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Golden Eagle Luxury Train: The Grand Silk Road (Tashkent to Beijing)

21 Nights • Luxury Experience

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Overview

Twenty-two days and the entire Silk Road, from Tashkent to Beijing, using two private trains: eleven nights aboard the *Golden Eagle* through Central Asia, then six aboard the *Golden Eagle Silk Road Express* across China.

This is the full route rather than a section of it. Uzbekistan alone takes a week - Kokand, Rishtan and Margilan in the Fergana Valley, Bukhara, Nukus, Khiva, Shahrisabz and two days at Samarkand - with side trips into Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. A private flight from Almaty crosses into Xinjiang, where the second train picks the journey up at Kashgar and carries it through Hotan, Golmud, Dunhuang and Xi'an to Beijing.

Journey highlights

- The Fergana Valley - the Palace of Khudayar Khan at Kokand, the ceramicists of Rishtan and a silk-weaving family at Margilan
- Two full days at Samarkand, including Registan Square after dark for the light show and the Shakh-i-Zinda necropolis
- The Igor Savitsky Museum at Nukus, the "Louvre in the Sands", with 100,000 avant-garde works held in the desert
- Dushanbe and the Kohi Navruz Palace, a teahouse that became a palace
- A private nomadic games festival at Lake Issyk-Kul - horseback wrestling, eagle hunting and ordo
- A private flight from Almaty to Kashgar, and the Apak Khoja Tomb
- The Mogao Caves at Dunhuang and a camel trek to Crescent Lake
- The Terracotta Army at Xi'an and the Great Wall at Badaling

One departure in 2027: 30 August to 22 September. Cabins are sold as a pair, one grade on each train; the Han Dynasty Suite combination is on request.

DAY BY DAY

Your Itinerary



DAY 1

TASHKENT

Arrive at Tashkent and transfer to a five-star hotel in the centre. The evening opens with a champagne reception and the welcome dinner, where you meet the group.

DAY 2

TASHKENT

Uzbekistan's capital was largely rebuilt after the 1966 earthquake, so Soviet planning sits over a much older city. The Old Town comes first, including a small library holding the world's oldest Koran, then the Railway Museum and the Museum of Applied Arts. In the afternoon you board the *Golden Eagle* and settle into your cabin; dinner is on board.





DAY 3

KOKAND

A day in the Fergana Valley. Kokand was one of the great Silk Road trading posts, and you see the Palace of Khudayar Khan - the Pearl of Kokand - and the Jami Mosque. Rishtan is the centre of Uzbek ceramics, where a master potter works through the process in front of you. At Margilan, a family who have made silk for generations show the whole chain, from the mulberry trees that feed the worms to hand-weaving ikat on traditional looms.

DAY 4

BUKHARA



Bukhara was restored for its 2,500th anniversary in 1999 and is outstanding. You visit the Emir's summer palace - the Palace of the Moon and Stars - then the historic centre: The Ark, the fortress from which the Emirs ruled until Soviet times, and Poi-Kalyan Square with the Kalyan Mosque, still in use. There is time among the Trading Domes and at Lyabi-Hauz Square under the mulberry trees. Weather permitting, a barbecue on the station platform before the train leaves.



DAY 5

NUKUS

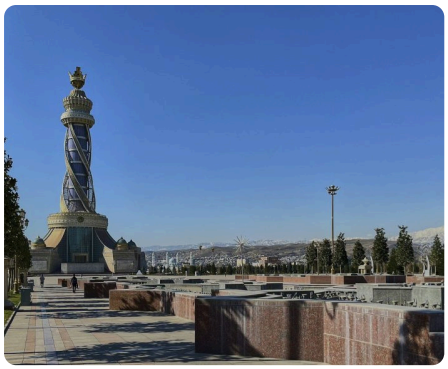
Nukus sits in the far north-west of Uzbekistan, ringed by the Kara Kum, Kyzyl Kum and Ustyurt deserts. Its improbable treasure is the Igor Savitsky State Museum of Fine Arts - the "Louvre in the Sands" - which holds some 100,000 works, including a collection of Soviet avant-garde art that survived precisely because it was so far from Moscow.

DAY 6

KHIVA



Khiva was founded 2,500 years ago at the crossing of the routes between Mongolia, Russia, China and Persia, and it survives as a complete walled city and World Heritage Site. Within the walls, the mosques, madrassas, bazaars and minarets stand close enough together to read as one continuous piece of architecture rising out of the desert.



DAY 7

DUSHANBE

An afternoon in the Tajik capital on the Varzob River. The Museum of National Antiquities comes first, then the Kohi Navruz Palace - begun as a teahouse and finished as something else entirely, hall after hall of chandeliers and carved detail, explained by a local guide. Afterwards, the Ismail Samani monument, Independence Square and the Mekhrgon Bazaar.

DAY 8

SHAHRISABZ

Shahrisabz is thought to be the birthplace of Amir Timur, who modelled himself on Genghis Khan and conquered by much the same methods. You visit his statue and the Ak-Saray Palace, which took more than twenty-five years to build and still carries its mosaic facing and Qur'anic inscriptions, including one dated 1395-96.





DAY 9

SAMARKAND

Samarkand is the name that means the Silk Road. Founded in the 6th century BC, it peaked as Timur's capital, and the buildings of the 14th to 17th centuries are what survive: Registan Square, the Bibi Khanum Mosque, and the Ulugh Beg observatory of 1428, among the earliest in the Islamic world. After dark you return to Registan for the illuminated light show, from front-row seats.

DAY 10

SAMARKAND

A second morning here, at the Shakh-i-Zinda necropolis - a corridor of mausoleums going back to the 9th century, tiled in blues that have not faded - and at Afrasiab, where the museum holds the 7th-century frescoes from the Palace of Varkhuman. Lunch back on board as the train runs on through Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan towards Kyrgyzstan.





DAY 11

BISHKEK

Bishkek began as a caravan stop on the Silk Road and spent the 20th century as a Soviet city, which is what you mostly see now: Ala-Too Square, built in 1984 for the 60th anniversary of the Kirghiz SSR, and parks holding statues of Marx and Engels and the memorial to the Red Guards.

DAY 12

LAKE ISSYK



Issyk-Kul is 170 kilometres long and the second largest alpine lake in the world. Its name means "warm lake" - depth, minerals and geothermal activity keep it from freezing, though snow-capped peaks ring it.

A festival is arranged privately for the group on the shore: the steppe sports handed down through generations. Archery you will know; horseback wrestling, hunting with golden eagles and ordo, played with cow kneecaps, you probably will not. Music, dance, costume and craft demonstrations complete it. Afterwards there is the option of the open-air Museum of Petroglyphs before dinner back on the train.



DAY 13

ALMATY

Almaty is the largest city in Kazakhstan, laid out in wide tree-lined boulevards under the Tien Shan. Its name comes from *alma*, apple - the orchards start just outside town. The morning tour takes in Panfilov Park with the Zenkov Cathedral, built entirely of wood and without nails, and Independence Square. In the afternoon a private flight carries the group to Kashgar, for one night in a five-star hotel.

DAY 14

KASHGAR

Kashgar has been a meeting point of cultures and faiths for as long as the Silk Road has existed. The Apak Khoja Tomb, the holiest Muslim site in Xinjiang, comes first, then the Old Town alleys and the Gaotai folk houses. In the afternoon you board the *Golden Eagle Silk Road Express* for its welcome dinner - the second half of the journey begins here.





DAY 15

HOTAN

A relaxed morning on board before Hotan, once the Buddhist Kingdom of Khotan. You visit an atlas silk and carpet workshop where everything is handmade, dyed with plant dyes and woven by hand, then see the ancient city of Yotkan by night.

DAY 16

GOLMUD

A lecture on the history of the Silk Road at the Hilton Qinghai-Golmud, and lunch there. The afternoon offers a choice between the Chaerhan Salt Lake, a pale expanse of salt flats and mineral deposits, and a guided walk through the city.





DAY 17

DUNHUANG

The Mogao Caves hold more than 500 grottoes cut into the cliffs of the Gobi, painted and carved from the 4th century onward and known as the Cave of a Thousand Buddhas. Local folk artists perform as you move through. After lunch, a camel trek over the dunes to Crescent Lake, a spring-fed oasis that has outlasted several thousand years of sandstorms.

DAY 18

GOLDEN EAGLE SILK ROAD EXPRESS

A day with nothing scheduled. The observation car has the largest window of any train in China; the lounge has the wine and cocktail list.





DAY 19

XI'AN

Xi'an's city walls and the Great Mosque in the morning, then the Terracotta Warriors - some 6,000 life-sized figures guarding the tomb of China's first emperor, each individually modelled, found only in 1974. The evening is a Tang Dynasty banquet with music and dance.

DAY 20

BEIJING

Arrive in Beijing. The classic tour covers the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square and the Summer Palace; the alternative takes in the Olympic Village and Bird's Nest, the CCTV Tower and the National Museum. Afterwards, transfer to the Four Seasons Beijing for two nights.





DAY 21

BEIJING

A morning at the Great Wall at Badaling, walking a restored section with the hills running away on both sides. The afternoon is free. In the evening, Peking duck at one of the city's celebrated restaurants, carved at your table.

DAY 22

BEIJING

Transfers to Beijing airport for your onward flight.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Terms & Conditions

Booking & Payment

- **Deposit:** 30% of the total tour cost is due at the time of booking. The deposit is non-refundable.
- **Final payment:** the balance is due no later than 125 days before departure.
- Bookings made within 125 days of departure are payable in full at the time of booking.
- Fares are per person. Your written confirmation shows the exact amounts and due dates.

Cancellation

- **125 days or more** before departure: 30% of the total tour cost (the deposit)
- **Less than 125 days** before departure: 100% of the total tour cost

Changes

- **Date change:** free of charge, subject to availability, when requested 125 days or more before departure; after that, a fee of 15% of the total tour cost applies.
- **Cabin upgrade:** only the fare difference between cabin categories applies.
- **Cabin downgrade or passenger name correction:** free of charge up to 35 days before departure; within 35 days, EUR 500 per change.

Changes or cancellation by the train operator

If the train operator cancels or materially changes a departure, you will be offered a new date or an amended booking, a credit toward a future journey, or a refund of the amounts paid.

All cancellation, change, or update requests must be submitted in writing by email to travel@palacetours.com. A request takes effect only once we have received and processed it, and we will confirm the outcome to you in writing. Timeframes are calculated by reference to local time and business days at the destination; a request received outside business hours is treated as received on the next business day.

We strongly recommend purchasing travel insurance, including cancellation cover, from the moment you pay your deposit. For information on available plans, please visit www.palacetours.com/insurance.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Frequently Asked Questions

How long is the Golden Eagle Grand Silk Road journey from Tashkent to Beijing?

> The Grand Silk Road lasts 22 days and 21 nights and covers the entire Silk Road rather than a section of it. It uses two private trains: 11 nights aboard the Golden Eagle through Central Asia and 6 nights aboard the Golden Eagle Silk Road Express across China, with hotel nights in Tashkent, Kashgar and Beijing.

When does the 2027 Grand Silk Road departure run?

> There is one departure in 2027, running from 30 August to 22 September. It begins with arrival in Tashkent and ends with an airport transfer in Beijing. Availability for each cabin combination is shown in the departure list on this page.

How much does the Grand Silk Road from Tashkent to Beijing cost?

> Fares for the 2027 Grand Silk Road (30 August to 22 September) are currently quoted on request for every cabin pairing. You travel in a Superior Class cabin or a Han Dynasty Suite on the *Golden Eagle Silk Road Express*, paired with Gold Class or an Imperial Suite on the *Golden Eagle*, with cabins sold as a pair, one grade on each train. Contact us for a confirmed fare for your preferred pairing and occupancy.

Why does the Grand Silk Road use two different trains?

> Central Asia is covered aboard the Golden Eagle, and from Kashgar onward the journey continues aboard the purpose-built Golden Eagle Silk Road Express across China. Both trains have restaurant cars, a lounge car and en-suite cabins throughout, so the change of train is simply the start of the second half of the journey.

How are cabins booked across the two trains on the Grand Silk Road?

> Cabin grades are booked as a pair, one on each train. The combinations are Superior Class with Gold Class, Superior Class with Imperial Suite, and Han Dynasty Suite with Imperial Suite. Our specialists can explain the differences and check which pairings are available.

How does the Grand Silk Road cross from Kazakhstan into China?

> On day 13, after a morning tour of Almaty, a private flight carries the group from Almaty to Kashgar in Xinjiang. You spend one night in a five-star hotel in Kashgar, then board the Golden Eagle Silk Road Express the following afternoon.

Which places does the Grand Silk Road visit in Uzbekistan?

> Uzbekistan takes about a week: Tashkent, the Fergana Valley towns of Kokand, Rishtan and Margilan, Bukhara, Nukus with the Savitsky Museum, the walled city of Khiva, Shahrisabz and two days in Samarkand. There are also side trips to Dushanbe in Tajikistan and to Bishkek and Lake Issyk-Kul in Kyrgyzstan.

What does the Grand Silk Road include in Samarkand?

> Two days are spent in Samarkand. You see Registan Square, the Bibi Khanum Mosque and the Ulugh Beg observatory of 1428, then return to Registan after dark for the illuminated light show from front-row seats. The next morning covers the Shakh-i-Zinda necropolis and the Afrasiab museum with its 7th-century frescoes.

What happens at the private festival at Lake Issyk-Kul on the Grand Silk Road?

> On day 12 a festival is arranged privately for the group on the shore of Issyk-Kul, the second largest alpine lake in the world. You watch traditional steppe sports such as horseback wrestling, hunting with golden eagles and ordo, plus archery, music, dance and craft demonstrations, with an optional visit to the open-air Museum of Petroglyphs.

What are the highlights of the China section of the Grand Silk Road?

> In China you visit the Apak Khoja Tomb and Old Town in Kashgar, an atlas silk and carpet workshop in Hotan, the Chaerhan Salt Lake or a city walk at Golmud, the Mogao Caves and a camel trek to Crescent Lake at Dunhuang, the Terracotta Warriors at Xi'an, and the Forbidden City and Great Wall at Badaling in Beijing.

What are the Mogao Caves at Dunhuang?

> The Mogao Caves, known as the Cave of a Thousand Buddhas, hold more than 500 grottoes cut into the cliffs of the Gobi, painted and carved from the 4th century onward. On day 17 you tour the caves as local folk artists perform, then take a camel trek over the dunes to Crescent Lake, a spring-fed oasis.

What cabins are available on the Golden Eagle Silk Road Express in China?

> The Golden Eagle Silk Road Express offers Superior cabins and the Han Dynasty Suite. The Han Dynasty Suite measures 22.2 square metres with a double bed. The train also has an observation car with the largest window of any train in China, which you can enjoy on the free day on board.

What is included in the Grand Silk Road fare?

> The fare covers all accommodation, all meals, beverages with meals and from the lounge car, arrival and departure transfers, cabin attendant service with turndown, luggage porterage, guided excursions at every stop with entrance fees, the private flight from Almaty to Kashgar, a tour management team, an onboard doctor and all gratuities.

What is not included on the Grand Silk Road journey?

> International flights are not included, and neither are the Chinese visa, travel insurance or items of a personal nature. You fly into Tashkent at the start and home from Beijing at the end, and our specialists can help you plan those flights.

How many nights are spent in hotels on the Grand Silk Road?

> Four of the 21 nights are in hotels: one night in a five-star hotel in Tashkent at the start, one night in a five-star hotel in Kashgar between the two trains, and two nights in a five-star hotel in Beijing at the end. The other 17 nights are on board the two trains.

How much deposit is needed to book the Grand Silk Road, and when is the balance due?

> A deposit of 30 percent of the tour price confirms your cabin and is non-refundable. The balance is due 125 days before departure, and bookings made within 125 days of departure are payable in full at the time of booking. Your

Can children join the Grand Silk Road journey?

> Children can be booked, with child rates in two bands based on age at departure: under 5, and 5 to 11. Given the length of the journey, please talk to our specialists first so we can confirm cabin arrangements and the applicable fare.

Can I book the Grand Silk Road as a solo traveller?

> Single occupancy is available on request. Please contact us and we will confirm the sole-occupancy fare and availability for your preferred cabin combination on both trains.

What does the final part of the Grand Silk Road include in Beijing?

> On arrival in Beijing you choose between the classic tour of the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square and the Summer Palace, or a modern-city tour of the Olympic Village, the CCTV Tower and the National Museum. The next day includes the Great Wall at Badaling, a free afternoon and a Peking duck dinner carved at your table.

How do I ask a question or book the Golden Eagle Grand Silk Road?

> Email travel@palacetours.com, call 786-408-0610, or message us on WhatsApp at https://wa.me/17864080610, where a travel specialist or our AI assistant will reply. The departure list on this page is bookable directly, and we will confirm the current quoted fare for your cabin pairing.

Ready to Book Your Journey?

Contact Palace Tours for personalized rates and departure dates

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