

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION OF THE REPUBLIC
OF UZBEKISTAN

SAMARKAND REGION NATIONAL CENTER FOR
TRAINING TEACHERS IN NEW METHODS

RUZIYEVA N.Z

HISTORICAL PLACES OF UZBEKISTAN



Samarkand 2022

Historical places of Uzbekistan, Samarkand -2022, 50 pages

Manual author: **Ruziyeva Nigora Zohidjonovna** – Teacher Trainer at Samarkand Region National center for training teachers in New methods

Reviewers: **Hakimov H.N.** – "Samarkand Branch of the Institute of Retraining and Advanced Training of Physical Education and Sports Specialists"

Yakubjanova M.K – Senior teacher at Samarkand Region National center for training teachers in new methods

The work is approved by the decision of the scientific Council of Samarkand Region National center for training teachers in new methods of December 24, 2022

UZBEKISTAN'S TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

The historical monuments of Uzbekistan have attracted Western travelers for centuries.

From Marco Polo to the Great Game spies, Uzbekistan was always at the heart of the intrigue, its cities the routers of the great interchange between East and West that we call the Silk Road.

But for most of that time it was only the hardest of travelers risking life and limb who managed to see the great jewels connecting the caravan roads.

What comes to mind when Uzbekistan's tourist attractions are in question? First of all, it is the country's architectural heritage, richest in Central Asia: masterpieces of medieval Islamic architecture - minarets, mosques, madrasahs (Islamic colleges), mausoleums, fortresses, palaces. Among all of them stand out the famous Registan Square in Samarkand, with the three marvelous madrasahs built in the XV-XVII centuries at its three sides, and the grand Gur-e Amir Mausoleum where the great conqueror Tamerlane (Timur) is buried. Bukhara is first of all associated with Ismail Samani Mausoleum dating back to the 9th century and the 50-meter-tall Kalyan Minaret. There are over 170 important architectural monuments altogether in the city.

Khiva is famous for its unique Ichan-Kala 'inner city' historic part - a walled medieval Central Asian town being preserved as it was in the past - an artifact town. Thanks to its vast territory and very diverse terrains, Uzbekistan also boasts numerous natural attractions. They are the impressive tracts of the Kyzylkum Desert, for instance, and of course the majestic Tien Shan Mountains with their resorts and fascinating landscapes.



Uzbekistan Tourism attracts people worldwide for the amazing destinations that the country provides:

Samarkand. It is the historical capital city and is home to the Registan complex, the tomb of Tamerlane at Guri- Emir Mausoleum, Shahi-Zinda Mausoleum, Ulugbek Observatory, and the imposing Bibi-Khanum Mosque.

Bukhara. Travel back to the centuries-old alleyways of Bukhara and visit the 5th century fortress known as the 'Ark' or the nearby Zindon jail and Kalon mosque.

Khiva. Khiva is a magical land with great structures like Ichon-Qala inside which lies the Juma Mosque, Tosh-Hovli Palace, and Islom-Hoja Madrassa containing the Museum of Fine Arts that you must visit on your Uzbekistan Tours.



Termez. Termez located on the border of Afghanistan boasts the impressive Termiz Archaeological Museum, Karatepa Buddhist monastery remains, and Sultan Saodat Memorial Complex.

Uzbekistan played an important role in Asian history as Great craftworks created here were traded in the west and east through Silk Road. Uzbekistan still plays a key role when a new silk route is being created and people all over the world come to see it.

Eurasia Travels offers customized travel packages as per your needs and takes great care of your Uzbekistan Tourism Safety.

SIGHTSEEINGS OF TASHKENT

Tashkent ('a stone city'; also spelled Toshkent), Uzbekistan's capital, is in all respects a Central Asian regional hub; it is the fourth largest CIS city with a population of around 3 million. Today it has all the features of a modern metropolis and a capital, with a lot of attractive Central Asian-style newly-built structures and sites, as well as Soviet-era buildings. Tashkent is rich in museums, theaters and concert halls; there are a lot of traditional Central Asian and European-like restaurants and clubs, and several very nice parks, including a zoo and a huge botanical garden. Tashkent is the only Central Asian city which has an underground railway system (Tashkent Metro). It is probably one of the world's most beautiful: its stations are real works of art, each featuring unique designs covering various themes, such as famous people, events, valued notions, terms or just common nouns. Tashkent is a city of wide streets and numerous avenues, and is abundant in trees; although it is located in Central Asia, it has recently had a lot of evergreens planted, in addition to its traditional planes, poplars, oaks, willows, etc. Tashkent looks modern - it grew to its present size mainly during the Soviet times - but it is over 2,000 years old, and there is still some of its old part surviving, called Old City or Old Town. Tashkent Old city features a huge traditional Central Asian bazaar (there are many large and small bazaars in the city; most farmer products in the city are sold through them, not through stores), as well as several Islamic architectural monuments and quaint adobe mahalla neighborhoods, quite worth visiting for their charm.

THE INDEPENDENCE SQUARE IN TASHKENT

The Independence Square ('Mustaqillik Maydoni') is not just the central sightseeing of Tashkent; it is a symbol of the city, where festivities are held during national holidays, and a favorite place of leisurely walking among the refreshing fountains and green alleys.



The Independence Square is more than 12 hectares. Having climbed up the granite steps, framed by cascades of beautiful fountains, which

jets reach 7 meters in height, we get to the foot of the magnificent colonnade. Sixteen columns made of white marble are connected with each other by elegant metal board that is shot with silver in the sun. The colonnade is crowned by figures of storks, symbolizing peace and quiet in the country.

Going down the avenue that begins at the central arch "Ezgulik" (Arch of good and noble aspirations) you will come to the Independence Monument (1991), which marks the sovereignty of young Uzbekistan. The Independence Monument is a granite obelisk on which there is a globe with engraved outline of Uzbekistan enlarged several times, and symbolizes the desire of an independent state to be a full member of the world community. At the foot of the Independence Monument there is a monument of Happy Mother, Motherland (2006) - a figure of a woman with a baby in her hands. The woman symbolizes the motherland and wisdom, the repository of ancient traditions, and the baby symbolizes the bright future of the young state.



To the left of the Independence Monument there is a strict building of the Senate - the upper chamber of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament of Uzbekistan). It is in a classic architectural style - the main entrance is decorated with a portico with columns and crowned with the national flag of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In a high building in front of the Senate various ministries and other state institutions are located. A building of the Cabinet of Ministers is also situated On the Independence Square and it closes the administrative part of the area.

In the north the Independence Square there is a shady park area, the main sight of which is the Glory and Memory Alley. Along the both sides the alley there are galleries faced with granite and decorated with traditional carved gratings - pandjara. In the galleries there are fourteen stelas (symbolizing the regions of Uzbekistan) with Memory Books, where the names of Uzbekistan people who died for their Motherland in the Second World War are written in gold letters.

Going along the Glory and Memory Alley, the visitors get to the Eternal Flame and the Mourner Mother Monument, to the foot of which the citizens always bring fresh flowers. The park area on the right side of the Glory and Memory Alley will bring to the picturesque, shady bank of the channel Ankor.

KHAZRATI IMAM ARCHITECTURAL COMPLEX



The architectural complex Khazrati Imam (also spelled Khazrati Imom, Khazrat Imam, Khast Imam, Hast Imam, Khast Imom, Hast Imom) is the top Tashkent historic site and Islamic center, consisting of Barak-Khan Madrasah (also spelled Baraq Khan), Tilla Sheikh Mosque (also spelled Tillya Sheikh), Muiy Muborak Madrasah, Kaffal Shashi Mausoleum (also spelled Kaffal Ash-Shashi, Qaffal Ash-Shashi), Namazgoh Mosque, as well as the new Khazrati Imam Mosque and the muftiate building (the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan or Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Uzbekistan) built in 2007.

Thoroughly restored in 2007, the historic buildings of the complex, with the earliest of them dating back to the 16th century, show their original splendor now. The new mosque featuring traditional Islamic architectural elements adds to the grandeur of the site.

The complex was named after the 10th-century Islamic scholar, one of the first and highly esteemed imams of Ash-Shash (Tashkent's former name) Abu Bekr Al-Kaffal Al-Kabir Ash-Shashi (also spelled Abu Bakr Al-Qaffal Al-Kabir Ash-Shashi). He was famed for his immense knowledge of the Koran, Hadith, and Islamic law; his writings were an outstanding contribution to Islam. He also wrote poems and songs, some of which survive, and was a master locksmith besides (hence they nicknamed him Kaffal 'locksmith').

Kaffal Shashi became an Islamic saint after his death in 976. His grave by Ash-Shash city wall in Bogi- Keykaus Garden became a pilgrimage place. In the

16th century a mausoleum was built over the grave, and the area around it, with a cemetery stretching to the south, was named Khazrati Imam ('saint imam').



However, the most prominent structure of the site in the 16th century was Barak-Khan Madrasah.

Two other mausoleums and a library with a lot of manuscripts of ancient Asian authors were parts of the architectural ensemble it led.

Tilla Sheikh Mosque ('golden sheikh mosque'), standing opposite Barak-Khan Madrasah, was built in 1856 - 1857. It is still a functioning mosque, featuring minarets, a praying hall, a library and household facilities. There is also an iwan (a gallery-like structure with one side or two sides entirely open) added on to the mosque to pray outdoors. The hall has a mihrab decorated with carvings (Mihrab is a niche in the wall of a mosque that shows the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca and hence the direction Muslims should face when praying.) and a minbar pulpit. The windows of the mosque feature beautiful traditional Central Asian panjara stucco latticework.

Muyi Muborak Madrasah ('sacred hair madrasah'), built in the 16th century too, is said to have some hair of the Prophet Muhammad's hair preserved in it. Besides, it is famous for the great Islamic relic kept in its library, the Uthman Koran (also known as Samarkand Kufic Koran, Samarkand Codex, Samarkand Manuscript and Tashkent Koran; also spelled Osman Koran). This codex, in Kufic script, dates back to the 8th century and is believed to be the world's oldest Koran copy. It once belonged to Uthman ibn Affan, the third Caliph (of the four Righteous Caliphs who succeeded the Prophet Muhammad), and still has blood drops on its pages.



According to legends, the manuscript was brought to Samarkand from Iraq by either Tamerlane (Timur) or the famous Sufi Khodja Akhrar (also spelled Khoja Akhrar, Khoja Ahrar, Hoja Ahror, Xoja Ahror, Haji

Ahrar). It was kept in a Samarkand mosque for about four centuries till 1869 when Russian Turkestan Governor General Konstantin von Kaufman sent it to the Imperial Library in St. Petersburg. Vladimir Lenin gave it to the Muslims of Ufa, Bashkortostan, Russia, after the October Revolution, and then, in 1924, the codex returned to Uzbekistan, where it has been kept in Tashkent ever since.

The complex also contains the building of the Al-Bukhari Islamic University (built in 2007 too) and the offices of the newspaper Islom Nuri ('Ray of Islam') and the magazine Hidoyat ('genuine way') under the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan.

The buildings of the complex look very impressive from a distance, too, particularly at night when they are fabulously illuminated. The complex grounds are also beautifully laid out, featuring neat lawns, flowers, tree lines, as well as storks walking around in spring, summer and autumn, which makes the site even more attractive place to visit.

MAUSOLEUM OF ABUBAKR KAFFAL ASH-SHASHI

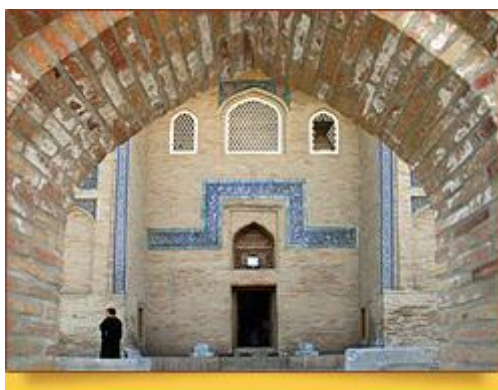


The Mausoleum of Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi is one of the most significant cultural and architectural monuments of Tashkent, a part of the historical and architectural complex of Hazrat Imam, located in the old part of the city.

Historically, the architectural ensemble of Hazrat Imam appeared thanks to the Mausoleum of Abu-Bakr Kaffal ash-Shashi, around which there were erected new buildings, for centuries having formed the whole complex. Square and architectural ensemble received the name of Hazrat Imam ('Holy Imam') in honor of the famous imam, an expert on the Quran, scholar and preacher Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi. The great scholar and theologian, was born in Tashkent, in 903, in the family of a handicraftsman - Kaffal (masters of making skilled locks). The child was named in honor of the companion of the Prophet Muhammad and the first Caliph - Abu Bakr. He got an excellent education

in madrassas in Tashkent, and then in Bukhara, Termez and Samarkand. Abubakr was considered as a student and spiritual successor of the famous Muslim theologians and scholars - Imam Al-Bukhari and Muhammad at-Tirmidhi. Deeply devoted to the Muslim religion Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi repeatedly carried out Hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca, traveled to the largest cities of the Muslim world, meeting and debating with the most prominent Muslim scholars of that time. His knowledge of theology was so great, and the authority was so indisputable that in the Arab world, Abubakr was named the Great Imam.

Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi devoted his life to the spread of Islam and religious education. That is why in 976 after the death of Kaffal ash-Shashi the place where he was buried (in a suburban garden - Bogi-Keykaus, at the fortress wall of



Tashkent), was considered to be a saint one. The building of the first Mausoleum of Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi built in the X century did not survive. On its place in the middle of the XVI century, built a new mausoleum was built which has been preserved to this day.

The Mausoleum of Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi which became a place of Muslim pilgrimage was built in an unusual architectural style - khanakah (a shelter for dervishes and pilgrims). It has quadrangular form and asymmetrical design. In addition, it is located on a high platform, raises the mausoleum above the rest of the buildings. Despite the massiveness, the Mausoleum of Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi seems to be heavenward and tall and even slender not only because of the platform, but also because of its crowning dome. It is interesting that the portal faces to the north, but not in the direction of Mecca, as in most of the mausoleums. Apart from a large cross-shaped hall, the building of the mausoleum has three tiers of cells (hujras) for pilgrims, located in the corner pylons.

In the XVI century, all the Mausoleum of Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi was covered with exquisite majolica, today you can see only a few surviving fragments. Some

of the inscriptions can be still restored - these are suras of the Koran, they were written in white and gold color. But the inscriptions made in the green cannot be restored - that is information about the construction itself - architects, craftsmen, and goodness of the place where the mausoleum is located. It is here that the oldest preserved pandjara (window grate), which now is 500 years old, as well as skilled doors of the XVI century.

SIGHTSEEINGS OF SAMARKAND

Samarkand (also spelled Samarqand) is probably the most famous Uzbekistan's historic city. Over 2,750 years of age, it boasts very impressive architectural monuments and a rich history. Samarkand originated from a settlement called Afrosiab (or Afrasiab), the ruins of which can be seen on the northern outskirts of the city. Later, still before the Common Era, it was the capital of Sogdiana (or Sogdia, Suguda, Sogdiane, Sogd, Sugd), named Marakanda (or Maracanda) then. When the city became the capital of the huge empire of Tamerlane (Timur) in the 14th century, it had enjoyed substantial growth and construction of splendid edifices, some of which we can still see today. The Registan Square, with the three grand madrasahs (Islamic colleges) on its sides, is the top Samarkand attraction. Among the others stand out Gur-e Amir Mausoleum (also spelled Gur-e Amir, Gur Emir, Guri Amir) where Tamerlane rests under a jade tombstone; Bibi-Khanym Mosque (also spelled Bibi-Khanom, Bibi-Khanum) - one of the largest mosques in the Islamic world; Khazrat-Khyzr Mosque, one of the oldest Samarkand monuments where you can have an impressive view of Shah-i-Zinda Necropolis (also spelled Shakh-i Zinda, Shahi-Zinda, Shohizinda), Siab Bazaar and distant mountains; and the surviving part of the legendary Ulugbek Observatory (also spelled Ulugh Beg, Ulughbeg, Ulugh-Beg) where Ulugbek compiled his world-famous star catalogue, the best between Ptolemy's and Brahe's.

Historical Samarkand is often the first stop for visitors to Uzbekistan – with the exception of capital Tashkent which serves as a transport hub. The high-speed train from Tashkent to Samarkand takes two hours, halving the time it takes to drive between the two cities.

Samarkand was the capital of Amir Timur, a 14th-century master general who built an empire spanning Central Asia and Persia, killing 17 million people in the process. He was also a patron of the arts, capturing artists along the way to build him a legacy in stone. The pitiful dead have been forgotten, but the magnificent city still stands.



Samarkand's Registan square

Located in the center of Samarkand, the Registan Square with its medieval edifices is certainly one of the most impressive squares in the world.

The legend has it that the square was a place of public executions from the 15th to the early 20th centuries, and they strew it with sand to absorb the blood shed there.

Therefore, the square was named Registan: reg ('sand') and stan ('place') - 'a sand place'. It was also a place where people, summoned with trumpets, gathered to listen to government decrees announced. Initially, at the beginning of the 15th

century, the square did not have the grand madrasahs standing on its three sides today. (A madrasah is an Islamic college; also spelled madrasa, madarasaa, medresa, madrassa, madraza, madarsa, medrese.) They were built later, in the 15th and the 17th centuries.



The Registan Square, paved with fired bricks and cobbles, and the architectural ensemble of its three edifices, masterpieces of medieval Islamic architecture, have been UNESCO World Heritage Sites since 2001. The central building of the ensemble is Tilla-Qori Madrasah (also spelled Tilla-Kori, Tillya-Kori, Tilya-Kori, Tilla-Kori); Ulugh Beg Madrasah (also spelled Ulugh Beg, Ulughbeg, Ulugh-Beg) and Sher-Dor Madrasah (also spelled Sher Dor, Sherdor, Shir Dor, Shirdor) stand to the left and right of it respectively.

The madrasahs date from different times. Ulugh Beg Madrasah, the earliest of them, was built in 1417 - 1420 by order of Ulughbek, Tamerlane's grandson. Two centuries later, by order of Samarkand governor Yalangtush Bahadur (also spelled Yalangtush Bakhodur, Yalangtosh Bahodir) Sher-Dor Madrasah and Tilla-Qori Madrasah were built. They replaced the khanaka (a Sufi hospice and monastery; also spelled khanqah, khaniqah, khanqa, khaneqa, khanegah, khaneqah) and the caravanserai that had been built under Ulughbek. Each of the madrasahs features unique decorations: fascinating tile mosaics, delicate stone carvings, splendid gilt ceilings, etc.

There was a period when Registan Square madrasahs stayed in a state of disrepair and were empty. In the 17th - 18th centuries, Samarkand was in crisis: the khanate's capital had been moved to Bukhara, and the Silk Road highway passing through the city had ceased to function. At the end of the 18th century Samarkand came back to normal life again, with a lot of shops and other small facilities opened in the square. In 1875, the square was leveled and paved, and became the major city center again.

Today various festivals, holidays and shows are held in the square. The madrasahs have been fully restored by now and are open for visitors. There is a number of shops offering local handicrafts housed in them.

The Registan complex of mosque and madrasahs (Islamic schools), decorated with ceramic tiles and presided over by an obviously un-Islamic lion, are at the heart of Samarkand. From here, you can branch out to the enormous Bibi Khanum mosque, or instead visit the striking Gur Emir mausoleum of Timur himself, which would inspire the Taj Mahal, built by Timur's descendants of the Mughal dynasty.

The Registan was medieval Samarkand's commercial centre. In the 15th century, under the auspices of Ulugh Beg, the astronomer-king and Timur's grandson, it became Samarkand's educational center as well, when he built a splendid madrasah (from the viewing platform, it's the building to your left) where he taught astronomy. At the time, the Ulugh Beg madrasah was known as one of the best universities of the Muslim world.

Ulugh Beg's size is balanced by the sheer elegance of its design and ceramic tile coating. A yellow-brown background highlights glazed green, turquoise, yellow and blue. Mosaic and majolica panels shine with floral motifs and Kufic calligraphy. The highlight is a muqarnas (a vaulted form of Islamic architecture) honeycomb decoration that dazzles with its mathematical complexity.

"Never in all the centuries will an artist, thought's acrobat, even with the bow of phantasy, scale the forbidden peaks of this minaret," reads one of the inscriptions extolling the opposite Shir Dor (having tigers) madrasah, built by Governor Yalangtush between 1619 and 1636. His architects strove to match Ulugh Beg in scale and nobility, though Koranic prohibition against symmetry forbade an exact mirror-image.

The decoration of Shir Dor is not as refined as that on the Ulugh Beg madrasah of the 15th century - the golden age of Timurid architecture. Yet the harmony of large and small rooms, exquisite mosaic decor, monumentality and

efficient symmetry all place the structure among the finest architectural monuments of Samarkand.



The Ulugh Beg Observatory Built in the 1420s by astronomer Ulugh Beg it is considered by scholars to have been one of the finest observatories in the Islamic world. It's possible to climb Ulugh Beg's minaret for exhilarating views over Samarkand. The best time is early in the morning – be prepared to surreptitiously offer guards a small fee if you want to do so.

The lions and human-faced sun that guard the portal are a striking return to pre-Islamic Zoroastrian symbolism, reminiscent of the Divanbegi madrassah in Bukhara.

To enclose the square in pleasing harmony, Yalangtush had a third madrasah built with a stretched facade of 75 metres. The Bibi Khanum mosque was in ruins by this time, and Tillya Kari was to become the city's main mosque. Its name means "the gilded one" and besides a lavish mosaic feast matching the colours of the Shir Dor, its magnificent interior is swathed in gold leaf.

Need to know

The Registan is so huge that it's worth visiting the site several times. Try to visit at different times of the day. This will allow you to pick out different details and to observe the play of light and shadow in the muqarnas.



Inside the tomb in Shah-i-Zinda

Overlooking Samarkand is another monument to the dead: the Shah-i-Zinda grave complex is the most atmospheric of all the majolica masterpieces of Uzbekistan. Built to house the graves of leaders and their relatives from the 11th to the 19th century, the complex tells the story of Samarkand, from humble beginnings to the spectacular heights of the Timurid empire.

The holiest site in Samarkand is a necropolis of mausoleums. In the 14th and 15th centuries, it developed into an architectural testing ground whose celebration of ceramic art, unrivalled in Central Asia, makes this street of the dead perhaps the most visually stunning sight in Samarkand.

The name, which means ‘Tomb of the Living King’, refers to its original, innermost and holiest shrine – a complex of cool, quiet rooms around what is probably the grave of Qusam ibn-Abbas, a cousin of the Prophet Mohammed who is said to have brought Islam to this area in the 7th century.

Shah-i-Zinda began to assume its current form in the 14th century as Timur and later Ulugh Beg buried their family and favourites near the Living King.

Look out for the 16-sided tomb of Amir Burunduk, the octagonal mausoleum built by Ulugh Beg, and the glorious Alim Nesefti Mausoleum with its relief majolica tiles, eight-pointed stars and the inscribed names of twelve Shi'ite imams.

The sapphire blue tombs are part of the necropolis built for Timur's female relatives. The most beautiful tomb is the Shodi Mulk Oko Mausoleum (1372), resting place of a beautiful young niece of Timur. The exquisite majolica and terracotta work here – notice the minuscule amount of space between the tiles – was of such exceptional quality that it merited almost no restoration.

The narrow corridors keep Shah-i-Zinda cool, so you can visit throughout the day in all seasons, but to have the site to yourself, come early in the morning. After visiting Shah-i-Zinda, be sure to continue on to Samarkand's city cemetery, where the most visited grave is that of former strongman Islam Karimov, who ruled the country with an iron fist for more than a quarter of a century, styling himself as Timur's successor.



Mir-I-Arab madrasah, Bukhara

Ulugbek Madrasah



Ulughbek Madrasah was built by order of Ulughbek, Tamerlane's grandson, in 1417-1420. Called a scientist on the throne, Ulughbek was a prominent astronomer of his times and an ardent promoter of education, science and art in his kingdom. The madrasah had turned out probably the most beautiful building he had ever ordered to erect.

The façade of the structure facing the Registan Square features a magnificent 34.7-meter-high pishtaq portal (a projected rectangular portal) of the main iwan entrance (a vaulted space in it). The portal is covered with intricate geometric and star-shape mosaic designs, as well as bands of calligraphic inscriptions - all made of glazed tiles in prevalent shades of blue (as on most other Samarkand historic buildings).

The either end of the façade has a minaret covered with geometric designs all over it too. There were minarets at every corner of the buildings but only these two and part of the northwestern rear one survive. The front minarets, affected by the elements, had been leaning quite badly until they were fixed in 1922 and 1965.

The building is rectangular; there is also a smaller iwan entrance on each of the three other sides. Decorated with tile mosaics, the iwan opposite the main portal is the entrance to the domed mosque the madrasah incorporates. There were also lecture halls and two stories of 48 hujra dormitory cells along the square courtyard of the madrasah. During the 18th-century riots the second story and the four large domes of the lecture halls in the corners of the courtyard were removed: the local ruler was afraid that the insurgents might shoot at his palace from them. In the 1990s the second story, except for the domes, was restored.



Though missing the domes, the building is a perfect example of Islamic elite architecture of the early Timurid times. The architect of it remains unknown though. According to some historical sources, Ulugbek himself took part in designing it.

The madrasah was one of the world's best Islamic colleges in the 15th century. The famous scholar and poet Jami (Nur ad-Din Abd al-Rahman Jami or Djami) was one of its graduates, for instance. It was also a center of secular education and research during Ulugbek's reign. Among his lecturers were Ulugbek himself and Qadi Zada al-Rumi (actual name: Salah al-Din Musa Pasha), the 'father' of Samarkand scientists and 'Plato of his times', as he was called by his contemporaries.

Ulugbek, much more successful as an astronomer than a king, whose world-famous star catalogue was the best between Ptolemy's and Brahe's, was killed by order of his son Abdulatif on October 25, 1449. His body was left on the doorstep of his modest home inside the madrasah.

Sher-Dor Madrasah

Sher-Dor Madrasah, which translates as 'possessing lions', was named after the mosaic motif on the upper part of its pishtaq portal. Reflecting each other on the right and left parts of the tympanum, it is a tiger-looking beast with a mane - some sort of a tiglon - pursuing some sort of a white fallow deer, and a segment of the personified sun over the tiglon's back: either watching the hunting scene or just rising out.



This mosaic motif is unique to medieval Islamic historic buildings, since depicting animals and people is against sharia. However, the designers of the madrasah seem to have tried to find a compromise: the creatures are fantastical, and the human face of the sun has both male and female

features.

Why Yalangtush Bahadur decided to use this motif, provoking Muslim clergy, is only a supposition. Some scholars say he wanted to highlight it because it was a popular Samarkand symbol of power, a Persian symbol Samarkand had borrowed. (Iran's emblem before 1979 was a lion with the sun too.) By the way, today's Samarkand seal features a snow leopard - another member of the large cats family... Whatever the reason was, the mosaic turned out to be a unique Central Asian piece of art and one of Uzbekistan's identity emblems. Sher-Dor's tiglon and the sun is even printed on the country's 200-som banknote.

Sher-Dor Madrasah was built on the site of the dilapidated khanaka right across from Ulugbek Madrasah in 1619 - 1635/36. Its portal was supposed to be a reflection of Ulugbek Madrasah portal, but they managed to achieve it only to a certain extent. The architect had not allowed for the two-meter elevation difference between the madrasahs (Sher-Dor's site was higher), so they had to shorten the structure to be level with Ulugbek Madrasah.



Sher-Dor Madrasah still features two impressive ribbed domes flanking its portal (Ulugbek's once had such domes too.) The structure is a rectangle in plan too, though shorter, for there is not a mosque at its end. In contrast with Ulugbek Madrasah, Sher-Dor hudjra cells are of one room only; the eastern façade features wall-high three-quarter towers, not minarets. The side iwan niches facing the yard have multifaceted semi-spherical ceilings Ulugbek Madrasah has never had.

Sher-Dor madrasah is also richly decorated with glazed bricks and tiles, forming various mosaics and intricate girikh geometrical patterns ('Persian knots') designed to look discernible from a distance. The friezes of the minarets and the dome drums are covered with ornamental inscriptions in Arabic. The upper parts of the hudjra cell arches, the interior of the lecture hall and many other surfaces of the madrasah feature very fine floral designs and arabesques - gilt and multicolored.

Sher-Dor Madrasah has survived a few earthquakes, with considerable damages though. In the 1920s and 1960s it was restored completely.

For almost three centuries the madrasah was quite a prominent Islamic college, although behind Ulugbek Madrasah in prestige. Despite its size, only around 40 students could study in it. Among its graduates was Shihabuddin Marjani, the famous Tatar theologian and a member of the Sufi order of Naqshbandi (1818-1889).

Tilla-Qori Madrasah



Yalangtush Bahadur ordered to build Tilla-Qori Madrasah ('gilded') on the site of Mirzo Caravanserai, also dilapidated, in 1646 - ten years after Sher-Dor Madrasah had been finished. They completed Tilla-Qori Madrasah in 1660, after the governor had already died.

The madrasah had been designed to complete the architectural ensemble in the square, adorning its northern side. However, the architect did not plan to make it a replica of either of the other two madrasahs. Though its main portal is similar to the ones of its mates, it is smaller, while the two-story wings, each with a short minaret at the end, are longer and have arched niches of 16 hujra cells.

The madrasah is square in plan, featuring a mosque with a portal and a large blue dome on the left of the main portal and behind it. They wanted the structure to serve as both a madrasah and a Friday communal prayer mosque. (The other Samarkand communal prayer mosques were in poor condition at the time.)



The mosque is a cross in plan, featuring a beautifully decorated mihrab - a niche in the wall of a mosque that shows the direction of Mecca Muslims should face when praying - and an 11-stair marble minbar pulpit. The interior walls and cupola of the mosque boast rich gilt ornaments; hence the name of the madrasah translates as

‘gilded’.

The four-iwan yard is surrounded with hujra cells: the main façade wings have two stories of them; the other three sides have only one. The inside and outside yard facades are covered with brick and tile geometric, floral and inscriptional mosaic designs.

At the beginning of the 19th century a strong earthquake destroyed the upper part of the main portal of the madrasah. It was restored during the reign of emir Khaidar (1800 - 1826), except for the mosaic decoration though. The restoration work on the décor and exterior ornaments continued and was completed in the 20th century: in the 1920s, 1930s, 1950s and 1970s. Today Tilla-Qori Madrasah houses the Registan restoration museum.

Nearby Historic Buildings

Located to the east of Tilla-Qori Madrasah is the Mausoleum of the Shaybanids - a dynasty that ruled the Khanate of Bukhara and Khorezm from the early 16th to the late 17th centuries. The mausoleum has a large number of tombstones, the oldest of which dates from the 16th century.

Behind Sher-Dor Madrasah stands Chorsu Trading Dome, evidence that Registan was the center of trade in medieval Samarkand. This hexagonal domed structure was built in the 15th century and rebuilt in the early 18th century. The building was restored in 2005; they had to remove three meters of soil to open it all above the foundations. Now Chorsu Trading Dome houses an art gallery where works of Uzbek artists and sculptors are exhibited.

GUR-E AMIR MAUSOLEUM



Gur-e Amir Mausoleum (‘emir’s tomb’; also spelled Gur-Emir; Uzbek: Go’ri Amir), a masterpiece of medieval Central Asian architecture, is the sepulcher of Tamerlane (Timur), his two sons Shahrukh and Miran Shah, his grandsons Muhammad

Sultan and Ulugbek, and Tamerlane's spiritual mentor Sayyid Baraka. The mausoleum was originally designed as the sepulcher of Muhammad Sultan, Tamerlane's favorite grandson and the heir to the throne, who was killed during a military campaign at the age of 27.

The construction of the mausoleum began in 1403, by order of Tamerlane, in the grounds of an architectural complex that had been built by order of Muhammad Sultan in the southeast of Samarkand in the 14th - 15th centuries. The complex comprised a madrasah and a khanaka, both facing the rectangular courtyard, as well as four minarets at the courtyard corners and an entrance portal. The khanaka was also the prince's residence. Only the foundations of the two buildings of the complex, its entrance portal and two of the four minarets survive. Initially, its purpose was to be a center of Islamic education, which the construction of the mausoleum made different.

In 1405, during his military campaign in China, Tamerlane got ill and died. Although there was a magnificent mausoleum built for him earlier in his hometown Shakhrisabz, he was buried next to his grandson in Samarkand mausoleum, which was named Gur-e Amir then and became a family sepulcher of the Timurids.

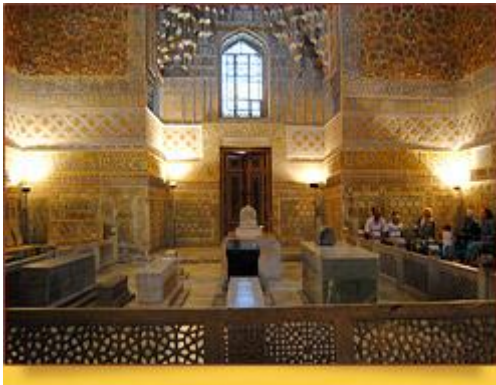


The mausoleum was modified during the reign of Ulugbek, another Tamerlane's grandson, 'a scientist on the throne' whose discoveries greatly advanced knowledge in the field of astronomy and mathematics in the Middle Ages. Ulugbek was buried in Gur-e Amir, too.

His tombstone bears an inscription saying he was killed by his son Abdulatif.

The one-dome octagonal building of the mausoleum is a perfect example of Central Asian architecture of Timurid times, a precursor of Humayun Tomb in Delhi and Taj Mahal in Agra. Its grand light blue onion dome features 64 ribs equaling the number of years the Prophet Muhammad lived.

The grand chamber of the mausoleum features large niches designed to make it look even larger. The lower part of the walls, their dado, is covered with onyx slabs, and, higher, with decorative bands and splendid star patterned murals. The inside of the dome and the squinch arch feature beautiful relief papier mache muqarnas, gilded and covered with beautiful floral designs. (Muqarnas, also known as mocárabe, honeycomb work, or stalactite work, is a type of corbel employed as a decorative device in traditional Islamic and Persian architecture, reminiscent of stalactites, taking the form of small pointed niches, stacked in tiers projecting beyond lower ones). The wooden entry door is also quite noteworthy. It was installed during the reign of Ulugbek and is decorated with very fine carvings.



The tombstones in the main chamber of the mausoleum mark the actual graves in the underground crypt of it. Tamerlane's tombstone, brought by Ulugbek from Moghulistan (or Mughalistan) in the 15th century, is the world's largest piece of nephrite (jade), dark green. Earlier the stone, believed to possess magical powers, had been an object of worship in a Chinese palace, and then was used as a throne by a Chagatai khan, a descendant of Genghis Khan. The stone is broken in half - a consequence, according to legend, of appropriating it by Persian king Nadir Shah who invaded Samarkand in the 17th century and removed it. Nadir Shah placed the stone before his throne to serve as a step - or planned to use it for decoration - but soon he was struck by ill luck, and, as his advisers strongly recommended, ordered that it was put in its place, and on the way back to Samarkand it was broken during an accident.

The tombstone has an inscription in Arabic saying 'When I rise from the dead the whole world will tremble.' Legend has it that there was a warning against opening the grave, saying 'Anyone who breaks my peace in this life or the next will be subjected to suffering and die.' However, Soviet archeologists, though opposed by the local elders and clergy, did so on June 19, 1941 - and a few days later Nazi

Germany attacked the USSR. When they reburied the remains in 1942, the victorious battle of Stalingrad began.

They could also confirm the authenticity of all the bodies in the mausoleum, Tamerlane's height (172 centimeters) and lameness, and the fact that Ulugbek was assassinated.

The large stone in the courtyard of the mausoleum is notable for the fact that it was used by the Timurids for their coronations.

SIGHTSEEINGS OF BUKHARA

Bukhara (also spelled Bukhoro, Buxoro, Buchara, Bokhara, Buhara) is over 2,500 years old and seems to be emanating the breath of history. According to the Iranian Encyclopedia, the name of the city came from the Sogdian for 'lucky place'; it is also said to derive from the Sanskrit for 'temple'. Bukhara is one of the world's seven holy cities of Islam. It was a large religious center in the Middle Ages, with over 350 mosques and 80 madrasahs (Islamic colleges), many of which survive. All the streets in Bukhara lead to the central historic complex Lyab-i Hauz (also spelled Lyab-i Khauz, Lyabi Khauz, Lyabi Hauz), where besides magnificent architectural monuments by a hauz pond a number of cozy restaurants and teahouses are located. Among the numerous attractions in Bukhara stand out the famous Kalyan Minaret (also Minorai Kalon, Minara-i Kalan), the impressive ancient Ark Fortress, functioning medieval bathhouses and domed shopping arcades. There over 140 architectural monuments in the city!

LYAB-I HAUZ ARCHITECTURAL ENSEMBLE



Lyab-i Hauz Ensemble (also spelled Lyab-i Khauz, Lyabi Hauz, Lyabi Khauz) is probably the most popular Bukhara tourist attraction, often used as a rest stop, thanks to its grandness, tranquility and old age. Lyab-i Hauz is located in the southeast shakhristan (the part of the city

within the city walls but outside the citadel) near the main Bukhara trade street.

Built in the 16th - 17th centuries, Lyab-i Hauz Ensemble is still one of the major Bukhara squares. It has a large artificial pond (42 meters in length, 36 meters in width and 5 meters in depth) with Nadir Divan-Beghi Madrasah, Nadir Divan-Beghi Khanaka, both built in 1622 (khanaka - also spelled khanqah, khaniqah, khanqa, khaneqa, khanegah or khaneqah - is a Sufi hospice and monastery), and Kukeldash Madrasah built in 1568 on the three sides of it. Lyab-i Hauz means 'by a pond'. Bukhara once had a lot of hauz ponds; they were the main city's source of water. In the early Soviet era most of them were dried, since they were also a source of many diseases. Lyab-i Hauz pond, however, was one of the ponds left to stay on.



The ensemble was constructed thanks to the vizier Nadir Divan-Beghi. He ordered to build the pond before his madrasah, khanaka and Kukeldash Madrasah to complete the artistic idea of the complex. According to Dmitriy Page, the author of a Bukhara guidebook, the construction was preceded by the following incident.

The site Nadir Divan-Beghi wanted to build the pond at was occupied by a house owned by a Jewish widow (there were a lot of Bukharan Jews in the city). The vizier asked the widow to sell it for a good price but she rejected the offer. Then the vizier took her to the emir Imam Quli-Khan. The emir was a wise ruler and forwarded the case to the panel of muftis, Islamic lawyers. According to their resolution, the vizier could not take the widow's house by force. They believed the local Jews and Muslims had to enjoy equal rights. Then Nadir Divan-Beghi hatched a plot to gain what he wanted: he built a canal at the side of the widow's house and its water began to slowly undermine one of the walls. The widow went to the vizier to appeal to his conscience but the sly man just repeated his wish to buy the house. Then the widow said she would not take money for it; in

return she wanted a piece of land and permission to build a synagogue on it. Nadir Divan-Beghi accepted it willingly and gave the woman his land in the neighborhood that is now called Jewish. Soon they built the pond - and the first Bukhara synagogue. According to some Bukhara historical sources the pond had the unofficial name Hauz-i Bazur, which means 'built through compulsion'.

In the Middle Ages Lyab-i Hauz, with the main trade street nearby, was used as a trade square because it had a lot of open space while the rest of the city was built up densely.

NADIR DIVAN-BEGHI ARCHITECTURAL ENSEMBLE



Nadir Divan-Beghi Architectural Ensemble consists of a madrasah, a khanaka Sufi hospice and monastery, and a hauz pond. The ensemble was constructed by order of the vizier Nadir Divan-Beghi who served for Imam Quli-Khan, one of the most powerful rulers of Ashtarkhanid dynasty.

Nadir Divan-Beghi Madrasah was built in 1622. It is located in the eastern part of the Lyab-i Hauz Square. The vizier had initially planned and constructed the building as a caravanserai but Imam Quli-Khan unexpectedly called it a madrasah at the opening ceremony. That was why they had to build on the portal, façade side towers, loggias, and the second floor with hujra cells for students to stay in. The main feature of the madrasah is its absence of a classroom; they just did not build it on. The portal is decorated with two mosaic pictures of the mythical flying creature Simorgh (also spelled simurgh, simurg, simoorg or simourv) holding fallow deer with its claws and heading towards the sun. The inscription on the portal says, 'Allah is great and Muhammad is his Prophet'. In 1993 Nadir Divan-Beghi Madrasah was included in UNESCO World Heritage List.

There is an interesting legend about the construction of the madrasah. When Nadir Divan-Beghi was getting married, he gave his fiancée a gift of just a pair of earrings on the wedding day. She felt offended by such a modest gift and said that the groom's family was rich enough to be able to give her more than just



earrings. The vizier, however, did not comment on these words. When his architectural ensemble had been completed a few years later, his wife said bitterly that he had skimped so much on the wedding gift and spent so much on the construction. In reply to this the vizier asked her to open her jewelry box and look inside. She did so and saw one of the earrings was missing. She began to yell it had been stolen but the vizier said, 'Darling! It is all the structures that have been

built on it! You could not appreciate my earrings, so appreciate what has been built thanks to one of them!'

Across from the madrasah stands Nadir Divan-Beghi Khanaka. It was built in 1619 - 1620, earlier than the madrasah. This khanaka is a massive structure with hujra cells along its walls and in the corners. The portal of the building has an originally stretched shape and is decorated with inscriptions in Arabic script along its border and with flowers. Thanks to its large hall with excellent acoustics and convenient location, Nadir Divan-Beghi Khanaka was Bukhara religious and cultural center for many years. 1620, earlier than the madrasah. This khanaka is a massive structure with hujra cells along its walls and in the corners. The portal of the building has an originally stretched shape and is decorated with inscriptions in Arabic script along its border and with flowers. Thanks to its large hall with excellent acoustics and convenient location, Nadir Divan-Beghi Khanaka was Bukhara religious and cultural center for many years.

There is a large rectangular hauz pond between the khanaka and the madrasah. Its edges have stairs and are made of solid blocks of yellow limestone.

Nadir Divan-Beghi Architectural Ensemble is very popular with the residents and guests of Bukhara. The place retains an amazing Oriental aura and allows its visitors to learn a lot from Uzbek cultural heritage through watching, listening to guides and even enjoying various folklore performances.

Apart from being an outstanding architectural monument, the old Nadir Divan-Beghi Madrasah is famous for a folklor show with folk dance accompanied by traditional live music and fashion show held regularly in the evenings within its premises.

Traditional live Uzbek music and stories about local musical instruments - doyra (a tambourine-like percussion instrument; also spelled dayereh, dojra, dajre, doira, dajreja), ghaychak (a bowed instrument; also spelled gheychak, ghijak), ney (a flute-like instrument) and others - played and told by the folk band Bukhorcha.

A dance show, at which traditional dances of various peoples and regions across Uzbekistan are performed to live musical accompaniment: the Khorezm folk dance, classical Fergana dance and traditional Uzbek dance will be shown together with the Arab and Tajik dances.

A fashion show by Bukharian clothes designers will be held in the intervals between the dances. The models will demonstrate original collections of silk and cotton clothes combining in them the bright traditional features and modern trends in the fashion industry.

If desired, the guests will be offered a delicious dinner consisting of traditional Uzbek food, such as pilaf (also spelled pilaff, plov, pilau, pilav, polow, pulaw, pulao), manti (dumplings; also spelled mantu), mastava (soup), samsa pasties (also spelled somsa, samosa, samoosa) and others, and traditional tea with oriental sweets.

The khujras (cells) of the Nadir Divan-Beghi Madrasah house today numerous souvenir shops, where you can buy unique traditional handmade souvenirs produced by local artisans.

The folk show at the Nadir Divan-Beghi Madrasah will enable you to feel the bright and colorful world of Uzbek culture, which is why it is so popular among tourists.

PO-I-KALYAN COMPLEX



Madrasah.

The architectural complex Po-i-Kalyan (also Poi Kalyan) is the central Bukhara tourist attraction located in the main Registan Square. Po-i-Kalyan, ‘the foot of the great’, consists of three structures built in the 12th - 16th centuries: Kalyan Minaret, Kalyan Mosque and Mir-i Arab

Kalyan Minaret, the symbol of the city, is the oldest of them. It is almost 9 centuries old, and it has never been restored. Built of fired bricks only, it was erected in 1127 by order of Arslan-Khan of the Karakhanids (also spelled Qarakhanids). The minaret is 46.5 meters in height; its diameter at the base is 9 meters. Its grand tapering body is topped with a lantern rotunda having 16 arched windows under a stalactite cornice. The inscription on the cornice says that the minaret was designed by an architect Bako. The minaret once featured another round section over the rotunda; now it has only a cone-shaped top remaining. There is a bridge connecting the minaret with the roof of Kalyan Mosque. You can use it, as well as the narrow brick spiral stairs inside the tower, to get to the rotunda to enjoy the fascinating panoramic view of Bukhara.

Kalyan Mosque (‘great mosque’) was built during the reign of Ubaidulla-Khan at the site of a destroyed Karakhanid mosque in 1514. It was the second largest mosque - behind Bibi-Khanyim Mosque - in Samarkand; it could hold 12,000 people at a time. The mosque has been the main Bukhara mosque for 500 years

already. It features the traditional architectural design typical of the Timurid times - a rectangular plan with four iwan structures (an iwan is a rectangular hall or space, usually vaulted, with one end entirely open). The main entrance called the Eastern Entrance is a large elevated portal decorated with mosaic. The main building of the mosque has two blue domes on the sides. Along the sides of the inner yard run vaulted galleries with 288 domes on 208 pillars. The facades are decorated with glazed tiles and mosaic.



Mir-i Arab Madrasah ('Arab emir madrasah'), which is still a functioning madrasah Islamic school, stands across from the mosque. The construction of the madrasah (1535 - 1536) was funded by Ubaidulla-Khan, Shaybani-Khan's nephew. It was built for the sheikh Abdullah Yemeni, the spiritual mentor of the early Shaybanids. In order to build the madrasah, Ubaidulla-Khan had to sell 3,000 captive Persians he had as slaves. According to another source, he gave Abdullah Yemeni, Bukhara Islamic leader and his teacher, also known as Emir of the Arabs, all the loot from his raids to pay for the construction.

The second largest Bukhara madrasah behind Kukeldash Madrasah, Mir-i Arab Madrasah has two floors with 114 hujra cells around a four-iwan yard and two cruciform halls. The first hall was used as a mosque and a classroom. The other is the mausoleum of Ubaidulla-Khan, Abdullah Yemeni and other noblemen. The wooden tomb of Ubaidulla-Khan is in the center of the mausoleum. Abdullah Yemeni's stands at its head. The main façade of the madrasah has two-tier loggias on either side of it. The madrasah is decorated with mosaic and multicolored decorative patterns. Today the madrasah is still a functioning Islamic college where muftis-to-be study the intricacies of Islam. What to see at Bukhara's Po-i-Kalan

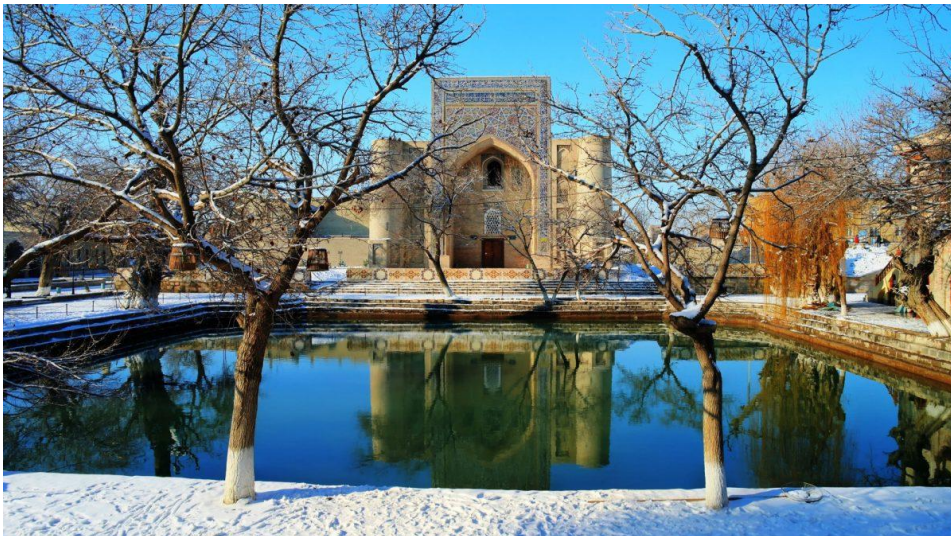
The spiritual heart of Bukhara is the Po-i Kalan complex. The magnificent brickwork of the Po-i Kalan minaret has been in place since 1127, surviving

earthquakes, the Red Army's cannonballs and Genghis Khan's marauders. At the foot of the 45m high minaret lies the mirror image of the Kalan mosque and the Mir-i Arab madrasah. The mosque actually stands on the foundation of an earlier 8th-century mosque that was burnt to the ground by Genghis Khan's army.

Bukhara

Bukhara is Uzbekistan's fifth-largest city and was a prominent stop on the Silk Road trade route. Built on the remains of a Buddhist monastery, Bukhara is known as the Dome of Islam throughout the Muslim world and still attracts pilgrims – Sufis in particular – who visit the shrine of Bahuddin Naqshbandi, revered founder of the Naqshbandi Sufi sect.

More than 2,000 years old, Bukhara offers the most complete example of a medieval city in Central Asia, with an urban fabric that seems to have changed little over the centuries.



Lyabi Hauz square, Bukhara

This 'new' mosque was built in 1514 and served as Bukhara's main mosque, with space for up to 10,000 worshippers. Shut down during the Soviet invasion, the Mosque re-opened to the faithful in 1991. The minaret cannot be scaled by tourists, and the madrasah is functional, only allowing visitors into the main court of the building so as not to disturb the students, but the Kalan mosque is free to visit.

The 19th-century octagonal pavilion set in front of the mihrab is an intriguing late addition to the mosque. Some say it marks the ancient well used for centuries for ritual ablutions, others that it was built to shade the emir during his weekly visits. Most probably, it served as an early tannoy system, from where a second imam would echo the words and motions of the first for the benefit of the congregation.

What to see at Bukhara's Lyabi Hauz

The Lyabi Hauz square centres around a pond or hauz. Most ponds in Bukhara were filled in after the Soviet take-over; they were the cause of diseases that plagued residents. But the Lyabi Hauz survived, perhaps because of how it so beautifully reflects the religious structures that flank it on three sides. The Divanbegi madrasah is noteworthy for its facade of phoenixes attacking a Mongol-faced sun, while the nearby khanqah (Sufi spiritual retreat) was a hostel for wandering dervishes who passed through the city. Summer evenings bring concerts and al fresco dining in a rather garish green light.

There's plenty more to see in Bukhara, from the 1,000-year-old Samanid mausoleum to the gaudy palace of the last Emir, the Ark Fortress and the leavings of the famed Bukhara Jews. Central Bukhara has hundreds of historic structures now used as bathhouses, shops selling carpets, spices or calligraphy.

It pays to wander out of the centre and into the narrow back streets to get a sense of real Bukharan life playing out amidst the ruins of days gone by. The crowds soon thin out, and it's not long before kids force you into their game, or an invitation for tea comes your way. Accept that invitation, and you will be rewarded with a peek behind the high gates of a traditional Uzbek multi-generational house.

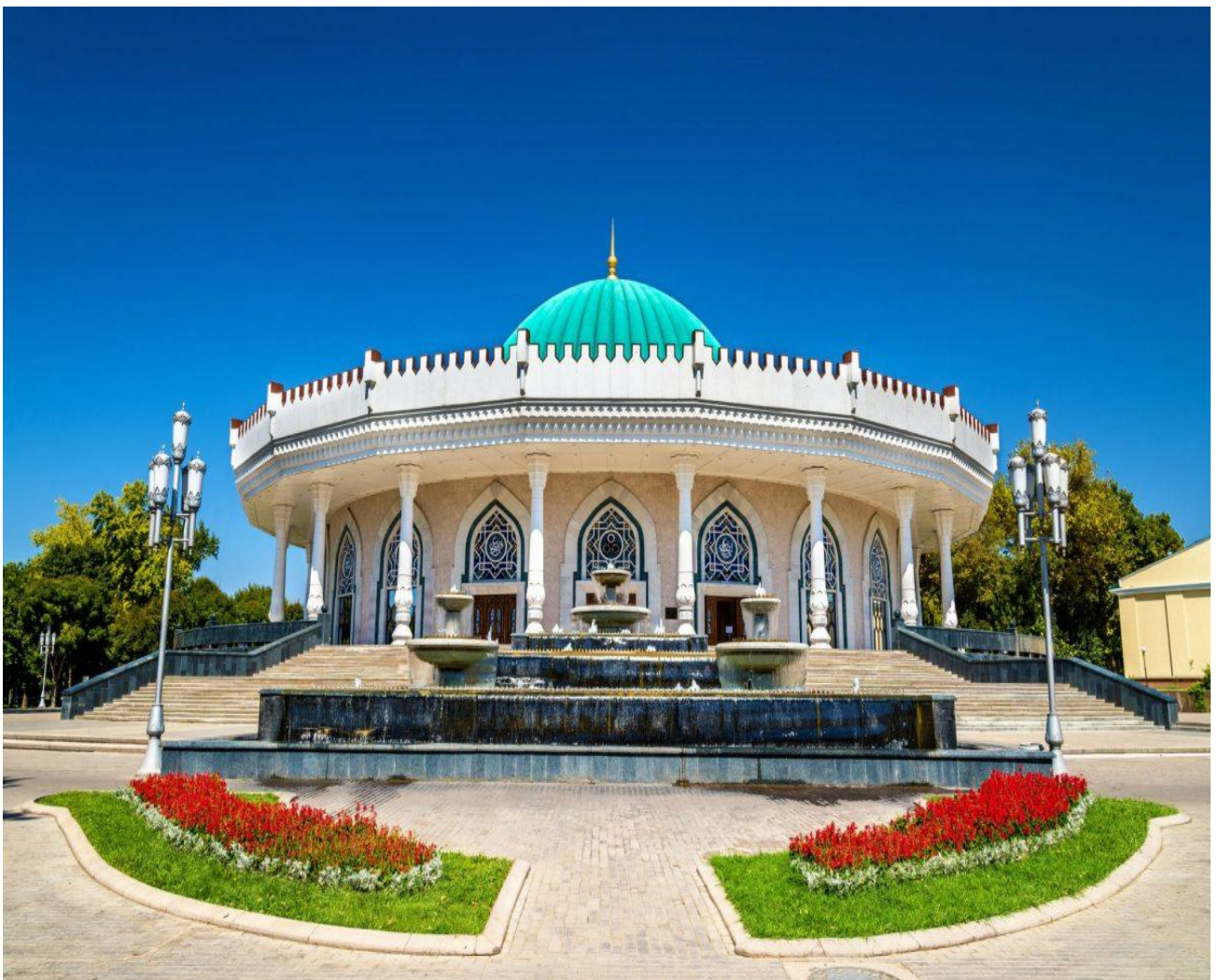
Khiva

The small slave trader settlement of Khiva encapsulates the best of Central Asian architecture within its mud-brick fortress walls. In the 19th century, Khiva remained out of reach for Russian colonial troops due to its remote location in the Kyzylkum desert, meaning it is well-preserved.

The Kalta Minor minaret dates from the 19th century and was supposed to rival the Kalan minaret in Bukhara. However, it remains unfinished after the architect fled

out of fear of being killed by the khan. More than the shape, though, it's the pattern-glazed tiles in shimmering turquoise, white and yellow that make the minaret worth visiting.

Khiva is tiny (home to just 90,000 people), so it's worth exploring further. The best side trip goes to the desert fortresses of Khwarezm: impressive, lonely relics rising up from the barren floor, these were once flourishing settlements until the course of the life-giving Amu Darya river changed and left them parched and deserted.



Amir Timur Museum in Tashkent

Tashkent's museums

After a devastating earthquake in 1966, Tashkent was rebuilt by authorities to become the “beacon of Soviet power in the East” that would “light the socialist

path to prosperity for neighbouring peoples of Asia.” A city built on a monumental scale, Tashkent offers a fascinating blend of 20th-century Oriental Brutalist architecture, medieval mausoleums and a fast-paced modern metropolis.

Besides monumental structures, Tashkent is also the place to indulge in some fine food – for instance, the capital’s 100 000-strong Korean community ensures delicious Korean-Uzbek food is not hard to find.

Few museums in Uzbekistan are worth your time; Tashkent is the exception. The Fine Arts Museum is stunning from the outside, but inside the visual feast continues, with an exquisite assembly of the best silk, woodcarving, suzani weaving, ceramics and jewellery.

Tashkent’s State Museum of History is another must-visit, if only for the spectacular shape of the former Lenin museum. It’s the place to really get a grasp on the long and diverse history of this land (but take a guide along, the museum’s English-language explainers are not very helpful). If possible, visit the museum at the end of your trip: you’ll get so much more out of the exhibits when you have been to the places they came from and understand the historical context, not just academically, but emotionally.

Restoration vs conservation

If you are wondering if a building would have looked the same 500 or 1000 years ago, the answer is, almost invariably, “no”. Although Uzbekistan has plenty of experts on the matter, it remains a very corrupt country, and restorations are usually given to cronies who have no time for historical accuracy.

Heritage destruction by real estate developers in search of a quick buck, or by inane officials in the name of touristification; it’s a real scourge in Uzbekistan. We advise not to look for the ‘real’ or ‘old’ Uzbekistan. There is only one Uzbekistan: that of the present.

One of the special attractions of Central Asia is the extraordinary lay redness of its history. Recent market-driven restorations are just the latest version of a never-ending process of renewal.



Ferghana textiles in Uzbekistan

If you would like to extend your trip outside of the main cities, consider the following options. If arts and crafts are your thing, head to the eastern Ferghana Valley, where you can admire silk production in Margilan, ceramics masters in Rishton, and the Khan's Palace in Kokand.

For something entirely different (and rather more depressing), continue west from Khiva into the new Aral desert, the successor to the Aral Sea, formerly the fourth-largest lake in the world but dried out by cotton farming. The regional capital Nukus hosts the Savitsky Museum, home to a top-notch collection of Russian avant-garde art once forbidden by Soviet authorities.

In the far south of the country, Termez offers remains of Greek and especially Buddhist history, as well as a tantalising glance over the border to Afghanistan at glorious Mazar-i Sharif.

Finally, Uzbekistan's central location in the region means you can cross a border and quickly find yourself in one of four other Stans: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan or Turkmenistan, and partly western part of the oasis and

provide a temperate climate, as well as give the originality of the relief and natural beauty to the Aidar-Arnasay lakes system in the north of the region.

National health resort

“Zaamin” Sanatorium is located at an altitude of 2000 meters above sea level in the Zaamin National Park health. The cleanest air, mountain landscapes, and coniferous trees – all this creates the best conditions for conducting wellness procedures for adults and children.

In the Zaamin district, in one of the most beautiful gorges of the Morguzar mountain range, you can visit the unique Teshiktosh cave and the tomb here, popularly named as “Parpi oyyim”. It is located near the Teshiktosh hole. This place is especially popular among women planning maternity.

In summer, the air temperature in this wonderful place is much lower than in neighboring regions due to the local flora. Nevertheless, keep it in mind that the temperature varies day and night. Therefore, even during the hottest month, take warm clothes with you, they will be very useful to you! Winter here is also very different from winters throughout Uzbekistan.

In the Zaamin area, among the souvenirs, you can mainly distinguish magnets with the image of local attractions. In addition, the local artisans are ready to surprise you with the crafts production made of wood and clay. These are the carved caskets with a secret lock, decorative plates and many other interesting things. The potters will delight you with painted dishes with unique local patterns.





The hallmark of the region's gastronomy is meat! The main dishes include tandoor kabob, jizz and, of course, Jizzakh samsa. Tandoor kabob is a dish invented by the nomads. Because they were constantly on the road, they had to come up with more and more new ways for convenient cooking on the road. What could be simpler than meat cooked at the stake? For this, the cooks made a hole in the ground with a depth of about 70 cm, stacked the firewood and laid the meat down. The meat was rubbed with the added juniper branches that gave piquant and unusual taste.

Jizz is considered a delicacy. Nowadays, this dish can be found in almost every city, but it has been invented in the Jizzakh region, that can be seen from its name. The way of cooking of jizz is unusual. First, the lamb is boiled and then fried in its own grease. It gives jizz a unique taste.

However, the main dish of the region is samsa. The local way of samsa cooking is famous throughout Uzbekistan, but, unfortunately, unlike most dishes, you can find it only in the Jizzakh region. Jizzakh samsa is very large in comparison with other types of samsa in the republic, but is cooked like the rest, in a vertical tandoor. Why it does not fall under the weight of the whole filling, you

may ask. I am afraid that the method of its preparation is another riddle comparable, probably, only with the question, why the sandwich falls butter down. Follow the link to read more about Uzbek cuisine.





An integral part of every trip is photography! In this section, we introduce you the most beautiful places in this city, where you can make the best shots.



Yurt camps are the best place to feel like the first settlers. You can sit around the campfire until midnight, sing songs and enjoy the beautiful night sky!



Walking on the river bank not only enhances health, but also arouses the desire to capture your walk, because you want to remember the beauty of this place forever!



The place “Bobo Yongok” is located in the Zaamin National Park and is famous for its growing hazel, which is more than 700 years old.

Zaamin is a very interesting place for nature lovers. This small town is the centre of the mountainous region of the Jizzakh region. Believe me, you will not find a better place to travel for camping! The natural beauty of this place leaves no one cold. Mountain air is so clear that sometimes, it makes you dizzy.



The fragrances of various flowers and herbs will not leave you throughout the trip, changing aromas with such frequency that you do not have time to enjoy all the notes of these amazing scents. In addition to all the natural beauty that can be found here, this area is also famous for its ancient history. Here you can see the ruins of fortresses and monuments of different eras. However, the main attraction is the reserve, created in 1960 to preserve the unique nature of this place. The area of the park reaches 10.5 hectares and most of it is occupied by forests.



Also in the reserve, you can find mountain ranges, gorges and hills. The highest part of the mountain range is Shaukartau Mount with a height of more than 4000 meters. The significant places of this park include “Boboyongok” – an ancient hazel, which, according to rough estimates, is about 700 years old. Its height is 20 meters, and it reaches almost 3 meters in diameter. A very interesting cave was found in a local village not far from the reserve. In its bowels, the archaeologists found the tools of primitive people. The walls of the cave are decorated with drawings. “Zaamin” sanatorium and several other rest houses and children’s camps are also located on the territory of the reserve.

THE LIST OF USED LITERATURE

1. Anderson, A & Lynch T (1988) Listening. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Andrew, W. (1989) Pictures for language learning. Cambridge University Press.
3. Brown, G. (1990) Listening to spoken language. Longman.
4. Broughter, G. (1978) Teaching English as a foreign language. Routledge& Kegan Paul Ltd.
5. Field, J. (1998) Skills and strategies: towards a new methodology for listening. Oxford University Press
6. Penny Ur. (1984) Teaching Listening Comprehension. Cambridge University Press.
7. Breen, J., and D. Candlin. 1980. The essentials of a communicative curriculum
8. in language teaching. Applied Linguistics, 1, 2, pp. 89–112
9. Collins English Dictionary for Advanced learners, third edition, 2001
10. Gairns, Ruth, Redman, Stuart: Working with Words, A guide to teaching and learning vocabulary, Cambridge University Press, 1986
11. Harmer, Jeremy: The Practise of English Language teaching, Longman, 1993
12. Howatt A.P.R. (1984) A History of English Language Teaching (OUP)
13. Hymes, D. H. 1981. On communicative competence. In The communicative approach to language teaching. (ed.) C. J. Brumfit and K.Johnson. Oxford: Oxford University Press
14. Krashen, Stephen: Principles and Practice in second language acquisition Logman, 1993
15. Nunan David: Language Teaching Methodology, a textbook for teachers Longman, 2000
16. Oxenden Clive, Seligson Paul, Latham Coenig Christina: English File 2, Oxford University Press, 1997
17. Peprník J., Nangonová S., Zábajová E.: Angličtina pro jazykové školy 1, Státní pedagogické nakladatelství Praha, 1981

18. Rossner, Richard- Bolitho, Rod: Currents of Change in English Language Teaching, Oxford University Press, 1990
19. Soars Liz and John: New Headway English Course, Oxford University Press, 2000
20. 2000
21. Swan Michael, Walter Catherine: The Cambridge English Course 1, Cambridge University Press, 1984
22. Thornbury, Scott: How to teach Vocabulary, Longman, 2002
27. www.exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols/vol37/no3/p27.html (from 9 April)
28. www.nthuleen.com/papers/720report.htm (from 3 May 2006)
29. www.aber.ac.uk (from 11 April 2006)
30. Allen, V. (1983) Techniques in teaching vocabulary. OUP.
31. Gairns, R. Redman, S. (1986) Working with words. CUP.
32. Hill, J. (1999) 'Collocational competence' English Teaching Professional, 11, pp. 3-6.
33. Lewis, M. (1993) The lexical approach. LTP.
34. Lewis, M. (1997) Implementing the lexical approach. LTP
35. Oxford, R. (1990) Language learning strategies. Newbury House.
36. Richards, J. (1985) The context of language teaching. CUP.
37. Scrivener, J. (1994) Learning teaching. Heinemann.
38. Thornbury, S. (1998) 'The lexical approach: a journey without maps'. MET, 7 (4), pp. 7-13
39. Willis, J. (1996) A framework for task-based learning. Longman.

INTERNET SOURCES

1. <http://www.google.com//>
2. <http://www.saviya.uz//>
3. <http://www.tilvaadabiyot.uz//>
4. <http://www.twirpx.com//>

