

Grand Silk Road Delhi to Ashgabad

India, Pakistan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan

Day by day itinerary

Day 01: Arrive Delhi

Upon arrival, meet your guide at the airport and transfer to the hotel.

The rest of the day is free at leisure

Overnight in Piccadilly Hotel (D)

Day 02: City tour of Delhi

Enjoy sightseeing tour of Delhi visiting Jama masjid, drive past Red fort, Rickshaw ride in the old Delhi, Rajghat- the cremation ground of Mahatma Gandhi, Humayun's tomb, India gate and Qutub Minar.

Delhi – the capital city of India has two distinct personalities: Old Delhi, with its chaotic, winding alleys, crammed with cycle rickshaws, and noisy street traders, and New Delhi, built by the Britishers. Old Delhi is home to the India's largest 17th-century Masjid Mosque, bustling shopping lane of Chandni Chowk, Red Fort (Lal Qila) and Rajghat. In New Delhi, you will see the magnificent Parliament Building and the Rashtrapati Bhawan (the official residence of the President of India in the 330 acres of land and designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens), once the awe-inspiring residence of the British Viceroy and now the Presidential Palace, India Gate (a majestic 42-mts high arch, built as a memorial to the Indian Soldiers killed in World War I), Qutab Minar (the 72.5 mts high tower dating back to 13th century and one of the greatest bequests of Islamic Culture), Humayun's Tomb (built in the 16th century and architecturally the fore runner of the Taj Mahal, has Mughal Architecture at its graceful best).

Overnight in Piccadilly Hotel (BD)

Day 03: Delhi to Agra

After breakfast drive to Agra. Enjoy the sightseeing tour of Taj Mahal and Agra Fort. Taj Mahal truly is one of the wonders of the world. It is a monument of love built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jehan for his Queen Mumtaz Mahal to enshrine her mortal remains in 1630. For twenty-two years 20,000 men worked day and night to build this masterpiece.

Agra Fort as world Heritage site was built as military establishments by Akbar in 1565. This powerful fortress encompasses the imperial city of the Mughal rulers within its 2.5-kilometre-long enclosure walls.

The Agra fort built with red sandstone was partially converted into a palace during Shah Jahan's time. Overnight Radisson /Hilton / Marriot (BD)

Day 04: Agra – Jaipur

Agra – Jaipur. En route to Jaipur, we visit the ghostly former Mughal city of Fatehpur Sikri, abandoned due to lack of water.

Fatehpur Sikri was constructed by Mughal emperor Akbar beginning in 1570. It was built in honour of Sufi saint Shaikh Salim Chisti, who foretold the birth of his son. It

was the first planned city of the Mughals and also the first one designed in Mughal architecture, an amalgamation of Indian architecture, Persian and Islamic architecture. It served as the Mughal Empire's capital from 1571 until 1585. Though the court took 15 years to build, it was abandoned after only 14 years because the water supply was unable to sustain the growing population.

Overnight in Shahpura House (BD)

Day 05: Sightseeing tour of Jaipur

Enjoy full day sightseeing tour of Jaipur. Start with Amber fort ascended on an elephant back followed by visit to city palace, Jantar mantar (observatory) and Hawa mahal (palace of winds)

Jaipur also popularly known as the Pink City, is one of the few planned cities in India and the capital city of Rajasthan. Founded in 1727 by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II. Amber Fort was built by Man Singh, embodies the Rajput belief that the fort symbolizes the strength of the King. Amber Fort is known for its artistic style, blending both Hindu and Mughal elements. It has four level (each with a courtyard) layout plan consisting of the Diwan-e-Aam or the "Hall of Public Audience", the Diwan-e-Khas or the "Hall of Private Audience", the Sheesh Mahal (mirror palace) or Jai Mandir, and the Sukh Niwas where a cool climate is artificially created by winds that blow over the water cascade within the palace. The Sheesh Mahal (Hall of Mirrors), its walls covered with tiny mirrors, becomes a dazzling fantasy with the light of a single match City palace: At the heart is the City Palace that is both a museum and home to the Royal family. You can see the textile and costume museum, arms and armour museum, art gallery and hall of public and private audience.

Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds) which remains only a façade today in Jaipur was built in 1799 by Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh . Hawa Mahal has small windows called jharokhas that are decorated with intricate latticework The original intention of the lattice was to allow royal ladies to observe everyday life in the street below without being seen. Overnight in Shahpura House (BD)

Day 06: Jaipur – Mandawa

Today after breakfast drive to Mandawa in Shekhawati region. The city of Mandawa was founded in the mid-18th century; it has interesting murals in the large rugged fort – now a hotel boasting of excellent views. The Castle Mandawa is located just outside the walled city of Mandawa. The hotel therefore allows the guests to take walking tours into the colourful city or just relax in the peaceful atmosphere.

Mandawa boasts of the finest painted havelis in the region and is a perfect place for wandering at random. The Goenka Havelis in the city are well worth the visit - Ladhuram Tarkesvar, Dedraj Turmal & the Ladia havelis (of which there are a number). The Shiva temple here has a rock crystal lingam. The Harlalkabaoli (a working step well) should be visited early in the morning to watch the oxen at work on the ramp to raise water. Another well located nearby is the Majisa ka Kuan Overnight in Vivaana (BD)

Day 07: Mandawa – Delhi

Today late in the morning drive back to Delhi and transfer to hotel.
Overnight in Piccadilly Hotel (BD)

Day 08: Delhi – Amritsar

Today you will be transferred to New Delhi railway station to catch train to Amritsar. The Shatabdi Express departs at 0720 hrs and arrives Amritsar at 1300 hrs.

Air conditioned seater class will be booked the on train.

On Arrival in Amritsar you will be met and transferred to hotel. In the afternoon, enjoy a sightseeing tour of Amritsar city. Amritsar; is on of the main cities in Punjab and home to the seat of Sikh religion called Golden temple, which is holiest shrine of Sikh religion. Maharaja Ranjit singh gave this distinctive look to the temple in 1803 and covered it with gold. The Golden temple is overlaid with pure gold leaf, walls are inlaid with semi-precious stones, frescoes and glass work. This complex also has the worlds largest free eatery (Langar) or community kitchen. Free food is served to everyone without any consideration for their background.

You will also visit Jallian wala bagh which is a public garden in Amritsar , and houses a memorial of national importance, to commemorate the sacrifice of people in India's freedom struggle the occasion of the Punjabi New Year on April 13, 1919

In the evening you will visit Golden temple again to see the Holy book procession ceremony.

Amritsar is also famous for its handicrafts and handlooms.

Overnight in Ramada Hotel (BD)

Day 09: Amritsar-Wagah border-Lahore (Pakistan)

Today in the morning you will be taken to Wagah border (India-Pakistan border).

Wagah border is the only border crossing between the two countries.

You will be met by your Pakistani guide at Wagah border and transferred to Lahore city.

Lahore has been the capital of Punjab for nearly 1,000 years. Besides being the Mughal show-window, Lahore is the cultural, academic and intellectual centre of Pakistan. For 200 years, beginning from about 1525 AD, Lahore remained a thriving cultural centre of the great Mughal Empire, when the city was beautified with palaces, gardens, monuments and mosques. During the British regime, many monuments sprang up in Lahore which blended beautifully with the Mughal, Gothic and Victorian styles of architecture. Overnight in Chancery Guest House (BD)

Day 10: Lahore City Tour

Full day city tour of Lahore includes

Today we will visit the different sites of Lahore which include the Badshahi Mosque which was built by Emperor Aurangzeb in 1674, represents the very best of Mughal architecture. The Lahore Fort is next to the mosque which was built by Emperor Akbar in 1560. It is a rectangular in shape which is 380 by 330 meters filled with buildings from a variety of periods which include Maktab Khana, Dican E Khas and Diwan Am, the Palace of Mirrors (Shish Mahal) Red Tower. Lahore Museum is especially famous for the stone caved fasting Buddha apart from other artefacts. Shalimar Garden was built by Shah Jahan in 1642. As a pleasure garden for the

royal household, it follows the Mughal concept of the perfect walled garden with three terraces of straight, shaded walks, geometrically arranged ponds fountains and marble pavilions, surrounded by flowers and fruit trees.

Later we visit Wazir Khan Mosque, famous for its extensive tile work and frescos. It was built in seven years starting around 1634–1635 AD during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jehan.

Overnight in Chancery Guest House (BD)

Day 11: Drive to Islamabad

In the morning drive by Daewoo express bus to Islamabad the capital city of Pakistan, Afternoon visit is followed by the Damn-E-Koh (view point), which gives us a panoramic view of Islamabad before driving past various modern streets and buildings graceful with a touch of Islamic Architecture & Folk Heritage Museum. Our tour culminates at one of the world's largest mosque – Shah Faisal Mosque.

Overnight in Ambassador Hotel (BD)

Day 12: Islamabad-Taxila-Naran

In the morning we drive to Naran en-route we will stop at Taxila, Taxila has a well-planned museum and many historic sites of the Gandharan Buddhist civilization. The area flourished from the Sixth Century B.C until the Fifth Century A.D.

Later drive to Naran.

Overnight in PTDC Motel (BD)

Day 13: Naran-babusar pass-Gilgit

Today we drive over Babusar pass to Chilas, where we join the Karakorum highway later continue driving to Gilgit.

Gilgit the administrative capital of Gilgit Baltistan and, perhaps, the most spectacular region of Pakistan in terms of its geography and scenic beauty. Here world's three mightiest mountain ranges: the Karakoram, the Hindu Kush and the Himalayas – meet. The whole of Gilgit Baltistan is like a paradise for mountaineers, trekkers and adventure lovers. The region has a rich cultural heritage and variety of rare fauna and flora. Historically, the area have remained a flash point of political and military rivalries amongst the Russian, British and Chinese empires. Immediately after the end of British rule in the sub-continent in 1947, the people of this region decided to join Pakistan through a popular local revolt against the government of Maharaja of Kashmir.

Overnight in PTDC or Riveria Hotel (BLD)

Day 14: Gilgit-Karimabad-Duiker

In the morning visit the Kargah Buddha carved on the rock dated from 7th century AD.

Later continue along the Karakorum highway toward Hunza, en-route we will stop at Raka Poshi Peak (7788m) view point, with stunning view of the Mountain while enjoying your lunch.

Later proceed to Duiker village which is just above Karimabad village with stunning

view over Karimabad and surrounding peaks
Overnight in Eagles Nest hotel (BD)

Day 15: Duiker-Karimabad

In the morning and enjoy the stunning sunrise over the snow-capped mountains of Ultar (7388m), Rakaposhi (7788m) and Diran (7266m).. Later in the afternoon drive down to Karimabad en-route visit Altit village.

Later visit Baltit Fort which is 700 years, but there have been rebuilds and alterations over the centuries. In the 16th century the Mir (King) married a princess from Baltistan who brought master Balti craftsmen to renovate the building as part of her dowry. The architectural style is a clear indication of Tibetan influence in Baltistan at the time.

The rest of the day is free time at leisure for shopping.
Overnight in Hill Top or Hunza Embassy Hotel (BD)

Day 16: Karimabad-Gulmit Gojal

In the morning we drive to Gulmit, en-route we do a site trip to Hoper Nagar valley, which can be seen from Duiker is on the opposite, eastern side of the Hunza River. This is another fertile valley and is predominantly Shia Muslim. This is one of the world's fastest moving glaciers at Hoper.

Later drive to to Gulmit.

In the afternoon visit around the village meet the locals and learn about their cultures.

Overnight in Marco Polo Inn (BD)

Day 17: Gulmit-Borith Lake- Passu

In the morning we drive Borith Lake where we enjoy the beautiful scenery. After lunch for those of you who are energetic we will hike to the Passu glacier. Later continue driving to Passu village. In the afternoon walk around Passu village, in the even you will be invited to local family for dinner.

Overnight in Ambassador Hotel (BD)

Day 18: Sost-Khunjerab pass-Tashkurgan (China)

Today drive to Sost, After border formalities, we will drive by private transport to Tashkurgan where you will meet our Chinese guide and transferred to you hotel
Overnight in Kay2 Hotel (BD)

Day 19: Kashgar

In the morning, we visit Tashkurgan Fort, dating back from the 14th century. You can enjoy an impressive view of the surrounding fields, mountains, and military complexes from the old walls. Afterwards we continue driving to Kashgar. The scenery along the way is breathtaking. We will be stopping at the Karakul Lake where you can enjoy the view of Muztagh-ata Mountains. Optional camel ride or walk around the Lake. Later continue to Kashgar.

Overnight in Qingi Bagh Hotel New Building (BD)

Day 20: Kashgar Sunday Market

This day is planned to coincide with the famous Sunday market in Kashgar where everything from carpets, blankets, foods, horses, donkeys, sheep's and even camels are for sale! Wonderful assortments of people come from all over the region, and the population of the town swells by 100,000! This is truly one of the most incredible bazaars in Asia, and a photographer's paradise!

Overnight in Qingi Bagh Hotel, New Building (BD)

Day 21: Kashgar Tash Rabat – Narayn (Kyrgyzstan)

In the morning transfer to the border crossing of Torugart pass, after border formalities you will be met by our Kyrgyz team, later visit the Caravan Sarai dated from 11th century which served as a fortress for travellers along the Great Silk Road. Continue driving to Naryn.

Overnight in Khan-Tengri Guest house (BLD)

Day 22: Issyk Kul Lake

Today our destination is Lake Issyk-Kul, which is the second-largest alpine lake after Lake Titicaca in South America. A combination of depth, thermal activity and mild salinity means the lake never freezes, thus its name 'Issyk-Kul' means 'warm lake'. Archaeological discoveries from the lake's bottom include ancient relics and graves dating back to the first millennium BC. An ancient trade center from the second century BC is thought to have been destroyed by the rise and fall of the lake's level. Before checking in at our hotel we will visit Cholpan-Ata, known for petroglyphs which are thought to have been created by the tribes of the Neolithic period. The images are mainly primitive long-horned ibex, horses, camels and snow leopards.

Overnight in Three Karnoy Hotel. (BLD).

Day 23: Bishkek

In the morning drive to Bishkek. En-route we stop at Jety Oguz canyon, where you have chance to do some short hikes or optional horse riding, later visit Burana tower which was built in the 11centuries. Overnight in Asia Mountain 2 Bishkek (BLD)

Day 24: Tashkent (Uzbekistan)

In the morning visit Ala-Archa National Park with picnic lunch later city tour of Bishkek, late in the the afternoon transfer to the airport for Uzbekistan airways flight HY 780 EDT 06:40 PM ETA to Tashkent at 7:00 PM, On arrival at Tashkent airport you will be met by our Uzbek guide and transfer to your hotel. Overnight in Uzbekistan hotel (B)

Day 25: Samarkand

In the morning transfer to Tashkent train station for train journey to Samarkand. For most people Samarkand is as mythical as Atlantis or as remote and legendary as Timbuctou. The sublime larger-than-life monuments of Timur, the technicolour bazaar and the city's long, rich history work a special kind of magic. On arrival we'll visit the old bazaars for which this exotic city is famous for.

Overnight in Malika Hotel (BD)

Day 26: Samarkand Visit

Samarkand, sometimes called the 'Rome of the Orient' was already flourishing when Rome and Babylon were founded. During the course of our full day tour we visit the famous Registan Square, Bibi Khanum Mosque, Mausoleum of Tamerlane and the Observatory of Ulughbek; the site where Uleg Bek, grandson of Tamerlane, made some of the greatest achievements of the pre-telescope era of astronomy in the 15th century. We also visit the regal mausoleums of Shah-I Zinda, site of Central Asia's most sacred Islamic shrine, the massive mosque of Bibi Khanym, and the adjacent colourful market. You can purchase Samarkand's famous bread which Alexander the Great unsuccessfully tried to have duplicated back home in Greece, or try some of the region's local produce, from grapes to the world's tastiest melons of multiple varieties. Our afternoon tour covers the Afrosiab Museum, located on the site of ancient.

Overnight in Malika Hotel (BD)

Day 27: Bukhara via Shakhrisabz

Travel to Bukhara via Shakhrisabz, the birthplace of Tamerlane. We visit Tamerlane's palace Ak Sarai, the Kok Gumbaz mosque, Mausoleum of Jehangir (Tamerlane's grandson) and Tamerlane's Mausoleum. Bukhara is one of the center of the Russian/British Intelligence Services in the 19th Century.

Overnight in Malika or Zargaron Hotel (BD)

Day 28: Bukhara Visit

Today we explore the old quarter on foot. Bukhara is an ancient city with its bustling "trade domes," active mosques, and the Kalyan Minaret ("tower of death"), one of Central Asia's tallest. We'll stroll around the streets and visit the old town center where old men with long white beards gossip for hours while drinking tea. Bukhara has been designated a World Heritage Site; the resulting restoration of some of the mosques, constructed in the 11th to 15th centuries, to make them appear as if they were built yesterday. There are even some structures still standing that date back to Zoroastrian times 2,500 years ago.

We also visit The Ark, a large fortress with the Emir's open-air throne room and the Mausoleum of Ismail Samani, an intricate and beautiful 10th century brick structure that is nicely preserved. We'll also venture to the outskirts of Bukhara and visit the summer palace of the last emir, built by a Russian Czar with grand halls and a harem. We will also see Char Minar, a gate of an ancient madrasa long time gone. It was built in 1809 and has more in common with Indian art styles than local.

Overnight in Malika or Zargaron Hotel (BD)

Day 29: Bukhara Free day

Full free day in Bukhara at leisure.

Overnight in Malika or Zargaron Hotel (BD)

Day 30: Bukhara-Urgench Khiva

In the morning drive to Khiva, later half day city tour of Khiva

Overnight in Hotel (BD)

Day 31: Khiva: City Tour

Legend has it that Khiva was founded when Shem, son of Noah, discovered a well here. The town certainly existed by the 8th Century, as a minor fort and trading post on a Silk Road branch to the Caspian Sea and the Volga. In the early 16th century, Khiva was made capital of the Timurid Empire, becoming a busy slave market and pivot of the khanate for the next three centuries. Until Russia finally wrested the region from Timurid grasp in the 19th century, even the boldest hearts feared encounters with these fierce tribesmen and their desert territory. Khiva is an ancient walled city and looks much like it did in centuries past. It is one of the few sites in Central Asia where one can easily imagine life during the time of the emirates. We will spend the morning wandering its maze of ruins and great mosques. Later, a tour of this living museum including the Ichon-Qala gates, Muhammad Amin and Rakhim Khan's Medressas, Tosh-Khovli Palace, Islom-Huja Medressa and Minaret. Dinner will be served at Toza Bogh Palace (Summer residence of Muhammad Rahim Khan II). Overnight in Khiva at hotel (BD)

Day 32: Dashoguz- Kunya Urgench – Gas Crater (Turkmenistan)

In the morning drive to Kunya Urgench through the Kara Kum Desert to the ruins of ancient capital. We cross the border at Dashoguz and continue driving to Kunya Urgench. We visit the Kunya Urgench historical site, where the mausoleums of Turebek-Khanym, Sultan Tekesh, Sultan II Arslan, Najmad-din-Kubra and Sultan Ali are located. Discover the Kutlug Timur Minaret & Kyrk Molla. Later in the afternoon we drive to Darvaza flaming Gas Crater or the 'mouth of hell'. En-route we visit a Nomad village located in the Karakum desert. Enjoy the amazing views with picnic dinner. Overnight in a basic camp near the Darvaza crater. We will be providing sleeping bags and mattresses. (BLD)

Day 33: Darvaza Flaming Crater-Ashgabad

In the morning drive to Ashgabad, check in to your hotel, later drive to visit Nissa fortress -the Sanctuary of Parthian Kings. UNESCO declared fortress a World Heritage Site in 2007. Nissa described as one of the first capitals of the Parthians. It was founded by Arsaces I (reigned c. 250 BC – 211BC), and reputedly the royal necropolis of the Parthian Kings, although it has neither been established that the fortress at Nissa was a royal residence or a mausoleum. The ruins of ancient settlement Nissa are located 18 km from Ashgabat at Bagyr village

Overnight in Ashgabad at Grand hotel (BLD)

Day 34: Ashgabad Sightseeing

In the morning visit Tolkuchka Bazaar visit the Spiritual Mosque of Turkmenbashi, later drive to Gokdepe fortress and horse farm. Gokdepe fortress that was attacked in December 1880 by 6,000 Russians under General Mikhail Skobelev against

25,000 defenders. Gokdepe Mosque was built to commemorate the defeat and is noted for its mint-turquoise blue colored roof and white marble structure.

At the horse farm you can see proud of Turkmen national Akhalteke horses. Over the 30 beautiful horses, you can see at the horse farm. 5000 years ago, Turkmens begin breed Akhalteke horses. Unique breed on the world, which not mixed with other breeds. Different rulers as Alexander Great, Darius I wants to own this horses.

Overnight in Ashgabad at Grand Hotel (BLD)

Day 35: Ashgabad onward flight

Our service will end with airport transfer (B)

Tour cost					
No of Pax.	2	3-5	6-9	10 Above	Single Supplement
Price in US Dollar per person	\$6965	\$5890	\$5150	\$4660	\$1330

Pls note that the above cost is net to you please add your markup accordingly.

TOUR COST INCLUDES

- All domestic transportation with private transfers, except express bus from Lahore to Islamabad, train seat class, domestic flights mentioned in the itinerary.
- Twin sharing accommodation at hotel plus with en-suite private facilities, one night basic Guest house at Naryn with communal facilities
- Meals Half board please see Key for included meals (B) Breakfast (D) Dinners
- All the sightseeing tours as described in the itinerary and entrance fees
- English-speaking local guides

TOUR COST EXCLUDES

Visa Fees.

Expenses in hotels such as laundry, telephone and room service, etc.

Optional activities

Meals, Lunches

Personal expanses

Single supplements

Tips for Guides and drivers

Early check in hotels and late checkout

Khunjerab national Park entrance fees