century Samarkand. We will enjoy lunch together, after which those who wish to do so can visit Afrasiyab Museum to learn about the ancient city of Samarkand – then known as Afrasiyab – which was destroyed by the Mongols in the early 13th century. Farewell dinner.

**Please note:** If you prefer to fly out of Tashkent instead of Samarkand, we can arrange transport back to Tashkent in the evening (2h train ride) and transfer to the airport.

*Hotel Rabat 3\* or similar*

**Day 9: Departure from Samarkand.**

Check-out at the hotel is any time before noon. You will have free time until your transfer to Samarkand International Airport for your flight home.

### Price includes

- All transfers by minibus according to the itinerary, as well as your airport transfers
- Accommodation based on double room sharing, incl. early check-in on Day 1
- English-speaking local tour guide accompanying the group
- All entrance tickets as per the itinerary
- Train tickets Bukhara-Samarkand
- Economy class plane tickets for the flights from Tashkent to Urgench (Khiva)
- Full board (breakfasts, lunches, dinners)

### Price does not include

- International airfares
- Hotel charges for additional services
- Travel insurance
- Personal expenses, e.g. souvenirs
- Tips for guides and drivers

### Important notes:

- Travel insurance is required for this tour. You are free to choose any insurance company.
- The 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 Uzbekistan or neighboring countries.
- Citizens of most countries do not need a visa to visit Uzbekistan (US citizens do need an electronic visa, though). If you do need an electronic visa, we will get it for you. The official fee is 20 USD: there is no extra charge from our side. We will send the visa to you as a PDF; you just need to print it out and take it with you.
- We are happy to suggest flights to get to Tashkent and back home from Samarkand: please contact us.
- Read more about [food in Uzbekistan](#)
- Read more about the [best time to travel to Uzbekistan](#)