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# Steppe Journeys

## Aral Sea and Uzbekistan Legends

*Bukhara. Photo by Kathleen Walsh*



**Day 1. Arrival in Tashkent from ??.** Pick up and transfer to your hotel. Overnight.

**Day 2. Tashkent city tour**

**Tashkent city tour**



This morning you will start the city tour and visit old city with Hasti Imam complex with osman Koran on 7<sup>th</sup> century, Chorsu bazar, Madina's Embroidery boutique shop, Bibihanim Silk and Ikat boutique shop in Chorsu bazar, Kukeldash madrasah, Applied arts museum, Tashkent metro and Independence square. Overnight in Ichan kala hotel.

**Day 3. Tashkent to Nukus flight and trip to Aral Sea**



Tashkent-Nukus flight at 0730-0950

Transfer to airport and upon arrival in Nukus airport drive to Aral Sea 400 km one way drive. Nukus-Kungrad-Usturt Plateau- Sudochie lake-Aral sea )

Departure from Nukus to discover the Usturt Plateau and Aral sea life. Pass via Kungrad district – which used to be one of the trading centers on the Silk Road. Continue to the Usturt Plateau. Stop at the Lake Sudochie, have lunch, see the fishermen's house. Old fish factory. Continue the way to Aral sea. On the way visit the former Light House, see the settlement of the gas plant. Stop to take pictures of beautiful Canyons and the collapsed land. Arrive to Aral Sea. Set up the tent. Dinner. Overnight in the Yurt at the shore.

**Day 4. Aral Sea-Nukus drive back**



Aral-sea-Moynak-MizdakhanXIVc-Nukus

Early wake up to take pictures of sun rise. Have breakfast. Transfer to Moynak village, which is known as "cemetery of ships" nowadays. Drive on the dried bottom of the sea, pass the gas towers, arrive to Uchsai – Gas Plant. Lunch. Back to Nukus, on the way stop at Mizdak-khan architectural complex of the XIV c and Gaur kala that was destroyed by Shingiz-khan. Overnight in Nukus.

### Day 5. Nukus-Chilpik-Ayazkala-Khiva 200 km



After breakfast visit famous Savitskiy museum which is one of the 2 biggest Avant-Garde museums in the world. You will discover soviet art of 1930-1970 , ethnography of Karakalpak people. Later drive to Khiva via Chilpik, Ayazkala ancient fortresses dating back 1-5 Centuries AD. Overnight in Khiva.

### Day 6. Khiva full day city tour



Khiva is a museum in open air with many mosques, madrasah, caravansaray, harem, minarets, workshops and museums. You will see all these master piece of Architecture of Khiva, its people living in Ichan kala and enjoy local food in one of the families of Khiva. Highlights of Ichan are: Kunya Ark, Pahlavan Mahmud's mausoleum, Juma mosque with 218 pillars, Harem Tash Hauli. Overnight.

### Day 7. Khiva to Bukhara 500 km, 6 hrs drive

Drive to Bukhara via Kyzylkum desert. Arrival in Bukhara, if the hotel room is available for early check you can check in or proceed for city tour in Bukhara . Visit Summer palace Sitorai Mohi Hossa and Bahuddin Naqshbandiy necropolis, the holy shrine of uzbek muslims and one of the sufiy leaders in Islam. Overnight.

### Day 8. Bukhara full day city tour

Bukhara- Today's full day city tour, all on foot through this ancient, holy city, includes Chashmai Ayub mausoleum, Ismail Samani mausoleum, Bolo Hauz mosque and Ark Fortress. You will see palaces, trade domes, mosques, madrasas, hanaka, Turkish hammam, the bazaar and many souvenir shops. After lunch at a local restaurants or café. you visit Kalyan minaret, Ulughbek and Abdulazizkhan madrasa, Nadir Divan Begi Madrasa and Khanaka, Magaki Attari mosque, Chor Minor madrasa. You can finish city tour with an optional folk show in Nadir Divan Begi madrasa at 1800. Overnight.



### Day 9. Bukhara city tour

Today you will visit outside of Bukhara city. Summer palace which is called Sitorai Mohi Hossa which was constructed for the last emir of Bukhara. Later you will visit Bahauddin Naqshbandiy necropolis, a holy site of central Asian muslims. Afternoon free time for your own activities. Overnight

### Day 10. Bukhara to Samarkand via Shahrisabz

Bukhara-Shahrisabz-Samarkand 290 km+140 km

After breakfast, transfer to Samarkand via Shahrisabz. Tgis ia home town of Temur who's Son Jahongir, his Father and his teacher are buried here and his empty tomb. You will drive to Samarkand via a beautiful mountain pass of Zarafshan ranges. Afternoon drive to Samarkand. Arrive in Samarkand afternoon, free time. Overnight.

### Day 11. Samarkand full day city tour



Today you visit Samarkand: Samarkand history goes back to 6 Century AD when it was called as Afroisab and the settelement was destroyed by Chengikhan troops in 13 Century and in 14 century it was rebuilt by Temurid's dynasty. Gur Emir Mausoleum, the tomb of Temur and his sons and grandchildren and teacher, Registan square with Sherdar Madrasah, Tillakori Mosque, and Madrasah of Ulughbek. Bibi Hanum mosque , named after favorite wife of Temur, Siab Bazar, The observatory of Ulugbek and ancient site Afrosiab. Transfer to hotel. Overnight.

### Day 12. Samarkand to Tashkent

**Breakfast in the hotel. Take morning train to Samarkand 2 hrs ride. Upon arrival meet and transfer to hotel, free time. You can visit local theatre which is famous for its Opera and Ballet. Overnight.**

### Day 13. Tashkent-Ferghana 400 km, 6 hrs drive



Transfer to Ferghan valley via Kokand. Short city tour in Kokand and Khans palace, juma mosque and stop in Rushtan at Cermic master's workshop and house. Evening arrival in Ferghana city and overnight.

### Day 14. Ferghana back to Tashkent via Margilan

After breakfast we will visit Margilan silk factory and mosque in Margilan where you can see local crafts people with their work. Afternoon we will drive back to Tashkent. Overnight.

### Day 15. Departure

Transfer to international airport of Tashkent for flight to ???, Departure back home. End of Services

### Hotels 3 star and boutique hotels option

Tashkent	Samarkand	Bukhara	Khiva	Ferghana
Navruz hotel 3*	Minor or Platan hotel	Minzifa B&B or Komil B&B	Zukhra or Kheivak B&B	Asia

**02 persons - \$1989 per person in double room share with breakfast**

**04 persons - \$1939 per person in Double room share with breakfast**

**06 persons - \$1890 per person in Double room share with breakfast**

**08 persons - \$1829 per person in Double room share with breakfast**

**10 persons - \$1790 per person in Double room share with breakfast**

**Single room supplement - \$240 per person**

**Inclusions:** Accommodation, Transport, Breakfast, Sightseeing, entrance fee, local flight Tashkent-Nukus and train tickets, bottled water daily, local tour guides in each city.

**Aral Sea trip Inclusions:** *Transportation: off-road 4-WD car, fully-licensed driver Total travel distance and time: ~900 km and about 16 hours of drive*

*Karakalpak cuisine is usually based on beef or lamb meat or fish, may contain rice, wheat or sorgo dough and many vegetables. Make sure to let us know if you prefer vegetarian cuisine or have any other preferences.*

*1-night stay at the yurt camp by the Aral Sea coast*

*Meals: 4 times during the tour. Useful tips: protective hiking boots or sport shoes and long trousers are recommended along with cap or hat. Sunscreen could be helpful as well. Warm jacket is needed in spring and autumn seasons.*

*There is no mobile or internet connection; however there is a telephone for local communication is available in the car and camp. There is also electric power at the camp to charge your devices.*

**Exclusions:** International airticket, Insurance, Alcohol beverages, Personal charges, Tipping guides and drivers. Lunch Dinner, Tour guide to accompany,