

Journey Along The Silk Route

Uzbekistan

October 6 – 17, 2025 | 12 Days

WITH OPTIONAL POST-TOUR EXTENSION TO KYRGYZSTAN



Registan Square,
Samarkand

PRESENTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH



ALUMNI



ALUMNI



This tour is presented by the alumni associations of the University of Alberta, the University of Saskatchewan, Western University, McGill University, McMaster University, and the University of Guelph. All are welcome!

Get to the heart of central Asia on our modern-day caravan through Uzbekistan along the fabled Silk Route with all its magic and mystery.

Discover the capital Tashkent, a fascinating mix of modern, post-Soviet city and traditional Uzbek town with leafy avenues and mud-walled houses. In the far West, visit the impressive Savitsky Art Museum housing thousands of banned avant-garde Russian art pieces. A drive across the desert takes us to the beautifully intact architectural ensemble of Khiva and then onward to the living museum of Bukhara where we stay for three nights to explore this still very much lived-in old centre filled with medrassahs, minarets, a royal fortress, and a mulberry tree-shaded oasis in its heart. The markets are a photographic delight and the flourishing arts and crafts enticing. In Samarkand, discover a cornucopia of magnificent monuments, including Registan Square, possibly the most awesome single sight in Central Asia.

The incredible sky-blue tile work, woven brick constructions, and brilliant fabrics of the Silk Road form a mosaic of vivid snapshots enhanced by warm Uzbek hospitality. An optional post-tour extension to Kyrgyzstan comprises the epic poem of the Manas, the vibrant mix of Soviet power and Asian traditions, and the stunning scenery of this mountainous country.



Study Leader

Paula Swart is a museum curator and expert on Asian culture and history. Paula has degrees in Sinology, Asian art history, Chinese history, and archaeology and has published several books and numerous articles on the art and architecture of Asian cultures. Paula is a lecturer at the University of British Columbia and has recently been teaching courses on UNESCO World Heritage sites at the UBC Summer Institute and the University of Victoria.



Ride on Central Asia's first metro



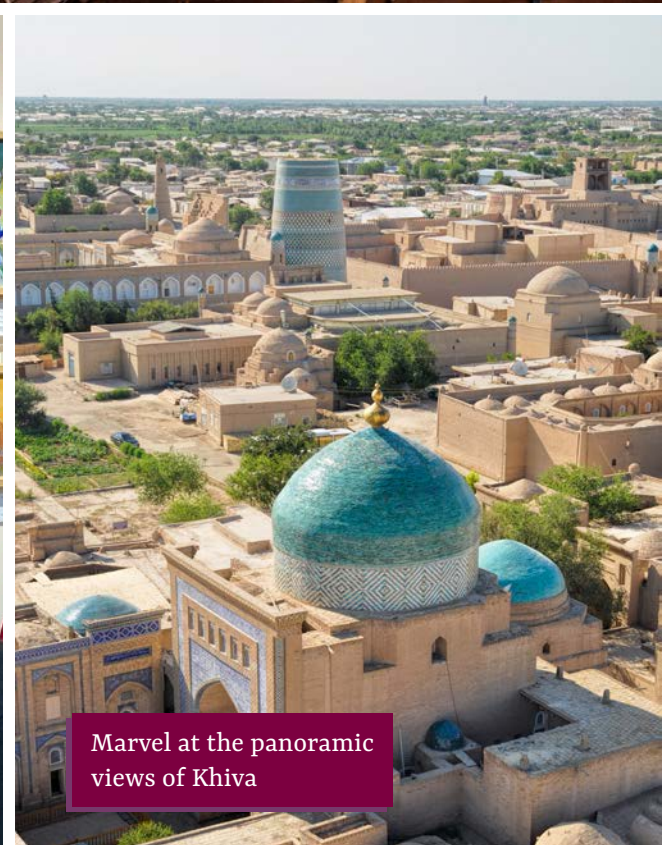
Explore ancient bazaars



Taste the signature dish 'plov'



Discover the archives of the Desert of Forbidden Art



Marvel at the panoramic views of Khiva

Detailed Itinerary

Monday, October 6: Arrive in Tashkent

Arrival from North America is typically in the very early morning. We are met at the airport and transferred to our hotel for breakfast and a rest. Later, meet Paula and your local guide for a briefing and then embark on a tour of the Uzbekistan's modern capital, an odd mix of oversized Soviet buildings and reconstructed traces of the old city. Visit the beautiful mosques and mausoleums as well as the bustling Chorsu Bazaar. This evening, enjoy a welcome dinner, perhaps including signature dish 'plov'!

Overnight: Lotte City Hotel, Tashkent

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Tuesday, October 7: Tashkent

We continue exploring the city today with visits to Independence Square, the Shahid Memorial Complex, and the Museum of Applied Arts, set in a lovely traditional mansion. Meet artisan-ceramists at their private studio. Ride the first metro in Central Asia with each station decorated in a different theme and meant to be "art galleries for the people."

Overnight: Lotte City Hotel, Tashkent

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Wednesday, October 8: Fly to Nukus

Take the short flight to Nukus in western Uzbekistan, a modern city at the centre of an area crisscrossed by old caravan routes. Here, we explore the incomparable Savitsky Art Museum. This remote desert museum houses the life's work of its founder, who amassed a collection of thousands of banned avant-garde Russian art pieces in what is often referred to as the "Desert of Forbidden Art." Nearby, visit the Nizdakhan Necropolis; tombs here date from the 2nd century BCE and include Zoroastrian alabaster elements.

Overnight: Jipek Joli Hotel, Nukus

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Spices in Chorsu Bazaar, Tashkent



Thursday, October 9: Drive to Khiva

Our drive today takes us past desert citadels as we travel alongside the ancient Oxus River. Stop to visit the Toprak Kala, the massive 2000-year-old royal citadel where the rulers of Khorezm lived, the Ayaz Kala fortress dating from the 4th to the 7th century, and the "Citadel of Eagles," originally constructed in the 1st century BC. Arrive in Khiva in the late afternoon as the sun sets over the splendid cityscape.

Overnight: Asia Khiva Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Friday, October 10: Khiva

Khiva was for hundreds of years a stop on the old Silk Road. During our guided walk today, we explore this compact, walled city filled with minarets, a khan's fort, cobbled alleys, mosques, palaces, and tombs. The city has been extensively preserved and exists today much as it did hundreds of years ago. The beautiful turquoise dome of the mausoleum of Pakhlavan Makhmud is a striking symbol of the city. Enjoy a Khalfi folklore concert this evening.

Overnight: Asia Khiva Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Saturday, October 11: Drive to Bukhara

We're off today to Central Asia's most ancient living city: Bukhara. Our drive takes us across the Kyzyl Kum, or Red Sands Desert, the same route ridden by loaded Silk Road camel caravans. The landscape is made up of dunes silhouetted against distant mountains. An oasis in the desert, Bukhara offers a charming respite for the modern traveller as it did to those in the Silk Road caravans. We're staying here for three nights.

Overnight: Alexia Hotel, Bukhara

Meals: Breakfast, Picnic Lunch, Dinner



Ark Citadel,
Bukhara

The Ark of Bukhara is a massive fortress that was initially built and occupied in Bukhara around the 5th century AD. In addition to being a military structure, the Ark encompassed what was essentially a town that, during much of the fortress's history, was inhabited by the various royal courts that held sway over the region surrounding Bukhara.

Sunday, October 12: Bukhara

Bukhara has preserved its ancient architecture and design. The delightful Old Town has a unified feel, drawn together by the central reflecting pool and the structure of the domed bazaars and major monuments. Visit the 2000-year-old Ark Citadel, the 12th-century Kalon assembly, and enjoy a cup of tea under the shade of the mulberry trees in the heart of the old town.

Overnight: Alexia Hotel, Bukhara

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Monday, October 13: Bukhara

Just outside the city centre is the Palace of Moon and Stars, the Summer Palace of the last Emir of Bukhara. The showpiece palace is set in beautiful grounds inhabited by wild peacocks. The Museum of National Crafts here exhibits the vivid embroidered suzanis for which Uzbekistan is famous. We also visit the Sufi complex and the Chor Bakr Necropolis. The afternoon is yours to explore the city's trade domes filled with artisans and handicrafts. Don't miss the capmaker and spice bazaars!

Overnight: Alexia Hotel, Bukhara

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Tuesday, October 14: By train to Samarkand

Travel along the fringes of the Kyzyl Kum Desert to Samarkand, visited by Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, and Tamerlane, who made it his capital city and gathered the finest architects, builders, and artisans of the time to enhance its beauty. Begin our exploration with a visit to the Registan, the centrepiece of the city. The three emblematic madrassahs frame the square and loom over the empty space in the centre. Nearby is the Gur-Emir Mausoleum, beautifully restored with brilliant gold leaf and fresh tile, and the Bibi Khanum Mosque built by Tamerlane to honour his favourite wife. There's time to browse the animated Siab Bazaar; here, an entrepreneur with a brazier of special incense is on hand to cleanse you of all bad luck!

Overnight: Grand Samarkand Superior

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Wednesday, October 15: Samarkand

Continue exploring the city today. Visit the spectacular row of tombs and mausoleums of the Shah-I-Zinda, elaborately decorated inside and out. Pay a visit to Ulugh Bek's Observatory, where Tamerlane's grandson found his true interest in the heavens. Just outside the modern city, visit the archaeological site of ancient Afrosiab, destroyed by the Mongols in the early 13th century.

Overnight: Grand Samarkand Superior

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Thursday, October 16: Samarkand

Explore beyond Samarkand today with a day trip to Shahrisabz, birthplace of the great commander Amir Temur and now known for being a decidedly green city. On the way back, we have planned a stop at the Urgut Market. This is old Samarkand where sumptuous suzani (the finely embroidered coverlets renowned in the country) and tasseled care are beautifully displayed in the many stalls. This is also a wonderful place to people watch! Back in Samarkand, we cap off this immersive tour with our farewell dinner.

Overnight: Grand Samarkand Superior

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Friday, October 17: Depart Samarkand

Transfer to the airport for homeward-bound flights.

Meals: Breakfast

Note: The itinerary and accommodation described in this detailed itinerary are subject to change due to logistical arrangements and to take advantage of local events.

Ulugh Bek Observatory, Samarkand





Sunrise in Samarkand

Tour Details

Tour Cost (per person): US\$6195
Including all taxes and gratuities

Single Supplement: US\$780

We would be happy to try to match you with a suitable roommate. If we are unable to, the single supplement will apply. This will be collected at 90 days prior to departure.

Group Size: 10 - 15 participants

What's Included:

- Airport transfers on tour start and end dates
- Accommodations based on double occupancy in hotels listed or similar
- Ground transportation
- All activities as described in the detailed itinerary
- Entrance fees to all sites visited with the group
- Services of English-speaking specialized guides
- Flight from Tashkent to Nukus, economy class, including taxes and one piece of checked luggage per person
- Meals as specified in the itinerary
- Bottled water in vehicle throughout the tour
- Porterage of one standard piece of baggage per person
- Gratuities for guides, driver, and included meals
- All taxes
- Services of your Tour Leader Paula Swart
- Fully escorted by our Uzbekistan Tour Director

Not Included:

- Return airfare from your home to join the tour
- Fuel surcharge (if applicable)
- Airport departure taxes
- Visa for fee for Uzbekistan, if required (currently US\$40)
- Travel insurance
- Airport transfers, if not arriving with the group
- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Alcoholic beverages with meals
- Items of a personal nature
- Additional transportation required due to any emergency or other situation
- Any item not mentioned in "What's Included"

Payment Details:

A non-refundable deposit of US\$750 per person is required to reserve a space on this tour. A second payment of US\$2000 per person is six months prior to departure. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure.

How to Book

Please contact the Worldwide Quest office for more information and to secure your booking.

1-800-387-1483 | 416-633-5666
travel@worldwidequest.com

What To Expect



Joining Instructions

Arrival: Monday, October 6

This tour begins at Tashkent airport. Travellers arriving on the tour start date will be met on arrival and transferred to our meeting point. This transfer is included in the cost of the tour. When you book the designated pre-trip accommodation with Worldwide Quest, your transfer from the airport to our group hotel on arrival is also included. If you are making your own pre-trip arrangements, this transfer can be provided at additional cost.

Departure: Friday, October 17

The tour concludes with a single included transfer to Samarkand airport. **Please contact us to verify timing of this transfer prior to making any flight arrangements.**



Travel Documents

You will require a passport for this trip. Please ensure it is valid for at least 6 months beyond your scheduled return home. USA passport holders require a tourist visa for Uzbekistan; this electronic visa can be obtained online prior to departure.



Level of Activity: Moderate

A good level of fitness is important for this trip. You must be comfortable walking on uneven terrain and irregular paving for at least three hours at a stretch. In many places access to sites is only on foot and we will be walking extensively in towns.



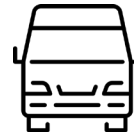
#SafeTravels

Worldwide Quest has been awarded the World Travel and Tourism Council's #SafeTravels Stamp for adopting health and hygiene global standardized protocols. [Learn more.](#)



Weather

We expect mainly sunny and dry conditions with average daytime temperatures between 20 and 22°C and overnight temperatures of about 8°C.



Transportation

We will be travelling in a comfortable air-conditioned vehicle driven by a professional driver. This tour includes one internal flight and one journey by high-speed train.



Accommodation

We stay in carefully selected first class hotels, located in the historic centre of each town. All hotels have private facilities, TV, and WIFI.

Lotte City Hotel, Tashkent

Located in the heart of the city, the updated Lotte City Hotel in Tashkent re-opened in 2013. The elegant hotel features two restaurants, one of them on the rooftop, serving regional and international cuisine. A piano bar, fitness center, outdoor pool, sauna, and spa services round out the amenities. Rooms include deluxe beds, air conditioning, WIFI, satellite TV, a minibar, and hairdryer.

Jipek Joli Hotel, Nukus

The new part of the Jipek Joli or “Silk Road” hotel is decorated in the traditional Karakalpak national style. The bright rooms feature wooden beds, handmade silk curtains, and ornamental carpets, and include air conditioning as well as a flat-screen cable TV. The non-smoking hotel features a spacious dining area serving international cuisine.

Asia Khiva Hotel

Located just outside of Ichon Qala and a two-minute walk from the city wall, Asia Khiva offers a beautiful lobby, a restaurant with its own bakery, a bar, a conference hall, WIFI, a pool, and a sauna. All rooms have air-conditioning, satellite TV, a phone, and a minibar.

Alexia Hotel, Bukhara

Opened in 2023, the Alexia brings a new boutique hotel experience to the heart of old town Bukhara. Alexia Hotel has 17 well-equipped and tastefully decorated guest rooms, each with its own spacious, private bathroom featuring heated floors.

Grand Samarkand Superior

Opened in 2012, the lovely 4-star Hotel Grand Samarkand Superior features traditional décor, a nice restaurant serving regional delicacies, a fitness centre, and a sauna. The stylish rooms include air conditioning, complimentary WIFI, a minibar, satellite TV, and a hair dryer.



Lotte City Hotel, Tashkent



Jipek Joli, Nukus



Grand Samarkand Superior

Additional Info

Extend your Stay

We are offering a 6-day/5-night post-trip extension to Kyrgyzstan. See below to learn more.

Terms and Conditions

For additional information about our terms and conditions, please refer to your booking form, the current brochure or our website. All participants booking with Worldwide Quest are covered by the terms of the Ontario Travel Industry Act (Worldwide Quest International, Ontario – License # 2667946). See full details [here](#).

Cancellation Policy

All payments are non-refundable; however, you may transfer your initial deposit for any land tour to another tour 90 days or more prior to your scheduled departure date. Initial deposits for cruises are non-refundable and non-transferable. Your second payment and your final payment are non-refundable and non-transferable. If you cancel within 90 days prior to trip departure, all associated trip costs are non-refundable. In the event of a cancellation, you must notify Worldwide Quest immediately and in writing. See full details [here](#).

Travel Insurance

We urge you to ensure that you have adequate cancellation and medical insurance in place, should an unexpected event cause you to cancel or interrupt your trip or should the tour not be operable per our terms and conditions. We will offer you Manulife insurance coverage. Medical insurance including emergency medical evacuation coverage is mandatory on all our tours.



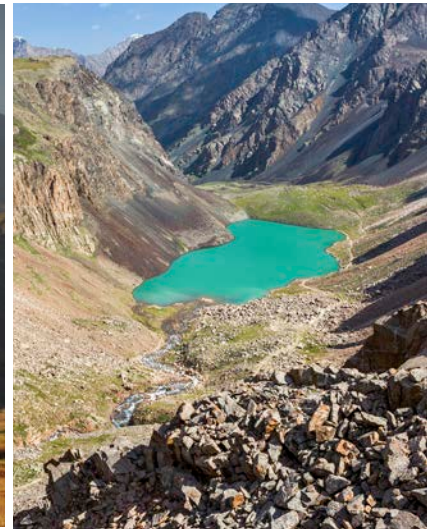
How to Book

Please contact the Worldwide Quest office for more information and to secure your booking.

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travel@worldwidequest.com



TICO#: 2667946



OPTIONAL POST-TOUR EXTENSION:

Kyrgyzstan

October 17 – 22, 2025 | 6 Days

Extend your journey by visiting the enigmatic and wondrous sights of Kyrgyzstan, filled with historical and natural sights. Explore Bishkek's old city charm filled with Soviet-style buildings, bustling markets, and ornate mosques. As we travel deeper into the wilder parts of Kyrgyzstan, let the natural beauty of snow-capped mountains, lush valleys, and crystal-clear alpine lakes sweep away your senses. Get a taste of the Kyrgyz culture through a guided village tour, a folk performance, a horseback excursion, traditional cuisine, and more.



Extension Itinerary

Friday, October 17: Fly to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Travel by train to Tashkent and then hop aboard a transfer to the airport for your flight to Kyrgyzstan. On arrival, you are met by our local representative for a transfer to your hotel. Meet your tour host later this afternoon and enjoy dinner together.

Overnight: Novotel Bishkek City Center

Meals: Breakfast (as part of main tour), Dinner

Saturday, October 18: Bishkek

Bishkek is graced with wide tree-lined boulevards and ringed with snow-capped mountains. It's a vibrant, free-spirited city with a mix of old-school tea houses and modern restaurants, Soviet-era monuments, and statues of Kyrgyz heroes. Tour the city to see the Ala Too Square, the State Historical Museum (currently under renovation) and vibrant Osh Bazaar. This evening, enjoy a Kyrgyz folk performance of poetry from the Kyrgyz Epic of Manas accompanied by the traditional three-stringed komuz.

Overnight: Novotel Bishkek City Center

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Sunday, October 19: Drive to Issyk-Kul

Head east toward Lake Issyk-Kul through scenic landscapes filled with autumn flowers. Stop at the 11th-century Burana Tower, one of the only still-existing watch towers on the ancient Silk Road. The small museum here has a collection of the fascinating ancient 'bal-bals,' carved stone figures used as monuments. As we continue our route, stop to see a fantastic open-air collection of petroglyphs at Cholpan-Ata.

Ala Too Square, Bishkek



The images dating from the Neolithic period depict long-horned Ibex, horses, camels, and Snow Leopards. In Issyk-Kulm, hop aboard a boat and glide gently across one of the world's largest alpine lakes.

Overnight: Caprice Resort, Issyk-Kul

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Monday, October 20: Drive to Chon-Kemin

Head out to the picturesque Chon-Kemin Valley; the population is mostly of the Sary Bagysh tribe, and many traditions are still practised here. Enjoy a horseback excursion and a walking tour of the village to feel the many aspects of countryside life, meeting villagers and sampling traditional cuisine.

Overnight: Kemin Guesthouse

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Tuesday, October 21: Chon-Kemin / Drive to Bishkek

Following breakfast at the hotel, start the day with a demonstration of how to make a kind of Kyrgyz donut known as "boorsok." We drive back to Bishkek today, stopping en-route to view the Kyrgyz tradition of felt making.

Overnight: Novotel Bishkek City Center

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Wednesday, October 22: Depart Bishkek

After breakfast, you are transferred to the airport for your homeward-bound flight.

Overnight: Breakfast

Note: The itinerary and accommodation described here are subject to change due to logistical arrangements and to take advantage of local events.



Extension Details

Tour Cost (per person): US\$3395

Including all taxes

Single Supplement: US\$400

We would be happy to try to match you with a suitable roommate. If we are unable to, the single supplement will apply. This will be collected at 90 days prior to departure.

Group Size: 4 - 8 participants

What's Included:

- Airport transfers on extension start and end dates
- Accommodations based on double occupancy in hotels listed or similar
- Ground transportation
- All activities as described in the detailed itinerary
- Entrance fees
- Train transportation to Tashkent and transfer to Tashkent airport on Day 1
- Flight from Tashkent to Bishkek on Day 1
- Meals as specified in itinerary
- Bottled water in vehicle throughout the tour
- Porterage of one standard piece of baggage per person
- Gratuities for included meals
- Fully escorted by our Kyrgyzstan Tour Director (with a minimum of six participants)

Not Included:

- Return airfare from your home to join the tour
- Fuel surcharge (if applicable)
- Airport departure taxes
- Travel insurance
- Airport transfers, if not arriving with the group
- Gratuities for drivers and guides
- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Alcoholic beverages with meals
- Items of a personal nature
- Additional transportation required due to any emergency or other situation
- Any item not mentioned in "What's Included"

Payment Details:

A non-refundable deposit of US\$500 per person is required to reserve a space on this tour. A second deposit of US\$1000 will be required 6 months prior to departure. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure.

What To Expect On The Extension



Joining Instructions

Arrival: Friday, October 17

This extension begins at the conclusion of the main tour with a train ride to Tashkent, followed by a short transfer to the Tashkent International Airport. From there, you take a short flight to Bishkek, where you have another transfer to your hotel there.

Departure: Wednesday, October 22

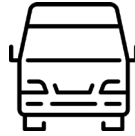
The tour concludes with a single included transfer to Manas International Airport in Bishkek.

Please contact us to verify timing of this transfer prior to making any flight arrangements.



Travel Documents

You will require a passport for your trip to Kyrgyzstan. Please make sure it is valid for six months after the date of your return home. A tourist visa is not required in Kyrgyzstan for stays under 60 days.



Transportation

The vehicle used will depend on the size of the group during the extension. In any case, it will be comfortable, air-conditioned, and driven by a professional driver.



Weather

Like in Uzbekistan, we expect mainly sunny and dry conditions with average daytime temperatures between 20 and 22°C and overnight temperatures of about 8°C.



Accommodation

Novotel Bishkek City Center

Opened in March of 2021, the Novotel Bishkek offers modern and contemporary 4-star comforts in the center of Kyrgyzstan's capital city. On-site amenities include fitness and spa facilities with a Turkish bath and sauna, massage rooms, an indoor swimming pool, and a restaurant serving local and Mediterranean fare. WIFI is available throughout the property.

Caprice Resort

Opened in 2008, the Caprice Resort is located on the shores of Lake Issyk-Kul approximately five kilometers from the city of Cholpan Ata. Rooms feature minibars, electric kettles, satellite TV, and hair dryers.

Kemin Guesthouse

The family-run Kemin Guesthouse offers comfortable accommodations in beautiful Chon-Kemin Valley. Rooms are furnished with wooden beds and local Kyrgyz fabrics and include private ensuite bathrooms with showers. The guesthouse serves delicious meals in the main lodge, which provides wonderful views of the surrounding mountains and the town.