



Highlights of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan

9 days, Bishkek to Almaty

Trip code AYKK

What's included

- Your G for Good Moment: Yurt Building Demonstration, Barskoon
- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group, Bishkek

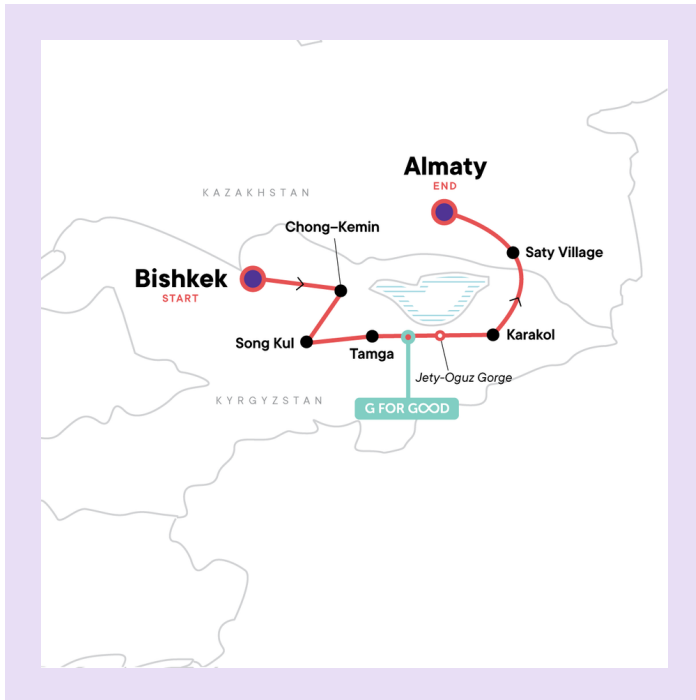
- Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in a Yurt, Song Köl
- Your Local Living Moment: Tamga Village Stay, Tamga
- Bishkek City Tour
- Burana Tower
- Home-cooked traditional dinner
- Overnight in a Yurt
- Free time in Chong-Kemin
- Song Kul Lake
- Lunch with Local Family in Kochkor
- Skazka "Fairytale" Canyon
- Tamga Village Stay
- Yurt Building Demonstration
- Jety Oguz & the Seven Bulls
- Karakol City Tour
- Russian Orthodox Cathedral
- Dungan mosque
- Saty Village Stay
- 4x4 ride to Kaindy Lake
- Charyn Canyon
- Almaty City Tour
- Independence Square, Zenkov Cathedral, Panfilov's Park
- WWII memorial
- Free time in Almaty

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing April 16th, 2025 and onwards

Itinerary



NOTE: Accommodations vary per departure and are subject to change until tour start date; they are not final and should be used as examples only. Travellers may login to the G Adventures App to view accommodations specific to their departure.

Day 1

Bishkek

Arrive at any time.

Welcome to Kyrgyzstan's artsy capital and cultural hub, situated at the base of the Tian Shan mountain range. There are no planned activities until the evening welcome meeting, so get out there and explore!



Accommodation

Grand Hotel Bishkek (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

ACTIVITY

Your opportunity to meet your CEO and fellow travellers, and learn more about your tour. Opt to join the group for a local meal afterwards. Don't forget to see the notice in the lobby (or ask reception) for the official time and place to meet up with the group.

Day 2

Bishkek/Chon Kemin

After breakfast, embark on a city tour of Bishkek before travelling to the serenity of Chong-Kemin Valley. Along the way, stop at one of Kyrgyzstan's oldest sights, the Burana Tower and learn about this ancient structure, rare in nomadic culture. Tonight, stay in a cozy guest house run by Karal Dobo Villagers. Soak in the stunning scenery while exploring the village and savour a home-cooked traditional dinner.



Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner



Accommodation

Chon Kemin Guesthouse (or similar)

Guesthouse



Today's Activities

City Tour

Bishkek

Check out some of the main highlights of this Soviet-esque capital city. Learn about the history of the city and daily life.

Private Vehicle

Bishkek - Chon Kemin

1h30m

90km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Burana Tower Visit

Burana

Visit the historical site of Burana and climb the stairs to check out the view from the top. A large minaret, along with some grave markers and remnants of a castle and mausoleums, are all that remain of the 9th century city of Balasagun.

Day 3

Chong-Kemin/Song Kul

In the morning, opt for a hike to the nearby mountains or explore the famous gorges of Chong-Kemin. In the afternoon, enjoy the scenic drive along the Kalmak-Ashuu mountain pass to Song Kul Lake. Immerse yourself in Kyrgyz culture with an overnight stay in a traditional yurt. Experience daily nomadic life and wander the breathtaking landscape. With an altitude of 3,016 meters above sea level, it's possible to experience four seasons in one day! Indulge in delicious home-cooked cuisine for dinner, then get cozy in the yurt around the stove.

Weather related conditions may limit access to the Song Kol mountain pass in May and June. If the pass is closed, the group will instead overnight at a yurt stay near Issyk Kol Lake.



Meals included

Breakfast | Dinner



Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Chon Kemin - Song-Köl

5h

230km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

ACTIVITY

Enjoy overnighting in a traditional felt yurt. Get comfortable in this multi-share round tent that fit up to 4 people and cozy up by the stove. Experience daily life of the nomads and sample some of their delicious cuisine.



Optional Activities - Day 3

Hiking in Song Kül

Song-Köl

Free

Explore the scenic mountain views and pastures on foot, getting up close and personal with breathtaking nature.

Spend the morning soaking in all the beauty of Song Kul Lake before departing for Kochkor to enjoy lunch together with a local family. After lunch, head to the breathtaking Skazka Canyon, also known as Fairytale Canyon. Walk through the striking rock formations and take some beautiful photos.

Afterward, head to Tamga village in the clutches of the Terskey Ala-Too and celestial Issyk-Kol' Lake, where you'll spend the night at a village guesthouse and get to know the local community members.

Tamga village was once famous for its Soviet-era military sanatorium, where Soviet cosmonauts relaxed and recovered after space flights.



Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner



Accommodation

Anyutaika Guesthouse (or similar)

Guesthouse



Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Song-Köl - Tamga

6h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle. Stop halfway in Kochkor village for a Kyrgyz felt-making workshop.

Lunch with Local Family in Kochkor

Kochkor

Enjoy an intimate lunch with local family in Kochkor Village.

Skazka "Fairytale" Canyon

Issyk Kul

On the Southern Shore of Lake Issyk Kul, visit the breathtaking Skazka Canyon, also known as the Fairytale Canyon. Its nickname speaks for itself, with natural rock formations that tower like princess castles in faraway lands.

ACTIVITY

Spend the night at a guesthouse in Tamga Village situated along Issyk Kul Lake. Surrounded by mountains and often used as a base for trekking, this village offers a touching glimpse into local Kyrgyz life.

Day 5

Tamga/Karakol

This morning we head to Ak-Orgo Workshop Centre, a G for Good supported organization, to observe how traditional yurts are built and learn about the importance of this Kyrgyz craft. Continue the drive to Jety Oguz, where we stop to visit the beautiful Seven Bulls rock formations, enjoy a picnic lunch with a stunning view and hike to the Jety Oguz viewpoint. Finish the drive to Kyrgyzstan's 4th largest city - Karakol and enjoy a city tour upon arrival, visiting notable sites like the Russian Holy Trinity Orthodox Church and the pagoda-style Dungan Mosque, built by Chinese Muslims in the early 20th Century.



Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner



Accommodation

Caravan Hotel Karakol (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

ACTIVITY

Visit the Ak-Orgo workshop, a G Adventures-supported project working to preserve Kyrgyz traditions and create employment opportunities in Barskoon. Observe how traditional yurts are built.

Jety Oguz & the Seven Bulls

Jety-Oguz

Visit the stunning Seven Bulls in the Jety Oguz mountain area. Watch as the bright red sandstone seemingly changes color hues as the sun reflects off the unique rock formations. We'll have a picturesque picnic lunch in the valley that is blanketed in colorful flowers in the spring. Then hike to the Jety Oguz view point on a 1.5 hour roundtrip moderate hike.

Private Vehicle

Tamga - Karakol

1h30m-2h

100km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle. Stop first in Barskoon village before continuing on to Karakol.

Karakol City Tour

Karakol

Jump on a mini-bus and see what Karakol has to offer. Stop by the Russian Orthodox Cathedral to admire the unique architecture. This beautiful wooden church was built in 1895, after the old structure was destroyed by an earthquake, and is still used for services on Sundays. Next, visit the colourful Dungan Mosque originally built in 1910 that almost resembles a Buddhist temple. This is the only mosque in the area and definitely worth checking out.

Day 6

Karakol/Saty Village

Cross the border into Kazakhstan on the journey to Saty Village, part of the Kolsay Lakes National Park. On arrival, jump in a 4x4 vehicle for the ride to Kaindy Lake, then embark on a trek to explore the sunken forest. Soak in the bright hues and marvel at the eerie sight of submerged trees. Spend the night in a homestay and indulge in traditional Kazakh meals for a true Kazakh experience.



Meals included

Breakfast | Dinner



Accommodation

Saty Village Guesthouse (or similar)

Guesthouse



Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Karakol - Saty Village

4h30m

230km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Border Crossing (Kyrgyzstan - Kazakhstan)

Kegen

Ready for a little more ink in your passport? Grab your bags and get ready to check another country off your bucket list.

Saty Village Stay

Saty Village

Be immersed in Kazakh culture during a homestay near the Kolsay Lakes National Park. Eat a traditional dinner and marvel at the mountain range and forests surrounding the village.



Optional Activities - Day 6

Hiking in Kolsay Lakes National Park

Kolsay Lakes National Park

Free

Explore the many lakes throughout the National Park. Unique views of the Tian Shan mountain range, Kolsay River, and the famous Kaindy Lake will not disappoint.

Day 7

Saty Village/Almaty

Depart early this morning for Almaty, the former Kazakh capital, stopping along the way to marvel at Charyn Canyon. Boasting stunning shades of red, orange, and brown, the Charyn Canyon is a natural wonder comparable in beauty to the Grand Canyon. On arrival in Almaty, join your CEO for an orientation walk around your hotel.



Meals included

Breakfast



Accommodation

Otrar Hotel (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Saty Village – Charyn Canyon National Park

2h30m

140km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Charyn Canyon Visit

Charyn Canyon National Park

Enjoy the views of the beautiful Charyn Canyon. Breathe the fresh air and snap a few photos of this stunning landscape.

Private Vehicle

Charyn Canyon National Park – Almaty

3h-4h

230km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Day 8

Almaty

Explore the amazing city of Almaty on a city tour, visiting sights such as Independence Square, Zenkov Cathedral, Panfilov's Park, and the striking WWII memorial. Enjoy a free afternoon to continue the adventure through Almaty. Opt to climb Green Hill for panoramic views, visit the local markets, or sip coffee in one of the plentiful cafés.



Meals included

Breakfast



Accommodation

Otrar Hotel (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

Free Time

Almaty

Enjoy the afternoon free to explore Almaty.

Almaty City Tour

Almaty

3h

Get to know Almaty on a city tour, visiting the most stunning sights. Stop by the colourful Ascension Cathedral, constructed entirely of wood without the use of any nails. It survived an earthquake in 1911 and continues to stand today. Walk through Panfilov's Park and the historical part of the city. Visit the new part of Almaty known as Independence Square, and stop by the WWII Memorial.



Optional Activities - Day 8

Zelyony Bazaar

Almaty

Also known as the "Green Bazaar," this was once a key trading centre in the city. Explore this traditional outdoor Kazakh market and roam around the varied stalls. Find anything from local spices and meats to souvenirs or furniture. Stay for a meal or opt to sip on tea while watching the hustle and bustle of the market unfold.

Day 9

Almaty

Depart at any time.



Meals included

Breakfast



Today's Activities

Departure Day

Almaty

Not ready to leave? Your CEO can help with travel arrangements to extend your adventure.

What's included

- Your G for Good Moment: Yurt Building Demonstration, Barskoon
- Your Local Living Moment: Tamga Village Stay, Tamga
- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group, Bishkek
- Bishkek City Tour
- Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in a Yurt, Song Köl
- Burana Tower
- Home-cooked traditional dinner

- Overnight in a Yurt
- Free time in Chong-Kemin
- Song Kul Lake
- Lunch with Local Family in Kochkor
- Skazka "Fairytale" Canyon
- Tamga Village Stay
- Yurt Building Demonstration
- Jety Oguz & the Seven Bulls
- Karakol City Tour
- Russian Orthodox Cathedral
- Dungan mosque
- Saty Village Stay
- 4x4 ride to Kaindy Lake
- Charyn Canyon
- Almaty City Tour
- Independence Square, Zenkov Cathedral, Panfilov's Park
- WWII memorial
- Free time in Almaty

What are the main highlights of this trip?

Learn about the diverse cultures of Central Asia, Soak in the breathtaking mountain scenery, Connect with the locals during yurt and village guesthouse stays, Wander the Soviet streets of Bishkek, Take in the beauty of Song Kul Lake and Kaindy Lake, Trek to the sunken forest, Learn how yurts are built.

What are the main highlights of this trip?

Learn about the diverse cultures of Central Asia, Soak in the breathtaking mountain scenery, Connect with the locals during yurt and village guesthouse stays, Wander the Soviet streets of Bishkek, Take in the beauty of Song Kul Lake and Kaindy Lake, Trek to the sunken forest, Learn how yurts are built.

Is there a disclaimer I should read before booking this trip?

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you view a final copy of your Trip Details a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

Is there an itinerary Disclaimer?

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

What important notes should I be aware of before the trip?

ACCOMMODATION NOTE:

Please be aware that properties we stay in with only two stories may not have elevators installed and climbing the stairs with your luggage will be necessary.

CULTURE

Central Asia is a region which may be very different to anything you have experienced before. Mixture of Soviet heritage and Islam, summer heat and winter cold, religious conservatism, traffic and crowds can result in initial culture shock but should be seen as an exciting new challenge.

DRESS CODE

Though you can see lots of people in traditional clothes, Central Asia has adopted western style clothing as well. Don't hesitate to pack your usual travel clothes: in summer it can be shorts and t-shirts, sandals etc. We recommend not to bring tank tops/singlets and any types of clothes with bare shoulders and backs - it is unacceptable in most areas, even in bigger cities. Our tour takes us to many religious sights, where dress code is very strict. We recommend women to have a headscarf in their day bags to cover up when going inside mosques (it's also a great help in the heat in summer). Best things to pack for the hot Central Asian climate is loose, long clothing - long trousers and sarongs or long skirts for women. In colder months (from the end of October through the end of April) it can rain and snow - bring warm clothes, jackets and comfortable warm shoes for walking.

ALTITUDE CONSIDERATIONS

This trip operates at altitudes over 800m (max altitude 3016m at Song Kul). Whilst we travel slowly allowing plenty of time to acclimatize you may experience headaches, nausea, lethargy. It is important to be aware of the affects of altitude on one's tolerance especially on long driving days.

MONEY

Due to the restrictions on changing money in Central Asia region, only notes/bills printed after 1996 and in good condition will be accepted for exchange. Usually 50 and 100 USD/EUR notes get better exchange rate. We recommend to bring smaller denominations as well - many vendors accept them if you don't have local currency.

RAMADAN

According to the lunar cycle, Ramadan will fall between Feb 28th - Mar 29th 2025, and Feb 17th - Mar 19th 2026. Please note that Ramadan is a month of fasting observed by Muslims throughout the world, during which time the followers of Islam should not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset. There may be some limitations to services and disruptions to schedules during Ramadan, but generally our tours still operate effectively during this period and food is available to non-Muslims throughout the day. It is very important to display increased cultural sensitivity during Ramadan. Please wear loose fitting clothes, that cover knees and shoulders, and try to avoid eating, drinking or smoking in public out of respect for those who can't at that time.

COMBO TRIP

Please note that this tour combines with other G Adventures tours. As such, the staff and some travel companions on your tour may have previously been traveling together with G Adventures, prior to Day 1 of your tour. Likewise, some staff and travel companions may be continuing together on another G Adventures tour, after your trip concludes.

What is the group leader like?

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officers (CEO). The aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting- we think it's the best of both worlds.

Please be aware your CEO may change between countries in Central Asia.

How large will the group be?

Max 16, avg 14

What meals are included in this trip?

8 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 5 dinners

What are the modes of transportation on my trip?

Private van, walking.

Is there an extra cost for travelling solo?

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Where will we stay during the trip?

Hotels (3 nts), village guesthouse (3 nts), yurt (1 nt, multishare up to 4 people per yurt), village homestay (1 nt)

Do any exceptions apply to Rooming or “My Own Room” on my tour?

Night 3 (Yurt camp)

What are the joining instructions?

For details of your joining hotel please refer to your tour voucher, G Account, the G Adventures App or contact your travel agent.

If you would like to book an airport Arrival transfer for your tour, please contact our Sales Team or your Travel Agent in advance of travel.

If you have paid in advance for an arrival transfer, a G Adventures representative will be at the airport to meet you. If for any reason you are not met at the airport, please call our local support line. If you are unable to make contact for whatever reason, please make your way to the joining point hotel via taxi.

Please note that day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned on this day.

Upon arrival to your Joining Hotel (note that check-in time will be in the afternoon), look for a note or bulletin board in the reception with a note from your CEO. This note will give the details of your Welcome Meeting on day 1 (usually between 5pm and 7pm), where you will get a chance to meet your CEO and other travellers, as well as learn more about how the tour will run. If you don't see a note, please ask reception for details!

If you are arriving later and will miss the Welcome Meeting, your CEO will leave a note at reception for you with any information you may need, and with morning instructions for the next day.

What happens if I experience problems when arriving?

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your leader, please refer to our emergency contact details. If you have pre-booked an airport transfer and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please apply to your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

Who should I contact in case of an emergency?

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

AIRPORT TRANSFER

If you have purchased an arrival through G Adventures or if an arrival transfer is included in the cost of your tour, please note that:

Your arrival transfer has been arranged based on flight information provided to us. If you are advised of a flight schedule change or flight cancellation within 48 hours of your scheduled arrival time, please call the emergency contact number to advise of your new arrival flight information. If you do not, we will not be able to rearrange your arrival transfer and you will need to make your own way to the starting hotel at your own expense. If your arrival transfer does not arrive within 30 minutes after you have exited the arrivals area please take a taxi to your start point hotel.

If your call is specifically concerning Airport Transfer complications please call our local G Adventures Transfer provider directly: Mr. Arlan +996700602090, Mrs. Asel +996777202888

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Office Central Asia:

Mr. Laziz Otayarov (Operations Manager - Central Asia)

Mobile 1: +99890 963 4779 (24h)

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below which will connect you directly with our Sales team who will happily assist you. Hours of operation by region can be found [here](#).

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0344 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 0800 365 1000

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

What should I take on my trip?

What you need to bring will vary according to the trip style you have chosen, the countries you are visiting and when you are travelling. Generally speaking though, you should pack as lightly as possible. On the vast majority of our trips you are expected to carry your own luggage (please see below for exceptions), and though you will not be required to walk long distances with your luggage (max 30 minutes) we recommend keeping the weight under 10kg/22lb.

Suitcases are not recommended for G Adventures travellers! Most travellers carry their luggage in a backpack, although an overnight bag with a shoulder strap would suffice if you travel lightly. Smaller bags with wheels are acceptable, although we recommend your bag has carry straps as well, as you may be required to negotiate bus and railway station steps. You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water and a camera etc for day walks and day trips.

What should be on my packing list?

Cold Weather:

- Long-sleeved shirts or sweater
- Scarf
- Warm gloves
- Warm hat
- Warm layers
- Warm waterproof jacket

Conservative Dress:

- Modest clothing that covers knees and shoulders (Long pants, long skirts, shirts that cover shoulders)
- Shawl or scarf (for temple visits)

Documents:

- Flight info (required) (Printouts of e-tickets may be required at the border)
- Insurance info (required) (With photocopies)
- Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)
- Visas or vaccination certificates (With photocopies)

Essentials:

- Toiletries (required) (Shampoo, bodywash, soap, etc.)
- Binoculars (optional)
- Camera (With extra memory cards and batteries)
- Cash, credit and debit cards
- Day pack (Used for daily excursions or short overnights)
- Ear plugs
- First-aid kit (should contain lip balm with sunscreen, sunscreen, whistle, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, bandaids/plasters, tape, anti-histamines, antibacterial gel/wipes, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, water purification tablets or drops, insect repellent, sewing kit, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
- Flashlight/torch (Headlamps are ideal)
- Fleece top/sweater
- Footwear
- Hat
- Headphones (Noise-cancelling recommended)
- Locks for bags
- Long pants/jeans
- Moneybelt
- Outlet adapter
- Personal entertainment (Reading and writing materials, cards, music player, etc.)
- Reusable water bottle
- Shirts/t-shirts
- Sleepwear
- Small travel towel
- Sunglasses
- Swimwear
- Watch and alarm clock
- Waterproof backpack cover
- Windproof rain jacket

Health & Safety:

- Face masks (Clients will be only be required to wear a face mask where it is mandated by local regulations.)
- Hand sanitizer
- Pen (Please bring your own pen for filling out documents.)

Light Hiking:

- Hiking boots/sturdy walking shoes
- Hiking pants (Convertible/Zip-off and quick dry recommended)
- Walking poles

Warm Weather:

- Sandals/flip-flops
- Shorts/skirts (Longer shorts/skirts are recommended)
- Sturdy water shoes/sandals
- Sun hat/bandana
- Swimwear Note: Though you can see lots of people in traditional clothes, Central Asia has adopted western style clothing as well. Don't hesitate to pack your usual travel clothes: in summer it can be shorts and t-shirts, sandals etc. We recommend not to bring tank tops/singlets and any types of clothes with bare shoulders and backs - it is unacceptable in most areas, even in bigger cities. Our tour takes us to many religious sights, where dress code is very strict. We recommend women to have a headscarf in their day bags to cover up when going inside mosques (it's also a great help in the heat in summer). Best things to pack for the hot Central Asian climate is loose, long clothing - long trousers and sarongs or long skirts for women.

When can I do my laundry on this trip?

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

What the visas and entry requirements for my trip?

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself with the Embassy. Please, keep in mind that all countries require passports valid for at least 6 months from the moment of departure from the country.

Visa information specific to your destination and nationality can be found in our Important Pre-Departure Information page [here](#)

KAZAKHSTAN

If you require a Letter of Invitation (LOI) to apply for a Kazakhstan visa, please fill out & submit the following request form:
<https://www.gadventures.com/visa-forms/kazakhstan/>

KYRGYZSTAN

If you require a Letter of Invitation (LOI) to apply for a Kyrgyzstan visa, please fill out & submit the following request form:
<https://www.gadventures.com/visa-forms/Kyrgyzstan/>

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you require an LOI (Letter of Invitation) for your Visa application for Kyrgyzstan, you will be subject to a processing fee of \$50USD (or currency equivalent) per person. This is charged by Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

You must have at least two blank passport pages available for each country you will visit on your tour. These are required for entry & exit stamps.

Information is accurate as of March 13th, 2024.

Where can I read detailed notes about this trip?

Border Crossings for AYKK:

Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan border - Kegen - Tup/Kensu border

How much spending money do I need for my trip?

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

What should I know about currency, credit cards, and exchanging money while on this tour?

In general Central Asia is a cash operating region, and travellers cheques are not recommended. Due to bank restrictions, only banknotes printed after 1996 can be exchanged. Better to bring notes without marks or stamps on them. We recommend to bring about 70 USD in small denominations: 1, 5 and 10 USD notes. If you are not able to get local currency it's always possible to pay in USD or EUR.

Kyrgyzstan

The preferred currency for local transactions is the som, and local establishments rarely accept credit cards so keep cash on hand. There are many of ATMs accessible in Bishkek and other larger cities such as Cholpon Ata and Karakol. Larger cities will also have money exchange locations that will trade EUR, USD, Roubles; some locations will trade GBP, and Chinese yuan.

Kazakhstan

The preferred currency for local transactions is the tenge, and local establishments rarely accept credit cards so keep cash on hand. ATMs in Kazakhstan are accessible in the larger cities, and withdrawals can be made by credit card. There are many currency exchange locations available to exchange EUR, USD, GBP, Russian rouble, Kyrgyz som and Chinese yuan.

How much emergency money should I bring on this trip?

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

Should I be tipping on my trip?

In Central Asia It is not customary to tip service providers such as waiters, but it is very appreciated, depending on the service we recommend 3-5%. Tipping shows an expression of satisfaction with the people who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from \$3-\$4 USD per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture. Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline \$4-7 USD per person, per day can be used.

What activities are optional on this trip?

Song-Köl

- Hiking in Song Kül (Free)

Kolsay Lakes National Park

- Hiking in Kolsay Lakes National Park (Free)

Almaty

- Zelyony Bazaar

Are there any health considerations I should know before travelling?

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that sometimes we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. In Asia pharmacies tend to stock the same western drugs as you get at home but they are usually produced locally so please bring the full drug name with you when trying to purchase a prescription drug. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

What do I need to know to about safety and security on my trip?

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/

What are the trip specific safety considerations?

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

What rules should I know before joining this trip?

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

Is travel insurance required for my trip?

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

What is Planeterra?

Planeterra International Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to turning travel into impact by helping local communities earn an income from tourism. Planeterra connects underserved local communities to the benefits of tourism by developing and supporting small community-owned businesses. These businesses support Indigenous people, empower women, grant youth access to employment opportunities, and protect the environment. Planeterra also works to ensure these businesses have a thriving customer base by integrating their projects into G Adventures' itineraries globally.

G Adventures is Planeterra's largest corporate donor, covering all operating costs, so 100% of your donation will bring opportunity to people in need.

G Adventures Dollar-a-day Program - Make Every Day Count - Turn your travel into impact with [Planeterra Foundation](#).

Did you know? Most communities around the world do not benefit from tourism. Give back to the places you visit on your travels by creating opportunities for local people to earn an income, and protect the environment.

Make every day count by donating \$1/day for the length of your trip, and join us in empowering the communities you will visit when you travel. 100% of your donation goes directly to Planeterra projects.

How should I dress to respect local customs during the tour?

Central Asian dress is quite conservative. Plan to pack loose-fitting light clothing appropriate for hot weather and plan to cover knees, shoulders and chest. For women, a hair scarf is recommended, though they are easy to buy in country.

How can I share feedback about my trip experience?

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Your tour evaluation will be e-mailed to you 24 hours after the conclusion of your trip. If you do not receive the tour evaluation link in the days after your tour has finished, please drop us a line at customersolutions@gadventures.com and we will send it on to you.

Does G Adventures have an email newsletter I can subscribe to?

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at www.gadventures.com/newsletters/

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

How old must I be to join this trip?

You must be 18 to travel unaccompanied on a G Adventures tour. For minors travelling with a guardian over 21 years old, the minimum age is 12.

Are international flights included in this trip?

No, international flights are generally not included in the price of your tour.

However, on some combo tours travelling between two different countries, international flights are included as part of the itinerary and price of the tour. Please speak to your GCO or booking agent for further details.

In addition, check-in times and baggage allowances/restrictions vary by airline and can change at any time. For the most up-to-date information for your flight, please contact your airline. We recommend checking in online in advance to avoid potential delays at the airport.

What should LGBTQ+ travellers know about safety and travel considerations on this trip?

The safety and well-being of all of our travelers is a priority at G Adventures and that includes our travelers who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. We recognize that there are specific concerns and questions you may have about your adventure in terms of safety and security. We encourage you to visit our [LGBTQ+ page](#) for useful resources to ensure you feel safe and comfortable throughout the duration of your trip. The Equaldex tool linked on this page can be of particular help when deciding where you may want to visit next.

Dossier Disclaimer

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.