



Uzbekistan: The Silk Road Cities

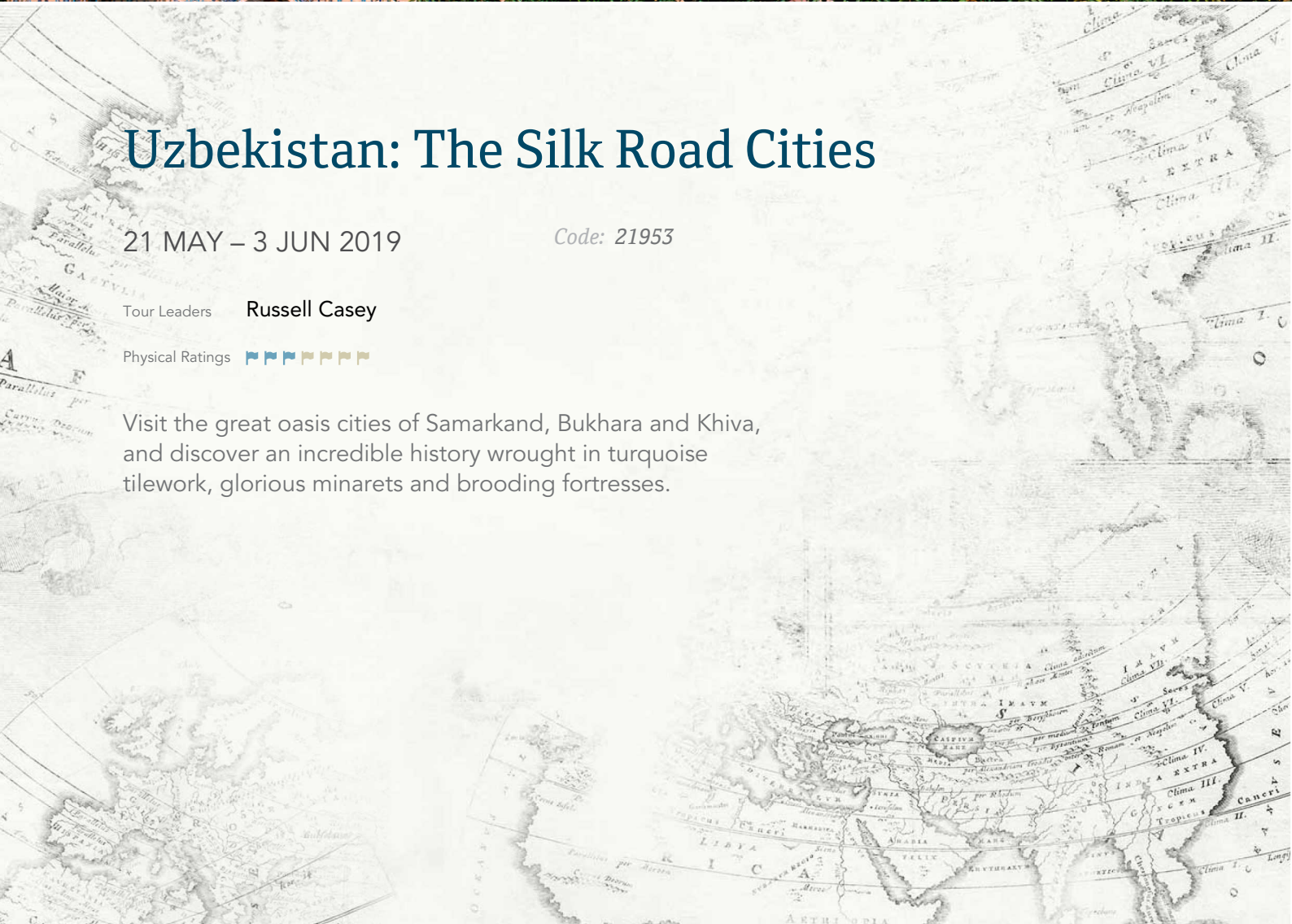
21 MAY – 3 JUN 2019

Code: 21953

Tour Leaders **Russell Casey**

Physical Ratings 

Visit the great oasis cities of Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva, and discover an incredible history wrought in turquoise tilework, glorious minarets and brooding fortresses.



Overview

Tour Highlights

- This tour, led by [Russell Casey](#), explores the magnificent architecture and rich history of key Central Asian Silk Road cities.
- Explore the rich magnificence of Tamerlane's Samarkand and her great monuments, including some of the finest tilework in the world.
- Walk a millennium of Central Asian architecture in Bukhara, beginning with the glorious Samanid Mausoleum, the world's oldest surviving Islamic tomb.
- Wander the atmospheric bazaars of Bukhara, feasting your eyes on a rich variety of traditional arts and crafts, from jewellery to the famous 'Bukhara carpets'.
- In Nukus, view the Savitsky Karakalpakstan State Art Museum, containing one of the greatest collections in the world of early modernist Russian art.
- Enjoy the lovely old city of Khiva, with her mud-brick walls, vividly tiled palaces, beautiful mosques, shrines and tombs, and towering Central Asian minarets.
- Get to know local potters, weavers, embroiderers and rug makers at their private workshops, learn to read particular motifs and distinguish special textiles including Uzbekistan's famous *suzani*.
- Beyond the fertile delta of the Oxus, explore the isolated Kazakh village of Chimbai, rarely visited by western travellers. Here, meet a family of yurt makers, some of the last working artisans in Central Asia.

Testimonials

It is an amazing privilege to travel in the heart of the Silk Road. Of the many routes from east to west all of them passed through Samarkand and Bukhara. One does get a sense of the wealth these cities must have enjoyed through the fabulous buildings that were erected with the taxes imposed on the goods travelling through. I loved travelling back in time in the baths in Bukhara – the filtered light on the grey marble, the steam, the beautiful young male attendants and the feeling of well-being at the end of the experience.
Kate, NSW.

My interest is Islamic Architecture and this tour fulfilled all my expectations. Can't believe my luck, it was great. Pam, QLD.

14-day Cultural Tour of Uzbekistan

Overnight Tashkent (2 nights) • Nukus (1 night) • Khiva (2 nights) • Bukhara (3 nights) • Samarkand (4 nights) • Tashkent (1 night)

Overview

Journey through the fabled Silk Road cities of Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva. Ancient towns and caravanserais, strung like pearls on ancient golden trade routes linking Asia and Europe, developed into thriving medieval commercial and cultural centres. Trade from Constantinople to China and India encouraged local traditions in bright fabrics, glorious carpets and stunning ceramics, which we study in depth. From Tashkent, capital of modern Uzbekistan, we fly to remote Nukus, where we explore the Savitsky Art Museum's extraordinary early 20th-century Russian avant-garde art collection. In nearby Chimbai village we visit one of the few remaining families making nomadic yurts in the traditional manner. Further south, we explore the walled, living city of Khiva: a maze of houses, mosques, palaces, and religious schools, all enclosed within one mile square, filled with an atmosphere redolent of travellers' tales from Ibn

Battuta and Marco Polo, to William Dalrymple. 'Divine Bukhara' is an ancient city of mosques, madrasas and minarets. Crooked alleys wind between walls of clay-built houses and Uzbek men in colourfully-striped coats and bright skullcaps sip tea beneath mulberry trees. From Bukhara, we take the high-speed train to Samarkand – Tamerlane's 14th-century imperial capital which he transformed into a city of soaring minarets and domes of glistening turquoise and cobalt blue. Samarkand's observatory and madrasas became lodestars for astronomers, poets and architects across the Islamic world and beyond.

Leaders



Russell Casey

A dedicated traveller with a passion for calligraphy, miniature paintings and textiles, Russell has travelled extensively through the Middle East, Iran & Central Asia. His language studies include French, German, Japanese, Arabic, Persian & Mandarin. Russell has led ASA's tours since 2009.

Russell Casey has led tours for ASA since 2009. He has held a fascination for the Middle East, Persia, Central Asia and the Silk Route since studying Latin at school. With a keen interest in languages, Russell studied French, German, Japanese, Arabic, Persian and Chinese (Mandarin). Learning Japanese generated an interest in calligraphy and woodblock prints. Persian and Arabic studies added to the appeal of calligraphy and 'The Art of the Book', which in turn led to visiting some of the great libraries and museums of the United Kingdom and Ireland to view their collections. After independently visiting Turkey, Syria and Jordan, Russell travelled to Iran on the ASA Art and Culture of Persia tour in 2002. In 2005 after completing the ASA Silk Route tour, he revisited Iran to further his understanding of Persian speaking peoples and their arts – including textiles, architecture, gardens and cuisine. He holds a Queensland Ambulance Service first aid certificate, a Master's degree in Medical Physics and is undertaking independent study in the art, history and culture of Central Asia, the Silk Route and surrounding regions. Russell consults in radiation protection and eHealth, including working as an expert advisor to the IAEA.

Combine this tour with

Tajikistan & Kyrgyzstan: Through the High Pamirs

4 JUN – 21 JUN 2019



Itinerary

The daily activities described in this itinerary may be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate changes in museum opening hours, flight schedules & road conditions. Meals will be taken in hotels and in restaurants, many with a historical or local flavour. At times picnic lunches will be provided. All meals are included in the tour price and are indicated in the itinerary where: **B**=breakfast, **L**=lunch and **D**=evening meal.

Tashkent, Uzbekistan - 2 nights

Day 1: Tuesday 21 May, Arrive Tashkent

- Arrival transfer for participants arriving on the ASA 'designated' flight (HY506 at 1415hrs)
- Welcome meeting & refreshments (5.00pm)
- Orientation tour of Tashkent
- Welcome Dinner at the Caravan Art Restaurant (7.00pm)

Participants travelling on the ASA 'designated' flight are scheduled to arrive in Tashkent mid-afternoon. Upon arrival we transfer by private coach to the [Lotte City Palace Hotel](#) located directly opposite the Alisher Navoi Opera and Ballet House.

Tashkent is the capital of modern Uzbekistan. The Sogdian city of Chach was founded on the site during the 1st century BC, developing into a major entrepôt prior to the Arab conquest of 751. Sadly, little remains of historic Tashkent as the city was severely damaged by an earthquake in 1966 and rebuilt in grandiose Soviet style. It is currently the fourth largest city in the former Soviet Union with a population of anywhere up to 4 million people including undocumented migrants from the countryside.

After settling into our hotel there will be a welcome meeting and refreshments, followed by a short orientation tour of the city and a walk through Independence Square. Tonight we enjoy a welcome dinner at the Caravan Art Restaurant. (Overnight Tashkent) **D**

Day 2: Wednesday 22 May, Tashkent

- Morning Talk: The Silk Road
- Hazret Imam Complex incl. the Barak Khan Madrasa, Tila Shaikh Mosque & Archives and Artisan workshops
- Tashkent Fine Art Museum
- Akbar Ceramic Museum and Workshop
- Memorial House Museum of Tamara Khanum
- Performance at the Alisher Navoi Opera & Ballet Theatre (*to be confirmed in 2019*)

Today's program begins with a morning talk contextualising our tour within the general history of the Silk Road.

We then visit the Hazret Imam complex consisting of mosques and madrasas constructed between the 11th-21st centuries. The complex takes its name from Mazar Kaffallya ash-Shashi – the first Imam and preacher of Islam in Tashkent ('Hazrat Imam' translates as 'The Holy Imam') and includes the Barak Khan Madrasa. One of the earliest structures within the ensemble is a large mausoleum (1530) crowned with double cupola and built by the founder of the Uzbek Sheybanid dynasty, Suyunidj-khan. Suyunidj-khan's son, Nauruz-Akhmed, transformed the complex in the 16th century. The madrasa is arranged around a typical central courtyard, but has distinctive features including majolica and brick mosaic wall decorations and windows enlivened with painted geometrical ornamentation.

We visit artisans' workshops where local craftsmen specialise in a variety of handicrafts, including tin-covered wooden bookstands, miniature paintings, *ikat* weaving and metalwork. In the traditional streets nearby and of particular note, is the house workshop of master block-printer Yuriy Pak. We also visit the Tila Shaikh Mosque, which holds one of the oldest surviving Qur'ans in the world, brought to Central Asia by Timur Leng (Tamerlane) to commemorate his military triumphs in the 14th century.

Our morning's program concludes with a visit to the Tashkent Fine Art Museum to view a collection of some of the finest textiles in Uzbekistan, including magnificent embroidered *suzani*, *ikat* robes and gold embroidery.

After lunch at a local restaurant we visit the workshop of the master ceramicist Akbar. Situated in the old city, the workshop is sited in the family's traditional Uzbek courtyard house, with a small ceramic museum and library facing onto a lovely garden filled with flowers and fruit trees. Here we learn how the styles and techniques of Central Asia's fine ceramic tradition are not only being preserved but also inspire new, innovative forms.

Our final visit today is the house museum of Tamara Khanum (1906-1991), a folk dancer and singer of ethnic Armenian origin who was the first woman to perform publicly in Uzbekistan without a veil. Tamara became a soloist at the Uzbek Philharmonic at the age of 30 and was active in the reform and professionalism of Uzbek national and folk dance. She gained international fame collecting and performing folk dances and songs from diverse nations; a remarkably quick learner, she could perform a piece like a native within a few days of first encountering it. Tamara amassed her own collection of national dresses from across the Balkans, Central Asia, China, Caucasus, India, and even Egypt, all displayed in the museum.

In the early evening we attend a performance (*subject to confirmation in 2018*) at the Alisher Navoi Opera & Ballet Theatre. Recently reopened following extensive renovations, the theatre was built by Japanese prisoners of war by direct order of Stalin and commemorates the 15th century 'Father of Turkic literature', Alisher Navoi.

From the theatre we walk the short distance back to our hotel for a light evening meal at the hotel's rooftop restaurant. (Overnight Tashkent) BLD

Nukus, Uzbekistan - 1 night

Day 3: Thursday 23 May, Tashkent – Nukus

- Morning Flight from Tashkent to Nukus (HY0011 0710-0855hrs)
- Savitsky Karakalpakstan State Art Museum, Nukus
- Embroidery Centre of Gulnara Egamberdieva
- Yurt-making family of Karimbai, Chimbai village
- Yurt band decoration weavers of Khudaibergen
- Dinner at the private home of Oktyabr Dospanov

We take an early morning flight to Nukus, the remote capital of the Autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan's westernmost region. Home to the Kara-Kalpak nation – a people closely related by language and culture to the Kazakhs – most Kara-Kalpaks lived in small villages of extended families prior to the Bolshevik takeover in 1921. These settlements clustered along Khorezm's vital irrigation canals – some of which date back millennia. Traditional Kara-Kalpak housing was the yurt, or a reed wickerwork frame house with clay walls and flat roof. During the 20th century, yurts were mostly abandoned and contemporary Kara-Kalpak villages are brick houses with big windows, wooden floors, electricity, water, natural gas and sewerage: a solid legacy of Soviet modernisation. Yurts can still be found in villagers' gardens, however, where they are used for family meals and sleeping in the scorching summers.

Traditional Kara-Kalpak clothing is very colourful, especially women's headgear and head coverings. Contemporary style is, for the most part, European with traditional dress preserved in motifs on modern women's short skirts, with only the very elderly wearing truly traditional clothing. The Kara-Kalpak people are the inheritors of unique traditions in woodcarving, leather working, textile weaving and embroidery; beautiful examples of which we see in the Savitsky Museum. Traditional Kara-Kalpak textile production includes yurt making and decoration, clothing, carpet and rug weaving, with loom-work incorporating soft brown shades, delicate purples and splashes of green and yellow.

On arrival in Nukus we begin with a visit to an extraordinary museum. Founded in 1966, the Savitsky Karakalpakstan State Art Museum holds an extraordinary collection of over 95,000 artefacts, including fine art by Russian and Central Asian painters, traditional Kara-Kalpak crafts, and archaeological finds from the cities and towns that litter the landscape of ancient Khorezem. The museum was the life work of Moscovite painter/archaeologist Igor Vitallyevich Savitsky who moved to Nukus in the mid 1950s. Far from the steely eyes of Moscow apparatchiks and ironically protected from their official scrutiny by dint of Nukus' location in a remote, closed, military zone, Savitsky was able to amass a priceless collection of early 20th-century Russian avant-garde paintings. Many of the artists represented in the collection were victims of the Stalinist Gulag and their works survive only due to Savitsky's determination.

Our program also includes a visit to a new NGO embroidery centre opened by talented Karakalpak artisan, Gulnara Egamberdieva, who was determined to preserve traditional techniques and designs. Here we can view (and purchase) examples of handmade Karakalpak embroidery and textiles while directly supporting a grass-roots organisation in the poorest part of Uzbekistan.

In the afternoon we drive out to the isolated Kazakh village of Chimbai to visit the home of the Karimbai family. The eldest son, Kural, still runs a workshop making yurts in the traditional manner. Yurt-making is a dying art in Uzbekistan and Kural's yurts are mostly made for Karakalpak and Kazakh villagers who live out in

the desert during the summer cattle-breeding season. We also visit a family of yurt band weavers in the village of Khudaibergeren.

In the evening we dine together at the private home of Oktyabr Dospanov, a Karakalpak archaeologist who has excavated many of the sites of ancient Khorezm during his employment at the Savitsky Museum. (Overnight Nukus) BLD

Khiva, Uzbekistan - 2 nights

Day 4: Friday 24 May, Nukus – Desert Fortresses – Khiva

- Chalpyk Kala (time permitting)
- Kizil Kala Fortress
- Toprak Kala Fortress
- Ayaz Kala

This morning we depart Nukus for Khiva in Khorezm, located to the south in the Oxus delta-oasis. Khorezm was traditionally isolated from oases cities to the south and east by harsh deserts and for much of her history forged an independent course, much like an island nation. Along our route to Khiva, we visit a number of fortresses, towns and cities dating from the 2nd century BC to the 9th century AD. These urban centres are evidence of once-thriving Khorezmian kingdoms that often managed to maintain their independence from more powerful neighbours by dint of geographic remoteness.

Time permitting, we first view Chalpyk Kala (Chilpyk, Chil'pk, Shilpyk), a 'tower of silence' (*dakhma*), or Zoroastrian tower where corpses were exposed to be picked clean by vultures before internment of the bones in ossuaries. We are traveling through a region of historically Iranian-speaking peoples who – prior to the arrival of Islam – mostly practiced variants of the Zoroastrian tradition. According to a few Russian scholars and in local legend, Zarathustra himself began to compose the *Avesta*, the foundation holy text of Zoroastrianism, in ancient Khorezm. Chalpyk *dakhma* was probably first constructed sometime between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD, but much of the standing architecture dates to the 7th and 8th centuries AD.

We then explore the remains of a number of Khorezmian mud-brick fortresses and fortress cities roughly contemporary with Chalpyk Kala. The site of Kizil Kala or 'Red Fortress', gets its name from the colour of the crumbling *pise* mud-brick fortifications. Dating to the 1st-2nd century AD, this fortified 'manor-house' was built before the Arab-Islamic conquest of Central Asia, but remained important until at least the 9th century.

The site of Toprak Kala is an excavated Khorezmian town (1st-5th centuries AD) that was one of the most important urban centres of the pre-Islamic 1st millennium AD. The mud-brick architecture includes a formidable Arg (palace temple fortress), complete with viewing stands and a temple, all looming over the remains of a walled trading town.

Our final visit today is to Ayaz Kala which consists of three fortresses constructed between the 4th century BC-7th century AD, to protect the fertile fields of the Oxus delta from nomadic steppe raiders. (Overnight Khiva) BLD

Day 5: Saturday 25 May, Khiva

- Ichon Qala Gates, Walls and Kalta Minor
- Kukhana Ark

- Madrasa Rakhimkhon
- Islam Khodja Minaret
- Mausoleum of Pahlavan Mahmud
- Tosh Khovil Palace & Caravanserai
- Juma Mosque
- Caravan Bazaar

Khiva is located in the fertile Oxus (Amu-Darya) river delta, servicing trade passing onto the Caspian Sea, Caucasus, the Volga River and onto Constantinople and Eastern Europe. The city divided into two sections: Ichon Qala, the old walled city and modern Khiva, which enveloped Ichon Qala during the Soviet 20th century. A small and insignificant ancient Khwarazmian town on the site of Khiva emerged as the major centre of Khorezm when Ilbars, the Uzbek Shaybanid made Khiva his capital in 1512, replacing Urgench. Ilbars modeled his small city on the great Timurid buildings of Bukhara and Samarkand and his successors maintained this architectural tradition right up to the early 20th century. Among Khiva's most interesting structures is the atmospheric Juma Mosque (Friday mosque): a hall of wooden columns, many stripped from the mosques of earlier Khorezmian cities and transplanted to Khiva by local Khans. Some of the carved black elm pillars date back to the late 9th/early 10th century and come from the Friday mosque of the city of Kath, once the capital of Khorezm and abandoned when a branch of the Oxus River changed course. The mosque is modeled on the earliest hypostyle mosques of the Arabian peninsula, despite most of the structure dating to the 18th century.

The ancient city of Khiva is physically the most uniform of all Central Asian cities, retaining a typical medieval city plan and surrounded by towering mud-brick walls, gatehouses and an Arg. Ichon Qala was forcibly evacuated by the Soviets after the collapse of the Khante of Khiva in 1921 and turned into a sterile city-museum. This was as much 'preservation through poverty' as any real attempt by the Bolsheviks to keep intact the traditional architecture of Central Asia. Following the independence of Uzbekistan in 1991, local families reclaimed their properties in Ichon Qala and much of the southern half of the district again resonates to the sound of laughing children, women baking bread at communal tandoor ovens, workshops hammering metalwork, or carving black elm for traditional beds, doors and house pillars. Amongst the reopened workshops is an NGO project that recently revived traditional carpet weaving and *suzani* production. Researchers and artisans researched original plant dyes gathered from the fields around Khiva and from representations of Khivan carpets in European paintings and Persian miniatures, reviving the nearly moribund carpet tradition. There will be ample time to soak in the atmosphere of this again-living desert city and explore the crafts and arts for sale in shops and workshops. (Overnight Khiva) BLD

Bukhara, Uzbekistan - 3 nights

Archaeologists have excavated evidence for human habitation in the Bukhara oasis from as early as 3000 BC – long before Bukhara enters written history around 500 BC. Iranian-speakers from the northern steppes merged with indigenous Iranian-speakers during the 2nd millennium BC, constructing a series of fortified towns across the broad oasis and part of a much larger cultural sphere which spread across Transoxiana. These Iranian speakers of Transoxiana became known as the Sogdian people and for the next millennium and half, living in city-states across Central Asia. Sogdian merchants dominated the central part of the Silk Route, trading and settling as far as Chang'an (Xian) in China. In 500 BC, the city and towns of the Bukhara oasis became a vassal state (*satrapy*) of the Achaemenid (Persian) Empire and fell to the armies of Alexander the Great in 329 BC. With Alexander's death in Babylon in 322 BC, his Seleucid successors, a Greco-Bactrian kingdom in northern modern Afghanistan, and another Iranian-speaking people, the Kushans all dominated the Bukharan oasis in quick succession, right up to the 3rd century AD. During this dominance by powerful imperial powers, the Sogdians of the Bukharan oasis practiced a polytheistic form of Zoroastrianism, particularly venerating the war and fertility goddess Anahita. After the fall of the Kushan

Empire, the Sogdian towns of the oasis were regularly raided by Turko-Mongolian steppe nomads, while the local population enthusiastically combined their Zoroastrian traditions with Manichaeism, Judaism, Buddhism and Nestorian Christianity; all products of Sogdian dominance of the central stretches of the Silk Road. Bukhara in the 4th century AD was the third most important settlement in the oasis and constituted a fortress mound, a temple dedicated to Anahita, markets and circular outer walls.

With the arrival of Arab armies at the oasis in the 7th century, the two most significant Sogdian towns were destroyed and Bukhara chosen by the Arab emir as the local capital: a cultural and political title the city has held tight during the last 1500 years. The local Sogdian population were closely integrated into the Islamic world after the Battle of Talas (751 AD), with Bukhara developing into the capital of the great Persian Samanid Empire (c.850). Rivalling Baghdad in the richness of her culture, Bukhara became a centre of the Islamic world, especially when Mohammad Al-Bukhari, a native of the city, collected and edited the *hadith* (sayings and observances of the Prophet). Bukhara also became a centre for Central Asia's most important Sufi order – the Naqshbandi – and rivaled Cairo, Córdoba and Baghdad in population.

In 999, the Turkic Qarakhanids (Karakhanids) toppled the Samanids and Bukhara again was subject to outside powers: the Mongolic / Manchurian Qara Khitai (Kara-Kitan) and Turkic-speaking Khwarazm Shahs. Bukhara was ravaged by Chinghis Khan and integrated into the Mongolian Chagatid state. With the rise to power of the great warlord Timur Leng in the 14th century, Samarkand was chosen as his great capital and the city flourished, to the detriment of Bukhara. The city again emerged as an independent force, as the capital of the Khanate of Bukhara, ruled by the Uzbek Shaybanid Dynasty (1500-1598) and later Uzbek Manghit dynasty. Between 1785 and 1920 the city was the capital of the most powerful of the Central Asian states: the Emirate of Bukhara. Her Uzbek khans rebuilt Bukhara, centring on their fortified citadel (ark), and embellishing the Islamic city with richly decorated monuments.

Bukhara is home to one of the oldest Islamic tombs in existence, the Samanid Mausoleum: one of the finest Islamic buildings to be found anywhere in the world and architectural testament to the cosmopolitan, cultured and intellectual atmosphere of the Samanid royal court. The huge minaret of Bukhara's Friday mosque is a Qarakhanid masterpiece – the very dynasty who removed the Samanids from power. These two buildings are constructed using the standard material of Central Asia: brick. The Samanids utilised traditional Iranian architectural styles and forms, decorated in brick relief, and combining Iranian heritage into a new Islamic context. This type of architecture dominated Central Asia until the Mongol invasions of the 13th century, when Muslim artisans started to produce coloured tiles to embellish their buildings instead of texture from decorative brickwork. During the 12th century two Islamic institutions developed: the madrasa or theological college – the first of which was founded in Baghdad in 1096 – and the *khanqah* or Sufi hospice. Architecturally, madrasas and *khanqahs* are often very similar and it is usually their location within a city that confirms their function. Initially tiles were used to highlight and accentuate brick relief patterns but over a couple of centuries, tile mosaics in blue, green, yellow, black and white replaced brick relief entirely. Timur completed this transformation in the 14th century, sheathing entire buildings in tile skins, a practice which spread across Iran, Afghanistan and into northern India.

The Uzbek successors to the Timurids built many madrasas in Bukhara and the city also retains vestiges of their extensive Bazaar. Without the commerce which passed through this vital throbbing heart, Bukhara and her sister cities would never have survived, let alone flourished. Rulers invested great sums in market infrastructure, with the provision of covered market areas, warehouses and shelter for merchants. In turn, the revenues from the markets enabled the rulers to enrich Bukhara for the glory of god and their dynasty.

Day 6: Sunday 26 May, Khiva – Bukhara

- Drive from Khiva to Bukhara across the Kyzyl-Kum (Red Desert)

This morning we leave Khiva to drive across the Kyzil-Kum (Red Desert) to Bukhara. We will get the opportunity to see one of the harshest landscapes of Central Asia from the comfort of an air-conditioned coach, travelling on a new German and Korean built highway. Before departing the Khiva Oasis we drive along the northern banks of the fabled Oxus River. We then press through the desert proper, today only inhabited by Kazakh and Karakalpak nomads and their herds of sheep and camels. The modern road follows an ancient trade route that was only travelled at night during the hotter months. A network of underground cisterns known as *sardoba* ensured historical travellers and merchants always had access to permanent fresh water.

Tonight we dine together at the Minzifa Restaurant whose rooftop terrace provides wonderful views over the old town. (Overnight Bukhara) BLD

Day 7: Monday 27 May, Bukhara

- Khanqah of Nadir Divan Beg
- Taq-i Sarrafon
- Maghak-i Attari Mosque
- Taq-i Tilpak Furushan (Market of the Headgear Sellers)
- Tim Abdullah display center and workshops
- Madrasa of Ulugh Beg
- Madrasa of Abd al-Aziz Khan,
- Taq-i Zargaran (Jewellers' Market)
- Kalyan Complex
- Madrasa of Miri Arab
- Hunarmand UNDP Assisted workshops (block printing, metal chasing, *suzani* embroidery, carving, miniature painting and gold embroidery)
- Lunch at the house of *suzani* maker, Rakhmon Toshev
- Afternoon at leisure
- Dinner at Akbar's House

During our exploration of the glorious old Silk Road city of Bukhara, we visit three types of monumental ensembles. The first is the great Kalyan Friday mosque and Qarakhanid minaret, that defied even the wrath of Chinghis Khan. The second ensemble is a group of madrasas and khanqahs, many of which now house textile shops. The third is the bazaar, which has been functioning for a millennium. These three types of building-complexes were originally interdependent, with rents and taxes from the bazaars used to support the religious institutions. Although most madrasas and khanqahs were suppressed by the Soviets, their architecture was restored, providing a stunning visual complement to the great monuments we see in Samarkand.

An afternoon at leisure will allow time to explore the bazaars and soak up the atmosphere of this ancient city. The classic 'Bukharan carpets' are actually woven by Turkmen nomads and have been traded from the city for centuries, developing their slightly deceptive moniker in the process. These beautiful Turkmen 'Bukharan' carpets are inexpensive compared to examples for sale in Australia.

Dinner will be hosted at Akbar's House, a traditional, restored Bukharan house in the old Jewish quarter of the city. Here you can view a fine collection of textiles and have the opportunity to purchase some prized pieces for your own collection, should you wish. (Overnight Bukhara) BLD

Day 8: Tuesday 28 May, Bukhara

- Samanid Mausoleum
- Chasma Ayyub Mausoleum
- Ark (Citadel)
- Balakhauz Mosque
- Sitora-i-Mokhikhosa, Summer Residence of the Former Emir of Bukhara
- The shrine of the Sufi saint Baha al-Din al-Naqshbandi
- Char Minar Madrasa
- Lunch at the house of Rakhmon Toshev, master of traditional Uzbek *Suzani*

This morning we continue our exploration with visits to the glorious Samanid Mausoleum, the Chasma Ayyub Mausoleum (dedicated to fresh water and the Prophet Job), Balakhauz Mosque, and Bukhara's Ark: the palace complex from which Bukhara, like most Central Asian cities, was ruled. One of the profoundly interesting features of much of the architecture we see in Bukhara is the magnificent 16th, 17th and 18th century tile work includes Chinese motifs including dragons and phoenixes: not traditional Central Asian decorative figures. The incorporation of these motifs are tangible testament to the people and objects traded along the Silk Road and it is highly likely that Bukharan tile-makers were inspired by motifs from Chinese textiles.

Lunch will be served at the private home of Rakhmon Toshev, master of traditional Uzbek *suzani*. Rakhmon makes *suzani* using either an *atlas* (silk), *adras* (mixture of silk and cotton) or cotton base, and embroidery silk thread which he dyes naturally from a variety of vegetables, plants and fruits.

This afternoon we make an excursion to Bukhara's city limits to visit Sitora-i-Mokhikhosa: the Tsarist-Russian build summer residence of the last two Emirs of Bukhara. Returning to central Bukhara, we visit the Char Minar Madrasa in the former 'Indian Quarter' and the shrine of the Sufi saint Baha al-Din al-Naqshbandi on the edge of the city. Built in 1809, the Char Minar was once the gatehouse of a madrasa built by a local merchant who'd made his fortune trading with the city of Hyderabad. The monument takes its name from its four decorative towers, which translates from Persian as 'the Four Towers'. The Naqshbandi Sufi order traces a lineage of mystics back to Ali, Abu Bakr and other central figures in early Islam. The order derives its name from a 14th century Central Asian sufi named Baha al-Din al-Naqshbandi. Born in 1317 AD, in the village of Qasr al-'Arifan, near Bukhara, Naqshband experienced profound visionary revelations in his youth, became a brilliant Islamic scholar before the age of twenty, made Hajj to Mecca three times and was a venerated holy man during his life time. Visitors from across Central Asia came to Bukhara to see the sage, seek his advice, and receive teachings in the school he had established. Following his death in 1388, Sheikh Baha al-Din al-Naqshbandi was buried adjacent to his school, directly upon the site of an ancient pagan temple dedicated to Anahita. (Overnight Bukhara) BLD

Samarkand, Uzbekistan - 4 nights

'Golden Samarkand' is arguably the most famous of all the Central Asian cities, but Samarkand is just the latest in a long line of rich and powerful Sogdian cities that each dominated the fertile lands of the upper Zerafshan River. Made famous as Timur Leng's great capital in the 14th century, Samarkand stands on the site of pre-Islamic Afrasiyab: a Sogdian city that flourished in the centuries before Islamic conquest at the beginning of the 8th century. Soviet excavations in the 60s revealed mural paintings in the ruins of a palace from the moment the city fell to Islam. After conquering the region in 710, Arab Muslims constructed their own citadel in Afrasiyab, similar to the famous round royal city of Baghdad. In the 9th and 10th centuries the Persian Samanid lineage governed both wealthy Samarkand and Bukhara.

Persian Islamic art, architecture and culture flowered in both cities. The Turkic Qarakhanids (Karakhanids) succeeded the Samanids as masters of Samarkand in 999, while the Mongolic/Manchurian Qara Khitai (Kara-

Kitan) and Turkic Khwarazm Shahs subjected Samarkand in their turn. This Islamic city prospered as one of the most important Central Asian entrepôts between the 9th to the 13th century. Not only was Samarkand prominent in Eurasian trade but was also the administrative heart of Transoxania and a centre for the production of paper and ceramics. Supported by an extensive agricultural hinterland watered by a sophisticated irrigation system, the inhabitants of Samarkand prospered. They built numerous palaces, mosques, markets, caravanserais and baths were constructed and as in Bukhara, mausoleums, madrasas and *khanqahs* (Sufi hospices) further augmented the city skyline.

This prosperity came to a crashing and fiery end with the arrival of Mongol armies in 1221. The nomadic Mongols warned the complacent Samarkandis that unless they surrendered unconditionally, they would be razed to the ground. The inhabitants of the first Muslim cities in the Mongol's path – Samarkand, Balkh, Herat and Nishapur – all failed to realise the deadly seriousness of the Mongol threat and were utterly destroyed. From the arrival of the Mongols in 1220 until the rise of Timur in the mid-14th century, the area of Samarkand remained desolate and the Black Death compounded this dire situation.

Despite these tribulations, the region remained agriculturally important and in 1369 Timur selected Samarkand as the capital of his new Asian empire. Timur resolved to make it the most beautiful city in the universe, a centre for Islamic art, architecture and culture, a veritable 'paradise on Earth'. To achieve this he forcibly transferred artisans and craftsmen from the many lands he conquered. Persians, Syrian Arabs and Anatolian Turks all participated in the reconstruction of the city according to Timur's grandiose vision.

These unfortunate conscripts built much of the theatrical main square of the city, Timur's mausoleum, the Bibi Khanum mosque dedicated to Timur's most important wife, and numerous other mosques, madrasas and mausoleums, cladding each in luxurious polychrome tiles as testament of the wealth and power of Timur. Succeeding Timurid and Uzbek rulers perpetuated the dazzling opulence of Timur's city, adding new mosques, madrasas and mausoleums to Samarkand's urban fabric. One great builder was Timur's grandson Ulugh Beg who added a large madrasa, the portal of the Shah-i Zindeh Cemetery, and an observatory, the design of which was repeated many times in India. The Timurids' Uzbek successors continued the Timurid style, building majestic portals, towers and lobed domes all cloaked in shimmering tiles of blue, turquoise, yellow and white. As we explore Samarkand we trace the development of Timurid form, decoration and function and their symbolism.

Day 9: Wednesday 29 May, Bukhara – Samarkand

- Morning at leisure
- High-speed Afrosiab train from Bukhara to Samarkand (1552-1725hrs)

Following a morning at leisure we take the highspeed train across the Kizilkum Desert to Samarkand. Both lunch and dinner will be served in local restaurants. (Overnight Bukhara) BLD

Day 10: Thursday 30 May, Samarkand – Koni Gil – Samarkand

- Registan and its Madrasas
- Production of Samarkand Mulberry Paper, Koni Gil Paper Mill
- Mausoleum of Timur (Gur-i Mir)

This morning commences with a visit to the Registan and its three madrasas: the Ulugh Beg Madrasa (1417-1420), the Sher-Dor Madrasa (1619-1636) and the Tilya-Kori Madrasa (1646-1660). The Ulugh Beg Madrasa's pishtaq (façade), decorated with geometrical stylized forms centres on an imposing iwan, framed by high minarets. The square courtyard within includes a mosque and lecture rooms fringed by dormitory

cells for students. Four deep iwans dominate the interior axes.

A 17th-century Bukhara governor of the city, Yalangtush Bakhodur, constructed the Sher-Dor Madrasa opposite the Ulugh Beg Madrasa and the Tilya-Kori Madrasa to form the present monumental complex of the Registan. Tiger motif mosaics in the spandrels of the Sher-Dor's pishtaq underline the variety of local traditions regarding the proscription of depicting living beings on religious buildings. The Tilya-Kori acted not only as a madrasa but also the grand mosque of 18th century Samarkand, replacing the ruined 14th century Timurid Bibi Khanum mosque. The Tilya-Kori has a two-storied main façade and a vast courtyard fringed by dormitory cells, with the usual four iwans on the cardinal axes. The mosque building, whose main hall is abundantly gilded, occupies the western flank of the building.

Midday we travel the short distance to Koni Gil village where we view the revival of a lost tradition – the making of Samarkand mulberry paper, popularly known as 'silk paper' in Central Asia. Samarkand became a major papermaking centre after the Arab Umayyad Caliphate won the Battle of Talas (in present day Kyrgyzstan) against the Chinese Tang dynasty in 751 AD. Legend has it that the production secret was revealed by two captured Chinese soldiers, who happened to be recruited paper makers. Water and wind power were used to operate the mills, to pound mulberry bark, cotton, with the waste from cotton and silk production. By the 10th century, mulberry replaced all other materials as it was pest resistant, flexible and durable. These qualities met the needs of Islamic calligraphers and vast quantities were exported all across the Islamic world. Samarkandi paper was renowned for its light color and fragrances, derived from adding henna and rosewater to the manufacturing process. Priceless manuscripts by eminent scholars including Avicenna, Al Biruni and Al Fargani were all written on Samarkand silk paper. By the 19th century, however, the skills were lost with the importation of cheap Russian paper. In 2001, with the assistance of UNESCO and JICA, a traditional water mill was constructed in the village of Koni Gil. Here, Usto (master) Muhtarov trains apprentices to create sheets of Samarkand paper using traditional methods.

After lunch in Koni Gil we return to Samarkand. Following some time at leisure, we visit one of the city's finest monuments, the Mausoleum of Timur. (Overnight Samarkand) BLD

Day 11: Friday 31 May, Samarkand

- Bibi Khanum Mosque
- Cemetery of Shah-i Zindeh
- Mausoleum of Khodja Daniar
- Fashion Parade at Alfiya's Gallery
- Evening meal at the Uzbek house of Ilkhom

We begin with a visit to the Bibi Khanum Mosque, one of the largest mosques in the Islamic world. This enormous structure, orientated on an axis between a vast entrance portal and a huge domed prayer hall, has recently been restored with the aid of UNESCO. Its vast scale gives a vivid impression of Timur's megalomania. Situated next to the mosque is one of the busiest markets in Uzbekistan. Every now and then travelling acrobats entertain the large crowds that visit the market to buy food, household appliances, and every other conceivable commodity.

Next, we visit the Shah-i Zindeh cemetery: a 'city of the dead' created by Timur as a family burial complex. Hacked into the walls of Islamic Afrasiyab, the Shah-i Zindeh cemetery is one of the most resplendent necropoli in the Islamic world, containing a shrine, mosque, prayer hall and 25 individual mausoleums. Although smaller than the great cities of the dead in Cairo, the intense colour and unified architecture inspires visions of worldly wealth and paradise: twin goals of Timur. Arguably the most important feature of the ensemble is the tile work covering most of the tomb façades; arguably the greatest single collection of

Islamic architectural ceramics in the world. The predominant colour is blue, worked in myriad gorgeous hues by unfortunate craftsmen captured by Timur and transported to his ideal city.

After lunch we visit the restored Mausoleum of the Old Testament Prophet Daniel which stands above the banks of the Siob River, hacked into the walls of pre-islamic Afrasiyab. Known locally as the Mausoleum of Khodja Daniar, the crypt is believed to contain the body of the Prophet Daniel. According to local legend, his bones were brought to Samarkand by Timur after he stole them from Mecca. The length of the crypt, being over 18 metres long, is explained by a curious legend that states Daniel is lengthening imperceptibly year on year and when he reaches unknown size, he will rise from his tomb and usher in the Day of Judgement.

In the early evening we attend a fashion parade of contemporary Uzbek design at Alfiya's Gallery. Dinner will be served at the local Uzbek house of Ilkhom, where we sample home-made food. (Overnight Samarkand) BLD

Day 12: Saturday 1 June, Samarkand

- Happy Bird Art Gallery of Samarkand
- Ulugh Beg Observatory
- Afrasiyab Museum
- Samarkand theatre of historical costume El Merosi

This morning we begin with a visit to the Happy Bird Art Gallery which is housed in a historic caravanserai. Founded in 2005, the gallery is a member of the Central Asian Crafts Support Association (CACSA) and "Hunarmand", the Republican Association of Craftsmen and Artisans. The aim of the gallery is to promote Uzbek folk arts and crafts using only local produced natural materials. It features handmade carpets, clothes, jewellery, pottery, and beautifully embroidered *suzanne*, made by old masters as well as contemporary designers.

We also visit the Ulugh Beg Observatory where the Timurid 'Astronomer King' charted the heavens. Ulugh Beg's astronomical research was still being utilised by European scholars in the 17th century.

After lunch we visit the fascinating Afrasiyab Museum. When Arab Muslims invaded the region they destroyed the earlier Sogdian city of Afrasiyab, which is now a huge mound on modern Samarkand's flank. Although little remains of the former city, one corpus of wall paintings survived, preserved in a purpose-built museum. Four frescoes painted in the late 7th century depict processions of Sogdian courtiers and merchants wearing fabulously rich textiles: obviously silks of the highest quality. These paintings provide an invaluable insight into early Central Asian textiles, the culture that produced and traded them and the geopolitics of the 7th and 8th centuries.

In the early evening we visit Samarkand's theatre of historical costume, El Merosi, to review the textile and clothing history of Central Asia. Costumes of Achaemenid soldiers, steppe nomad warriors and Sogdians merchants are based upon archaeological investigations (including the reliefs at Persepolis and finds at the ancient city of Afrosiab) and ancient art works including Persian miniatures and the designs on pottery. The show also provides an interesting insight into how modern Uzbeks view and present their own history. (Overnight Samarkand) BLD

Tashkent - 1 night

Day 13: Sunday 2 June, Samarkand – Tashkent

- Day at leisure
- High-speed Afrosiyob train from Samarkand-Tashkent (1730-1940hrs)

Following a day at leisure we take the high-speed train to Tashkent. Both lunch and dinner will be served in local restaurants. (Overnight Tashkent) BLD

Day 14: Monday 3 June, Tashkent. Tour Ends.

- Madrasa Abdul Kassim (with artisanal workshops)
- Museum of Applied Arts
- Farewell Lunch at the Caravan Affresco Restaurant
- Afternoon at leisure
- Departure transfer for participants travelling on the ASA 'designated' flight (CZ6028 departing at 2135hrs)

We spend the day visiting Tashkent's museums, monuments & workshops. Our program includes visits to the Museum of Applied Arts and the Madrasa Abdul Kassim which has workshops producing a wide range of objects, including intricately painted boxes, woodcarving and metalwork. We conclude our program with a farewell lunch at the Affresco Restaurant.

This evening participants travelling on the ASA 'designated flight' will transfer by coach to the Tashkent International Airport to check-in for their return flight to Australia. Please contact ASA if you require assistance with arranging an independent transfer. (Overnight Tashkent) BL

Accommodation

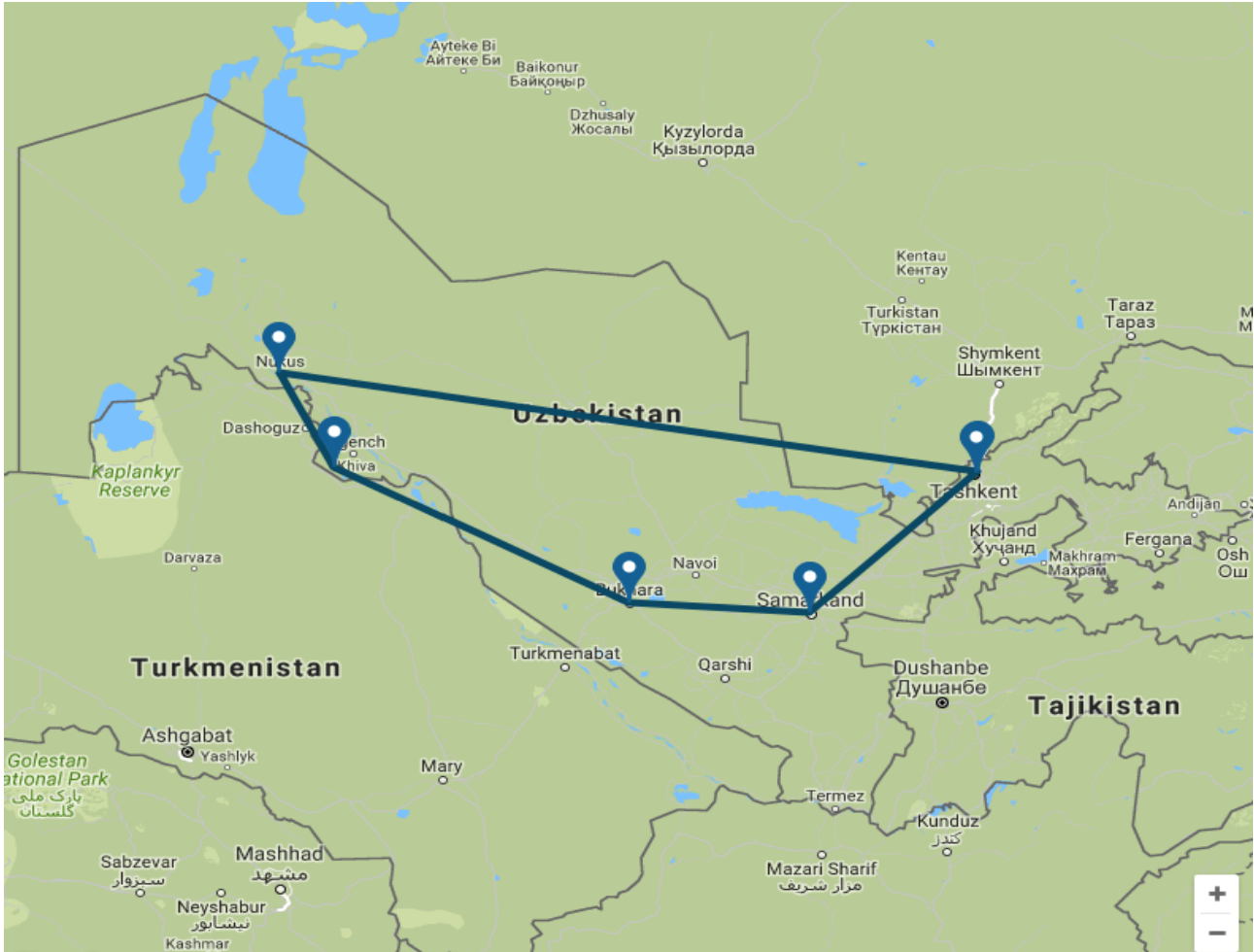
14-day Cultural Tour of Uzbekistan

All hotels are rated 3-4-star locally and include rooms with en suite bathroom. Double/twin rooms for single cooccupancy may be requested – and are subject to availability and payment of the Double (as Single) Supplement. Tourism in Uzbekistan is new. This is part of its allure but also means that tourist facilities are not of the quality of those of the USA or Western Europe. Those considering taking this tour must be prepared at times for basic facilities and inefficient service. A hotel list will be given to all participants prior to departure.

- Tashkent (2 nights): 4-star Lotte City Tashkent Palace Hotel – a recently renovated modern hotel with an excellent location next to the Alisher Navoi Opera and Ballet House. www.lottehotel.com
- Nukus (1 night): 3-star Hotel Jipek Joly – a well-run hotel, decorated in Karakalpak national style, located near to the Savitsky Museum. Accommodation is provided in the modern annex. [ayimtour.com/hotel images and overview](http://ayimtour.com/hotel-images-and-overview)
- Khiva (2 nights): 3-star Hotel Malika Khivaek – built in 2008, this traditionally designed hotel is located inside the walled city next to the Islam Khodja Minaret. www.malika-khiva.com
- Bukhara (3 nights): 3-star Omar Khayyam Hotel – located in the historic centre within walking distance of all the ancient monuments. www.hotelomarkhayam.com
- Samarkand (4 nights): 4-star Hotel Malika Diyora – the hotel is located within walking distance of the Gur Emir Mausoleum and Registan Square. www.hotel-diyora.com
- Tashkent (1 night): 4-star Lotte City Tashkent Palace Hotel – as described above. www.lottehotel.com

Note: *Hotels are subject to change, in which case a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*

Tour Map



Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$6580.00 Land Content Only – Early-Bird Special: Book before 31 July 2018

AUD \$6780.00 Land Content Only

AUD \$670.00 Single Supplement

For competitive Economy, Business or First Class airfares and/or group airfares please contact ASA for further information.

Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Best available 3-4 star hotels in twin-share rooms with private facilities
- All meals indicated in the tour itinerary, where: B=breakfast, L=lunch & D=evening meal
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals may not have drinks included.
- Bottled water during excursions
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach
- High-speed Afrosiab train from Bukhara to Samarkand (Day 9), Samarkand to Tashkent (Day 13)
- 1 Internal airfare: Tashkent to Nukus (Day 3)
- Airport-hotel transfers if travelling on the ASA 'designated' flights
- Porterage at hotels and airports
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Tour notes
- Entrance fees to museums and monuments
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals

Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- Airfare: Australia-Tashkent, Tashkent-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Airport-hotel transfers if not travelling on ASA 'designated' flights
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Costs for taking photographs (a supplement at some sites may be required)
- Travel insurance
- Single-entry visa for Uzbekistan



Physical Endurance & Practical Information

Physical Ratings 

The number of flags is a guide to the degree of difficulty of ASA tours relative to each other (not to those of other tour companies). It is neither absolute nor literal. One flag is given to the least taxing tours, seven to the most. Flags are allocated, above all, according to the amount of walking and standing each tour involves. Nevertheless, all ASA tours require that participants have a good degree of fitness enabling 2-3 hours walking or 1-1.5 hours standing still on any given site visit or excursion. Many sites are accessed by climbing slopes or steps and have uneven terrain.

This 14-day Cultural Tour of Uzbekistan involves:

- An extensive amount of walking and standing where you will encounter steps, cobbled streets, rocky and uneven ground, slopes and steep walks; several of the sites are large and unsheltered.
- Potentially hot temperatures at the desert sites of Nukus, Khiva and Burkara; possible cold temperatures in the evenings.
- A number of early-morning starts; time schedules can be unpredictable, flight schedules can change and road conditions are variable.

Other considerations:

- 3- to 4-star hotels with five hotel changes.
- Rudimentary toilet facilities (during some day-excursions).
- You must be able to carry your own hand luggage, and wheel your own suitcase.
- Hotel portage includes 1 piece of luggage per person.
- Risk of gastric ailments (you should consult your doctor about medication before departure – see also information about prohibited medications below).
- High-speed Afrosiab train from Bukhara to Samarkand (Day 9); Samarkand to Tashkent (Day 13).
- 1 internal flight: Tashkent to Nukus (Day 3).

It is important to remember that ASA programs are group tours, and slow walkers affect everyone in the group. As the group must move at the speed of the slowest member, the amount of time spent at a site may be reduced if group members cannot maintain a moderate walking pace. ASA tours should not present any problem for active people who can manage day-to-day walking and stair-climbing. However, if you have any doubts about your ability to manage on a program, please ask your ASA travel consultant whether this is a suitable tour for you.

Please note: it is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. For further information please refer to the Booking Conditions on the last page of this tour itinerary.

Passport & Visa Requirements

The following visa will be required for passengers travelling on an Australian passport:

- **Uzbekistan Single Entry Visa:** The current visa fee (for Australian passport holders) is US\$40.00. The relevant amount is to be prepaid to ASA

As there is no diplomatic representation in Australia the visa approval will be obtained prior to departing Australia. You will receive a copy of this visa approval in your final documentation, the visa will then be issued on arrival.

Requirements for ASA to assist you with arranging your visa approvals:

- ASA must receive no later than 3 months prior to departure, a **SCANNED, COLOUR** copy of the front picture page of your passport. It is essential that this copy is of very good quality.
- Please check that your passport will be valid for 6 months after your date of return to Australia. This is important because many countries will refuse entry to anyone whose passport is about to expire.
- Please make sure your passport has at least **2** empty pages.
- Completed Visa Approval Application form for Uzbekistan. ASA will send you the appropriate application form to be completed in due course.
- 1 x **recent, colour** passport photograph (Must be 3.5 cm x 4.5 cm). This can be sent to ASA by scan or by post with your completed forms.
- If you are travelling to and from the tour independently (i.e. flights not booked through ASA) we need a copy of your airline E-ticket showing your arrival and departure flights. This must reach ASA no later than 3 months prior to the commencement of the tour.

Practical Information

Tour members will receive prior to departure practical notes which include information on visa requirements, health, photography, weather, clothing and what to pack, custom regulations, bank hours, currency regulations, electrical appliances and food. The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade website has advice for travellers: www.smarttraveller.gov.au

Booking Conditions

ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION and send it to Australians Studying Abroad together with your non-refundable deposit of AUD \$500.00 per person payable to Australians Studying Abroad.

Passport Details

All participants must provide no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the program a photocopy of the front page of their current passport.

Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a double (or twin) room for single occupancy throughout the tour. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.



Reservation Application

TOUR NAME _____

TOUR DATES _____

Please complete **one application, per person in block letters and sign**. Parental signature is required for participants under 18 years of age. Please mail this form with the appropriate deposit to: **P.O. Box 8285, ARMADALE, VICTORIA, 3143**. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation.

Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr Mrs Ms Miss Dr Other _____

FIRST NAME _____ Preferred FIRST NAME _____

MIDDLE NAME _____ SURNAME _____

POSTAL ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ COUNTRY _____ POSTCODE _____

TEL. (AH) () _____ TEL. (BH) () _____ Mobile Tel: _____

EMAIL address _____

Date of birth ____ / ____ / ____ GENDER Male Female

Passport Number _____ Expiry date ____ / ____ / ____ Nationality _____

Colour copy of my current valid passport enclosed I'm renewing my passport ASA has a colour copy of my current passport

Travel Plans

I wish ASA to book my airfare, please contact me to discuss my options. Business Class Economy Class

I plan to leave Australia before the tour commences. Planned departure date ____ / ____ / ____

I will be arranging my airfare independently and taking the Land Content Only option.

Frequent Flyer _____ Name of Airline _____ Airline Seat preference _____
Membership # _____ (please note request only)

Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like: a twin-bedded room a double-bedded room a room for sole occupancy

I am travelling: on my own with a friend/family member Travel Companion _____

Meals

I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

fish poultry red meat dairy products

eggs pork nuts

Other _____

Allergies: Refer to the Medical Information

Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence Postal Mail Email Address _____

Emergency Contact Details

Note: this person **MUST** be available by telephone and be present in Australia for the duration of your tour with ASA

Name _____ Relationship to Traveller _____

Address _____

TEL. (AH) () _____ TEL. (BH) () _____ Mobile Tel: _____

EMAIL address _____

The purpose of seeking this information is to assist ASA to determine, where necessary, whether ASA is able to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs and whether your health and safety (or that of your fellow travellers) is likely to be compromised given your choice of tour. It will also assist you and ASA if you fall ill or have an accident whilst travelling.

- ASA reserves the right to decline your Reservation Application if this Medical Information section is not completed properly and may reject or cancel your reservation, or terminate your participation on any tour, if ASA subsequently learns that you have failed to make full and proper disclosure.
- ASA is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information. ASA's privacy policy is available for viewing at www.asatours.com.au
- If ASA has any concerns about the information you have provided, it will contact you to request clarification before considering your Application.
- ASA requires you to consider carefully your limitations in light of ASA's Physical Endurance Star Rating System in ASA's Brochure and Itinerary when choosing your tour.
- If you are not likely to satisfy ASA's Participation Criteria (see below), ASA, in its sole discretion, may reject your Reservation Application.
- It is a condition of your tour that you agree to accept the directions of ASA's Tour Leaders in relation to your suitability to participate in activities planned on tour.
- ASA reserves the right to cancel your participation on a tour if your behaviour is in ASA's opinion causing undue distress or damage to any person or their property.
- If your participation is discontinued during a tour, ASA will assist by arranging your onward travel (if required) at your own cost, but you will not be refunded for forfeited parts of the tour.
- ASA tour groups are not accompanied by a medical practitioner. ASA recommends that you see your doctor for advice about your specific needs while overseas. You may also wish to contact a travel and vaccination clinic for advice. www.traveldoctor.com.au tel: 1300 658 444; www.travelvax.com.au tel: 1300 360 164.
- Travel insurers require you to declare all existing medical conditions.
- Please carry a complete list of medications with you during the ASA tour. Include **generic names** of each medication (consult your local pharmacy for information).

Please mark **X** in the YES or NO box to every question below and provide details where necessary:

Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour. The responsibility of the Tour Leader is to ensure that the larger group enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing individual assistance to any one guest.

- | | YES | NO |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Can you walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Can you walk unassisted on and over uneven surfaces? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Can you climb at least 3 flights of stairs and/or walk up and down steep slopes unassisted? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Can you walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15 - 20 minutes unassisted? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Can you organise, manage and carry your own luggage? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Can you follow and remember tour instructions and meet punctually at designated times and places? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Can you administer your own medication? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Do you have impaired vision or hearing which may impact your capacity to participate on this tour? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Mobility and Fitness

As many of ASA's international sites do not provide access to wheelchairs or similar mobility aids, we regret that ASA tours are not suitable for people who require the use of a walking frame, wheeled walker, wheelchair or motorised scooter.

1. Do you suffer from any medical conditions that may compromise your mobility and/or fitness to participate on this program? YES NO
 If yes, please specify

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

Allergies and/or Food Intolerances

ASA will make reasonable endeavours to organise meals to suit you, provided that you give ASA adequate notice of your specific dietary requirements or allergies. You may be required to research dietary alternatives, as not all destinations may be able to offer suitable food substitutes.

1. Do you have any food allergies or intolerances? YES NO
 If yes, please specify

2. Have you ever had an anaphylactic reaction to anything? YES NO
 If yes, please specify

Do you carry an epipen? YES NO

3. Do you have any other allergies or reactions to anything, including medical drugs? YES NO
 If yes, please specify

Existing Medical Conditions

You alone are responsible for managing any existing medical conditions, your medication and any medical equipment that you may need when on your tour. Please plan for contingencies and take extra medication, dietary supplements and/or fully charged batteries for medical equipment if your health and safety depends on these. You should take into consideration that power sources at some destinations may be unavailable, inadequate, inconvenient or unreliable.

1. Have you any significant medical conditions that may impact your capacity to complete this tour? YES NO
 If yes, please specify

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

2. Do you require some form of powered medical aid, such as a CPAP machine? YES NO

These machines may not be operable on certain international flights, modes of transport, in remote or other areas with inadequate or unreliable power sources without a fully charged independent long life battery or batteries.

Diabetics: You may be travelling and sightseeing for many hours at a time. Insulin dependent diabetics must carry extra supplies of insulin (as this medication cannot be obtained in some destinations), regulators, applicators, storage and refrigeration equipment, as well as any necessary supplements. Accommodation may not provide refrigerators in rooms.

3. Are you diabetic? YES NO

Are you insulin dependent? YES NO

4. Do you suffer from travel sickness? YES NO
 Remember to use an appropriate medication while on tour.

Declaration

I declare that: I have read and understood the ASA Tour Itinerary, Reservation Application and Booking Conditions. I am aware of ASA's terms as relating to refunds, cancellations, responsibility and liability. I understand that ASA relies upon this declaration when considering this Application. I accept that there are inherent dangers and risks that may occur during any tour. I have made full and complete disclosure and have not knowingly withheld any medical information about myself from ASA. I have completed this Reservation Application honestly and accurately. I warrant that I am able to participate independently in all activities described by ASA in the itinerary without assistance from any person.

I will advise ASA in writing if any aspect of my fitness and or health conditions change materially at any time before my departure date. I understand and accept that the itinerary, accommodation and lecturers scheduled for this tour may change.

I agree and consent that ASA may give my personal information in this Reservation Application to tour service providers and relevant authorities as required by law, but for the purpose of making bookings with and engaging services provided for the tour. I understand that if I do not consent to the use of my personal information for this purpose, ASA will decline my Reservation Application.

In consideration of ASA's acceptance of my Reservation Application, I irrevocably release and indemnify ASA from all claims that I, or any other party, may have against ASA its employees, invitees, agents and contractors, however arising in respect of any loss, damage, injury, death or expense incurred in the course of travelling to, on and from any tour.

I understand and acknowledge that this Release and Indemnity applies with respect to:

1. Every general risk to which I or my personal belongings may be exposed in the course of travelling to, on or from any ASA tour
2. Every special risk, in particular medical risks, to which I may be exposed in the course of travelling to, on or from any ASA tour arising from, including, but not limited to:
 - a. intermittent power cycles and/or the temporary or permanent loss of power (beware CPAP or any other medical machine users);
 - b. dietary, food or other allergies (ASA cannot guarantee that traces of items to which you are allergic are not present in food or drink you are served, medication you are administered or other substances with which you may come into contact);
 - c. any event or situation that may compromise the administration of necessary medication or my health, safety and wellbeing generally.
3. All claims arising as a result of my or ASA's cancellation or termination of my continued participation on a tour for whatever reason (refund conditions in ASA's Booking Conditions excepted).

Limitation of Liability

ASA is not a carrier, event or tourist attraction host, accommodation or dining service provider. All bookings made and tickets or coupons issued by ASA for transport, event, accommodation, dining and the like are issued as an agent for various service providers and are subject to the terms and conditions and limitations of liability imposed by each service provider. ASA is not responsible for their products or services. If a service provider does not deliver the product or service for which you have contracted, your remedy lies with the service provider, not ASA.

ASA will not be liable for any claim (eg. sickness, injury, death, damage or loss) arising from any change, delay, detention, breakdown, cancellation, failure, accident, act, omission or negligence of any such service provider however caused (contingencies). You must take out adequate travel insurance against such contingencies.

ASA's liability in respect of any tour will be limited to the refund of amounts received from you less all non-refundable costs and charges and the costs of any substituted event or alternate services provided. The terms and conditions of the relevant service provider from time to time comprise the sole agreement between you and that service provider.

ASA reserves the sole discretion to cancel any tour or to modify itineraries in any way it considers appropriate. Tour costs may be revised, subject to unexpected price increases or exchange rate fluctuations.

Booking Conditions

DEPOSITS

A deposit of \$500.00 AUD per person is required to reserve a place on an ASA tour.

CANCELLATION FEES

If you decide to cancel your booking the following charges apply:

More than 75 days before departure: \$500*
75-46 days prior 25% of total amount due
45-31 days prior 50% of total amount due
30-15 days prior 75% of total amount due
14-0 days prior 100% of total amount due

This amount may be **credited to another ASA tour departing within 12 months of the original tour you booked. We regret, in this case early-bird discounts will not apply.*

We take the day on which you cancel as being that on which we receive written confirmation of cancellation.

UNUSED PORTIONS OF THE TOUR

We regret that refunds will not be given for any unused portions of the tour, such as meals, entry fees, accommodation, flights or transfers.

WILL THE TOUR PRICE OR ITINERARY CHANGE?

If the number of participants on a tour is significantly less than budgeted, or if there is a significant change in exchange rates ASA reserves the right to amend the advertised price. We shall, however, do all in our power to maintain the published price. If an ASA tour is forced to cancel you will get a full refund of all tour monies paid. Occasionally circumstances beyond the control of ASA make it necessary to change airline, hotel or to make amendments to daily itineraries. We will inform you of any changes in due course.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

ASA requires all participants to obtain comprehensive travel insurance. A copy of your travel insurance certificate and the **reverse charge** emergency contact phone number must be received by ASA no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the tour.

FINAL PAYMENT

The balance of the tour price will be due 75 days prior to the tour commencement date.

PLEASE READ THE ABOVE CAREFULLY, PRINT AND SIGN BELOW

I accept the conditions on this booking form I have read the information about the physical requirements of the tour in the detailed itinerary and confirm that I am able to meet these requirements

Applicant's Signature

Print Full Name

Dated

Tour / Course Name

Name of Traveller 1 _____

Name of Traveller 2 _____

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$ _____ (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

The above amount is payable for:

- Intention to Travel Tour Deposit
 Balance of Payment Upgrade from Intention to Travel to a Deposit
 Travel Insurance Other (eg. Airfares, Accommodation) _____

International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate
- via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg. Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ
Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic
Swift Code ANZBAU3M
BSB 013-423
Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No. _____

Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended

Date Money Transferred _____

Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard & Visa 2%
 American Express 2%

Please debit my: Mastercard Visa American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number _____

Expiry Date _____ Security Code (CVC) _____

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ) _____

Cardholders Name _____

Cardholders Billing Address _____

Postcode _____

State _____ Country _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Cardholders Signature _____

AUSTRALIANS STUDYING ABROAD

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