

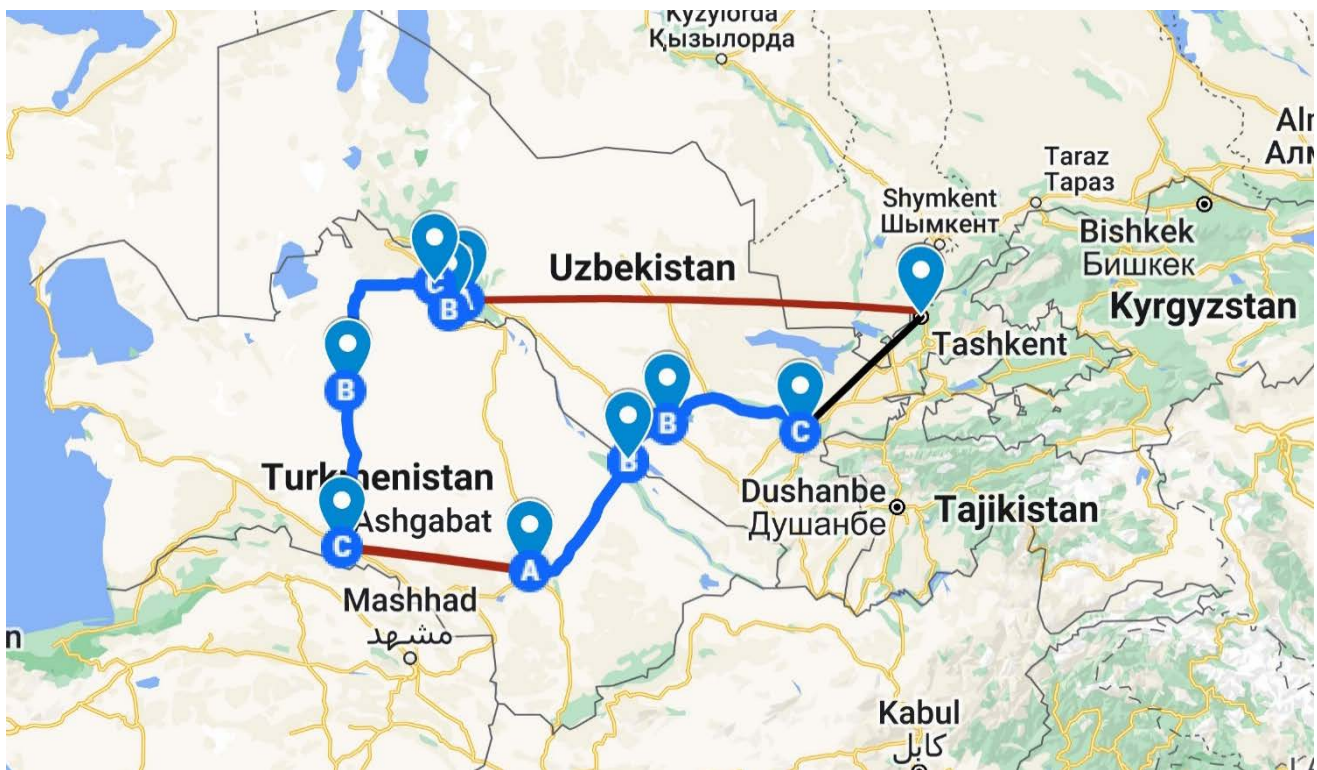
BEST OF TURKMENISTAN AND UZBEKISTAN



ITINERARY

Highlights

- Khiva, Uzbekistan: This ancient city is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is known for its well-preserved mudbrick architecture, including the Ichan Kala (Inner City), which is enclosed by walls and has many mosques, madrasas, and mausoleums.
- The Door to Hell, Turkmenistan: This natural gas crater has been burning continuously since 1971. It is located in the Karakum Desert and is a popular tourist attraction.
- Ashgabat, Turkmenistan: The capital of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat is known for its white marble buildings and grandiose architecture. Some of the most notable landmarks include the Arch of Neutrality, the Turkmenbashi Ruhy Mosque, and the Ashgabat Opera and Ballet Theatre.
- Merv: This ancient city was once a major stop on the Silk Road. It is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is home to the ruins of several impressive buildings, including the minaret of Kalon.
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- Samarkand, Uzbekistan: This historic city is home to many UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including the Registan, a stunning square lined with three ornate madrasas. Other must-sees include the Bibi Khanym Mosque, the Shah-i-Zinda necropolis, and the Gur-e-Amir mausoleum, the tomb of Timur (Tamerlane).
- Tashkent, Uzbekistan: The capital of Uzbekistan, Tashkent is a modern city with a mix of old and new architecture. Some of the most notable landmarks include the Tashkent Opera and Ballet Theatre and the Chorsu Bazaar.



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DAY 1: TASHKENT

Arrive in Tashkent welcome at the airport and transfer to the hotel. Early check-in. Sightseeing tour of Tashkent: **Khast Imam Complex** – a religious center of the city consisting of the **Barakkhan Madrasah, KaffalShashi Mausoleum** and the library of **Islamic Literature with the Holy Koran Book of the VII century**. Visiting modern part of Tashkent by metro: **Amir Timur Square, Applied Art Museum, Earthquake Memorial, and Independence Square**. Overnight in Tashkent.

DAY 2: TASHKENT – URGENCH – KHIVA

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to the airport and flight to Urgench at 07:15. Arrive Urgench at 08:55. Transfer to Khiva, and start sightseeing – inner town of **Ichan Kala (XIV-XX CC) with Muhamad Amin Khan Madrassah, Kalta Minor Minaret, Kunya Ark, Muhamad Rahim Khan Madrassah, Juma Mosque and Minaret, TashHauli Palace, Islam Khodja Minaret and Madrassah, Shirgazi Khan Madrassah, Pahlavan Mahmud Mausoleum**. Overnight in Khiva.

DAY 3: URGENCH – DASHOGUZ (SHAVAT) POST – DARWAZA

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to Uzbekistan - Turkmenistan border point. Sightseeing tour of the historical places of "**Kunya-Urgench**": Excursion in KunyaUrgench. Sightseeing tour in KunyaUrgench: visit **Portal of Caravan-saray, Mamur Minaret, Il Arslan Mausoleum, Sultan Tekesh Mausoleum, Academy of Horezm, kutlug Timur Minaret, Turabek Hanum Mausoleum**. Transfer to famous Gas crater – Door to Hell. Dinner. Rest & night in camp near crater.

DAY 4: DARWAZA - ASHGABAT

Picnic style breakfast. Drive back to Ashgabat. En-route we cross Karakum desert, will make a stop in small desert village Erbent. Arrival in Ashgabat. 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 Sports and Housing facilities, the Earthquake and victims of WWII Monuments**. Overnight in Ashgabat.

DAY 5: ASHGABAT

Breakfast at the 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. 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). 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. Then visit Gokdepe museum about the battle between Russians and local tribe "Akhhalteke" in 1881. 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 Akhalteke horses. There are over 35 beautiful horses in the farm. Per superstition, every sick person who touches an Akhalteke horse will get well soon. Drive to visit **Turkmenbashi Ruhkhan Mosque in Kipchak (the largest mosque in Central Asia)**. Overnight at Hotel.

DAY 6: ASHGABAT – MARY – BUKHARA

Breakfast at the hotel. Morning flight to Mary. Arrival and transfer to ancient Merv for excursion. Sightseeing of Merv: visit **Gyz Gala & Oglan Gala, Complex of Askhabs, Gyaour Gala, Erk Gala, Soltan Gala, Soltan Sanjar Mausoleum** etc. After excursion transfer to Turkmen – Uzbek border Farap. Uzbek driver will meet you at Uzbek side. Drive to Bukhara, transfer to the hotel. Overnight in Bukhara.

DAY 7: BUKHARA

Breakfast at the hotel. Starting city tour in Bukhara at 09:00. City tour with visits to the Ark Fortress – **residence of Bukhara khans (I-XX CC), Bolo Hauz Mosque (XVIII C), Samanids Mausoleum – Shrine of Ismail Samani** and other members of the **Samanid Dynasty (IX-X CC), Chashma-Ayub Mausoleum – Saint Job's well (XII-XVI CC)**. Continue sightseeing by walk: **Poi-Kalyan complex with Kalyan Minaret (XII C)** through orient bazaars with three trade domes of **Toki Zargaron (XV C), Toki Sarrafon (XVI C), Toki Telpak Furushon (XVI C), Ulugbek Madrassah (XV C), Abdulazizkhan Madrassah (XVII C)**. Visiting Lyabi Hauz complex consisting of Kukeldash Madrassah (XVI C), Magoki Attori Mosque now used as a carpet museum (XII C), Nadir Divan-begi Madrassah and Nadir Divan-begi Khanaka. Overnight in Bukhara.

DAY 8: BUKHARA – SHAKHRISABZ – SAMARKAND

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to Shakhrisabz – hometown of Tamerlane. In Shakhrisabz we will visit the magnificent **Palace of Timur – AkSaray**. The palace is covered with beautiful blue, white and gold mosaics. Continue by visit of **Kok-Gumbaz Mosque and Dorus-Saodat Mausoleum**. Drive to Samarkand. Overnight in Samarkand.

DAY 9: SAMARKAND ASHGABAT – MARY – MERV

Breakfast at the hotel. We will start sightseeing from gem of Samarkand – **Registan Square** and three madrassahs (religious study centers) surrounding the square: **Ulughbek Madrassah (XV c), Sher-Dor Madrassah (XVII c), and Tillya-Kari Madrassah (XVII c)** – covered with gold. Visit to **Gur Emir Mausoleum** – tomb of Tamerlane, Shakhizinda Necropolis – ensemble including mausoleums and other ritual buildings of IX-XIV and XIX CC, **Ulughbek Observatory**, built in XV century by Timurid ruler and astronomer, **Bibi Khanym Mosque** – built by Amir Timur (Tamerlane) in XV century and Siyab Bazaar. Overnight in Samarkand.

DAY 10: SAMARKAND – TASHKENT

Breakfast at the hotel. Today we will visit Museum located in ancient settlement of Afrosiab. Then visit to Tombstone of **KhodjaDaniyar (St Daniel)**, revered by three world religions: **Christianity, Judaism and Islam**, and mausoleum is still a pilgrimage place for the followers of all three Abrahamic religions. Drive to Konigil village to visit Samarkand Paper Mill “Meros”, where you can see the process of making famous Samarkand paper by ancient technology. Transfer to the railway station for train Samarkand-Tashkent at 17:00. Arrive Tashkent at 19:10. Overnight in Tashkent.

DAY 11: TASHKENT

Breakfast at the hotel. Check out by 12:00. Transfer to the airport. End of the tour.

Service includes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of Invitation in Turkmenistan • Accommodation in DBL/Twin room • Flight ticket: Tashkent-Urgench, Ashgabat - Mary • Escort English speaking guide service • Transportation as per program per AC regular road vehicles • Train ticket: Samarkand-Tashkent on 2nd class. • Meals: BF at hotel, BBQ dinner at Darvaza • 1,5 L water per person per day • Entrance fee: per program
Service does not include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of Invitation in Turkmenistan • Accommodation in DBL/Twin room • Flight ticket: Tashkent-Urgench, Ashgabat - Mary • Escort English speaking guide service • Transportation as per program per AC regular road vehicles • Train ticket: Samarkand-Tashkent on second class. • Meals: BF at hotel, BBQ dinner at Darvaza • 1,5 L water per person per day • Entrance fee: per 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 33-37 USD.*
5. *Please keep with you 1, 5, 10, 20 USD banknotes for 100-150 USD, when you got the visa at the airport or at the land borders, sometimes bank does not have the change, and accept only cash.*
6. *Breakfast box in case of very early morning departures.*