



Celestial Mountains Tour Company

CULTURAL TOURS

The Tajik Silk Road

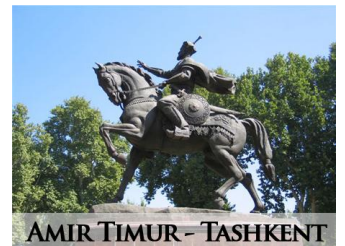
DAY 1 Arrival at Tashkent. Free time after the flight. Visit the old city Overnight at a hotel.

Tashkent, is Uzbekistan's capital and is the biggest, one of the most cosmopolitan cities and an important business center in Central Asia. The city has a history which stretches back over 2000 years.



DAY 2 Drive to Samarqand. In the afternoon visit the site of ancient Marakanda (Afrosiab) Overnight at a hotel.

Samarqand is the second biggest city in Uzbekistan and once was considered to be "The Rome of the East"



AMIR TIMUR - TASHKENT

DAY 3 City tour of Samarqand. Visit the Registan Square and the Museum of Cultural History of Uzbekistan. Overnight at a hotel.

Samarqand was declared as a "Crossroads of Cultures" by UNESCO, which included Samarqand in the World Heritage List. Registan Square was the center of trade and cultural life in medieval Samarqand. The square is surrounded by three impressive madrasses of 15-17th centuries.



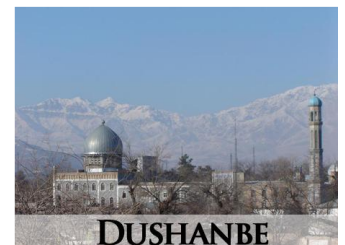
PAJAKENT BAZAAR

DAY 4 Drive to Tajik border and then continue to Penjikent. Visit the Penjikent Museum. Overnight at a home stay.

Panjikent was a Sogdian town until it was destroyed by Arabs in the 7th century. It was an important Silk Road trading city. And the town is still an active archeological site, often referred to as a Pompeii of Central Asia.

DAY 5 Drive to Dushanbe along the Zarafshan River Valley. Overnight at a guest house.

Dushanbe city is the capital of Tajikistan. The name, Dushanbe, is believed to derive from Persian meaning – "Day two" or "Monday", probably because it was once famous for Monday markets.



DUSHANBE

DAY 6 Drive south from Dushanbe to the Oxus river (Amu-Darya) Visit archeological site of Takht-i-Sangin. Overnight at a hotel

Takht-i-Sangin is a temple architecture which combines Persian and Greek styles. The Oxus Treasure was found in this site which contained gold and silver objects of Achaemenid Empire (6th-4th centuries B.C.)

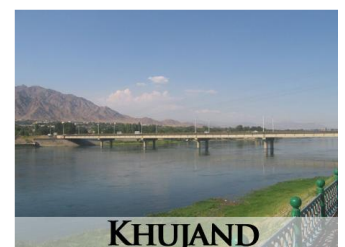


ISKANDARKUL LAKE

DAY 7 Visit Hissor Fort near Dushanbe and the Museum of Ancient Antiques. Overnight at a hotel.

The site of the Hissor is 18th century Fort, which was formerly capital of Eastern Bukhara province.

The Museum of Ancient Antiques has exhibits from Tajikistan's pre-Islamic civilizations (Greek-Bactrian, Buddhist, Hindu, Zoroastrian) as well as some more recent Islamic finds. The centerpiece is the 19m long reclining Buddha, now the largest Buddha in Central Asia.



KHUYAND

DAY 8 Drive to Iskandarkul lake. Have a walk and see a 30 m high waterfall. Overnight at chalets by the lakeside.

Iskandarkul is a lake named after Alexander the Great, is one of the most beautiful lakes in Central Asia, ringed by several high mountainous peaks.

DAY 9 Drive to Istarafshan city over Shahrison pass. Visit Isarafshans fortified citadel. Overnight at a hotel.

Istarafshan is one of the most ancient and beautiful cities in Tajikistan. This is a place with some of the oldest and most intact Islamic buildings in the country.

DAY 10 Visit Isarafshan's old city Visit workshops of local craftsmen. Overnight at a hotel.

Istarafshan is famous for its wood carving, knife making and traditional crafts bazaar. Ancient Urateppe (now Isarafshan) was a small, but rich town of the Soghdians.

DAY 11 Drive to Khujand city. Visit the fortress by the Syr Darya river and Bazaar. Cross the Uzbek border and drive to Tashkent. Overnight at a hotel.

Khujand was founded by Alexander the Great as Alexandria Eschate or Alexandria the Furthest. Ancient Greek and Roman authors considered Khujand the frontier of Asia.

DAY 12 Departure from Tashkent