



Uzbekistan & Turkmenistan Silk Road Cultural Discovery

12 Days



The Adventure Company | EST. 1969

MT+SOBEKTM
MOUNTAIN TRAVEL SOBEK

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS
AS THE PIONEER OF ADVENTURE TRAVEL

Uzbekistan & Turkmenistan Silk Road Cultural Discovery

Experience the best of East and West on this extraordinary journey through Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Delight in the natural beauty of the northern Silk Road route's immense deserts and rich cultural heritage. Explore some of the region's most stunning ancient and modern cities, from Tashkent and Samarkand to Bukhara and Khiva. Visit bustling bazaars; explore mosques, mausoleums, and palaces; take in local folk performances; and sample traditional regional cuisine. Let MT Sobek guide you on this adventure of a lifetime along the Silk Road!

Details

Arrive: Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Depart: Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Duration: 12 Days

Group Size: 4-15 Guests

Minimum Age: 13 Years Old

Activity Level:



Testimonials

"In Central Asia you really need to have guides and MT Sobek works with excellent country guides, which makes a huge difference."

Irina & Andrei S.

"This trip was so interesting, absorbing, and well-paced that I returned home feeling rested and fulfilled."

Jane O.

GOT QUESTIONS? SPEAK WITH AN EXPERT.

☎ 1-800-974-0300

✉ info@mtsobek.com

Why Take This Trip With Us?

REASON #01

MT Sobek has led travelers on this epic Silk Road adventure for over 20 years, expertly navigating border crossings and visas.

REASON #02

Our remarkable local guides offer immense insight and expertise, and go out of their way to make you feel at home.

REASON #03

This immersive adventure takes you back in time to explore the legendary wonders of Samarkand, Bukhara, Tashkent, Khiva, and beyond.

What to Expect



ACTIVITIES

Cultural touring of historical cities and stunning sights, including bazaars, mosques, tombs, madrassas and palaces. At night enjoy folk performances and savor regional cuisine.



LODGING

Comfortable and conveniently located Silk Road hotels with modern and traditional flair.



CLIMATE

Temperatures will range from the low 50's F at night to the high 80's and into the 90's F during the day. It will generally be warm, dry and sunny.

Meet Our Guides

Our expert guides and trip leaders are truly the key to our trips' success. Many are locals who live in-country year-round; others have made it their second home—all are passionate, enthusiastic and endlessly knowledgeable. Meet two of the guides that might be on your trip.

Alex was born in Kyrgyzstan, and successfully completed his studies in history and culturology at Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University in 2012. He soon found his passion in guiding and has led groups in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. Alex is now a regional expert, always searching for new discoveries. Every year Aleksandr takes part in the international travel fairs in London and Berlin, representing Central Asia and the Great Silk Road. His biggest desire is to open Central Asia to the world and there is nothing but smiles from those traveling with him.

Aleksandr Kalmykov

Alyona has led adventure travel tours through remote areas of Central Asia for over 10 years. Her local roots give her a deep insight into the culture and traditions, enabling travelers to experience Central Asian culture in a profound way. Alyona has made several presentations at UNWTO forums about tourism in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia. As a result, she is aware of the main trends in tourism including sustainable travel, and successfully implements it with the groups she travels with.

Alyona Strauss

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Itinerary

DAY 1

WELCOME TO UZBEKISTAN

Welcome to Tashkent! Meet your MT Sobek guide at the airport and transfer to your hotel. This evening, the group convenes for a brief orientation and a welcome dinner.

Meals: D

DAY 2

SCENIC DRIVE TO SAMARKAND

After breakfast, enjoy a scenic drive to Samarkand, a historic and central part of the old Silk Road. En route stop for a small picnic with beautiful mountain views near the legendary gate of the 14th-century nomadic ruler Tamerlane, for a brief photo op near the second-largest river in Central Asia, Sir Darya, and then at a famous local market where the region's best melons are sold. If melons are in season, you'll try some! On arrival in Samarkand, visit the Koni Ghil Silk Paper Center to learn the process of silk paper production and bread baking process. Visit Alexiy Cathedral, followed by a traditional dinner at a historic UNESCO-protected home. After dinner, view Registan Square from the outside and marvel at the glowing monuments.

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 3

EXPLORE THE LEGENDARY CITY OF SAMARKAND

Begin today's tour of legendary Samarkand at Guri Emir, the mausoleum and burial place for Amir Temur and his family, and regal Registan Square, with its intricately designed and vibrantly colored blue-tiled mosques and madrassas (Muslim schools). Also visit the regal mausoleums of Shah-i-Zinda, site of Central Asia's most sacred Islamic shrine, the massive mosque of Bibi Khanum, and the adjacent colorful market, where the original "spice girls" sell saffron at unbelievably low prices. This afternoon, visit the the home of Mr. Kalandarov, a wealthy Jewish man, which is now are museum of local lore. Before dinner enjoy wine tasting at Khovrenko Wine Factory.

Activity: City touring

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 4

TAKE THE TRAIN TO BUKHARA AND VISIT BUKHARA'S UNESCO-LISTED SITES

Transfer to the station and take Afrosiyob train to Bukhara. Explore Bukhara, with its bustling trading domes and active mosques, including Kalyan Minaret, one of Central Asia's tallest towers, and the ancient Silk Market. Taste splendid herbal teas at Retro-Saloon Timur. Tonight enjoy a cooking demonstration and dinner of plov, a local lamb and rice pilaf dish.

Activity: City touring

Meals: B, D

DAY 5

STROLL THE STREETS OF OLD BUKHARA

Tour Old Bukhara: stroll the old town center, where locals chat endlessly while drinking tea around a natural oasis spring. Bukhara's UNESCO recognition has resulted in restorations of some of its 11th- to 15th-century mosques, including Bolo Hauz Mosque, Chashmai Ayub and Magokki Attori Mosque. Visit Bukhara's massive fortress, the Ark, and Ismail Samani's beautiful 10th-century mausoleum. Tonight, enjoy a festive folklore and national dress show at the historic Nodir Devonbegi Madrassah.

Activity: City touring

Meals: B, D

DAY 6

CROSS INTO TURKMENISTAN & DISCOVER HISTORICAL MARY

After breakfast, drive to the Turkmenistan border and on to Mary — known as Merv in ancient times — a city on an oasis in the Karakum Desert. En route, stop for lunch in the ancient Silk Road crossroads of Turkmenabat, which once connected Bukhara with Khiva and Merv. For about 300 years, Merv was the largest city in Central Asia and the Khalifat capital for eight years. During the 12th century, it was said to be the world's biggest city. Take in Old Merv's historical sites before enjoying a hearty dinner.

Activity: City touring

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 7

EXPLORE THE HISTORICAL SITES OF MERV

This morning we explore more of ancient Merv, the oldest and best-preserved of the oasis-cities along the Silk Route in Central Asia, and a UNESCO World Heritage site. We explore the history museum and other sites, before transferring to the airport for an evening flight to Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan. Its gleaming domes, monuments, minarets, and lavish palaces make it feel like an enchanted city.

Activity: City touring

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 8

TOUR ASHGABAT'S TOMBS & SANCTUARY OF PARTHIAN KINGS

Today browse the city's famous Sunday bazaar, a truly medieval experience! Everything from camels to auto parts to world-famous Bukhara rugs — both new and old — are sold. Later, we'll tour more of Ashgabat, including the majestic Turkmenbashy Ruhy Metjidi, one of the biggest mausoleum complexes in Central Asia, containing the tombs of Turkmenbashy (the former ruler of Turkmenistan) and his family. Visit the ruins of Nissa, the former seat of the Parthian kings and an important Silk Road trading town, then take a city tour. After dinner, drive Ashgabat's main avenues to take in its brightly lit buildings and monuments. This exquisite city is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as having more white marble than any other in the world!

Activity: City touring

Meals: B, D

DAY 9

ARRIVE IN THE ANCIENT CITY OF KHIVA

This morning, transfer to Ashgabat Airport for a flight to Dashoguz. Upon arrival, take a 35-minute drive to one of the most impressive fortresses of the Middle Ages: the ruins of Yzmukshir Fortress, birthplace of famous scientist and philologist As Zamahshary. Return to Dashoguz for lunch and then drive into Uzbekistan and on to Khiva, a very ancient city said to be founded by Shem, the son of the biblical Noah. Visit a Khorezmian singer's house and enjoy traditional, ethnically Khorezmian music. There will be time to rest before dinner at the hotel, the largest in Khiva.

Activity: City touring

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 10

TOUR OLD KHIVA

After breakfast at the hotel, set off on a walking tour of old Khiva, visiting Kunya-Ark fortress, several mosques, madrassas, and minarets. The walled city of Khiva hosts more than 50 monuments, making it a true archaeological treasure. The afternoon is free to explore the city on your own before convening for dinner tonight at a local family's restaurant for traditional regional fare.

Activity: City touring

Meals: B, D

DAY 11

EXPLORE THE WONDERS OF TASHKENT

Enjoy an early breakfast, before transferring to the Urgench Airport for your flight back to Tashkent. On arrival, explore the bustling and cosmopolitan city of Tashkent, with its tree-lined boulevards, verdant parks, and elaborate monuments. Take in many of the city's highlights, including the Khast-Imam Complex and its architectural marvels; the world-renowned Uthman Qur'an Friday Mosque, which houses an early copy of the

Quran; the Chorsu Bazaar, a traditional market set beneath a vibrant, blue dome and the Applied Arts Museum. After lunch, visit the newer part of the city: Independence Square, Amir Temur Museum, Alisher Navoi Theater. In the late afternoon, visit ceramist Akbar Rahimov's workshop and take a tea break. This evening, enjoy a festive farewell dinner at a local Georgian restaurant.

Activity: City touring

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 12

DEPART FROM TASHKENT

After breakfast this morning, transfer to the airport, bid farewell to your travel companions, and depart on your homeward-bound flight.

Meals: B

Dates

May 5 - 16, 2024

Sep 8 - 19, 2024

Oct 6 - 17, 2024

May 5 - 16, 2025

Sep 8 - 19, 2025

Oct 6 - 17, 2025

For full terms and conditions please visit www.mtsobek.com/terms. Please note that our itineraries may be subject to change.

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Inclusions & Exclusions

PRICE INCLUDES

- Expertise and services of our experienced adventure guides
- All accommodations as noted in the itinerary
- All breakfasts, almost all lunches and dinners as noted in the itinerary
- Snacks and water between meals
- Additional regional guides and experts on many trips
- Comprehensive Trip Planner with detailed pre-trip information
- Private guided tours at historic sites, museums, wineries and other select attractions as noted in the itinerary
- Special events and other select attractions as mentioned in the itinerary
- All gratuities at hotels and restaurants
- Equipment and experienced guides for activities as described in the itinerary
- Park and other entry fees (unless otherwise noted)
- Fares for trains, ferries and other modes of travel as listed in the itinerary
- Select transfers as mentioned in the itinerary
- Baggage transfers and portorage

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- International airfare, airport taxes, and excess baggage fees
- Alcoholic beverages (MT Sobek provides wine at select events)
- Gratuities for MT Sobek guides and guide-drivers
- Travel Protection Program
- Personal expenses

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➤ **The World of MT Sobek**

At Mountain Travel Sobek, we believe life is an adventure and adventure is life.

As the originators, innovators and leaders in adventure travel for more than five decades, we passionately create, craft and share indelible, transformative journeys to the world's most memorable places. Our more than 200 unique and once-in-a-lifetime trips are designed to inspire and exhilarate, enliven and excite--opening eyes and minds through profoundly personal connections with nature and culture.

Our small group and custom adventures span the globe, and the spectrum—of interests, environments and activities—every one expertly planned and knowledgeably and passionately guided. And our commitment to making every experience a remarkable one has earned us preferred travel outfitter status for National Geographic Active Expeditions, Active New York Times Journeys, and Smithsonian Active Journeys.

We are *the* adventure company.

Awards



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