Itinerary

19 Day Five Stans of The Silk Road 2027

***IMPORTANT NOTE: Any extra nights, optional tours or other amendments, will not be visible on this itinerary.**

Day 1: Arrive Almaty, Kazakhstan

Welcome to Kazakhstan. On arrival in Almaty, you will be met and transferred to your hotel.

After check-in, take some time to settle in before exploring Kazakhstan's largest city. Almaty is known for its leafy streets, mountain backdrop and rich cultural heritage.

Depending on your arrival time, you may enjoy a guided city tour today. Highlights include 28 Panfilov Guardsmen Park, Zenkov Cathedral, the Museum of History and Republic Square.

MEALS: Nil

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Kazzhol, Almaty

Day 2: Almaty ~ City Tour

After breakfast, head towards Esik to visit the Esik Burial Mounds and Esik State Historical and Cultural Museum.

This important archaeological site is linked to the Scythian-Saka period and is one of Kazakhstan's greatest discoveries. The area is best known for the tomb of the "Golden Man", an unplundered burial site filled with remarkable historical treasures.

Return to Almaty for lunch before continuing to Medeo Gorge, located around 25 kilometres from the city. Sitting at more than 2,000 metres above sea level, this scenic mountain area is home to the world's highest mountain skating rink.

Along the way, stop near the dam that helps protect Almaty from avalanches and mudslides. Then, take a cable car ride for panoramic views across the Tien-Shan Mountains.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: N/A

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Kazzhol, Almaty

Day 3: Almaty ~ Karakol, Kyrgyzstan

After breakfast, depart Almaty and travel towards the Kyrgyzstan border.

After completing border formalities, continue into Kyrgyzstan and travel through the scenic Karkara Valley. This picturesque mountain region is known for its open landscapes, seasonal wildflowers and rural scenery.

Continue to Karakol, a charming town near the eastern edge of Issyk-Kul Lake. On arrival, check in and enjoy the evening at leisure.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: 8 Hours

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: 400 km

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Green Yard, Karakol

Day 4: Karakol ~ Bokonbaevo

After breakfast, enjoy a short sightseeing tour of Karakol, a town known for its old Russian style houses and historic charm.

Visit the Russian Orthodox Church, built in 1886, and the Dungan Mosque, built in 1899 without the use of nails. These sites reflect the diverse cultural history of the region.

Afterwards, continue to Jeti-Oguz Gorge, famous for its striking red sandstone rock formations. The surrounding pastures are still used by local shepherds for sheep and horses.

Later, travel along the southern shore of Issyk-Kul Lake. This vast alpine lake is surrounded by the snow-capped Terskei and Kungei Ala-Tau mountain ranges.

Tonight, stay in a traditional yurt camp and experience a memorable night in the Kyrgyz countryside.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: 4 Hours

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: 120 km

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Yurt Camp, Bokonbaevo

Day 5: Bokonbaevo ~ Bishkek

After breakfast, depart Bokonbaevo and continue along the southern shore of Issyk-Kul Lake.

This scenic alpine lake sits between the snow-capped Terskei and Kungei Ala-Tau mountain ranges. Along the way, enjoy changing views of mountains, lake scenery and rural Kyrgyz landscapes.

Continue to Bishkek, the capital and largest city of Kyrgyzstan. Known for its green parks, wide streets and mountain backdrop, Bishkek offers a relaxed introduction to city life in Kyrgyzstan.

On arrival, enjoy a short sightseeing tour including Ala-Too Square, Oak Park, public monuments, government buildings and local theatres.

This evening, enjoy a folklore show with traditional music and cultural performances.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: 8 Hours

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: 400 km

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Plaza, Bishkek

Day 6: Bishkek ~ Osh

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your morning flight to Osh.

Please note, flight details will be provided once on tour and are subject to local scheduling.

On arrival, begin exploring one of the oldest cities in Kyrgyzstan. Osh is believed to be more than 3,000 years old and was once an important stop on the Silk Road.

Visit Suleiman Mountain, a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in the heart of the city. This sacred mountain is also known as Solomon's Throne and remains an important place for local pilgrims.

Continue to the colourful Osh Bazaar and Historical Museum before visiting a local bread bakery. Here, learn how traditional lepyoshka bread is prepared, shaped and baked in a tandyr oven.

Later, visit the workshop of Zakir Aka, a local craftsman who has been making handmade knives for almost 60 years.

APPROXIMATE FLIGHT TIME: 1 Hour

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Sunrise, Osh

Day 7: Osh ~ Khujand, Tajikistan

After breakfast, depart Osh and travel towards the Tajikistan border at Kyzyl-Bel.

After completing border formalities, continue to Khujand, one of the oldest cities in Central Asia. This historic city sits in northern Tajikistan and has long been an important cultural and trading centre.

On arrival, visit the Mausoleum of Sheikh Muslihiddin, a respected poet and former ruler of Khujand from the 12th century.

Continue to the Historical Museum, located inside the city's citadel, before visiting Payshanba Bazaar, the largest bazaar in Tajikistan.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: 8 Hours

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: 370 km

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Khujand Grand, Khujand

Day 8: Khujand ~ Dushanbe

After breakfast, depart Khujand and travel towards Dushanbe, passing through the Varzob Gorge and Istiklol Tunnel.

Along the way, stop in the ancient city of Istarafshan, believed to have been founded by Cyrus the Great in the 7th century. Explore the old town, including the Shohi-Zinda Mosque and Mug Teppe.

Continue your journey through local villages, with the chance to see everyday life in rural Tajikistan. Along the way, enjoy changing mountain scenery and views of the surrounding countryside.

On arrival in Dushanbe, check in and enjoy the evening at leisure.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: 8 Hours

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: 350 km

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Atlas, Dushanbe

Day 9: Dushanbe ~ City Tour

After breakfast, begin exploring Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan.

The city's name means "Monday" in Tajik, as it grew from a village known for its Monday market. Today, Dushanbe blends wide boulevards, cultural landmarks and traces of its ancient past.

Visit the Museum of Antiquities, home to the UNESCO-protected reclining Buddha, the largest Buddha statue in Central Asia.

Continue to the main mosque, old synagogue, Russian Orthodox Church, Rudaki Park and Shah-Mansur Bazaar.

Later, travel to Hissar Fortress, the ruins of an 18th century fort from the Emirate of Bukhara.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: N/A

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Atlas, Dushanbe

Day 10: Dushanbe ~ Samarkand, Uzbekistan

After breakfast, depart Dushanbe and travel towards Penjikent, one of the most ancient cities in Central Asia.

On arrival, visit the excavation site of Old Penjikent, often described as the “Pompeii” of Central Asia. This historic site features remains of former palaces, ancient settlements and necropolises.

Continue to the Rudaki Museum and explore the old town of Penjikent before travelling onwards to Samarkand.

After completing border formalities, enter Uzbekistan and continue to Samarkand, one of the most famous cities along the Silk Road.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: 8 Hours

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: 300 km

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Asia, Samarkand

Day 11: Samarkand ~ City Tour

After breakfast, begin exploring Samarkand, one of the most important cities along the ancient Silk Road.

This historic city has long been a crossroads of cultures, trade and learning. Founded as ancient Afrosiab, Samarkand became especially important during the Timurid period.

Visit the famous Registan Square, once the heart of Samarkand. Here, see three impressive madrasahs, including Ulug-Bek Madrasah, Tillya-Kori Madrasah and Sher-Dor Madrasah.

Continue to Gur Emir, the grand mausoleum of Tamerlane. This beautiful site is one of Samarkand’s most significant landmarks.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: N/A

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Asia, Samarkand

Day 12: Samarkand ~ Bukhara

After breakfast, depart Samarkand and travel to Bukhara, subject to train ticket availability.

Your route follows part of the ancient Silk Road, once used by traders, scholars and travellers moving through Central Asia.

Bukhara is one of the region’s great historic trading centres. The city has long been known for its scholarship, religion, culture and impressive Islamic architecture.

On arrival, begin exploring the old city, including the Poi Kalon complex, Kalon Minaret, Kalon Mosque and Mir-Arab Madrasah.

Continue through the Toki Zargaron trading domes and visit Magoki Attori Mosque before checking in to your hotel.

APPROXIMATE TRAIN TIME: 2 Hours

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: 270 km

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Asia, Bukhara

Day 13: Bukhara ~ City Tour

After breakfast, continue exploring Bukhara, one of Central Asia's most atmospheric Silk Road cities.

Begin with a visit to the oriental bazaar, filled with traditional colours, local character and the rich aromas of daily market life.

Continue through the old city, visiting some of Bukhara's most beautiful mosques, madrasahs and historic monuments.

Highlights include the Ark Citadel, Mausoleum of the Samanids, Chor Minor Madrasah, Lyabi Khauz Square, Chashma Ayub Mausoleum and Bolo Mosque.

Later, enjoy free time to explore at your own pace, take photos or browse the local shops and laneways.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: N/A

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Asia, Bukhara

Day 14: Bukhara ~ Khiva

After breakfast, depart Bukhara and travel across the Kizilkum Desert towards Khiva.

This desert route has been crossed for centuries by traders, nomads, invading armies and explorers travelling through Central Asia.

Along the way, stop near the Amudarya River, also known as the Oxus River, before continuing through the desert landscapes.

On arrival in Khiva, check in and enjoy your first impressions of this remarkable walled city.

Known as the "Pearl of Khorezm Oasis", Khiva is famous for its narrow streets, carved wooden doors, historic buildings and living old town atmosphere.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: 8 Hours

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: 470 km

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Malika, Khiva

Day 15: Khiva ~ City Tour

After breakfast, begin exploring Khiva, one of Uzbekistan's most atmospheric Silk Road cities.

This winding old town feels like an open-air museum, with ancient walls, narrow laneways, minarets, mosques and traditional workshops.

Explore the old town of Khiva, including Kunya Ark Fortress, Mohammed Amin Khan Madrasah, Islamic Khodja Minaret, Palvan Kari Complex and Rafanek Madrasah.

Continue to Uch-Avliyo Mausoleum, Juma Mosque, Tash-Hauli Palace and Arab Mohammed Khan Madrasah.

Throughout the day, admire ornate wood carvings, historic courtyards and the living traditions that still shape daily life in Khiva.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: N/A

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Malika, Khiva

Day 16: Khiva ~ Darwaza, Turkmenistan

After breakfast, depart Khiva and travel towards the Turkmenistan border.

After completing border formalities, enter Turkmenistan, the final Stan of your Central Asia journey.

Continue to Konya-Urgench, the former capital of ancient Khorezm. This important UNESCO-listed site features historic mosques, mausoleums, minarets and caravanserai remains.

Later, continue through the Karakum Desert towards Darwaza, home to the famous Darwaza Gas Crater.

Also known as the "Gateway to Hell", this fiery crater has been burning since 1971 and is especially spectacular at sunset.

This evening, enjoy a BBQ dinner near the crater before overnighting in a yurt camp.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: 8 Hours

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: 380 km

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Yurt Camp, Darwaza

Day 17: Darwaza ~ Ashgabat

After breakfast, depart Darwaza and travel towards Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan.

On arrival around midday, transfer to a local restaurant for lunch before continuing to your hotel for check-in and a short rest.

This afternoon, enjoy an introductory city tour of Ashgabat. Visit the city centre, Russian Bazaar, Ertogrul Gazi Mosque, Independence Park and Neutrality Arch.

Continue to the Wedding Palace viewpoint for sweeping views across this striking and unusual capital city.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: 5 Hours

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: 275 km

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Sport, Ashgabat

Day 18: Ashgabat ~ City Tour

After breakfast, continue exploring Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan.

Begin with a visit to Nisa, the former winter capital of the Parthian rulers and one of the country's most important archaeological sites.

Continue to the National Museum of History, home to a rich collection of ancient artefacts and traditional exhibits.

Later, drive to a local stud farm to see the famous Akhal-Teke horses. These elegant horses are a national symbol of Turkmenistan and have been bred in the region for thousands of years.

During your visit, see the stables and learn more about the care, training and importance of these remarkable horses.

This evening, enjoy a farewell dinner at a special local venue.

APPROXIMATE DRIVING TIME: N/A

APPROXIMATE DRIVING DISTANCE: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Sport, Ashgabat

Day 19: Depart Ashgabat

After breakfast at the hotel, check out and transfer to Ashgabat International Airport for your onward flight.

Your incredible journey through the 5 Stans comes to an end today. We thank you for travelling with MyHoliday2 and hope you have enjoyed an unforgettable experience exploring Central Asia’s Silk Road cities, mountain landscapes, desert scenery and vibrant cultures.

We wish you a safe and pleasant journey home and look forward to welcoming you on another MyHoliday2 adventure in the future.

MEALS: Breakfast