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UZBEKISTAN «SILK ROAD»

9 DAYS / 8 NIGHTS (including the night in the plane)
ITINERARY
UZBEKISTÁN «SILK ROAD» 9D/8N

DAY 1 / ISTANBUL - TASHKENT
- Flight to Tashkent (not included)
- Night on board

DAY 2 / TASHKENT (ARRIVAL)
- Arrival to Tashkent
- Transfer to the hotel
- Accommodation (early check-in)
- Breakfast at the hotel
- Panoramic tour of Tashkent
- Visit of the old city architectural complex Hasti Imam
- Exterior visit of Medrese of Kukeldash
- Visit of Chorsu Bazaar
- Lunch at the local restaurant
- Visit of the Museum of Applied Arts
- Visit of the Earthquake Monument
- Visit of the house of the potter Akbar Rakhimov
- Visit of the Tashkent’s Metro
- Welcome dinner at the local restaurant

DAY 3 / TASHKENT - URGENCH - KHIVA
- Breakfast at the hotel
- Transfer to the airport
- Flight to Urgench
- Arrival to Urgench
- Transfer to Khiva (30km)
- Transfer to the hotel
- Accommodation
- Visit of the ancient city of Itchan Kala
- Visit of Kalta Minor Minaret
- Visit of Kunya Ark, or “Old Fortress”
- Visit of the Medrese of Mohamed Rahim Khan
- Lunch at the local restaurant
- Continuation of the visit of Khiva
- Visit of the Minaret and the Medrese of Islam Khodia
- Visit of the Medrese of Khan Allakuli
- Visit of the Juma Mosque
- Visit of the Mausoleum of Saida Allautdina
- Visit of the architectural complex and the Palace Tash Khovli (Tash Jauli)
- Visit of the Mausoleum of Pakhlan Mahmud
- Dinner at the local restaurant with the typical dish of the province Khorezm
  - “Shivit Oshi” (green spaghetti)
On option: Dinner with the dance show of the province Khorezm

DAY 4 / KHIVA - URGENCH - BUKHARA
- Breakfast at the hotel
- Transfer to the Urgench airport (30 km)
- Flight to Bukhara
- Arrival to Bukhara
- Transfer to the hotel
- Accommodation
- Lunch at the local restaurant
- Visit of the grave of mother Bahouddin Nakshbandi
- Visit of the Mausoleum of Chor Bakr
- Visit of the summer residence of the Emir of Bukhara Sitorai-Mokhi-Hossa
- Visit of the Ljabi-Hauz architectural ensemble
- Visit of the workshop producing the dolls from papier-mache
- Visit of the Medrese Chor-Minor
- Dinner at the old local house where we will prepare the national festive dish “Plov”

DAY 5 / BUKHARA
- Breakfast at the hotel
- Panoramic visit of Bukhara
- Visit of the silk workshop
- Visit of the Mausoleum of Samani
- Visit of the Bolo-Hauz Mosque
- Visit of the Mausoleum and the saint spring Chashma Ayub
- Visit of the Citadel Ark
- Lunch at the local restaurant
- Visit of the architectural complex “Poi-Kalyan”
- Visit the of the Medrese of Ulugh Beg
- Visit the Medrese of Abdulaziz
- Visit of the Maggoki-Attori Mosque
- Visit of the Three Domes-Market
- Visit of the caravanserai Nugay

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Dinner at the local restaurant where we will taste the typical dish “Shashlik” (marinated grilled meat skewers)

On option: folk show in Madrese Nadir Divan Begui

DAY 6 / BUKHARA - SHAKHRIZABS - SAMARKAND
- Breakfast at the hotel
- Departure to Shakhrizabs (290km)
- Stop at the “Steppe of Hunger”
- Visit of the ruins of the Palace Ak-Saray
- Visit of the complex Dorut Saodat, the Mosque of Imam Jarsati, the Mausoleum of Jahanguir
- Visit of the complex Dorut Tilovat: the Mosque Kok Gumbaz, the Mausoleum of Gumbaz-Saidan
- Lunch at the local house
- Departure to Samarkand (130km)
- Stop at the village where is prepared the traditional Uzbek bread “non” and where are produced the traditional carpets (kîlîms)
- Arrival to Samarkand
- Transfer to the hotel
- Accommodation
- Dinner at the hotel

DAY 7 / SAMARKAND
- Breakfast at the hotel
- Visit of the memorial complex of Imam Al-Bujari
- Panoramic visit of Samarkand
- Visit of the Mausoleum Gur Emira
- Exterior visit of the Mausoleum of Rukhabad
- Visit of the Registan square
- Lunch at the local restaurant where we will prepare the national dish “Lagman” (spaghetti with meat and vegetables)
- Visit of the Bibi-Khanum Mosque
- Visit of the picturesque Bazaar Siab with tasting
- Dinner at the local restaurant

On option: Visit of the wineries Khovrenko with the local wines tasting

On option: Historical costumes show in the theatre El Merosi

DAY 8 / SAMARKAND - TASHKENT
- Breakfast at the hotel
- Visit of the factory producing the ancient paper called “Silk paper”
- Visit of the Observatory of Ulugh Beg
- Visit of the Shah-i-Zinda Necropolis
- Visit of the Museum and the archaeological excavations of the ancient city Afrosiab
- Lunch at the local restaurant
- Visit of the couture workshop of Valya Romanenko with the silk clothing show
- Transfer to the train station
- High-speed train “Afrosiab” to Tashkent
- Arrival to Tashkent show at the local restaurant with wine or vodka included
- Transfer to the hotel
- Accommodation

DAY 9 / TASHKENT (DEPARTURE)
- Breakfast at the hotel
- Transfer to the airport
SELECTION OF HOTELS

UZBEKISTÁN «SILK ROAD» 9D/8N

TASHKENT:
4*: Lotte Tashkent Palace, or similar

KHIVA:
3*: Bek, or similar

BUKHARA:
4*: Asia Bukhara, or similar

SAMARKAND:
4*: Reguistan Plaza, or similar
UZBEKISTAN
SILK ROAD, THE OLDEST CITIES IN THE WORLD

Uzbekistan is the cradle of the mythic Silk Road: a land of steppes and deserts furrowed by the caravans heading to China. A hospitable country, with a rich gastronomy and a long history.
BUKHARA
CULTURAL CAPITAL OF CENTRAL ASIA, A TRUE CITY-MUSEUM

This wonderful walled city, at the gates of Persia, was upon a time the cultural centre of the Islamic world. Its sublime architecture, carefully preserved, transports us to the times of the ancient Turkestans.
SAMARKAND
A MILLENNARY CITY, AT THE HEART OF THE SILK ROAD

Main Centre of the Silk Road and old Tamerlane’s capital, its sole name evokes exotic and mystery. The mixture of peoples and cultures give to Samarkand its distinct identity.
DAY 1 / ISTANBUL - TASHKENT
Flight from Istanbul to Tashkent (not included)
Night on board.

DAY 2 / TASHKENT (ARRIVAL)
Arrival to Tashkent.
Transfer to the hotel.
Accommodation (early check-in).
Breakfast and refreshment at the hotel.
Panoramic tour of Tashkent on bus (exterior visits) which combines modern buildings and medieval monuments, all surrounded by large parks. This city has influences of Persians, Arabs, Turkish and Soviet.
Visit the Amir Temur Square where stands a statue showing him on his horse as the Independence Square where the official parades take place. Many government buildings surrounding the square, but also very beautiful cascading fountains.
Visit of the old architectural complex Khast Imán (o Khazarat Imán) and the Medrese of Kukeldash which was built in the XVIth century and nowadays is used as a Mosque.
Visit of the Opera and Ballet Square.
Visit of the Chorsu Bazaar.
Lunch at the local restaurant.
Visit the Museum of Applied Arts, the former residence of the Russian Ambassador Polovtsev. The building was built and decorated in the national style. The collection includes 7,000 pieces of folk art ceramic, porcelain, textiles handmade, traditional clothing, carpets, all kinds of objects from different regions of Uzbekistan. The museum is worth a visit, not only for its collection, but also for the beauty of the building itself, which reflects the best traditions of the national architecture.
Visit of the Earthquake Monument.
Visit of the house of the potter Akbar Rakhimov.
Visit of the Tashkent’s Metro. It is the only one of its kind in Central Asia: each station is beautifully decorated, in the style of Moscow metro, with different local themes: cotton, space, Uzbek poet Alisher Navoi, etc.

Welcome dinner at the local restaurant.

**DAY 3 / TASHKENT - URGENCH - KHIVA**

**Breakfast** at the hotel.

Transfer to the airport for the flight to Urgench.

Arrival to Urgench.

Transfer to Khiva (30 km, 40-50 min).

Transfer to the hotel.

**Accommodation.**

Khiva, located at the heart of the region of Khorezm, it was one of the most important stages of the Silk Road and was one of the major slaves’ markets in Central Asia, still active in the early XXth century. Fully restored, the old city offers the visitors the sight between the XVIIIth and early XXth centuries: the unique architectural ensemble, no similar buildings in Central Asia.

Visit of the ancient city of Itchan Kala, where we will be able to admire more than 50 historical monuments and buildings from centuries XXVIIth to the XIXth centuries and they are considered as masterpieces of Muslim architecture of Central Asia.

Itchan Kala is considered as a genuine open-air museum and was classified as World Heritage by UNESCO. The area is surrounded by a huge and thick defensive wall made of clay.

Visit of Kalta Minor Minaret built during the XVIIth century. It is the main one of all Central Asia. It is completely covered with stained glasses and majolica ceramics.

Visit of the Castle Kunya Ark, or Kukhna Ark, the “old fortress”, which construction started in 1686. It was one of the residences of the khans of Khiva till 1919. Inside you can admire the summer mosque, the prison or Zindan, the Throne Hall or Kurinch Khana, the Mint and numerous mosques decorated with beautiful blue and white ceramics. The Ak Sheikh Bobo bastion was built in the earlier period, since its construction dates back to the XIth century. It has a terrace from which you can see a magnificent panorama of the old city.

Visit of the Medrese of Mohamed Rahim Khan. It was built in 1871 by Mohamed Rahim Khan, who wrote numerous poems under the pen-name Feruz.

Lunch at the local restaurant.

Continuation of the visit of Khiva.

Visit of the Medrese of Islam Khodia (1908-1912) with its 45 meters minaret, the highest in Khiva.

Visit of the Medrese of Allakuli Khan. It is the beginning of a series of buildings, all of them marked by the royal seal of one of the greatest khans of Khiva.
Visit of the Mosque of Juma ("Friday Mosque"), the main mosque of Khiva. Its 200 carved wooden columns evoke the ancient mosques of Arabia. It is located in the center of Ichan-Kala, the "inner city" of Khiva. Its facade consists of a long wall flanked by the minaret.

Visit of the Mausoleum of Saida Allautdina.

Visit of the architectural complex Tash Hovli or Tash Jauli, the “Stone Palace”, built for the khan Allakuli. It was the main residence of the khans of Khiva until 1880 and has more than 250 rooms. It is a real maze where Allakuli and extravagant court lived. It has a small courtyard in its center, with an aivan (veranda) surrounded by two columns entirely covered with polychrome majolica. Among its outbuildings, there are the Harem, the Reception Room or Ichrat Jauli, the Administrative Office and the Court or Arz Jauli.

Visit of the Mausoleum of Pakhlavan Mahmud (1810 - 1825). This one of the most famous monuments of Khiva is situated behind the Mosque of Juma.

Dinner at the local restaurant with the typical dish of the province Khorezm– "Shivit Oshi" (green spaghetti).

On option: Dinner with the typical dance show of the region of Khorezm.

DAY 4 / KHIVA - URGENCH - BUKHARA

Breakfast at the hotel.

Transfer to the airport of Urgench. (30 km)

Flight to Bukhara.

Arrival to Bukhara.

Transfer to the hotel.

Accommodation.

Lunch at the local restaurant.

Visit of the grave of mother Bahouddin Nakshbandi (30 km from the city).

Visit of the Mausoleum of Chor Bakr (Xth century).

Visit of the summer residence of Emir de Bujará Sitorai-Mokhi-Hossa (XIXth century).

Visit of the architectural complex Liaba Havz, the quietest part of the city constructed during the XVI-XVIIth centuries and that has been conserved in its authentic aspect so far. It is situated on the big square and consists of three buildings: the “Khanqah”, intended for religious gatherings and spiritual retreat, the Medrese of Nadir Divan Begui and the Medrese of Kukeldash. Its buildings date from the XVI-XVIIth centuries and have preserved almost intact.

Visit of the workshop producing the dolls from papier-mache.

Visit of the Madrese of Chor-Minor, or «Four Minarets»: with its four towers topped with domes, it is one of the most beautiful and atypical constructions of Bukhara.

Dinner at the old local house where we will prepare the festive national dish “Plov”.

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DAY 5 / BUKHARA

Breakfast at the hotel.

Panoramic visit of Bukhara that has been during a long time the main center of Islamic culture and the most important place for Muslim pilgrims. The general design of the set played an important role in the Persian History and arts. The city center is considered as World Heritage by UNESCO during the year 1993.

Visit of the silk workshop.

Visit of the Mausoleum of Samanidas, or Mausoleum of Islam Samani. Inside there is a tomb of Ismai Samani (Xth century), the oldest building preserved in its original state, decorated with intense blue ceramics.

Visit of the Bolo-Hauz Mosque, which means "By the Pond". Precisely the pond is the oldest part, dating from the XVIth century. The rest was built between the early XVIIIth century and XIXth century. Located opposite the Citadel, it has a splendid dome with stalactites shaped decorations. His famous "aiwan" or porticoed atrium, is supported by 20 beautiful tall columns of carved wood.

Visit of the Mausoleum and the saint spring Chashma Ayub, the “Spring of Job”, with its four rooms topped by beautiful domes, dating from the XIXth century. It is the part of the tentative list of World Heritage of UNESCO.

Visit the Citadel Ark, the symbol of the Emirate of Bukhara. For more than a millennium it was the fortified residence of the sovereigns of the town. It had palaces, barracks, Mint and prison. Its original construction dates from the XVIIth century, but its present appearance is due to the reconstruction that took place in the XVI. It was the residence of the emirs of Bukhara until 1920, when they were ousted by Russian troops. We will enter the Citadel Registan Square, where public punishments and executions took place.

Lunch at the local restaurant.

Visit of the architectural complex “Poi-Kalyan” that consists of Kalyan Minaret, Kalyan Mosque - both constructed with brick and decorated with cupolas, arches and ceramics with geometric and vegetal reasons - and the Medrese Mir-i-Arab, created by the outstanding architects of Bukhara that composed the most majestic set of the city. In these monuments, you can feel the spirituality of the ancient city and the history of the culture during the epoch of the governors when the masterpieces of the architecture of the Central Asia were done. Visit of the XIth century Minaret Kalyan, the highest construction of the ancient city. Due to its beauty, it is considered as the most important one of those that still exists. It has a balcony that surrounds its highest part, from which the muezzin realized five daily calls to the prayer. Visit of the XVth century Mosque Kalyan, surrounded by the wall, which is one of the biggest constructions of his epoch and of the mosques “Boloi Havz” and “Chashmai Aiub”.

Visit of the Medrese of Ulugh Beg, situated behind the Bazaar, it is one of the oldest in Central Asia.

Visit of the Medrese of “Abdulazizhana”, the most well-known Islamic religious school of the XVth century with the mosque and lessons rooms.

Visit of the Mosque of Magoki-Attari, Bukhara’s oldest mosque, built on an ancient temple dedicated to Zoroaster.

Visit of the Three Domes-Market, important centers of urban life in the medieval East, there was a system of roofed streets. Being no exception, Bukhara is divided into two unequal parts by a trading avenue, which has cupolas at the crossing points. Today, one can see only three of the five original cupolas from the 16th century, namely: Toki Sarrafon (the Dome of Shroffs), Toki Tilpak-Furushon (the Dome of Milliners), and Toki-Zargaron (the Dome of Jewelers).

Visit the caravanserai Nu Gay.

Dinner at the local restaurant where we will taste a typical dish “Shashlik” (marinated grilled meat skewers).
On option: Folk show at the Medrese Nadir Divan Begui.

**DAY 6 / BUKHARA - SHAKHRIZABS - SAMARKAND**

Breakfast at the hotel.

Departure to Shakhrizabs (290 km, 5 hours).

Stop at the «Steppe of Hunger», nowadays mostly irrigated by the waters of the river Syrdarya, and where cotton is grown, also called "The White Gold of Uzbekistan".

Shajkhrizabz, formerly known as Kech, or Nautaca, is one of the oldest cities in Asia, built nearly 2800 years ago. It was the capital of the historic region known as Bactria. Here was Roxana, the wife of Alexander the Great, who conquered this land, in the limit of its expansion. It is also the hometown of Tamerlane, who had built here the immense White Palace ("Ak Saray"), about the magnificence of which we can get an idea watching the impressive remains of its portal with a unique ceramic decoration.

Visit of the ruins of the White Palace or Ak-Saray, planned as the greatest Tamerlane’s constructions.

Visit of the complex Dorut Saodat, consisted of the Mosque of el Iman Jasnati, the Mausoleum of Jahanguir and the crypt where was found the sarcophagus of Tamerlane, but finally it was buried in Samarkand.

Visit of the complex Dorut Tilovat, built in 1437 by Ulugh Beg in honor of his father Shah Rukh. Inside there is Kok Gumbaz Mosque.

Lunch at the local house.

Departure to Samarkand (130 km, 3,5-4 hours).

En route stop in a village where is prepared the Uzbek traditional bread “non” and where are produced the traditional carpets - “kilims”.

Arrival to Samarkand.

Transfer to the hotel.

Accommodation.

Dinner at the hotel.

**DAY 7 / SAMARKAND**

Breakfast at the hotel.

Visit of the memorial complex of Imam Al-Bujari. Imam Muhammad Al-Bukhari has entered history through his many literary works. The most important is Sahih Al-Bukhari, a collection of authentic hadith of the Prophet Muhammad.

Panoramic visit of Samarkand founded on the banks of the river Zeravshan, whose name means in Persian “the one that distributes gold”. The city took benefit during long centuries due to its strategic situation at the crossroad of the principal commercial routes today known as “Silk Road”, where the precious goods transits between China and Middle East.
The above-mentioned position and the beauty of its main monuments constituted the origin of the extraordinary wealth of the city. Some historical sets are still intact today in spite of the numerous invasions and conquests that Samarkand has suffered along his history.

We will start from the famous Registan, the center of the ancient city, where they are three Islamic religious schools considered as prototype that inspired Islamic architecture in the last 600 years: Sher-Dor, constructed in year 1636 and decorated with tigers roaring, contradicting the Islamic prohibition of representing alive animals; Tillya-Kori, constructed in year 1660 and whose name means “golden covering” and Ulugbe.

**Visit of the Mausoleum Gur Emira** constructed by famous Tamerlane, legendary conqueror, military leader and Turkish - Mongolian politician. The tomb was destined for his grandson, but later it turned into familiar pantheon, where there are the remains of the proper Tamerlane, and his progeny. The interior of the Mausoleum is decorated with blue and golden paintings.

**Visit of the Mausoleum of Rukhabad, or Rkhobod**, located opposite the Guri Amir. It houses the remains of one of the spiritual masters of Tamerlane, Mohammed, and a lock of his hair.

**Visit of the famous Registan Square**, center of the social life in the Middle age and now one of the most visited points of the city, with its three monumental portals, which correspond to three Koranic schools, with figurative and polychrome decorations.

Lunch at the local restaurant where we will prepare the national dish “Lagman” (spaghetti with meat and vegetables).

**Visit of the Bibi-Khanum Mosque**, name of the favorite wife of Tamerlane. Its construction was completed shortly before the death of the emperor. At one point in its history, it became one of the largest Islamic mosques in the world. It was slowly deteriorated over the years and in 1897 collapsed during an earthquake.

**Visit of the picturesque Bazaar Siab** where you can buy and taste the nuts of Uzbekistan.

**Dinner** at the local restaurant.

*On option:* **Visit of the Khovrenko wineries, where are produced the local wines, followed by a small tasting.**

*On option:* **Historical costumes show in the theatre El Merosi.**

**DAY 8 / SAMARKAND - TASHKENT**

**Breakfast** at the hotel.

**Visit of the factory producing paper by the traditional method, called “silk paper”.**

**Visit of the XVth century Observatory of Ulughbek**, structure of more than 40m of length and an arch of 63m high, whose telescopes provided with powerful glasses were moving on rails. The Observatory is located on Chupan-Ata mount, in the surroundings of Samarkand.

**Visit of the Shah-i-Zinda Necropolis**, one of the holiest places of Samarcand that consists of a set of mosques and Islamic religious schools that surround the grave of Prophet Mahomet’ cousin. The aristocracy Temuride continued the tradition of constructing mausoleums in this impressive place. The mausoleums are decorated with beautiful sets of ceramics and even mosaic in the domes and in the interiors.

**Visit of the Museum and the archaeological excavations of the ancient city Afrosiab.** Afrosiab was the name of the oldest part of the city of Samarkand. It was inhabited between 500 BC and 1220 AD. The archaeological layers have a thickness of up to 12 meters. Archaeological elements discovered during excavations are exhibited in the museum located in the east wing.
Lunch at the local restaurant.

Visit of the couture workshop of Valya Romanenko with the silk clothing show.

Transfer to the train station to get the high-speed train “Afrosiab” to Tashkent.

Arrival to Tashkent.

Farewell dinner with folk show at the local restaurant, with wine or vodka included.

Transfer to the hotel.

Accommodation at the hotel.

**DAY 9 / TASHKENT (DEPARTURE)**

Breakfast at the hotel.

Transfer to the airport.