

Treasures of Uzbekistan

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Overview

The Highlights

- 8 nights on *Golden Eagle* luxury train, with all meals, drinks, gratuities, included;
- Accommodations in Tashkent at the beginning and end of your journey for 1 night;
- Champagne welcome reception accompanied by traditional music;
- Palace of Khudayar Khan, the "Pearl of Kokand," with its opulent tile work;
- Two full days in Bukhara, including a rooftop dinner as the sun sets over Kalyan Square;
- Learn how to create Plov, Uzbekistan's national dish;
- Dazzling light show on Registan Square, Samarkand;

- Visit to the silk-making workshops of Margilan;
- Explore the "Louvre in the Sands" Museum with the largest art collection in Central Asia.

The Tour

Answer the siren call of the Silk Road and immerse yourself in the history and culture of Uzbekistan, the "jewel" of Central Asia.

This brand-new itinerary helps intrepid travelers experience a country that's a true melting pot of Eastern and Western cultures. Travel aboard the opulent *Golden Eagle* train for an all-inclusive, luxury exploration of Uzbekistan's spectacularly global cultural identity. Bustling bazaars, imposing Soviet monoliths, and sumptuous Islamic architecture will all be featured, along with plentiful immersive activities like a Plov cooking class (the national dish of the country), a paper-making demonstration, and a gala dinner and dance performance in Registan Square.

Itinerary

Day 1: Tashkent

Upon arrival at Tashkent Airport, you will be met and transferred to the Hyatt Regency Hotel (or similar) in Tashkent for a one-night stay.

As the sun sets, enjoy an unforgettable welcome reception and dinner, where you will have the opportunity to meet your fellow travelers and tour manager.

Day 2: Tashkent

The 2,200 year old city of Tashkent is a magnificent modern metropolis that beautifully blends decadent medieval structures and minimalistic modern edifices. Our sightseeing tour of the Uzbek capital will include the awe-inspiring Khast Imam Complex, the culturally momentous Independence Square, and the Applied Arts Museum (situated in the extravagant former home of Imperial Russian diplomat, Alexander Polovtsev). As we explore the city, take the opportunity to traverse the underground artistry of the Tashkent Metro, with ornate Soviet-inspired stations.

An early evening champagne reception and Karnay-Surnay performance (a musical ensemble of the national wind instrument) welcomes you aboard the *Golden Eagle*. Toast to your "Voyage of a Lifetime" with a sumptuous Welcome Dinner in the ornate Restaurant Car as we depart towards the Fergana Valley.

Day 3: Fergana Valley

In the morning, we arrive in Kokand, situated within the Fergana Valley region. The city is one of

the most ancient cities of Uzbekistan and served as a critical trade center on the Silk Road.

After breakfast onboard, enjoy a thrilling day of touring. Begin with the majestic Palace of Khudayar Khan, "the Pearl of Kokand," and its façade of opulent tile work. Continue to Jami Mosque, Kokand's most impressive mosque.

Our exploration of the Fergana Valley takes us to Rishtan, home to a world-famous ceramics center. Get a behind-the-scenes look at the meticulous craftsmanship that goes into decorating these exquisite ceramics. Enjoy the immersive experience with the opportunity to unleash your creativity and design your very own ceramic masterpiece.

The day concludes with a visit to Margilan - a once vital Silk Road point for handmade silk products. We will learn the art of silk weaving with a visit to a craftsman's workshop and studio.

Re-board *Golden Eagle* in the early evening and continue our rail adventure onwards to Bukhara.

Days 4 & 5: Bukhara

Today we step into the enchanting world of Bukhara, a city where modernity weaves seamlessly with ancient architecture. Legend has it that the Persian Prince Siyavush founded this city back in the 5th century B.C., and today, it is a living treasure trove of historical wonders, meticulously restored to their former glory.

Our exploration includes the imposing Ark Fortress, the once-residence of the mighty Emirs of Bukhara. Despite enduring the turmoil of the advancing Russian Red Army in 1920, the fortress has risen from the ashes, now housing captivating museums and the resplendent 17th-century Juma Mosque. For a bird's-eye view, we will ascend the Shukhov Water Tower, offering a breathtaking 360-degree panorama of the ancient heart of Bukhara.

Our touring program will also transport us to the grandeur of Poi-Kalyan Square, home to the iconic Kalyan Mosque. Stroll through the mosque's large maksura rooms, pillar-domed galleries, and deeply recessed niches.

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.

During our two unforgettable days in this city, you will have the freedom to wander and explore Bukhara at your own pace. Dive into the vibrant bazaars, haggle for treasures, or simply take a break in a charming tearoom.

And, when it comes to dining, we have two extraordinary highlights. Savor the delectable Bukharian cuisine in the rooftop restaurant of the Minorai Kalon Hotel, with uninterrupted views of Poi-Kalyan Square.

We'll also enjoy a traditional Uzbek barbecue on the train platform.

Day 6: Nukus

Located in the northwest of Uzbekistan, the city of Nukus is surrounded by three deserts — the Kara Kum, Kyzyl Kum and Ustyurt. As such, the city has a beautiful, undisturbed landscape – featuring endless sandy scenery, deep dunes, and towering peaks.

Following breakfast, we will visit the Igor Savitsky State Museum of Fine Arts. Known as the ‘Louvre in the Sands,’ the museum features the largest art collection in Central Asia – with over 100,000 exhibits from the Karakalpak region.

Return to the train for a leisurely afternoon on board as we continue our voyage to Khiva.

Day 7: Khiva

Our day begins in the ancient city of Khiva. Traced back to the 10th century, Khiva is a “city-museum,” magnificently adorned in majestic buildings, spiraling columns and beautifully carved doors.

Our adventure here centers around Itchan Kala, the hallowed Old Town, celebrated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Inside these ancient walls are palaces and mosques to madrasas, mausoleums, and minarets. Among them, you will encounter the time-honored Juma Mosque, built in the 10th century, and the breathtaking Kalta Minor Minaret.

Khiva has an eclectic culinary identity, which has been heavily influenced by Chinese, Turkish and Persian traditions. Enjoy the Khorezmian cuisine - we recommend the famous green pasta ‘shivit oshi’, tulum-barak (a fluffy dough-filled dish) and fresh fish sourced from the Amu Darya river with freshly baked bread.

Day 8: Shahrisabz

Shahrisabz is believed to be the birthplace of Amir Timur, a military prodigy who modelled himself on Genghis Khan and used similar violent methods to conquer and control his Empire. Visit the UNESCO-honored statue of Amir Timur and his Ak-Saray Palace. This majestic palace in Shahrisabz took over a quarter of a century to build, and was originally decorated with colorful, highly detailed mosaic but also included delicate calligraphic inscriptions from the Qur’an.

This afternoon, savor an open-air barbecue feast accompanied by a Kazakh folklore performance.

Days 9 & 10: Samarkand

Samarkand, the ‘Crossroad of Culture’, has an awe-inspiring history of over two and a half millennia. The town is a living museum to the famous dynasties that have passed through – including Genghis Khan, Temurids, and Russians. As such, mudbrick houses shoulder structured neighborhoods of painted and decorated homes, while opulently bedecked Mosques loom on the horizon. Over the next two days, we will unlock the secrets of Samarkand through a comprehensive touring program.

Our exploration includes the awe-inspiring Registan Square, heart of the city. The square is a work of art, framed by three madrasahs. Explore the Ulugh Beg Observatory, largest in the pre-modern era, a true feat of engineering, science, and design. From a study of the stars, we then move to the Shakhi Zinda Necropolis – a collection of 11 individually-decorated mausoleums framed by glimmering turquoise domes.

Visit the Meros Paper Mill and enjoy an up-close lesson of the laborious process, ancient machines, and centuries-old methods used here. (Until the Middle Ages, Samarkand served as the main supplier of paper to the Arab world and Europe.)

Enjoy a lunch with an interactive Plov cooking demonstration. Considered Uzbekistan's national dish, Plov is intrinsic to the national identity and a staple dish at social gatherings.

Another stop is the Gur-e-Amir Mausoleum. Serving as the resting place of Leader Timur, the beautiful building features a uniquely fluted azure dome and magnificent portal. The interiors are an exquisite example of medieval craftsmanship – bedecked in gilded mosaics, the lofty ceilings imitate a starry sky.

Close by stands the majestic Bibi-Khanym Mosque. Impressive in both its size and beauty, the structure is often associated with the gates of heaven. Boasting carved marble structures, elegant minarets, and glistening gold walls, such a comparison is understandable.

Try your hand at bartering at the famous Siab Bazaar. A must-see spot, the bustling oriental market is a thriving and exhilarating hive of activity.

Our first evening, we return to Registan Square for an unforgettable experience. As the sun sets, the square comes alive with a dazzling light show that tells the rich history of Samarkand. Following the show, indulge in a traditional dinner followed by an exciting fashion show by a local designer.

Late afternoon on Day 10, reboard the *Golden Eagle* for the journey to Tashkent and a final farewell dinner on board. We spend our final night at a luxury hotel.

Day 11: Tashkent

Transfer to Tashkent Airport included for your departure flight.

Dates & Prices

More

Americans and Canadians will need a visa to enter Uzbekistan. We will provide visa guidance

according to your nationality.

Latest News: Click [here](#) for owner Owen Hardy's blog on improvements on the *Golden Eagle*.