

Jewels of the Silk Road

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Overview

The Highlights

- Explore three of the magnificent 'Stans' on board the luxurious *Golden Eagle* luxury train with all meals, drinks, gratuities, included;
- Take in the 2,500 year-old city of Khiva, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site;
- View Samarkand's Registan Square, beautifully lit at night;
- Visit Lake Issyk-Kul, nestled in the heart of the Kyrgyz mountains;
- Enjoy a private showcase of traditional sports, such as horseback wrestling and hunting with Golden Eagles;

- Tour includes transfers, luggage handling, meals, excursions and gratuities.

The Tour

Embark on this incredible 8-day journey on the *Golden Eagle* luxury train. This adventure travels through Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan, offering a fascinating blend of ancient history and natural beauty.

The tour begins with the UNESCO World Heritage cities of Khiva and Bukhara. You'll explore the fabled city of Samarkand, the modern capital of Tashkent, and the serene landscapes of Lake Issyk-Kul in Kyrgyzstan. Here, you will experience a privately arranged cultural event showcasing traditional nomadic sports and games. The journey comes to an end in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Itinerary

Day 1: Khiva, Uzbekistan

Upon arrival at Urgench Airport, you will be met and transferred directly to the *Golden Eagle* train in nearby Khiva, Uzbekistan.

Founded 2,500 years ago, Khiva became one of the Silk Road's most important trading posts as it lies at the crossroads of the routes between Mongolia, Russia, China and Persia and is now a World Heritage Site.

A truly magnificent sight to behold, it rises out of the desert to reveal a wealth of impressive architecture. Stepping back in time, we discover its impressive mosques, madrassas, bazaars and minarets within the city's ancient walls.

Day 2: Bukhara, Uzbekistan

Today, we arrive in Bukhara and begin with a visit to The Ark, a fortified residence of the Emirs of Bukhara - the despotic and ruthless leaders who ruled until Soviet times. Continue to Poi-Kalyan Square, home to the iconic Kalyan Mosque, a living relic of traditional Islamic design. Stroll through the mosque's large pillar-domed galleries and deeply recessed niches, and you will be transported to a bygone era.

Immerse yourself in the lively pulse of the city as we explore the bustling Trading Domes of Bukhara and gather at Lyabi-Hauz Square, a vibrant social hub cocooned by a pool and embraced by the soothing shade of mulberry trees and local tea rooms.

This evening, weather permitting, we will enjoy a barbecue on the station platform before our train departs.

Day 3: Samarkand, Uzbekistan

Just the mention of Samarkand instantly conjures up images of the Silk Road, more so than any other town. Founded in the 6th century BC, Samarkand's stunning architecture hints at its former status as one of the most important cities in Asia, and is particularly noted for its architectural remains from the 14th to the 17th century, when it flourished as the fabled capital of the Mongol empire of Timur and his successors.

Today we will visit some of its most significant sites including Registan Square, the refined elegance of the beautifully proportioned Bibi Khanum Mosque and the Ulag Beg observatory, one of the earliest Islamic astronomical observatories built in 1428.

Prepare for an unforgettable evening in Samarkand that will leave an indelible mark on your memory. As the sun sets and night descends upon this ancient city, we will whisk you away to the illuminated Registan Square, where an extraordinary spectacle unfolds. From your prime front-row seats, you'll be treated to a dazzling light show that weaves the rich tapestry of Samarkand's history and significance.

Day 4: Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Today we arrive in Tashkent, the capital city of Uzbekistan. We spend time touring this modern Soviet-style city, which was rebuilt following the devastating earthquake of 1966.

Our tour of the city includes the Old Town, where traditional homes and religious buildings line the narrow streets. In a small library here we will be privileged to see one of Islam's most sacred relics – the world's oldest Koran. This is followed by a visit to the Railway Museum and the Museum of Applied Arts.

Day 5: Onboard

Enjoy a more leisurely pace today as we journey through the striking landscapes of Uzbekistan, before crossing the border into Kyrgyzstan.

Day 6: Lake Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan

Today, we enjoy an extended visit to the magnificent Lake Issyk-Kul, a true natural wonder nestled in the heart of the Kyrgyz mountains. Stretching over 170 kilometers in length and up to 70 kilometers wide, it is recognized as the second-largest alpine lake in the world. Its name, meaning "warm lake", reflects its remarkable resistance to freezing – the result of a unique combination of depth, mineral richness, and geothermal activity beneath its surface. Framed by towering, snow-capped peaks, the lake offers a serene beauty.

Immerse yourself in the rich nomadic heritage of Kyrgyzstan with a privately arranged cultural event along the lake's shores. Enjoy a captivating display of traditional sports and games such as archery, horseback wrestling, hunting with majestic Golden Eagle or "ordo" – a strategic game played with cow kneecaps.

This experience is a celebration of steppe culture in all its vibrant detail – from music and dance to intricate costumes and demonstrations of time-honoured crafts. It is a rare and enthralling glimpse into a way of life that continues to flourish in the highlands of Central Asia. This day promises a unique and authentic insight into the cultural heart of the region, offering memories that will linger long after your journey ends.

After the festival there will be the option to visit the outdoor Museum of the Petroglyphs before returning to the *Golden Eagle* train for the farewell dinner.

Day 7: Almaty, Kazakhstan

This morning we arrive into Almaty, our final destination. We bid farewell to the *Golden Eagle* as we disembark in Almaty.

Today we will take a tour of the city, including a visit to Panfilov Park, home to the Zenkov Cathedral, a 19th-century Russian Orthodox Church made entirely of wood.

Overnight we stay for one night at the InterContinental Almaty hotel (or similar).

Day 8: Almaty, Kazakhstan

Following breakfast you will be transferred to Almaty Airport for your onward flight.

Dates & Prices

2026 Dates

September 22 - September 29

Accommodation	Double	Single	Deposit
Silver Class	\$15,300	\$23,100	\$1,750
Gold Class	\$19,800	\$32,800	\$3,000
Imperial Suite	On request	On request	\$6,000

All prices are per person.

More

Travel visas may be required for Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, depending on your nationality.