

CLASSICAL KAZAKHSTAN 10 DAYS



Day 1: Almaty

Your guide will pick you up at the Almaty International Airport and accompany you to Almaty. Almaty was the capital of independent Kazakhstan from 1991 to 1997. In 1997 the capital moved to Astana, and since then, Almaty has been referred to as the southern capital of Kazakhstan. Despite this change, Almaty remains the major financial/commercial center of Kazakhstan. The city is located in a mountainous area of southern Kazakhstan, near the border with Kyrgyzstan. Almaty is the largest, most developed, and most culturally diverse city in Kazakhstan. You will spend the night in a comfortable hotel.

Day 2: Almaty city tour – Medeu – Almaty

In the morning, we will start your city tour. Today, you will become acquainted with Almaty's fascinating history. We will start with the Ascension Cathedral – the second highest wooden building in the world! Then you will visit the Square of 28 Panfilov Heroes. Here you will see the Glory Memorial dedicated to the victims of the Civil War and World War II. Afterwards you will visit the Museum of Musical Instruments. After lunch you will have an excursion to Medeu, the winter sports complex that has been the home of many speed skating records. In the evening we will return to Almaty for rest and relaxation.



Day 3: Almaty city tour – Hawk Nursery – Green Bazaar – Kok Tebe – Almaty

In the morning we will start second part of the city tour. First, we will drive to the “Hawks Nursery” to see the many different hunting dogs and birds of prey. Here, specialists train hawks, eagles, and golden eagles to hunt at the command of the owner. Your guide will tell you about the fascinating tradition of hunting with these amazing birds. This is a photo opportunity you won't want to miss! We will take a guided tour of the Historical Museum to learn more about Kazakhstan. After lunch we will go for a walk in the Green Bazaar to capture the magic of an Asian market. In the evening, we will drive to Kok Tebe to capture a panoramic view of Almaty. Overnight will be in your hotel.

Day 4: Almaty – Charyn Canyon – Almaty

Today we will visit another popular place in Kazakhstan – Charyn Canyon. It is an amazing phenomenon of nature that took millions of years to create. The height of the steep mountainsides can reach 150-300 meters, and numerous ravines and gullies are dense with vegetation. Centuries of the erosional effects of wind and water created the stunning "Red Castles Valley". The length of it is more than two kilometers, while the width is a narrow 20-80 meters. All along the valley you are surrounded by towers of fantastical forms, built of sedimentary rock. Geologists have estimated their age to be 12 million years. The round-trip distance to Charyn Canyon is 400 km. In the evening, we will return to Almaty.

Day 5: Almaty – Issyk Lake – Almaty – night train to Shymkent

In the morning, we will drive to the most beautiful gorges in the world, the Trans - Ili Alatau - Issyk Gorge. Situated along the Kuldja Tract, caravans weaved their way through here on the Great Silk Road. Then the tour route will take you to an altitude of 1,756 meters above sea level, to the beautiful Issyk Lake, located in the valley with the same name. The lake was formed about 10,000 years ago due to colossal landslide, which resulted in the formation of a 300 meters high natural dam. On the lake you will enjoy the majestic beauty of its turquoise water and the Issyk Gorge, as well as having a rest to enjoy its beauty. In the evening you will return to Almaty city. At 10:10 p.m. you will take the night train to Shymkent (025T). You will sleep on the train (4 people/cabin) and in the morning you will arrive at your destination.

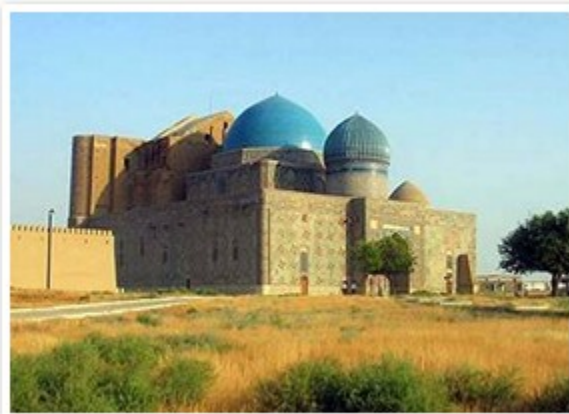
Day 6: Shymkent – Turkestan

You will arrive in Shymkent at 9:25 a.m. After breakfast, we will begin our journey by visiting a local bazaar to feel the spirit of Central Asian life! Here you will find numerous opportunities to capture the atmosphere of this truly colorful place.

After the bazaar, we will drive 160 km to for a full-day excursion to Turkestan. Turkistan attracts many people from throughout the world with its open-air historical monuments and a rich history that is hidden in its heritage. We will visit the Azret-Sultan historical-architectural complex and Khodja Akhmed Yassayu mausoleum. Yassayu was the first great Muslim holy man to bring Islam to the town, and the mausoleum was built on a grand scale by Timur in the late 14th century. Today it is one of the largest, outstanding, and best-preserved buildings of the Timurid period, and is considered to be Kazakhstan's greatest building – and one of the most important sites of Muslim pilgrimage in Central Asia. Also we will visit Turkistan's necropolis, oriental baths, and underground mosque. It is a small but very interesting town! Overnight is in your hotel.

Day 7: Turkestan – Arystan Bab – Aksu Jabagly

In the morning we will drive to Shymkent. On the way we will visit the famous Arystan Bab Mausoleum. The mausoleum was erected over the grave of the famous religious mystic, Arystan Bab, who lived in the 12th century. The first building of the mausoleum belongs to the 14th-15th centuries. Only the carved wooden pillars are left from it. In the 18th century on the site of an ancient tomb, which was destroyed by an earthquake, was built two domed building with aiwan, supported by two carved wooden columns. The building of 18th century was destroyed and in 1909 was rebuilt again. This information can be seen on one of the cartridge's frieze. In 1971, due to the high groundwater level leading to an emergency condition, the mosque was demolished and rebuilt. The building was built from baked bricks. In the afternoon we will return to Shymkent to overnight in a guesthouse.



Day 8: Aksu Jabagly Reserve

In the morning you will have a full-day excursion at the Aksu Jabagly Natural Park. Located on the western side of the Tien Shan Mountains, the park covers 74.4 thousand hectares. Founded in 1926, it was the first natural reserve Central Asia. In the reserve there are altitudinal belts of vegetation that vary from semi-desert to glacial zones. Several kinds of endemic species of plants grow on the territory of the reserve. You will be impressed with the mountain ridges, swift rivers and nature of the amazing beauty. There are several interesting destinations and activities inside the park for your enjoyment. You will personally attest that the Aksu River Canyon is one of the deepest canyons in Asia as you will go on a short hike to discern this, followed by an open-air picnic. Dinner and overnight will be in a guesthouse.

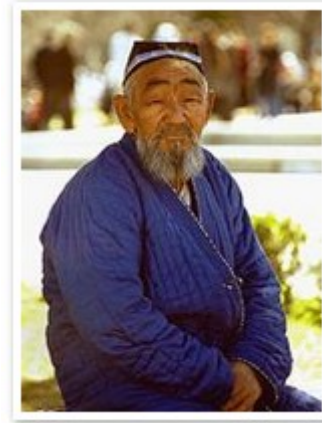
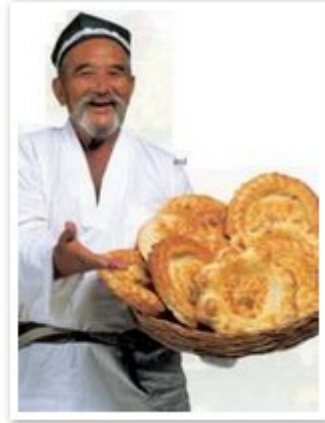
Day 9: Aksu Jabagly – Shymkent – Astana

In the morning we will drive to the Shymkent Airport to catch your flight to Astana. Upon our arrival in the capital of Kazakhstan, we will take a city tour. First of all you will visit the Astana – Baiterek Complex. This unique construction is one of the most famous symbols of Astana. The viewing platform is located at a height of 97 meters, and from here you will get a bird's eye view of the new capital. After a stroll around the city, you will have time to visit the Singing Fountains Alley. This wide alley cuts the left river-bank into two parts and represents a three-level, gallery-type construction consisting of two pavilions, glass transition-passes, open galleries, green lawns, colorful sidewalks, and huge bowls with musical fountains. Dinner will be in the early evening and you will get a good night's rest in your hotel.



Day 10: Flight

In the morning we will drive to the Astana Airport for flight home.



Service includes:

- Airport transfers
- Transport for all transfers and excursions
- Double room accommodation+Breakfsat:
- Mineral water during the tour
- Full-time service of your English speaking guide/interpreter
- Entry fees to museums

Service does not include:

- Single room accommodation
- Kazakh visa and visa support
- Personal travel insurance