



# MUSLIM LEGACY: UZBEKISTAN

MARCH 5-13



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# WHY DID WE CHOOSE UZBEKISTAN?

Islam was brought to ancestors of modern Uzbeks during the 8th century when the Muslims entered Central Asia. The deen initially took hold in the southern portions of Turkestan and thereafter gradually spread northward. It also took root due to the missionary work of the Iranian Samanid rulers as a significant number of Turkic peoples accepted Islam. The territory became a world leading center of science, medicine, philosophy and invention, ushering in the period of the Golden Age of Islam. The synthesis of cultures gave the Muslim world brilliant theologians, faqihs and Hadith scholars like Imam al-Bukhari, Imam al-Maturidi, Imam al-Tirmidhi and many others.

Uzbekistan is more than 80 percent Muslim. The majority of the country's Muslims are Sunni. In the Stalin era, Muslims suffered persecution, as did Christians throughout the Soviet Union, because they opposed the Soviet regime. During World War II, the Soviet government forged a

rapprochement with Imams, and established the Muslim Board of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. In the later Soviet period, just prior to independence, overt expressions of Islam and faith were strongly discouraged and could disqualify a person from educational or career opportunities.

In the years since the fall of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan has opened its arms warmly to Muslims and seeks to have more Muslim *Halal* tourism come its way. This trip is a historic opportunity to revive our connection to the Muslim Legacy in Uzbekistan. InshaAllah.



## **THE PROGRAM**

# **A DAY BY DAY ITINERARY**

InshaAllah, we will be visiting Samarkand, Tashkent, and Bukhara.

The following is subject to change where needed.

### **Travel and Arrival in Tashkent (March 5-6)**

IGI team members will meet you at the airport and facilitate a swift transfer to the hotel in Tashkent. (2am arrival)

### **March 7**

- Visit Khazrati Imam Complex, which houses the world-famous Uthman Qur'an (7th century, perhaps the oldest extant manuscript of the Qur'an in the world) in the Madrasa Muyi Buborak. Near the Chorsu Bazaar area, visit the 16th-century Madrassah Kukeldash, which is still active.
- Visit the mausoleum of Kaffal Shashim, then Zangi Ota complex. Lunch with delicious local halal food.

- After lunch, a panoramic tour of the modern city, the square of Amir Temur, and a stop for dinner with halal food.

## March 8

1. After early breakfast, transfer to the railway station to catch the modern high-speed train "Afrosiyob" to Samarkand (2 hrs 20 min).
2. After hotel check in, light sightseeing tour of Samarkand. The tour includes visits to Amir Temur (Tamerlane).
3. Then visit Shahi Zinda Complex with the burial-place of Qussam Ibn Abbas, the cousin of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as well as many other famous and historic mausoleums displaying stunningly beautiful mosaic and majolica tile work.

## March 9 - Trip Highlight

- Visit to the maqam of Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi, the great Imam of Aqidah.
- Visit the maqam and complex of Imam al-Bukhari, the great and renowned collector of Hadith, compiler of the world-famous Sahih al-Bukhari. This *may* include a reading of the final chapter of Sahih al-Bukhari, completing a khatm of the Sahih insha'Allah.

- Lunch. In the evening visit to the complex of the great Shaykh Khoja Ahrar.

## **March 10**

- Breakfast. After breakfast, drive to Bukhara and en-route in Gijduvan visit to the Masjid of Imam Abdul Khaliq al-Ghujdawani.
- Arrival in Bukhara and check in. Lunch with delicious local halal food.
- After lunch, tour of the city, including visit to the Samanid Mausoleum, which is the earliest example of a structure made of baked brick; Bolo Hauz mosque; Ark complex; Poi Kalon Ensemble of Kalan Minaret; Kalan mosque; Mir Arab Madrassah.
- Dinner in restaurant with delicious local halal food.

## **March 11**

- After breakfast, continue our ziyarat tour to the masjid and maqams of Imams and Shuyukh in the suburbs of Bukhara, including Khoja Anjir Faghnawi, Khoja Ali Ramitani, and Baha-ud-Din Naqshband Bukhari).
- Lunch with delicious local halal food.
- After lunch, transfer to the railway station, and take the Afrosiyab high-speed train to back to Tashkent.

- Arrive in Tashkent, drive to the hotel and check in.

## March 12

- Free day in Tashkent, to explore, eat at local restaurants, and shop in the markets of this historic Silk Road city.
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## March 13

- March 13: Departure from Tashkent International Airport



# WHAT TO EAT

With wide-reaching fields of wheat and grain, the Uzbek dinner table leans heavily into rice and noodle dishes. Each region boasts their own distinct versions of two staples: plov—a pilaf-like rice dish with stewed meat and vegetables—and bread, called *non*, that's available fresh at the market every morning. Samarkanders are particularly proud of their loaves, which are significantly denser than other areas' recipes. The Uzbek palate pulls from a variety of international influences. The aforementioned *non* bread sounds etymologically similar to Indian naan. Lagman, a noodle dish usually in soup topped with local vegetables and meat, comes from the Chinese lamian. Manti—meat dumplings—were likely an old Mongol recipe now found as far as the Caucasus and even Korea (called mandu) in the wake of their invasion.

You'll be hard-pressed to spend more than \$5 per meal at a restaurant not geared (read: inflated) towards tourists, but an uptick in the number of establishments isn't moving as speedily as the rise in traveler numbers, meaning dinnertime in the old quarters of Bukhara require an advance reservation if you have a particular dining venue in mind.

# GETTING AROUND

According to the UN World Tourism Organization, Uzbekistan registered the fourth highest increase in travelers in the last 5 years. This is largely due to the ease with which you can move between destinations. While the distances are far, private transfers and comfortable train travel are a cinch to organize.

Taxis are generally safe and in abundance. The hotels can usually arrange for you as well.

As one of the world's oldest trading posts, the bazaars in Uzbekistan are enthralling. Urgut Sunday market just outside Samarkand is a byword for bustle; you are likely to find the experience overwhelming in a good way.



