

UZBEKISTAN

Textiles Arts & Crafts of The Silk Route

March 21 - April 6, 2023

Optional: 7 days Kyrgyzstan April 6 - 12

The Silk Route was a place where culture and commerce intersected. A sense of exploration mixed with the exchange of things and ideas." -- Ron Pompeii





Your Destination Awaits...

Since the Middle Ages, Uzbekistan was the center of the Silk Road whose rulers left behind impressive art and architecture. From weaving to embroidery, pottery to papermaking against the backdrop of awe-inspiring architecture, it's a country full of many generations of applied artistry.

Our tour tells the tale of one of humankind's most important arteries of trade and culture. Skirting deserts, loping over mountains, delving into fabled cities, join us as we explore thousands of years in seventeen leisurely days.

Highlights

The most comprehensive Uzbekistan tour out there

- Echoes of the Silk Road in **Khiva, Bukhara, Shahrissabz, Samarkand, and Tashkent** for arts, culture, textiles
- Beautiful **Fergana Valley** in easternmost Uzbekistan for outstanding ikat, suzani, and ceramics
- Buzz of markets in **Urgut and Margilan** teeming with all manner of goods, especially textiles
- Isolated, semi-autonomous **Karakalpakstan** for the stupendous **Savitsky Collection**, a treasure trove of modernist Russian art spirited away from the Soviet revolution
- Visit **award-winning artisans** for traditional block printing, ikat weaving, rug making, embroidery, ceramics, and contemporary fashion. **Hands-on workshops** and several demos.
- Exclusive viewing at **private collections** of textiles
- **Culinary** beats, desert **fortresses**, wild and windswept **landscapes**



AT A GLANCE...

(16 nights/17 days March 21 – April 6, 2023)

- 2 nights Tashkent
- 2 nights Fergana Valley
- 1 nights Nukus
- 2 nights Khiva
- 3 nights Bukhara
- 4 nights Samarkand
- 2 nights Tashkent
- Depart Tashkent

Cost

USD 4650 pp double occupancy

USD 1395 single supplement

Contact: shila@eyhotours.com

“Who goes to Uzbekistan? You will get that question. I certainly never expected to visit, let alone fall in love with it. Drawn by the textiles, it turns out everything captivates me: the markets, mosques and monuments exceed expectation; there are lush valleys and rugged mountains in contrast to the expected desert expanses. It is so different and yet it feels familiar; a reminder that life and culture have persisted for millennia, evolving through incredible hardship, invasion and plunder.”



The most vivid memories are, of course, the people: the curiosity, the warmth, and the gratitude that you are visiting their country. I am so happy to return again and again.”

-- Dana Davies, trip leader





Day 1: Tuesday 21 March

TASHKENT

Touchdown Tashkent! Be welcomed on arrival and transferred to hotel.

Tashkent, capital city of Uzbekistan, is known for its museums, mix of modern and Soviet-era architecture.

Depending on your arrival time, you may want to venture forth on your own or catch a nap before the welcome dinner and briefing.

Overnight Tashkent

Meals : D



Day 2: Wednesday 22 March

TASHKENT

Tashkent offers myriad examples of architecture, art, and crafts that represent the influences of the English and Russians, the Soviet occupation, and independence.

Kicking off with a visit to the Museum of Applied Arts with a lovely curated collection of vintage Uzbek handicrafts, we will then visit workshops of artisans reviving traditional crafts (woodblock printing, embroidery, wood working) as well as contemporary designers using traditional materials for modern fashion. Welcome dinner.

Overnight Tashkent

Meals: B,D



Day 3: Thursday 23 March

FERGANA VALLEY

Early departure for the lush Fergana Valley via train. Lunch on the train. First stop is the Kumtepa Bazaar in Margilan. As with all bazaars, there is a little bit of everything, but Kumtepa is unique with its large section of stalls dedicated to selling all types of ikat by the meter, the biggest selection you will see on this trip. If fabric is your thing, this is your happy place!

Time permitting, visit Kokand Palace, abode of the last ruler of the Kokand Khanate for a fascinating glimpse into the life of an oriental despot just before the Russian advance.

Overnight in Fergana.

Meals: B, L



Day 4: Friday March 24

FERGANA VALLEY

After breakfast, we will visit a factory where the production of silk textiles is demonstrated starting from cocoon to thread which is then used for ikat, carpets, and suzani embroidery. Wrap up with a hands-on workshop at tie-dyeing your own silk scarf! It may become your most prized possession.

Following lunch we head to Handicraft Development Center established by a fifth generation and UNESCO award-winning ikat weaver. There we will see weaving, suzani and wood block printing.

Overnight in Fergana.

Meals: B, D



Day 5: Saturday March 25

FERGANA – TASHKENT - NUKUS

Travel day!

In salon cars, we depart for a 6-hour drive to Tashkent through scenic highland passes. Along the way we visit Rishtan famed for its production of ceramics from the local red clay featuring intricate designs and distinctive blue green glazes.

Arrive Tashkent. Opportunity to pick up left luggage at hotel, and head to airport for evening flight to Nukus. Arrival and transfer to hotel and check in.

Overnight in Nukus.

Meals: B, L

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Day 6: Sunday March 26

NUKUS - KHIVA

Seemingly in the middle of nowhere, Nukus is worth the trek because of the Savitsky Collection, one of the world's largest collections of Uzbek and Russian avant garde art and more. We will get a guided tour of the museum. Before the museum visit, early risers may visit nearby Mizdakhn necropolis that originated in the 4th century BCE

After lunch, head 3 hrs to Khiva, stopping to stretch and hike the Ayaz Kala, a 2nd century BCE fortress of the Kushan people. Upon arrival in Khiva, check in followed by a pre-dinner orientation walk.

Overnight Khiva

Meals: B, D



Day 7: Monday 27 March

KHIVA

The walled city Khiva, once a literal gateway on the route to China, was also home to slave traders. Despite a bloody history, it's impossible not to be charmed by this ancient city. We will enjoy a guided walking tour of some of the attractions: Juma Mosque, Mausoleum of Pahlavan Mahmud, Kunya Ark Citadel, Gaza Khan Madrasa, Palace of Nurallah-bai.

Walk the walls for spectacular views of the city and surrounding steppe at dusk.

Overnight Khiva.

Meals: B, L



Day 8: Tuesday 28 March

KHIVA - BUKHARA

Visit a silk carpet atelier where Khivan tile and carved door designs provide inspiration for beautiful rug and suzani designs.

Depending on whether the long-promised bullet train to Bukhara is operational, we will either transfer by rail or road to Bukhara.

Arrive in time for dinner and check in.

Overnight Bukhara.

Meals: B, L



Day 9: Wed March 29

BUKHARA

Bukhara in the heart of the Silk Road was a major trading center and today still makes and sells the most complete range of Uzbek crafts. Once home to hundreds of madrasahs, many of which are now craft centers, we take a guided tour of the Ark fortress, the Kalon minaret, Poi Kalyan Mosque, and Ismail Samanid Mausoleum. Bukhara is a wonderful town to explore on foot (no vehicles inside the old city walls) as you drop in at the trading domes, tea houses, and galleries.

Overnight Bukhara.

Meals: B, D



Day 10: Thurs March 30

BUKHARA

After breakfast, we will tour the last Emir's summer palace, a fabulous mash up of Russian and Islamic styles. On the estate, we will visit the collection at the Bukhara Museum of Decorative Applied Arts. Visit the beautiful Ismail Samanid mausoleum. Upon return to the walled city, we will tour the last remaining Jewish synagogue.

Evening, viewing of private textile collection followed by dinner with the family in their beautifully restored heritage family home and art gallery. Antique and vintage lovers will relish the shopping opportunities here.

Overnight Bukhara.

Meals: B, D



Day 11: Fri March 31

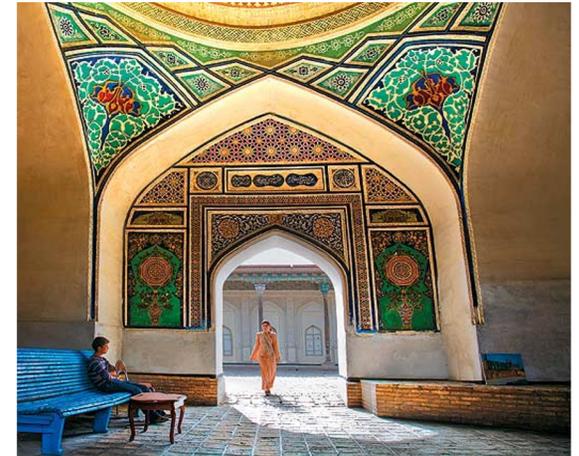
BUKHARA - SAMARKAND

Morning, take in a suzani masterclass with an award-winning artisan and her mother. An opportunity to shop for Bukhara's famous suzani. Enjoy a leisurely lunch in Bukhara.

After, we will take the afternoon bullet train to Samarkand, the storied highlight of the Silk Road, arriving in time to see the stunning monuments of the Registan and Bibi Hanum mosque bathed in pink springtime light.

Overnight Samarkand

Meals: B, L



Day 12: Saturday Apr 1

SAMARKAND

Samarkand, perhaps the best known city of the Silk Road in Central Asia, captures the romantic spirit many associate with the name. In addition to the spectacular monuments of the Registan, we will also visit the mosques of Gur-e-Emir and Bibi Hanum, the breathtaking necropolis of Shah-i-Zinda. Beyond the historical monuments, much of Samarkand's significance lies in its roots as a center of Islamic, mathematic, and scientific learning as the 13th century observatory we will visit attests.

Overnight Samarkand.

Meals: B, D



Day 13: Sunday April 2
URGUT

Depart Samarkand early for the famed Urgut Market. Sundays attract sellers of vintage and new handmade textiles. Possibly the oldest continuously operating market in Uzbekistan, it's the largest we visit. Everything you can imagine...and then some! As Uzbekistan is "discovered," vintage treasures are becoming rare but here is a place where you can still find plenty.

On return, visit a papermaking operation for demo of centuries-old technique of making "silk" paper from mulberry branches that have been stripped of leaves by silkworms.

Overnight Samarkand.

Meals: B, D



Day 14: Monday Apr 3
SHAKHRISABZ

By now, the name of Amir Timur (Tamerlane) will be very familiar and today, we will drive to Shakhrisabz, his birthplace and hometown. Once a major city at during the reign of different rulers, its monuments are listed as UNESCO World Heritage sites. We will Visit the Ak-Saray Palace, Kok Gumbaz Mosque in the Dorut Tilovat Complex.

Stop at a weaving village for a taste of Uzbek rural life and a demo of wool carding, weaving, and rug-making. Return to Samarkand.

Overnight Samarkand.

Meals: B, D

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Day 15: Tuesday Apr 4
**SAMARKAND –
TASHKENT**

In addition to markets and museums, our final day in Samarkand we will visit the Afrasiab Museum, learning about the archaeological history of Samarkand, followed by Ulugbek's famous 15th CE observatory, and the stunning Shahi-zinda necropolis of Timurid dynasty.

Or perhaps simply stroll around this extraordinary city, savoring its timeless atmosphere.

Early evening, we will take the bullet train back to Tashkent and check in.

Overnight Tashkent.

Meals: B, L



Day 16: Wed April 5

TASHKENT

Our last full day in Tashkent will include must-see sites of the Khast Imam Complex, Independence Square, the many parks and monuments that dot the city. Who knew there are lush canals in Tashkent? We will take the famous Tashkent metro to the Chorsu Bazaar, a sprawling, colourful market that brings together the essence of Uzbekistan. Visit nearby ateliers of contemporary Uzbek designers, including suzani, drawing international interest in the textiles of Uzbekistan. Farewell dinner.

Overnight Tashkent.

Meals: B, L



Day 17: Thur April 6

TASHKENT

On our last morning we will wrap up with a visit to the Museum of Victims of Political Repression, a sobering reflection on recent Uzbek history.

With time for any last errands, you will transfer to the airport prior to your scheduled departure for your trip home or join us for 7 days in the wilds of another Silk Road country: Kyrgyzstan!

Xavfsiz Sayohat! Safe Travels!

Meals: B

Fun facts – Uzbekistan



- Population (2020): 34,230,000 people.
- 56th largest country in the world by area with 447,400 square kilometers (172,700 square miles)
- Once part of the ancient Persian Empire, later conquered by Alexander the Great in 4th C B.C.
- Handshakes are only acceptable between men; you greet an Uzbek woman by bowing with right hand placed over your heart.
- Green tea is the national hot beverage; teahouses (chaikhanas) are of cultural importance
- Uzbekistan is one of the largest producers and exporters of cotton
- Uzbekistan has the fourth largest gold deposits in the world.
- Uzbekistan is one of a handful of double landlocked countries



Kyrgyzstan - Textiles and nomadic culture | April 6 – 12, 2023

6 nights, 7 days following main tour, fully escorted by expert guide. Detailed itinerary click [here](#).

Day 1: April 6, 2023

Arrival in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan.

Day 2: April 7, 2023

Spend the day exploring historical sites of Bishkek, including the National History Museum, local bazaars, and the Eternal Flame.

Day 3: April 8, 2023

Discover the art of felt-making in Kochkor village. Continue on to Issyk Kul lake, nestled in the majestic snow-capped mountains.

Day 4: April 9, 2023

Visit Cholpon-Ata, a 500BC open-air stone carvings museum. Stroll the heart of Karakol city, taking in its unique architecture and bustling marketplaces. Dinner and folklore performances hosted by a local Kyrgyz family.

Day 5: April 10, 2023

Eagle hunting show in Jety-Oguz valley. Visit the home and workshop of a local yurt maker – spend the afternoon learning the techniques of yurt making and lunch with the local family.

Day 6: April 11, 2023

On to Chonkemin valley, for a true taste of the fresh and raw Kyrgyz wilderness. Hike through untouched mountain woods. Continue on to Bishkek, visiting Burana tower along the way. Be treated to Kyrgyzstan's infamous horseback games, *ulak tartysh*.

Day 7: April 12, 2023

Final sightseeing in Bishkek, and transfer to airport for onward flight/departure.

** Does not include Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan airfare. Approximately USD 150 one way on Uzbekistan Airways. Please enquire.*



Enquiries

To register or for answers to your questions, please email:
shila@eyhotours.com

Visit <http://www.eyhotours.com/> for Terms and Conditions

Read about our trip leader Dana Davies [here](#)

For your complete peace of mind, we are TICO (Travel Industry of Ontario) accredited #50023991

COSTS

Uzbekistan

USD 4650 pp double occupancy

USD 1395 single supplement

Kyrgyzstan extension

USD 1720 pp dbl. occ. (group size 3-8)

USD 1650 pp dbl. occ. (group size 9-12)

Single supplement USD 580

What's included:

- Uzbekistan tour co-led by Dana Davies who travelled extensively in Uzbekistan, and one of Uzbekistan's most experienced guides in specialty arts and crafts
- Visa support letter
- All internal travel and transfers (flights, trains, sedans, minibuses)
- Accommodation in select 4-5* family-run and heritage properties
- Breakfast and lunch or dinner daily
- Silk tie-dye workshop in Fergana
- Suzani embroidery masterclass
- Bread making masterclass
- Several arts and crafts demos, including carpet weaving, wood carving, papermaking, and ceramics
- Daily bottled water
- Admission to museums and other sites
- All taxes and fees

What's not:

- International flight, gratuities, and beverages at meals