



## Group Tour to Five Wonders of Central Asia

### Key information

Countries visited: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan

Duration: 15 days / 14 nights

Best season: April - June, August - October

Tour type: Small group / individual (starting from 2 persons)

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### What's included:

All airport transfers, Accommodation in hotels listed on website - 14 nights (twin/dbl shared), including early check-in at the hotel in Ashgabat on day 1, Meals: breakfast at the hotels, one dinner at Darvaza gas crater, Services for private A/C car with driver per program, Tashkent-Kokand train ticket (modern carriages, normal speed, seated places), Domestic air tickets: Ashgabat-Mary, Osh-Bishkek, Entrance fees to the sites listed, Escort English – speaking guide for all days, Mineral water 1.0 L per day/per person, Visa support (letter of invitation Turkmenistan only needed)

### What's not included:

International flight tickets, Tips and gratuities, Visa consular fees, Video and photo charges, Porterage, Personal expenses, Meals besides breakfast and 1 dinner, Services not included in the itinerary

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### Itinerary in brief

Day 1 - Arrival in Ashgabat - Kow-Ata Lake - Nokhur - Ashgabat

Day 2 - Ashgabat City Tour - Darvaza - Ashgabat

Day 3 - Mary - Merv - Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan border - Bukhara

Day 4 - Bukhara City Tour

Day 5 - Samarkand City Tour

Day 6 - Samarkand City Tour

Day 7 - Uzbekistan-Tajikistan border - Seven Lakes - Panjakent - Samarkand

Day 8 - Tashkent City Tour

Day 9 - Kokand - Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan border - Osh

Day 10 - Osh City Tour - Bishkek

Day 11 - Tokmok - Issyk Kul

Day 12 - Karakol City Tour

Day 13 - Kyrgyzstan-Kazakhstan border - Charyn Canyon - Almaty

Day 14 - Almaty City Tour

Day 15 - Departure



## Detailed itinerary

### Day 1

Your Asian adventures will start after arrival at Ashgabat airport. You will meet our company representatives and head to the hotel to check-in. Your guide will meet you after some rest time and the tour will start. First, you will visit Nokhur village located in an amazing natural place. The village is deserved visiting due to its locals who managed to preserve their old culture, traditional crafts, and architecture. They even claim to be the descendants of Alexander the Great. Here you will admire the beautiful view of local vineyards and gardens as well as will watch the process of silk weaving. In the evening you will return to Ashgabat.

*Overnight: Hotel in Ashgabat*

*Meals: Breakfast*

### Day 2

The day will be devoted to the exploration of Ashgabat sites. Ashgabat is «the city of white marble», the largest administrative, political, industrial, scientific and cultural center of the state. First, you will visit the Turkmenistan National Museum and then will head to Nissa historical complex which consists of two archaeological monuments - Old and New Nissa. Old Nissa once was the center of Parthia. The tour will proceed to the unique natural phenomenon of Turkmenistan – Darvaza. Just in the middle of the desert, you will see the unique scene of a circular large crater with burning gas that never goes out. The sight of a flame burning among the yellow sands of the desert fascinates and intrigues even experienced travelers. The crater has been burning since 1971. You will learn the interesting version of the crater appearance from your guide. In the evening you will return to Ashgabat.

*Overnight: Hotel in Ashgabat*

*Meals: Breakfast, Dinner*

### Day 3

The day will start with a flight to the ancient center of the Great Silk Road - Marv city (40 km from Mary) preserved in ruins. Its appearance is shrouded in secrets, however, one is known that it was founded about 4000 years ago. The city was once home to great thinkers of the Middle Ages. After arrival, you will have a sightseeing tour around Merv and then there will be a transfer to the Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan border. The day will end in Bukhara.

*Overnight: Hotel in Bukhara*

*Meals: Breakfast*

### Day 4

Bukhara is a historical city of Uzbekistan, which is home to more than 140 architectural monuments. This day you will have a chance to explore many of them. Your city tour program will include the following sights: Ismail Samani Mausoleum, Chashma Ayub Mausoleum, Bolo Khauz Mosque, Ark Citadel, Po-i-Kalyan Complex (Kalyan Minaret and others), Ulugbek Madrasah, Abdulaziz-Khan Madrasah, Lyab-i Hauz Architectural Ensemble, Kukeldash Madrasah, Nadir Divan-Begi Madrasah, domed shopping arcade. Your guide will provide you with full information about the peculiarities of each important monuments. The day will end in Bukhara.

*Overnight: Hotel in Bukhara*

*Meals: Breakfast*

### Day 5

This day your way will continue to Samarkand – the gem of Uzbekistan and the whole Muslim Eastern World. Due to the abundance of religious and historical monuments, the city was included in the list of



UNESCO heritage. Your guide will let you plunge in its specific atmosphere. You will get to know that the city was founded in the VII century BC and after that it witnessed many historical events and shakes. Your city tour will start with the main square of the city – Registan where the architectural ensemble of three madrasahs (Islamic schools) - the Ulugh Beg Madrasah, the Tilya-Kori Madrasah, and the Sher-Dor Madrasah is located. The tour will proceed to the mausoleum of Gur-e-Amir with the tomb of Tamerlane the Conqueror.

***Overnight:*** Hotel in Samarkand

***Meals:*** Breakfast

### **Day 6**

This day you will continue exploring Samarkand sights. The first in the list will be Shah-I-Zinda Necropolis considered one of the most mysterious monuments of the city. The complex consists of various temples and mausoleums of royal persons and nobles. All the mausoleums are distinguished by a common compositional style. The tour will proceed to the observatory founded by astronomer Ulugh Beg in the 1420s. The tour will end with the visits to Afrasiab Museum and Silk Paper workshop.

***Overnight:*** Hotel in Samarkand

***Meals:*** Breakfast

### **Day 7**

In the morning there will be a transfer to the Tajikistan border. You will have a short but unforgettable time in Tajikistan with your Tajik guide. The tour will be devoted to natural gems of the country – Seven Lakes each of which has a different colour. They are located at the foot of the well-known Fann Mountains. The area here is stunning like a paradise. That's a great place to relax and enjoy the tranquility of nature. After the hiking and admiring the nature, you will have a rest and picnic at Khozorchashma Lake. The tour will proceed to Panjakent rural type city located in a beautiful place surrounded by mountains. With the history extending to the Silk Road times, the city is an attractive destination for travellers. You will visit its most important sights including Rudaki Museum, local bazaar, and mosque and the ancient part of the city. In the evening you will return to the Uzbekistan border and will stay overnight in your Samarkand hotel.

***Overnight:*** Hotel in Samarkand

***Meals:*** Breakfast

### **Day 8**

The acquaintance with Tashkent awaits you this day. The sightseeing tour will start upon arrival. Tashkent surprises with its contradictions including the interlacement of modernity with Soviet-style districts and crowded bazaars with farmers. This day you will try to feel the local atmosphere with the help of your guide. The important sights like Minor White Mosque, Independence Square, Amir Timur Square, and Tashkent Underground also won't be left without attention.

***Overnight:*** Hotel in Tashkent

***Meals:*** Breakfast

### **Day 9**

In the morning you will have a transfer to the railway station for traveling to Kokand city. It is a trading city located on the Great Silk Road. Upon arrival, you will have a sightseeing tour including the Palace of Khudayar Khan where is a museum of exhibits representing the past and present of Kokand, as well as the Mausoleum of Modari Khan and Juma Mosque. That will be your last day in Uzbekistan. It will end with a transfer to the Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan border. Kyrgyzstan is a mysterious and less discovered country of picturesque lakes and rivers, mountain peaks covered with eternal snows, friendly nomads and the unique



flavor of Asian food. After passing the customs you will travel to the second-largest city in Kyrgyzstan – Osh.

**Overnight:** *Hotel in Osh*

**Meals:** *Breakfast*

### **Day 10**

Explore the must-visit sights of Osh this day. It is a friendly city with an interesting history extending to more than 3000 years ago. In 2018 the city was proclaimed “the cultural capital of the Turkic world”. Your tour will start with the sacred Sulaiman-Too Mountain which in 2009 became the first UNESCO object in the country. Here at the foot of the mountain, you will visit a Sulayman-Too National Historical and Archaeological Museum, which hosts more 33 000 exhibits representing the history, archaeology, and art of southern Kyrgyzstan. Then you will have a chance to go up a small hill where is hidden a small mosque of Babur, from the hilltop opens a panoramic view of the city. After lunch, transfer to the airport and flight to Bishkek. On arrival, you will have a short sightseeing tour and transfer to the hotel.

**Overnight:** *Hotel in Bishkek*

**Meals:** *Breakfast*

### **Day 11**

This day you will leave Bishkek for the gem of Kyrgyz nature – Issyk Kul Lake. It is the seventh deepest lake in the world and the second-largest saline lake after the Caspian Sea. Before reaching Issyk Kul you will make a stop to visit Burana Tower which is an important archaeological site of the country. This tower is the only remaining structure of the ancient Balasagun city which is the 9th century capital of the Karakhanid Empire. In this area, you will also enjoy lunch at the local Kyrgyz family. On the lake shores, you will admire the inspiring views of mountain peaks, unspoiled nature, surrounding woods (230 km).

**Overnight:** *Hotel in Issyk Kul*

**Meals:** *Breakfast*

### **Day 12**

This day you will have a tour around the fourth largest city of Kyrgyzstan – Karakol. It is located not far from Issyk Kul Lake. Karakol attracts with its beautiful nature, gardens as well as cultural and religious sites like Przhevalskiy Museum, the Wooden Orthodox Church and the Chinese-style Dungan Mosque. Przhevalsky was a Russian scientist who explored flora and fauna and discovered about 200 new species. There is also a bazaar where one can feel the colorful atmosphere of the city; you will have an opportunity to stroll around it at the end of the tour. This will be your last day in Kyrgyzstan, prepare to leave for Kazakhstan the next morning.

**Overnight:** *Hotel in Karakol*

**Meals:** *Breakfast*

### **Day 13**

After passing the customs your Kazakhstan adventures will start. The first stop will be at the most famous and attractive natural gem of the country – Charyn Canyon. It resembles a little the Grand Canyon in the USA. The area of the canyon being the part of the Charyn National Park has stunning nature: there are rock formations, waterfalls, lakes, and forests. You will have a chance to see the most popular part of the canyon is the Valley of Castles which is a magnificent natural monument built of sedimentary rocks. At the end of the day, you will arrive in the second largest city Almaty.

**Overnight:** *Hotel in Almaty*

**Meals:** *Breakfast*



#### **Day 14**

This day you'll have a full sightseeing tour around Almaty city. It is the largest metropolis of Kazakhstan, located in the foothills of the Trans-Ili Alatau mountain range. Until 1997, it was the capital of the state and still remains a commercial and cultural centre. "Almaty" is translated from Kazakh as "the city of apple trees". Your sightseeing program will include the main sights of the city: Panfilov Park, Zenkov Wooden Cathedral, Memorial of Glory and Eternal Flame, Almaty's Green Bazaar. The bazaar appeared here 100 hundred years ago and still remains the important trading part of the city. It is an attractive touristic place full of the colorful local atmosphere where one can buy national products, smoked fish, spices, medicinal herbs, cheeses, as well as chat with good-natured friendly sellers and get to know the everyday life of Kazakhs. You will also have a short trip to beautiful Almaty Lake located among Tien Shan Mountains. You will spend a pleasant time here enjoying the scenery of wooded mountains and slight hiking in the surroundings. On the way back to Almaty there will be a stop at the Falcon Farm known for its exciting bird shows.

***Overnight:** Hotel in Almaty*

***Meals:** Breakfast*

#### **Day 15**

Transfer to the airport, a departure from Kazakhstan.



## **Booking terms**

### **Booking process**

Once you have chosen the tour and travel date, push Book now button at your chosen date, fill necessary fields and send us an inquiry. Alternatively use contact from contact us page in About us menu tab. Once we have received your inquiry, confirmed all tour details with you, we send deposit invoice. After the deposit is received (500 euro per person), we start your hotel, train, air tickets reservations and send your Tour Voucher with all the trip details.

### **Payment process**

Tour payment is divided into 2 parts: 1. Deposit, 2. Final payment.

1. Deposit amount is 500 euro per person. Once you prepaid the deposit, it is fully refundable for a month. After month deposit becomes nonrefundable. Deposit is paid via bank transfer, your tour manager provides deposit payment invoice with full bank details. We need deposit to start your hotel, guide, vehicle, domestic flights and train ticket booking.

2. Final payment is done via bank transfer (15 working days prior to tour start) or cash (upon arrival before tour start). Both cases your tour manager provides you electronic or paper invoice. We reserve the right to cancel your tour and apply the relevant cancellation charges (detailed below) if we do not receive all payments at the due time.

#### **Tour Cancellation**

If you or your group member cancels the tour, please make sure to let us know in a month after deposit is paid. Note, the deposit is non-refundable, however, you can use it throughout the year and book another tour. In this case, train and domestic flight ticket fees only will be charged a cancellation fee.

### **Rights and obligations**

Tours provided by our company are planned for many months before its inception and are not the subject of change or cancellation. Under the obligation of forced circumstances (weather, holidays) we can make some changes to the itinerary, however, all that relates to services and attractions will remain unchanged. Please note that our tours require a minimum number of participants –2 persons. We reserve the right to cancel the trip with full refund or deposit paid, if the tour booked by you does not have the minimum number of participants. We inform you about the cancellation of the tour no later than 30 days before the start. We also request immediately and promptly report all complaints and any claims during the tour. If possible, all problems will be solved. If the tourist does not report any complaint, the compensation will not be implemented.

Note AraraTour Central Asia is not liable for services not included in the tour price. Our responsibility is limited only to the extent provided by our tour. Force majeure or any other event which is beyond our control and which is not preventable by reasonable diligence on our part frees both parties from liability or obligation. In case of Force majeure, we don't issue any refund.

### **Insolvency or bankruptcy insurance**

AraraTour Central Asia guarantees the refund of clients' money for unfulfilled services even in the case of company's own insolvency or bankruptcy.