



PRIVATE TOUR · 7 DAYS

Turkmenistan culture tour

Round trip from Ashgabat · Turkmenistan

Duration
7 days, 6 nights

Start and end
Round trip from Ashgabat

Best time to visit
Apr–Oct

Private tour from
\$1,236 per person

Tour type
Culture, Nature, Silk Road

Difficulty
Easy

Flight
A flight included

Prices and dates valid for 2026 departures. Issued 12 October 2026.

Tour highlights

Take an extraordinary seven-day journey through Turkmenistan, where ancient history meets breathtaking landscapes. Explore the [UNESCO-listed Nissa Fortress](#), marvel at the white-marble grandeur of [Ashgabat](#), and uncover the secrets of the Silk Road in [Merv](#). Experience the surreal glow of the [Darvaza Gas Crater](#), camping under the stars in the heart of the [Karakum Desert](#).

Discover the legendary [Akhal-Teke horses](#), the pride of Turkmenistan, and immerse yourself in the rich traditions and culture of this fascinating land. With expert guides, comfortable accommodations and unforgettable sights, this tour promises an adventure like no other!

Difficulty: Easy. City and site sightseeing on foot with short walks. Long drives (up to about 400 km a day), an early-morning domestic flight, a 4x4 ride to Nokhur and one night in a yurt or tent at the Darvaza Gas Crater.



Turkmenistan culture



The fire of the Darvaza (Derweze) gas crater in the Karakum Desert in Turkmenistan.

Where you'll stay

Nights 1–2	Ashgabat	Sport Hotel or Yyldyz Hotel or similar
Night 3	Darvaza Gas Crater	Darvaza yurt camp
Night 4	Ashgabat	Sport Hotel or Yyldyz Hotel or similar
Night 5	Balkanabat	Hotel in Balkanabat or similar
Night 6	Ashgabat	Sport Hotel or Yyldyz Hotel or similar

Listed accommodation or similar, same category.

Day-by-day itinerary

DAY

1

Ashgabat

Arrival at Ashgabat International Airport. You will be met by our representatives and transferred to the hotel (early check-in). Free time.

Morning drive to visit Nissa fortress – the Sanctuary of Parthian Kings. UNESCO declared the fortress a World Heritage Site in 2007. Nissa is described as one of the first capitals of the Parthians. It was founded by Arsaces I (reigned c. 250 BC – 211 BC) and is reputedly the royal necropolis of the Parthian Kings, although it has never been established whether the fortress was a royal residence or a mausoleum.

In the afternoon, Ashgabat city tour. In 2013, the Guinness Book of Records named Ashgabat a “white marbled city” – here you can see the biggest number of structures in the world made of white marble. You will see the Wedding Palace, the modern Yildyz Hotel, the Ferris Wheel, the Constitution Monument, the Arch of Neutrality, the Monument and Park of Independence, the Ertogrul Gazi Mosque, the Ashgabat Olympic Stadium, and the Earthquake and Victims of WWII monuments. Overnight in Ashgabat.

Overnight **Ashgabat** · Sport Hotel or Yyldyz Hotel or similar

DAY

2

Ashgabat - Mary - Merv - Ashgabat

Breakfast at the hotel. After breakfast, drive to Mary (360 km). On the way you see the ruins of the Seyitjemaladdin Mosque in Anau, built in 1456 when Abu-ibn-Kasim Baber Bahadurkhan ruled in Khorasan. Its construction was financed by Bahadurkhan’s vizier, Muhammad Hudaidot, who chose a site near the grave of his father, Sheikh Jemaledin, a native of Anau. The mosque was destroyed in the 1948 Ashgabat earthquake; only the lower parts of the portal and some fragments of the walls remain.

On the way, visit Abiwerd, once an important trading town of North Khorasan and a key link on the Great Silk Road between Nisa and Merv.

Drive to Merv (35 km) to explore ancient Merv – the “Queen of the world” – once one of the most important capitals of Islam, along with Baghdad, Cairo and Damascus. Sightseeing includes Greater Kyz Gala and Lesser Kyz Gala (6th–7th c.), the Complex of Askhabs (8th–14th c.), Erk Gala (6th c. BC), Gyaour Gala (4th c. BC), the Hoja Yusup Hamadani complex, the Sultan Sanjar mausoleum and the Muhamed Ibn Zeid mausoleum. After sightseeing, drive back to Ashgabat (395 km). Overnight in Ashgabat.

Overnight **Ashgabat** · Sport Hotel or Yyldyz Hotel or similar

Meals Breakfast

Travel Ashgabat – Mary (360 km)
Mary – Merv (35 km)
Merv – Ashgabat (395 km)

DAY

3

Ashgabat - Darvaza

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to visit the “Altyn Asyr” Oriental Bazaar in Jygyldyk, 20 km north of Ashgabat (open on Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday) – one of the world’s largest open bazaars, filled with colorful rugs, jewellery, carpets, silk, national Turkmen costumes and, in other parts, animals.

Alternatively, visit the Gulistan Bazaar, one of the largest and oldest covered markets in Ashgabat. The ground floor is dedicated to fresh produce – fruit, vegetables, meat, fish and dairy – with stalls selling spices, nuts and dried fruit; the second floor has clothing and souvenir shops.

Afternoon drive to the Darvaza Gas Crater (276 km), one of the most popular sights in Turkmenistan. The region is rich in natural gas, and the crater has been burning for more than 50 years, shining like a pearl amid the Karakum desert. You will also see water and mud craters, breathe the fresh desert air and get a taste of the nomadic way of life. At night, while the burning crater lights up the sky, you camp in a Turkmen national yurt or private tents and have a barbecue dinner.

Overnight	Darvaza Gas Crater · Darvaza yurt camp
Meals	Breakfast, Dinner
Travel	Ashgabat – Darvaza Gas Crater (276 km)

DAY

4

Darvaza - Ashgabat

Picnic-style breakfast. Morning drive to Ashgabat (276 km). Transfer to the hotel. Free time. Overnight at the hotel.

Overnight	Ashgabat · Sport Hotel or Yyldyz Hotel or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Darvaza Gas Crater – Ashgabat (276 km)

DAY

5

Ashgabat - Turkmenbashi - Yangykala - Balkanabat

Transfer to Ashgabat International Airport for a morning flight to Turkmenbashi (T5-241, 06:20–07:20; flight times are subject to change).

After arrival at Turkmenbashi Airport, drive to the Yangykala Canyon, visiting the pilgrimage site of Gozli-Ata on the way. “Yangy kala” translates from Turkmen as “fire fortress” – and indeed the sheer cliffs of white, yellow, ochre, purple and red, carved by winds and rains, look like stone castles from a fantasy. Explore the canyon, then drive to Balkanabat. Overnight at the hotel.

Overnight	Balkanabat · Hotel in Balkanabat or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Ashgabat – Turkmenbashi (flight) Turkmenbashi – Yangykala Canyon Yangykala Canyon – Balkanabat

DAY

6

Balkanabat - Nokhur - Gokdepe - Ashgabat

Breakfast at a local restaurant. After breakfast, drive by 4x4 vehicles to Nokhur, a village in the western Kopetdag Mountains. Its cemetery is unique: each grave is protected by the huge horns of mountain goats, which locals consider sacred – many houses in the village have a goat's skull hanging outside to ward off evil spirits. Just beyond is the pilgrimage site of Kyz Bibi, where a fat-trunked plane tree is covered with scraps of cloth representing wishes, and a flight of steps leads up to a tiny cave on the hillside.

Then drive to the Gokdepe fortress, stormed by the Russian Imperial army after a 23-day siege that began in December 1880. Visit the Geokdepe Mosque (Saparmyrat Hajy), built in 1995 to commemorate the battle and noted for its turquoise roof and white marble, and the Gokdepe museum about the battle between the Russians and the Akhal-Teke tribe in 1881.

Later, visit a horse stable to see the national pride of the Turkmen people – the Akhal-Teke horses. Turkmens began breeding them 5,000 years ago, and emperors such as Alexander the Great and Darius I desired to own them. There are over 35 beautiful horses on the farm. After the visit, drive to your hotel in Ashgabat. Check in and rest until departure time.

Overnight	Ashgabat · Sport Hotel or Yyldyz Hotel or similar
Meals	Breakfast
Travel	Balkanabat – Ashgabat

DAY

7

Ashgabat, departure

Transfer to Ashgabat International Airport. Departure.

Overnight	Departure day, no overnight
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What's included

Included

- Letter of invitation (LOI) for the Turkmenistan visa
- Registration in Ashgabat city
- Hotel accommodation in double/twin rooms
- Yurt camp at Darvaza – 1 night
- Transportation throughout the tour
- Flight ticket Ashgabat – Turkmenbashi
- Escort English-speaking guide service
- Entrance fees as per program
- Meals: breakfast at the hotel, barbecue dinner at Darvaza
- 1.5 L water per person per day
- Travel tax: 2 USD per person per night

Not included

- International flights
- Cost of the Turkmen visa and border fees (70–100 USD)
- PCR test
- Payment for photo and video
- Tips for the guide and driver
- Medical insurance
- Meals: lunch and dinner (unless specified)
- Services not shown in the program
- Single supplement: 210 USD with Sport Hotel 4* / 425 USD with Yyldyz Hotel 5*

Prices

Valid for 2026 departures

Private tour, per person by group size

Travellers	Sport Hotel 4*	Yyldyz Hotel 5*
1 traveller	\$2,510	\$2,967
2 travellers	\$1,668	\$2,128
3 travellers	\$1,645	\$2,105
4–5 travellers	\$1,386	\$1,846
6–7 travellers	\$1,346	\$1,806
8–9 travellers	\$1,254	\$1,714
10 travellers	\$1,236	\$1,696

Private tours start on any date you choose. Prices per person in a double or twin room. Single room supplement per person: Sport Hotel 4*: \$210; Yyldyz Hotel 5*: \$425.

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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