

Journey Through Central Asia: The Five 'Stans

A CLASSIC SILK ROAD SURVEY

SMALL GROUP TOUR



21 Days

Premier Series Land Tour

\$7,195 per person, double occupancy

Plus internal air \$200

(economy class, subject to change)

Single supplement \$1,225

Comprehensive tour inclusions listed on page 103

Group Size 5-16 travelers

2012 Land Tour Dates

April 10-30 • May 1-21 • August 21-September

10 • September 18-October 8 • October 9-29

Stay a little longer... Combine this tour with Treasures of the South Caucasus, page 77; or with Essential Iran, page 57.

MIR Signature Experiences

- Observe Kyrgyz national horse-games after a home-cooked meal in a Kyrgyz village
- Savor traditional Uzbek meals with families in the Fergana Valley and the Karakalpak region
- Admire the trove of rescued Russian art with an expert who leads you behind the scenes at the Savitsky Museum



Diminutive musician in Kyrgyzstan

photo: Douglas Grimes



Rooftops of Khiva

More than 2,000 years ago, the great trade routes that linked Europe and China opened Central Asia to foreign cultures, customs and religions. Join a modern-day caravan on an epic journey to five of these exotic countries — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

Days 1-4: Almaty, Lake Issyk-Kul, Bishkek Begin the tour in Almaty, the largest city in Kazakhstan, driving into the majestic Tien Shan mountain range. Cross into Kyrgyzstan and spend a night at beautiful alpine Lake Issyk-Kul before exploring Bishkek.

Days 5-7: Osh, Fergana, Margilan, Rishtan, Khujand Fly to the lush Fergana Valley, divided among three of the five 'Stans. Ascend to UNESCO-listed Suleiman-Too Sacred Mountain, one of the holiest Islamic sites in Central Asia, rising from the outskirts of Osh, where you meet with a group of locals. In the Uzbek portion of the valley, visit Margilan and Rishtan, villages specializing in silks and ceramics. Cross the border into Tajikistan for an overnight in historic Khujand.

Days 8-16: Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Nukus Journey overland to Tashkent and admire one of the oldest Korans in the world. Explore the blue-tiled mosaics of Samarkand, Tamerlane's UNESCO-listed Ak Saray Palace in Shakhrisabze, the interlocking brickwork of Bukhara and the winding alleys of Khiva. Drive through the Kara Kum (Red Sands) desert to the astonishing Savitsky Museum of avant-garde Russian art in remote Nukus, capital of Karakalpakstan, for an overnight.

Days 17-21: Kunya Urgench, Tashauz, Ashkabad, Nisa, Merv In Turkmenistan explore the ruins of Khorezm's Kunya Urgench, the Parthian city of Nisa and mythical Merv, all three of them UNESCO Sites. In the modern capital of Ashkabad, browse the Golden Age bazaar, piled with deep red carpets and crowded with merchants, shoppers and livestock.

