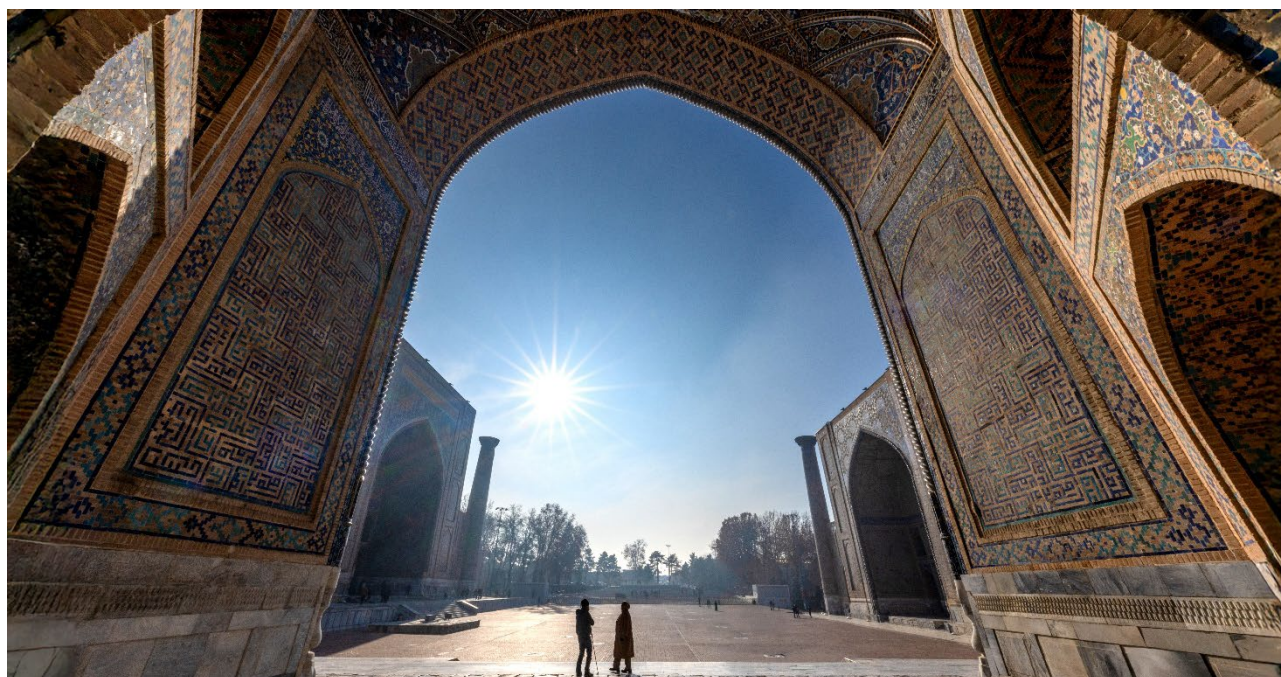


Turkmenistan – Uzbekistan Silk Road Journey

From the Marble Capital to the Blue Domes of Samarkand

Overview

A rare and immersive journey across two of Central Asia's most fascinating countries. This carefully crafted itinerary combines the mystery and raw authenticity of **Turkmenistan** with the timeless elegance of **Uzbekistan's Silk Road cities**. Designed for culturally curious Western travelers, this tour balances history, human encounters, comfort, and adventure — without rushing or superficial sightseeing.



At a Glance

Tour price TWN/DBL: USD 3,690

Single supplement: \$580

Duration: 13 days / 12 nights

Countries: Turkmenistan & Uzbekistan

Start: Ashgabat (Turkmenistan)

End: Tashkent (Uzbekistan)

Group size: 6–10 guests (max 12)

Best season: April–June | September–November

Activity level: Moderate (some long drives and walking on uneven terrain)

Style: Cultural + History

Suitable for: Culturally curious travelers aged **35–70** with a moderate level of fitness.

Route: Ashgabat – Mary – Ashgabat – Darvaza – Kunya Urgench – Dashoguz – Khiva – Bukhara – Samarkand – Tashkent

Why This Journey is Different?

- Licensed local operator in **both Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan**
- FITUR Madrid and ITB Berlin exhibitor
- English-speaking professional guides
- Handled visas support, borders & logistics end-to-end
- Operating cultural & Silk Road journeys since 1996
- Domestic flights, trains, and private transport
- Carefully selected hotels and yurt accommodation
- Entrance fees to all major sites and UNESCO monuments
- Small-group travel (6–12 guests) for flexibility and comfort
- Remote desert access by 4WD vehicles
- 24/7 local support on the ground

Highlights

- Visit **two Silk Road countries** rarely combined in a single, seamless itinerary
- Explore **6 UNESCO World Heritage Sites**
- Encounter the legendary **Akhal-Teke horses**
- Spend a night beside the iconic **Darvaza Gas Crater** in the Karakum Desert
- Travel through deserts, ancient capitals, and living bazaars
- Small-group experience with expert local guides
- This is not a checklist tour — it is a journey into the heart of Central Asia.

Map and Route



DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1. Arrival in Ashgabat – The Marble Capital

Why this day matters: This day sets the tone for the entire journey. Ashgabat offers an extraordinary introduction to Turkmenistan’s identity — blending ancient memory, Soviet legacy, and a bold post-independence vision unlike anywhere else in the world.

Arrive early morning in Ashgabat, typically with **Turkish Airlines** or another international carrier. Upon arrival, meet your dedicated Turkmen guide inside the terminal, who will assist with immigration and customs formalities:

- Visa stamp: **\$85**
- Rapid COVID test: **\$31**
- Migration tax: **\$14**

Important notes:

- Please prepare **USD 130 (cash only)** for airport formalities
- Arrival procedures, including baggage claim, take approximately **1.5 hours**

Transfer to your hotel (approximately 15 minutes). Early check-in is arranged, allowing time to rest and refresh after your overnight flight.

10:00 (ideally 09:00) – After breakfast, meet your guide in the hotel lobby for a short introduction to the journey ahead and a briefing on the day’s experiences. The day is fully dedicated to discovering Ashgabat — often referred to as “*The Marble Capital*” or “*The City of Love*.”

Begin at the **Halk Hakydasy Memorial Complex**, an important national site commemorating the victims of World War II, the Battle of Gokdepe, and the devastating 1948 Ashgabat earthquake. Inside the museum halls, explore archival photographs that document the city’s destruction and its remarkable reconstruction (30–40 minutes).

Continue to explore Ashgabat’s monumental modern landscape, developed primarily after independence. Stops include the **Monument of the Constitution**, **Alem Ferris Wheel**, **Monument of Magtymguly and the Health Path**, **Monument of Neutrality** crowned with the golden statue of the first president, and the **Independence Monument with the Ruhnama Book**. This section includes scenic drives, photo stops, and short walks (approximately 2 hours).

After lunch at **Berkarar Mall** or a local restaurant, shift focus to the older, Soviet-era districts of Ashgabat. Enjoy a guided walking tour featuring the **Clock Tower** that survived the 1948 earthquake, the **Circus building**, a coffee stop at a local café, a walk along **Magtymguly Avenue** (the city’s historic artery), **Russian Bazaar**, and the **Lenin Monument**. The vehicle remains available at all times for comfort (2–3 hours).

In the evening, gather for a **welcome dinner** at one of Ashgabat’s best restaurants, offering panoramic views of the city illuminated at night. Return to the hotel for overnight.

Accommodation: Ashgabat hotel 4–5★

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Welcome Dinner

Activity level: Easy – Moderate

What to carry today: Comfortable walking shoes, light jacket or scarf (air-conditioned interiors), sunglasses, camera/phone, small daypack, personal medications, some local currency for small purchases.

Day 2. Ashgabat – Grand Bazaar & Historical Treasures

Why this day matters: This day bridges ancient imperial history with contemporary daily life, revealing how Turkmen identity evolved over more than two millennia.

After breakfast, depart at **09:00** for **Altyn Asyr Bazaar**, also known as *Tolkuchka*, one of the largest open-air bazaars in Central Asia. The market is divided into specialized sections offering livestock, traditional clothing, carpets, jewelry, embroidery, handicrafts, and seasonal fruits. Time is allocated to explore freely and interact with vendors — bargaining is part of the experience (2–3 hours).

Return to Ashgabat for lunch.

In the afternoon, drive to **Bagir village** to visit **Old Nisa (UNESCO World Heritage Site)** — the former capital of the Parthian Empire. Walk among the remains of palaces, temples, and defensive walls that once rivaled Rome’s eastern power (approximately 50 minutes).

Continue to the **State Museum of History and Ethnography**, offering a comprehensive overview of Turkmenistan’s ancient civilizations, nomadic heritage, and cultural traditions (1–1.5 hours).

The remainder of the day is free for rest or individual exploration.

Accommodation: Hotel in Ashgabat 4–5★

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Activity level: Easy

What to carry today: Comfortable shoes, sun protection, reusable water bottle, camera, light backpack, local currency for bazaar shopping.

Day 3. Ashgabat – Gokdepe – Mary (Evening Flight)

Why this day matters: This day reveals Turkmenistan’s cultural soul — living traditions passed down through horses, craftsmanship, and storytelling.

After breakfast, check out of the hotel. Main luggage is stored at the hotel; take an overnight bag for Mary.

The morning focuses on two national symbols of Turkmenistan — **Akhal-Teke horses and Turkmen carpets**, often described as “*the wings and the soul*” of the nation.

Drive approximately one hour to **Gokdepe village** to visit a private **Akhal-Teke stud farm**. Meet the owner and learn about the breed’s ancient lineage, known for its metallic sheen, endurance, and speed. Guests may feed, photograph, and optionally ride the horses. Gokdepe is also historically significant as the site of a major 19th-century battle between the Teke tribe and the Russian Empire (about 1 hour).

On the return journey, stop in **Kipchak** to visit the **Turkmenbashi Ruhy Mosque** and the family mausoleum of the first president (30–40 minutes).

Return to Ashgabat for lunch. In the afternoon, visit the **Turkmen Carpet Museum**, showcasing rare antique carpets and explaining their symbolic patterns and tribal origins (40–60 minutes). Optional stop at the **Ertogrul Ghazi (Blue) Mosque**.

At **16:00**, transfer to the airport for an evening domestic flight to **Mary**. Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel and rest.

Accommodation: Hotel in Mary 3★

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Activity level: Moderate

What to carry today: Passport (required for flight), modest clothing for mosque visits, camera, comfortable footwear, small overnight bag.

Day 4. Ancient Merv – Ashgabat

Why this day matters: Ancient Merv represents Turkmenistan at its historical peak — a crossroads of civilizations, faiths, and empires.

After breakfast and check-out, drive to **Bayramali** to explore **Ancient Merv (UNESCO)** — one of the most important cities of the Silk Road. Visit **Sultan Sanjar Mausoleum, Erk Kala, Gyz Kala, the Ice House**, and other archaeological remains spanning over 2,000 years (2–2.5 hours).

Lunch is served at a **Turkmen ethno-guesthouse**, featuring traditional dishes, folk dance performances, and the famous **Alabai dogs** (approximately 2 hours).

Continue with a visit to **Alexis Russian Orthodox Church**, one of the oldest Christian sites in Turkmenistan.

Return to Ashgabat via a newly constructed desert highway (approximately 4 hours, with rest stops). Check in.

Accommodation: Hotel in Ashgabat 4–5★

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Activity level: Moderate

What to carry today: Hat, sunscreen, sturdy walking shoes, camera, water bottle, light layers for desert conditions.

Day 5. Ashgabat – Karakum Desert – Darvaza Gas Crater

Why this day matters: This is Turkmenistan's most iconic and remote experience — raw nature, desert silence, and an unforgettable night under the stars.

Morning at leisure to relax at the hotel. At **11:00**, check out and depart in **4WD SUVs** (3 guests per vehicle) toward the Karakum Desert.

En route, stop in **Bokurdak village** for an immersive visit with a local family. Experience daily desert life: bread baking, camel milking, embroidery, traditional cooking in sand, and the use of *yuzarlik* incense (2–3 hours).

Continue deeper into the desert to **Darvaza Gas Crater**. Settle into yurts and explore the crater at dusk, when the flames glow most dramatically. Dinner includes kebabs and traditional **dutar music**. Overnight in yurts.

Accommodation: Yurt Camp

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Activity level: Moderate – Active

What to carry today: Closed shoes suitable for sand, warm layers for evening, headlamp or flashlight, power bank, scarf, personal toiletries.

Day 6. Darvaza – Kunya Urgench – Dashoguz

Why this day matters: Kunya Urgench is one of Central Asia's most historically important yet least-visited Silk Road cities — a highlight for cultural travelers.

After breakfast, depart north across the Karakum Desert. Drive approximately 5.5 hours to **Kunya Urgench (UNESCO)**. Lunch on arrival.

Explore the former capital of the Khorezm Empire, including **Turabek Hanum Mausoleum, Kutlug Timur Minaret, Sultan Tekesh Mausoleum, Il-Arslan Mausoleum**, and the **Najmeddin Kubra Shrine** (1.5–2 hours).

Transfer to **Dashoguz** (approx. 1.5 hours). Check into hotel and rest.

Accommodation: Hotel in Dashoguz 3★ (best available)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Activity level: Active

What to carry today: Snacks, water, reading material or music for long drives, sun protection, camera.

Day 7. Dashoguz – Khiva (Uzbekistan)

Why this day matters: You transition seamlessly from Turkmenistan into Uzbekistan, stepping directly into a perfectly preserved Silk Road city.

After breakfast, transfer to the **Dashoguz/Shavat border**. Assisted exit formalities on the Turkmen side, followed by entry into Uzbekistan. Meet your Uzbek guide and driver and continue to **Khiva**.

Begin exploring **Ichan Kala (UNESCO)** — a living museum with over 50 preserved monuments, including **Juma Mosque, Kunya Ark, Tash Hauli Palace**, and **Islam Khoja Minaret**. Free time to browse craft workshops and markets. Lunch and dinner in Khiva.

Accommodation: Hotel in Khiva 4★

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Activity level: Moderate

What to carry today: Passport, walking shoes, camera, sun protection, small daypack.

Day 8. Khiva – Bukhara (Across the Kyzylkum Desert)

Why this day matters: This journey is about understanding distance and endurance on the Silk Road. Crossing the Kyzylkum Desert places the grandeur of Bukhara in context — a thriving oasis city surrounded by vast, unforgiving landscapes.

After breakfast and check-out, depart **Khiva at around 09:00** for a full-day journey across the vast **Kyzylkum Desert**, following sections of the ancient Silk Road once traveled by caravans linking Khorezm with Bukhara.

The drive offers changing desert landscapes, distant camel herds, and a sense of the scale and isolation faced by Silk Road traders centuries ago. En route, stop for an open-air coffee break with oriental sweets and dried fruits. If conditions allow, enjoy lunch at **Sunnat's Kyzylkum Chaykhana**, a traditional desert teahouse

located near the **Amu Darya River**, once one of Central Asia's most important lifelines for trade and agriculture.

Continue toward Bukhara, arriving in the late afternoon or early evening. Check into your hotel and enjoy free time to relax after the long drive or take a gentle walk through the atmospheric old town.

Dinner at a local restaurant or at the hotel.

Accommodation: Hotel in Bukhara 4★

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Activity level: Active (long drive)

What to carry today: Comfortable travel clothing, neck pillow or scarf, snacks, sunscreen, sunglasses, entertainment for the drive (music, audiobook, book), power bank.

Day 9. The Noble Bukhara

Why this day matters: Bukhara is the spiritual and intellectual heart of the Silk Road. Walking its streets feels less like visiting ruins and more like stepping into a living medieval city.

After breakfast, begin a full-day exploration of **Bukhara**, one of the most complete medieval cities in the Islamic world and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Start at the **Poi Kalyan Ensemble**, dominated by the majestic **Kalyan Minaret**, once used both as a call to prayer and as a landmark for Silk Road caravans. Visit the **Kalyan Mosque** and the **Mir-i-Arab Madrasah**, still functioning today as an important center of Islamic education.

Continue to the **Ismail Samani Mausoleum**, a masterpiece of early Islamic architecture renowned for its intricate brickwork and perfect proportions. Walk through the serene **Lyabi Hauz Ensemble**, centered around a historic pond and framed by madrasahs and tea houses — one of Bukhara's most atmospheric gathering places.

Lunch is at a local cafe.

In the afternoon, visit the **Ark of Bukhara**, the ancient citadel that served as the residence of the city's emirs. Continue to **Chor Minor**, the charming four-towered gateway, as well as **Magok-i Attari Mosque** and **Bolo Khauz Mosque**, known for its elegant wooden columns.

In the evening, enjoy a **traditional dinner with folk show**, featuring local music and dance, before returning to your hotel.

Accommodation: Hotel in Bukhara 4★

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner with folk show

Activity level: Moderate

What to carry today: Comfortable walking shoes, modest clothing for religious sites, camera, reusable water bottle, light scarf, local currency for lunch and small purchases.

Day 10. Bukhara – Samarkand

Why this day matters: Samarkand represents the artistic and political zenith of the Silk Road, where architecture became an expression of imperial power and cultural refinement.

After breakfast and check-out, depart **Bukhara** for **Samarkand**, a journey of approximately **5 hours by road** through the agricultural heartland of Uzbekistan.

Arrive in Samarkand before or around lunchtime. Check into your hotel and enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.

In the afternoon, begin exploring the city's iconic monuments. Visit **Gur Emir Mausoleum**, the final resting place of **Amir Timur (Tamerlane)** and his descendants, where the grandeur of Timurid architecture first reveals itself.

Continue to the legendary **Registan Square**, framed by three monumental madrasahs — Ulug Beg, Sher-Dor, and Tilya-Kori — widely considered one of the most magnificent architectural ensembles in the Islamic world.

After dinner, optional return to **Registan Square** to experience its illuminated facades and light show, a memorable highlight of the journey.

Accommodation: Hotel in Samarkand 4★

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Activity level: Moderate

What to carry today: Walking shoes, camera, light jacket for evening, sunglasses, modest attire for mausoleum visits, small backpack.

Day 11. Samarkand – Layers of History and Craft

Why this day matters: This day reveals Samarkand beyond its monuments — as a place of science, spirituality, craftsmanship, and everyday life.

After breakfast, continue exploring Samarkand's remarkable heritage.

Begin at the **Ulug Beg Observatory**, built in the 1420s by the astronomer-king Ulug Beg. Learn about his advanced astronomical calculations, which were centuries ahead of their time.

Proceed to the stunning **Shakhi Zinda Necropolis**, a sacred avenue of mausoleums adorned with vibrant turquoise and cobalt tiles. This site reflects the spiritual depth and artistic mastery of Timurid Samarkand.

Next, visit the monumental **Bibi Khanym Mosque**, once among the largest mosques in the Islamic world and a symbol of Timur's ambition. Continue to **Siab Market**, Samarkand's bustling central bazaar, where locals shop for bread, spices, fruits, and sweets.

After lunch, visit the **Koni Ghil Meros Craft Center**, where artisans demonstrate traditional paper-making techniques using mulberry bark, as well as other local crafts. Enjoy tea beneath centuries-old plane and poplar trees.

The evening is free for relaxation or independent exploration.

Accommodation: Hotel in Samarkand 4★

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Activity level: Moderate

What to carry today: Comfortable shoes, hat, sunscreen, camera, scarf for religious sites, reusable water bottle, small amount of cash for market purchases.

Day 12. Samarkand – Tashkent (Train Journey)

Why this day matters: Tashkent provides a powerful contrast — blending ancient faith, Soviet urban planning, and modern Uzbek identity.

After an early breakfast and check-out, transfer to the train station for the **morning train to Tashkent** (Sharq or Nasaf), departing at **08:06**. Enjoy views of the Uzbek countryside during the journey.

Arrive in **Tashkent at 12:01** and transfer to your hotel. After lunch, begin exploring Uzbekistan’s dynamic capital.

Visit the **Khast-Imam Complex**, home to the **7th-century Quran of Caliph Uthman**, one of the oldest Islamic manuscripts in existence. Continue to **Chorsu Bazaar**, one of Central Asia’s most vibrant markets, filled with spices, breads, dried fruits, and local delicacies.

Conclude the tour at **Amir Timur Square**, where modern avenues meet historic legacy, symbolized by the statue of Tamerlane surrounded by government buildings and theaters.

After dinner, return to the hotel to rest before departure.

Accommodation: Hotel in Tashkent 4★

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Activity level: Easy – Moderate

What to carry today: Passport, small overnight bag, comfortable shoes, camera, light jacket for train and evening, personal essentials in carry-on bag.

Day 13. Tashkent – International Departure

Why this day matters: The journey concludes, but the memories of two remarkable Silk Road civilizations — Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — travel home with you.

After breakfast, check out of the hotel. Depending on your flight schedule, transfer to **Tashkent International Airport** for your onward journey.

Safe travels home.

Accommodation: —

Meals: Breakfast (depending on flight time)

Activity level: Easy

What to carry today: Passport, flight documents, valuables and electronics in hand luggage, any remaining local currency for airport purchases.

What Is Included in the Tour Price

Transport & Logistics

- Comfortable air-conditioned transportation throughout the tour depending on the group size
 - Minibus or coach for cities and highways
 - 4WD SUVs for desert and remote regions (Karakum / Darvaza)
- Domestic flight (economy class): **Ashgabat → Mary**
- Train journey (economy class): **Samarkand → Tashkent**

Accommodation

- Hotel accommodation on a **Bed & Breakfast basis**, shared twin rooms
 - 3 nights** – 5* hotels (Ashgabat)
 - 5 nights** – 4* hotels (Bukhara, Samarkand, Tashkent)
 - 1 night** – boutique hotel (Khiva)
 - 2 nights** – 3* hotels (Mary, Dashoguz)
 - 1 night** – yurt camp at Darvaza (2 guests per yurt)

Guiding & Support

- English-speaking professional guide throughout Turkmenistan (Turkmen guide continues as a tour leader till Tashkent)
- English-speaking professional guide throughout Uzbekistan
- Licensed drivers experienced on desert and long-distance routes
- **24/7 local operational support** during the entire journey
- Mandatory tourist registration in both countries

Sightseeing & Activities

- Entrance fees to all sites and museums listed in the itinerary
- Guided visits to UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Cultural experiences, village visits, and desert activities as described

Meals

- Meals as specified in the itinerary: **13 breakfasts / 12 lunches / 12 dinners**

Visa Support

- Official **Letter of Invitation (LOI)** for Turkmenistan tourist visa
- Assistance and guidance for Uzbekistan visa or visa-free entry (if applicable)

Additional Inclusions

- Bottled drinking water during excursions and long drives

What Is Not Included

- **Turkmenistan visa fee on arrival:** USD 85 (cash, USD only)
- **Mandatory rapid COVID-19 test on arrival in Turkmenistan:** approx. USD 31 (cash, USD only)
- **Turkmenistan migration tax:** USD 14 (cash, USD only)
- Uzbekistan visa fee (only if required for your nationality)
- International flights to Ashgabat and from Tashkent
- Single room supplement - USD 580
- Alcoholic beverages
- Tips for guides and drivers (customary and recommended)
- Personal expenses and hotel extras (mini-bar, laundry, etc.)
- Photo or camera fees at certain museums and historical sites

Accommodation

Handpicked accommodation for comfort stays and best locations.

Ashgabat – Divan Hotel 5* or similar

Mary – Margush or Mary Hotel 3* on availability

Darvaza – Yurt camp

Dashoguz – Dashoguz Hotel 3* best available

Khiva – Zaravshon Boutique 4* or similar

Bukhara – Shahrison Hotel 4* or similar

Samarkand – Continental 4* or similar

Tashkent – Ramada by Wyndham Tashkent 4* or similar

Accommodation displayed here should be taken as a guide only.

Note: In the event of government-level events or official delegations, hotels may be required to prioritize state guests. In such cases, our company reserves the right to replace the confirmed hotel with an alternative property of the **same official category and similar standard.**

Price and Departures for 2026

The prices below are based on two sharing and exclude international flights. A 10% deposit is required at the time of booking. **Guaranteed departures with minimum group size of 6 pax.**

The application submission deadline is at least 60 days prior to the selected departure date.

Spring:

- Saturday / March 21 – Thursday / April 2 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**
- Saturday / April 4 – Thursday / April 16 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**
- Saturday / April 18 – Thursday / April 30 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**
- Saturday / May 2 – Thursday / May 14 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**
- Saturday / May 16 – Thursday / May 28 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**
- Saturday / May 30 – Thursday / June 11 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**

Fall:

- Saturday / August 29 – Thursday / September 10 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**
 - Saturday / September 12 – Thursday / September 24 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**
 - Saturday / September 26 – Thursday / October 8 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**
 - Saturday / October 10 – Thursday / October 22 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**
 - Saturday / October 24 – Thursday / November 5 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**
 - Saturday / November 7 – Thursday / November 19 **\$3,790 / Single sup. \$580**
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Price and Departures for 2027

The prices below are based on two sharing and exclude international flights. A 10% deposit is required at the time of booking.

Guaranteed departures with minimum group size of 6 pax.

Spring:

- Saturday / March 21 – Thursday / April 2 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**
- Saturday / April 4 – Thursday / April 16 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**
- Saturday / April 18 – Thursday / April 30 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**
- Saturday / May 2 – Thursday / May 14 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**
- Saturday / May 16 – Thursday / May 28 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**
- Saturday / May 30 – Thursday / June 11 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**

Fall:

- Saturday / August 29 – Thursday / September 10 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**
 - Saturday / September 12 – Thursday / September 24 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**
 - Saturday / September 26 – Thursday / October 8 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**
 - Saturday / October 10 – Thursday / October 22 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**
 - Saturday / October 24 – Thursday / November 5 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**
 - Saturday / November 7 – Thursday / November 19 **\$3,940 / Single sup. \$610**
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Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need a visa for Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan?

Yes. For Turkmenistan, a tourist visa is required for all travelers. We provide the mandatory Letter of Invitation (LOI) issued by the State Migration Service. Once approved (usually 12-14 days), the visa can be obtained at a Turkmen embassy or on arrival. Entry fees (USD \$85 visa + \$14 migration tax) are paid in cash on arrival. For Uzbekistan, citizens of the USA, UK, EU, Canada, Australia, and many other countries enjoy visa-free entry for up to 30 days. If a visa is required for your nationality, we assist with the e-visa process.

Is it safe to travel in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan?

Both countries are very safe for tourists. Turkmenistan has extremely low crime rates, and Uzbekistan has invested heavily in tourism infrastructure and safety. You'll be accompanied by experienced local guides throughout. As with any travel, normal precautions apply – but these are among the safest destinations we operate.

Will I have internet access during the tour?

Turkmenistan

Internet access is available but limited. In **Ashgabat**, unrestricted Wi-Fi is generally available in **5★ hotels**. Outside the capital, connectivity is slower and more restricted. **Local SIM cards** can be purchased in major cities with a passport, offering basic mobile data. In **remote areas** such as Darvaza and village stays, little or no internet should be expected.

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan offers **full and unrestricted internet access**, with reliable Wi-Fi and mobile data widely available in hotels, cafés, and public areas.

Our advice:

Treat Turkmenistan as a destination where travel is **intentionally immersive**, and internet access is secondary. Many travelers appreciate this balance — staying connected when needed, while enjoying moments away from screens.

What currency should I bring? Can I use cards?

Uzbekistan accepts cards at hotels, upscale restaurants, and some shops in tourist areas. Turkmenistan is largely cash-only – we recommend bringing USD in good condition (post-2006, no marks or tears) for changing to local currency. ATMs are unreliable in both countries for foreign cards.

What should I pack?

Comfortable walking shoes are essential. Dress modestly (knees and shoulders covered) for mosque visits. Layers work best – temperatures vary from hot days to cool nights, especially in the desert. Bring a headscarf for women visiting religious sites. A neck pillow and entertainment for long road journeys. A good camera and a powerbank is a must – these countries are incredibly photogenic!

What is the fitness level required?

Moderate fitness is sufficient. You'll walk 2-4 km daily on varied terrain including cobblestones and archaeological sites. The Darvaza camp requires a short walk on sand. There are no strenuous hikes. Please let us know of any mobility concerns so we can accommodate you.

Can I join as a solo traveler?

Absolutely! Many of our travelers join solo and find the small group format perfect for meeting like-minded travelers. You'll share experiences with 6-1 fellow adventurers. If you prefer not to share a room, single supplements are available for private accommodation.

What are the roads like? Will travel be uncomfortable?

Road conditions vary by region. Cities and main highways are modern and well paved, while desert sections around **Darvaza and the Karakum Desert** include unsealed, uneven tracks. These areas are traveled in **comfortable 4x4 vehicles**, driven at a relaxed pace by experienced drivers. Although some stretches, especially between **Ashgabat and Kunya Urgench**, can be bumpy, regular stops are included, and longer drives are balanced with scenic views, cultural visits, and comfortable accommodation.

What about dietary requirements?

Central Asian cuisine features plenty of rice, bread, fresh vegetables, and grilled meats. Vegetarian options are available but can be limited outside major cities – please inform us in advance. Vegan diets are challenging but manageable with prior notice. Food allergies can be accommodated with advance warning.

Is a COVID-19 test required to enter Turkmenistan?

Yes. All international arrivals to Turkmenistan are required to undergo a rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival at the airport or land border. The test costs approximately USD \$30-35, payable in cash. No pre-departure test or vaccination certificate is currently required. The on-arrival test is a standard formality handled efficiently by airport authorities, and our guide will assist you through the process.

How does the border crossing work?

We handle all logistics for the Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan border crossing at Dashoguz/Shavat. Your Turkmen guide escorts you to the border, assists with exit formalities, and your Uzbek guide meets you on the other side. The crossing typically takes 1-2 hours. We prepare you with detailed instructions.

How does the tipping work?

Tipping is optional but appreciated for good service. In this itinerary, **one Turkmenistan guide continues as the tour leader for the entire journey, including Uzbekistan**, and is usually tipped once at the end of the tour.

In **Uzbekistan**, local **city guides** join the group for sightseeing and are tipped at the end of each city visit. **Drivers** are tipped separately, either daily or at the end of each country segment. As a practical guideline, we

suggest **\$6–10 per person per day for the tour leader/guide, \$4–7 per person per day for drivers, and \$3–5 total for yurt camp staff or local hosts.** Restaurant service is often included; if not, a small rounding is sufficient.

Payment Terms and Cancellation Policy?

Payment Terms

- **Deposit:** 10% of the total tour cost is required to confirm the booking (non-refundable).
- **Balance payment:** The remaining amount is due **45 days before departure.**
- **Payment methods:** Bank transfer or card payment (subject to availability and agreement).

Cancellation Policy

- **60+ days before departure:** Deposit is non-refundable; remaining balance is refunded.
- **30–59 days before departure:** **50% of the total tour cost** is charged.
- **7–29 days before departure or no-show:** **100% of the tour cost** is charged.

Important Notes

- Some services become **non-refundable once booked**, including permits, hotels, flights, and transport.
 - Whenever possible, we will try to **minimize cancellation penalties by reselling the vacated spot.**
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Contacts:

Ayan Travel

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