CENTRAL ASIA GUIDE



PRIVATE TOUR · 1 DAY

Day Tour to Aksu-Zhabagly Nature Reserve

Round trip from Shymkent · Kazakhstan

Duration 1 day	Start and end Round trip from Shymkent	Best time to visit Apr–Oct
Private tour from $216 per person	Group size Max 10 travellers	Tour type Hiking, Nature
Difficulty Easy		

Prices and dates valid for 2026 departures. Issued 28 November 2026.

Tour highlights

Escape the city for a day in the Aksu-Zhabagly Nature Reserve, Kazakhstan's oldest protected wilderness in the Western Tien Shan, on a day trip from Shymkent. The drive takes you from the open steppe through rolling foothills into the mountains, with comfortable transport, an experienced guide and no overnight stay required. From the Ruslan recreation area, a 6 km round-trip hike follows a crystal-clear mountain stream through pine forests and alpine meadows, with wildflowers in summer and golden foliage in autumn, to the picturesque Kishi Kaindy Waterfall. Enjoy a homemade picnic lunch with herbal tea surrounded by mountain scenery, breathe in the fresh alpine air and listen to your guide's stories and local legends before heading back to Shymkent.

Difficulty: Easy. An easy to moderate hike of about 6 km round trip along a mountain stream to the Kishi Kaindy Waterfall, suitable for beginners and children aged 8 and over, plus the drive from Shymkent to the reserve and back. Comfortable hiking shoes and at least 1.5 L of water per person are recommended.





Day-by-day itinerary

DAY 1

Shymkent – Aksu-Zhabagly Nature Reserve – Kishi Kaindy Waterfall – Shymkent

Departure from Shymkent: meet your guide at the agreed meeting point and set off on a comfortable drive to the reserve. On the way, enjoy a cup of tea, get to know your fellow travellers and learn more about the region as the scenery changes from the open steppe to rolling foothills and dramatic mountain landscapes.

Arrival at the Ruslan recreation area: complete the reserve registration and permits, then take a short break to prepare for the hike.

Kishi Kaindy Waterfall hike: set off on a relaxed 6 km round-trip hike, suitable for beginners and families with children aged 8 and over. The trail follows a crystal-clear mountain stream through fragrant pine forests and peaceful alpine meadows, with colourful wildflowers in summer and golden foliage in autumn. The highlight is the Kishi Kaindy Waterfall, a hidden mountain gem where you can relax beside the cascading water, enjoy the peaceful surroundings and take memorable photos.

Picnic lunch: take a well-deserved break with a homemade picnic lunch and herbal tea, surrounded by spectacular mountain scenery.

Free time: explore the area at your own pace, take photos or simply soak in the peaceful atmosphere. Your guide also shares stories, traditions and local legends of the Aksu-Zhabagly region.

Return to Shymkent: enjoy the mountain views one last time on the scenic drive back to the city and arrive at the original meeting point.

Meals	Lunch
Travel	Shymkent – Aksu Zhabagly Nature Reserve (104 km) Aksu Zhabagly Nature Reserve – Kishi Kaindy Waterfall (hike, 3 km) Kishi Kaindy Waterfall – Aksu Zhabagly Nature Reserve (hike, 3 km) Aksu Zhabagly Nature Reserve – Shymkent (104 km)

What's included

Included

- Round-trip transport from Shymkent to the Aksu-Zhabagly Nature Reserve
- Entrance fees to the Aksu-Zhabagly Nature Reserve
- English- or Russian-speaking guide throughout the hike
- Homemade picnic lunch and herbal tea
- Photo support from your guide

Not included

- Personal expenses

Prices

Valid for 2026 departures

Private tour, per person by group size

Travellers	Price per person
1–4 travellers	$216

Private tours start on any date you choose. Prices per person in a double or twin room.

Book or ask a question

Choose a date or ask us anything about this tour. We usually reply within one working day.

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Email	info@central-asia.guide
Phone and WhatsApp	+358 40 812 4448
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