



THE GREAT SILK ROAD
THE ULTIMATE CENTRAL ASIA ADVENTURE

4 - 21 SEPTEMBER 2024

Ignacio Palacios

THE GREAT SILK ROAD

The Silk Road is neither an actual road nor a single route. The term instead refers to a network of routes used by traders for more than 1,500 years. The Silk Road extended approximately 6,437km across some of the world's most formidable landscapes, mountains, cities and architecture.



Central Asia is a region that sparks curiosity, intrigue, and adventure. This trip will take you across borders, over high mountain passes, and into remote communities, all while improving your photography skills.

The Silk Road was an ancient network of intercontinental trade routes connecting China and the Far East with the Middle East and Europe. As well as exchanging luxury products like Chinese silk, spices, salt, sugar, jade, and fur, the disparate civilisations connected by the Silk Road also forged deep social, cultural and religious links – a meeting of minds that played an essential role in the development of the region.

You will see this iconic land at its best and if your partner is not a keen photographer, we would invite you to bring her/him along as you will both enjoy the rich photo opportunities as well as an amazing cultural experience and natural wonders of four different countries. With its beautiful light, wild landscapes and rich cultural heritage, Central Asia will feed the imagination of any traveler/photographer.

Accommodation

For this photography expedition, we'll be staying at 3-star and 4-star hotels and guesthouses. We will also have the opportunity to stay in a yurt with shepherds. While at times "rough," these accommodation options provide excellent interactions with local and rural communities and the possibility of capturing some of the best portraits as you get to know your hosts. There will be a few standard hotels along the way to recuperate from the remote environment and also historical local hotels, which are done in traditional styles, incorporating local techniques and fabrics into their rooms.

"A culture of huge hospitality makes locals more accessible. It is great to meet people willing to open their doors to strangers."



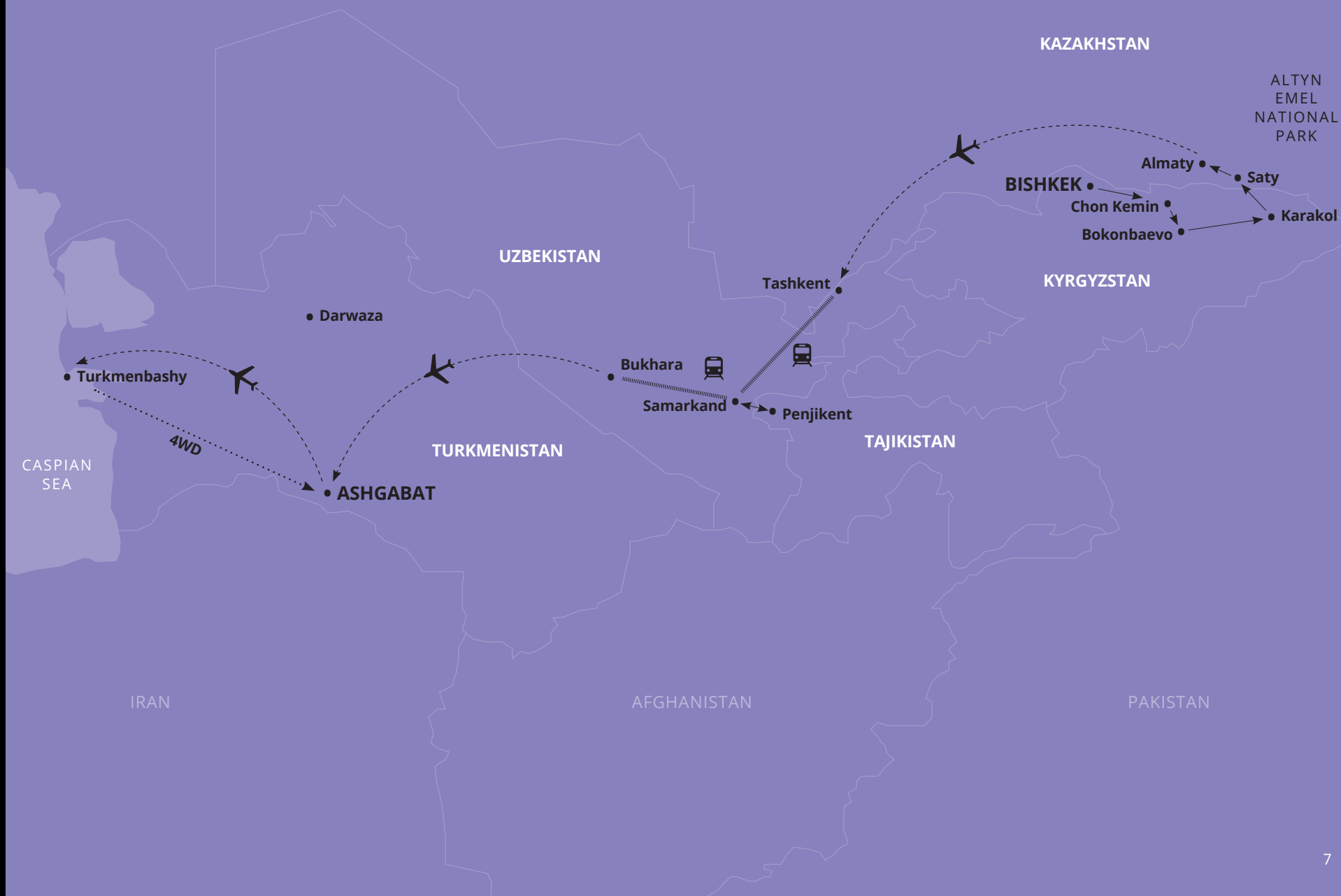
Traditional Yurt.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

To further inspire you, here are just a few of the tour highlights:

- **Charyn Canyon in Kazakhstan.** Charyn canyon is considered the little brother of the Grand Canyon in the United States. The erosion made by the Charyn River has created dramatic and impressive landscapes. This region, stretching from Almaty (Kazakhstan's former capital city) to Lake Balkhash, is known as Zhetisu, meaning Land of Seven Rivers and it is one of Kazakhstan's most varied regions: from semi-deserts to lush greenery and dense forests, from Grand Canyon-like rock formations to waterfalls and lakes fed by the glacial meltwater of the snow-peaked Tien Shan Mountain range. This part of the country is nicknamed 'the Golden Triangle' for its trio of major natural attractions: the Charyn Canyon (also written as Sharyn Canyon), the **Kolsai Lakes** and the **Altyn-Emel National Park**.
- Explore the atmospheric city of **Bukhara in Uzbekistan** was once a very powerful Khanate, controlling most of Turkmenistan and the surrounding area. Many of the buildings here are spectacular and well-preserved. Exploring the streets, you really get the feeling that this is how Central Asia was before Soviet domination.
- Discover **historic Samarkand**, a city brimming with history that became famous in the 14th Century as the birthplace of the warlord Timur and the capital of his Sultanate. Thanks to its central location along the Silk Road, the town originally grew prosperous as a crossroads between East and West, creating a melting pot of different cultures and traditions whose influences are still very much apparent today.
- Appropriately known as the '**Door to Hell**', the Darvaza Gas Crater in Turkmenistan's Karakum Desert was first discovered in 1971 by Soviet engineers, who were drilling the area for oil. This huge pocket of natural gas was only protected by a thin crust of earth, which collapsed as they began drilling, spewing out methane in great quantities. To prevent the gas spreading, the engineers set it on fire – and it's believed to have been burning continuously ever since.
- Photograph the **Yangikala Canyons** at sunset. Defined by sheer cliffs of white, yellow, ochre, purple and red, the canyon's name is derived from the Turkem expression "yangi kala", meaning "fire fortresses" and is a dream location for photographers. Don't forget your drone!
- Enjoy three photo shoots with professional models at Chon Kemin, Karakol and an Eagle Hunter with his bird of prey in Bokonbaevo.

“Follow the footsteps of Marco Polo, born into a family of wealthy merchants in Venice, he travelled with his father to China when he was just 17 years of age.”



ITINERARY

“Kyrgyzstan is a rugged Central Asian country along the Silk Road, the ancient trade route between China and the Mediterranean. The Tian Shan mountains, which surround the old caravan route and dominate the country, are home to snow leopards, lynx and sheep.”



DAY 1 | 4 September: Arrival in Bishkek (~40 min transfer from airport to hotel) – Kyrgyzstan

Arrival at Manas Airport, group gathering and presentations. Today we will take it easy as we will all be quite tired and jetlagged after the long trip to Kyrgyzstan.

After breakfast we start our photo tour of the city of Bishkek to capture the daily life of citizens. We begin our fascinating tour from the main square of Kyrgyzstan – Ala too.

Here we will photograph the city buildings such as the Historical Museum, the White House, built in the Soviet Union, and we will also capture the locals resting on the square.

Lunch in a traditional restaurant (traditional Kyrgyz cuisine).

After lunch we will visit the Central Mosque of Imam Sarakhsi and the Osh Bazaar market, with buzzing crowds, offering a variety of local products and a unique experience to photograph the locals.

Accommodation at Plaza Hotel or similar (4 stars).

Note: you are welcome to arrive the day before and stay at the hotel and we can arrange that for you if you decided to do so. Depending of flying/arrival times, the group might have to arrive on the 3rd but this will be communicated on due time.

DAY 2 | 5 September: Bishkek – Burana – Chon Kemin (200km, 3-4 hrs) – Kyrgyzstan

We leave Bishkek and we will travel to Tokmok through the picturesque Chuy valley, surrounded by mountains and a beautiful landscape.

On the way, we will stop at the Burana historical complex to photograph the petroglyphs and the historic tower built by the Karakhanids at the end of the 9th century.

We will have lunch at a local family's house close to Burana.

After lunch there will be a sunset photo session with the participation of a professional model dressed in the national costume at Chon Kemin valley.

Accommodation at Kemin Guesthouse or similar.



Historic tower, Burana





DAY 3 | 6 September: Chon Kemin – Kyzyl Tuu – Bokonbaevo (180km, 3-4hrs) – Kyrgyzstan

Today we will visit and photograph the largest lake in Kyrgyzstan – Issyk Kul Lake.

On the way, we will stop in the small village of Kyzyl Tuu. In this village you will experience and photograph how a Kyrgyz family builds the yurts, an art that is learnt from generation to generation. We will have lunch at a guesthouse in Kyzyl Tuu.

Arrival in Bokonbaevo, where we will have a photography session with an eagle hunter and his bird of prey. During the session we will be able to appreciate the agility and speed of the bird and capture a hunting scene. This is one of the oldest traditions of nomadic Kyrgyz. Dinner in the yurt.

Accommodation at Yurt camp (Almaluu or similar).

DAY 4 | 7 September: Bokonbaevo – Skazka – Barskoon – Jety Oguz – Karakol (180km, 3-4hrs) – Kyrgyzstan

After breakfast in the guesthouse, we head off to Karakol. Along the way, we will visit and photograph the Skazka Canyons, (Fairytale Canyons) and got its name because of the winding and amazing mountain landscape. The wind-sculpted bizarre figures resemble sculptures of mythical creatures, fairy-tale heroes and animals. We will then visit Barskoon Gorge. The gorge is famous for its waterfalls. One of the best known is named Tears of a Leopard.

We will continue to Jety Oguz gorge which means “Seven Bulls” in Kyrgyz because of the seven giant red-brown rocks resembling furious bulls standing together. Dinner after sunset in the local restaurant.

Accommodation at Karagat Hotel or similar.

DAY 5 | 8 September: Karakol – Kyrgyzstan

After breakfast, we will have a boat trip to the lake and on the way, we will admire and photograph the snow-capped mountains that surround it and are reflected in the crystal-clear water. We will then visit its famous Orthodox Church and the Dungan Mosque.

After lunch we will enjoy a musical performance and take some great shots.

Accommodation at Karagat Hotel or similar.

“Thanks to its natural resources Kazakhstan is probably the best developed of the Stans. It is the world’s ninth biggest country and the country’s capital, Asatana, is a 21st-century city of modern architecture. Whatever your expectations are, leave them in the airport, Kazakhstan defies them all and will greatly surprise you.”



DAY 6 | 9 September: Karakol – Kaindy Lake – Saty (240km, 5hrs) – Kazakhstan

After breakfast, departure to the border between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan and transfer to Saty village. Lunch will be on the road. From Saty we will travel on 4WDs through a mountain road (15km) to reach Kaindy Lake. Kaindy Lake (Birch Lake) is located 2,000 meters above sea level, and it was formed in 1911 due to an earthquake that caused a landslide which blocked and flooded it.

The water in the lake is very cold, which is why the needles of the flooded trees are well preserved and are clearly visible through the transparent surface of the water. After walking and photographing around the lake, you will return to Saty village to take a shower, have dinner and rest.

Accommodation at Kolsay Grand or similar (guesthouse).

DAY 7 | 10 September: Saty – Charyn Canyon – Basshi (ca. 370km, 5-6hrs)

After breakfast, we will drive to Charyn Canyon. Charyn canyon is considered the little brother of the Grand Canyon in the United States. The erosion made by the Charyn River has created dramatic and impressive landscapes.

When we arrive, we will take a moment to enjoy and photograph the great panorama and then, we will walk down to the bottom of the canyon to walk about 2km around the Valley of the Castles labyrinth.

After 2-3hrs in the canyon, we will drive to Basshi village located near Altyn Emel to have dinner and rest in the guesthouse.

Accommodation at Altyn Emel Guesthouse or similar.

DAY 8 | 11 September: Basshi – Altyn Emel – Almaty (300km, 4hrs) – Kazakhstan

After breakfast, we will visit Altyn Emel National Park and we will begin our visit to the “singing” dune located between the mountains of Big and Small Kalkan. Altyn Emel National Park is one of the best places in Kazakhstan to see herds of wild hoofed mammals: the park boasts a population of some 6,000 goitered gazelle. Established in its present form in 1996, and covering an area of some 460,000ha, the Altyn Emel National Park is one of the largest in Kazakhstan.

“Sandy hill” is made up of very fine sand, which “sings” when it is windy and the sound coming out is very reminiscent of an organ.

Transfer to Almaty, where we will spend the night.

Accommodation at Holiday Inn Express or similar (4 stars).



Charyn Canyon lookout





DAY 9 | 12 September: Almaty – Kok Tobe – Almaty (30km, 35 min one way) – Kazakhstan

After breakfast, we will visit Zenkov Cathedral, one of the most beautiful and magnificent architectural monuments in the city. Then, we will climb to Kok Tobe hill, the highest point in the city.

Kok Tobe is famous for its panoramic view of the city from all directions. To reach the Kok Tobe, we take a cable car ride and goes over some of the oldest parts of Almaty and the magnificent fruit-growing gardens. Once you reach the top of the hill, you will see the famous 372 meters high TV Tower which is visible from far and offers great views of the mountains and the city. Dinner and overnight in Almaty.

Accommodation at Holiday Inn Express or similar (4 stars).

DAY 10 | 13 September: Almaty – Tashkent (flight) – Uzbekistan

Morning flight from Almaty to Tashkent. Our team will welcome you at Tashkent International Airport. Transfer and check-in in our hotel at around 2:00pm. After lunch we will start our sightseeing tour in Tashkent, the capital city of Uzbekistan. We visit Hazrati Imam Complex, the spiritual heart of Tashkent, and Chorsu bazaar, one of the busiest bazaars in the city.

We will then visit Amir Temur's square and independent square, a favourite resting place for the locals.

We will end the day visiting Tashkent famous underground with magnificent decoration. It was the seventh metro to be built in the former USSR, opening in 1977, and was the first subway system in Central Asia. Each station is designed around a particular theme, often reflected in the station name. Dinner and overnight in Tashkent.

Accommodation at Art Hotel or similar.

DAY 11 | 14 September: Tashkent – Samarkand (traveling by train) – Uzbekistan

After breakfast in the hotel, we will take an early train to Samarkand (about 2 hrs) and we will start the sightseeing in the kingdom of the Timurids dynasty visiting Guri Amir Mausoleum and the famous Registan square with three madrasas, one of them the famous Tilla-Kari (Gold-Covered) Madrassa.

We will then have a photo session with the participation of a professional model in the national costume.

After lunch, we will enjoy a folk music performance and take some great pictures. We will then discover, and photograph Bibi Khanum Mosque built in 1399 and Siab Bazaar – the oldest and still operating bazaar. Dinner and overnight in Samarkand.

Accommodation at Zilol Baxt Hotel or similar, Samarkand.

Photography session with professional model, Samarkand







“Geographically, linguistically, culturally and historically – Uzbekistan is a country that reveals in the obscure and will surprise you greatly.”



DAY 12 | 15 September: Samarkand – Uzbekistan

After breakfast we will visit the rest of Samarkand including Shahi Zinda Complex and Ulugbek observatory. We will end our visit in Samarkand at the Konigil village ancient paper factory.

Dinner and overnight in Samarkand.

Accommodation: Hotel 3-star (Art Zilol Baxt hotel or similar).

DAY 13 | 16 September: Samarkand – Jartepo (Uzbek – Tajik border) – Penjikent – Samarkand

Breakfast and transfer to Jartepo border at 8:00am

Arrive to Uzbekistan-Tajikistan border Jartepo (50km, 1hr). Customs and passport control on both sides, cross the border, 10:00am meet Tajik local guide and departure to the Penjikent city and surrounding area.

We will visit the ancient excavations of Sarazm. Penjikent was a major Sogdian city dating back to the 5th century and was destroyed by Arab conquerors in the 8th century.

Visits during the day: Sarazm excavation (5000 old town, UNESCO Heritage) and museum.

During the sightseeing trip and excursions, we will make lunch at local restaurant (Nigina or Shomi Panjakent or Sarazm 5000 or Safina) – 1hr for lunch.

Museum of Archaeology named after Rudaki – 1hr; Ancient Penjikent excavation; Museum of Ancient Penjikent – 1hr; Old central market and city center – 30mins.

Accommodation: Hotel 3* (Zilol Baxt Hotel or similar).

DAY 14 | 17 September: Samarkand to Bukhara (by train or by bus) – Uzbekistan

After breakfast we will take an early train/bus to Bukhara (about 1.5hrs). On arrival, we will meet our guide, check-in in our hotel and after lunch we will start our photography tour around the city with plenty of opportunities to photograph the locals and historic buildings.

Bukhara is simply amazing. We will visit Ismail Samanid and Chashmai Ayyub mausoleums (museum of water), Bolo-Hauz Mosque, Ark Fortress citadel, Poi-Kalyan architectural complex (Mir-i-Medressa, Kalyan Mosque, and Kaon Minaret), Ulugbek Madrasa, Abdullazizkhan Madrasa and Laby Houz Complex.

If time allows, we will also visit Chor Minor, Kukaldash madrasah, Magoki Atoori and Tim Abdulla Khan Trading Dome.

Accommodation: Hotel 3-star (Old Bukhara Hotel or similar).



Kalyan Minaret and Mosque in Bukhara



DAY 15 | 18 September: Bukhara – Turkmenistan border (Farap – Ashgabat (domestic flight) (180km, 2-3hrs) – Turkmenistan

Breakfast at the hotel and transfer to Turkmenistan border (Farap). Lunch in local restaurant and evening flight to Ashgabat (ETD 7:20pm, ETA 8:10pm).

Upon arrival, check-in the hotel and depending on time, we might have time to do a short tour around Ashgabat-by-night.

Accommodation at Ak Altyn Hotel.

DAY 16 | 19 September: Ashgabat – Darwaza – Ashgabat (285km, 3-4hrs) – Turkmenistan

After breakfast excursion to the Ancient Nissa (UNESCO) and Turkmenbashi Mosque Mausoleum during the morning.

Then, after lunch, we will drive to Darwaza Gas crater via Water and Mud crater. Locals call this area 'the gates of hell'. The diameter of the crater is approximately 60 m and the depth is about 20m.

Upon arrival, we will enjoy a delicious BBQ dinner near the crater. Taking the time to take beautiful pictures at dark.

Drive back to Ashgabat and accommodation at Ak Altyn Hotel or similar.

DAY 17 | 20 September: Ashgabat – Turkmenbashi – Yangikala Canyons (domestic flight) (380km, 5hrs) – Turkmenistan

Morning flight to Turkmenbashi (ETD 06:30am, ETA 07:30am).

Upon arrival we will drive to Yangikala Canyons and we will have time to explore this beautiful area and take amazing shoots. The Yangykala Canyons are defined by sheer cliffs of white, yellow, ochre, purple and red. The canyon's name is derived from the Turkem expression "yangi kala", meaning "fire fortresses" and is a dream location for photographers.

Picnic Lunch near to the Canyons. We will explore the area and photograph them around sunset.

Overnight at the canyons in tents or at the pilgrim house. Dinner at the pilgrim house.

DAY 18 | 21 September: Ashgabat – Airport – Departure (500km, 4-5hrs)

Drive back to Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. On the road, we will visit Know-ata, an underground lake and Nokhur village.

Transfer to the airport or hotel depending on your departure time.

Yangykala Canyon at sunset

Central to this unforgettable tour is YOU. Through Ignacio's guidance, you'll not only learn the secrets of the masters, but you'll take your photography skills to the next level and leave your Central Asia adventure with a collection of powerful, moving photographs that you'll share with pride.

Some of the photography skills you'll learn throughout the tour include:

- How to photograph animals in the wild, shutter speed/ISO/Focus
- The art of composition, capture the moment – what makes a good picture
- Post-processing techniques tips and tricks
- Creative post-processing – for those of you who are keen to break the rules
- How to work with light
- Optimising your equipment and filters
- Pre-visualisation and the creative process
- The unique techniques of landscape photography, wildlife photography, portrait photography, while also touching on aerial, black and white, and night photography
- Ignacio will also be there to offer one-on-one guidance on other specific skills you'd personally like to master.

Camera Skills

The best way to learn the art of photography is by taking photos. So Ignacio will be by your side in the field sharing insight and guidance as you shoot. Helping you create great photos as you shoot. No matter your skill level or equipment, you'll learn the craft with an award-winning master.

The Creative Process

Throughout the tour, you'll also have the opportunity to process and enhance your images using Lightroom, Photoshop, Capture One and other editing software. Learning first-hand how to create photographs that tell a story, evoke emotion and ultimately help you find your unique style and personality as an artist.

Critique Session

Should you dream of entering competitions, or simply wish to push yourself as a photographer, critique sessions are an invaluable part of the learning process. Ignacio will offer one-on-one critique sessions during the tour. Providing constructive evaluation and feedback supported by recommendations and tips through the eyes of a professional. While having your work critiqued can feel overwhelming at first, this is one of the most powerful ways to improve your skills as a photographer.

Level of photography

All skills levels are welcome. Whether you're a beginner or expert, the tour is designed to cover all aspects of image capture and post processing as it applies to where you are on your photography journey. As for equipment, we can help you optimise the equipment you chose to use from mobile phone to tablets, compact camera to digital SLR cameras.

Physical considerations

Our guides will take us to a range of different locations most of which involve some short walks. Sometimes, we may take longer walks, but all excursions are optional and if you are tired, you can always sleep in and relax in the homestays/hotels. This expedition does not require high altitude travel but participants should be in good general health, however, there is not much strenuous walking/trekking involved. Temperatures can range drastically in the mountains from day to night. Packing layers is essential.

“Today, many historic buildings and monuments still stand, marking the passage of the Silk Roads through caravanserais, ports and cities.”





IGNACIO PALACIOS

When it comes to photography and travel, few can rival Ignacio Palacios' experience, skill, and passion. A third-generation photographer, Ignacio has been honoured with over 100 prestigious photography prizes and awards from around the world and has travelled to over 90 countries in his 20 years career. It's little wonder he's developed a reputation as a leading photographer in the fields of travel, landscape, and nature photography.

Born in Spain, Ignacio now calls Sydney, Australia home – though his unmistakable Spanish spirit continues to influence his work and define his signature style.

Combining his love of travel and photography has proved a powerful combination, and today Ignacio leads some of the world's best photography tours to incredible destinations around the world. As an AIPP double Master of Photography, Ignacio shares his insight, experience, and technique with his clients to help them find their own success and joy on their photographic journey.

"I hope that through my images and my tours, I can open people's eyes to the incredible world we live in. I want to give my guests both travel and photographic experience. We are privileged to have such a beautiful planet and it's our responsibility to respect, cherish and protect it."

Ignacio's distinct, award-winning style can be defined by his mastery of composition, colour, and light. With his minimalistic style and unique ability to connect with his audience through storytelling through his images, Ignacio invites his audience to experience the subject not as how he captured it, but how he experienced it, evoking an emotional connection between the viewer, subject and artist.

Photography and travel will always be Ignacio's passion, and he is dedicated to helping others ignite their passion too.

Awards

- Spanish Professional Photography Awards (AFP) – Landscape Winner (LUX Gold) 2014
- APPA AIPP Landscape Photographer of the Year – Runner-Up 2016
- APPA AIPP Creative Photographer of the Year – Runner-Up 2019
- Head On Landscape Prize – Exhibited Finalist 2013, 2016, 2018
- NSW AIPP Professional Photographer of the Year – Overall Winner 2018
- NSW AIPP Professional Travel Photographer of the Year – Winner 2017, 2018, 2019
- NSW AIPP Professional Nature Photographer of the Year – Winner 2016, 2017/Finalist 2018, 2019
- NSW AIPP Professional Landscape Photographer of the Year – Finalist 2014, 2016 2017/Winner 2018
- NSW Epson Signature Worthy Award – Winner 2017
- APPA AIPP Photographic Book of the Year – Finalist 2018, 2019
- ANZANG Australian Geographic Nature Photographer of the year – Finalist 2013
- National Geographic Travel Contest – Finalist and Editors choice 2013
- Travel Photographer of the Year – Finalist (TPOTY) 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021
- Travel Photographer of the Year – Category Winner and Portfolio Runner-Up 2019, Category Runner-Up 2021
- TPOTY – Highly Commended 2014, 2015, Commended 2018, 2 x Special Mentions 2019
- International Landscape Photographer of the Year – Category Winner 2016, 2018, 2019
- EPSON Pano Awards Open Competition – Top 50: 2016, 2017, 2018
- IPA (International Photography Awards) – Finalist 2009, Honorable Mention 2009, 2013, 2015, 2019
- International Loupe Awards – Runner up 2010, Finalist 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013
- Wildlife Photographer of the Year – Final Round 2013, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019
- GDT European Nature Photographer of the Year – Finalist 2017
- MontPhoto Landscape – Finalist 2020
- Eyes on Asia Awards – Runner Up 2013
- FOCUS Awards – Image of the Year 2016, 2018



Gur-Emir Mausoleum, Samarkand

CHECKLIST

Camera equipment

- DSLR. To bring a couple of bodies is always recommended (check your baggage allowance with your airline/travel agent)
- Tripod with quick release plate
- Standard zoom, wide angle and telephoto lens
- Plenty of batteries and a couple of chargers
- Shutter cable release
- Polarising filter and ND filters
- Laptop computer with Photoshop and Lightroom and/or Capture One. Please make sure that these programs are working properly on your laptop before you arrive.
- External backup drives (SSD recommended) and memory cards for storage
- Lenses that cover the range of 24mm to 400mm plus, perhaps, a x1.4 teleconverter. I am planning to bring the following lenses: 24-70mm f2.8, 70-200mm f2.8 and possibly a 180-400 f4 or a 400mm f2.8 prime.

What to bring, clothing and other

- Water bottle (1lt) to avoid the use of plastic bottles for mineral water. Our guide will make sure to refill your bottle whenever necessary.
- Sun block and sun glasses (protection against UV)
- Hat
- We recommend comfortable clothing made of fabric that breaths (such as cotton) and pack a combination of short sleeve and long sleeve top and pant options
- Comfortable hiking boots.
- Travel and medical insurance, passport, visa, medication that might include malaria pills

Luggage preparations

- Additional luggage allowances have been arranged across all of your internal flights for your convenience
- We recommend you shrinkwrap your baggage at your departure airport
- Ensure your telephoto lenses are packed in protective casings designed for this specific lens
- We also suggest you carry your camera equipment as carry-on luggage where possible. In the event your luggage is delayed or lost, you can still shoot the moment you arrive.

IP Travel Photography reserves the right to cancel this workshop. In the event of this happening, all payments received will be refunded but participants shall have no further claim against IP Travel Photography arising from such cancellation. Any such refund will not include payments for any bookings for other services made in addition to the itinerary outlined above. The responsibility for such bookings lies with the participant. As such, IP Travel Photography recommends participants to purchase a travel protection and cancellation insurance prior to paying the first deposit. It is recommended that the cancellation insurance covers for the whole cost of the trip.

To reserve your place for 2024 or to make an enquiry, please email ignacio@iptravelphotography.com.au

“My strongest motivation is to create. I want to create beautiful images of natural subjects that can inspire others and the joy comes from sharing those incredible moments.”

Ignacio Palacios



TERMS AND CONDITIONS



WORKSHOP DATES AND PRICES

Tour dates: **4 – 21 September 2024** (18 days)

The tour commences in **Bishkek** (Kyrgyzstan) and ends in **Ashgabat** (Turkmenistan)

Standard cost: **US\$13,790** per person;
Optional single supplement: **US\$1,990**

Maximum **8** participants

A deposit of **US\$2,000** is required when you book the workshop

Terms of payment

- A deposit of US\$2,000 must be paid to secure your place. The deposit is non-refundable unless you can sell your place to someone else
- Note: the workshop is quoted in US\$. To calculate the rate in AUD\$, the currency exchange rate will be obtained from the Westpac website at the time of transferring the deposit and balance.
- The online Registration Form must be filled in and signed by each participant at the time of paying the first deposit. Participation will be declined otherwise
- The remaining balance must be paid on or before 1 May 2024
- Bookings will be accepted strictly in the order they are received
- Important: the workshop requires a minimum of 4 participants to run so please don't book your flights until the trip has been confirmed.

What's included

- Full 18 day and 17 night tour, photography instruction by Ignacio Palacios
- All meals (B, L, D) and accommodation in 3 and 4 star hotels, guesthouses and yurt
- Transfers from and to airports
- Flights Ashgabat – Turkmenabad – Ashgabat
- Flight Almaty –Tashkent
- Boat trip in Karakol
- Three photoshoots sessions with professional models in Chon Kemin, and eagle hunter

with bird of prey in Bokonbaevo and in Samarkand with folk musician and professional model

- Domestic train/bus tickets
- Mineral water
- All entrance fees to sites and museums, excursions guided English speaking guides
- 4WD vehicles
- Park/reserve fees
- Local taxes.

What's not included

- Flight to Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) and out of Ashgabat (Turkmenistan)
- Accommodation and meals prior to or following the trip
- Travel, cancellation, and equipment insurances
- Medical insurance
- Visas (if required)
- Alcohol consumption
- Beverages and snacks in between main meals
- Hotel Minibar, laundry services and late check-outs
- Souvenirs and other personal expenses
- Tips/gratuities. *Note on tips: gratuities for local guides, hotel staff, butlers etc. are not included on this tour. However, if you feel that any staff has given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them. We emphasize that such tips should be at your own discretion and based solely on the level of your service satisfaction.*

Additional notes:

- Local market Osh in Kyrgyzstan is closed on Mondays

- National Museum in Turkmenistan is closed on Tuesdays
- Sunday Market in Turkmenistan is only opened on Thursday, Saturday and Sundays

Cancellation Policy

A written notice of any cancellation must be received by you at which time the following cancellation fees will apply:

- If cancelled between 1 January 2024 and 30 April 2024, 60% of the workshop cost will be payable
- If cancelled after 1 May 2024, a fee equal to 100% of the workshop cost will be payable
- Failure to pay by the due dates will be considered a cancellation of the booking and fees paid will be non-refundable
- Bookings made after 1 January 2024 must be paid in full
- No refunds will be made for unused portions of the workshop. The photography workshop is sold as a land package (no airfares included)
- Cancellation fees are not transferable.

Camera gear

There is really no limit to what camera gear you take. Check with your airline about weight restrictions. Whatever level of camera equipment you have, we will help to ensure you get the most out of it. Check the camera equipment checklist at the end of the brochure but if you want to discuss specific equipment for this trip, contact me.

Fitness and health considerations

Sometimes participants will be required to walk on uneven terrain or tracks and hiking. A basic level of walking fitness will help, but this tour is not a hiking tour or a trekking tour so nothing extreme will be required. If you have concerns about your own capabilities or health, please check with your doctor before booking a place. By signing the Registration Form, you guarantee that to the best of your knowledge, you do not have any physical or other disability that could create a risk for you or other tour participants. Once a booking has been accepted by IP Travel Photography, medical circumstances will not be accepted as an exemption to the Cancellation Policy above.

Within the Registration Form, please indicate any health issues, allergies or dietary requirements. IP Travel Photography does not assume any responsibility or liability for medical care or special dietary requirements. If a participant becomes ill during the workshop, IP Travel Photography reserves the right to continue the tour for the benefit of the rest of the participants. IP Travel Photography will make every effort to assist you whilst trying to minimize disruption of the workshop for other participants.

Visas/Covid-19

I will provide guidance on this to obtain your visas (if required) and we will update you before the trip with regards to covid tests (if required) prior departure.

Rights

IP Travel Photography reserves the right to:

- Substitute hotels/accommodation
- Make changes in the itinerary or transport if required due to changes in airline schedules, or when necessary. We may be forced to change or alter the itinerary due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware, however, that we will attempt to stick as close to the original program as possible
- Cancel the workshop prior to departure, in which case a full refund of all payments received will be given. If such an event occurred, IP Travel Photography will not be responsible for any other expenses such as non-refundable air fares, visa fees and other related expenses. The responsibility for such bookings lies with the participant. As such, IP Travel Photography recommends participants to purchase a travel protection and cancellation insurance prior to paying the first deposit
- Substitute the tour leader and guest photographer as originally specified, in which case this substitution will not entitle the participant to a refund
- Run the photography workshop without the guest photographer if the group size is less than 6 participants. This will not entitle the participant to a refund
- Accept or refuse any person as a participant in the workshop
- Change the price of the workshop at any time due to adverse currency exchange fluctuations,

airline schedule changes, fuel and tax price charges

- Change the price of the workshop at any time due to major unforeseen increases in expedition related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.

Liability

The operation of the workshop is at the sole discretion of Ignacio Palacios (IP Travel Photography Pty Ltd), having in mind the wellbeing and interests of all participants and the safe and sensible operation of the program as specified within this itinerary IP Travel Photography does not accept any liability for the acts, omissions or default, whether negligent or otherwise of third party providers IP Travel Photography disclaims liability for any injury, damage, loss, delay, additional expense or trouble caused by force majeure or any other event which is not preventable by reasonable diligence on IP Travel Photography's part.

IP Travel Photography

IP Travel Photography is an ASIC business name with Australian Business Number 16578586693 and registered in Australia under the Business Names Registration Act 2011. IP Travel Photography Pty Ltd (Ignacio Palacios) will guide and provide photography tuition to all participants during the tour. IP Travel Photography is not a travel agent or travel service provider.











**TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE FOR 2024
OR TO MAKE AN ENQUIRY, PLEASE EMAIL
IGNACIO@IPTRAVELPHOTOGRAPHY.COM.AU**



IGNACIO PALACIOS
TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

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