

The Celestial Mountains Tour Company

Kashgar and Beyond



The Kashgar Circular is a special itinerary for a group to visit Kashgar and return to Bishkek, including the famous Sunday market.

NOTE: This excursion was originally designed for ex-pats living in the region - although others may take advantage of it. However, it does require a Multiple Entry Visa for Kyrgyzstan. A standard Tourist visa is valid for one entry only.

Departure Thursday 8.00 am. from Bishkek.

English speaking guide(s) throughout.

Accommodation: Naryn our own accommodation; Kashgar (if possible) Hotel Seman.

All meals (except Bishkek), included.

Itinerary

- Day 1** (Thursday): 8 am. start: then via lake Son Kul (picnic lunch) to Naryn, overnight stay
Day 2 (Friday): 5 am breakfast, 6 am departure: Naryn to Torugart with visit to Tash Rabat, lunch on way, arrival to pass approximately 1 pm., arrival at Kashgar hotel approximately 5 pm.
Day 3 (Saturday): morning: in Kashgar: visit Abak Hoja tomb, street of the artisans. Afternoon at leisure.
Day 4 (Sunday): morning - visit to Sunday market, including animal market. Afternoon at leisure.
Day 5 (Monday): return to Naryn (not stopping at Tash Rabat)
Day 6 (Tuesday): return to Bishkek (not via Son Kul): arrive early afternoon.

With the opening of the Irkeshtam Pass, some alternatives are possible:

Day 5 travel via Irkeshtam to Osh

Day 6 fly to Bishkek

Or:

Day 5 travel via Irkeshtam to Osh

Day 6 travel via Uzgen to Chichkan

Day 7 return to Bishkek via Suusamy

Or you could choose to extend your stay in China by a visit to Urumqi:

Day 4 take the evening flight from Kashgar to Urumqi

Day 5 in Urumqi – city tour

Day 6 travel to Heavenly Lake, sightseeing around the lake, take a boat trip and visit the Regional Museum

Day 7 travel to Turfan, visit the Keraz Irrigation Well, Jiaohe Ancient City, Sugong Minaret and watch a traditional dance show.

Day 8 return to Urumqi, visiting the Flaming Mountains, Astana tombs, and Gaochang Ancient city.

Day 9 onward travel.

Optional Extra: a Day Trip to the Taklamakan Desert – with Camel riding.

It is possible to arrange a day trip from Kashgar, 260 kilometers to the sands of the Taklamakan Desert, and see the high, rolling sand dunes, capture the atmosphere of both the Silk Road and the experiences of early explorers..

Depart from Kashgar in the morning with about two hours riding camels and lunch before returning to Kashgar.

This vast expanse of sand in the Tarim basin of Xinjiang province, surrounded by lush oases, was referred to in the time of the Han dynasty as “Liu sha” (= “moving sands”), due to the constantly drifting sand dunes, driven by fierce relentless winds. The modern name “Taklamakan” means in Uighur: “enter and never return”.

Ancient cities once flourished in the areas now overtaken by the desert – and there have been many expeditions into the interior, which have found incredible treasures. There is a North South road crossing the desert, which would have been a boon to explorers like Sven Hedin who nearly perished here.

Onward travel options include: Flight to Bishkek, Flight to Almaty, Train to Almaty, Flight to Beijing or another major Chinese city.

Now that there is a railway line between Kashgar and Urumqi it is possible to catch the train Sunday night and travel over Monday to Urumqi (it is a day's journey – soft sleepers and hard sleepers are available).

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