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Urumqi
Turpan
Kanas Lake
Karamay
Urumqi

Enjoy a Xinjiang photography tour with a scenic drive to the Kanas Lake. Every of your stop is overflowing with picturesque scenery. Mixed in with people watching in Turpan to explore the unique Uyghur cultures. Please keep your camera ready.

Type
Private
Duration
10 days
Theme
Photography
Trip code
XJT-04

Price
From £ 1,125 per person

Itinerary

This Northern Xinjiang Photography Tour is filled with a vast collection of natural landscapes. Begin with a visit to Tian Chi Lake near Urumqi, then follow the track of the North Silk Road to the awe-inspiring Kanas Lake, which is at the apex of China, Mongolia, and Russia. Visit Hemu Village, one of the six most beautiful villages in the country recognized by China's National Geographic, where you will experience the simple life and ethnic customs of the Tuwa people.

Day 01 :

Arrive Urumqi



Compared with your other experience in China, traveling along the Silk Road provides a different way to explore the past civilizations and ethnic culture of China. The spectacular lakes and magnificent deserts will make you forget about the bustling life in the modern city. Completely immerse yourself into the great natural landscapes.

This amazing tour starts in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang. Our local guide and driver will pick you up at the airport or train station once your arrival. After getting settled into the downtown hotel, spend the time today to have a rest or explore the Uyghur culture of this city on your own.

Day 02 :

Drive to Turpan - Turpan Highlights Tour

Morning drive to Turpan, an oasis city which is located in the southeast of Urumqi. Lying on the basin with the lowest elevation, this city is regarded as the hottest place in China. The drive takes about 3 hours, notice the largest wind power station in China along the way. Firstly visit the **Gaochang ancient city Ruins**, the city was built in the first Century BC and later became capital of the Idikut (Gaochang) Uighur Kingdom in the 8th Century. Today the layout of Goachang city still can be recognized clearly. Some of the temples and pagodas have been well preserved. Spend some time to walk around here to see the past glory of this city still remains.

Afterwards, head to the Tuyuk village, a beautiful village with friendly Uighur community. Here you will be arranged to visit local family and have a traditional Uyghur lunch in a local family home. It is a chance that you get to know some Uyghur culture and their life style.

Afternoon, visit the **Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves**, rated as the place where holds the largest number of caves with the most intricate and exquisite frescos in Xinjiang. Learn about the Buddhist culture along the Silk Road, which could be a different experience in Xinjiang.

On the way back to hotel, stop at the Flaming Mountain, it is said that this is the hottest and driest place along the silk road. You will learn its tales in the classic novel *Journey to the West* from your guide.

Day 03 :

Another half day in Turpan - Drive back to Urumqi

Continue exploring the historical relics of Turpan today. After breakfast, head to the **Karez Well** to admire this great project left by the ancient local people 2,000 years ago. Also known as the source of life in Turpan, Karez Well is a unique irrigation system which channels underground water to solve the local problem of water shortage. You will be astonished that this system is still maintained and functioning today.

Followed with a visit to the **Jiaohe Ancient City Ruins**, an ancient city which once was an important stop along the Silk Road. The city got its name as it is situated on an island where two rivers converge. Standing like a huge castle on the desert, Jiaohe has witnessed the rise and fall of many kingdoms for 2,000 years. But now, it has become a historic relic waiting to be witnessed. The last sightseeing is the **Sugong Pagoda**, which is the only Islamic tower among the thousands of famous towers in China. Standing 37 m. (121 ft.) high, this pagoda was built of brick, displaying both Uyghur and Han architectural style.

After lunch, return back to Urumqi (roughly 3 hours). If you are not tired, you may take an exploration at the Grand Bazaar in Urumqi.

Day 04 :

Drive to visit Heavenly Lake, then drive to Fuyun (540km, 7-8 Hour Drive)



In the morning, you will drive to visit **Heavenly Lake** in the Tianshan Mountains. This stunning mountain lake, located at an altitude of 1,980 meters (6,500 feet), offers breathtaking scenery with snowcapped peaks and picturesque surroundings. You can either trek around the lake, enjoy the boating cruise, or even take the cable car to explore Maya Mountain for the incredible view of Bogoda Peak.

Afterward, continue traveling to Fuyun County, passing by Huoshaoshan (Burning Mountain), where you will witness a sea of red, caused by burnt rocks that look as if they are still burning along the hills. Overnight at Fuyun.

Day 05 :

Drive to Burqin County, 280KM / 4-5 Hour Drive, Visit Five-colored Beach



This morning, you will visit **Keketuohai National Geological Park**, known for its mines and deposit sites. The park offers a stunning natural landscape with valleys, rivers, and mine pits that will leave you amazed.

Afterward, drive about 4-5 hours to reach Burqin, a small county in the area that borders Russia, Kazakhstan, and Mongolia. Upon arrival, you will have the chance to freely explore the city on your own. In the late afternoon, you'll head out to visit **Five-colored Beach** (Wucaitan in Chinese), named for the stunning layers of multi-colored rock overlooking the crystal-clear waters of the Irtysh River below. You'll catch the best time to see the rock around sunset when the different colors of rock shine and dance in the lights of the sky above. You'll then stay overnight in Burqin County.

Day 06 :

Drive to Jiadengyu - Visit Kanas Lake Nature Reserve - Return to Jiadengyu

In the early morning, you'll take a 3-hour drive to Jiadengyu, which is the entrance to the **Kanas Lake Nature Reserve**. The reserve is known for its stunning landscapes, crystal-clear lakes, lush forests, and snow-capped mountains. The highlight of the reserve is Kanas Lake, a mesmerizing body of water with turquoise hues that change with the seasons. Kanas Lake is a great place for outdoor activities, and your options include hiking, boating, horse riding, and river rafting (these activities are at your own expense).

Today, we suggest that you take the shuttle bus to visit **Guan Yu Tai (Fish Watching Pavilion)**, the highest point within the reserve that offers a stunning panoramic view of the entire lake. Kanas Lake is renowned for its ever-changing colors, which transform from deep green to sky blue, gray, and white throughout the day. As you ascend to higher vantage points, you'll be treated to a captivating display of vibrant hues.

You'll then stay overnight at a hotel near Jiadengyu or, if your budget allows, you can choose to stay at a hotel inside the Kanas Lake Nature Reserve.

Day 07 :

Another Day in Kanas Lake

You'll have another day to further enjoy the beauty of the Kanas Lake Nature Reserve. Today, we recommend you walk and enjoy the beauty of Kanas Lake in **Lying Dragon Bay, Immortal Bay, and Moon Bay**. These bays are the most well-known and beautiful spots in the area.

You'll then stay overnight at a hotel near Jiadengyu or, if your budget allows, you can choose to stay at a hotel inside the Kanas Lake Nature Reserve.

Day 08 :

Head to Hemu Village & Visit a Local Tuwa Family

Morning drive to **Hemu Village**. Hemu Village has been recognized by China's National Geographic as one of the six most beautiful villages in the country. Take this opportunity to immerse yourself in the local culture by visiting Tuwa families, experiencing their way of life, and learning about their rich traditions. Spend overnight at hotel in Hemu Village.

Day 09 :

Visit Hemu Village - Drive to Karamay and visit the Urho Ghost City, 500Km, about 8 hours drive



Rise early and commence a **one-hour trek** up the wooden steps leading to the grassland on the hill opposite the village, where a breathtaking sunrise awaits. The panoramic view from this vantage point is simply majestic, showcasing the entire village with its wooden houses, birch trees, and a vibrant green river winding its way through the landscape. You also have the option for a short horse riding experience on the grassland.

Continues exploration in Hemu village with a visit to the Tuwa people, whose simple lifestyle and distinctive character have left many visitors deeply impressed.

After lunch in the village, you'll set out for Karamay, making a pit stop at the **Urho Ghost City**, also known as Wuerhe Wind City. This unique wind-eroded geological area earned its ghostly name not from spectral inhabitants but from the frequent howling winds that give it an eerie ambiance. Today you will be driven to pass through the sprawling Hundred Mile Oil Zone.

Stay overnight at Karamay.

Day 10 :

Drive back to Urumqi (320KM/4.5 hours drive), Departure.



Enjoy the drive back to Urumqi, end this great Northern Xinjiang tour. In Urumqi, there are flights available to most major cities in China.

If you wish to continue your journey, we are experts in tailor made trips and ready to assist you in extending your stay in China.

Inclusions

Tour notes:

Please note prices are based in CNY.

General inclusions:

2 bottles of mineral water provided daily.

All required government taxes and fees.

Your selection of 3, 4 or 5 Stars hotel (shared twin room, private bathroom and daily breakfast)

The hotel accommodation is based on two persons sharing one standard twin room with private facilities in all relevant locations. If a single client requests a twin room alone, the single room supplement will be charged.

All entrance tickets as noted in the tour's itinerary.

Guide fluent in English, Chinese or Japanese that is certified by the state tourism build and from the local community. (If your native language is not listed please let us know, we are certain we can assist your needs.)

Airport and/or train station pick-up and drop-off.

All domestic flight and train tickets. Economy-class for flights and soft sleeper / seat for train tickets.

Transportation will be provided via a comfortable and clean car, minivan or tourist bus depending upon the groups size.

Meals as remarked in the itinerary. (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner)

General exclusions:

Personal expenses such as laundry, drinks, internet access, fax, telephone calls etc.

Tips for your guide and driver.

Optional Attractions that are not specified in the itinerary.

Flight and/or railway ticket(s) to the first city of the tour and departure from the last city of the tour.

Meals not specified in the itinerary.

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