

HISTORICAL MONUMENTS AND SIGHTS OF UZBEKISTAN

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Annotation: *Uzbekistan has been a crossroads of cultures and civilizations, leaving behind a legacy of magnificent historical monuments and sights.*

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Historical Monuments and Sights of Uzbekistan: A Glimpse into a Rich Past

Nestled in the heart of Central Asia, Uzbekistan is a treasure trove of historical monuments and sights that speak volumes about the region's vibrant past and cultural heritage. From ancient cities to majestic mausoleums, Uzbekistan offers an unparalleled glimpse into the civilizations that have shaped its landscape.

Ancient cities of Uzbekistan

A Brief History of Samarkand

Samarkand was founded at the same time as Babylon, Memphis, Athens, and Rome – almost 2500 years ago. It has been called the “Pearl of the Muslim World,” “Eden of Ancient East,” and “Rome of the East.” Samarkand has been conquered many times – by Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, and Tamerlane, for instance. Tamerlane made it his capital and named it the “Center of the Universe.” Here was a mix of those from Iran, India, Persia, and Mongolia, and being the central part of the Silk Road, was additionally influenced by China, the Middle East, and Europe. Samarkand saw its glory at the height of trade on the Silk Road, beginning in the 2nd century and lasting until the 16th century.

A Brief History of Bukhara

Bukhara is estimated to be about 2300 years old. It was conquered by Alexander the Great and was also once ruled by the Kushan Empire. However, when the Samanids later came into power, they created a large feudal state, with Bukhara as its capital. It was part of what came to be called the Golden Road, the meeting point of the northern and southern branches of the Great Silk Road, and hence a great center for commerce, religion, and culture.

Visiting Bukhara Today

The tour started when I crossed the border from Turkmenistan. Having finished my time there, my tour guide escorted me to the border for the crossing. On the other side, a tour-arranged driver picked me up and drove me to Bukhara. Hotel Siyavush in Bukhara was lovely; the rooms were decorated with Uzbek textiles, and everything was clean, with all the modern conveniences. The breakfast was also excellent, offering a selection of cereals, breads, salads, and fresh pastries. My one criticism is that the Internet was temperamental and when it did work, it wasn't very fast. Uzbekistan, which was a much more closed country under the previous president, never prioritized developing its Internet and connections to the

outside world. It currently ranks very low in world rankings for speed and quality of Internet overall. Hopefully they will work on this along with the visa policy. Besides this, I was very happy with my stay

A Short History of Khiva

Khiva is located in the Khorezm oasis inside the great Karakum Desert. While the Khorezm khanate was famous in the 4th century B.C. the actual date of origin of Khiva is lost in the mists of time. Some archaeologists believe it was founded about the same time as the birth of Christ, and was named after the ancient well of Kvivak, said to have been discovered by Shem, the Son of Noah. The remains of that ancient well are in the old city, and you are likely to see many newlyweds who come here to drink for good luck..

Mausoleums:

- Gur-e-Amir Mausoleum: Built in the 15th century to honor Timur (Tamerlane), this mausoleum is renowned for its turquoise dome and elaborate interior. The tomb of Timur and his descendants lies within its opulent halls.

- Shah-i-Zinda Necropolis: This sprawling cemetery in Samarkand is home to over 100 mausoleums and mosques. Its vibrant tiles and intricate carvings tell the stories of past rulers and scholars.

- Chor Minor Madrasah: Located in Bukhara, this unique madrasah features four minarets instead of the typical one. Its colorful facade and striking architecture make it a popular tourist attraction.

Historical monuments of Uzbekistan:

Ichan Kala

Ichan Kala (literally "internal fortress") forms the internal city of Khiva. The borders of Khiva coincided with that in the 16th-17th centuries. The clay wall over 2,200 m in length and 7-8 m in height surrounded Ichan Kala. The wall was fortified with semicircular towers. The embattled gallery went along the top of wall. Defensive walls of Ichan Kala reliably protected Khiva down to invasion of Nadir-shah in the middle of 18th century. Iranian troops took Khiva and fortification system was partly destroyed. Khiva had expanded at the Qungrad dynasty. By the 20th century its area had been fifteen times as much as Ichan Kala.

Ensemble Khazret Imam, Tashkent

The ensemble was built on the tomb of one of the first Imams of Tashkent, a famous scientist and expert on the Koran and the khadises of khazreti Imam (his full name is Abubekr Mukhamad Kaffal Shashi). According to historical data, he was buried in the territory of Sebzar - one of the four city areas of Tashkent which were later developed. The tomb was popular and is highly honoured. All districts in the Sebzar part of the old city received the name of Khazreti Imam - named after the Sheikh.

Samarkand Museum of History

The museum is situated on the site of the ancient settlement of Afrasiab, on the road leading from the mosque of Hazret-Hyzzr to the bridge across the Siab river.

The museum displays exhibits illustrating the various periods of the city's ancient history: ossuaries, fragments of ancient swords, knives, arrows, coins, ceramics and unique frescos from the 7-8th century palace of the Ihshid of Samarkand.

Excavated in 1965 in the center of the medieval city behind the third fortification, the palace occupied more than 1 hectare.

USED LITERATURES:

Books:

- "Historical Monuments of Uzbekistan" by the Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences
- "The Silk Road in Uzbekistan: A Cultural and Historical Guide" by Bradley Mayhew
- "Uzbekistan: The Golden Road to Samarkand" by Calum MacLeod

Online Resources:

- Uzbekistan National Commission for UNESCO:
<https://en.unesco.org/countries/uzbekistan>