CENTRAL ASIA GUIDE

PRIVATE TOUR · 15 DAYS

5 Stan Quick Tour

Ashgabat – Almaty · Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Duration 15 days, 14 nights	Start and end Ashgabat – Almaty	Best time to visit All year
Private tour from $2,731 per person	Tour type Culture, Multi-country, Nature, Silk Road	Difficulty Easy
Flights and train A flight and 2 train journeys included		

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Tour highlights

Interested in seeing all five Central Asian “Stans” in a short time frame? This 15-day **5 Stan Quick Tour** takes you through the culturally rich and historically significant countries of **Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan**, letting you experience the fascinating diversity of the region on a tight schedule while still covering its most important sights.

You travel overland from Ashgabat to Almaty, crossing five land borders, with a high-speed train from Bukhara to Samarkand, a morning train to Kokand and a short flight from Osh to Bishkek.

Difficulty: Easy. Physically easy: city walking tours and short walks at Charyn Canyon and the Seven Lakes; the highest point (about 3,200 m) is reached by cable car above Medeo. The pace is fast, with long drive days (4.5 h each way to Darvaza, returning around midnight), five land border crossings and one domestic flight.

Darvaza crater from above

Great view of Po i Kalyan complex in Bukhara from a drone

Where you'll stay

Nights 1–2	**Ashgabat**	Ak-Altyn Hotel 3* or similar
Nights 3–4	**Bukhara**	So’zangaron Boutique 3+* / Amiran Boutique 3+* or similar
Nights 5–7	**Samarkand**	Jahongir Premium 3+* / Sultan Boutique 3+* or similar
Night 8	**Tashkent**	Navruz 4* or similar
Night 9	**Osh**	SunRise Hotel 3* or similar
Night 10	**Bishkek**	Freedom Hotel 3* or similar 3* or similar
Night 11	**Cholpon Ata**	Silence Hotel 3* or similar 3* or similar
Night 12	**Karakol**	Amir Hotel 3* or similar 3* or similar
Nights 13–14	**Almaty**	KazZhol Hotel 3* or similar 3* or similar

Listed accommodation or similar, same category.

Day-by-day itinerary

DAY 1

Arrival – Ashgabat

Our representative will meet you at the International Airport of Ashgabat. Transfer to the Hotel. Rest time till lunch, then you can explore Ashgabat city tour.

In 2013 the Guinness Book of Records named Ashgabat “white marbled city” – here you can see the biggest number of structures in the world made out of the white marble.

You will see Presidential Palace, Ruhyyet Palace, Wedding Palace, modern “Yildyz” Hotel, Ferries Wheel, Constitution Monument, Arch of Neutrality, Monument and park of Independence, Ertogrul Gazy Mosque, Ashgabat Sports and Housing facilities, the Earthquake and victims of WWII Monuments. Overnight at the hotel.

Overnight	**Ashgabat** · Ak-Altyn Hotel 3* or similar

DAY 2

Ashgabat - Darwaza - Ashgabat

After breakfast visiting the Earthquake and victims of WWII Monuments, Nissa UNESCO and Turkmenbashi mosque-mausoleum.

Transfer to Gas Crater (4.5-hour drive, due to bad road conditions) dubbed by locals as “The Door to Hell”. The Darwaza area is rich in natural gas. While drilling in 1971, Soviet geologists tapped into a cavern filled with natural gas. The ground beneath the drilling rig collapsed, leaving a large hole with a diameter of 70 meters. To avoid poisonous gas discharge, it was decided the best solution was to burn it off.

Geologists had hoped the fire would use all the fuel in a matter of days, but the gas is still burning today. In the evening watch the spectacular and fascinating view of the gas crater. BBQ dinner. Return to Ashgabat. Arrival to the hotel before or just after midnight. Overnight in the hotel.

Overnight	**Ashgabat** · Ak-Altyn Hotel 3* or similar
Meals	Breakfast, Dinner
Travel	Ashgabat – Darvaza Gas Crater Darvaza Gas Crater – Ashgabat

DAY 3

Ashgabat – Mary - Farap border – Bukhara

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to Mary. Upon arrival to Mary, explore ancient Merv – “Queen of the world”, was one of the most important capitals of Islam along with Baghdad, Cairo and Damascus.

Sightseeing of ancient Merv includes Greater Kyz Gala & Lesser Kyz Gala (VI-VII), Complex of Askhabs (VIII-XIV), Erk Gala (VI BC), Gyaur Gala (IV BC), Hoja Yusup Hamadani complex, Sultan Sanjar mausoleum, Muhamed Ibn Zeid mausoleum.

Transfer to the Farap border. Border formalities on both sides, then drive to Bukhara to follow your trip to Uzbekistan.

Overnight in the hotel.

Overnight	**Bukhara** · So’zangaron Boutique 3+* / Amiran Boutique 3+* or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Ashgabat – Mary Mary – Bukhara

DAY 4

Bukhara

Breakfast and start exploring the Old City of Bukhara. Highlights of the walking tour will include: the Lyabi Hauz Ensemble, Magoki-Attori Mosque, Chor-Minor Madrasa, Kalyan Minaret, Kalyan Mosque, Miri-Arab Madrasa, Ulugbek and Abdulazizkhan Madrasas, Ark Fortress, Bolo-Khauz Mosque, Ismail Samani and Chashma-Ayub Mausoleums, and various trading domes.

In the evening National Show at Nadir Divan-begi Madrasa. Overnight at the hotel.

Overnight	**Bukhara** · So'zangaron Boutique 3+* / Amiran Boutique 3+* or similar
Meals	Breakfast

DAY 5

Bukhara - Samarkand

Breakfast at the hotel. Free morning. At 11 meet with your guide and visit the out-of-town site, located in 20 min driving from Bukhara- Sitoria-Khosa, the summer residence of the last Emir of Bukhara.

Then transfer to the railway station and departure to Samarkand by a high-speed train. On arrival accommodation in the hotel and rest.

Overnight	**Samarkand** · Jahongir Premium 3+* / Sultan Boutique 3+* or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Bukhara – Samarkand (train)

DAY 6

Samarkand

Breakfast and city tour will begin with a visit to the spectacular Registan Square, followed by the Gur Emir Mausoleum, the final resting place of the Turco-Mongol emperor, Timur. Explore Gur-e Amir and Rukhabad Mausoleum (from the outside).

After lunch visit the Bibi Khanum Mosque, Shakhi-Zinda Necropolis, Ulugbek Observatory.

Return to the hotel and rest.

Overnight	**Samarkand** · Jahongir Premium 3+* / Sultan Boutique 3+* or similar
Meals	Breakfast

DAY 7

Samarkand - Penjikent - 7 lakes - Samarkand

Breakfast at the hotel and transfer to Uzbek – Tajik border (40 km). Arrival at Uzbek – Tajik border pass. Pass the border. Meet by Tajikistan staff and transfer to Penjikent (~50 km, 30 min). Arrival and start the excursion program in Penjikent.

– Sarazm ruins – one of the ancient settlements in Central Asia with a 5500 – year civilization. In 2010 Sarazm was added to the list of Human Heritage by UNESCO.
– Museum of Rudaki – As Penjikent is a birthplace of Abu-Abdallah Rudaki, considered by many to be the father of Persian Poetry. Before lunch, we'll visit the local bazaar and mosque.

Continue drive to Seven Lakes. Transfer to Marguzor, the famous seven lakes – seven wonderful water mirrors full of mountain riverside drops. Each lake looks different whenever the sun changes its position. Colors may vary from deep blue to indie color ripple. Most of them are cold to swim even in summer. These lakes belong to Fann Mountains system. On the western edge of the Fan Mountains in the valley of the river Shing there are seven lakes, six of them are dammed origin, beside the lake Hazorchashma. Lakes are called Marguzor, but each of the lakes has its own name: 1. Nezhigon (other references Mizhgon), 2. Soybean, 3. Gushor, 4. Nofin, 5. Hurdak, 6. Marguzor.

Lunch in homestay near 4-lake (Nofin). The difference in level between the upper and lower lake – 692 meters. Afternoon border crossing BP "Jartepa" to Uzbekistan (takes about 30 min-1 hr), meet the driver at Uzbekistan side of the border (16:30). Transfer to Samarkand hotel.

Overnight	**Samarkand** · Jahongir Premium 3+* / Sultan Boutique 3+* or similar
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch
Travel	Samarkand – Panjakent (90 km) Panjakent – Seven Lakes (Haft Kul) Seven Lakes (Haft Kul) – Samarkand

DAY 8

Samarkand - Tashkent

Breakfast and start transfer to the Tashkent. Arrival in the afternoon and start city tour by visiting the Minor white mosque, Independence Square, Amir Timur Square and Tashkent metro.

Transfer to the hotel for check-in and rest. Overnight in the hotel.

Overnight	**Tashkent** · Navruz 4* or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Samarkand – Tashkent

DAY 9

Tashkent-Kokand by morning train- Kokand -Rishtan- Duslik land border - Osh

Breakfast at the hotel and transfer to the railway station for the train to Kokand (4 hours).

On arrival lunch at the local Shinam Chaykhona and tasting the traditional Kokand pilaf with pistachios. After lunch visit the Palace of Khudayar Khan and the Juma (Jami) Mosque. Then visit a pottery workshop in Rishtan, where the local master makes unique ceramic works. Also visit of candy shop. Transfer to the land border with Kyrgyzstan. Border formalities.

Meet your Kyrgyz guide and driver and transfer to Osh. En route to the hotel- evening sightseeing tour in Osh. Overnight in the hotel.

Overnight	**Osh** · SunRise Hotel 3* or similar
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch
Travel	Tashkent – Kokand (train) Kokand – Osh

DAY 10

Osh-Bishkek by midday flight

After breakfast meet the guide and start city tour in Osh. Visit Suleiman Mount and historical Museum, located in the main cave. After that walk up the hill and watch a little mosque of Babur. The Great Mogols Dynasty founder, and take a bird eye's view of the city.

After lunch transfer to the airport and flight to Bishkek. On arrival short city tour and transfer to the hotel. Overnight in the hotel.

Overnight	**Bishkek** · Freedom Hotel 3* or similar 3* or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Osh – Bishkek (flight)

DAY 11

Bishkek-Burana Tower- Cholpon Ata (280 km)

After breakfast drive to Cholpon Ata by the Northshore of the Issyk-Kul lake-the second largest alpine lake in the world. Visit Burana Tower, which was part of the ancient city of Balasagun (11th to 13th centuries) and is now a UNESCO World Heritage. Continue to Cholpon -Ata. Upon arrival check-in at the hotel.

Overnight	**Cholpon Ata** · Silence Hotel 3* or similar 3* or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Bishkek – Cholpon Ata (280 km)

DAY 12

Cholpon Ata- Karakol

Breakfast at the hotel. Start driving to Karakol. On route visit the museum of Petroglyph's. Upon arrival to Karakol visit the museum of the famous Russian explorer Of Central Asia N.M. Prejvalsky, visit Dungan Mosque (19 century) and see the wooden Russian Orthodox Cathedral of The Holy Trinity built at the end of the 19th century.

Walk around the central bazaar to feel the real life of the city. Overnight in the hotel.

Overnight	**Karakol** · Amir Hotel 3* or similar 3* or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Cholpon Ata – Karakol

DAY 13

Karakol- Kegen land border- Charyn canyon- Almaty

After early breakfast depart from Karakol and drive to the Land border with Kazakhstan. Border formalities. Transfer to Almaty. On the way visit Charyn Canyon. The Charyn Canyon is located in the Charyn National Park and has been describes as the Grand Canyon's little brother. The Canyon itself is approximately 150 km long, and, in places up to 300 m deep.

Walking excursion along canyon and enjoy its beautiful view. Continue to Almaty and arrival by the evening. Overnight in the hotel.

Overnight	**Almaty** · KazZhol Hotel 3* or similar 3* or similar
Meals	Breakfast, Lunch
Travel	Karakol – Almaty

DAY 14

Almaty

Breakfast at the hotel and city tour around the center of Almaty. Visit to Republic Square and Monument of Independence. Walk via old city center (today: Square Astana) to the 28 Panfilovtsev Park. Along the Avenue of memory obelisks with names of 28 fighters of the 1075th regiment of the 316th shooting division, accepted unequal battle with German tanks in the winter of 1941 are established during fight for Moscow), Zenkov Cathedral (monument of cult architecture of Christians in Kazakhstan). Moreover, you could visit the Museum of Musical Instruments, Abai Theater, Green Market.

Next visit of the Kok-Tobe hill with the Almaty TV tower. Short ride from the top of the hill to the center of the city by the famous Almaty cableway.

After lunch, transfer to Medeo. Take a cable car to 3200 m altitude to enjoy breathtaking landscapes. Transfer to the hotel. Overnight in the hotel.

Overnight	**Almaty** · KazZhol Hotel 3* or similar 3* or similar
Meals	Breakfast

DAY 15

Almaty, departure

Transfer to the airport.

Overnight	Departure day, no overnight
Meals	Breakfast

What's included

Included

- Turkmenistan: Assistance with the e-visa application (a letter of invitation is no longer required): once we receive your documents, we submit the application, and the State Migration Service then sends you a link to complete the form and pay the fees
- Turkmenistan: State registration and travel pass
- Turkmenistan: Accommodation in Ashgabat – 2 nights (Ak-Altyn Hotel 3* or similar)
- Turkmenistan: Escort English-speaking guide service
- Turkmenistan: Transportation as per program per AC regular road vehicles and 4×4 where terrain requires
- Turkmenistan: Entrance fee: per program
- Turkmenistan: Meals: BF at hotel, BBQ dinner at Darvaza
- Turkmenistan: 1.5 L water per person per day
- Turkmenistan: Travel tax
- Uzbekistan: Accommodation as per program (double/twin room)
- Uzbekistan: Meals: BB+1 lunch
- Uzbekistan: Comfortable transport as per the program a/c
- Uzbekistan: Bukhara-Samarkand “Afrosiab” high speed train tickets (economy class)
- Uzbekistan: Tashkent – Kokand train ticket (economy class)
- Uzbekistan: English speaking escort guide all over the tour
- Uzbekistan: Entrance fees to sightseeing spots
- Uzbekistan: 0.5 L mineral water per person per day
- Tajikistan: Transport service during full tour time
- Tajikistan: English-speaking professional licensed local guides in Tajikistan (1 standard excursions)
- Tajikistan: Single entry tickets to the sites, museums, mausoleums and nature fees as per program
- Tajikistan: Meal (Lunch)
- Tajikistan: Sightseeing tour program in each city
- Tajikistan: Bottle of water per person for day
- Kyrgyzstan: Transport for all excursions and transfers according the program with A/C
- Kyrgyzstan: Meals: breakfast
- Kyrgyzstan: English speaking guide
- Kyrgyzstan: Entrance fees
- Kyrgyzstan: Accommodation as per program (double/twin room)
- Kyrgyzstan: Mineral water during the tour (one liter a day per person)
- Kazakhstan: Transport for all excursions and transfers according the program with A/C

- Kazakhstan: Meals: breakfast and 1 lunch
- Kazakhstan: English speaking guide
- Kazakhstan: Entrance fees
- Kazakhstan: Accommodation as per program (double/twin room)
- Kazakhstan: Cable car to Shymbulak
- Kazakhstan: Mineral water during the tour (one liter a day per person)

Not included

- Turkmenistan: International flights
- Turkmenistan: E-visa fee: standard 40 USD per person (processing about 10–14 business days) or urgent 80 USD per person (about 5–7 business days)
- Turkmenistan: Customs fee, paid at the border or airport: 16 USD per person
- Turkmenistan: PCR test, still mandatory, paid at the border or airport: 35 USD per person
- Turkmenistan: Payment for photos and videos in UNESCO sites & museums
- Turkmenistan: Meals: lunch, dinner (on average 10–18 USD per meal)
- Turkmenistan: Tips for guide and driver
- Turkmenistan: Medical insurance
- Turkmenistan: Services not shown in the program
- Uzbekistan: International flights
- Uzbekistan: Medicine insurance
- Uzbekistan: Meals (Lunch, Dinner)
- Uzbekistan: Video and photo shootings charge on the spots
- Uzbekistan: Lost, damaged, stolen luggage
- Uzbekistan: Tip and gratuities
- Uzbekistan: Services not mentioned in the program
- Uzbekistan: Cancellation fee
- Tajikistan: Tajik visa fee, if required
- Tajikistan: Personal travel insurance
- Tajikistan: Tips for guide and driver
- Kyrgyzstan: Meals: lunch, dinner
- Kyrgyzstan: Osh - Bishkek flight ticket
- Kyrgyzstan: Alcohol and soft drinks
- Kyrgyzstan: Porter service in hotels and airport
- Kyrgyzstan: Personal expenses of the clients
- Kyrgyzstan: Any deviation from the program
- Kyrgyzstan: Single room supplement

- Kyrgyzstan: Tips for guide and driver
- Kazakhstan: Meals: lunch, dinner
- Kazakhstan: Alcohol and soft drinks
- Kazakhstan: Porter service in hotels and airport
- Kazakhstan: Personal expenses of the clients
- Kazakhstan: Any deviation from the program
- Kazakhstan: Single room supplement
- Kazakhstan: Tips for guide and driver

Prices

Private tour, per person by group size

Travellers	3-star
2 travellers	$4,987
3 travellers	$4,295
4 travellers	$3,674
5 travellers	$3,362
6–7 travellers	$3,114
8–9 travellers	$2,918
10 travellers	$2,731

Private tours start on any date you choose. Prices per person in a double or twin room. Single room supplement per person: $641.

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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