



# KYRGYZSTAN & UZBEKISTAN

*Contrast two of Central Asia's most Fascinating Countries*

**18 DAYS - STARTING BISHKEK 27 SEPTEMBER 2020**





# KYRGYZSTAN & UZBEKISTAN

## Trip Outline

Lying at the heart of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan share much in common however they offer very different holiday experiences. Kyrgyzstan, with its dramatic mountain scenery and large population of nomadic shepherds contrasts with the spectacular Silk Road cities of Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva whose ancient turquoise mosques etch the desert skyline.

In Bishkek, the Kyrgyz capital we visit the Ala Too and Victory Squares, the White House and Hero Monument and take a stroll in the nearby Ala-Archa National Park. In the mountainous countryside, home to rare animals such as the snow leopard we travel around the Issyk-Kul Lake and gaze on petroglyphs dating from the 2nd Millennium BC. In Karakol we visit the Russian Orthodox Church and the Dungan mosque. Lush summer pastures are home to local yurt dwelling shepherds and we watch a demonstration of the Golden Eagle hunting. Back in Bishkek we fly to the ancient Osh, dominated by Sulaiman Too, a large mountain in the city centre, protected by UNESCO due to its cultural and spiritual significance.

We cross into Uzbekistan to Ferghana city and visit silk and carpet centres and on our way to Tashkent we stop at a ceramic centre, the Khudayarkhan's palace and Juma Mosque. From Tashkent we fly to ancient Khiva, once a slave-trading Khanate and the most intact of our three ancient cities. Within its baked mud brick walls we visit a wonderful carpet and textile workshop and see some stunning vernacular architecture, exploring a number of mosques, madrasas and mausoleums. Next comes Bukhara, one of the great Silk Route cities of central Asia and two days allows ample time to see the principal sights and make our own discoveries.

Finally we reach legendary Samarkand, whose colourful history dates back over 2,500 years. Here we discover the most celebrated sights including the madrassas and mosques of the magnificent Registan. A short drive away is World Heritage-listed Shahrisabz where we explore the palace ruins of the conqueror Timur and visit nearby Konigil, known for its ancient paper making workshop. Our Central Asian adventure comes to an end in Tashkent where we ride the metro, visit the State Museum of Applied Arts and explore the fabulous Chorsu food bazaar.

## Tour Host – Steve Mortimer



Steve Mortimer heads up Byroads Travel and will be your host on this tour. Steve has nearly 30 years in the travel industry and has travelled to well over 100 countries. He has worked with a number of well-known Adventure travel companies in Australia including 13 years as a Product Manager and

Operations Director for Peregrine Adventures. Most recently he has been involved in researching and developing holidays in several different regions of the world, including Latin America and the Middle East where he has lived.

Steve likes nothing better than getting out and about with like-minded travellers, sharing his knowledge and introducing them to some of the world's most interesting places. A particular feature of his tours is the chance to see places that others often miss (or simply don't know about!).

With our itinerary you can be confident you'll visit all the 'must see' attractions – and much more, however there are some days when you'll have time to wander and make some of your own discoveries. Throughout the tour local guides are employed to provide a wealth of background information and share their extensive local knowledge.



# ITINERARY STARTS IN BISHKEK

**SUN 27 & MON 28 SEP: BISHKEK** – On arrival at Bishkek Airport you are met and transferred to your hotel. Today is simply an arrival day and we will plan to meet up in the evening. The following day we begin with an easy walk in the nearby Ala-Archa National Park with its snow-capped peaks and then return to the city to visit the main sights including the Ala Too and Victory Squares, the White House, Oak Tree Park and the Hero Monument. (B)

**TUE 29 SEP: BISHKEK – BURANA-ISSYKUL-CHOLPON ATA** – We stop this morning at an archaeological museum in a caravan town dating from the 10<sup>th</sup> Century before continuing to the Issykul Lake. The mountains of this wild and unique environment are home to rare animal species including snow leopard and wild boar. We visit the open air Petroglyph Museum with displays dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, before reaching the lakeside town of Cholpon Ata. (B)

**WED 30 SEP: CHOLPON ATA – KARAKOL** – After breakfast we our drive around the lake to the trekking region of Karakol situated at 2200m. Here we visit the Preshevalsky Museum dedicated to the memory of an early explorer renowned for his work on the regions flora and fauna. Later we visit the Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox church of the late 19th century and the Dungan mosque. (B)

**THU 1 OCT: KARAKOL – BOKONBAEVO - BISHKEK** – First stop today is Jety Oguz with its famous red rocks and spectacular countryside. The summer pastures are home to nomadic shepherds who graze their cattle and live in yurts. Later, at the lakeside village of Bokonbaevo we witness a demonstration of the Golden eagle hunting before returning to Bishkek for the evening. (B)

**FRI 2 OCT: BISHKEK – OSH – FERGHANA** – A short flight brings us to Osh, an ancient city in the Fergana Valley - a centre for merchants and traders for millennia. We visit the main sights which include UNESCO declared Sulaiman Too, a large religious mountain in the centre of the city with its reconstructed mosque originally built by Babur in the 1400's, We visit the mausoleum of Asaf ibn Burhia and the Sulaiman Too National Historical and Archaeological Museum. In the afternoon we cross into Uzbekistan to the city of Ferghana where we witness a demonstration at a nearby silk factory - from harvesting the silkworm cocoon, to spinning, dyeing, weaving and carpet making. (B)

**SAT 3 OCT: FEHANA – TASHKENT** – Following breakfast we depart for Tashkent, stopping first in Rishtan, famous for its ceramics and in Kokand where we visit the Khudayarkhan's palace and the Juma mosque. The palace complex, surrounded by a carved stone wall consisted of seven courtyards and 119 rooms. We arrive in Tashkent in the late afternoon. (B)

**SUN 4 & MON 5 OCT: TASHKENT – KHIVA** – We take a morning flight to Urgench and then transfer to Khiva. The old quarter of Khiva is UNESCO listed and we spend our time exploring the mosque, madrasa, minarets, bazaars and workshops of this ancient city. The following day you will have free time where you can visit private workshops of wood masters or carpet workshops and there are also rope walkers, local music and dance to enjoy. (2B)

**TUE 6 OCT: KHIVA TO BUKHARA** – Today is the longest day of the trip (around 8 hours). We cross the Amu-Darya River and head south east across the Kizilkum Desert to Bukhara arriving in the late afternoon. (B)

**WED 7 & THU 8 OCT: BUKHARA** – Like Khiva, there is much to see and do here as we explore Bukhara's most celebrated sights including the Samani Mausoleum, Bukhara Ark, Kalon Minaret and mosque, Choir Minor and Lyabi Hauz. On our last afternoon you can choose to shop in the excellent bazaars or you may like to relax in a traditional hamam. (2B)

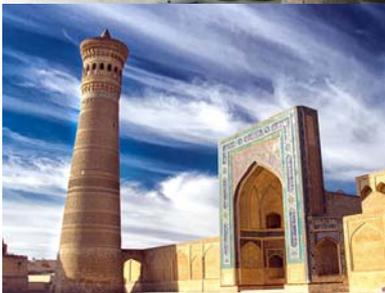
**FRI 9 & SAT 10 OCT: BUKHARA – KONIGAL - SAMARKAND** – On our way to Samarkand we stop to visit the remains of an 11th Century caravanserai and in Konigal we witness the ancient art of papermaking. In Samarkand we spend the day seeing the highlights of this stunning city, including the Registan complex, Gur Amir mausoleum, the Shah-I-Zinda complex, the bazaar and more. (2B)

**SUN 11 OCT: SHAHRISABZ - SAMARKAND** – Our day trip by car through the spectacular Zarafshan mountains brings us to the World Heritage-listed town of Shahrisabz, the birthplace of Timur. It contains several impressive Timurid monuments, including the ruins of the Ak Saray palace, Mausoleum of Jahongir, Juma mosque and the tomb of Temur's teacher and father. In the afternoon we return over the mountains to Samarkand. (B)

**MON 12 OCT: SAMARKAND – TASHKENT** – Today we have a free day until mid-afternoon to explore on our own before catching the high speed 'Afrosiyob' train to Tashkent (B)

**TUE 13 OCT: TASHKENT** - We explore new and old Tashkent today, visiting the Khast Imam complex and the excellent Museum of Applied Arts. We'll also take a ride on the metro, comparable only to Moscow's celebrated subway system and explore Chorsu Bazaar. (B)

**WED 14 OCT: TASHKENT** – Our tour ends today. Taxis can be easily arranged at the hotel to take you out to the airport. Extra nights are also available (see back page for details). (B)



## Prices & Inclusions

### 18 Days Kyrgyzstan & Uzbekistan Tour

**Price in US Dollars: USD 4160 (per person twin-share)**

**Single Supplement: USD 845**

**Price includes:** Steve Mortimer as Tour Escort, local tour guides, arrival transfer, all transportation on tour, flights Bishkek to Osh and from Tashkent to Urgench, 17 nights hotel accommodation and meals as indicated.

**Not Included:** Visa fees, travel insurance (compulsory), international flights, additional meals, drinks, departure transfer, optional tours, spending of a personal nature, laundry and tips.

**Transportation:** Our transport is in a comfortable air-conditioned minibus or coach, train and plane.

**Accommodation:** Contrary to popular opinion, Central Asian hotels are fine. Rooms can be a little small and 4\* hotels might be considered closer to 3\* by international travellers, but we've selected what we think are some of the best hotels in the country, in terms of their character, service and location.



Modern 3\* hotel in Bishkek



Breakfast in Karakol



Comfort in the Ferghana Valley



Stylish in Tashkent



The best location in Khiva



Courtyard Hotel in Bukhara

**Food and drink:** Breakfast is included each day. Elsewhere, we enjoy the great variety of local food on offer. Beer, wine, vodka, soft drinks, tea, coffee and bottled water is all widely available.

**Group size:** Maximum 16

**Additional Expenses:** Food is not expensive in Kyrgyzstan or Uzbekistan. You should allow US\$5-\$10 for a light lunch and around US\$15-\$20 for dinner. In addition you should budget for any personal shopping you may wish to do. Please also allow extra funds to tip your local tour guide, driver and porters (full details will be provided in the pre-trip Field Guide).

**Bookings:** Travel on Q (Sydney) is the sole booking agent for this tour. Please register your interest ASAP in order to secure your place and note there are a limited number of single rooms available. A non-refundable deposit of AUD 750 per person is required with final payment due 60 days prior to tour commencement.

**Travel on Q** (Carole Grassby and Tina Briggs)

Tel: (02) 9357 6800

Email: [travel@travelonq.com.au](mailto:travel@travelonq.com.au)

**Currency:** Due to the volatility of global currencies the tour price has been quoted in United States Dollars (USD) however you will pay for your tour in Australian dollars based on the buying rate set by Westpac Banking Corporation on the due date of your final balance.

**Flights and Transfers:** There are no direct flights from Australia or NZ to Central Asia and a stop-over en route is often required. Air Astana fly from Bangkok to Bishkek and from Tashkent back to Bangkok. There are also other options via the middle east. An arrival transfer is included however the departure transfer is not and can be arranged on request. Travel on Q will be able to assist you with your flights and advise you on your best options.

**Extra Nights in Bishkek & Tashkent:** Extra nights can be booked pre and post tour however you must advise Travel on Q well in advance to ensure rooms are available.

**Visas for Australian & NZ citizens:** As of January 2019 Uzbekistan visas are no longer required for Australian and New Zealand passport holders. Visas are not required for Kyrgyzstan.

**Documentation:** Upon receipt of final payment, a comprehensive field guide will be mailed and you will be sent the relevant tour and accommodation vouchers prior to departure.

**What Next?** Don't miss out! Contact Travel on Q to discuss your travel plans and to make your booking. Further information is also available at [www.byroads.com.au](http://www.byroads.com.au).

**Byroads**

**Travel on Q**  
Independent travel specialists