

## Best of Central Asia Tour – Fall 2024

Price: USD 6,230 per person. Deposit: USD 500. Payment can also be made in EUR or CHF.  
Single supplement available for USD 1,000 and required for solo travelers.

**Guaranteed departures on the following dates in 2024:**

**24 Aug - 16 Sep 2024 | 7 Sep - 30 Sep 2024 | 21 Sep - 14 Oct 2024 | 28 Sep - 21 Oct 2024**



Kalpak Travel's Best of Central Asia Tour combines the cultural highlights and natural beauty of five different countries in one epic journey. In each of the Central Asian republics you'll visit the modern and historic capitals, and see firsthand the cultural treasures and traditions of both the nomadic people who have crossed this region for centuries, and also the people who have settled in its cities. The eclectic contemporary architecture of [Astana](#) and [Ashgabat](#) contrasts with the sprawling Soviet-styled cities of [Almaty](#), [Bishkek](#), and [Dushanbe](#), and nothing can prepare you for the impact of the great Silk Road cities, where flourishing Islamic culture and the medieval Timurid Empire left a lasting architectural legacy. Travel across the five 'Stans with us to experience the very best of Central Asian hospitality on an unforgettable adventure.

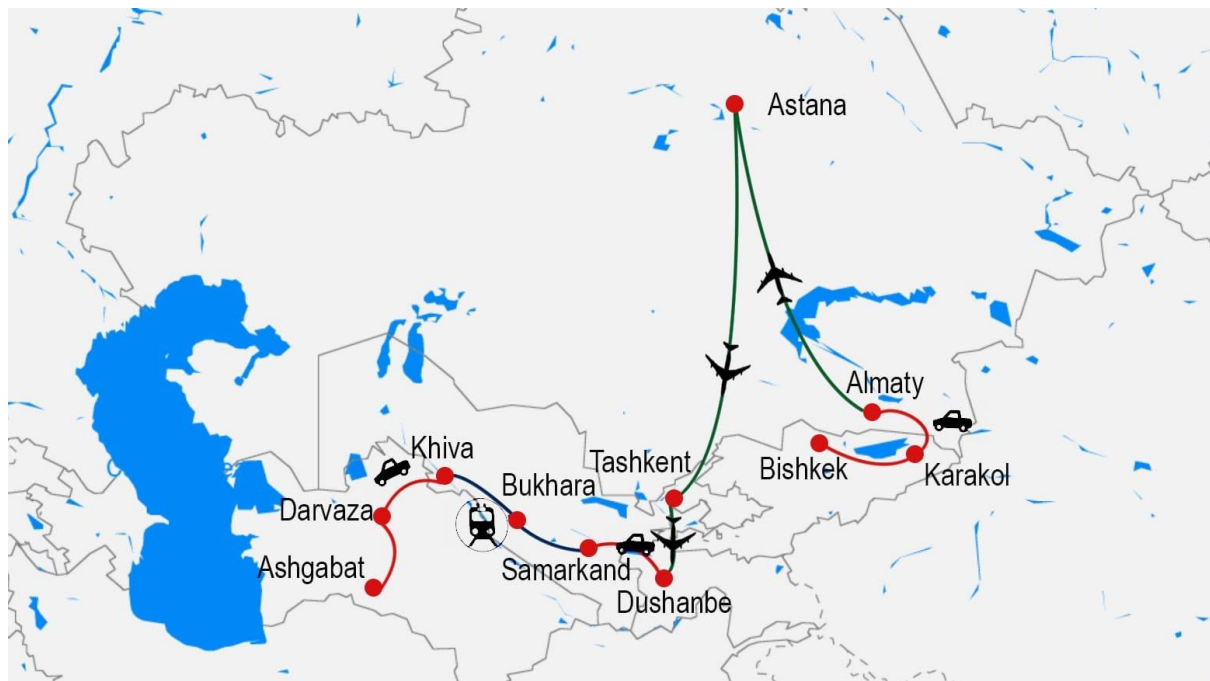
### Highlights

- Combine the cultural highlights and natural beauty of Central Asia in a single tour
- Visit the diverse [capitals of all five Central Asian republics](#)
- Gaze upon the turquoise alpine lakes of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan
- Sleep in traditional yurts and experience Kyrgyz nomadic culture firsthand
- Marvel at Registan Square and other architectural wonders of ancient [Samarkand](#)
- Wander the bustling streets of UNESCO World Heritage Sites of [Khiva](#) and [Bukhara](#)
- Shop in authentic oriental bazaars for everything from hand-woven silks to spices
- Feast on a barbeque next to Turkmenistan's burning gas crater known as "the Gate of Hell"

## Itinerary Overview

- Day 1: Arrival in Bishkek**
- Day 2: Bishkek – Burana – Kochkor / Chon Kemin**
- Day 3: Kochkor – Song Kul / Chon Kemin – Kochkor**
- Day 4: Song Kul / Kochkor – Tamga**
- Day 5: Tamga – Jety Oguz – Karakol – Tepke (c. 150km, 4-5h)**
- Day 6: Karakol– Charyn Canyon - Almaty (400km, 7-8h)**
- Day 7: Almaty City Tour**
- Day 8: Almaty – Astana (flight)**
- Day 9: Astana City Tour**
- Day 10: Astana – Tashkent (flight)**
- Day 11: Tashkent City Tour**
- Day 12: Tashkent – Dushanbe (flight) | City Tour**
- Day 13: Dushanbe – Iskander Kul – Penjikent (290km, 7h)**
- Day 14: Seven Lakes Day Trip**
- Day 15: Penjikent – Samarkand (70 km, c. 2h)**
- Day 16: Samarkand**
- Day 17: Samarkand – Bukhara (train, c. 2h)**
- Day 18: Bukhara City Tour**
- Day 19: Bukhara – Khiva (450km, c. 7-8h)**
- Day 20: Khiva Walking City Tour**
- Day 21: Khiva – Darvaza Gas Crater (360km, c. 6-7h)**
- Day 22: Darvaza – Ashgabat (280km, 5h)**
- Day 23: Ashgabat Regoin**
- Day 24: Departure from Ashgabat**

## Map



## Itinerary

### Day 1: Arrival in Bishkek

Welcome to Kyrgyzstan! Most flights arrive very early in the morning. You will transfer to the hotel and check-in at the hotel with time to rest after your long flight, take a shower, and have breakfast. In the afternoon, we will have a walking city tour in Bishkek. Bishkek, the charming capital of Kyrgyzstan, is relatively young. It started as a Russian garrison named "Pishpek" in the late 19th century, and it was only during the Soviet period that it grew into a city. It is a very green place, with tree-lined boulevards and many parks. Our sightseeing program in Bishkek includes Oak Park, the Ala-Too Square with a visit to the National Museum, and Victory Square.

*B-Hotel 3\* or similar*

### Day 2: Bishkek – Burana – Kochkor / Chon Kemin

After breakfast, we will transfer to Ala Archa National Park, 30km outside Bishkek. We will walk in the park, appreciate the mountain views, and inhale the wonderfully fresh, clean air. After this interlude, we will return to Bishkek and continue driving on the main road leading toward Lake Issyk Kul. Our first stop will be Burana Tower near the town of Tokmok, 80km east of Bishkek. Burana's 11th-century minaret is the only remaining building from the ancient city of Balasagun, once the capital of the mighty Karakhanid empire. You can walk up the winding staircase and enjoy a wide view of the scenic Chuy Valley. There is also a small open-air museum of balbals, carved stone figures often found around ancient burial mounds.

#### ***Until 15 September: Kochkor***

From Burana we will continue driving about two hours to the mountain village of Kochkor, where we will arrive just in time for dinner. After dinner, you can see a demonstration of how shyrdak, traditional felt carpets, are made. Kochkor is located at an altitude of almost 1,800 meters, and you can get some acclimatization for the ascent to lake Song Kul on the following day.

*Overnight in hotel Nomad Lodge or similar*

#### ***After 15 September: Chon Kemin***

From Burana, we will drive further on into the mountains to our guesthouse in the beautiful Chon Kemin Valley. After less than two hours' ride we will arrive just in time for dinner. Dinner and overnight at the guesthouse.

Kemin Guesthouse (single/twin room with private bathroom)

### Day 3: Kochkor – Song Kul / Chon Kemin – Kochkor

Until the middle of September, we will drive up to Lake Song Kul. Later, Song Kul is not accessible due to snow and it is replaced with the mountain valley of Chon Kemin. See below the different itineraries for today, depending on your selected departure.

#### ***Until 15 September: Kochkor – Song-Kul***

In the morning we learn how boorsok (deep fried bread, a speciality of Kyrgyzstan) is made and will taste it for breakfast. After breakfast, we start our ascent towards mountain lake Song Kul. The lake is not very far from Kochkor, but due to bad road conditions, it will still be a quite long and bumpy ride to the lake (c. 3 hours). Lake Song Kul is a mountainous lake on the altitude of 3016 meters above the sea level. The nomads pass their summer on the "jailoo" (summer pasture) with their animals. We will arrive in time for lunch, which will be served in the yurt camp. Free time in the afternoon to go on a walk to the shore or horse ride and observe nomadic life. The yurt camp is located about 3

kilometers from the shore of the lake. We will also watch a match of Kok Boru – a traditional spectacle of horsemanship.

*Overnight in a yurt (2 people in a yurt, shared western toilets outside, simple shower)*

#### **After 15 September: Chon Kemin – Kochkor**

In the morning we learn how boorsok (deep fried bread, a speciality of Kyrgyzstan) is made and will taste it for breakfast. After breakfast, you can walk into the village, observe the life of the local people; or opt for a short horse ride into the surrounding hills. We will also have a chance to watch a match of Kok Boru – a traditional spectacle of horsemanship. After lunch, we drive about two hours through the mountains to the village of Kochkor. Before dinner, you can see a demonstration of how shyrdak, traditional felt carpets, are made. Dinner in a family guesthouse and overnight in a simple hotel.

*Overnight in hotel Nomad Lodge or similar*

#### **Day 4: Song Kul / Kochkor – Tamga**

After breakfast, we will drive to Issyk Kul, “the pearl of Kyrgyzstan” and the second-largest mountain lake in the world. At an altitude of 1,600 meters, it is warm enough in summer for swimming and is a popular beach destination for the Kyrgyz and Kazakh people. It’s only a short distance on from Kochkor to Issyk Kul, but we will have several interesting stops along the way. Our first stop is in the village of Kyzyl Tuu, where we will meet a yurt maker and learn more about this traditional nomadic dwelling. Many people in this village are involved in the yurt-making business. Near Bokonbayevo, we will meet an eagle hunter, who will show us his eagle and give a short demonstration for us. At Skazka (Fairytale) Canyon, which derives its name from its bizarre landscape made of fabulous rock formations, we will walk for around one hour. From here, it is then just half an hour to reach our destination, a yurt camp near the shore of Issyk Kul. Dinner and overnight in the yurt camp.

*Overnight in a yurt (2 people in a yurt, shared bathroom facilities)*

#### **Day 5: Tamga – Jety Oguz – Karakol – Tepke (c. 150km, 4-5h)**

Today we will drive further east along Issyk Kul’s southern shore towards the town of Karakol. En route we will take a diversion into the side valley of Jety Oguz, famous for its two red rock formations called “Seven Bulls” and “The Broken Heart”. You will see these rocks and our guide will tell you the legends behind their interesting names.

In Karakol, we will have lunch with a local Uighur family, and a short sightseeing tour of the town’s most interesting sights. These include the Dungan Mosque, built in 1904; and the wooden Russian Orthodox Church, which has been standing since 1869. From Karakol, it is another 30km drive north to the village of Tepke, where we will spend the night in the welcoming guesthouse of a family who breed Kyrgyz horses.

*Overnight at Reina Kench Guesthouse (single/twin room with shower and toilet in the room)*

#### **Day 6: Karakol – Charyn Canyon - Almaty (400km, 7-8h)**

It is time to leave Kyrgyzstan behind and cross the mountains into Kazakhstan, driving to Almaty, Kazakhstan’s former capital and its largest city. It is a very long ride and partly on bad roads. About half way between Karakol and Almaty, we will stop for a picnic lunch at one of the most famous natural sights in Kazakhstan, Charyn Canyon. The canyon is often compared to the Grand Canyon, although it is much smaller in size with a total length of 80-90km. The part of the canyon you will visit is known as the Valley of Castles for its unusual rock formations. It is 3km long and 100m deep. We will walk these 3km down to the river, and have our lunch in a scenic spot there. We will arrive in Almaty in time for dinner.

*Overnight in Hotel Kazzhol Park 4\* or similar*

### **Day 7: Almaty City Tour**

Almaty is the largest city in Central Asia's richest country, Kazakhstan. For 70 years – up until 1997 Almaty was the country's capital and it remains today the country's business and educational center. During our city tour, we will explore the recent history of Kazakhstan. We will talk about political repressions and the great famine that took place in Kazakhstan in the early years of the Soviet Union and see the building where the infamous NKVD was located. We will continue by walking in what was the most artistic area of the city in the 60s and 70s, wherein the best theaters, luxurious hotels, and elite restaurants attracted crowds of Soviet Almaty's citizens. Before lunch, we will also visit Panfilov Park to see the impressive memorial dedicated to the Soviet soldiers who fought in WWII and take a look at the most famous Orthodox cathedral of Almaty.

After lunch, at the Green Bazaar, you get a chance to explore local Kazakh culture as you shop for fresh fruits and vegetables. In the afternoon, you have some free time to explore the city on your own or relax at the hotel. Your guide will be available and happy to suggest places to go/ things to see or do.

In the evening we meet up again in the hotel lobby and take the cable car to Kok Tobe Hill, from where you will have a nice view of the city. Then we have dinner and return back to the hotel.

*Overnight in Hotel Kazzhol Park 4\* or similar*

### **Day 8: Almaty – Astana (flight)**

After breakfast, we are heading to the mountains just outside of Almaty. We will take a cable car to reach one of the main landmarks of Almaty, the Shymbulak ski resort, where you will enjoy wonderful views of the Ili Alatau Mountains from the top at 3,200 meters altitude. We will have lunch in the mountains. After lunch, we drive back to the city and visit the house Museum of the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan – Dinmukhamed Kunayev – who made a significant contribution to the social, economic, and cultural development of Kazakhstan. This is your chance to see a real Soviet flat. We will then transfer to Almaty Airport to catch the domestic flight to Astana. From Astana Airport we transfer directly to the restaurant for dinner before checking in at the hotel.

*Overnight in Hilton Garden Inn 4\* or similar*

### **Day 9: Astana City Tour**

Astana is Central Asia's youngest capital and a showpiece for 21st century Kazakhstan. However, it was an important city long before becoming the capital. After breakfast, we will head to the Alzhir Memorial complex, located 40km outside of the city in the steppes. It is a museum dedicated to a labor camp during the Stalin era for "wives of the betrayers of the motherland". Back in the city, we will have lunch. In the afternoon we continue our city tour by taking a walk at the huge Independence Square and seeing monuments for the independence of Kazakhstan. After the square, we visit the impressive National Museum. The museum is huge and we will visit the most interesting rooms, including the ones with famous Scythian gold artifacts, most importantly the "Golden Man". We will then the old city with homes of merchants from the 19th century, the lively Arbat area with street vendors, and of course the walkable riverside of Ishim.

*Overnight in Hilton Garden Inn 4\* or similar*

**Day 10: Astana – Tashkent (flight)**

Breakfast and check-out from the hotel. We will start the day by waving to the President of Kazakhstan in front of Akorda - the White House of the Republic of Kazakhstan. We will then see the capital from the bird's eye view at the top of Baiterek Tower and finally find ourselves inside the biggest tent-like building in the world - Khan-Shatyr, which is used as a shopping mall. Halfway between the city and the airport, we will visit the futuristic Expo 2017 complex which boasts the biggest spherical building in the world. The building used to be the Kazakh Pavilion during the Expo and is now used as a Museum (closed today). We will also visit the biggest mosque in Central Asia - an impressive shining palace with giant wooden doors from Africa and endless carpets from New Zealand. In the afternoon, transfer to the airport to catch the flight to Tashkent (5:00 PM - 6:00 PM). Meet your Uzbek guide and driver in the arrival area in front of the airport. Immediate transfer to the restaurant for Uzbek welcome dinner.

*Overnight in Hotel Inspira-S 4\* or similar*

**Day 11: Tashkent City Tour**

With a population of over 3 million people, Tashkent is the largest city in Central Asia. Its history dates back to the first century BC when an urban settlement grew up around a major caravan crossroad on the Silk Road. Much of what you see today, however, dates from the late 20th or 21st centuries, as a devastating earthquake in 1966 destroyed much of the older city. Rebuilding Tashkent was a major Soviet infrastructure project, with laborers coming to work here from across the Soviet Union.

We will start the day's sightseeing at the Monument of Courage, which remembers the victims of the earthquake. We will then walk to Independence Square, a symbol of freedom for Uzbekistan's citizens, who declared their independence when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. At Amir Timur square you will see the statue of the great conqueror. Next, we drive to Chorsu Bazaar, Tashkent's green-domed market, with its acres of spices, fresh produce, and traditional crafts. We will also visit the Old City to find the Khast Imom complex, which houses the historic holy Quran of Caliph Osman. Today's city tour will end with the Museum of Applied Arts, an ornate, rainbow-colored building that was previously the official residence of the Russian Ambassador.

*Overnight in Hotel Inspira-S 4\* or similar*

**Day 12: Tashkent – Dushanbe (flight) | City Tour**

Today we need to get up very early in the morning to catch the flight to the Tajik capital Dushanbe (8:00 AM – 9:00 AM).

Originally, Dushanbe was a small village centered on a market that took place every Monday. The Persian word Dushanbe means "Monday", so this is how the city got its name. It was during the Soviet Union that Dushanbe became the industrial center of Tajikistan and the capital city it is today. Arriving in Dushanbe you will meet your Tajik guide and start the city tour. We will visit the Museum of Antiquities with its 13m-long Sleeping Buddha, then tour the marvelous modern Navruz Palace. We will then enjoy a nice city view from the top of the newly built Independence Monument. Next, we will visit the Ismail Samani statue. This large gold and marble monument commemorates the 1,100th anniversary of the Samanid State, a 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 lived under the Samanids during the 10th century. We will also visit today the Craft Center and the small musical instruments Museum where we can hear a demonstration. Dinner in a nice Tajik restaurant.

*Overnight in Hotel Atlas 4\* or similar*

**Day 13: Dushanbe – Iskander Kul – Penjikent (290km, 7h)**

Today we will drive to Iskander Kul, a mountain lake named after Alexander the Great. Triangular in shape, it is considered one of the most exquisitely beautiful lakes in all the former Soviet Union nations, It is nestled in the Fann Mountains at an altitude of 2,200m. The route is a delightful one, through rugged mountain scenery. On the shore of the lake, we will have lunch, then take a short hike to a nearby waterfall. It is then a four-hour drive to reach the town of Penjikent, where we arrive just in time for dinner and will stay overnight in a hotel.

*Overnight in Hotel Umarion 3\* or similar*

**Day 14: Seven Lakes Day Trip**

Our day trip will start with a bumpy ride into the mountains to explore the area of the Seven Lakes. This mountain valley is not far from Penjikent, but due to the terrible road conditions, this trip takes a full day. We will drive up until the sixth lake. It is then a short and easy hike of about two hours (both ways) to the seventh and highest lake, Hazorchashma. There will be time to enjoy the scenery and wander along the lake shore before hiking back down to the sixth lake and returning slowly by road to Penjikent with a few stops in some of the mountain villages.

In the evening, we will have a cooking master class in a nice teahouse with a garden. We will also invite a singer and drum player (dutar) and they will perform traditional songs from the Zarafshon region called “doyra”.

*Overnight in Hotel Umarion 3\* or similar*

**Day 15: Penjikent – Samarkand (70 km, c. 2h)**

Leaving Penjikent behind this morning, we head west and make for the border to return to Uzbekistan. Before crossing the border we stop off at the UNESCO site of Sarazm, dating back to the 4th century BC and bearing evidence of one of the first settlements in Tajikistan, possibly even Central Asia. Continuing onto the border, we cross on foot before meeting our Uzbek guide Bekhruz again and making the short drive onto the much-fabled city of Samarkand, where we arrive in the late morning.

Sublime Samarkand was the capital of the Timurid Empire; Timur was one of history’s greatest 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 the architectural heritage from this period has been preserved, allowing us to see how the city might have been at the peak of Timur’s power.

We will start the city tour with a visit to Bibi-Khanum Mosque, a structure that legend says was gifted to Timur by one of his wives. We will also have some time to explore Siyob Bazaar.

After lunch, we visit Registan Square, the most famous landmark in all of Uzbekistan. This square was the focal point of medieval Samarkand and is framed by three beautiful madrassas (religious schools), Ulugbek, Sherdor, and Tillya Kori. We will complete today’s city tour with a visit to Gur-e-Amir, the gilded mausoleum where Timur is buried. We will hear stories from his life and how he began the construction of Samarkand.

*Overnight in Hotel Rabat 3\* or similar*

**Day 16: Samarkand City Tour**

After breakfast, we 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. After lunch, we will 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. Dinner in a popular local restaurant.

*Overnight in Hotel Rabat 3\* or similar*

### **Day 17: Samarkand – Bukhara (train, c. 2h)**

After breakfast, we will transfer to the train station to catch the high-speed train to Bukhara (9:44 AM – 11:20 AM). Have lunch in Bukhara and check in at the hotel. In the afternoon we have a walking tour of Bukhara, one of the most important trading hubs on the Great Silk Road, as well as a respected center of religious learning. 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, an oasis shaded by mulberry trees in the heart of the city. Your guide will show you the city's unmissable sights, and you can soak up the atmosphere wandering through Bukhara's labyrinthine alleyways. Key sites on today's tour itinerary include the historic trading domes, Magokiatori mosque, Kosh madrasah, and the Poi Kalon complex. Dinner in the old town.

*Overnight in Hotel Paradise Plaza 4\* or similar*

### **Day 18: Bukhara City Tour**

Today morning we visit a couple more sights near Bukhara. First, we 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". On the way back to the old town we will stop to see Chor Minor madrassah.

In the afternoon we continue sightseeing in the old town of Bukhara. We will visit the Ark Fortress, the 10th-century Samanid Mausoleum, and Bolo Hauz Mosque. Dinner in the old town.

*Overnight in Hotel Paradise Plaza 4\* or similar*

### **Day 19: Bukhara – Khiva (450km, c. 7-8h)**

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 and also have time to stretch our legs. At the end of this arduous drive, we will be rewarded with the magnificence of Khiva. We will arrive in the evening, just in time for dinner in the town, and check-in at the hotel for the night.

*Overnight in Hotel Asia 3\* or similar*

### **Day 20: Khiva Walking City Tour**

Our walking tour of Khiva will begin after breakfast. Khiva is bursting with historical sites and today you will get a chance to see them all. We will visit the walled inner-city section of Khiva called the Ichan-Kala. This old section of the city contains more than 50 historic monuments and hundreds of centuries-old houses. The entire citadel is protected as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. As you walk through the enormous city gates, you will be confronted by a glistening beacon of Islamic design, the Kalta Minor. Our tour delves deep into all of Khiva's sites. During dinner tonight there will be a performance by local dancers and singers, immersing you in Khorezmian culture.

*Overnight in Hotel Asia 3\* or similar*



**Day 21: Khiva – Dashoguz – Darvaza Gas Crater (360km, c. 6-7h)**

In the morning drive to the Turkmenistan border point Shavat-Dashoguz (60 km, 1 h.). Be at the border at 9:00 AM when it opens, and go through formalities at both checkpoints (takes around 2-3 hours).

After crossing the border it is already time for lunch in Dashoguz. After lunch, we drive for another five hours to the Darvaza gas crater. The road is paved for the most part, but full of potholes, which make for an extremely shaky and uncomfortable ride. Upon arrival at Darvaza, we will enjoy a delicious fire-cooked meal for dinner, then sleep overnight at the yurt camp.

*Overnight in Yurt Camp (2 people per yurt, shared bathroom facilities)*

**Day 22: Darvaza – Ashgabat (280km, 5h)**

After camp-style breakfast drive to Ashgabat via water crater and Erbent desert community. Arrive in Ashgabat around noon and have lunch. Check-in at the hotel (at or after 2:00 PM) and have some rest during the midday heat and after the long and shaky ride of the past couple of days.

In the afternoon, have a short sightseeing tour (3-4 h) in Ashgabat. The tour includes a visit to the National Museum of History, the Arch of Neutrality, and the Independence Park. After dinner, drive back to Ashgabat through the New City area of Ashgabat enjoying the view with all its night illuminations.

*Overnight in Hotel Sport 4\* or similar*

**Day 23: Ashgabat Region**

After breakfast, we drive to Old Nisa fortress (UNESCO World Heritage site) – the earliest of Parthian Empire capitals. Located in an atmospheric area on an irregular pentagon hill, at the foot of the Kopet-Dag Mountains, Old Nisa is a beautiful landmark. 14 hectares in size, the fort accommodates two semi-excavated complexes of the Parthian period (III c. BC – III c. AD) structures, designated as a royal residence and temple complex. Then drive back to Ashgabat, stopping en route at National Memorial Complex “Halk Hakydasy” with WWII and Earthquake memorials. Spend some time at the Memorial Complex. Lunch at a local restaurant.

After lunch, we continue to the Spiritual Mosque, one of the biggest mosques in Central Asia, and the Turkmenbashi Mausoleum nearby.

Then continue driving to a farm in Anau, about 8 km southeast of Ashgabat, the Ahalteke horse stable, where you can see the famous Turkmen horses called Akhal Teke. Then we drive back to Ashgabat. Turkmen farewell dinner with folklore show.

*Overnight in Hotel Sport 4\* or similar*

**Day 24: Ashgabat Departure**

Transfer to Ashgabat Airport for your flight back home, or to begin a private extension trip to see more of Turkmenistan.

### Price includes

- All transfers, including airport pick-up and drop-off.
- Accommodation is based on two people sharing a double/twin room; breakfasts are included.
- Full board (all lunches and dinners)
- English-speaking local tour leader in each country / for groups of more than 6 people tour leader accompanying the group during the whole trip
- All entry fees as per the itinerary
- Train tickets Samarkand-Bukhara
- Economy class flight tickets Almaty-Astana, Astana-Tashkent, Tashkent-Dushanbe
- Visa support letters for the Turkmenistan tourist visa

### Price does not include

- International air fares to and from Central Asia
- Hotel charges for additional services
- Consular fees for tourist visas
- Travel insurance (required)
- Personal expenses (e.g. souvenirs)
- Alcoholic beverages
- Tips for guides and drivers (optional)

### Important Information

- This is the Fall version of our bestselling tour to the “Five Stans”. We also have a Spring version (starting in Ashgabat), and a Summer version (cheaper, shorter, and including more mountains).
- All listed departures are guaranteed
- You can also opt to book the whole itinerary as a private tour. We can arrange extra nights before or after the trip, and suggest private tour extensions.
- We can advise and take care of all visas for you. For Turkmenistan, you can get a visa on arrival with a letter of invitation pre-arranged by us. Other countries are visa-free for most nationalities.
- 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/>
- Travel insurance is required
- We are happy to suggest flights to get to Central Asia and back home: please contact us
- See our [books recommendation on Central Asia & the Silk Road](#)
- Read more about [food in Central Asia](#)