



Golden Eagle Train Exterior



UZBEKISTAN

GOLDEN EAGLE - TREASURES OF UZBEKISTAN (TOUR CODE: 12626)

STARTS AND ENDS

in Tashkent

TRAVEL PERIODS

20 Oct 2023 - 30 Oct 2024

EXPERIENCE

Rail

TRAVEL STYLE

Rail Packages

New for October 2023 - Answer the siren call of the Silk Road and immerse yourself in the gilded oases of a thousand shrines, Uzbekistan.

Highlights

- Rooftop dinner in Bukhara watching the sunset over Kalyan Square, Bukhara
- Test your bartering skills at the Siab Bazaar, Samarkand
- An interactive cooking masterclass in Samarkand of the Uzbek national dish, Plov
- Tea ceremony in Khiva
- Gala dance performance and fashion show in Registan Square, Samarkand
- Visit to the silk-making workshops of Margilan
- Road trip to the 'Valley of Fifty Fortresses'

Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, Seljuk Sultans...step back in time and trace the footsteps of history's most infamous dynasties through the Treasures of Uzbekistan. An exquisitely mismatched country, Uzbekistan boasts a fascinatingly contradictory cultural architecture – palatial, Islamic grandeur collides with mud-walled houses and monoliths of Communist rule. Aboard this immersive, 11-day odyssey, escape into a land of contradiction and discover the awe-inspiring culture at its core. Learn the ancient art of silk-making in Margilan, experience the hauntingly beautiful melody of a Kazakh folklore performance in Tashkent, and follow the trail of the fierce Huns, Turks, and Arab warriors as you explore the Desert Castles of Ancient Khorezm.

INCLUSIONS

- Pre tour accommodation at a centrally located hotel for a one-night stay
- Private ensuite accommodation on the Golden Eagle train – Silver Class TWIN cabin
- Arrival and departure transfers
- Freshly prepared meals on board – using the finest local ingredients.
- Authentic dining experiences in local restaurants
- Generous drinks allowance, including international wines with lunch and dinner
- Expertly guided off-train excursions as detailed in the itinerary
- 24-hour cabin attendance service
- Experienced Tour Management team
- Services of a UK-registered Doctor and medical facilities on board
- All gratuities – on and off the train
- Luggage portage throughout the journey

ITINERARY

Day 1

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Upon arrival at Tashkent Airport, you will be met and transferred to your centrally located hotel for a one-night stay. This evening we will enjoy a welcome reception and dinner, giving you the opportunity to meet your fellow travellers.

Dinner



Day 2

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

After a leisurely morning and refreshing lunch, we will begin our touring of the Uzbekistan capital. The 2,200 year old city of Tashkent is a magnificent modern metropolis which beautifully blends decadent medieval structures and minimalistic modern edifices. Our sightseeing tour will include the awe-inspiring Khasti-Imam Complex, the culturally momentous Independence Square, and the Applied Arts Museum (situated in the extravagant former home of Imperial Russian diplomat, Alexander Polovtsev).

Early evening, we will enjoy a champagne reception and Karnay-Surnay performance (a musical ensemble of the national wind instrument) on the platform as we are welcomed aboard the Golden Eagle. Toast to the Voyage of a Lifetime with a sumptuous Welcome Dinner in the ornate Restaurant Car as we depart towards the Fergana Valley.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day **3**

Fergana Valley, Uzbekistan

In the morning, we arrive in Kokand, situated within the Fergana Valley region. The city is one of the most ancient cities of Uzbekistan and served as a critical trade centre on the Silk Road.

After breakfast onboard, we will begin with a tour of the majestic Palace of Khudayar Khan – aptly known as the Pearl of Kokand. One of the most visited moments in the Fergana Valley, the palace was constructed in 1870s, and covers an impressive four hectares. The entire façade is opulently tiled with multi-coloured geometric patterns, arabesques, and floral motifs– creating a truly spectacular sight.

Additionally, we will visit the Jami Mosque – Kokand's most impressive Mosque. Erected in 1812, the colourful construct features a 100m long portico, supported by 98 Indian red-wood columns and beautifully adorned in traditional Fergana carvings. Our visit will include the opportunity to sample the local delicacy – Halva – a unique confectionary said to have numerous health benefits.

We will then make the short drive to Rishtan, home to the world-famous ceramics centre. Here we will discover the secrets of the state-of-the-art techniques of the ancient craft from the prominent local artisan Rustam Usmanov.

After a traditional lunch our next stop today is Fergana City. With Tsarist-era buildings and expansive boulevards – the city has a distinctly different feel from the wider region. Here we will visit the home of the famous Russian General – Mikhail Skobelev – and the Russian Army Assembly Hall. Revered by the Russian people, the formidable General was ominously known as 'Bloody Eyes' by his opponents.

Our touring concludes with a visit to Margilan. Once a vital, ancient caravan route for Chinese and Western trade, the city is renowned for its beautiful, handmade silk products. We will learn the art of silk weaving with a visit to a craftsman's workshop and studio.

In the early evening we return to board the Golden Eagle private train now waiting for us in Margilan, from where we continue our rail adventure onwards to Navoi.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



PALACE OF KHUDAYAR KHAN

Day 4

Navoi, Uzbekistan

Located in the southern region of the Karatau Mountain range, the Sarmish-Say Gorge is said to be the largest gorge for Stone Age petroglyphs and pictographs. The petroglyphs vary in accordance with their origin. Those from the early Iron Age feature a more 'animalistic' style. Whilst those from the Neolithic and Mesolithic age feature images of the local rituals and routines of the prehistoric times.

After a visit to these historical monuments, we will enjoy an open-air barbeque and a traditional folklore performance. The folklore of the country is a wonderful representation of the cultural dynamism of Central Asia. Beautifully lyrical, with a hauntingly ritualistic melody, the opportunity to watch a folklore performance is a magical experience.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



ON BOARD DINING

Day 5

Nukus, Uzbekistan

Located in the north-west of Uzbekistan, the city of Nukus is surrounded by three deserts - the Kara Kum, Kyzyl Kum and

Ustyurt. As such, the city has a beautiful, undisturbed landscape – featuring endless sandy scenery, deep dunes, and towering peaks.

Following breakfast, we will visit the Igor Savitsky State Museum of the fine arts, regional archaeology and studies in Nukus. Known as the 'Louvre in the Sands', the museum features the largest art collection in Central Asia – with over 100,000 exhibits. The museum was founded by renowned scientists, artist and collector – Igor Savitsky – and includes an eclectic collection of avante-garde pieces and crafts from the Karakalpak region.

Enjoy a more leisurely pace this afternoon back on board our private train. Maybe take time to sit in the Bar Lounge Car enjoying afternoon tea and watch the Uzbek landscapes that unfold outside our windows as we continue our voyage to Khiva.

Alternatively, you will have the option to travel by road to visit the 'Valley of Fifty Fortresses'. Uzbekistan's ancient desert castles date back more than 2,000 years and were originally built to protect locals from nomadic raids. Feel like an archaeologist as we explore 'Toprak Kala' (the 'Dusty Fortress', I-IV century AD) and Ayaz-Kala (the 'Windy Fortress', III-II century BC).

In the evening, the train arrives in Khiva (those who took the additional trip by road will rejoin the train upon arrival to Khiva).

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 6

Khiva, Uzbekistan

Our day begins in the ancient city of Khiva. Traced back to the 10th century, Khiva is a "city-museum", magnificently adorned in majestic buildings, spiraling columns and beautifully carved doors.

Rooted in its ties with the Silk Road, Khiva has an eclectic culinary identity – heavily influenced by Chinese, Turkish and Persian traditions. After a walking tour of the city, enjoy lunch at a local restaurant and taste the Khorezmian cuisine. We recommend the famous green pasta 'shivit oshi', tulum-barak (a fluffy dough-filled dish) and fresh fish sourced from the Amu Darya river with freshly baked bread.

After lunch, we will continue explore Khiva – including a visit to the Palace of Nurrullah Bai. Built in 1912, the Palace is extravagantly bedecked with bronze chandeliers, crystal pendants, and Venetian mirrors.

Before returning to the train, we will visit the Photography Museum. Along with other artists, the museum features the work of Khudaibergen Devanov – the pioneering photographer and cinematographer of Uzbekistan.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 7

Bukhara, Uzbekistan

According to legend, the city of Bukhara was founded by the Persian Prince, Siyavush, in the 5th century B.C. The city is a treasure trove of historical buildings and architectural monuments – many of which are excellently preserved. Our tour of the area will begin with a visit to the Sitorai Mokhi-Khosa Palace (translating to ‘a palace-like stars and moon’). The grand palace offers an insight into local life with displays featuring regional clothing, traditional embroidery, and ceramic creations.

From the palace, we will visit Chor Minor Madrasa. Translating to ‘Four Towers’, the Chor Minor continues to create architectural interest with its creative and unique design. Interestingly, each of the 17-metre towers feature a different design – said to represent the four different religions.

Our morning of architectural exploration concludes with the other-worldly Ismail Samani mausoleum and the Bayland Mosque. The Ismail Samani is the oldest building in Bukhara. Believed to have served as the family tomb for the Samanid dynasty (819-1005), the mausoleum features an intricate baked brick, wickerwork pattern. Whilst the Bayland Mosque represents a distinctly different style – modest white exteriors and interiors adorned with floral patterns and gilded tiles.

After a delicious lunch at a local restaurant, we visit Shukhov Tower – a water tower erected in 1929. We will ascend by lift to reach the top of the observation tower and enjoy the best view of the Old Town of Bukhara. Our afternoon concludes with a trip the breath-taking Ark Fortress. This “Noble Abode” perfectly captures the oriental exoticism of Uzbekistan.

In the evening, sample the finest Bukharian cuisine as we dine in the rooftop restaurant of the Minorai Kalon Hotel. From this magnificent spot, we will enjoy the finest views of the Kalyan Square at sunset.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 8

Bukhara, Uzbekistan

Bukhara is a magical city; whereby modern life entwines with archaic architecture and an otherworldly allure. Our morning begins with a visit to the Lyabi Hauz Square. Translating as 'around the pool', Lyabi-Hauz is a square built around a pool, shaded by lush mulberry trees and local tearooms. Here we will see the fascinating blend of old and new – local tea rooms stand next to evening jazz bars and western-style coffee shops.

To the west of the square stands the oldest mosque in Bukhara – Magoki Attori. Constructed in 714, the mosque represents the emergence of Islam in this region. The UNESCO site boasts an incredibly grand exterior, with carved columns, intricate decorative trimmings, and imposing arches.

Our explorations bring us to Kalyan Square and the iconic Kalyan Mosque. Featuring a traditional design – large maksura rooms, pillar-domed galleries, and deeply recessed niches – a walk around the site will transport you back to a long-gone era.

After lunch in the Lyabi-Hauz area, there will free time to explorer Bukhara further at your own pace. Take the time to visit the beautiful bazaars which decorate the Lyabi-Hauz Square, or maybe stop to sample the produce from the "Chaihanas" tearooms.

In the evening, enjoy the unique experience of a traditional Uzbek BBQ on the train platform by the Golden Eagle. It is hard to miss the aromatic aromas of fresh BBQs as we have been exploring the streets of Uzbekistan, and now is the chance to sample some of these delicious dishes. Succulent meats richly marinated and flamed grilled on an open fire...these melt in your mouth dishes are the perfect end to a day of adventure. We re-board the train as we head for our final destination of Samarkand arriving late evening.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 9

Samarkand, Uzbekistan

Samarkand, the 'Crossroad of Culture', has an awe-inspiring history of over two and a half millennia. Fascinatingly, the town is a living museum to the famous dynasties who have passed through – including Genghis Khan, Temurids, and Russians. As such, mudbrick houses shoulder structured neighbourhoods of painted and decorated homes, whilst opulently bedecked Mosques loom on the horizon.

Fascinatingly, such influences span beyond architecture to astronomical discovery. Ulugh Beg, the Ruler of Transoxiana (1409-49) had been interested in astronomy from childhood, continuing to build the largest Observatory in the pre-modern era, to support his studies. The incredible feat of engineering centres of a huge sextant (40m radius), embedded in a 2m trench. The magnificence of this construct is not limited to its interiors - spanning three stories, the exterior is exquisitely decorated with glittering, glazed tiles, mosaics and majolica.

From a study of the stars, we then move to the Shakhi Zinda Necropolis – a building framed by a constellation of glimmering turquoise domes. The necropolis consists of 11 mausoleums, individually decorated with majolica tiles, carved mosaics, and porticos. As we wander through the gilded avenues, it is clear to see why the site has served as an important pilgrimage centre.

Before lunch we will gain further insight into the intertwining identity of the 'Crossroad of Culture', Samarkand. Until the Middle Ages, Samarkand served as the main supplier of paper to the Arab world and Europe. With a visit to the Meros Paper Mill, we will learn about this ancient art with an up-close lesson of the laborious process, ancient machines, and centuries old methods.

Cuisine is at the very core of a culture. Continue your immersion into Uzbek identity with an interactive cooking class and Plov lunch. Considered Uzbekistan's national dish, Plov is intrinsic to the national identity and a staple dish at social gatherings. Representative of Uzbekistan's rich history, Plov is shaped by the Mediterranean, Chinese and Russian cultures who have settled in the region.

After lunch there will be the opportunity to explore Samarkand at your leisure before returning to the train to prepare for the spectacular evening that lies ahead.

Evening celebrations begin with cocktails and dinner at the Oriental Sweets Caravan Sarai. The 300-year-old restaurant boasts a beautiful open air dining space, shaded by lush mulberry trees, and framed by ornate arches.

After dinner we will cross over to the famous, now illuminated, Registan Square to enjoy a fabulous gala dance performance and fashion show. Soak up the magical atmosphere as the setting sun seeps down the world's most recognised Mosque.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 10 Samarkand, Uzbekistan

Registan Square is the main square in Samarkand – constructed by the Turkic-Mongolian leader, Timur (of the Timurid dynasty). To stand in the tiled expanse is a breath-taking experience – ethereally ornate portals, intricate minarets and glimmering cupolas loom above. As we explore the revered site, it is easy to see why the Viceroy of India, George Curzon, described it as “the noblest public square in the world”.

Our second day in Samarkand continues with a visit to the Gur-e-Amir Mausoleum. Serving as the resting place of Leader Timur, the beautiful building features a uniquely fluted azure dome and magnificent portal. The interiors are an exquisite example of medieval craftsmanship –bedecked in gilded mosaics, the lofty ceilings imitate a starry sky.

Following lunch, test your local knowledge and try your hand at bartering at the famous Siab Bazaar. A must-see spot, the bustling oriental market is a thriving, and exhilarating hive of activity. Featuring 5 hectares of trade rows and over 17 variations of Samarkand bread.... you will most certainly be spoilt for choice.

Close by stands the majestic Bibi-Khanym. Impressive in both its size and beauty, the structure is oft compared the gates of heaven. Boasting carved marble structures, elegant minarets, and glistening gold walls, such a comparison is understandable.

Return to the train in the late afternoon and enjoy our onboard Gala Farewell Dinner as the train departs Samarkand for Tashkent.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day

11

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

After our arrival in Tashkent, your private transfer will be waiting to transfer you to Tashkent airport for your return flights home.

Breakfast

ACCOMMODATION

Golden Eagle

UPGRADE AVAILABLE

LIFE ABOARD THE GOLDEN EAGLE

The Golden Eagle has been carefully designed with emphasis on your comfort, relaxation and enjoyment. In addition to our private en-suite sleeping cabins, we offer a beautifully appointed Bar Lounge Car and Restaurant Cars.

The Golden Eagle, comprising three categories of cabins, featuring state-of-the-art amenities and en-suite facilities, is the only private train of its kind operating in these regions of the world.

SILVER CABIN

Silver Class cabins, which are more compact at 60 sq ft (5.5 sq metres), feature a small double lower bed and a single upper bed as well as DVD/CD player, LCD screen, safe, individual air-conditioning, wardrobe and large picture window.



The Silver Class cabins have private en-suite wet room with a washbasin, toilet and shower.

- Sleeps 2 in lower small double bed or bunk style
- Remote controlled air-conditioning and heating
- Recessed lighting and wardrobe
- Personal safe
- Private en-suite bathroom with 'wet-room' style shower and toilet
- Bathrobes, slippers, hairdryer and toiletries provided
- DVD/CD player with LCD screens
- Towels and linens changed every second day or daily on request
- Complimentary tea, coffee and mineral water available at all times
- Laundry service available at an additional charge

Room Upgrades

Gold Cabin

At 77 sq ft (7 sq metres) Gold Class cabins are extremely well-proportioned and have everything from a private bathroom with separate power shower cubicle and underfloor heating to a DVD/CD player, LCD screen, safe, individual air-conditioning, wardrobe, large picture window as well as featuring a double lower bed and a single upper bed.

Guests in Gold Class benefit from complimentary drinks off the Standard Bar List in the Bar Lounge Car.

- Sleeps 2 in either lower standard double bed or bunk style
- Remote controlled air-conditioning and heating
- Recessed lighting and wardrobe
- Personal safe
- Private en-suite bathroom with full power shower and underfloor heating
- Bathrobes, slippers, hairdryer and toiletries provided
- DVD/CD player with LCD screens
- Towels and linens changed every second day or daily on request
- Complimentary tea, coffee and mineral water in cabin available at all times
- Drinks in the Bar Lounge Car included from the Standard Bar List
- Laundry service available at an additional charge



Prices are dynamic based on travel dates. Please proceed to [Book Now](#) or [Contact Us](#) for details.

Imperial Suite

Imperial Suites are the most spacious cabins available onboard the Golden Eagle measuring 120 sq ft (11.1 sq metres) and benefiting from a large and luxurious double bed as well as a lounge area with dressing table.

Imperial Suite facilities include a private en-suite bathroom with power shower and the luxury of underfloor heating; individual air-conditioning; wardrobe; DVD/CD player with LCD screen; complimentary fully stocked minibar; safe; small library and two large picture windows to watch the world go by.

Exemplary service starts with a complimentary bottle of Dom Perignon champagne when you board the train to toast the start of your wonderful adventure.

A note for Imperial Suite guests:

A private guide and chauffeured car service is included in many of the destinations we visit on your journey, however, in locations where there are a limited number of experienced and qualified tour guides available, we may offer a shared car service among Imperial Suite guests. Imperial Suite guests will also benefit from the inclusion of drinks from the Standard and Premium Bar list in the Bar Lounge Car, a laundry service and room upgrades to the next available category at the hotels which are featured in the itinerary.

- Sleeps 2 in a large Double Bed (1.5m by 1.9m)
- Sitting area
- Remote controlled air-conditioning and heating
- Recessed lighting and wardrobe
- Dressing table
- Personal safe
- Private en-suite bathroom with full power shower and underfloor heating
- Bathrobes, slippers, hairdryer and toiletries provided
- Complimentary minibar
- DVD/CD player with LCD screens
- Towels and linens changed every second day or daily on request
- Complimentary tea, coffee and mineral water available at all times
- In-cabin dining available on request
- Drinks from the Bar Lounge Car included from the Standard and Premium Bar List (excluding Premium Wine List)
- Private car and guide options in selected cities for off-train excursion programme
- Laundry service included



Prices are dynamic based on travel dates. Please proceed to [Book Now](#) or [Contact Us](#) for details.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- The bar lounge car is the perfect location to relax and unwind as you watch the ever changing scenery pass by. Reminisce the day's adventures with fellow passengers over afternoon tea or perhaps challenge your friends to a game of cards before dinner.
- Throughout your journey the Bar Lounge Car and Restaurant Cars will host a variety of entertaining and enriching activities such as Russian language lessons and engaging lectures on local history and culture from expert guest speakers.
- It is also here that our Tour Manager will organise a programme of activities for the journey ahead. Daily itineraries detailing train arrival and departure timings and information on the following day's excursions and activities will be provided, plus useful weather forecast and time zone information.
- As evening falls, enjoy the sounds of the resident pianist playing on the baby grand piano in the Bar Lounge Car. Each night the bar stays open until the last person leaves.
- Expect a relaxed and convivial atmosphere at mealtimes with the freedom to dine wherever, and with whomever, you please in a single sitting. An informal dress code is applied throughout the journey.
- Configuration and styles of Gold Class & Imperial Suite cabins vary with seating and sleeping arrangements. Requests for a preferred cabin arrangement will be noted, but cannot be guaranteed. Please ask for details.

Departure dates:

- 18 Apr 2024 - 28 Apr 2024
- 20 Oct 2024 - 30 Oct 2024

Excluded

- International airfares and taxes
- Domestic airfares and taxes, unless otherwise specified in our holiday package
- Visa expenses, processing, and issuance fees
- Meals other than as specified in our holiday package
- Travel Insurance or expenses of a personal nature (mini-bar, phone call, laundry, etc.),
- Tips or gratuities to guides, drivers, porters, hotel, restaurant or boat staff, etc – unless specified in inclusions
- Or any other travel expense that has not been included in our holiday package