CENTRAL ASIA GUIDE

PRIVATE TOUR · 11 DAYS

Full Uzbekistan Tour – Silk Road cities, Deserts, and the Aral Sea

Round trip from Tashkent · Uzbekistan

Duration 11 days, 10 nights	Start and end Round trip from Tashkent	Best time to visit Mar–Oct
Private tour from $1,397 per person	Tour type Culture, Hiking, Jeep (4x4), Nature, Silk Road	Difficulty Easy
Flights and train A flight and 2 train journeys included		

Prices and dates valid for 2026 departures. Issued 16 November 2026.

Tour highlights

Follow the ancient Silk Road across Uzbekistan — from the blue domes of Samarkand and Bukhara to the silent shores of the Aral Sea. This journey blends the splendor of old caravan cities with the haunting beauty of Central Asia's remote landscapes.

Wander through open-air museums of Islamic architecture, explore Khiva's timeless fortress walls, and uncover the living heritage of local artisans. Then travel north to the vast Ustyurt Plateau, where desert winds whisper over the ghostly remains of the Aral Sea. Visit abandoned ships in Muynak and witness the resilience of life in this once-thriving region.

Difficulty: Easy. Mostly city sightseeing on foot. The pace includes several long drives on desert roads (up to 460 km a day), two train journeys, a domestic flight and one simple night in a shared yurt camp (4 persons per yurt) at the Aral Sea.

Khiva is one of the highlights of Uzbekistan tours

Aral Sea ship

Where you'll stay

Night 1	**Tashkent**	Human Hotel or similar
Night 2	**Samarkand**	Arba Hotel or similar
Nights 3–4	**Bukhara**	Rangrez Hotel or similar
Nights 5–6	**Khiva**	Khiva Residence Hotel 3* or Asia Khiva Hotel 4* (or similar) or similar
Night 7	**Nukus**	Pana Hotel 3* (or similar) or similar
Night 8	**Aral Sea**	Yurt camp at the Aral Sea (4 persons per yurt)
Night 9	**Nukus**	Pana Hotel 3* (or similar) or similar
Night 10	**Tashkent**	Human Hotel or similar

Listed accommodation or similar, same category.

Day-by-day itinerary

DAY 1

Tashkent

Welcome to Uzbekistan! Upon arrival in Tashkent, we meet at the airport and transfer to the hotel for check-in and a short rest.

Our first day begins with a tour of Uzbekistan's vibrant capital — a fascinating mix of ancient traditions and modern life. We explore Khast-Imam Square, home to the world-famous Quran of Caliph Osman, and visit the elegant Barak-Khan Madrasah and Kafal-al-Shashi Mausoleum, one of the city's most sacred sites.

A stroll through Chor-Su Bazaar, with its colorful domes and lively market atmosphere, offers a glimpse into local daily life. In the afternoon, we discover Amir Timur Square and Independence Square, the heart of modern Tashkent. Overnight at the hotel.

Overnight	**Tashkent** · Human Hotel or similar
Meals	Breakfast

DAY 2

Tashkent - Samarkand by train

After an early breakfast, we board the morning train to Samarkand — the legendary "Pearl of the East." Upon arrival, we begin our exploration of one of the most magnificent cities of the Silk Road.

We visit the Gur-e-Amir Mausoleum, resting place of Tamerlane and his dynasty, and then step into the breathtaking Registan Square, surrounded by the glittering mosaics of the Ulugbek, Sher-Dor and Tillya-Kori madrasahs.

Next, we admire the majestic Bibi-Khanum Mosque, stroll through the Siab Bazaar, and visit Shah-i-Zinda, a stunning avenue of tiled mausoleums that seem to glow under the sunlight. Our day ends at the Ulugbek Observatory — where science met the stars in the 15th century. Check-in at the hotel and rest.

Overnight	**Samarkand** · Arba Hotel or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Tashkent – Samarkand (train)

DAY 3

Samarkand - Bukhara by evening train

After breakfast, we continue exploring Samarkand. Visit the Afrosiab Museum and ancient settlement — the cradle of the city's 2,500-year-old history. See the peaceful Tomb of Saint Daniel, a sacred site revered by Muslims, Christians and Jews alike.

We also stop by the Khujum Carpet Factory to see traditional weaving in action, and the Konigil village workshop, where artisans produce Samarkand's famous silk paper by hand.

Later, transfer to the railway station and take the evening train to Bukhara, the spiritual heart of Central Asia. Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel and overnight.

Overnight	**Bukhara** · Rangrez Hotel or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Samarkand – Bukhara (train)

DAY 4

Bukhara

After breakfast, we set out to explore the ancient city of Bukhara, one of the most atmospheric destinations along the Silk Road. With over 900 historical monuments, this city is like a living museum — every brick here whispers stories of the past.

We begin with the Samanid Mausoleum, a masterpiece of early Islamic architecture, and the elegant Bolo-Khauz Mosque, famous for its carved wooden columns reflected in the still pond before it. Then we visit the mighty Ark Fortress, once home to emirs and their courts — a true city within a city.

In the afternoon, we admire the Poi Kalon Ensemble, where the majestic Kalon Minaret, Kalon Mosque and Mir-i-Arab Madrasah dominate the skyline. Continue to the richly decorated Ulugbek and Abdulaziz-Khan madrasahs, followed by a stroll through the Lyabi-Khauz Complex, a favorite gathering place for locals, surrounded by tea houses and mulberry trees.

We end the day wandering through the Trading Domes — ancient market halls that have served merchants since Silk Road times. Return to the hotel for rest.

Overnight	**Bukhara** · Rangrez Hotel or similar
Meals	Breakfast

DAY 5

Bukhara - Khiva by road, 460 km

After breakfast, we embark on a long but fascinating drive through the Kyzylkum Desert, one of the largest sand expanses in Central Asia. The road follows the path of the mighty Amu Darya River, once a lifeline for caravans traveling between oasis cities.

Along the way, we stop for lunch at a local café and enjoy panoramic views of the desert landscape — endless dunes, camels grazing, and distant villages.

By evening, we arrive in Khiva, a true open-air museum that seems frozen in time. Check in at the hotel and enjoy some free time to stroll through the quiet streets or visit local workshops filled with handmade crafts and silk souvenirs. Overnight at the hotel.

Overnight	**Khiva** · Khiva Residence Hotel 3* or Asia Khiva Hotel 4* (or similar) or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Bukhara – Khiva (460 km)

DAY 6

Khiva

After breakfast, we step back in time to explore Ichan-Kala, the walled inner city of Khiva and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

We begin with the Pahlavan Mahmud Mausoleum, dedicated to Khiva's poet, philosopher and national hero. Then we visit the Kunya-Ark Fortress, the oldest part of the city, followed by the elegant Islam Khodja Minaret and Madrasah — their intricate tilework and panoramic views are unforgettable.

After lunch, we continue to the Tash Khauli Palace, where the ornate courtyards and carved ceilings once hosted royal receptions. Explore the Juma Mosque, known for its 218 carved wooden pillars, and the Muhammad Amin Khan Madrasah, once Central Asia's largest religious school.

As the sun sets over the city's clay walls, take in the view — Khiva glows golden in the evening light, as if still living in the Silk Road era. Return to the hotel for rest and overnight.

Overnight	**Khiva** · Khiva Residence Hotel 3* or Asia Khiva Hotel 4* (or similar) or similar
Meals	Breakfast

DAY 7

Khiva - Khorezmian fortresses - Nukus by road, 200 km

After breakfast, we leave the fairytale streets of Khiva and travel across the Kyzylkum desert toward Nukus, the capital of Karakalpakstan — a remote land where desert, art and history meet.

On the way, we stop to explore the ancient Khorezmian fortresses: Ayaz-Kala, dramatically perched on a hill overlooking the desert, which guarded the borders of the Khorezm kingdom nearly 2,000 years ago, and Toprak-Kala, a vast citadel that served as the royal residence of ancient Khorezm, with its crumbling mud walls still standing proud against the wind.

By afternoon, we reach Nukus and check into the hotel to freshen up. Later, we visit the world-famous Savitsky Museum, often called the “Louvre of the Steppe.” Its incredible collection of avant-garde art and Karakalpak folk artifacts reveals a fascinating story of creativity preserved against all odds. Return to the hotel for rest and overnight.

Overnight	**Nukus** · Pana Hotel 3* (or similar) or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Khiva – Nukus (200 km)

DAY 8

Nukus - Kungrad - Ustyurt Plateau - Sudochye Lake - Aral Sea by road, 400 km

Early breakfast and departure from Nukus. We drive north through the vast desert, passing the small town of Kungrad, once a crossroads on the Silk Road, before climbing onto the Ustyurt Plateau — an endless expanse of steppe and rocky cliffs stretching to the horizon.

We stop at Sudochye Lake, a shimmering body of water that remains a refuge for migratory birds. Then we continue to Urga village, the first Russian settlement in the Aral region, where we have lunch en route.

As the landscape turns into a surreal blend of canyons and dry seabed, we finally reach the Aral Sea — or what remains of it. The view is haunting yet majestic: a reminder of nature’s fragility and endurance.

We descend to the shoreline and settle into our yurt camp on the plateau. Dinner under a star-filled sky completes this unforgettable day in the middle of nowhere. Overnight in yurts.

Overnight	**Aral Sea** · Yurt camp at the Aral Sea (4 persons per yurt)
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Travel	Nukus – Aral Sea (400 km)

DAY 9

Aral Sea - Muynak - Khodjeyli - Mizdakhan Complex - Nukus by road, 400 km

After breakfast in the camp, we begin our return journey, traveling across the barren seabed where waves once rolled. The road leads to Muynak, once a thriving fishing port — now a silent witness to the sea's retreat.

We visit the Cemetery of Ships, where rusted hulls lie stranded in the desert — a haunting monument to the vanished Aral Sea. From the nearby memorial to WWII victims, we enjoy a panoramic view over the dry seabed.

Next, we stop at the Muynak Museum, where paintings and photographs tell the poignant story of the sea and the lives it once sustained. After lunch at a traditional guesthouse, we continue toward Khodjeyli to visit the Mizdakhan Necropolis — an ancient burial complex with legends spanning centuries. Its key landmarks include the Mazlumkhan-Sulu Mausoleum, the Caliph Erejep Tomb and the Shamun Nabi Mausoleum, revered by locals for generations.

By evening, we return to Nukus and check in at the hotel for rest.

Overnight	**Nukus** · Pana Hotel 3* (or similar) or similar
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch
Travel	Aral Sea – Nukus (400 km)

DAY 10

Nukus - Tashkent by morning flight

After breakfast, we transfer to the airport for our flight back to Tashkent. Upon arrival, meet your guide and drive to the hotel (check-in after 14:00). The rest of the day is free to relax or explore the capital at your own pace.

You might take a leisurely walk through Magic City Park, a modern family-friendly area filled with fountains, cafés and charming architecture, or visit Tashkent City Park, a beautiful green oasis in the very heart of the metropolis — the perfect place to unwind after your desert adventures. Overnight at the hotel.

Overnight	**Tashkent** · Human Hotel or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Nukus – Tashkent (flight)

DAY 11

Tashkent, departure

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before your transfer to Tashkent International Airport for your onward flight. Our journey across Uzbekistan's eternal cities and the lost Aral Sea comes to an end — but the memories of this land's colors, kindness and contrasts will stay with you.

Overnight	Departure day, no overnight
Meals	Breakfast

What's included

Included

- Accommodation in the listed hotels, or in similar properties of the same category, in double/twin rooms with breakfast. Early check-in on Day 1 in Tashkent is included; standard check-in at other hotels is 14:00, check-out 12:00.
- Overnight stay in a yurt camp at the Aral Sea (4 persons per yurt; single accommodation not available).
- Meals according to the program: daily breakfasts, plus 2 lunches and 1 dinner in the Aral Sea region.
- Entrance fees to all monuments and museums mentioned in the itinerary.
- Services of English-speaking local guides for sightseeing throughout the tour.
- Comfortable, air-conditioned transportation for all transfers and excursions, including airport–hotel–airport transfers.
- Railway tickets for the trains from Tashkent to Samarkand and from Samarkand to Bukhara (economy class). Tickets for high-speed trains are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed in advance.

Not included

- International flight tickets.
- Local flight from Nukus to Tashkent (approx. 100 USD per person, economy class).
- Single room supplement: 210 USD with 3* hotels / 350 USD with 4* hotels (single accommodation is not available in the yurt camp).
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary.
- Medical insurance and personal expenses.
- Porter services at hotels, railway stations and airports.
- Tips and gratuities.

Prices

Valid for 2026 departures

Private tour, per person by group size

Travellers	3-star	4-star
1 traveller	$3,379	$3,902
2–3 travellers	$1,990	$2,294
4–5 travellers	$1,597	$1,931
6–7 travellers	$1,437	$1,770
8–9 travellers	$1,458	$1,792
10–11 travellers	$1,397	$1,730

Private tours start on any date you choose. Prices per person in a double or twin room. Single room supplement per person: 3-star: $210; 4-star: $350.

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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