



MEJDI TOURS

A Journey through the Silk and Spice Road and the many Narratives of Uzbekistan

(Scheduled Group Departure)

Dates & Pricing:

October 8-17, 2026 (\$3,500 per person, + \$700 single room supplement)

April 15 - 24, 2027 (\$3,650 per person, + \$780 single room supplement)

October 7-16, 2027 (\$3,650 per person, + \$780 single room supplement)

Included:

- 9 nights' accommodation at premium hotels per itinerary
- 1 Local English Speaking Guide for 10 days
- 1 MEJDI-Expert Tour Leader for 10 days
- 10 days of private bus transportation including private airport arrival and departure transfers
- 9 days of private bus transportation, including 2 one-way train tickets (Bukhara-Samarkand & Samarkand-Tashkent)
- 1 One-way domestic flight Tashkent-Nukus
- Meals listed in the itinerary: 9 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 4 dinners
- Bottled water during all touring and light drinks at meals
- Entrances, sites, and honorariums for speakers
- Dedicated pre-trip traveler services and 24/7 on-ground support

Not

included:

- International airfare
- Travel insurance- highly recommended
- Single Supplement
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Custom gratuities for guides, drivers and hotel staff
- Anything not explicitly mentioned in the included section



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Overview

Embark on a captivating 10-day journey through Uzbekistan, discovering its diverse culture and historical wonders. Explore the intersection of multiple narratives, tracing the region's rich history along the Silk and Spice Roads where intellectuals of Sunni and Shia Islam have alternately clashed and embraced each other over centuries, alongside the famous Jews of Bukhara. Examine a complex relationship with the Kremlin to the north, move through UNESCO-listed ancient sites including well-preserved madrasas, and navigate vibrant bazaars featuring medieval architecture and finely woven carpets. Meet local communities, learn to prepare the local cuisine, and connect with this region's deep spiritual heritage.

Highlights

- Hear an expert Uzbek speaker trace the country's path to post-Soviet independence and analyze current events
- Enjoy a local cooking class, visit spice markets and traditional tea houses
- Here from a Jewish community member and have dinner at a local home for insight into the religious communities of this region
- Visit UNESCO-Heritage sites and examine remarkable architecture
- Meet with a Sufi Imam to dive deep into their traditions and customs
- Meet with a local scholar to hear about the history of the silk road and the Uzbek connection to it
- Step into the home of a local artist and enjoy live Uzbek music



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Itinerary:

Day 1: Arrival in Tashkent

Arrive in Tashkent and check in to your hotel. Meet your tour leader for a brief orientation before a welcome dinner featuring traditional Uzbek cuisine. In the evening, hear an expert presentation on the long and complicated relationship between Russia and Uzbekistan.

Overnight: Wyndham, Tashkent (Dinner included)

Day 2: Soviet History in Tashkent

Visit Uzbekistan's capital, a city representing the modernity and architecture of the Soviet period. Take an architecture tour including the Soviet subway station and Ballet, then continue to the Chorus Bazaar to try Uzbek flavors in the city's most local and famous market. Visit the Repression Museum for a sobering commemoration of those lost under Soviet rule, followed by an evening flight to Nukus.

Overnight: Pana Hotel, Nukus (Breakfast and Lunch included)

Day 3: Nukus - Culture & Art

Nukus is the cultural heart of Karakalpakstan — a remote and resilient region deeply rooted in tradition. Its isolation has helped preserve a distinct local identity, with art, architecture, and customs found nowhere else in Uzbekistan. Explore the renowned **State Museum of Arts**, home to the world's second-largest collection of Russian avant-garde artworks alongside extensive exhibits on regional archaeology and ethnography. Later, head to the **Mizdakhhan Necropolis**, an ancient burial complex where Zoroastrian, Islamic, and folk traditions intertwine through centuries of history and mythology.

Last, begin the journey toward Khiva, stopping en route at the dramatic **Chilpik Dakhma**, an ancient Zoroastrian "Tower of Silence" overlooking the desert landscape. Learn about the region's pre-Islamic spiritual traditions and funerary rituals before continuing to Khiva for overnight.

Overnight: Khiva Residence Hotel, Khiva (Breakfast included)

Day 4: Colors of Khiva

Drive to Khiva in the morning, arriving for a city tour beginning at the Ichan Kala, a walled inner city and UNESCO World Heritage Site. Explore the labyrinthine streets,



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lined with well-preserved madrasas, mosques, and mausoleums. Visit the **Kalta Minor Minaret**, a striking turquoise tower that remains an unfinished but iconic local symbol, then explore the local bazaar offering unique handicrafts and traditional textiles. See the intricate tilework of **Muhammad Amin Khan Madrasa**, continue to **Islam Khodja Minaret** and **Mosque** and **Kunya-Ark Citadel**, then wander through the **Tash Hauli Palace** (the **Stone Palace**). After taking in sunset views of the desert from a traditional teahouse, discuss the Silk Road's importance in the region with a local expert.

Overnight: Khiva Residence Hotel, Khiva (Breakfast & Dinner included)

Day 5: Road to Bukhara

Transfer to **Bukhara**, another ancient city situated along the Silk Route. Upon arrival, enjoy an immersive cultural experience beginning with a visit to the gallery of a local photographer, followed by greetings at the former residence of an esteemed artist. Learn about their life and legacy, and hear traditional Uzbek music performed live. A restful evening at leisure follows.

Overnight: Kukaldosh, Bukhara (Breakfast and lunch included)

Day 6: Multicultural Millenia

Today's in-depth exploration of the medieval-like city of Bukhara uncovers an urban fabric that has remained largely intact for over 2,000 years. Visit the famous tomb of Ismail Samani, a masterpiece of 10th-century Muslim architecture, and pass through the Po-i-Kalyan Complex, home to the iconic Kalyan Minaret, Kalyan Mosque, and Miri-Arab Madrasa. Admire the tilework of the Ulugbek Madrasa, built by the astronomer and ruler Ulugbek, then tour the Mahalla-i Juif (Jewish Quarter) including a visit to Maghoki-Attar, one of the oldest synagogues in Central Asia. Later, take in impressive views from the Mullah Sadra Necropolis on the outskirts of the city, where gravestones in a distinct section of the cemetery are engraved with Hebrew script. Have dinner at the home of a Jewish community member, engaging in conversation about their heritage and the experience of religious minorities in the region.

Overnight: Kukaldosh, Bukhara (Breakfast and Dinner included)



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Day 7: Sufi Spirit

Drive just beyond the city to the **Sitorai Mokhi-Khosa Palace**, summer residence of Bukhara's last emir, to traverse a complex of impressive gardens honoring descendants of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. Meet a local imam at the **Sufi mosque Naqshbandi** for a discussion of the community and its connection to Bukhara. In the afternoon, ride the bullet train to Samarkand and check into your accommodations.

Overnight: Zarafshon Parkside, Samarkand (Breakfast Included)

Day 8: Samarkand Flavors

Founded in the 7th century BC, Samarkand derives its importance as a junction along key Asian trade routes. Start the day at **Gur-e-Amir Mausoleum**, the final resting place of Timur the Great, which served as a prototype for the famous Taj Mahal in India. Stand in Registan Square, the heart of Samarkand, marveling at the stunning ensemble of three madrasas: **Ulugh Beg Madrasa, Tilya-Kori Madrasa, and Sher-Dor Madrasa**. After lunch on your own, visit the impressive **Bibi-Khanym Mosque**, one of the largest sanctuaries in the Islamic world when it was built in the 15th century. This afternoon's **cooking class** culminates in a group dinner featuring a favorite local dish.

Overnight: Zarafshon Parkside, Samarkand (Breakfast and Dinner Included)

Day 9: Observation & Conclusions

Visit the **Shah-i-Zinda Necropolis**, a UNESCO World Heritage site renowned for its extraordinary collection of mausoleums and some of the finest tilework in Central Asia. Continue to a **traditional paper workshop** to learn about the centuries-old production of Samarkand paper, once highly prized across the Silk Road for its quality and craftsmanship. Observe the traditional techniques still used today, from mulberry bark processing to hand-finishing, and gain insight into the region's long history of trade, scholarship, and artisanal production.

Enjoy a festive farewell lunch with the group followed by leisure time in the afternoon. In the evening, board the high-speed train back to Tashkent and transfer to your hotel.

Overnight: Wyndham, Tashkent (Breakfast and Lunch Included)



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Day 10: Departure

Check out and take either the bullet train or standard train back to **Tashkent** to catch departing flights.

(Breakfast included)