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Last Updated: November 8, 2020

The Five Stans of the Silk Road - AYBA

26 days: Bishkek to Ashgabat

What's Included

- Your G for Good Moment: Yurt Building Demonstration, Barskoon
- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group, Bishkek
- Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in a Yurt, Ozero Sonköl'
- Your Local Living Moment: Tamga Village Stay, Tamga
- Your Local Living Moment: Community Homestay, Kuli Iskandarkul
- Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in a Yurt, Aydar Kul Camp
- Half-day city tour (Bishkek)
- Burana Tower visit (Bishkek)
- Przhevalsky Museum visit (Karakol)
- Yurt building presentation (Kizil Tuu)
- Saty village stay
- City tour (Almaty)
- Charyn Canyon Visit
- City tour (Dushanbe)
- Waterfall hike (Kuli Iskandarkul)
- City tour (Khujand)
- Mug Yepe Visit (Istaravshan)
- Market visit (Khujand)
- City tour (Samarkand)
- Walking tour (Bukhara)
- Chashma Complex and Holy Spring Visit (Nurata)
- Fortress of Alexander the Great visit (Nurata)
- City tour (Bukhara)
- Khiva Ancient City tour
- City tour (Tashkent)
- Felt-making workshop visit
- Hikes and picnic lunch
- Derweze (Door to Hell)
- Erbent visit
- City tour (Ashgabat)
- Internal flight
- Transport between destinations and to/from included activities

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing March 3rd, 2020 - December 31st, 2020

Itinerary

NOTE: Accommodations vary per departure and are subject to change until tour start date; they are not final and should be used as examples only. Travellers may login to the G Adventures App to view accommodations specific to their departure.

Day 1 Bishkek

Arrive at any time.

Welcome to Kyrgyzstan's artsy capital and cultural hub, situated at the base of the Tian Shan mountain range. There are no planned activities until the evening welcome meeting, so get out there and explore!

Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group

Your opportunity to meet your CEO and fellow travellers, and learn more about your tour. Opt to join the group for a local meal afterwards. Don't forget to see the notice in the lobby (or ask reception) for the official time and place to meet up with the group.

Day 2 Bishkek/Chong-Kemin

After breakfast, embark on a city tour of Bishkek before travelling to the serenity of Chong-Kemin Valley. Along the way, stop at one of Kyrgyzstan's oldest sights, the Burana Tower and learn about this ancient structure, rare in nomadic culture. Tonight, stay in a cozy guest house run by Ashuu villagers. Soak in the stunning scenery while exploring the village and savour a home-cooked traditional dinner.

Burana Tower Visit

Bishkek - Burana

Visit the historical site of Burana and climb the stairs to check out the view from the top. A large minaret about 80km from Bishkek, along with some grave markers and remnants of a castle and mausoleums, are all that remains of the 9th century city of Balasagun.

Private Vehicle

Bishkek - Chong-Kemin 1h30m-2h160km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

City Tour

Bishkek

Check out some of the main highlights of this Soviet-esque capital city. Learn about the history of the city and daily life.

Meals included: Breakfast | Dinner

Day 3 Chong-Kemin/Song Kul

In the morning, opt for a hike to the nearby mountains or explore the famous gorges of Chong-Kemin. After lunch, enjoy the scenic drive along the Kalmak-Ashuu mountain pass to Song Kul Lake. Immerse yourself in Kyrgyz culture with an overnight stay in a traditional yurt. Experience daily nomadic life and wander the breathtaking landscape. With an altitude of 3,016 meters above sea level, it's possible to experience four seasons in one day! Indulge in delicious home-cooked cuisine for dinner, then get cozy in the yurt around the stove.

Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in a Yurt

Enjoy overnighing in a traditional felt yurt. Get comfortable in this multi-share round tent and cozy up by the stove. Experience daily life of the nomads and sample some of their delicious cuisine.

Private Vehicle

Chong-Kemin - Song-Köl 4h230km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Optional Activities - Day 3

Hiking in Song Kül

Song-Köl

Free

Explore the scenic mountain views and pastures on foot, getting up close and personal with breathtaking nature.

Meals included: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

Day 4 Song Kul/Tamga

Spend the morning soaking in all the beauty of Song Kul Lake before departing for Kochkor to learn the importance of felt-making to Kyrgyz culture and local artisans. Learn the craft during a hands-on workshop creating a small version of the traditional carpet known as ala-kiyiz, and enjoy lunch together. Afterward, head to Tamga village in the clutches of the Terskey Ala-Too and celestial Issyk-Kol' Lake, where you'll spend the night at a village guesthouse and get to know the local community members.

Tamga village was once famous for its Soviet-era military sanatorium, where Soviet cosmonauts relaxed and recovered after space flights. The complex still exists in its original, untouched 1930's glory, with an atmosphere that would seem to bring you back in time.

Private Vehicle

Song-Köl - Tamga4h30m

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle. Stop halfway in Kochkor village for a Kyrgyz felt-making workshop.

Felt Making Workshop

Kochkor

Visit a felt-making workshop to learn more about this traditional Kyrgyz craft. Make your own miniature version of the precious carpet known as ala-kiyiz, and enjoy lunch in Kochkor village. Opt to purchase a carpet or two.

Your Local Living Moment: Tamga Village Stay

Spend the night at a guesthouse in Tamga Village situated along Issyk Kul Lake. Surrounded by mountains and often used as a base for trekking, this village offers a touching glimpse into local Kyrgyz life.

Meals included: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

Day 5 Tamga/Jety-Oguz

Enjoy a free morning getting to know this isolated village or opt to explore the surrounding nature trying to find the elusive Tibetan 'Om' rock, known as Tamga Tash. Around midday, transfer to Ak-Orgo Workshop Centre to observe how traditional yurts are built and learn about the importance of this Kyrgyz craft. Continue to Jety-Oguz Gorge and overnight in another one of those cozy yurts.

Private Vehicle

Tamga - Jety-Oguz1h30m-2h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle. Stop first in Barskoon village before continuing on to Jety Oguz.

Your G for Good Moment: Yurt Building Demonstration

Visit the Ak-Orgo workshop, a G Adventures-supported project working to preserve Kyrgyz traditions and create employment opportunities in Barskoon. Observe how traditional yurts are built and enjoy a local lunch with the community.

Meals included: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

Day 6 Jety-Oguz/Karakol

Say goodbye to the beautiful valley of Jety-Oguz and ride to Kyrgyzstan's 4th largest city - Karakol. Stop for a visit at the Prejevalskiy Museum, dedicated to the famous Russian explorer Nikolai Przhevalsky, followed by a city tour. See the Russian Holy Trinity Orthodox Church and pagoda-style Dungan Mosque, built by Chinese Muslims in the early 20th Century. Spend the afternoon as you wish, exploring Karakol.

Private Vehicle

Jety-Oguz - Karakol48m42km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Przhevalsky Museum Visit

Karakol

Visit a fascinating museum dedicate to the Russian explorer Nikolai Przhevalsky. The museum offers insight into his life and travels and displays some of the flora and fauna species endemic to the area.

Karakol City Tour

Karakol

Jump on a mini-bus and see what Karakol has to offer. Stop by the Russian Orthodox Cathedral to admire the unique architecture. This beautiful wooden church was built in 1895, after the old structure was destroyed by an earthquake, and is still used for services on Sundays. Next, visit the colourful Dungan mosque originally built in 1910 that almost resembles a Buddhist temple. This is the only mosque in the area and definitely worth checking out.

Free Time

Karakol Afternoon

Karakol is the 4th largest city in Kyrgyzstan, located on the scenic Lake Issyk-Kul.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 7 Karakol/Saty Village

Cross the border into Kazakhstan on the journey to Saty Village, part of the Kolsay Lakes National Park. On arrival, jump in a Russian 4x4 for the ride to Kaindy Lake, then embark on a trek to explore the sunken forest. Soak in the bright hues and marvel at the eerie sight of submerged trees. Spend the night in a homestay and indulge in traditional Kazakh meals for a true Kazakh experience.

Saty Village Stay

Saty Village

Be immersed in Kazakh culture during a homestay near the Kolsay Lakes National Park. Eat a traditional dinner and marvel at the mountain range and forests surrounding the village.

Border Crossing (Kazakhstan - Kyrgyzstan)

Ready for a little more ink in your passport? Grab your bags and get ready to check another country off your bucket list.

Private Vehicle

Karakol - Saty Village4h30m230km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Optional Activities - Day 7

Hiking in Kolsay Lakes National Park

Kolsay Lakes National Park

Free

Explore the many lakes throughout the National Park. Unique views of the Tian Shan mountain range, Kolsay River, and the famous Kaindy Lake will not disappoint.

Meals included: Breakfast | Dinner

Day 8 Saty Village/Almaty

Depart early this morning for Almaty, the former Kazakh capital, stopping along the way to marvel at Charyn Canyon. Boasting stunning shades of red, orange, and brown, the Charyn Canyon is a natural wonder comparable in beauty to the Grand Canyon. On arrive in Almaty, take a city tour visiting sights such as Independence Square, Zenkov Cathedral, Panfilov's Park, and the striking WWII memorial. Time permitting, opt to climb Green Hill for panoramic views, visit the local markets, or sip coffee in one of the plentiful cafés.

Charyn Canyon Visit

Charyn Canyon National Park

Enjoy the views of the beautiful Charyn Canyon. Breathe the fresh air and snap a few photos of this stunning landscape.

Private Vehicle

Saty Village - Charyn Canyon National Park2h30m140km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Private Vehicle

Charyn Canyon National Park - Almaty4h230km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

City Tour

Almaty3h

Get to know Almaty on a city tour, visiting the most stunning sights. Stop by the colourful Zenkov Cathedral, constructed entirely of wood without the use of any nails, it survived an earthquake in 1911 and continues to stand today. Walk through Panfilov's Park and the historical part of the city. Visit the new part of Almaty known as Independence Square, and stop by the WWII Memorial.

Optional Activities - Day 8

Zelyony Bazaar

Almaty

Free

Also known as the "Green Bazaar", this was once a key trading centre in the city. Explore this traditional outdoor Kazakh market and roam around the varied stalls. Find anything from local spices and meats to souvenirs or furniture. Stay for a meal or opt to sip on tea while watching the hustle and bustle of the market unfold.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 9 Almaty/Dushanbe

In the morning, transfer to Almaty airport and board a flight to Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, on the Varzob River. Enjoy an evening in the city.

There may be more travellers joining the group here. Opt to attend an evening welcome meeting to get to know them.

Plane

Almaty - Dushanbe 1h30m

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's... yup, it is a plane, actually.

Optional Activities - Day 9

Optional Welcome Meeting for Travellers on Combos

You may be a seasoned pro at group travel by now, but there will likely be some new travellers joining the group. Sit in on the welcome meeting to meet the newest members of your group and learn about the next leg of your tour.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 10 Dushanbe/Kuli Iskandarkul

Enjoy a morning tour of Dushanbe, visiting the main monuments, museum, and mosque. After lunch, drive through the valleys and mountains to Kuli Iskandarkul for a short hike to Iskander Darya waterfall. Afterward, continue the drive--passing Alexander the Great's lake--to your overnight stay at a local home in the stunning mountain valley. Meet the local people and explore the gorgeous landscape of the Fann Mountains.

Your Local Living Moment: Community Homestay

Enjoy an overnight stay in local homes in this stunningly beautiful area. Meet the locals and explore the gorgeous landscape of the Fann Mountains.

Iskander Darya Waterfall

Kuli Iskandarkul

Take a short hike through the peaceful Fan Mountains to Iskander Darya waterfall, or Fan Niagra. The Iskander Darya river flows from the famous Iskandarkul Lake, named after Alexander the Great for his love of place. This massive, majestic waterfall falls from a height of 38 meters.

City Tour

Dushanbe

Visit the highlights of the capital city on a guided tour, seeing the Central Mosque and square, Ismail-i-Somoni Monument, the State Flag Pole, and Tajikistan Antiquities Museum.

Private Vehicle

Dushanbe - Kuli Iskandarkul

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Meals included: Breakfast | Dinner

Day 11 Kuli Iskandarkul

After breakfast, embark on a trek alongside Sarytag and the Karakul River. Return to the homestay for lunch and spend the afternoon at leisure. Later, head to Sarytag Village to experience local living and get a better understanding of life in this remote region. After the village exploration, head back to the homestay for a delicious Tajikistan dinner.

Free Time

Kuli Iskandarkul Half Day

Get out and explore the region.

Your Local Living Moment: Community Homestay

Enjoy an overnight stay in local homes in this stunningly beautiful area. Meet the locals and explore the gorgeous landscape of the Fann Mountains.

Meals included: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

Day 12 Kuli Iskandarkul/Khujand

Continue on to Khujand, stopping first in Istaravshan to explore a local mosque and Mug Tepe, an ancient citadel fortress stormed by Alexander the Great in 329 BC. Enjoy an optional lunch in a local chaikhana (teahouse) before continuing the drive to Khujand. Wander the city in the afternoon, visiting the Historical Museum of Sughd, resembling a castle, and the Mausoleum of Sheik Muslekheddin.

Private Vehicle

Kuli Iskandarkul - Khujand3h30m

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Mug Tepe Visit

Istaravshan

Visit a fortress stormed by Alexander the Great in 329 BC and again by Arabs in 772 AD. Learn more about the history of this place and soak in the view over the city.

City Tour

Khujand

Explore the city, visiting the museum and a mausoleum.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 13 Khujand/Tashkent

Visit the Khujand market (largest in Tajikistan) before continuing on to the border. Cross into Uzbekistan and drive to the capital city of Tashkent, where modern skyscrapers mix with Soviet-era architecture and mosaic mausoleums. Enjoy a short orientation walk in the evening before an optional dinner.

Some travellers will be joining the group here as they start their journey into Uzbekistan.

Market Visit

Khujand

Visit the market in Khujand. It's the largest in Tajikistan and a great example of a typical Central Asian market. Enjoy browsing what's for sale and opt to sample a few of the local delicacies.

Orientation Walk

30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

Border Crossing (Tajikistan - Uzbekistan)

Ready for a little more ink in your passport? Grab your bags and get ready to check another country off your bucket list.

Private Vehicle

Khujand - Tashkent3h178km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 14 Tashkent

Spend the day freely exploring this unique bustling city. Check out one of the many museums, wander the streets admiring the modern, Soviet-era architecture, venture up Tashkent Tower (which offers city views from its observation deck), or wander through the bazaar.

Free Time

Tashkent Full Day

Head out and explore Uzbekistan's capital city.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 15 Tashkent/Samarkand

Travel on to Samarkand, known for intricately beautiful mosques and mausoleums, situated on the Silk Road. Take an orientation walk and opt to visit the Amir Timur Mausoleum, dedicated to the famous conqueror who once hoped to rebuild the empire of Genghis Khan.

Orientation Walk

30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

Private Vehicle

Tashkent - Samarkand4h30m310km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Optional Activities - Day 15

Amir Timur Mausoleum Visit

Samarkand

3USD per person

Amir Timur, known as Tamerlane, is an important figure to the city of Samarkand. He was a conqueror in the 14th century hoping to rebuild the empire of Genghis Khan and is considered the last of the great conquerors of the Eurasian steppe. Visit his mausoleum and learn more about his life and contributions.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 16 Samarkand

Embark on a city tour, visiting Ulugbek Observatory, Shaki Zinda complex, the bazaar, Bibi Khanum, and Registan Square. With a free afternoon, continue exploring the Samarkand sights, have a cuppa in a local tea house, or wander around the bazaar. Opt to explore the Tomb of Prophet Daniel, famous for the Biblical story of Daniel and the lions.

Free Time

Samarkand Afternoon

Head out and discover more of Samarkand.

Samarkand City Tour

Samarkand4h

Visit the important sights of the city with an expert local guide. See the Ulugbek Observatory, Shaki Zinda complex, bazaar, Bibi Khanum, and Registan Square.

Optional Activities - Day 16

Tomb of the Old Testament Prophet Daniel Visit

Samarkand

3USD per person

Enjoy a visit to the Tomb of the Old Testament Prophet Daniel, famous for the Biblical story of Daniel and the lions. A legend says that his body grows by half an inch every year!

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 17 Samarkand/Aydar Kul Camp

Travel out into the desert to visit Chashma Complex, a pilgrimage site in the territory of Nurata, dominated by ruins of Alexander the Great's fortress, Juma mosque, a bath-house, and the ancient Panjvakta mosque. All of this, hiding a holy spring believed to heal diseases. After exploring the complex, head to Aidarkul Lake and opt for a swim before continuing on for an overnight stay in a local yurt camp. Enjoy an authentic Uzbekistan dinner and an evening Kazakh singing show.

Private Vehicle

Samarkand - Aydar Kul Camp4h30m280km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Chashma Complex and Holy Spring Visit

Nurata1h30m

The Chashma Complex in Nurata contains multiple important Islamic sights including the Juma Mosque and spring. The spring is believed to heal diseases and attracts many visitors.

Fortress of Alexander the Great Visit

Nurata

The city of Nurata was founded by Alexander the Great in 327BC and the remains of his fortress are still standing. The area is mentioned in many historical texts as being of strategic importance.

Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in a Yurt

Stay in traditional felt yurts and experience the way of life in the remote reaches of Uzbekistan.

Optional Activities - Day 17

Kazakh Singing

Aydar Kul Camp

Free

Sit back and enjoy some local culture with a Kazakh singing performance.

Meals included: Breakfast | Dinner

Day 18 Aydar Kul Camp/Bukhara

Travel to Bukhara, known as one of the most charming cities in the country, and get your bearings on an orientation walk. Opt to visit the old city bazaars, enjoy a traditional dinner cooked by a local family, visit a hammam (bathhouse), or just relax in the pleasant atmosphere of this Silk Road city.

Private Vehicle

Aydar Kul Camp - Bukhara4h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Free Time

Bukhara Half Day

Spend the afternoon wandering and get to know the city.

Optional Activities - Day 18

Hammam (Bathhouse) Visit

Bukhara

20USD per person

There are a few hammam choices in the city and they are often gender specific - Hammam Kunjak for ladies and Bozori Kord Hammam for gentlemen. Depending on the day of the week and when you want to go, your CEO can advise you on some options.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 19 Bukhara

Explore Bukhara on a half-day guided walking tour around the beautifully restored mosques, madrassas, and covered markets, or trading domes, that make up the Old City. A centre for pottery, cloth, and carpets, Bukhara is centered around Lyabi-Hauz, a delightful pool of water surrounded by ancient mulberry trees. Wander the artisan shops and narrow twisting streets and alleyways, or sit at a café table and let the evening drift by. Opt to watch a local puppet show held in an old caravanserai, or indulge in a rejuvenating hammam bathhouse.

Free Time

Bukhara Afternoon

This is the perfect city for shopping or enjoying tea and snacks at a chaykhana.

Bukhara City Tour

Bukhara3h

Take an included city tour with a local guide to visit the the Samanid Mausoleum, the Ark Citadel, and the Poi-i-Kalon complex. Walk around beautifully restored mosques, madrassas, and covered markets that make up the Old City.

Optional Activities - Day 19

Hammam (Bathhouse) Visit

Bukhara

20USD per person

There are a few hammam choices in the city and they are often gender specific - Hammam Kunjak for ladies and Bozori Kord Hammam for gentlemen. Depending on the day of the week and when you want to go, your CEO can advise you on some options.

Carpet Museum

Bukhara

1USD per person

The Magok-i Attari Mosque (Museum of Carpets) offers information about the art of carpet making and some fine examples to boot. Perhaps more impressively, the building the museum is located in was once used for Jewish, Muslim, and Christian services, demonstrating the diversity and open-mindedness of this intriguing city.

Jewish Area and Synagogue Visit

Bukhara

Free

Bukhara has a fascinating Jewish history, with Bukharan Jews speaking a Turkic-Persian dialect with a Hebrew script. The city once was home to 40,000 Jews and now has a community of about 25-30 families. The synagogue is well worth a visit (donation expected) and houses a Torah that is roughly 1,000 years old. Please note that on Friday evenings and Saturday, the Synagogue is usually closed for Shabbat.

Chor-Bakr Complex

Bukhara

This UNESCO World Heritage Site is the burial site of Abu-Bakr-Said, one of the four descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. Wander around the necropolis of family tombs and enclosed courtyards while admiring the simple, yet intricate beauty.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 20 Bukhara/Khiva

Enjoy a scenic drive through the desert on a full day's journey to reach UNESCO-listed Khiva, well worth the arduous drive. Get to know this peaceful, picturesque city on a late afternoon orientation walk, and pick your favourite spots to explore more in-depth tomorrow.

Private Vehicle

Bukhara - Khiva6h-7h450km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Orientation Walk

30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 21 Khiva

Before exploring this historic town on your own, enjoy a guided tour to learn about local life here. Wander through the narrow labyrinth mudbrick alleyways of old town, bargain with locals at the bazaar, admire the madrassas and blue mosaic domes, climb up towering minarets, and venture into the dark dungeons Khiva was infamous for back in the 10th century. Explore the inner walls of Ichon-Qala, and enjoy spectacular sunset views of the sand-coloured mosques and homes.

Free Time

Khiva Full Day

Get to know this humble UNESCO-listed city with a free day to explore at your own pace.

Khiva Ancient City Tour

Khiva4h

Khiva is currently almost a museum city, with well-preserved city walls and ancient monuments. Wander the city and learn about life here and its important place in history.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 22 Khiva/Dashoguz

Spend the morning in Khiva, enjoying your last moments here to experience anything you couldn't squeeze in yesterday, or do some last minute shopping. After lunch, drive to the Uzbek-Turkmen border and continue to Dashoguz. Take an orientation walk and opt for dinner in local café, or explore the city and it's Bai Market.

Private Vehicle

Khiva - Dashoguz1h30m

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Border Crossing (Uzbekistan to Turkmenistan)

Khiva - Shavat1h

Cross the border on foot and enter Turkmenistan.

Free Time

Khiva Morning

Enjoy your last morning in Khiva, taking in anything you have yet to experience.

Optional Activities - Day 22

Bai Bazaar

Dashoguz

Free

Walk around and explore the Bai Bazaar. Opt to purchase fruits or pastries and sample local foods.

Dashoguz Museum

Dashoguz

10USD per person

Learn more about the history, culture, and art of Turkmenistan at the Dashoguz Museum. From archeological finds to ancient clothes, find the various moments of history captured and on display in this stunning landmark.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 23 Dashoguz/Darvaza

Drive to the UNESCO World Heritage Site Kunya Urgench to visit the ancient capital of the Khorezmian Empire. After lunch, continue to the Kara-Kum desert and witness the fiery Darvaza gas crater, also known as the "Gates of Hell." This evening, enjoy a delicious barbeque dinner and spend the night camping under the stars at a yurt camp.

Private Vehicle

Dashoguz - Kunya-Urgench2h-2h30m

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Kunya-Urgench City Visit

Kunya-Urgench2h-2h30m

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, this town was abandoned in the 1700s and has remained untouched ever since. Visit the series of monuments built between the 11th and 16th centuries including a mosque, the gates of a caravanserai, fortresses, mausoleums, and a 60 meter high minaret.

Private Vehicle

Kunya-Urgench - Darvaza4h300km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Darvaza Gas Crater Visit

Darvaza

Often referred to as the 'Gates of Hell', this gas crater was originally constructed to support a drilling rig but collapsed. As residents discovered the natural gas leak, it was set on fire to burn off over the course of several weeks. Decades later it continues to burn.

Meals included: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

Day 24 Darvaza/Ashgabat

After breakfast, begin the journey to the capital of Turkmenistan - Ashgabat. On the way, stop near the community of Erbent and admire its golden sand dunes that stretch out to the horizon. On arrival in Ashgabat, spend the evening at leisure. Opt to visit the Turkmenbashi Ruhy Mosque, also known as Gypjak Mosque, and capture the sun setting on the symmetrical minarets and golden domes.

Private Vehicle

Darvaza - Ashgabat3h30m

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Erbent Sand Dunes

Erbent1h

Walk across the ancient sands of the central Karakum Desert near the village of Erbent. Keep your camera handy - the Karakum dunes are a stunning landscape any time of year.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 25 Ashgabat

Spend the day exploring bustling Ashgabat. Enjoy a tour of the city in the morning, visiting several city treasures such as the Monument of Independence and the National museum or Neutrality Arch. Afterward, opt to venture to the ancient ruins of Nisa, or continue exploring Ashgabat.

Ashgabat city tour

Ashgabat5h

Start the day exploring the Monument of Independence followed by the National Museum of History and Ethnography. Next, visit the Arch of Neutrality and end the tour at the Gulistan market.

Free Time

Ashgabat Afternoon

Enjoy some free time today to explore the sights or relax in the city.

Optional Activities - Day 25

Ashgabat Hippodrome

Ashgabat

Free

The largest hippodrome in the country, attend a horse race or just explore the grounds and view the markets, facilities, and playground.

Ertugrul Gazi Mosque

Ashgabat

Free

With four minarets and a central dome, this mosque honours the founder of the Ottoman Empire, Osman I. Here, find a lavish interior and stained glass windows.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 26 Ashgabat

Depart at any time.

Departure Day

Not ready to leave? Your CEO can help with travel arrangements to extend your adventure.

Meals included: Breakfast

What's Included

Your G for Good Moment: Yurt Building Demonstration, Barskoon

Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group, Bishkek

Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in a Yurt, Ozero Sonkël'

Your Local Living Moment: Tamga Village Stay, Tamga

Your Local Living Moment: Community Homestay, Kuli Iskandarkul

Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in a Yurt, Aydar Kul Camp. Half-day city tour (Bishkek). Burana Tower visit (Bishkek). Przhevalsky Museum visit (Karakol).

Yurt building presentation (Kizil Tuu). Saty village stay. City tour (Almaty). Charyn Canyon Visit. City tour (Dushanbe). Waterfall hike (Kuli Iskandarkul). City tour

(Khujand). Mug Yepe Visit (Istaravshan). Market visit (Khujand). City tour (Samarkand). Walking tour (Bukhara). Chashma Complex and Holy Spring Visit

(Nurata). Fortress of Alexander the Great visit (Nurata). City tour (Bukhara). Khiva Ancient City tour. City tour (Tashkent). Felt-making workshop visit. Hikes and

picnic lunch. Derweze (Door to Hell). Erbent visit. City tour (Ashgabat). Internal flight. Transport between destinations and to/from included activities.

Highlights

Explore the Soviet-esque capital of Bishkek, Witness how Kyrgyz felt is made, Marvel at Charyn Canyon, Browse the stalls of Khujand's markets, Stay overnight in traditional yurts, Camp under the stars near Derweze crater, Take in the mountainous landscapes and the beauty of pristine lakes.

Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

Important Notes

1. CULTURE

Central Asia is a region which may be very different to anything you have experienced before. Mixture of Soviet heritage and Islam, summer heat and winter cold, religious conservatism, traffic and crowds can result in initial culture shock but should be seen as an exciting new challenge.

2. DRESS CODE

Though you can see lots of people in traditional clothes, Central Asia has adopted western style clothing as well. Don't hesitate to pack your usual travel clothes: in summer it can be shorts and t-shirts, sandals etc. We recommend not to bring tank tops/singlets and any types of clothes with bare shoulders and backs - it is unacceptable in most areas, even in bigger cities. Our tour takes us to many religious sights, where dress code is very strict. We recommend women to have a headscarf in their day bags to cover up when going inside mosques (it's also a great help in the heat in summer). Best things to pack for the hot Central Asian climate is loose, long clothing - long trousers and sarongs or long skirts for women. In colder months (from the end of October through the end of April) it can rain and snow - bring warm clothes, jackets and comfortable warm shoes for walking.

3. ALTITUDE CONSIDERATIONS

This trip operates at altitudes over 800m (max altitude 3016m at Song Kul). Whilst we travel slowly allowing plenty of time to acclimatize you may experience headaches, nausea, lethargy, especially when visiting Song Kul & Iskanderkul. It is important to be aware of the affects of altitude on one's tolerance especially on long driving days.

4. MONEY

Due to the restrictions on changing money in Central Asia region, only notes/bills printed after 1996 and in good condition will be accepted for exchange. Usually 50 and 100 USD/EUR notes get better exchange rate. We recommend to bring smaller denominations as well - many vendors accept them if you don't have local currency.

5. RAMADAN

According to the lunar cycle, Ramadan will begin on April 23, 2020 and April 13, 2021. Please note that Ramadan is a month of fasting observed by Muslims throughout the world, during which time the followers of Islam should not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset. There may be some limitations to services and disruptions to schedules during Ramadan, but generally our tours still operate effectively during this period and food is available to non-Muslims throughout the day. It is very important to display increased cultural sensitivity during Ramadan. Please wear loose fitting clothes, that cover knees and shoulders, and try to avoid eating, drinking or smoking in public out of respect for those who can't at that time.

6. COMBO TRIP

Please note that this tour combines with other G Adventures tours. As such, the staff and some travel companions on your tour may have previously been traveling together with G Adventures, prior to Day 1 of your tour. Likewise, some staff and travel companions may be continuing together on another G Adventures tour, after your trip concludes.

Group Leader Description

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officers (CEO). The aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting- we think it's the best of both worlds.

Group Size Notes

Max 16, avg 12

Meals Included

25 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 9 dinners

Transport

Private vehicles, plane, walking.

Local Flights

Please be aware that flight delays between Bishkek and Dushanbe can occur. Your CEO may need to make adjustments to your itinerary in case of flight schedule changes.

Solo Travellers

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Accommodation

Standard hotels/guesthouses (20 nts), yurts (4 nts), homestay (1 nt).

My Own Room Exceptions

Please note that if you have booked the "My Own Room" option for this tour, you will receive your own single accommodation for all night stops, with the following exceptions: Days 3, 5 & 17 (yurt stay); Day 10-11 (lake homestay); Day 23 (camping near Derwaza Crater)

About Accommodation

Standard hotels/guesthouses (19 nts), yurts (3 nts), CBT homestays (2 nts), tented camp (1 nt). Please note that there will be shared bathroom facilities when staying in the yurts.

Joining Hotel

For details of your joining hotel please refer to your tour voucher, G Account, the G Adventures App or contact your travel agent.

Joining Instructions

When you arrive to Bishkek International Airport (Manas International Airport), you will have two options to get to your starting hotel.

TAXI: we always recommend printing out the address of the hotel (in the native language as well as English if available), to show to your taxi driver.

Once you exit from the customs area there will be a lot of drivers offering taxi services, but on the ground floor there is also an Information Desk where you can get assistance with arranging an official taxi service.

If you have paid in advance for an arrival transfer, a G Adventures representative will be at the airport to meet you. If for any reason you are not met at the airport, please call our local support line. If you are unable to make contact for whatever reason, please make your way to the joining point hotel via taxi.

Please note that Day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned for that day other than your welcome meeting in the evening, so you can arrive at any time. Similarly the last day is a departure day during which no activities have been planned.

A G Adventures Representative will organize a short meeting soon after arrival, during which you will meet other tour participants and receive information about general and specific aspects of the trip. A welcome note will be left for you in the hotel so you have all the necessary information regarding the meeting time. If you arrive late, s/he will leave you a message detailing what time and where you should meet the next morning.

Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your leader, please refer to our emergency contact details. If you have pre-booked an airport transfer and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please apply to your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

AIRPORT TRANSFER

If you have purchased an arrival through G Adventures or if an arrival transfer is included in the cost of your tour, please note that:

Your arrival transfer has been arranged based on flight information provided to us. If you are advised of a flight schedule change within 48 hours of your scheduled arrival time, we will do our best to rearrange your arrival transfer however we cannot guarantee this. If your arrival transfer does not arrive within 30 minutes after you have exited the arrivals area please take a taxi to your start point hotel.

If your call is specifically concerning Airport Transfer complications please call our local G Adventures Transfer provider directly at: +996 550 393 920 (Ms. Olga)

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Office Central Asia:

Mr. Laziz Otayarov (Operations Manager - Central Asia)

Mobile 1: +99890 963 4779 (24h)

Mobile 2: +99897 921 7087 (24h)

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0344 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 0800 365 1000

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

What to Take

What you need to bring will vary according to the trip style you have chosen, the countries you are visiting and when you are travelling. Generally speaking though, you should pack as lightly as possible. On the vast majority of our trips you are expected to carry your own luggage (please see below for exceptions), and though you will not be required to walk long distances with your luggage (max 30 minutes) we recommend keeping the weight under 10kg/22lb.

Suitcases are not recommended for G Adventures travellers! Most travellers carry their luggage in a backpack, although an overnight bag with a shoulder strap would suffice if you travel lightly. Smaller bags with wheels are acceptable, although we recommend your bag has carry straps as well, as you may be required to negotiate bus and railway station steps. You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water and a camera etc for day walks and day trips.

Packing List

Cold Weather:

- * Long-sleeved shirts or sweater

- * Scarf

- * Warm gloves

- * Warm hat

- * Warm layers

Conservative Dress:

- * Modest clothing that covers knees and shoulders (Long pants, long skirts, shirts that cover shoulders)

- * Shawl or scarf (for temple visits)

Documents:

- * Flight info (required) (Printouts of e-tickets may be required at the border)
- * Insurance info (required) (With photocopies)
- * Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- * Required visas or vaccination certificates (required) (With photocopies)
- * Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)

Essentials:

- * Binoculars (optional)
- * Camera (With extra memory cards and batteries)
- * Cash, credit and debit cards
- * Day pack (Used for daily excursions or short overnights)
- * Ear plugs
- * First-aid kit (should contain lip balm with sunscreen, sunscreen, whistle, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, bandaids/plasters, tape, anti-histamines, antibacterial gel/wipes, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, water purification tablets or drops, insect repellent, sewing kit, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
- * Flashlight/torch (Headlamps are ideal)
- * Fleece top/sweater
- * Footwear
- * Hat
- * Locks for bags
- * Long pants/jeans
- * Moneybelt
- * Outlet adapter
- * Personal entertainment (Reading and writing materials, cards, music player, etc.)
- * Reusable water bottle
- * Shirts/t-shirts
- * Sleepwear
- * Small travel towel
- * Sunglasses
- * Toiletries (Preferably biodegradable)
- * Watch and alarm clock
- * Waterproof backpack cover
- * Windproof rain jacket

Light Hiking:

- * Hiking boots/sturdy walking shoes
- * Hiking pants (Convertible/Zip-off and quick dry recommended)

Warm Weather:

- * Sandals/flip-flops
- * Shorts/skirts (Longer shorts/skirts are recommended)
- * Sun hat/bandana
- * Swimwear

Note: Though you can see lots of people in traditional clothes, Central Asia has adopted western style clothing as well. Don't hesitate to pack your usual travel clothes: in summer it can be shorts and t-shirts, sandals etc. We recommend not to bring tank tops/singlets and any types of clothes with bare shoulders and backs - it is unacceptable in most areas, even in bigger cities. Our tour takes us to many religious sights, where dress code is very strict. We recommend women to have a headscarf in their day bags to cover up when going inside mosques (it's also a great help in the heat in summer). Best things to pack for the hot Central Asian climate is loose, long clothing - long trousers and sarongs or long skirts for women.

Laundry

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

Visas and Entry Requirements

Uzbekistan:

PLEASE READ THE ENTIRETY OF THE TEXT BELOW AS THIS IS IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOUR ENTRY INTO UZBEKISTAN

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself with the Embassy of Uzbekistan.

For AYKU the days spent in Uzbekistan are as follows: Days 13-22

AYBA - The Five Stans of the Silk Road: Days 13-22

Uzbekistan Visa Exemptions: Citizens of the following countries do not require a visa to enter Uzbekistan for stays up to 30 days:

Australia, Austria, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Vatican, Luxembourg, Hungary, Brunei Darussalam, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Canada, Andorra,

Liechtenstein, Monaco, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden , Latvia, Lithuania, Mongolia, New Zealand, Portugal, Bulgaria, Republic of Cyprus, Malta, Poland, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Chile, Romania, Slovakia, United Kingdom, Germany, Brazil, Finland, Montenegro, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Estonia, Israel, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Turkey

Citizens of the following countries do not require a visa to enter Uzbekistan for stays up to 90 days:
Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine

Citizens that are eligible to apply for E-Visa online:
Albania, France, India, Kuwait, China (including Hong Kong), Macedonia, UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, USA, Thailand

With E-Visa, no need to request LOI or apply for Visa at Uzbekistan Consulate or Embassy. The E-Visa is eligible for 30 days, single entry.
Uzbek E- visa website: <https://e-visa.gov.uz>
For question "Preliminary place of residence in Uzbekistan", please provide following: "Uzbektourism Licensed Hotels"

Nationalities which are not listed on Uzbekistan Visa exemptions list or not on the E-Visa list are required to apply for Visa Approval/Telex No prior to their Uzbekistan Visa application at Uzbekistan Consulate. In order to get Visa Approval/LOI you will be required to fill out & submit the request form (<https://www.gadventures.com/visa-forms/Uzbekistan/>). It takes about 7-10 business days to get the approval from Uzbekistan MFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Once Visa Approval No/LOI is received we will forward it to you/your agent. Please print out the Visa Approval/Telex No along with duly completed Uzbekistan visa application form & submit to the Uzbekistan Consulate.

Information accurate as of September 12th, 2018

Tajikistan

PLEASE READ THE ENTIRETY OF THE TEXT BELOW AS THIS IS IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOUR ENTRY INTO TAJIKISTAN

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself with the Embassy of Tajikistan. Please, keep in mind that all countries require passports valid for at least 6 months from the moment of departure from the country.

To apply for Tajikistan visa please follow the Tajikistan E-Visa link: <https://www.evisa.tj>

Essential info & answers for online E visa application

Applicant Type: Individual
Purpose of the visa type: Tourism
GBAO Permit: No (you will not be required to apply for this permit)
Date of arrival: The date you enter & exit from Tajikistan (below are the days per trip code you enter & exit from Tajikistan)
AWDT - Highlights of Tajikistan: Days 1-5
AWTU - Best of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan: Days 1-5
AYBT - Best of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan: Days 9-13
AYKU - Multi-Stan Adventure - Bishkek to Tashkent: Days 9-13
AYBA - The Five Stans Of The Silk Road: Days 9-13

Address in Tajikistan
Dushanbe - "Atlas Hotel" - 32,34 Nisor Mukhammad st, Dushanbe, Tajikistan 734124
Khujand - "Feruz Hotel" - Lenina street 223, Khujand

If required:
The local operator in Tajikistan - "Panjakent Intour"
Address: 12, Borbadi Marvazi street, Panjakent
Tel: +992 3475 56674

The cost of E Visa for most of nationalities is 50 USD & other detailed info can be obtained by following the link
[herehttps://www.evisa.tj/index.evisa.html#/getinformed](https://www.evisa.tj/index.evisa.html#/getinformed)

Information accurate as of September 12th, 2018

Kazakhstan:

PLEASE READ THE ENTIRETY OF THE TEXT BELOW AS THIS IS IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOUR ENTRY INTO KAZAKHSTAN

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself with the Embassy of Kazakhstan. Please, keep in mind that all countries require passports valid for at least 6 months from the moment of departure from the country.

To apply for a Kazakhstan visa, some nationalities must present an official Kazakhstan Letter of Invitation (LOI).

Noted Exemptions: Citizens of the following countries do not require a visa to enter Kazakhstan for stays up to 30 days (90 days for countries marked with *):

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia*, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia*, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine*, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), namely Azerbaijan, Armenia*, Belarus*, Kyrgyzstan*, Moldova*, Russia*, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR TRAVELERS WHOSE ARE NOT LISTED ABOVE : Once your trip is confirmed, at 90 days prior to your entry into Kazakhstan, you must submit an application for your Letter of Invitation. A link will be emailed to you in your confirmation email. The details will be forwarded to our local agent in Kazakhstan and you will be emailed your Kazakhstan Invitation Letter about 60 days before the trip start date. Kazakhstan LOI's cannot be rushed.

Kazakhstan visas can be used up to 3 months from the date the visa is issued, and once you have entered Kazakhstan, the visa is valid for a maximum of 30 days. Therefore, please time your application accordingly and do not apply for the visa more than 3 months in advance of your trip.

Input your name the same way it is in your passport. The information on the application form must match your passport (if you have 2 or more names - all of them have to be listed under "first name"). If you have an umlaut or other character not recognized in the English alphabet in your name (ie. ü), please enter it in the longer form (ie. ue).

For the following multi-country trips, the days spent in Kazakhstan are as follows:

AYBT - Best of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan: Days 7-9

AYKK - Highlights of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan: Days 7-9

AYKU - Multi-Stan Adventure - Bishkek to Tashkent: Days 7-9

AYBA - The Five Stans of the Silk Road: Days 7-9

The Kazakhstan Government has implemented a new requirement asking passengers to provide a Letter of Employment (LOE) in order to issue the LOI. Please make sure to attach this LOE to your LOI application below as both are required to begin this process. This should be a letter from your employer, dated and on company letterhead, that states where you work, your role and how long you have worked there. It should also have the issuer's name, signature, as well as their role and the company address and phone number. If you are retired, a LOE is not necessary.

If your country has an official Kazakhstan Consulate/Embassy, you must choose this as your 'Visa pickup Embassy'. If you do not see a local Consulate/Embassy on this list or you are unable to go there due to prior travel arrangements, please contact your Travel Agent or G Adventures for further assistance. Certain nationalities may be able to obtain a visa upon arrival at the Almaty Airport, but you must make sure to check with your Embassy if this applies for your nationality before choosing this option.

At time of writing, the below documents will be needed to obtain your visa (however, we do advise you confirm this with your nearest Embassy):

1. A standard visa application form from the Embassy or Consulate where you will collect your visa
2. 1 colour, passport sized photos (taken within 14 days)
3. Payment for the visa (this will be dependent on nationality and will sometimes need to be made at a local nearby bank - check with your Embassy to confirm details)
4. Passport with empty pages and at least 6 months validity
5. Kazakhstan Letter of Invitation/reference number
6. Flight tickets providing entrance and proof of onward travel
7. Copy of travel insurance in a hard copy
8. We also recommend bringing your vouchers and a copy of the itinerary, printable from our website. While this may not be needed, we recommend having a copy on hand if needed.

Information accurate as of September 12th, 2018

Kyrgyzstan:

*****PLEASE READ THE ENTIRETY OF THE TEXT BELOW AS THIS IS IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOUR ENTRY INTO KYRGYZSTAN*****

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself with the Embassy of Kyrgyzstan. Please, keep in mind that all countries require passports valid for at least 6 months from the moment of departure from the country.

Citizens of the following countries can enter Kyrgyzstan without visa for a stay up to 60 days:

Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Vatican, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

Citizens of the following countries do not need an LOI, and can obtain a visa at any Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic or upon arrival at the Bishkek airport:

Albania, Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Cyprus, Indonesia, Israel, Macedonia, Mexico, Montenegro, Oman, Philippines, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela.

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR TRAVELERS WHOSE ARE NOT LISTED ABOVE:

Once your trip is confirmed, at 90 days prior to your entry into Kyrgyzstan, you must submit an application for your Letter of Invitation. A link will be emailed to you in your confirmation email. The details will be forwarded to our local agent in Kyrgyzstan and you will be emailed your Kyrgyzstan Invitation Letter about 60 days

before the trip start date. Kyrgyzstan LOI's cannot be rushed.

Kyrgyzstan visas can be used up to 3 months from the date the visa is issued, and once you have entered Kyrgyzstan, the visa is valid for a maximum of 30 days. Therefore, please time your application accordingly and do not apply for the visa more than 3 months in advance of your trip. Please apply for stamp visa, DO NOT apply for an E Visa. E Visas will not be accepted as an exit document when crossing the border of Kyrgyzstan to Kazakhstan.

Input your name the same way it is in your passport. The information on the application form must match your passport (if you have 2 or more names - all of them have to be listed under "first name"). If you have an umlaut or other character not recognized in the english alphabet in your name (ie. ü), please enter it in the longer form (ie. ue).

For the following multi-country trips, the days spent in Kyrgyzstan are as follows:

AYKU - Multi-Stan Adventure - Bishkek to Tashkent: Days 1-7

AYBT - Best of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan: Days 1-7

AYKK - Highlights of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan: Days 1-7

AYBA - The Five Stans of the Silk Road: Days 1-7

If your country has an official Kyrgyzstan Consulate/Embassy, you must choose this as your 'Visa pickup Embassy'. If you do not see a local Consulate/Embassy on this list or you are unable to go there due to prior travel arrangements, please contact your Travel Agent or G Adventures for further assistance. Certain nationalities may be able to obtain a visa upon arrival at the Bishkek Airport, but you must make sure to check with your Embassy if this applies for your nationality before choosing this option.

At time of writing, the below documents will be needed to obtain your visa (however, we do advise you confirm this with your nearest Embassy):

1. A standard visa application form from the Embassy or Consulate where you will collect your visa
2. 1 colour, passport sized photo, taken within 14 days
3. Payment for the visa (this will be dependent on nationality and will sometimes need to be made at a local nearby bank - check with your Embassy to confirm details)
4. Passport with empty pages and at least 6 months validity
5. Kyrgyzstan Letter of Invitation/reference number
6. Flight tickets providing entrance and proof of onward travel
7. Copy of travel insurance in a hard copy
8. We also recommend bringing your vouchers and a copy of the itinerary, printable from our website. While this may not be needed, we recommend having a copy on hand if needed.

Please carefully check all the information below prior to submitting

Once you have received your LOI you can apply for your visa by going to the Kyrgyzstan Embassy you listed in the online application. Please remember that it is your responsibility to check whether passport details, name spelling and dates on the LOI are correct.

Information accurate as of September 12th, 2018

Turkmenistan:

All nationalities require a Visa to enter Turkmenistan. In order to secure your visa, you must first apply for a Letter of Invitation through G Adventures. Once your trip is confirmed, please submit your application for your Turkmenistan Letter of Invitation no later than 40 days before the start of your tour. A link will be emailed to you in your confirmation email. At the approximate 40 day mark from date of first travel, your Visa application details will be forwarded to our local agent in Turkmenistan, who will submit your documents to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan. This will take around 2 to 4 weeks to process.

Important Note:

If you submit your Letter of Invitation application inside of 40 days from departure date, you will be subject to having your Letter of Invitation process expedited for an additional fee of approximately \$70USD per person. It will take approximately 7 to 10 business days in order to process and approve your expedited Turkmenistan Letter of Invitation application.

Once your Letter of Invitation is processed and approved, we will send this information to your CEO guide who will be leading that trip. As our trip crosses in to Turkmenistan overland, Visa can be obtained at the (Shavat) border. Our CEOs will be responsible for presenting the LOIs to Immigration officials, each traveller will then collect their Visa individually in their passport after paying for their Visa Fee and Immigration tax.

Visa fees vary per nationality. European, US, Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand nationals pay approximately \$60USD per person. Nationals from the United Kingdom pay approximately \$90USD per person. Immigration tax paid at the border is approximately \$15USD per person.

Important Note:

Visa at the border can be paid only in cash in USD (Good condition notes without marks or stamps are accepted). In case our travellers had no chance to get cash USD in their home country, there is a possibility to withdraw USD cash in Uzbekistan's bank prior going to border.

The days spend in Turkmenistan are as follows:

AUTA - Best of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan: Days 9 - 13

AYBA - The Five Stans of the Silk Road: Days 22 - 26

Detailed Trip Notes

Border Crossings for AYBA:

Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan border - Kegen - Tup/Kensu border

Tajikistan/Uzbekistan border - Oybek border

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Money Exchange

In general Central Asia is a cash operating region, and travellers cheques are not recommended. Due to bank restrictions, only banknotes printed after 1996 can be exchanged. Better to bring notes without marks or stamps on them. We recommend to bring about 70 USD in small denominations: 1, 5 and 10 USD notes. If you are not able to get local currency it's always possible to pay in USD or EUR.

Uzbekistan

There are lots of ATM's to withdraw local currency (UZS), and banks around to exchange USD or EUR. Travellers cheques are not recommended, as only limited amount of banks work with them. Please, note that you can withdraw only local currency (Uzbek Sums) from ATM's. Some banks in Tashkent allow USD cash advance, but this option depends on the amount of USD cash in the bank.

Kazakhstan

The preferred currency for local transactions is the tenge, and local establishments rarely accept credit cards so keep cash on hand. ATMs in Kazakhstan are accessible in the larger cities, and withdrawals can be made by credit card. There are many currency exchange locations available to exchange EUR, USD, GBP, Russian rouble, Kyrgyz som and Chinese yuan.

Kyrgyzstan

The preferred currency for local transactions is the som, and local establishments rarely accept credit cards so keep cash on hand. There are many of ATMs accessible in Bishkek and other larger cities such as Cholpon Ata and Karakol. Larger cities will also have money exchange locations that will trade EUR, USD, Roubles; some locations will trade GBP, and Chinese yuan.

Tajikistan

The preferred currency for local transactions is the somoni, and local establishments rarely accept credit cards so keep cash on hand. You may be able to pay in USD and EUR in some places, however, it is recommended that you take out somoni at ATMs in Dushanbe; there are very few ATMs outside of Dushanbe, and those that exist are less dependable.

Emergency Fund

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

Tipping

In Central Asia It is not customary to tip service providers such as waiters, but it is very appreciated, depending on the service we recommend 3-5%. Tipping shows an expression of satisfaction with the people who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from \$2-\$3 USD per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture. Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline \$20-25 USD per person, per week can be used.

Optional Activities

Song-Köl

- Hiking in Song Kül (Free)

Kolsay Lakes National Park

- Hiking in Kolsay Lakes National Park (Free)

Almaty

- Zelyony Bazaar (Free)

- Optional Welcome Meeting for Travellers on Combos

Samarkand

- Amir Timur Mausoleum Visit (3USD per person)

- Tomb of the Old Testament Prophet Daniel Visit (3USD per person)

Aydar Kul Camp
- Kazakh Singing (Free)

Bukhara
- Hammam (Bathhouse) Visit (20USD per person)
- Carpet Museum (1USD per person)
- Jewish Area and Synagogue Visit (Free)
- Chor-Bakr Complex

Dashoguz
- Bai Bazaar (Free)
- Dashoguz Museum (10USD per person)

Ashgabat
- Ashgabat Hippodrome (Free)
- Ertugrul Gazi Mosque (Free)

Health

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that sometimes we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. In Asia pharmacies tend to stock the same western drugs as you get at home but they are usually produced locally so please bring the full drug name with you when trying to purchase a prescription drug. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

Safety and Security

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/

Trip Specific Safety

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

Planeterra Foundation - the non-profit partner of G Adventures

Planeterra International Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to turning travel into impact by helping local communities earn an income from tourism. Planeterra connects underserved local communities to the benefits of tourism by developing and supporting small community-owned businesses. These businesses support Indigenous people, empower women, grant youth access to employment opportunities, and protect the environment. Planeterra also works to ensure these businesses have a thriving customer base by integrating their projects into G Adventures' itineraries globally. G Adventures is Planeterra's largest corporate donor, covering all operating costs, so 100% of your donation will bring opportunity to people in need.

G Adventures Dollar-a-day Program - Make Every Day Count - Turn your travel into impact with [Planeterra Foundation](#).

Did you know? Most communities around the world do not benefit from tourism. Give back to the places you visit on your travels by creating opportunities for local people to earn an income, and protect the environment.

Make every day count by donating \$1/day for the length of your trip, and join us in empowering the communities you will visit when you travel. 100% of your donation goes directly to Planeterra projects.

Local Dress

Central Asian dress is quite conservative. Plan to pack loose-fitting light clothing appropriate for hot weather and plan to cover knees, shoulders and chest. For women, a hair scarf is recommended, though they are easy to buy in country.

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Your tour evaluation will be e-mailed to you 24 hours after the conclusion of your trip. If you do not receive the tour evaluation link in the days after your tour has finished, please drop us a line at customerservice@gadventures.com and we will send it on to you.

Minimum Age

You must be 18 to travel unaccompanied on a G Adventures tour. For minors travelling with a guardian over 21 years old, the minimum age is 12.

International Flights

Check-in times and baggage allowances/restrictions vary by airline and can change at any time. For the most up-to-date information for your flight, please contact your airline. We recommend checking in online in advance to avoid potential delays at the airport.