

AMAZING TURKMENISTAN



ITINERARY

HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the best cultural, historical and natural places of Turkmenistan in a single tour
- Visit the Capital of Parthian Kings and the modern Turkmenistan on a first day
- A panoramic view of Ashgabat's unique architecture imbued with Turkmen cultural symbols
- Stop by visit to Seyit Jemaletdin mosque and Abiverd ruins on the way to Merv
- Going through the centuries-old pages of the ancient city of Merv in a single day
- Dinner while watching the glow of the Darvaza gas crater, which has been burning for 50 years
- You will find a cure for all chronic diseases in the healing waters of the Kowata underground lake.
- Stop by the Geoktepe fortress, the last stronghold of the Turkmens against the Russian invasion, and the magnificent mosque.
- Watching the most beautiful horses in the world at the biggest farm of Turkmen Ahalteke horses.



<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=IseoKsDXEwYljnFh5ez7cZmpl4MDCq4s&usp=sharing>

DAY 1: ASHGABAT

Arrival in **Ashgabat International airport**. You will be met by our representatives and transfer to hotel.

Morning drive to visit **Nissa fortress** -the Sanctuary of Parthian Kings. UNESCO declared fortress a World Heritage Site in 2007. Nissa described as one of the first capitals of the Parthians. It was founded by Arsaces I (reigned c. 250 BC – 211BC), and reputedly the royal necropolis of the Parthian Kings, although it has neither been established that the fortress at Nissa was a royal residence or a mausoleum. The ruins of ancient settlement Nissa are located 18 km from Ashgabat at Bagyr village. Drive to visit **Turkmenbashy Ruhy Mosque** in Kipchak (the largest mosque in Central Asia).

Then you will have Ashgabat city tour. You will see **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**. Overnight at a hotel.

DAY 2: ASHGABAT – MARY – MERV – ASHGABAT

BF at hotel. Morning drive to Mary. You also see ruins of **Seyitjemaladdin mosque** in Anau. The mosque was built in 1456, when Abu-ibn-Kasim Baber Bahadurkhan ruled in Khorasan (1446-1457). Construction of the mosque was financed by Bahadurkhan's vizier, Muhammed Hudaidot, who also selected a site of construction–near the grave of his father, sheikh Jemaleddin, a native of Anau. The square central hall (with the sides of 10.5 meters) was crowned with a dome. In later periods, the Seyit-Jemaleddin mosque was partially reconstructed. By the nineteenth century, the subsidence of land had already damaged the building heavily, and during the 1948 Ashgabat earthquake it was destroyed completely. Now, only lower parts of the portal and some fragments of the walls are extant.

On the way visit **Abiwerd** that was once an important trading town of North Khorasan. It was a key link on the Great Silk Road between Nisa and Merv, and also enjoyed ties in Nishapur, across Kopetdag Mountains to the south.

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 sightseeing transfer to Mary airport for back flight to Ashgabat. Overnight at the hotel.

DAY 3: ASHGABAT – DARVAZA – ASHGABAT

BF at Hotel. Drive to **visit Carpet Museum**, one of the best in Central Asia featuring designs from the Tekke, Yamud, Sarik and Chodor tribes. The Turkmen carpet museum is one of the cultural centres of Turkmenistan, where about 2000 carpet exhibits, including rare ones, are exhibited. For example, the museum has the smallest carpet to wear keys, as well as the world's largest hand carpet with a total area of 301 m², which was woven in 2001, and in 2003, it was added to the Guinness Book of Records. Lunch, after drive to Darwaza burning **Gas Crater** (268km) 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 gas is still burning today. In the evening, watch the spectacular and fascinating view of the gas crater. BBQ dinner at Gas Crater. Drive back to Ashgabat. Overnight at the hotel.

DAY 4: ASHGABAT – KOWATA - GOKDEPE – ASHGABAT

BF at Hotel. Drive to **Kowata underground lake**, which is, located 107 km from Ashgabat. The Turkmen name Kow-Ata means "father of caves". This underground area seems like a magnificent auditorium: the overall length of the cave is 230 m, its height reaches 20 m, and its width is at some points 57 m. The bottom of the cave is covered with lumps of dissolved limestone (stalagmites), and its warm and gushing water is clear and emerald colored. The water has a constant temperature of 33-37°C. (You should swim in the lake, very useful for your body).

After drive to **Gokdepe fortress** that was attacked in December 1880 by Russian Empire Army. The siege of Gokdepe lasted 23 days, after which the city was taken by storm. Visit **Geokdepe Mosque** (Saparmyrat Hajy) that was built in 1995 to commemorate the defeat and is noted for its mint-turquoise blue colored roof and white marble structure.

Later drive to visit **Horse Farm** to see a national proud of Turkmen people - Akhalteke horses, the nicest horses in the world. 5000 years ago, Turkmens begin breed Akhalteke horses. The World's unique breed was never mixed with other breeds. Such illustrious Emperors like Alexander the Great, Darius I desired to own Ahalteke horses. There are over 35 beautiful horses in the farm. Per superstition, every sick person who touches an Ahalteke horse will get well soon.

Transfer to the Ashgabat International airport.

Service includes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of invitation • Registration in Ashgabat city • Accommodation in DBL/TWIN rooms: • Transportation throughout the tour • Flight ticket: Mary – Ashgabat • Escort English speaking guide service • Entrance tickets to sights • Meals: BF at hotel, BBQ dinner at Darvaza • 1,5 L water per person per day • Travel Tax: 2 USD per person per night
Service does not include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International flights • Cost of Turkmen visa & border fees (70 – 100 USD) • Payment for photo and video • Tips for guide and driver • Medical insurance • Services not shown in the program

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.*