



Khiva city walls and minaret, Khiva

Medicine and Society in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan Historical and Contemporary 20 September – 3 October 2026

Pre-Tour to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan
13 – 20 September 2026

“I thoroughly enjoyed the tour and found the destination fascinating. Everyone got on extremely well - very nice and interesting people.”

Andrew Gilkes, Dental Study Tour in Uzbekistan, October 2024



Level 4
ACTIVE





Kungey Alatau Mountains Kyrgyzstan

Uzbekistan is the land-locked heart of Central Asia's evocative Silk Road. The stunning architecture of its ancient cities links the empires of China and Persia, reflecting history that encompasses the pinnacles of civilization and science as well as oppression. Travel in the footsteps of Silk Road caravans through Uzbekistan and make a visit to Tajikistan, centre of the ancient Sogdian empire. Continue to explore Turkmenistan's desert cities, which have silently observed the passing of some of history's most dominant empires.

Dr Matt Young will lead you through the ancient history and vibrant, contemporary societies of these many-storied nations. The itinerary includes fascinating medical visits as you travel through the land of Avicenna, a polymath regarded as the father of early modern medicine, including a visit to his birthplace,

a modern hospital and a traditional healing practice. Meet your medical peers and come away with a deeper understanding of both healthcare and society. There will also be ample opportunity to enjoy wonderful local food and wine, including several special meals.

Extend your journey with a pre-tour adventure through Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, offering the opportunity to travel through stunning mountain scenery and explore five nations at the heart of the ancient Silk Road

THIS TOUR IS CLASSED AS:

Level 4 | Active



Longer and fuller days. Significant levels of walking, covering longer distances, requiring very good fitness and mobility.

Tour Leader

Dr Matt Young OAM has been a GP for over 25 years. His practice at Medeco Inala won the RACGP Australian General Practice of the Year in 2018 and acts as the home base for his mobile Hep C eradication crusade, the Hep C Kombi project, which he co-founded.

As well as medicine, Matt loves travelling the globe and has visited over 100 countries across all seven continents. He has a deep fascination with foreign cultures and loves immersing himself in their stories. He is most at home rafting rivers, climbing mountains and hiking through jungles. Having completed an Archaeology Degree (UQ) and History Diploma (UQ), his areas of special interest are Australian WW1 history and ancient civilisations. Matt finds these studies significantly enhance all his intrepid travelling experiences. Matt writes for the AMAQ's 'Doctor Q' magazine and worked on 4BC as the 'Ocker Doctor' on radio talk back. He loves a yarn, a laugh and writing poetry for fun.



He has been South's Rugby Union club doctor for 17 years and has captained Brisbane's Ned Flanders Cricket Club for over two decades, leading the team to international victories against national teams on every continent. He was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for services to community health in January 2024. Matt also graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and History in July 2024

'Overall, the whole trip was wonderful, and we had a great time. Matt was the energy behind the organisation and his attention to everyone's needs was unrelenting. Best tour leader I have ever seen.'

Adnan Khan, Medical Study Brazil & Argentina, March 2023



Registan Square

Pre-tour extension: Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan 13 – 19 September 2026

B = Breakfast **L** = Lunch **D** = Dinner

2 nights Bishkek – 1 night in a yurt camp on Lake Issyk-Kul – 1 night Karakol – 2 nights Almaty

Legend: Pre-Extension Tour Main Tour



Day 1: Bishkek (Sun, 13 Sept)

D

Am/Pm: Arrive in Bishkek and transfer to the hotel.

Pm: Arrive in Karakol and check in to your hotel. Sightseeing tour to Dungan Mosque and the exquisite Russian Orthodox Church.

Day 2: Bishkek (Mon, 14 Sept)

B D

Am: Full day sightseeing in Bishkek, taking in key landmarks such as Ala-Too Square and lively Osh Bazaar.

Day 5: Karakol / Almaty (Thurs, 17 Sept)

B D

Am: Drive across the Kazakh border. Visit Charyn Canyon, the 'Grand Canyon of Central Asia,' and enjoy a short hike.

Pm: Continue to Almaty and at leisure.

Day 3: Bishkek / Issyk-Kul (Tues, 15 Sept)

B D

Am: Drive to Issyk Kul Lake, the 'Pearl of Central Asia,' in the stunning Tien Shan Mountains, visiting the 11th-century Burana Tower minaret en route.

Pm: Overnight in a traditional Kyrgyz yurt camp on the lake shore.

Day 6: Almaty (Fri, 18 Sept)

B D

Am: Full-day city tour of Almaty, finishing with a cable car ride up Kok-Tobe Hill for panoramic views.

Day 4: Issyk-Kul / Karakol (Wed, 16 Sept)

B D

Am: Drive to Skazka (Fairytale) Canyon to admire its striking red sandstone formations. Continue to Jety Oguz Valley with its 'Seven Bulls' rock formation.

Day 7: Almaty / Tashkent (Sat, 19 Sept)

B

Am: Fly* to Tashkent and transfer to the Marriott Hotel. At leisure until the main tour commences the following day.

*Alternatively, take the overnight train to Tashkent, arriving at 1:00pm the next day (Sunday).

Main Tour Itinerary

20 September – 3 October 2026

B = Breakfast **L** = Lunch **D** = Dinner

2 nights Tashkent – 4 nights Samarkand – 3 nights Bukhara – 2 nights Khiva – 2 nights Ashgabat

Day 1: Tashkent (Sun, 20 Sept)

D

Pm: Arrive in Tashkent, the largest and most cosmopolitan city in Central Asia. Orientation tour before a dinner.

B D

Day 2: Tashkent (Mon, 21 Sept)

Am: Begin in Tashkent's old town at Khast Imam, home to one of the world's oldest Qur'an manuscripts. Walk across Independence Square and explore the city's ornately decorated metro stations. Visit the Museum of Applied Arts, where a curator will guide you through Central Asian decorative arts.

Pm: Visit a Tashkent public polyclinic and meet with local doctors, or at leisure.

Eve: Enjoy a welcome dinner at a local winery.

Day 3: Tashkent / Samarkand (Tues, 22 Sept)

B D

Am: Take the train to Samarkand.

Pm: Visit the tomb of Tamerlane and majestic Registan Square.

Day 4: Samarkand (Wed, 23 Sept)

B D

Am: City of myth and fable, Samarkand was founded in the 5th century BC, razed to the ground by Genghis Khan in 1220 and re-built as Tamerlane's capital in 1370. A full day in magnificent Samarkand will take you to the Ulugbek Observatory, Daniel's Tomb and the Bibi-Khanym Mosque.

Pm: Visit a public cardiology clinic.

Eve: Walk to a winery for wine and cognac tasting before dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 5: Samarkand (Thurs, 24 Sept)

B D

Am: Visit Langar village in the surrounding foothills. Visit Shakre Sabz, the birthplace of Tamerlane, and a local herbalist.

Pm: Return to Samarkand and at leisure.

Eve: Dinner in a private house.

Day 6: Samarkand / Tajikistan / Samarkand (Fri, 25 Sept)

B L

Am: Drive to Tajikistan and visit Penjikent, the old centre of the Soghdian Empire, which was abandoned suddenly at the end of the 8th century. Visit the archaeological site and Rudaki Tajik Museum.

Pm: Have lunch and visit the local market before returning to Samarkand.



The Tashkent metro (top); A spice shop in Tashkent (above)



Mir-i Arab Madrasa, Bukhara

Day 7: Samarkand / Bukhara (Sat, 26 Sept)

B D

Am: Take the train to Navoi. Visit the pottery centre at Gijduvan, where sixth generation potters produce needle-fine work in vividly coloured floral designs. Continue to Bukhara.

Pm: Arrive in Bukhara, once Central Asia's religious, intellectual, scientific and commercial hub. Transfer to the hotel before a city orientation tour.

Eve: Rooftop dinner at Minzifa café.

Day 8: Bukhara (Sun, 27 Sept)

B L

Am: Explore Bukhara, which looks much as it did 200 years ago.

Pm: Lunch at Lab-i Hauz, a cool plaza surrounding a pool which is shaded by mulberry trees dating back four centuries. Visit Ismail Samanid Mausoleum, Bolo Haouz Mosque and lovely Chor Minor.

Day 9: Bukhara (Mon, 28 Sept)

B D

Am: Visit Bukhara's great fortress and the zindan (prison) with its notorious bug pit.

Pm: Visit the village of Afshona, the birthplace of Avicenna. Visit the Museum of Abu Ali Ibn Sino (Avicenna) and its medicinal herb garden.

Eve: Candlelit dinner on the hotel terrace overlooking the 47-metre Kalon Minaret, which is so impressive that even Genghis Khan was moved to spare its destruction.

Day 10: Bukhara / Khiva (Tues, 29 Sept)

B D

Am: Drive across the desert, crossing the River Amudarya (Oxus).

Pm: Arrive in Khiva and transfer to the hotel.

Eve: Dinner on a terrace with a view of the walled city.

Day 11: Khiva (Wed, 30 Sept)

B L

Am: Explore magnificent Khiva, perhaps the best preserved of all the Silk Road cities.

Pm: Enjoy lunch at Zainab's House before visiting the Museum of Khorezm History and the prison.

Day 12: Khiva / Ashgabat (Thurs, 1 Oct)

B D

Am: Cross the border into Turkmenistan and visit the ancient city of Kunya-Urgench (Old Urgench). Drive to Dashguz.

Pm: Fly to Ashgabat.

Day 13: Ashgabat (Fri, 2 Oct)

B D

Am: Tour of Ashgabat including Independence Square, the Arch of Neutrality and the National Museum.

Pm: Visit Nissa and the stables of the famous Akhal-Teke (Golden) Horses. Return via the Turkmenbashi Mosque and Mausoleum.

Eve: Caviar and vodka tasting followed by farewell dinner.

Day 14: Ashgabat (Sat, 3 Oct)

B

Am: Depart hotel and transfer to airport.



The Registan, Samarkand (top); Lab-i Hauz, Bukhara;
Kalon Minaret and Hamman, Bukhara;
The prized 'golden horses' of New Nissa (above)

Tour cost is €4,368 per person sharing

Tour cost with a room to yourself is €4,896

The cost of the tour includes:

- 13 nights' accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with private facilities in medium grade, boutique and the best available local accommodation
- The services of a tour leader, Dr Matt Young
- The services of a specialist English-speaking national guide
- A full programme of professional visits and cultural tours as detailed in the itinerary
- Breakfast daily and meals as per the itinerary
- All internal transport services and domestic flight from to Urgench (Khiva) to Ashgabat
- Water on the bus
- All admission fees, tips and taxes

The cost excludes international flights and airport transfers; meals and drinks not mentioned; all optional excursions, tours and visits; all personal extras such as portage, laundry and inoculation fees; travel insurance and visas; PCR Test on arrival in Turkmenistan (USD \$40)

NB: All itineraries are subject to change according to local conditions.

Extension cost is €2,033 per person sharing

Extension cost with a room to yourself is €2,321

The cost of the tour includes:

- Six nights' accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with private facilities in medium grade accommodation and a yurt*
- The services of a tour leader, Dr Matt Young, and a specialist English-speaking national guide
- A full programme of cultural visits and tours as detailed in the itinerary
- Breakfast and dinner with water daily
- All internal transport services and flight from Almaty to Tashkent, or optional overnight train travel between Almaty and Tashkent
- All admission fees, tips and taxes

The cost excludes

- As per main tour

About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.

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A statue of Avicenna in Khiva (top); Samarkand dome; The mighty city walls of Khiva; Independence Square, Ashgabat (above)



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TOURS**

