



KYRGYZSTAN ITINERARY



WHERE PEAKS AND CULTURE CONVERGE

RECOMMENDED SEASON: JUN-SEP

**JET SET
JAMBO**

Hello,

Thank you for sharing our passion for chasing big adventures and considering a trip with JAMBO! We began this journey in 2022, after an unforgettable adventure in Tanzania. Those two weeks exploring tribal culture, building friendships with locals, and fulfilling a lifelong dream of witnessing the Great Migration reignited our curiosity about the world. We realized there were so many landscapes, cultures, and traditions waiting to be discovered. Every time we found ourselves in awe, we wished we could share these moments with family and close friends. That's why we created JAMBO, to unlock more of these magical experiences and make them accessible for fellow adventurers.

Our vision is to make journeys to epic, off-the-beaten-path destinations easy, safe, and as stress-free as possible. Since our start, we've expanded our roster to include Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Kenya, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Zanzibar, Uganda, Armenia, and more. Along the way, we've been lucky enough to send friends, family, and adventurous travelers like you on incredible trips, and it's been a wild ride. We're just getting started!

You may not know this, but "JAMBO" means "hello" in Swahili. We chose it because it captures the warmth of all those friendly exchanges that make travel so enriching. At JAMBO, we value the deep connections you build with both your travel crew (be they old friends or new faces), and the locals you meet who share their stories, their time, and their expertise. We also care deeply about the social impact we can create, working closely with local communities and trusted partners who bring JAMBO experiences to life.

Each of our trips reflects how we love to explore the world: respectfully, authentically, participatively, and always with an eye for those hidden gems. Our team has walked these paths, tasted the local food, built relationships with our partners, and thoughtfully crafted each itinerary to bring you the best of each place at just the right pace.

JAMBO isn't designed to cover every type of travel. Sometimes we love a road trip or getting lost in the winding streets of a new city. But here, our hope is to inspire bold journeys—whether ticking off a bucket-list destination or simply venturing somewhere new. And if that place happens to be on our map, we'd love to have you join us and experience the JAMBO magic.

Safe travels,

The JAMBO Team





01

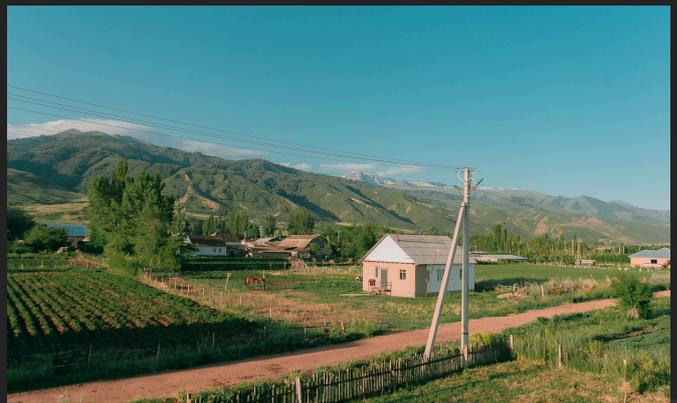
ARRIVAL, CATTLE MARKET OR BURANA TOWER, CHON-KEMIN VILLAGE

Salam and welcome to Kyrgyzstan! Most of our trips begin on a Sunday, which means you'll get to experience a truly local highlight: the bustling cattle and horse market, where traders and buyers from surrounding villages gather for trade. On other days, we visit the Burana Tower, a remnant of the ancient city of Balasagun, and a UNESCO world heritage site.

From there, we set off toward the captivating Chon Kemin Valley, renowned for its beauty. Along the way, we stop at a panoramic viewpoint where two rivers merge, a striking natural landmark.

After lunch and check-in at a family-run guesthouse, take a short rest before exploring village life the traditional way, by horse cart. Wave to locals, breathe in the crisp mountain air, and if you're lucky, catch a blacksmith at work fitting horseshoes. After a sumptuous local dinner, gather around the campfire for stargazing, stories, and the warm feeling that you've truly arrived in Kyrgyzstan.

Accommodation: Guesthouse in Chon Kemin





02

RAFTING, ISSYK-KUL, KARKOL & DUNGAN DINNER

Kick off the day with one of the early highlights of the trip, a fun and beginner-friendly rafting adventure down the Chu River. With helmets, vests, and guides, you'll be well equipped to enjoy the ride. As the river winds its way through a wide valley, soak in the fresh air and dramatic scenery, a shared thrill that sets the tone for the group adventure ahead. For smaller private groups, a leisurely boat ride on Issyk Kul is a relaxing alternative.

We then continue our drive along the northern shore of Issyk Kul, the second largest saltwater lake in the world, affectionately known as the "Pearl of the Tien Shan." Along the way, we'll pause for photo stops and stretch our legs with a short walk in the beautiful Grigorievka gorge before reaching Karakol town.

Dinner is a hearty home-cooked Dungan dinner hosted by a local family whose ancestors settled in the region over a century ago, preserving their distinct culinary traditions.

Accommodation: Guesthouse in Karakol or Farmstay in the outskirts of Karakol town





03

HIKING UP ALTYN ARASHAN, NATURAL HEALING SPRINGS

Today we trek up to Alтын Arashan, one of the true jewels of the Tien Shan mountains. The roughly 14 km route takes about 5 hours at a steady, unhurried pace. The trail is mostly gentle, winding through pine forests and open valleys, with rivers rushing alongside us and snow-capped peaks slowly revealing themselves as we gain altitude. The final stretch brings a more noticeable incline, a satisfying push before arriving in the mountain valley.

At the heart of the valley lie Alтын Arashan's natural hot springs. The pools are modest and sheltered, but the mineral rich waters offer a deeply rewarding soak after the hike. For those feeling adventurous, a quick dip in the icy river nearby provides a sharp and invigorating contrast that leaves you feeling refreshed and very much alive.

Before nightfall, we hop aboard rugged Russian trucks or UAZ 4WDs for the bumpy but scenic ride back down the valley, watching the landscape change as we descend.

Accommodation: Guesthouse in Karakol or Farmstay in the outskirts of Karakol town





04

JETI ORGUZ FORMATION, BARSKOON, SKAZKA CANYON, EAGLE HUNTING DEMONSTRATION

After breakfast, we set out along the southern shore of Issyk Kul. Our first stop is Jetti Oguz, the striking red sandstone cliffs whose name means “Seven Bulls.” As you admire the formations, your guides will share local folktales that bring their shapes to life.

We continue to Barskoon, where we have a hearty lunch, before driving off to Skazka Canyon. Known as “Fairy Tale Canyon,” its wind-carved formations resemble castles, dragons, and fantastical creatures. The walks here offer endless photo opportunities in a surreal landscape.

As the day winds down, we gather for a sunset eagle hunting demonstration. This ancient tradition is a proud part of Kyrgyz nomadic heritage, showcasing the powerful bond between hunter and eagle. Watching an apex predator in action is a rare and unforgettable glimpse into a living culture.

Accommodation: Modern Yurt camp in Bokonbaveyo





05

YURT MAKING WORKSHOP & JOURNEY TO SON-KUL LAKE

One of the trip's true highlights awaits at Song Kul Lake. To fully appreciate it, we first take part in a workshop to learn how yurts are made. More than just practical shelters, yurts carry deep cultural meaning, with every part of the design intertwined with Kyrgyz tradition. You'll even get the chance to join in the process.

From Kochkor, we drive into the mountains toward Song Kul. At over 3,000m, the air is crisp and the weather can be cold even in summer, the only season the lake is accessible. Along the way, you'll see shepherd families who move here with their livestock for the pastures.

As evening falls, we arrive at the lake and settle into our yurt camp. With sweeping plains, grazing herds, and a canopy of stars, Song Kul is an unforgettable glimpse into Kyrgyz nomadic life.

Accommodation: Yurt camp in Son Kul





06

NOMADIC TRADITIONS AT SON-KUL LAKE

There's a deep sense of peace in being surrounded by open steppe, mountains, and sky, with little sign of built-up life. After breakfast, we mount up for a guided two-hour horseback ride to sweeping viewpoints around the lake. Riding alongside these majestic creatures, you'll feel the quiet rhythm of nomadic life and the vastness of the high pastures all around you. We then visit local shepherd families to learn about their way of life during the summer months, when they move here with their livestock.

Later, we gather for a demonstration of traditional games such as kok boru, a spirited test of skill and strength that reflects the resilience of Kyrgyz nomadic heritage. As the sun sets over Song Kul, the stillness of the landscape, the herds grazing nearby, and the absence of digital noise make it clear why many consider this one of Kyrgyzstan's most beautiful places.

Accommodation: Yurt camp in Son Kul





07

SHYRDAK CARPET MAKING IN KOCHKOR, BISHKEK

The journey down from Song Kul Lake takes us back through the mountains and into the lowlands. En route, we stop in Kochkor, where skilled artisans introduce us to the craft of shyrdak carpet making. These vibrant felt carpets, which you've likely sat on throughout the trip, require countless hours of dedication and artistry. Here you'll gain a deeper appreciation for the tradition behind them.

From there, we continue on to Bishkek, the capital city. The contrast is striking: open pastures give way to city streets, Soviet-era architecture stands alongside leafy boulevards, and the pace of life shifts from tranquil to urban. For those keen to explore further, Bishkek has a vibrant nightlife scene, from hidden speakeasies to laid-back craft beer bars.

Accommodation: Hotel in Bishkek





08

BISHKEK CITY TOUR, HISTORICAL LANDMARKS, SHOPPING, OSH BAZAR

Back in Bishkek, we set out on a city tour that weaves together history, culture, and daily life. From Ala Too Square to the Manas Sculptural Complex, you'll see landmarks that reflect the nation's past and present.

After lunch, we'll also explore Bishkek's shopping scene, from boutique stores like One Village One Product that have a relatable social impact mission to give back to different village communities around the country to TUMAR that showcases a collection of well designed local products. We also visit the bustling Osh Bazar, where stalls overflow with nuts, teas, honey, jams, spices, and souvenirs.

In the evening, we come together for a final celebratory dinner. It's a moment to share stories, laugh over highlights, and toast the adventures and friendships made along the way; the perfect way to end our Kyrgyz journey.

Accommodation: Hotel in Bishkek





09

FAREWELL & DEPARTURE FROM BISHKEK

And just like that, our journey through Kyrgyzstan comes to a close. Over the past days, we've circled Issyk-Kul Lake, met eagle hunters, stayed in yurts beneath starlit skies, and experienced the quiet rhythm of Kyrgyz nomadic life. We hope you leave with not just memories, but a deeper connection to this remarkable corner of the world.

This morning, our drivers will be ready to bring you to the airport for your international flight. Thank you for choosing to explore with us. We hope this won't be your last Jambo Journey, and that your next adventure is already on the horizon. Safe travels!



Trip Summary

Day	Trip highlights
1	Arrival, Cattle Market Visit or Burana Tower, →Chon-Kemin Valley, Horse Cart Ride
2	→Issyk Kul lake, Rafting, →Karakol, Dungan Dinner
3	→Altyn Arashan, Hiking, Dip in Natural Hot Pools, Descend in ex-military vehicles
4	Jeti Orguz Formation, Barskoon, Skazka Canyon, Sunset Eagle Hunting Showcase
5	Yurt Making Workshop, →Son Kul Lake
6	Son Kul Lake, Horse Riding, Nomadic Village, Kok Boru Games
7	Son Kul Lake, →Kochkor, Shyrdak Carpet Making Workshop, →Bishkek
8	Bishkek City Tour, Shopping, Osh Bazar
9	Departure



If a picture's worth a thousand words, imagine what this video could say!

Click the video or scan the QR code below to see Kyrgyzstan through our lens

📷 JAMBOJOURNEYS



Because your comfort matters to us...

Throughout your journey with us, you will be staying in properties that we have carefully curated. The following pictures are intended to give you an idea of the quality and level of comfort you can expect when travelling with Jambo. These are a selection from some of the preferred accommodation partners we work with and could differ across trips and based on availability at the time of your booking.



Because your comfort matters to us...



Follow the Trail of Your Adventure

Unlike many typical multi stan programs in Central Asia, we design our journeys to go a little deeper into each country. Nine days will never be enough to see all of Kyrgyzstan, yet it gives us the time to venture beyond Bishkek. We explore the Issyk-Kul region, stay by a beloved alpine lake, and end in the capital city. Shorter trips often stay within reach of a single city, but only by traveling farther can you truly experience what makes each corner special like meeting yurt makers who have mastered their craft for generations, visiting communities known for their champion eagle hunters, and hiking through mountain valleys that reveal a very different side of the country.



Legend: The numbered circles indicate where you will spend each night.



Guide on Recommended Flights (1/2)

Flight schedules often change, so please treat this as a general guide. We've omitted exact timings as they vary throughout the year. This overview highlights routes that best meet our priorities:

- Minimizes leave days by using back-to-back weekends
- Convenient arrival/departure windows
- Reasonable total travel time
- Minimal layovers
- Reliable, comfortable carriers
- Good price to value

Additional note if you are looking to join an open group trip:

We aim to start and end together. Where possible, please try to book the recommended flights. If you're flying separately or arriving early, please plan to be at the airport when the main group arrives. Kindly share your flight details with us, and let us know if you need help arranging separate airport transfers.

	Emirates & FlyDubai ★Recommended	Turkish Airlines	
Membership	Skywards	Star Alliance	
Outbound:	<p>SIN > DXB > BSZ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departs SIN: Morning, ~10am <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦  Schedule: Daily • Layover in Dubai: ~8hrs • ◆ Eligible for Dubai Connect • Arrives BSZ: Next day, early morning, ~5am 	<p>SIN > IST > BSZ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departs SIN: Morning, ~9/10am <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦  Schedule: Daily • Layover in Istanbul: ~5hrs • Arrives BSZ: Next day, early morning, ~5am 	<p>SIN > IST > BSZ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departs SIN: Late night, ~11pm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦  Schedule: Daily • Layover in Istanbul: ~15hrs • ◆ Eligible for TourIstanbul • Arrives BSZ: 2 days later, early morning, ~5am
<i>You can pick either combination of flights</i>			
Return:	<p>BSZ > DXB > SIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departs BSZ: Early morning, ~6am <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦  Schedule: Daily • Layover in Dubai: ~2hrs • Arrives SIN: Night, ~10pm 	<p>BSZ > IST > SIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departs BSZ: Early morning, ~10am <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦  Schedule: Daily • Layover in Istanbul: ~3.5hrs • Arrives SIN: Next morning, ~9am 	<p>BSZ > IST > SIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departs BSZ: Early morning, ~10am <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦  Schedule: Daily • Layover in Istanbul: ~13hrs • ◆ Eligible for TourIstanbul • Arrives SIN: Next evening, ~6pm
Ideal schedule: 9-day ground tour	<p>Multiple for e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depart SIN: Sat • Arrive BSZ: Sun • Depart BSZ: Mon • Arrive SIN: Mon 	<p>Multiple combinations, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depart SIN: Fri (TourIstanbul) or Sat (shorter flight) • Arrive BSZ: Sun • Depart BSZ: Mon • Arrive SIN: Tue 	



Guide on Recommended Flights (2/2)

FREE tours, transfers, meals, and hotel stays for long transits depending on airline! Perfect for killing two birds with one stone!

Flights from Singapore to Bishkek can be long, but both recommended airlines offer programs that make transits more comfortable and enjoyable. Eligibility criteria may apply and can change over time, so while this serves as a useful guide, do check the airlines' official websites for the latest details. We also recommend booking directly with the airline for smoother redemption.

Emirates and Fly Dubai

Program name	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dubai Connect (website)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complimentary hotel accommodation, transfers, applicable meals and a visa to enter the UAE
Eligibility <i>(brief overview)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The connecting flight on your itinerary must be the best available connection. This means that the stopover time in Dubai between your two flights must be the shortest one available• Economy or Premium Economy class: connecting stopover time of 8 to 26 hours• Business or First class: connecting stopover time of 6 to 26 hours

Turkish Airlines

Program name	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TourIstanbul (website)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complimentary city tour service with six different tour programs at different times and 19 tour routes every week• While there is a separate stopover program with hotel stays, our route and transit duration do not qualify
Eligibility <i>(brief overview)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The layover time must be at least six hours and no more than 24 hours. The layover times must be compatible with the tour times.• Departure and arrival flights must be on the same reservation code (PNR)• Visa procedures are the passenger's responsibility. You can check visa arrangements on the e-visa services page

Private trips: Keep the Adventure Going!

We have reserved the following add-ons for private trips, as it is not always easy to fill a longer open group trip. We also know there is a tendency for folks who can afford a few extra days to want to explore the country or the region more deeply. These are some examples of extensions we recommend, and will be happy to suggest others based on your preferences and number of available days.

Additional 1D1N in Altyn Arashan

With the extension on Day 3, the afternoon and evening are spent at an unhurried pace, soaking in the natural hot springs as the air cools and the valley quietens. With no need to descend, the setting feels more intimate as night falls, with simple comforts, shared dinner, and a peaceful night surrounded by the Tien Shan mountains.

The following morning, we cross the clear stream that runs through the valley and spend the day exploring Altyn Arashan on foot or horseback. Away from vehicular tracks, the experience is slow and tranquil, offering glimpses of local shepherd families as they go about their daily routines before we eventually continue our journey.



Additional 2D2N in Kel Suu Lake

After Day 4 in the base program, we add 2D2N in Kel Suu Lake, one of Kyrgyzstan's most spectacular yet remote natural wonders. This stunning alpine lake sits at an altitude of around 3,500 meters in the Naryn region, surrounded by dramatic limestone cliffs, rugged peaks, and narrow gorges. When full, its turquoise-blue waters reflect the surrounding mountains in a way that feels otherworldly.

- **1st additional day:** Drive to Naryn, Yurt Making Workshop
- **2nd additional day:** Drive to Kel Suu, Guided Horse ride to Kel Suu Lake, Boat ride
- **Replace D5 in the original:** Explore Kel Suu Lake, Visit yak shepherds, Drive to Son Kul



Private trips: Keep the Adventure Going!

Additional 4D4N in Kazakhstan

This extension will mean your departure should be from Almaty, Kazakhstan. After wrapping up the first segment of our adventure in Kyrgyzstan, cross into Almaty, then explore some of the Kazakhstan's famous natural landscapes; the striking Charyn Canyon, surreal Kaindy Lake, and tranquil Saty village. Hike between Kolsai I and II Lakes, surrounded by alpine forests and mountain peaks, before returning to the capital for a short city tour and shopping before your departure.

- **Day 9:** (no guides on this day) Cross-border, hotel drop-off, free and easy in Almaty
- **Day 10:** Drive to Charyn Canyon, Kaindy Lake, overnight in Saty village
- **Day 11:** Hike to Kolsai Lake I and Kolsai Lake II, picnic lunch
- **Day 12:** Drive back to Almaty, short city tour, shopping
- **Day 13:** Departure



Alternatively, if the intention is to cover both the best of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, we can cover the same stops via a slightly different route. You would effectively save a day (12D11N vs 13D12N), however the cost of both programs is similar. This is because on the day we cross the border near Karakol, we need to account for the services of both local teams, including guides and vehicles on each side. In recent years, cross-border regulations have made it standard practice to operate with in-country teams, ensuring a smooth and fully compliant transition while maintaining the quality of the experience.

Alternative 12D11N Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan Program

- **Day 1:** Arrival, Breakfast, Osh Bazar, Bishkek City tour, Visit local brands
- **Day 2:** Chon-Kemin, Horse Cart Ride, Boorsok Cooking Experience
- **Day 3:** Yurt making workshop, Son Kul Lake
- **Day 4:** Son Kul Lake, Guided Horse Riding, Visit Shepherd's Home, Kok Boru Games
- **Day 5:** Kokchor, Shyrdak Workshop, Bokonbayevo, Sunset Eagle Hunting Showcase
- **Day 6:** Skazka Canyon, Barskoon, Jeti Orguz, Karakol
- **Day 7:** Altyn Arashan, Hiking, Natural Hot Pools, Dungan dinner
- **Day 8:** Cross border, Change team, Kaindy lake, Saty village
- **Day 9:** Hike to Kolsai Lake I and Kolsai Lake II, picnic lunch
- **Day 10:** Charyn Canyon, Almaty
- **Day 11:** Almaty City Tour, Central Markets
- **Day 12:** Departure

Post group trips: Keep the Adventure Going!

Our Kyrgyzstan program runs as a curated group trip and forms the core of the journey. For those who would like to make the most of being in the region, we offer **optional private add-ons into neighbouring Kazakhstan**. These extensions are designed for guests who want to explore further at their own pace, while keeping the group experience intact for the Kyrgyzstan portion of the trip.

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- **Day 12:** Drive back to Almaty, short city tour, shopping
- **Day 13:** Departure



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