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14 Day Kazakhstan Adventure



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Travelling with Inspiring Vacations allows you to explore the wonders of the world in a variety of different ways. We have partnered with a worldwide network of local travel experts to bring you culturally unique and delightfully unforgettable travel experiences. Whether it is meandering through narrow canyons by rail, cruising the idyllic waters of the Mediterranean or touring through t...

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TOUR ITINERARY



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TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1

Destination	Nur-Sultan (Astana)
Meals included	Dinner
Accommodation	N/A

Welcome to Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan. Your adventure begins with a welcome meeting at 6 pm in the hotel lobby. Recently renamed Nur-Sultan in honour of the long serving first president, the city was purpose built to become the capital city of Kazakhstan in 1997. Similar to Washington D.C. in the United States or Canberra in Australia, Nur-Sultan is a planned city with the Japanese architect Kisho Kurokawa as its master mind. Now, Nur-Sultan is one of the most vibrant cities in Central Asia. If you arrive early, take the time explore and admire the futuristic city skyline. Join your leader in the evening for an included local dinner tonight.

Accommodation Hotel (1 night)

Meals Included Dinner

Special Information It's very important that you attend the welcome meeting as we will be collecting insurance details and next of kin information at this time. If you are going to be late please let your travel agent or hotel reception know. Ask reception or look for a note in the lobby for more information on where the meeting will take place.

DAY 2

Destination	Nur-Sultan (Astana)
Meals included	Breakfast
Accommodation	N/A

This morning, head off on a city tour with your leader and see some of the most impressive designs of this ambitious new city. Visit Nur-Astana Mosque, built in 2005 – with its capacity of 5000 worshippers inside and an additional 2000 outside it is one of the largest mosques in Central Asia. Then you'll stop at Palace of Peace & Reconciliation, a pyramid shaped conference hall that's considered to be Astana's symbolic center. You'll also visit the President's Culture Center which houses an array of exhibits that tell of the past, present and future of Kazakhstan, and of course, as its name suggests, the many achievements of its President. The rest of the day is free to spend as you wish.

Accommodation Hotel (1 night)

Included Activities Nur-Sultan - City tour

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Meals Included Breakfast

DAY 3

Destination Nur-Sultan (Astana) ✈️ Kyzyl Orda 🚗 Baikonur

Meals included Breakfast

Accommodation N/A

Today, take an early morning flight from Nur-Sultan to Kyzyl Orda (approximately 1.5 hrs) and from here you'll head to one of the most unique destinations on this trip, Baikonur (approximately 3.5 hrs). Located on the desert steppe of Kazakhstan, Baikonur has been leased to the Russian Federation until 2050. The town was originally constructed to service a huge space base that dispatches astronauts and supplies (and during the Soviet Union, cosmonauts) to the International Space Station. Firstly named Zarya (Russian for sunrise) it was renamed Baikonur by Russian president Boris Yeltsin in 1995. We will have some free time this afternoon and evening before our in depth tour of the sights tomorrow.

Accommodation Hotel (1 night)

Meals Included Breakfast

DAY 4

Destination Baikonur

Meals included Breakfast

Accommodation N/A

Get ready for a full day of exploration today. Visit the Baikonur Cosmodrome, the world's first and largest operational spaceport. Sputnik 1, the first artificial Earth satellite, was launched from here. Stop in at the nearby museum where you'll see a range of space artifacts, and check out the cottage once occupied by Russian astronaut Yuri Gagarin, the first human to ever venture into outer space.

Accommodation Hotel (1 night)

Included Activities Baikonur - Yuri Gagarin Museum & House Baikonur - Cosmodrome Baikonur - Space Museum

Meals Included Breakfast

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DAY 5

Destination	Baikonur 🚆 Kyzil Orda 🚆 Turkistan
Meals included	Breakfast
Accommodation	N/A

Today is another travelling day, this time by train. Drive back to Kyzil Orda and from there it's around 7 hours to the next destination – Turkistan. Grab some snacks, sit back and relax as the epic landscape rushes by. Located in southern Kazakhstan, the city of Turkistan contains more historical relics and cultural sites than any other place in the country. Your train will arrive in the late afternoon. We'll visit the main attraction of the Yasau Mausoleum tomorrow morning, but you'll have the option to see it illuminated at night today.

Accommodation Hotel (1 night)

Meals Included Breakfast

DAY 6

Destination	Turkistan
Meals included	Breakfast
Accommodation	N/A

Head out on a city tour this morning, the highlight of which is a visit to the Kozha Akhmed Yasau Mausoleum, Kazakhstan's most iconic building. The blue and white-tiled Mausoleum is the final resting place of a great Turkic holy man and Sufi. Built by Tamerlane, it is said that three visits here are equal to one visit to Mecca. As it is a religious site, we recommend that women wear a headscarf when entering. In the surrounds you'll find a rose garden, other monuments, an archeological museum and a mosque, which are all included in the entry ticket. Continue the journey to Shymkent (approximately 4 hours) by private vehicle, stopping at the ancient settlement of Otrar on the way. It was first excavated in 1969 and has a history dating back to the first century AD. Remnants of palaces, mosques and bathhouses can still be seen today. It is also where Genghis Khan's army is said to have fought heroically (though unsuccessfully) when the Mongols first invaded Central Asia. There'll be some time to spend in Shymkent before boarding the overnight train (approximately 11 hours) to Almaty.

Accommodation Overnight sleeper train (1 night)

Included Activities Otrar - Ancient settlement Turkistan - Yasui Mausoleum

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Meals Included Breakfast

Special Information We travel in kupe class, which is 4 berths per compartment with a lockable door. There are toilets and hot water for drinks at the end of each carriage. While we aim to group our travellers together, please be aware that compartments are not segregated by gender and you may be sharing with other travellers.

DAY 7

Destination	Turkistan 🚗 Shymkent 🚗 Almaty
Meals included	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation	N/A

Arrive in Almaty, grab some breakfast and drive the 240 km (approximately 3.5 hours) out of town to the spectacular Altyn-Emel National Park, where you will spend the next two days exploring. This is the largest national reserve in the country and preserves many rare plants and animals, including zheyran (goitred gazelles), argali sheep and kulan (wild donkeys), which you may be lucky enough to spot during your time here. The program may vary depending on the weather and season. Taigak Gorge houses the Kyzyl Lauyz Petroglyphs where you can make out ancient Tibetan inscriptions of the words 'Om Mani Padme Om', as well as images of hunting, farming and celebrations. There are also the Besshatyr Burial Mounds, which date from the sixth century BC when this area was a shrine of the ancient Saks people. Tonight you'll stay in a simple guesthouse within the national park where lunch and dinner is included.

Accommodation Guesthouse (1 night)

Meals Included Breakfast Lunch Dinner

DAY 8

Destination	Almaty 🚗 Altyn-Emel National Park
Meals included	Breakfast
Accommodation	N/A

Explore the sights not visited yesterday, of which the best-known is the Singing Barkhan – a sand dune extending 3km and up to 120m high. It gets its name from the way the fine sand hums in windy weather and the view from the top gives a great panorama of the surrounding Djungarian Alatau, Sogety, Boguty and other mountains. In dry, windy weather, the sand dune's song can be heard up to a few kilometres away. These mountains have revealed preserved remains of prehistoric animals including giant rhinos, crocodiles and turtles, and many compare the huge, conical mountains to the man-made Egyptian pyramids. Return to Almaty tonight after a full day in the park.

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Accommodation Hotel (1 night)

Meals Included Breakfast

DAY 9

Destination	Altyn-Emel 🚗 Almaty
Meals included	Breakfast
Accommodation	N/A

Today embark on a full-day guided city tour of Almaty. The development and wealth you'll see on display as you walk the streets comes from the country's main export – oil. Kazakhstan is one of the world's top five oil-producing nations in the world. Visit Central Square and the colourful Zenkoff Cathedral in historic Panfilov Park, dedicated to the 28 guardsmen who died defending Moscow against German tanks in WWII. Check out the fascinating Museum of Kazakh Musical Instruments and the State Historical Museum, which features a great collection of ancient relics. Finally, summit Kok Tobe Hill for great views over the city before returning to the hotel after a long but fulfilling day.

Accommodation Hotel (1 night)

Included Activities Almaty - Central State Museum Almaty - Museum of Kazakh Musical Instruments Almaty - Kok Tobe Hill Almaty - Panfilov Park Almaty - Medeu Almaty - Zenkov Cathedral

Meals Included Breakfast

DAY 10

Destination	Almaty 🚗 Border crossing 🚗 Karakol
Meals included	Breakfast
Accommodation	N/A

Today before saying goodbye to Kazakhstan, stop at spectacular Charyn Canyon (approximately 4 hours' drive). The colorful formations of different shapes and sizes are no less impressive than the Grand Canyon in the United States, (though it's much smaller!). Continue to the border and enter the mountainous nation of Kyrgyzstan. Tonight you'll stay in the peaceful town of Karakol.

Accommodation Guesthouse (1 night)

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TOUR ITINERARY

Included Activities Charyn Canyon - National Park

Meals Included Breakfast

DAY 11

Destination	Karakol
Meals included	Breakfast
Accommodation	N/A

This mainly Russian town was officially founded on 1st of July in 1869 by the military. At this time the town already had a large population of military officers, explorers from the Russian Geographical society, merchants and artisans. The town's Soviet name was Przhhevsk after the Great Russian explorer of Central Asia and China, Nikolai Przhhevsky. His last expedition ended here and he is buried on the lakeshore near Karakol. Stroll along Karakol's streets spotting Russian-style 'gingerbread' houses. Visit the Dungan Mosque, Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral, a local market and the Przhhevsky Museum. After lunch, drive for about 1 hour for a hike (approx. 2 hours) in the picturesque Jety Oguz Valley, aka Seven Bull Valley. Your leader will guide you through the forest to a waterfall (with jaw dropping panoramic views). Return to Karakol for the night.

Accommodation Guesthouse (1 night)

Included Activities Karakol - Dungan Mosque Karakol - Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral Karakol - Przhhevskiy Museum Karakol - Jety Orghuz Canyon Hike

Meals Included Breakfast

DAY 12

Destination	Karakol 🚗 Bishkek
Meals included	Breakfast
Accommodation	N/A

Today is a full day's drive to Bishkek along the northern shore of Issyk Kul – the second largest alpine lake in the world after lake Titicaca in South America. The views are lovely along the way, especially seeing Issyk Kul surrounded by snow capped mountains. On the way, you'll stop at Cholpan Ata, visit a petroglyph's site and take a short boat ride onto the lake to enjoy its sheer size and scale. Arrive in Bishkek in the late afternoon.

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Accommodation Hotel (1 night)

Included Activities Cholpan Ata - Petroglyphs

Meals Included Breakfast

DAY 13

Destination	Bishkek
Meals included	Breakfast
Accommodation	N/A

Take a trip down memory lane today with a city tour showcasing the country's fascinating history. The centre of the city is Ala-too Square, which was known as Lenin Square in Soviet times. Lenin used to stand in his concrete overcoat in the middle of this square, proudly gesturing towards the mountains. A great place for a wander is Dubovy (Oak) Park, where you'll find a few open-air cafes. The century-old oaks here and all along Freedom Avenue make Bishkek one of the greenest cities in Central Asia. In the afternoon, you'll have some free time to further explore Bishkek. Quite the contrast to the relaxed quiet streets, square and parks in the city center, Osh Market is noisy, crowded, and a perfect peek into local life. You'll find all kinds of things on sale here from spices and fruits to clothes and carpets. Get together with your travel mates and enjoy an optional dinner together tonight to celebrate a great journey through Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Accommodation Hotel (1 night)

Included Activities Bishkek - City Tour

Optional Activities Bishkek - Osh Market - Free

Meals Included Breakfast

DAY 14

Destination	Bishkek
Meals included	Breakfast
Accommodation	N/A

You adventure ends after breakfast today and you can depart at any time. Hotel checkout time is 12 noon.

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Meals Included Breakfast

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Inclusions

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Small, personal group experience – no more than 12 people
Experienced Tour Leader throughout
Accommodation: Hotel (9 nights), overnight train (1 night), Homestay/Guesthouse (3 nights)
13 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners
Transport: Private vehicle, Plane, Train, Overnight sleeper train
Nur-Sultan city tour, Baikonur, Turkistan, Almaty, Charyn Canyon National Park, Karakol, Bishkek city tour

Fine Print

EXCLUSIONS

Airfares
Personal Expenses
Travel Insurance
Optional activities
Anything not mentioned in the itinerary or optional

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Accommodation

The accommodation listed is subject to change. Any changes will be of an equal or higher standard. Bedding configurations (double or twin) are requests only. All efforts will be made to meet your preferences, however, any changes are beyond our control.

Single Travellers

This trip is designed for shared accommodation and doesn't involve a compulsory single supplement. Single travellers share with people of the same gender in accommodation ranging from twin to multishare. This only applies to accommodation during the tour - pre-trip and post-trip accommodation will be booked on a single room basis.

Single Supplement

A single supplement is available on all nights of this trip from an extra AUD \$1245 subject to availability. Please note the single supplement excludes Day 6 (overnight train) & Day 7 (guesthouse).

Triple Share

On Request

Passport copy required

Please send us a scanned, color copy of your passport info page and the application form for us to purchase the permits for Baikonur, no later than 60 days before departure. This permit is date specific and non-refundable. Please request the application form with your agent.

Children

Children must be 15 years old or over and share a room with parents at all times.

Tour Documentation

Final documentation will be provided approximately 30 days prior to travel.

Space launches from Baikonur

As the schedule is subject to frequent changes and cancellations, this trip is not scheduled to coincide with any space launches from Baikonur.

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HOW TO BOOK & PAYMENTS

Deposit & Payments

Book now and secure your package with only a AUD \$200 deposit per person.
Pay a 2nd instalment of AUD \$1190 per person within 28 days.
You will then be invoiced for final payment 90 days prior to departure.
Booking Process

Select the purple 'Reserve Your Seat' tab to begin your booking (you must 'Sign Up' first by entering your email and creating a password)
Then select the purple 'Book now' tab of the tour you have selected
Select your Departure Date, Departure City, Number of Passengers, Room Configuration, any Upgrade Options, and enter any Special Requests
Click the purple 'Proceed to Secure Checkout' tab
Enter your credit card or PayPal details to secure your deposit/payment. You may also pay via BPAY (not available within 70 days of departure)
Once your order is complete, you will be prompted to complete a Booking Form so that we can fulfil your booking
Your booking is confirmed once your Booking Form is submitted and you can begin the countdown to your Inspiring Vacation!

HOTEL LIST

Hotel (9 nights), overnight train (1 night), Homestay/Guesthouse (3 nights)

OPTIONAL TOURS

Bishkek - Osh Market (Day 13) - Free

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