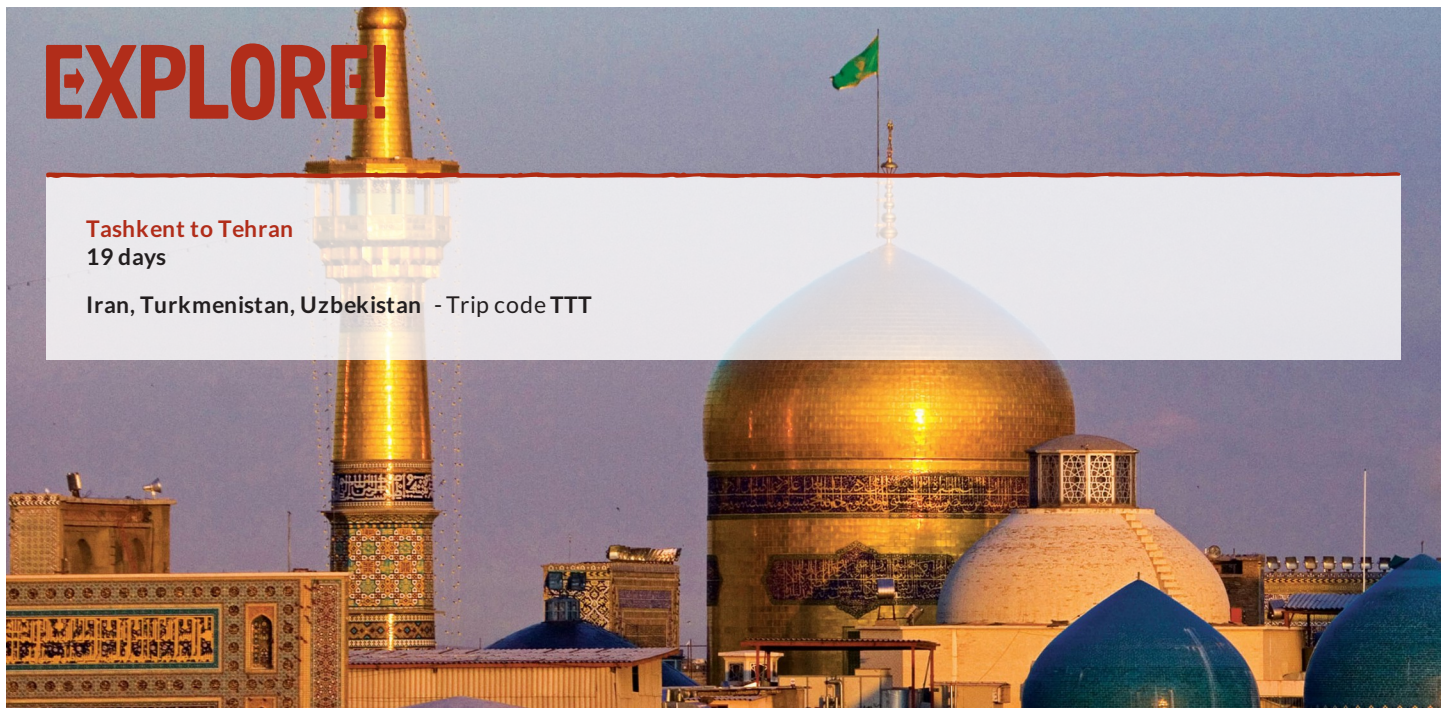


EXPLORE!

Tashkent to Tehran
19 days

Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan - Trip code TTT



Tashkent to Tehran

An overland exploration offers an opportunity to discover some of the lesser-travelled stretches of the ancient silk routes. This pioneering journey travels west from the vibrant Uzbek capital of Tashkent, through little-known Turkmenistan, to reach the Iranian metropolis of Tehran and a country that has only just opened its doors to tourists again. Moving from Central Asia into Persia, we encounter fascinating cities, rich archaeological sites and unique and contrasting cultures.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Samarkand** - Tamerlane's magnificent city, including the Registan and The Shah-i-Zinda.
- ★ **Bokhara** - Guided visits to the Ulugbek Madrassah and the Emir's Palace.
- ★ **Mary** - Explore the UNESCO World Heritage site of Merv.
- ★ **Mashhad** - Discovering the cultural treasures of Iran's holiest city.
- ★ **Tehran** - Visit the National Museum and the Golestan Palace.
- ★ **Isfahan** - Sightseeing of Imam Square and the area's mosques and palaces.

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:

Moderate

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

GROUP SIZE:

10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.



Why book this trip

This holiday combines two 'stans' of Central Asia before venturing into Ancient Persia. You will journey along parts of the ancient Silk Road and encounter friendly locals as you learn about the rich history of the region. This tour is ideal for travellers who are interested in culture, architecture and desert scenery. Iran has only just recently re-opened its doors to tourism, and Uzbekistan has been named as one of the top emerging destinations of 2015.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 17



Transport

Bus
Train



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader(s)
Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)

Trip information

Country information

Iran

Climate

Much of Iran is arid desert and mountain. The harsh climate has great extremes of heat and cold between summer and winter. Average annual rainfall is below 25cm and usually confined to winter and spring. Summer (Apr- Oct) is very hot, whilst winter temperatures can reach -4. Spring and autumn are best.

Time difference to GMT

+3.5

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Islam

Language

Persian

Turkmenistan

Climate

Spring and autumn are the best times to visit, when the temperatures are mild and there is the chance of occasional rains. April can bring colourful blooms to the normally barren desert landscapes, whilst summer days in the cities and desert can be very hot, when the temperatures can reach as high as 50°.

Time difference to GMT

+5

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Islam, Eastern Orthodox

Language

Turkmen, Russian, Uzbek

Uzbekistan

Climate

Spring and autumn are the best times to visit, when the temperatures are mild and there is the chance of occasional rains. April can bring colourful blooms to the normally barren desert landscapes, whilst summer days in the cities and desert can be very hot, when the temperatures can reach as high as 50°.

Time difference to GMT

+5

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Islam, predominantly Sunni, Eastern Orthodox

Language

Uzbek, Russian, Tajik

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for

guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Zurkhaneh in Isfahan - 5GBP

Clothing

Lightweight raingear may be needed, with some warmer clothes for the cooler evenings, when temperatures can drop considerably. It gets very hot in the summer so long sleeves and a hat may be useful to help keep cool. Casual clothes are the most practical: tight fitting garments, brief shorts and skirts should be avoided, since they attract unwelcome attention and these regions follow the strict tenets of the Muslim faith.

Dress code in Iran

Iran is a traditional Islamic country and a strict dress code is enforced throughout the tour.

Women:

Head - A headscarf must be worn by women at all times, preferably tied under the chin. Some hair can be shown.

Arms - must be covered by long sleeves

Feet - Any comfortable footwear is acceptable

In cold weather it is useful to have a cardigan which you can wear over your manteau and easily remove

Manteau - long coat

The Manteau should hide the shape of the body and must be knee length. It is best to purchase a manteau or similar such as a 3/4 length cotton coat that hides your shape prior to your arrival in Iran. A long baggy mens shirt can be used instead of an overcoat, but the above principles must apply.

We recommend one cotton or linen length manteau for the south and a warmer one for the north. However, if it is not possible to purchase, long shirts/ coat will suffice.

Legs - should be covered by trousers or a long skirt below the manteau

Underneath the 'manteau' anything can be worn!

April to September can be hot (approx. 30 degrees plus) - A bra and light cotton trousers/skirt is sufficient. Pack for hot conditions during this period of the year.

March, October, November can be cold (approx. 12 degrees) - warmer clothing is needed under the manteau and you will need a warm fleece or jacket for cold nights. Bring waterproofs between Oct-Apr.

The 'chador' - 'coverall' - is only worn at holy shrines and can be borrowed locally. Dress code is more relaxed in some towns and brighter garments are being worn by young locals.

Men:

Men must wear long trousers. Short sleeved shirts are acceptable but most Iranian men wear full length sleeves. April to September can be hot (approx. 30 degrees plus) - Pack for hot conditions during this period of the year. March, October, November can be cold (approx. 12 degrees) - warmer clothing is needed, you will need a warm fleece or jacket for cold nights. Bring waterproofs between Oct-Apr.

You may find when you arrive in Iran that some local Iranians do not dress as traditionally or strictly as we have suggested above. Explore feels that it is socially correct for our travellers to be responsible in the way they travel and respect all country traditions so we would advise that you try to stick to our advice as closely as possible and then once in Iran you can make your own decisions as to how much is appropriate to cover. Your tour leader can also advise you on this in each location.

Footwear

Light walking boots/comfortable walking shoes, trainers and sandals.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece and a daysac. Remember, you are expected to carry your own luggage - so don't overload yourself. We recommend either a suitcase or holdall on wheels, or else a backpack, as you may be expected to carry your own luggage up to 1.5km across the border.

Equipment

Torch, water bottle, swimming costume, insect repellent, high factor sun cream, good quality sunglasses and a lip salve with sun protection.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly you should allow approx US\$ 90 for gratuities for local staff.

In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Country Information

Iran

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£9

Dinner price

£12

Water price

£0.90 Please note that alcohol is not available within the country of Iran.

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Rials.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Major hard currencies are accepted in the main cities but we advise taking all of your spending money in Euros or US\$ cash (Travellers Cheques can be hard to change). Once you arrive in Iran there will be no way for you to get any extra money so please make sure you bring plenty with you so that you do not run out.

Where To Exchange

Currency exchange is available in most major towns and cities

ATM Availability

do NOT work with foreign cards

Credit Card Acceptance

Accepted in some of tourist shops in Isfahan but please do not rely on this as it is not always possible

Travellers Cheques

Very hard to change.

Turkmenistan

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£4

Dinner price

£6

Beer price

£1.4

Water price

£0.8

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Manat.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Take your spending money in US\$ cash, as many bars and shops only accept hard currency (and often lack the facility to change travellers cheques). We recommend you take new (post 2003), good condition dollar bills in small denominations.

Where To Exchange

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Very limited, do not rely upon this.

Credit Card Acceptance

Limited usually to larger outlets and restaurants.

Travellers Cheques

Not recommended.

Uzbekistan

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Dinner price

£6.00 - 10.00

Beer price

£1.4

Water price

£0.7

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Sum

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Take your spending money in US\$ cash, as many bars and shops only accept hard currency (and often lack the facility to change travellers cheques). We recommend you take new (post 1990), good condition dollar bills in small denominations.

Where To Exchange

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Very limited, do not rely upon this.

Credit Card Acceptance

Limited usually to larger outlets and restaurants.

Travellers Cheques

Not recommended.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Train

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Uzbekistan: Visas are required for all nationalities. An e-visa can be applied for via www.e-visa.gov.uz

You should take a printed copy of the e-visa for your arrival in Uzbekistan.

Turkmenistan: A single entry visa is required for Turkmenistan. Prior authorisation from the Turkmen authorities is required for UK citizens. Explore will obtain this on your behalf. Overseas passengers must check with the relevant consulate and if you require an authorisation letter please contact Explore immediately. On arrival in Turkmenistan, you must complete a migration card and pay a US\$12 migration fee (\$10 fee plus \$2 Admin charge). The authorities will retain the card. Please note it is not possible to obtain the Turkmenistan authorisation any earlier than 8 weeks prior to the tour departure date and it takes 3 weeks to process.

Iran: An Iran visa is required by all nationalities, and must be arranged prior to travel. Please consult with your nearest Iran Consulate for further, up to date information regarding the visa process, costs and any relevant supporting documentation that you will need to supply.

Part of the Iran Visa process is to obtain an authorisation code/invitational letter from the local Iranian authorities. All nationalities will require this. Explore will request this on your behalf at the earliest 2 months prior to departure, the local Iran authorities will not process any requests sent through outside of the 2 month process time. Please note the various process times depending on your nationality:

British, American and Canadian: Minimum of 30-35 working days

All other nationalities: Minimum of 10 working days

In order for Explore to obtain the necessary authorisation code/invitation letter on your behalf, we will require a clear colour copy of your passport photo page and all pages with visas and/or country stamps to reach us no later than 12 weeks before you travel. In addition to the colour copy of your passport pages, you'll also need to supply us with further personal information including a head and shoulders digital photograph of the applicant in front of a white area, a C.V./resume (max. 2 pages), username information for all social media websites you are a member of, and email and telephone contact details (please provide the same information you will provide on your visa application form). Explore will be in contact with you regarding this information between 10-12 weeks before you travel. Please be aware that due to the lengthy visa application process, we do not recommend making any other holiday arrangements during this time, that require your passport.

You can submit your application for your visa, once Explore has obtained your authorisation code/invitational letter and sent it through to you. Please note, if you intend using the London or Dublin Consulate, then we strongly recommend to contact them first to confirm that they have your authorisation code/invitational letter or alternatively to wait a minimum of 3 working days after you have received your authorisation code before attending the Consulate. Please do this before you attend the consulate, as they will not accept your application if they have not received your authorisation code/invitation letter from the local Iranian authorities. For non-UK residents, please contact your nearest consulate for the most up to date information on visa costs and required documentation as this can vary depending on your nationality and country of residence. Most Consulates provide a 5-7 working day visa processing service.

Please note the authorisation code is only valid for 30 days from issuance.

For UK residents, applications are only accepted in person at the London or Dublin Consulate. Please note that you'll need to submit 2 passport photos (women need to wear a head scarf for these photos), along with your passport and visa application form to The Iranian Consulate in London or Dublin. Currently the London Consulate is charging approximately £170.00 per person for the visa. Please note, any women attending the London or Dublin Consulate in person will need to wear a head scarf.

Please ensure that your passport has a minimum of 6 months validity from the date of return to your home country. Please note that any passport that contains an endorsement or a visa for Israel, regardless of whether it has expired, will not be accepted.

All visa information is subject to regular change, so please check with your local consulate for the most up to date advice for the countries you intend to visit.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Iran

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against malaria, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Turkmenistan

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on the need for and different prophylaxis available against malaria. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling. Turkmenistan has banned the sale of all tobacco products and prohibited smoking in ALL public places including streets, parks, airports etc. Smoking is only permitted in public in designated areas in hotels and restaurants. New regulations only permit the import of a MAXIMUM of 2 packets of 20 cigarettes per person.

Uzbekistan

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on the need for and different prophylaxis available against malaria. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.
