**Turkmenistan - Uzbekistan - Tajikistan**

**Best of Central Asia Tour combines cultural highlights and natural beauty of countries in one epic journey. Travel through the modern and historic capitals of Central Asian states. Explore the cultural treasures and traditions of the nomadic people who have crossed the region throughout centuries, and of the people who have settled in its cities. Visit the architectural legacies of a flourishing Islamic culture and the medieval Timurid Empire.**

**16 Days / 15 Nights**

**Ashgabat – Darvaza – Dashoguz – Khiwa – BuKhara – Samarkand – Shakhrisabz – Dushanbe – Iskandarkul – Penjakent – Istaravshan – Khujent – Tachkent**

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| **Day** | **Date** | **Direction** | **Program** |
| **1** |  | / - Ashgabat | Arrival in Ashgabat. Transfer to the hotel. Overnight in Ashgabat. |
| **2** |  | Ashgabat | Breakfast. Sightseeing in Ashgabat: Ertogrul Gazy Mosque, Bazaar, Independence Park, Neutrality Arch, National Museum, Nissa (UNESCO) and Turkmenbashi Mosque Mausoleum. |
| **3** |  | Ashgabat-Darvaza | Breakfast. In the morning city sightseeing: Ahalteke horse stables. Anau Mosque ruins and Central bazaar.  Afternoon drive to the Darwaza gas crater. On the way visit the water crater. Arrival in Darwaza. Camp, BBQ dinner and overnight in tents |
| **4** |  | Darvaza-  Dashoguz-BP Shavat-Khiwa | Breakfast in camp style. Transfer to Kunya Urgench. Excursion to Kunya Urgench (UNESCO). In the afternoon transfer to BP Shavat for the border crossing. After the border formalities transfer to Khiva. Overnight at hotel. |
| **5** |  | Khiwa | Full day to visit the 2'500 year old fortress town. The car-free old town behind mighty. City walls is a real gem with its monumental buildings. You will visit the architectural complex Pachlawan Mahmud, the Juma Mosque, the Kunya Ark Citadel and the Islam Chodja Minaret. In the evening enjoy the sunset from the Sheyk Boto tower while tasting a non-alcoholic local wine / sparkling wine. |
| **6** |  | Khiwa - Bukhara | Breakfast. After breakfast, a 6-hour drive to Bukhara. In spring, in the Kysylkum Desert, which you pass through today, flowers and herbs are blooming. In the evening arrival in Bukhara and overnight. |
| **7** |  | Bukhara | Sightseeing: Samanid Mausoleum, PoiKalon Complex - the religious heart of ancient Bukhara, active Islamic school Miri-Arab, commercial domes of Bukharas bazaars, Kukeldash Koran school - the largest medresse of Central Asia.  In the afternoon visit to the mighty Ark Citadel. The local bazaar will not leave you untouched: stout filled stalls with aromatic spices, traditional ornaments and unique rugs and much more. In the evening you can enjoy an optional folklore show (booking through the tour guide) in the courtyard of the Medresse Nodir Dewon Begi. |
| **8** |  | Bukhara – Samarkand | Breakfast. Transfer to Samarkand. First sightseeing in Samarkand. Walk on the Registan square |
| **9** |  | Samarkand | Stadttour: Das Herz Samarkands ist der beeindruckende Registan Platz mit den drei berühmten Medressen Scherdor, Ulugbek und Tilla Kori. Ebenso stehen dort die grandiose moschee bibi-chanum sowie das einzigartige  Mausoleum Gur Emir, wo Tamerlan und seine Nachkommen begraben sind. Am Nachmittag besuchen Sie das Observatorium von Ulugbek (1420) - dem Enkel Tamerlans. Ulugbek war ein berühmter Herrscher, Wissenschaftler und Astronom. Später besichtigen Sie die Nekropole Schachi-Sinda - hier wurden Herrscher und Aristokraten von Samarkand begraben. Der Komplex besteht aus wunderschön verzierten Mausoleen. Ebenfalls besuchen Sie den orientalischen Basar Samarkands. Übernachtung in Samarkand |
| **10** |  | Samarkand – Shakhrisabz | 2-hour drive to Shahrisabz where you will visit the ruins of Ak Sarai Palace, Doruttiljawat Ensemble, Amir Temur Memorial, Kok Gumbas Mosque, Dzhami Mosque, Dzhahongir Mausoleum and Chorsu Trade Dome. Overnight in Shakhrisabz. |
| **11** |  | Shakhrisabz Guzar-BP Sariosijo-Dushanbe | Early morning transfer via Guzar to the checkpoint Sariosijo. Border formalities.  The Tajik tour guide will meet you at the border and accompany you to Dushanbe. The whole day is planned for a city tour. We will first visit Rudake Park, the National Library, the White House, the National Seal, the Parliament and the Jomi Theater. Then, in the National Park, we take photos of the Ministry of Interior and the largest national flag in the world - 165 m high, 30 m wide, 60 m long. After the excursion to the Central Museum, we will have lunch. Then visit the Gurminj Museum of Traditional Musical Instruments. To feel the real life, you should visit the Asian bazaar. It has colorful goods, fruits and vegetables. Today, we will see the main highlights of Dushanbe and you will learn many interesting facts about the Tajiks. Dinner is served in a traditional restaurant where you can try Tajik food. Overnight at hotel. |
| **12** |  | Dushanbe-Iskandarkul lake | Today's trip leads to the high mountain lake - Iskanderkul (2 255 m above sea level). It is located in the famous Fann mountains. This fabulous area is one of the best places in Central Asia. The road to the lakes leads over the Anzob Pass (3 372 m) with stunning panoramic views. After arriving at the lake, you will walk along the beaches. This is an amazing place to rest. We will also hike 40 minutes to see a waterfall. Tajikistan ranks second among countries in terms of water volume: it has the highest water reserves of any Central Asian country with more than 1 000 rivers, 2 000 lakes and 8000 glaciers. Overnight at the inn. |
| **13** |  | Iskandarkul – Aini – Penjakent | In the morning we drive via Aini to Penjakent. The city of Penjakent ("five villages") is located in Khujand in Tajikistan in a picturesque valley of the river Zeravshan. Perhaps the five villages have begun the story of this remarkable city, which was built in the 5th-8th centuries. Century AD. Penjikent was at that time one of the most important cultural and craft centers of Sogd. It was even called "Central Asian Pompeii". It was a well-fortified, well-organized city with a royal palace, two temples, markets, rich dwellings adorned with numerous paintings, wooden and clay statues of ancient gods. The ruins of this ancient city were found only in the last century. Today tourists can visit the remains of residential and office buildings, the citadel with the palace, the craft house and the fire-worshiping church. |
| **14** |  | Penjakent – Istaravshan – Khujent | Today we drive via Istaravshan to Khujand. Khujand is the second largest city in Tajikistan. It is located on the river Syr Darya at the mouth of the Fergana Valley. The population of the city is 149,000. It is also the capital of the northernmost province of Tajikistan, now called Sughd. In the afternoon visit a culture palace of Khujant. At this point, the first president of Tajikistan was elected. We will also visit the central mosque, which is located in the middle of the city. Overnight at hotel. |
| **15** |  | Tashkent | In the morning transfer to the Uzbek border Oybek.  Border formalities.  The tour guide will meet you at the border and accompany you to Tashkent. Transfer to Tashkent.  Sightseeing in Tashkent.  Overnight in Tashkent |
| **16** |  | TAS Departure | Transfer to the airport. |