

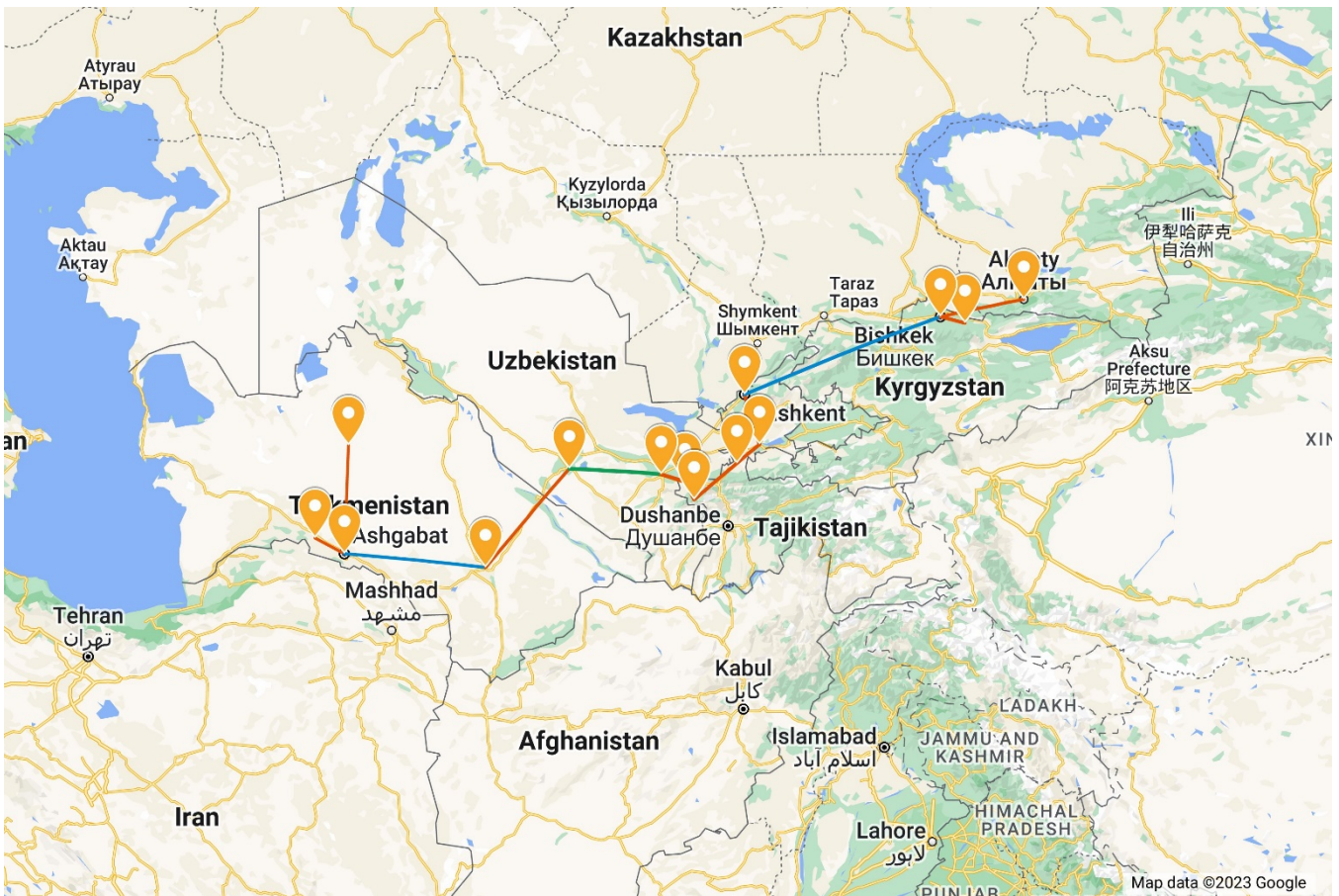
# 5STAN-TRIP



# ITINERARY

## Highlights

- Explore the Southern Capital of Kazakhstan – Almaty – the place of cultural and entertainment centres
- Journey to the Greenest City of Central Asia – Bishkek
- See the world from point of Burana Tower's Height
- One day tour to the modern capital of Uzbekistan
- Excursion to the oldest cities of Tajikistan – Khujand – Istaravshan – Penjikent
- The unique turquoise and purple colors of the seven lakes will hypnotize you and relax you
- Stop by the milestones of Central Asian Middle Ages – Samarkand and Bukhara.
- Don't forget your sunglasses in the White City, which will dazzle you with its buildings covered with white marble stones
- Camp in the middle of the Karakum desert, accompanied by the reflected lights of the Darvaza gas crater, which has been burning for more than 50 years
- Undoubtedly, the Akhalteke horses, which are considered by everyone to be the most beautiful horses in the world, are worth seeing



<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=13zKjswgcXIRAYTG30zBT-vEWimTNIpk&usp=sharing>

## DAY 1: ALMATY

Upon arrival meeting with your guide **at the airport and transfer to the hotel**. Overnight at the hotel.

## DAY 2: ALMATY

Breakfast at the hotel. We will start our **sightseeing of Almaty**. You will know more about history and development of the Southern capital of Kazakhstan and see its major attractions. You will visit a popular place for townspeople - the Green Bazaar, where it is impossible to refrain from shopping. It is the great chance to experience an atmosphere of the real eastern market, its colors, smells and crowds. There you can obtain famous Oriental sweets, but don't forget to bargain... Then the tour will continue in one of the oldest Almaty parks - **Panfilov Park**, where one of the most beautiful wooden building in the world - Zenkov Cathedral is located. You will also visit the **Memorial of Glory and Eternal Flame, Museum of Kazakh Folk Musical Instruments After exploration of sport**, cultural and business areas of the city you will get to the the Central mosque Next destination is the Kok-Tobe hill where the tallest TV tower in the world is located (if to count from the sea level) and where you will get by the picturesque winding mountain road. In **Kok-Tobe Park**, you can stroll along the winding paths of the park, admire the magnificent panorama of the city from the special observation deck and visit the shop of national souvenirs. The tour ends with the short ride from the top of the hill to the center of the city by the famous Almaty cableway. Overnight in Almaty.

## DAY 3: ALMATY – BISHKEK

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to Bishkek. Four-hour drive till the **Kazakh-Kyrgyz** border near Kordai village and then border formalities will take couple hours. Cross the border into Kyrgyzstan. Arrive to Bishkek. After hotel check-in our guide will take you on a short city tour in the charming capital of Kyrgyzstan, the greenest city in Central Asia. Our sightseeing program in Bishkek includes stops at **the The Philharmonic Hall and the Victory, Oak Park, Central Square Ala – Too, Square, Kurmanzhan Datka Monument**, main governmental buildings, Old Square with Parliament House and Lenin's Monument. Finish at the Victory Square dedicated WWII. Overnight in Bishkek.

## DAY 4: BISHKEK – BURANA TOWER - TASHKENT

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to archeological and historical complex **Burana**. On the place of the Burana Tower there existed Balasagyn, settlement until the XIV-XV centuries. At that time, it had already lost its former meaning. You will be able to stroll through the settlement, where there are also tombstones, balbals, ancient millstones and other objects of household culture, climb the tower and take stunning photos. It is especially beautiful here in spring, when everything starts to burn from poppy blossoming. It incredibly contrasts with the whiteness of the snow-capped Kyrgyz Ridge. **Drive back to Bishkek to Airport to catch your flight to Tashkent** HY 778, every Monday, Bishkek (FRU) - Tashkent (TAS) 19:50 - 20:10. Transfer to the hotel. Overnight at Tashkent.

## DAY 5: TASHKENT - KHUJAND

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to **Uzbekistan-Tajikistan border** Oybek (100 km, 1h 30 min.). Customs and passport control on both sides, cross the border. Meet our Tajik local guide and driver. Then drive to Khujand (70 km, 1 h.). Sightseeing in **Khujand: Republican Historical-Ethnographic Museum, Timur-Malik Fortress, Archeological Museum, Mosque and Madrasah of Shaikh Muslihiddin, Payshanba Bazaar**. Lunch at local restaurant. Free time in the afternoon. Overnight in Khujand.

## DAY 6: KHUJAND- ISTARAVSHAN- SEVEN LAKES – PENJIKENT

Breakfast at the hotel. Excursion to Mug Tepa which situated in **Ura-Tube** is one of the ancient settlements in Tajikistan. It is said the city was found by Kir in the north-east boundary of the empire. Then visit **Khazrati Shoh** architectural complex- consists of Khazrati Shoh mausoleum-the grave of brother of Kusam ibn Abbas, Khudayar Valami mausoleum and mosque Namozgoh. There were city cemetery and Medresse too. All these buildings belong to 19th c. Explore the Bazaar- an oriental market where you can find everything. The Seven Lakes are located in the west of Fann mountains; each of them has its own colour which varies from calming turquoise to mesmerizing purple. At the last lake of **Khoazorchashma** you will enjoy a picnic. Driving to Penjikent, check in to the hotel. Overnight in Penjikent.

## DAY 7: PENJIKENT - SAMARKAND

Breakfast at the hotel. Excursion to the **Museum of Rudaki** – As Penjikent is a birthplace of Abu Abdallah Rudaki, considered by many to be the father of Persian Poetry. Ancient Penjikent - ruins of old Sogdian town founded in 5th century and abandoned in the 8th century by Arabs. Foundations of houses, a citadel with a couple of Zoroastrian fire temples and city bazaar are visible in the excavated ruins. Sarazm ruins - Sarazm one of the ancient settlement in Central Asia with 5500 years civilization. In 2010 the Sarazm was added to the list of the Human heritage by UNESCO. After lunch drive to the **Jartepa border** crossing (30 km, 40 min). Customs and passport control on both sides, cross the border. Meet our Uzbek local guide and driver. Overnight in Samarkand.

## DAY 8: SAMARKAND – BUKHARA

Breakfast at the hotel. Begin sightseeing tour in Samarkand: **Gur-Emir Mausoleum (15c), Registan Ensemble (including Ulugbek (15c), Shir Dor (17c), Tillya –Kari Madrassahs (17c), Bibi Khanum Mosque** and one of the biggest oriental bazaars Siab market. After lunch second part excursion in Samarkand by visiting: Shah-i-Zinda complex (14-15c), Mirzo Ulugbek's observatory (15c) and Saint Daniel's tomb, Meros Paper Mill Konigil (famous Samarkand silk paper workshop). Take a **night train to Bukhara** (21:00/22:40). Transfer and check in to the hotel. Overnight in Bukhara.



## DAY 9: BUKHARA

Breakfast at the hotel. Discover Holy city of Bukhara, the city tour will be by foot as all monuments are located in close dense area. First, we drive to starting point near the city park. Sightseeing tour in Bukhara: **Mausoleum of Ismail Samani (9-10c)-vault of Bukhara rulers' dynasty, Chashma-i-Ayub Mausoleum (14c, St. Job's well), Bolo-Hauz complex (18 c) consisting of Mosque (where Bukhara emirs used to pray) minaret and khauz (pond), royal fortress Ark (6-16 c) with its high fortification walls.** After lunch, second part of sightseeing tour in Bukhara: **Poi-Kalyan Ensemble consisting of Minaret Kalon (12c) Djuma Mosque (15c) and functioning Madrassah of Miri-Arab (16 c), Emir-Alim-Khan Madrassah (14c), Ulugbek's madrassah (15c), Abdulaziz's (17c) Madrassahs.** Medieval trading domes: Toqi Zargaron (jewellers), Toqi Telpak-furushon (cap sellers) and Toqi Sarrafon (money exchangers), Lyab-i-Hauz place (16-17c) consisting of Kukeldash and Nadir Devonbegi Madrassahs (16c, 17c) including Khanaqa (ancient hospice for pilgrims) and khauz (pond) of Nadir Divanbegi, ancient Mosque Magok-i-Attari (16c). Overnight in Bukhara.

## DAY 10: BUKHARA – KHIVA

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to **Khiva through Kyzyl-Kum desert.** Route will take around 7-8 hrs. En route we will have several stops, with panoramique views to plains of desert and the river basin of Oxus (the ancient name of Amu-Daria river). Arrival & check in to the hotel. Free time. Overnight in Khiva.

## DAY 11: KHIVA

Breakfast at the hotel. begin the **sightseeing tour in Khiva: Kunya-Ark fortress, including Kurinish Khana (17c); Mohammed-Amin-Khan (19c) Madrassah, Islam Khodja Minaret; Palvan-Kari complex, Abd Al Bobo complex (18c), Rafanek Madrassah, Mohammed Rakim Khan (19 c), Amir-Tur Madrassah, Sho-I-Kalandar Bobo Mausoleum.** After lunch, second part of excursion in Khiva, explore the Mazary Sharif Madrassah, Kheivak well (10c), Uch Avlioli ("three saints") Mausoleum, Juma Mosque (18c), Kutluq-Murad Inaq (19c) Madrassah, Pakhlavan Mahmoud Mausoleum, Tash Hauli ("stone yard") Palace, Alla-Kuli-Khan (18c), Arab Mohammed Khan (18 c) Madrassahs. Overnight in Khiva.

## DAY 12: KHIVA – KUNYA URGENCH – GAS CRATER

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to **Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan border**, pass Shavat-Dashoguz border. Customs and passport control on both sides. Meet the Turkmen local guide and driver. Then drive to Kunya Urgench. Sightseeing tour in **Kunya Urgench**: visit Portal of Caravansaray, Mamun Minaret, Il Arslan Mausoleum, Sultan Tekesh Mausoleum, Academy of Horezm, Kutlug Timur Minaret, Turabek Hanum Mausoleum. You will also visit Nejemeddin Kubra, Sultan Ali and Kryk Molla. Lunch at the local cafe. Then drive to **Darwaza burning Gas Crater** dubbed by locals as "The Door to Hell". The Darwaza area is rich in natural gas. While drilling in 1971, Soviet geologists tapped into a cavern filled with natural gas. The ground beneath the drilling rig collapsed, leaving a large hole with a diameter of 70 meters. To avoid poisonous gas discharge, it was decided the best solution was to burn it off. Geologists had hoped the fire would use all the fuel in a matter of days, but the as is still burning today. In the evening, watch the spectacular and fascinating view of the gas crater. BBQ dinner & overnight near the Gas Crater in a tent.

## DAY 13: GAS CRATER – GOKDEPE HORSE FARM - ASHGABAT

Picnic style breakfast in the camp. Then drive to **Gokdepe horse farm** (310 km, 4-5 hours). Lunch in local café in a national style yurt. After delicious lunch explore the Gokdepe fortress and horse farm 45km from Ashgabat. **Gokdepe fortress** that was attacked in December 1880 by Russians under General Mikhail Skobelev. The siege of Gokdepe lasted twenty-three days, after which the city was taken by storm. **Gokdepe Mosque** was built to commemorate the defeat and is noted for its mint-turquoise blue colored roof and white marble structure. At the horse farm you can see proud of Turkmen national Akhalteke horses. Over the 30 beautiful horses, you can see at the horse farm. 5000 years ago, Turkmens begin breed **Akhalteke horses**. Unique breed on the world, that not mixed with other breeds. Different rulers as Alexander Great, Darius I wants to own this horses. Drive back & check in to the hotel. Overnight Ashgabat.

## DAY 14: ASHGABAT – MARY

Breakfast at the hotel. We will begin explore **the Las Vegas of Central Asia**. You will have Ashgabat city tour. Excursion to the **Presidential Palace, Ruhyyet Palace, Wedding Palace, modern "Yildyz" Hotel, Ferries Wheel, Constitution Monument, Arch of Neutrality, Monument and park of Independence, Ertogrul Gazy Mosque, Ashgabat 2017 Sports and Housing facilities**. You will be also taken to grandiose Square of Revival (Galkynysh) - a new administrative, business and cultural center of Ashgabat. Have a stroll along Ylham (Inspiration) Park. Evening **flight to Mary**. Arrival, transfer to the hotel. Overnight in Mary.

## DAY 15: MARY – ASHGABAT

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to Merv to explore ancient **Merv – “Queen of the world”**, was one of the most important capitals of Islam along with Baghdad, Cairo and Damascus. Sightseeing of ancient Merv includes **Greater Kyz Gala & Lesser Kyz Gala (VI-VII), Complex of Askhabs (VIII-XIV), Erk Gala (VI BC), Gyaur Gala (IV BC), Hoja Yusup Hamadani complex, Sultan Sanjar mausoleum, Muhamed Ibn Zeid mausoleum**. After drive to Mary city. Then you will visit **Mary History Museum** is a history museum of Mary, located in the center of the city. The exposition of the museum reflects the history and culture of Mary from ancient times to the present day, is unique in size and content of the exhibits. Take a **flight to Ashgabat**. Overnight in Ashgabat.

## DAY 16: DEPARTURE

Breakfast at the hotel or farewell lunch box from the hotel. **Transfer to the International airport of Dushanbe city**. We wish to you a pleasant flight, and hope that your Central Asia trip will be remembered for a lifetime.

<b>Service includes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation on DBL/TWIN sharing</li> <li>• All government taxes paid at the hotels</li> <li>• Meals: Breakfasts only, mentioned meals on the program</li> <li>• All airport transfers and tour on comfortable transport, 4WD cars where needed</li> <li>• Entrance tickets to museums and sightseeing's specified in the program</li> <li>• Air tickets: Bishkek –Tashkent, Ashgabat – Mary – Ashgabat</li> <li>• Visa support for Turkmenistan &amp; Uzbekistan</li> <li>• Tajikistan e-visa</li> <li>• English speaking guide services</li> <li>• Water 1 bottle 1,5L per day</li> </ul>
<b>Service does not include:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International air tickets</li> <li>• extra charges in airport</li> <li>• personal expenses</li> <li>• Full board (lunches &amp; dinners)</li> <li>• camera and video charges</li> <li>• tips for guide &amp; driver</li> <li>• personal travel insurance</li> <li>• visa support for Kyrgyzstan &amp; Kazakhstan tourist visas (60USD)</li> <li>• consular fee for the visas</li> </ul>

### Notes:

1. *Due to the changing conditions of some roads & traffic there might take slightly more or less time for driving than mentioned driving time in the program*
2. *Flight times are subject to be change by Turkmenistan Airlines, hand language 5kg, baggage 20kg per person, if the baggage overweight you pay between 2-3\$ per kg).*
3. *If the traveler stays more than 3 working days in Turkmenistan, travel agency will register and stamp on your passport in a local Tourist Board.*
4. *An express PCR test for Covid-19 will be taken upon arrival. It costs between 35-45 USD.*
5. *Breakfast box in case of very early morning departures.*