



## UZBEKISTAN CLASSIC TOUR – 9 DAYS

### DAY 1

HOME – TASHKENT (flight + 10 km)

Departure with **TURKISH AIRLINES** via **Istanbul** or **AEROFLOT** via **Moscow** and overnight on board. Arrival in Tashkent early in the morning. Meet the guide of your group and transfer to hotel (10 km) for the overnight.

### DAY 2

TASHKENT – URGENCH – KHIVA (excursion + flight + 35 km)

Breakfast and check out from hotel. Transfer to the north-east of Tashkent, an ancient part called '**old city**'. Visit at the city including: '**Khasti-Imom**' complex: madrassa, mosque, mausoleum & museum of the Holy Koran. **Mausoleum of Kaffol Shoshiy** (903-976): he was a very famous and holy scientist in Tashkent in his time and was known as '**Khasti Imom**' by people. **Madrassa of Barakkhan (XVI cen.)**: one of the most popular Koranic school, today a center for craftsmanship. **Museum of Moyi Mubarek**: a very interesting sacred place, where Holy Koran – Osman's Koran (VII cen.) & ancient manuscripts (XIII-XX cen.) are kept. **Mosque Tilla Sheikh** (1890 y.): a functioning mosque, where Muslims pray five times a day. **Friday Mosque of Khazrati Imom** (built in XIX century & named Namozgokh Friday Mosque): a big mosque, last rebuilt in 2007. Every Friday this place is filled with Muslims. Transfer to **Bazar Chorsu**, a beautiful market in Tashkent full of local people every day. Visit of **Friday Mosque Khodja Akhror Vali** (XV cen.), which was built in 1451, and very famous some centuries ago; at beginning of the XX century the mosque was closed to be recently reopened after restorations. **Madrassa Kukaldosh** (XVI cen.): an operational Madrassa built in 1561 and now housing a Muslim high school reserved reserved to boys. Approximate 400 students have here their lessons. Transfer to **Museum of Applied Arts**, which was built at the end of the XIX century by Russian ambassador Plovsev, who used it as his residence. It exists as museum since 1937. Transfer to airport & departure for Urgench with local flight **HY-1057 (18:40 – 20:20)**. Arrival in Urgench & transfer to Khiva (35 km).

### DAY 3

KHIVA (excursion)

Breakfast at the hotel and start of the **city tour of Khiva**, one of the most fascinating cities in the region. A traditional story attributes the name to one of the **sons of Noah**: the story tells that **Shem**, after the flood, found himself wandering in the desert alone. **Ichan-Kala**: a town inside the town of Khiva itself. There are 4 gates and walls **2500 meters long**. **Madrassa Mukhammad Amin Khan** (XIX century) it was the biggest madrassah, with 125 double rooms for students. **Minaret – Kalta Minor** (XIX cen.): a very interesting historical monument; it was supposed to be higher than it is now, but the owner died when it was only 28 meters high. **Konya Ark**: the residence of governors between XVII and XIX century. **Madrassah Mukhammad Rakhim Khan II**: built in 1871 and closed at the beginning of XX century. **The Mausoleum of Pakhlavan Makhmud** (XIX cen.): it used to be the most sacred mausoleum in Khiva but in 1913 a new complex was built here. **Madrassah Shergazi Khan** (XVIII cen.) **Madrassah, Minaret & First Russian School**: built by **Islam Khodja** in 1910, when he was Prime Minister of Khiva. From that time till today **Islam Khodja's Minaret** is the highest minaret of Uzbekistan (57 meters). Nowadays his **Madrassah** hosts a **Museum of Applied Arts** & his **Russian School** a **museum of old photos**. The large **Friday Mosque** is famous for its 218 wooden columns supporting its roof – a concept thought to be derived from ancient Arabian mosques. Inside it, you can climb over the very dark stairway up to the pigeon-poop-splattered gallery of the 47m Friday Minaret. There are also **museum of music, museum of nature, museum of art & center of silk**. All museums & centers are located in the **Madrassah of nineteenth century**. Close to the door of the citadel there are **white mosque and turkish bath**, which were built by **Anush Khan** in the XVII century. Our visit in Khiva ends with the complex of '**Tash Hovli**' (**Stone Home**). **Palace Tash**

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**Hovli** served as the summer residence of Khan Allakuli and it was completely built by the end of the XIX century. Dinner at local restaurant & overnight in the hotel.

#### DAY 4

##### KHIVA – BUKHARA (480 km)

Breakfast at the hotel and transfer to Bukhara (480 km). On our way we will cross the **Amu-Darya River** and the **Red Desert (Kyzilkum)**. In Uzbekistan there are two great rivers: the Amu-Darya (in classical Greek known as the **Oxus**) and the Syr-Darya (known as **Jaxartes or Yaxartes** by the Greeks). Amu Darya flows through Turkmenistan from south to north, passing Turkmenabad and marking the border between Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan from Khalkabad. The **Kyzilkum Desert** is the 16th largest desert in the world. It covers about **298,000 sq km**. **Bukhara** – a very important city for the country thanks to its mineral deposits, particularly gold, uranium, aluminum, copper, silver, oil and natural gas. Located on **the Silk Road**, the city has always been a center of trade, scholarship, culture, and religion. During the golden age of the **Samanids** in 9th and 10th centuries, Bukhara became the intellectual center of the Islamic world and therefore, at that time, of the world itself. **UNESCO** has listed the historic center of Bukhara, which contains numerous mosques and madrassahs, as one of the **World Heritage Sites**. Arrival in hotel in Bukhara. Free time. Dinner at local restaurant & overnight in the hotel.

#### DAY 5

##### BUKHARA (excursion)

Breakfast at the hotel and visit of the historic center of **Bukhara**, which was considered one of the main centers of **Persian civilization** since its early days in the VI century BC – Turkish speakers gradually moved in from the VI century AD. The architectural and archaeological sites of this city are real pillars for **Central Asian** history and art. The region of **Bukhara** was for a long time part of the **Persian Empire**. **The mausoleum of Samanids** is located in the historical urban nucleus of the city of Bukhara, in a park created on the site of an ancient cemetery. This mausoleum, which is one of the most esteemed example of Central Asian architecture, was built in the IX / X century (between 892 and 943) as the resting-place of **Ismail Samani**. Although in the first instance the Samanids were **Governors** of **Khorasan** and **Transoxiana** under the suzerainty of the **Abbasid Caliphate**, the dynasty soon established virtual independence from Bagdad. **Mausoleum of Chashma-i Ayub**: the current building was built during the reign of Timur and features a Khwarazm-style conical dome uncommon in Bukhara. **The Mosque of Bolo Khauz**. **The Ark of Bukhara** is a massive fortress located in the city of Bukhara. **The Grand Minaret Minora-i Kalon** is the only one of the structures of Arslan-han complex that was kept safe during that siege. It is also known as the **Tower of Death** because for centuries criminals were executed by being thrown from the top. **The Grand Mosque** (Masjid-i Kalon) was completed in 1514. **Taqi Sarrafon** – bazar of the moneychangers, **Taqi-Telpak Furushon** – bazar of the cap makers, **Taqi-Zaragon** – bazar of the jewelers. **Ulugbek's Madrassa** is one of Central Asia's architectural highlights, built by Ulugbek in 1417, sober and strictly proportioned. **Abdulaziz Khan's Madrassah** is located opposite Ulugbek's Madrassah. **The Lab-i Hauz Ensemble** (1568–1622) is the name of the area surrounding one of the few remaining hauz (ponds) in the city of Bukhara. **The Ensemble** surrounding consists of the **Kukeldash Madrassa** (1568–1569), the largest in the city, and of two religious buildings built by **Nadir Divan-Beghi**. There is also an interesting metal sculpture of **Khodja Nasriddin**. Dinner at local restaurant & overnight in the hotel.

#### DAY 6

##### BUKHARA – SHAKHRISABZ – SAMARCANDA (270 km + excursion + 140 km)

Breakfast at the hotel and transfer to **Shakhrisabz** (270 km). The name of the city means “green city”. Visit of **The Palace Ak-Saray**, which was Timur's Summer Palace (“White Palace”). It was planned as the most grandiose of all Timur's constructions. **The Mosque of Kok Gumbaz / Dorut Tilovat Complex**. The Friday Mosque was built in 1437 by Ulugbek in honor of his father Shahrukh, its name means “Blue Dome”. Located immediately behind the Mosque is

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the so-called "House of Meditation", a mausoleum built by Ulugbek in 1438, but apparently never used for burials. **Hazrat-i Imam Complex.** The Eastern part of the Mosque hosts another complex called Dorus-Saodat (Seat of Power and Might), which contains the Tomb of Jehangir. The conqueror was actually buried in Samarkand, not in Shahrisabz. Transfer to Samarkand (140 km). Dinner at local restaurant & overnight in the hotel.

#### DAY 7

##### SAMARKAND (excursion)

Breakfast at the hotel and visit to the **heart of Uzbekistan – Samarkand.** The city was taken by **Alexander the Great** in 329 BC, when it was known by its Greek name of Marakanda. Samarkand was ruled by a succession of Iranian, Persian, and Turkish people until the Mongols under Genghis Khan conquered Samarkand in 1220. In 2001, UNESCO added the city to its World Heritage List as Samarkand – Crossroads of Cultures

**The Mausoleum of Gur Amir** is Persian for "Tomb of the King". This architectural complex with its azure dome contains the tombs of Tamerlane, his sons Shakhrukh, Miranshakh and grandsons Ulugbek, Sultan Muhammad. Also honored with a place in the tomb is Timur's teacher Sayyid Baraka. **The Registan Square** was the heart of the ancient city of Samarkand during the Timurid's dynasty. The name Registan means "Sandy place" or "desert" in Persian. There are three madrassas facing Registan Square: **The Ulugbek Madrassah** (1417–1420), **The Tilla-Kori Madrassah** (1646–1660) and **The Sher-Dor Madrassah** (1619–1636). The Ulugbek Madrassa was built during the Timurid's Empire, it has an imposing aiwan with a lancet-arch portal facing the square. **The Sher-Dor Madrassah** was built in the XVII century by Yalangtush Bahodir, the ruler of Samarkand, who ordered the construction of the Sher-Dor and Tilla-Kori madrassahs. **The Tilla-Kori Madrassah** (the name means 'gilded') was built 10 years later. It was not only a residential college for students, but also played the role of grand mosque. **The Mosque Bibi Khanum** is one of the most important monuments of Samarkand. In the XV century it was one of the largest and most magnificent mosques in the Islamic world. **The Mausoleum of Shah-i-Zinda** (the name means "The Living King") is a necropolis in the north-eastern part of Samarkand. The Shah-i-Zinda Ensemble includes mausoleums and other ritual buildings of IX-XIV and XIX centuries. The Shah-i-Zinda is connected with the legend that Kusam ibn Abbas, the cousin of the prophet Muhammad was buried there.

Dinner at local restaurant & overnight in the hotel.

#### DAY 8

##### SAMARKAND – TASHKENT (excursion + 280 km)

Breakfast at the hotel and free time till 12.00. Check out from the hotel and visit of the **Museum Afrosiyob.** It was originally an ancient site of northern Samarkand, that was occupied from c 500 BC to 1220 AD. Today, it is a hilly grass mound located near the Bibi Khanaum Mosque. Afrasiyab is the oldest part of the ancient and medieval city of Samarkand. It was located on high ground for defensive reasons, south of a river valley and north of a large fertile area which has now become part of the city of Samarkand. Inhabitants started settling in the territories of Afrasiyab in the VII-VI centuries BC, as the centre of the **Sogdian** culture. **The Tomb of Daniel** is the traditional burial place of the biblical prophet **Daniel** **Various**; different locations have been named to be his tomb, but the tomb in **Susa, Iran**, is the most widely accepted, being it first mentioned by **Benjamin of Tudela**, who visited Asia between 1160 and 1163. Transfer to Tashkent. Dinner at local restaurant & overnight in the hotel.

#### DAY 9

##### TASHKENT – HOME (10 km + flight)

Early in the morning, transfer from hotel to airport & departure.

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