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Silk Road Debuts Uzbekistan Tour

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Silk Road Treasure Tours, specialists in travel to Central Asia, has debuted “Golden Road to Samarkand”, a 10-day journey to Uzbekistan. Among the ancient surroundings of Tashkent, Nukus, Khiva, Bukhara and Shakhrisabz en route to Samarkand, one of the oldest inhabited cities in the world, guests will wander through the ancient narrow streets discovering mausoleums, mosques, minarets and bazaars in Uzbek’s triad of UNESCO World Heritage cities. The small group tour has 12 guaranteed departure dates from May 4, 2012 to Aug. 29, 2013 and ranges from \$2,999 to \$3,299 per person, plus consular fees, guide gratuities and international airfare.

The journey to legendary Samarkand begins in Tashkent, the capital and economic center of Uzbekistan. In Tashkent, guests will explore ancient mausoleums and mosques in the Old City and get a true taste of everyday life watching craftsmen at work at the lively Chor-Su Bazaar. The next morning guests will fly west to Nukus, a city not far from the Aral Sea, for a sightseeing tour and visit to the Savitsky Museum. The Savitsky Museum, featured in the documentary film, *The Desert of Forbidden Art* (2010), is famous for its collection of early 20th century art from Russia and Central Asia, including the second-largest collection of Russian avant-garde in the world, thanks to Igor Savitsky, who rescued 40,000 pieces of forbidden fellow artists’ works during the Soviet era. In the afternoon guests will drive to the fairy-tale city of Khiva, one of the popular World Heritage Sites of the Silk Road, to explore Uzbekistan’s open-air museum, which holds unparalleled examples of Oriental architecture.

On day four, guests will drive through the Kyzyl Kum (Red Sands), the 11th largest desert in the world and one of the main Silk Routes, stopping at the yurts and a local chaykhana (tea-house) for a picnic lunch, to Bukhara for a three-night stay in one of the most ancient cities of the Silk Road and another UNESCO World Heritage Site. There, guests will enjoy dinner and a folklore show featuring dancers, singers, and fashion stars; visit the magnificent summer residence of last Emir of Bukhara and Sitorai Mohi-Khossa (the Palace of Moon and Stars); observe the trade domes of money changers and sellers of hats, silk, carpets, puppets, and jewelry; and enjoy a wine tasting at the ancient Nugai caravanserai, a former lodging for those who traveled by caravan and camel.

From Bukhara, guests will take the Golden Road to Samarkand through the ancient city of Shakhrisabz, also the birthplace of the Great Amir Timur, better known in the West as Tamerlane, for a visit to the ancient ruins of Tamerlane’s summer residence, the Ak-Saroy (White Palace), the Khazrati Imom mosque, and the exquisite blue-tiled Kok Gumbaz mosque. After arriving in Samarkand, guests will enjoy a three night stay in this World Heritage Site with more than 3,000 years of history, where Alexander the Great married his love, Roxana, a local Bactrian princess. Guests will embark on a full day exploration in ancient Samarkand visiting: Registan Square, Samarkand’s main attraction and an impressive site for holding some of the world’s finest international music festivals; Ulugbek’s Observatory, which dates back to the 15th century; the Shahi Zinda Ensemble; and one of the oldest wineries of Uzbekistan. On the last full day, guests will have photo opportunities from the highest point of Samarkand, visit local bazaars and handicraft centers, and enjoy the traditional food of an Uzbek family before driving back to Tashkent for a farewell dinner.

About Silk Road Treasure Tours

Silk Road Treasure Tours specializes in custom private and group tours to Central Asia Stan countries and the most fascinating destinations along the Silk Road. Zulya Rajabova, owner of Silk Road Treasure Tours and native of Uzbekistan, provides expert advice to

craft authentic journeys for tourists, academics, historians, business and special-interest groups. (silkroadtreasuretours.com)

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