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## *Inspiring Journeys & Diversions*



24th February 2017

Hi Everyone

Greetings from the Argentinean capital Buenos Aires, where I try to spend a couple of months each year working from the apartment I purchased here nearly 10 years ago. It's always a great opportunity for me to plan the year ahead and now that the 2017/18 Byroads tour program has been released and sales are underway I can start to write regular newsletters that bring to you news and interesting snippets about the places Byroads travels to. I hope you enjoy the read.

Cheers - Steve

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### **Byroads Travel Destination Survey**

Thanks to the many readers who completed the short Byroads Travel Destination Survey. The survey provided a list of 47 countries and respondents were asked to select a maximum of 10 countries they would be interested in travelling to with Byroads in the next 5 years. Here is a list of the 10 most popular choices so far:

1. Oman
2. Iran
3. Italy
4. Cuba
6. Kazakhstan
7. Kyrgyzstan
8. Myanmar (Burma)
9. Tunisia

5. Jordan

10. Mongolia

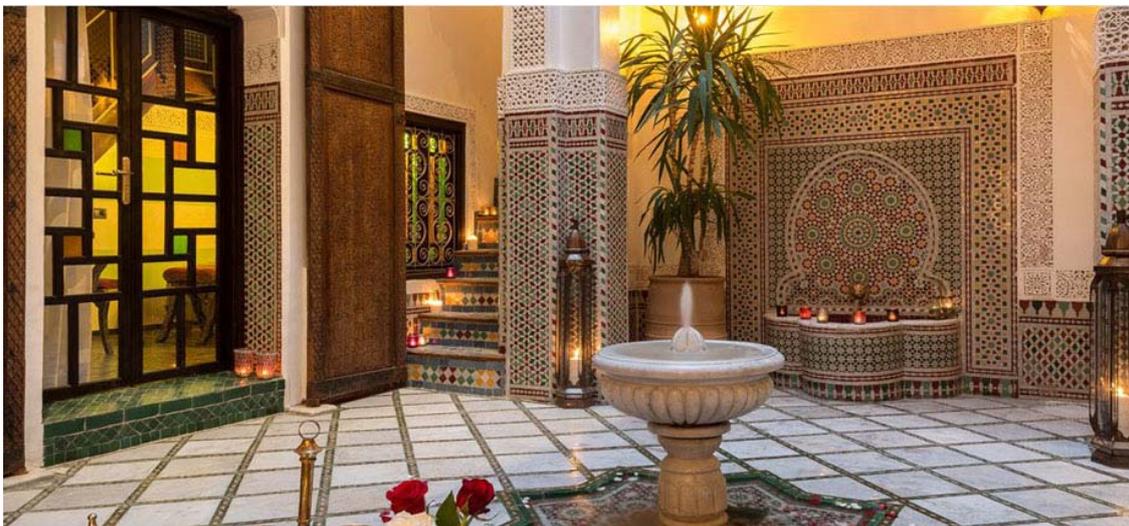
The survey is open until the end of March so if you haven't already responded and would like to, then please take a couple of minutes to do so. I'm keen to hear from our Byroads travellers where they would like to travel to in the coming years to make sure we can offer the destinations of your choice.

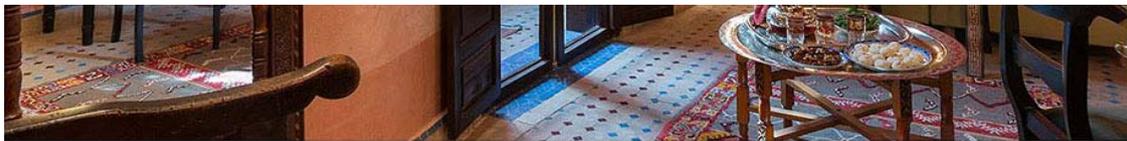
Please [click here](#) to complete and thanks in advance for your time.

### Featured Accommodation - Riad Algila - Fes

Each newsletter I want to feature a hotel that adds something special to your holiday with Byroads. This time I have chosen the **Riad Algila** in the ancient city of Fes. We spend two nights here on our Moroccan Mosaic tour.

Nestled at the end of a quiet street, near the heart of the ancient labyrinth of the medina of Fes, the Algila Fes offers a charming base for exploring the souks and monuments of the loveliest of Morocco's imperial cities. The hotel is comprised of three inter-connected 18th century residences, each an architectural gem in its own right, offering modern comforts in a traditional setting. The hotel's 12 guest rooms are arrayed around three separate courtyards fitted with fountains, palm trees and sitting areas. Delightful details abound, including a rooftop terrace with marvelous views over the medina.





### Naadam Festival - Mongolia

The Naadam Festival is truly one of the world's most exciting & colourful traditional festivals. This Mongolian Festival is so unique it is listed on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list. The festival features in our Byroads 14 days 'Mongolian Discoverer' tour in July 2018.

The three day event officially celebrates the Mongolian Revolution & Independence, although the festival is said to predate Genghis Khan. Each Naadam festival starts with an opening ceremony - a swirl of horse riders, wrestlers, singers, musicians, monks & dancers. The hallmark of the festival is the "three games of men" - the sports of archery, horse racing and wrestling.

The Festival is celebrated within each province or 'soum' (small administrative district) and each organise a Naadam Festival of their own. The capital Ulaanbaatar hosts the largest festival, which now attracts a great number of tourists however the Byroads tour will experience a smaller but truly authentic provincial Naadam Festival. Here you will get to see firsthand the nomadic history, culture and traditional sporting events which make this fascinating country famous - and will no doubt leave a lasting impression on visitors for many years to come.

Please [click here](#) for details on the Byroads 'Mongolian Discovery' tour.





### The Changing Face of the Silk Route

Having recently returned from the Byroads trip in Uzbekistan in October I was amazed at the development of high speed train travel between the cities of Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara. It was quite an experience to travel on-board the 'Afrosiyob' at 230 km/h across the parched landscape. The train has revolutionised train travel in Uzbekistan.

So, it was with interest that I read of China's massive investment over the last few years in the development of the railway network across several countries along the ancient Silk Route. This investment culminated in history being made in January with the arrival in the United Kingdom of the first freight train from China. The train from Yiwu in eastern China pulled into east London having completed the 12,000 km journey through China, Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Poland, Germany, Belgium and France before finally crossing under the English Channel into the UK. The journey took 18 days and marked a milestone in China's push to build commercial links across Europe and Asia.



Afrosiyob High Speed Train - Tashkent to Bukhara





## Byroads Tour Program 2017 & 2018

### 2017 - MOROCCO, UZBEKISTAN & IRAN

- [16 Days Moroccan Mosaic](#) - Departs Rabat 14 September 2017
- [13 Days Uzbekistan](#) - Departs Tashkent 8 October 2017
- [15 Days Persia Unveiled](#) - Departs Tehran 23 October 2017

### 2018 - MEXICO, CUBA, SRI LANKA, MONGOLIA, MOROCCO, UZBEKISTAN & IRAN

- [15 Days Mexico & the Yucatan](#) - Departs Mexico City 2 February 2018 \*\*\* **New**
- [14 Days Rhythms of Cuba](#) - Departs Havana 18 February 2018 \*\*\* **New**
- [13 Days Secrets of Sri Lanka](#) - Departs Colombo 15 March 2018
- [14 Days Mongolian Discoverer](#) - Departs Ulaanbaatar 4 July 2018 \*\*\* **New**
- [16 Days Moroccan Mosaic](#) - Departs Rabat 13 September 2018
- [13 Days Uzbekistan](#) - Departs Tashkent 7 October 2018
- [15 Days Persia Unveiled](#) - Departs Tehran 22 October

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