

Turkmenistan & Uzbekistan – In Search of Tamerlane

Tour Code TUZ

From the blue-tiled splendour of Tamerlane's Samarkand to the holy city of Bukhara, boasting a mosque for each day of the year, and beyond, the romantic desert-girdled khanate of Khiva, Uzbekistan lays claim to a breathtaking architectural legacy. Such splendours have attracted and astonished visitors since ancient times and this detailed journey is planned to allow time to relax and fully appreciate these awe inspiring fabled cities of the Silk Road. Our Central Asian journey begins in the Land of the Turkmen, where we explore the monuments of Ashgabat, including the Parthian fortress of Nissa. The great ancient cities of Merv and Kunya Urgench also feature plus a visit to the colourful Sunday market in Turkmenistan's capital.

Turkmenbashi Square, Ashgabat
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Day 1 Fly to Ashgabat via Istanbul

Afternoon departure from Heathrow Terminal 3 with Turkish Airlines to Istanbul. Short transit before boarding flight to Ashgabat arriving the following morning

Day 2 In Ashgabat

We arrive into Ashgabat airport early this morning and transfer to our hotel with immediate rooms and breakfast available. This afternoon we have a city tour including the Arch of Neutrality, Lenin Square, the Orthodox Church of Nevsky and Ertogulgazi Mosque. A welcome dinner has been arranged at a smart local restaurant. Three nights at the Nissa hotel (B,D)

Day 3 In Ashgabat

This morning we visit the National museum of History and Ethnography with an excellent collection of artefacts from Turkmenistan's prime sites including Nissa. The afternoon is spent at Nissa, once a 3rd century BC Parthian capital. Today, its' citadel, palaces, temples and tombs are a UNESCO listed heritage site. Dinner in a local restaurant (B,D)

Day 4 Return flight to Mary. Visit Merv

A daytrip by air to Mary to visit Merv, 'Mother of Cities'. Its remains are thought to span 4000 years of human history and it existed as the largest city in the world in the 12th century AD rivalling Constantinople. Known as Margiana in the classical times, this UNESCO site has a well preserved fortress, mausoleum and necropolis. Dinner in the hotel (B,D)

Day 5 Ashgabat. Fly Dashoguz

We spend the morning at the capital's Talkuchka Sunday bazaar, where colourful rugs, jewellery and costumes can be found. We also visit the Carpet museum, one of the best in Central Asia. In the late afternoon we transfer to the airport for our flight east to Dashoguz. Overnight at the Uzbhoy hotel with dinner (B,D)

Day 6 Visit Kunya Urgench. Drive to Khiva

We visit the UNESCO listed site of Kunya Urgench this morning that includes the Mausoleum of Turabeg Khanum and the Shrine of Fakh al-Din Razi. The monuments testify to outstanding achievements in architecture and craftsmanship whose influence reached Iran and Afghanistan, and later the architecture of the Mogul Empire of 16th-century India. We cross into Uzbekistan and drive to Khiva. Two nights at the Malika hotel with dinner (B,D)

Day 7 In Khiva

A full day in Khiva with its stunning array of medieval mosques, madressahs and palaces including the stunning Jummi or Friday mosque and the elaborate Khiva Ark. After lunch you will have time to explore this fabled city at one's own pace. Dinner tonight is in a restored madressah. (B,D)

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Day 8 Drive to Bukhara

A full day of driving today through the Kizilikum desert, crossing the ancient Oxus River before arriving at Bukhara. Three nights stay at the Komil hotel, a restored 19th century house located in the heart of the historic old city. Dinner in the hotel (B,D)

Day 9 In Bukhara

This morning we visit one of the greatest Asian cities of antiquity. Based in the heart of Bukharas' historic centre we can marvel at the huge Kalyan minaret, and nearby mosque, the unique Chor Minor and an array of jade domed and elaborately tiled madrassas. The afternoon is spent at leisure to visit the bazaars and soak up the atmosphere of this fabled city. Dinner in an ancient madrasa accompanied by a folkloric show (B,D)

Day 10 In Bukhara

A second morning of sightseeing in Bukhara to see the vast Arg Citadel, fortress of the Bukharan Khans, and the stunning Summer Palace of the Last Emir. A further free afternoon at leisure to wonder at Bukhara's stunning ancient architectural past. Dinner in an ancient madrasa accompanied by classical recitals (B,D)

Day 11 Drive to Samarkand via Shahr-I-Sabz

Morning drive to Shahr-I-Sabz, Tamerlane's birthplace and his second capital where we visit the remains of his colossal Summer Palace. After a break for lunch and a visit to the blue domed 15th century mausoleum of Janangir we continue to the legendary city of Samarkand. Two-night stay at the Malika Prime hotel situated close to the famous Registan Square. Dinner in the hotel (B,D)

Day 12 In Samarkand

Our morning sightseeing starts at Tamerlane's tomb, a jewel of Islamic art, before arriving at the magnificent Registan Square, the noblest square in Central Asia. We continue to the beautifully decorated Bibi Khanym or Friday Mosque. In the afternoon we continue our sightseeing with a visit to Ulug Beg's Observatory, the Afrosiyab Museum and finish at the beautiful 14th century mausoleum complex of Shah-I-Zinda. Dinner at a local restaurant (B,D)

Day 13 Drive to Tashkent

We depart for Tashkent this morning and spend the afternoon in the old city of Tashkent to view its impressive complex of ancient madrasahs. Two nights at the Dedeman Silk Road hotel. Dinner at a smart restaurant (B,D)

Day 14 In Tashkent

We start the morning with a visit to the bustling Chorsu Bazaar, the largest in Tashkent before continuing to the Museum of Applied Arts housed in a delightful building in traditional Uzbek style. We spend the afternoon at the impressive History museum and the grand Independence Square. Dinner at the hotel (B,D)

Day 15 Fly London

Early hours transfer to the airport for our Turkish Airlines flight via Istanbul arriving into Heathrow Terminal 3 in the morning.

Cost £1895.00 per person in a twin room (excludes international flight)

Single supplement charge £250.00

Price includes –

- ▶ Tour accompanied from London by Patrick Syder FRGS
- ▶ Turkmen and Uzbek guide for the duration of the tour
- ▶ Domestic flights within Turkmenistan
- ▶ All transportation in private a/c minibus
- ▶ Full sightseeing programme including entrance fees
- ▶ Accommodation ranges from four star hotels in the main cities to best available in rural towns
- ▶ All dinners included at hotel or local restaurants
- ▶ Airport transfers
- ▶ Bottled water daily
- ▶ Porter, hotel and restaurant staff gratuities

PLEASE NOTE – personal travel insurance, applicable visa fees, alcoholic drinks, guide and driver gratuities, Turkish Airline international and domestic flights are not included in the land tour cost (Turkish Airlines international flights start from £600.00 through Flight Centre UK) (Included meals denoted by B Breakfast, L Lunch, D Dinner)

