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2522 4228
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AMAZING MONUMENTS & CULTURAL TREASURES IN CENTRAL ASIA

EXPLORE UBEKISTAN AND GEORGIA'S HISTORICAL HERITAGE



DAY ONE TASHKENT

→ Arrive in **TASHKENT** where you will be met by your driver and transferred to the hotel. Check in and meet your guide to start sightseeing in the capital of Uzbekistan, the biggest city in Central Asia. Some highlights include:



→ **KHAST-IMOM COMPLEX** An architectural monument dating from the 16th to 20th centuries, and the centre of Islam in Uzbekistan, where the world-famous Quran of Caliph Uthman – Ottoman has been preserved; one of the oldest Qurans in the world. In Khast-Imom tour **the Madrasah of Barak-Khan, Tilla Sheikh Mosque, the Mausoleum of the Saint Abu Bakr Kaffal Shashi** and the **Islamic Institute of Imam al-Bukhari**.



→ **CHOR-SU** Also known as the Chorsu Bazaar, a labyrinth of walkways both indoor and out, with stalls selling a myriad of eclectic products. The central part of bazaar is the main magnificent domed construction, patterned with oriental ornaments and with a diameter of nearly 350 meters.



→ **APPLIED ARTS MUSEUM** Via a ride on the Tashkent metro. The museum contains over 4,000 exhibits on decorative art in Uzbekistan, including wood carving, ceramics, embossing, jewellery, gold weaving, and embroidery,

→ Finally, walk through the stunning **Navoi Theater** to **Amir Timur Square** where you will end Tashkent city tour.

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DAY TWO TASHKENT - SAMARKAND

→ At 07:00 transfer from your hotel to the railway station. Take the high-speed train which departs Tashkent at 08:00 and arrives in **SAMARKAND** at 10:10. Your guide and driver will meet you at the train station to begin the tour of Samarkand. Highlights include:

→ **REGISTAN SQUARE** A real gem located in the very heart of the ancient city of Samarkand. It has gained its worldwide fame thanks to the ensemble that has become a monument of oriental architecture. From three sides, the square is surrounded with grand madrasah, portals of which are facing the centre of the space. It is by virtue of these buildings that Samarkand was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2001.



→ **BIBI KHANUM MOSQUE** This enormous congregational mosque is the largest of its kind in Central Asia, able to hold about 10,000 worshippers.

→ **SIYOB BAZAAR** An open-air market with a bustling atmosphere where you peruse local products and take in the local ambience.



→ **ULUGBEK OBSERVATORY** A historical landmark built in the 15th century by the famous astronomer and mathematician, Ulugbek. The observatory was a major centre for scientific research and education in the region, and it played a significant role in the development of astronomy and mathematics in the Muslim world.



→ **SHAKHI-ZINDA NECROPOLIS** and **GUR EMIR MAUSOLEUM-shrine of Tamerlane**. Famous for its simplicity of construction and for its solemn monumentality. During his lifetime, Tamerlane conquered many countries and established the Timurid Empire with its capital city Samarkand.

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DAY THREE SAMARKAND

→ **AFRASIAB MUSEUM** Located at the historical site of Afrasiyab, one of the largest archaeological sites in the world and the ancient city that was destroyed by the Mongols in the early 13th century. The museum features a variety of exhibits, including not only artifacts found during excavations in Afrasiyab and Samarkand but its wider region as well. Among the artifacts one can find the remains of ancient swords, ossuaries, knives, arrows, coins, statues and other ancient objects of everyday life.



→ **TOMB OF SAINT DANIEL** A holy site for Muslims, Christians, and Jews, it is thought that the spirit of the buried Saint protects Samarkand and brings wealth and prosperity to its people. Pilgrims visit to pray near the mausoleum, especially worshipping the spring nearby.

→ Then drive to **KONI GHIL VILLAGE** to explore the traditional way of making Samarkand paper from mulberry. After the sightseeing tour, enjoy some free time with the car and driver at your disposal.



DAY FOUR SAMARKAND - BUKHARA (3rd OCTOBER)

→ At 09:45 transfer from your hotel to the railway station. Take the high-speed train, departing Tashkent at 09:46 and arriving in **BUKHARA** at 12:29. Upon arrival transfer to the hotel to leave your luggage. Meet your guide then begin your tour.



→ **OLD BUKHARA** Which is listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, contains a trove of encounters that will transport you through time. Explore **Kalyan Minaret, Kalyan Mosque** and **Miri-Arab Madrasah, Magoki- Attori Mosque, madrasahs of Ulugbek** and **Abdulazizkhan, trade domes, Lyabi Hauz Ensemble, Chor-Minor Madrasah.**

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DAY FIVE BUKHARA

- Start the second day of discovering Bukhara. Some highlights include:
- **ARK FORTRESS** A massive fortress that was initially built and occupied around the 5th century AD. This spectacular fortress is the oldest structure in Bukhara, it is a town within a town. Other sites include **BOLO-KHAUZ MOSQUE** and **CHASHMA-AYUB MAUSOLEUMS**.
- **SITORAI-MOKHIKHOSA** – summer residence of Bukhara's last emir, unique site combining Oriental and Russian architecture. Continue to **Mausoleum of Bakhoutd** in Naqshbandi. Enjoy free time in the afternoon.



DAY SIX BUKHARA - KHIVA

- Drive to **KHIVA** (480 km, 7-8 h.). The Great Silk Road that once routed through Bukhara and Khiva ran through the Kyzylkum Desert, as does the present road. Relive this historic journey and stop en-route to enjoy views of the desert and Amudarya River.
- Arrive in Khiva late in the afternoon, check in to the hotel and rest.



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DAY SEVEN KHIVA

→ **ITCHAN-KALA FORTRESS** A UNESCO World Heritage site. The gateway to the desert, Itchan Kala, stands as the largest remaining preserved walled city in Central Asia. Itchan Kala is the inner town (protected by brick walls some 10 m high) of the old Khiva oasis, which was the last resting-place of caravans before crossing the desert to Iran. Although few very old monuments remain, it is a coherent and well-preserved example of the Muslim architecture of Central Asia.



→ The tour features visits to **Mukhammad Amin Khan Madrasah, Mukhammad Rahimkhan Madrasah, Kalta Minor, Juma Mosque, Toshkhovli Palace, Pakhlavan Makhmud Mausoleum and Islom Khodja Minaret**, the highest minaret in Uzbekistan.

→ Free time in the afternoon.

DAY EIGHT KHIVA - TBILISI



→ At 05:15 am be transferred to Urgench airport (35 min.) for your flight to Istanbul departing at 08:15 am. Arrival in Tbilisi at 4.15 pm. Meet your guide and be transferred to the hotel. Free evening in **TBILISI**, one of Europe's oldest capitals. Tbilisi has been the cultural, political, and economic centre of Georgia for fifteen centuries. At the heart of the city lies historic **OLD TBILISI**, which was built during the early Middle Ages.



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DAY NINE TBILISI

- Meet your guide to start sightseeing tour in Tbilisi. Start at **Metekhi church** and the **monument to Vakhtang Gorgasali**, the legendary founder of Tbilisi.
- Take the cable car to **NARIKALA FORTRESS** to enjoy breathtaking panoramic views of the city. This extraordinary (and for its time, enormous) building dates from the 11th century, early in the golden age of Georgian church architecture. Walk down to the district of Sulphur bath houses and pass by the only mosque in Tbilisi.
- **SHARDEN AREA** Full of narrow streets with cozy cafés, wine tasting bars, souvenir shops, and more. Here you can breathe in the living past. It is one of the most popular, crowded, interesting and attractive places in Tbilisi. Get acquainted with the works of contemporary Georgian artists, buy different and original items, and listen to good music.
- **SIONI CATHEDRAL** Beautiful cathedral with mesmerizing wall-paintings. It also serves as a burial ground for many notable religious figures.
- **ANCHISKHATI BASILICA** The oldest surviving church in Tbilisi. (6th Century). It was built by King Dachi and originally dedicated to the Virgin Mary.
- **HISTORICAL GEORGIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM** (the Simon Janashiya Museum of Georgia). The museum houses collections that represent Tbilisi history, everyday life, and culture. The museum has the collection of paintings as well as masterpieces of renowned Georgian artists.
- Free evening to relax at the Sulphur Bath houses.

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DAY TEN TBILISI – MTSKHETA – UPLISTSIKHE – TBILISI

→ Drive to **MTSKHETA**, one of the oldest towns in Georgia and its cultural and religious centre. It was the capital of the Eastern Georgian Kingdom of Iberia beginning in the 3rd century BC.

→ **JVARI CHURCH** A true architectural masterpiece of the early Medieval Period. From its hilltop site you can enjoy views of the Aragvi and Mtkvari Rivers.

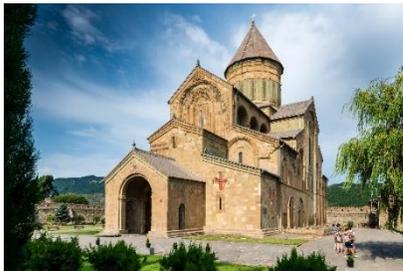
→ **SVETITSKHOVELI**, the main cathedral of Mtskheta and a sacred place where supposedly the robe of Christ is kept. According to the legend a part of Christ's tunic fell into the hands of a Mtskheta dweller, local Jewish man Eliazar, who had witnessed the crucifixion.

→ **UPLISTSIKHE CAVE TOWN** Which dates to the Hellenistic Period and is noted for its unique combination of carving styles and the co-existence of pagan and Christian architecture.

→ Drive back to Tbilisi and on the way back, there is an optional stop at Gori to visit the **Stalin Museum**, which includes more than 60,000 artifacts, such as the tiny house where Stalin was born and the impressive bulletproof train which he used to travel in between Yalta and Potsdam.

DAY ELEVEN TBILISI

→ Check-out from the hotel at noon. Free time until transfer to Tbilisi International Airport. Departure.



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