



Legacy of the Silk Road: Uzbekistan & Turkmenistan

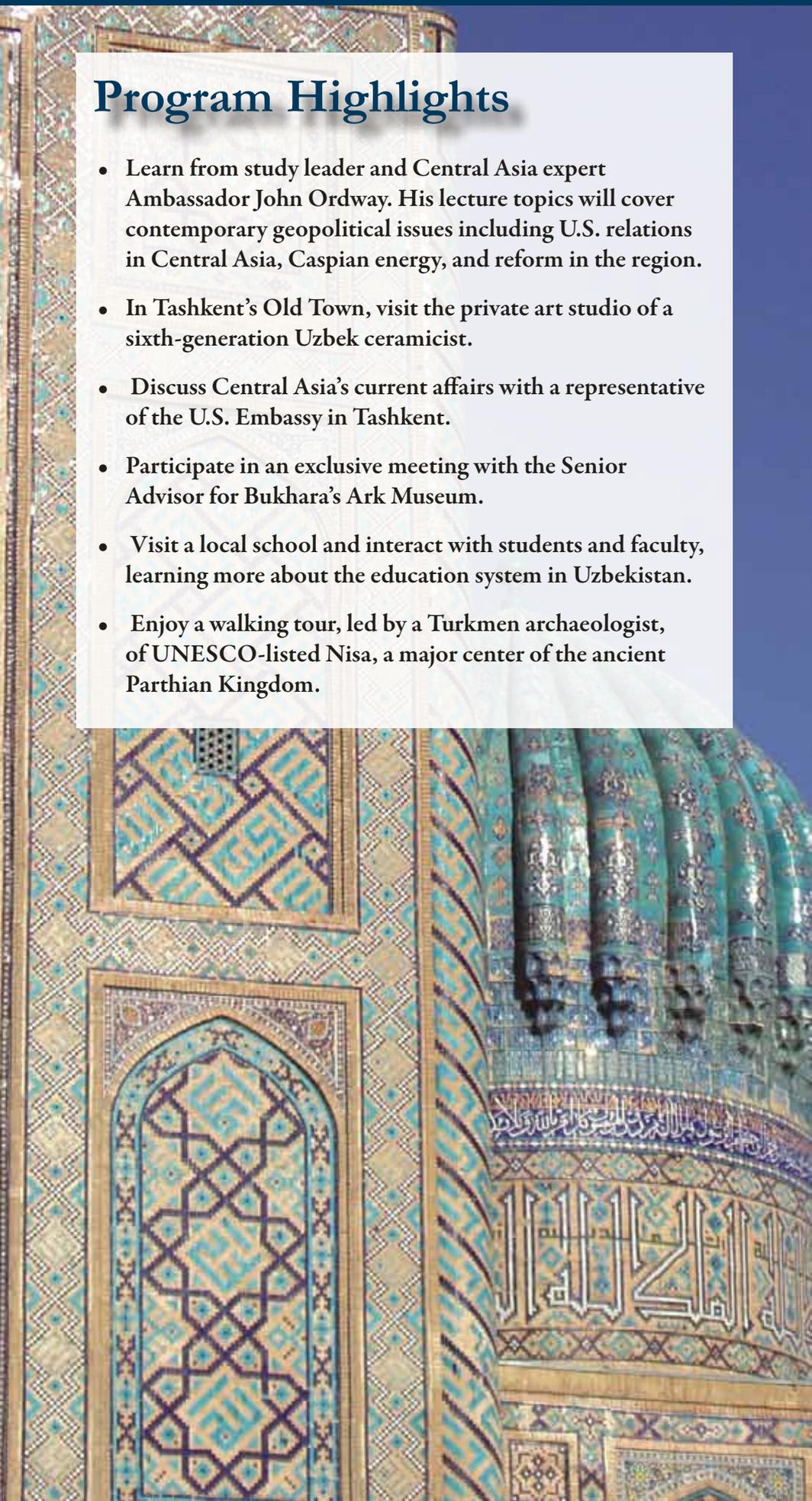
Tashkent • Samarkand • Bukhara
Khiva • Ashkhabad

October 6-20, 2012



Program Highlights

- Learn from study leader and Central Asia expert Ambassador John Ordway. His lecture topics will cover contemporary geopolitical issues including U.S. relations in Central Asia, Caspian energy, and reform in the region.
- In Tashkent's Old Town, visit the private art studio of a sixth-generation Uzbek ceramicist.
- Discuss Central Asia's current affairs with a representative of the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent.
- Participate in an exclusive meeting with the Senior Advisor for Bukhara's Ark Museum.
- Visit a local school and interact with students and faculty, learning more about the education system in Uzbekistan.
- Enjoy a walking tour, led by a Turkmen archaeologist, of UNESCO-listed Nisa, a major center of the ancient Parthian Kingdom.



Itinerary

October 6-8

Depart USA • Arrive Tashkent

Depart the U.S. on international flights bound for Tashkent, Uzbekistan via a European gateway. Arrive early in the morning of October 8. After a morning rest, enjoy an overview tour of Uzbekistan's modern capital. Gather for a welcome dinner in the evening. *Tashkent Palace Hotel (In flight, D)*

CASPIAN
SEA

October 9

Tashkent

Explore Uzbekistan's capital, Tashkent, an odd mix of wide tree-lined boulevards, oversized 20th century Soviet buildings and reconstructed traces of the old city. Over lunch at a local restaurant, attend a briefing by a guest from the U.S. Embassy about Central Asia's geopolitics and current affairs. Admire the treasured Uthman Koran, considered by Sunni Muslims to be the oldest Koran in the world. Pay a visit to the private studio of a sixth-generation Uzbek ceramicist whose family has been making pottery since the 1790s. Enjoy a privately guided tour of the Museum of Applied Arts, where exhibits include the Uzbek embroidered wall coverings called *suzani*, ceramics, jewelry, rugs and musical instruments. *Tashkent Palace Hotel (B, L, D)*

October 10-11

Samarkand

Drive overland along the same Silk Road that many a merchant traveled to Samarkand, Tamerlane's UNESCO-listed capital city. Visit the Registan, the centerpiece of Samarkand, surrounded by the blue-tiled Ulug Bek, Tillya-Kori, and Shir Dor *madrassahs*. Enjoy dinner at the private home of a local family. Next day, admire the Bibi Khanum Mosque, built by Tamerlane to be the largest in the Islamic world. Wander the row of tombs and mausoleums collectively called Shah-I-Zinde, or "place of a living king." Tour Ulug Bek's Observatory, one of the most advanced observatories of the ancient world. Visit a workshop where hand-crafted paper is made according to traditions handed down from the 8th century, when paper-making began in Samarkand. Gather in the evening for a dance performance. *Hotel Asia Samarkand (B, L, D)*

October 12

Shakrisabze • Bukhara

Depart for UNESCO-listed Shakrisabze, the birthplace of Tamerlane. Admire the ruins of Ak Saray (White Palace), built in the 14th century and one of Tamerlane's most expansive undertakings. Remaining is a massive portal standing over 131 feet high and covered with incredible blue, white and gold ceramic tile mosaics. *Sasha & Son B&B (B, L, D)*



October 13-14

Bukhara

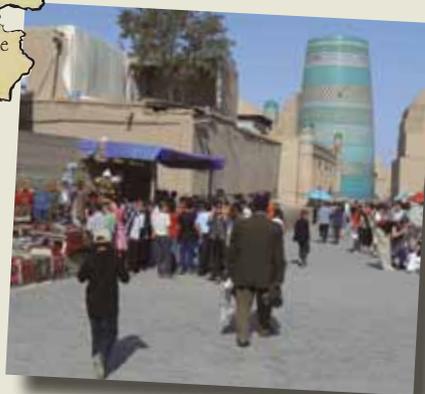
Get to know Central Asia's most ancient living city. The UNESCO-listed Old Town in Bukhara has a unified feel, drawn together by a central reflecting pool and plaza, by commonality in the structure of the domed bazaars and by the major monuments ringing the Old Town: the Kalon Assembly, the Zindan Prison, and the Ark Citadel. While at the Ark, enjoy a specially arranged lecture by the Museum's Senior Advisor. Wander the Jewish Quarter in the heart of Bukhara's Old Town, where in the mid 19th century 2,500 families were estimated to have been living.

Meet with a local Bukharan architect who will provide you with an interesting look into the current state of historical architectural renovation in Bukhara. Explore the Summer Palace of the last Emir and stop at its Museum of National Crafts. Visit a local *madrassah* to dine and enjoy a performance by local artists. *Sasha & Son B&B (B, L, D)*

October 15-16

Khiva

Head for the last great UNESCO site on the Uzbek part of your itinerary, Khiva. The drive today takes you across long stretches of the Kyzyl Kum, or Red Sands, Desert. Arrive in Khiva in time for dinner and overnight. Spend the next day exploring Khiva on foot.



Highlights include the Tash Hauli Palace, once the home of the Khan and his four legal wives, and an open courtyard for enthroning the khans. Admire the 9th century Dzhuma Mosque with its unusual wood ceiling and 115 carved wood columns, creating a forest-like effect. Visit a classroom at a Khiva school, meeting the schoolchildren and giving them an opportunity to practice their English. *Hotel Asia Khiva (B, L, D)*

October 17

Khiva • Tashauz • Ashkhabad

Today cross the border into Turkmenistan and transfer to the airport for a flight to Ashkhabad. *Hotel Grand Turkmen (B, L, D)*

October 18-20

Ashkhabad

A tour of Turkmenistan's capital includes visits to the Lenin Monument, the new mosque and Turkmen-Turkish cultural center, and a local bazaar. Ashkhabad's excellent Museum of Carpets and Textiles displays an abundance of gorgeous carpets, *kilims*, cushions and costumes. Venture outside the city to tour a horse-breeding farm devoted to the renowned Akhal-Tekke horse. Visit the personal studio of a master of Turkmen jewelry. Spend a morning at the Altyn Asyr Oriental Market, brimming with all types of goods, including traditionally patterned carpets, jewelry and animals for sale. Enjoy a celebratory farewell lunch before exploring the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the ancient Parthian Kingdom of Nisa. Depart in the early morning of the 20th for flights to the U.S. *Hotel Grand Turkmen (B, L, D)*

Study Leader: Ambassador John Ordway

Ambassador John Ordway is a retired Foreign Service Officer who is serving as the U.S. Commissioner to the U.S.-Russian Bilateral Consultative Commission under the New START Treaty. He served as Ambassador to Kazakhstan (2004-2008) and to Armenia (2001-2004). He was Director of African Affairs at the National Security Council during the first Bush Administration, as well as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow from 1999-2001. More recently he has served as the *chargé d'affaires* at several embassies, including the U.S. Embassy in Vienna, Austria; Sofia, Bulgaria; Kathmandu, Nepal; and Prague, Czech Republic. He returned to Kazakhstan and was *chargé d'affaires* at the U.S. Embassy in Astana from January to September 2011. Born in California, Ambassador Ordway graduated from Stanford University and the University of California's Hastings College of Law. He has in-depth experience in a broad range of issues ranging from arms control and nonproliferation, to investment disputes and energy, as well as domestic politics and human rights. In addition to Russian, his languages include Czech, Italian, French, Spanish, German and basic Armenian and Kazakh.



Land Program Rate: \$4,995

(per person land tour based on double occupancy)

Single Supplement: \$695



Included: All accommodation, hotel taxes
• Meals per itinerary (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner) • Group arrival/departure transfers for passengers arriving/departing on scheduled start/end days • All land transportation per itinerary including economy class air from Tashauz to Ashkhabad and private motor coach throughout the itinerary • Special cultural events and extensive sightseeing, including entrance fees
• Welcome and farewell receptions • Services of a tour manager throughout the land program • Gratuities to tour manager, guides and drivers • Comprehensive pre-departure packet

Not Included: Travel insurance • Round trip airfare from/to your home city. Our tour operator MIR Corporation can assist with reservations. • Passport and visa fees • Personal items such as telephone calls, alcohol, laundry, excess baggage fees

Air Arrangements: Program rates do not include international airfare. Because there are a number of flight options available, there is no group flight for this program. Information on a recommended flight itinerary will be sent by our tour operator upon confirmation.

What to Expect: This trip is moderately active due to the substantial distances covered and the extensive walking and stair climbing required; parts of the tour will not always be wheelchair accessible. To reap the full rewards of this adventure, travelers must be able to walk at least a mile a day (with or without the assistance of a cane) and stand for an extended period of time during walking tours and museum visits. Flexibility and a willingness to accept local standards of amenities and services are highly recommended as delays or changes in the itinerary are likely.

Reservations and Payments: Please mail the completed registration form with check (payable to MIR Corporation-CA Trust) or credit card information to Commonwealth Club of California Travel, 595 Market St., 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105 or fax to (415) 597-6729. Balance of payment for all land and air costs is due by July 6, 2012, 90 days prior to departure. **Payment of balance due by check only.** Space is limited. Reservations will be processed in order of receipt, subject to availability.

Cancellations and Refunds: All cancellations must be made in writing to The Commonwealth Club of California and the following cancellation charges will apply: Cancellations received 91 or more days before departure, deposits paid or due in full of \$500 per person; those received 61 days to 90 days before departure, 50% of land tour cost per person; those received 60 days or less before departure, no refund.

Refunds cannot be made to passengers who do not complete the tour for any reason at all. The Commonwealth Club and our tour operator MIR Corporation reserve the right, without penalty, to withdraw the tour announced (i.e., cancel a tour). Our tour operator MIR Corporation reserves the right to decline to accept any person as a participant in a tour, or to require any participant to withdraw from a tour at any time at his/her own expense, when such action is determined by tour staff to be in the best interest of the health, safety, or general welfare of the tour group or of the individual participant, and subject only to the requirement that the recoverable cost of unused services and accommodations be refunded, if any.

Note: Neither The Commonwealth Club nor our tour operator MIR Corporation accepts liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a non-refundable ticket in connection with this tour. It is recommended that you not purchase international flights until instructed by the tour operator.

Single Travelers: Prices are based on double occupancy; single rates are available. We make every effort to match single travelers who request a roommate. However, shared accommodations cannot be guaranteed and a single supplement rate will apply.

Insurance: Trip cancellation/interruption insurance is highly recommended and should be considered for your financial protection. Also important is medical insurance and emergency medical evacuation coverage. Information on insurance is available and will be mailed upon receipt of your reservation.

Responsibility: A detailed statement of limitations and exclusions of liability of The Commonwealth Club and the Tour Operator for loss of property, injury, illness or death will be provided to passengers upon enrollment and is available to prospective travelers upon request. A signed release of liability/assumption of risk agreement is required for trip participation.

Commonwealth Club of California: CST #2096889-40

MIR Corporation: CST #2082306-40. WST #601-099-932.

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The enclosed non-refundable deposit of \$ _____ (\$500 per person) to hold _____ place(s).

Enclosed check, payable to MIR Corporation-CA Trust Visa Mastercard American Express Discover

Credit card number _____ Exp date _____

Signature of cardholder _____

Full name #1 (as listed in passport) _____ Date of birth _____

Full name #2 (as listed in passport) _____ Date of birth _____

Mailing address (no PO boxes please) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (Home) _____ (Work) _____ Email _____

Please note preferences:

I am traveling alone and prefer a single room wherever available at the single supplement rate (\$695).

I will share accommodations with _____

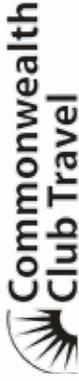
I would like to share with a Non-smoker Smoker (shares are not guaranteed)

International and U.S. domestic airfare is not included in the tour price. Roundtrip economy class airfare from San Francisco is approximately \$2,100 including taxes, as of July 2011, subject to change without notice.

Please send me a recommended air itinerary and fare estimate between _____ and Tashkent/Ashkhabad in:

Business class Economy class

For more information, contact The Commonwealth Club of California by phone at (415) 597-6720 or by fax at (415) 597-6729 or travel@commonwealthclub.org.



The Commonwealth Club of California

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