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Discover the Silk Road: a Journey across 5 Stans

SR-08





Join us on an extraordinary 5 Stans tour, taking you through the heart of Central Asia's most captivating landscapes and cities. This comprehensive journey covers Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, each offering a unique blend of history, culture, and natural beauty. Experience the allure of ancient Silk Road cities like Samarkand and Bukhara, marvel at the architectural splendor of Khiva, and uncover the mysteries of Merv and Nissa - both UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Traverse scenic mountain ranges, explore bustling bazaars, and visit iconic landmarks like the Darvaza Gas Crater and the Ahalteke horse stables.

Whether you're drawn by the intricate tilework of historic madrasahs or the vibrant local traditions, this tour blends authentic experiences with modern comforts. Discover the timeless allure of the Silk Road and the rich diversity that defines Central Asia. This tour promises not just a trip, but an adventure filled with lifelong memories and cultural insights. Join us on this journey through the 5 Stans, where history and modernity converge to create an unforgettable experience.

Why join this tour? This tour has been meticulously crafted to ensure your journey is both comfortable and enriching. Recognising that long drives can be tiring, we've minimised travel times to help you enjoy the stunning scenery without unnecessary fatigue. You'll stay in the best available accommodation, with options ranging from authentic, basic stays to more luxurious choices for added comfort. Additionally, this tour offers the flexibility to be fully customised, allowing you to tailor the experience to match your interests, travel style, and schedule.

Why book this tour

DEPARTURE DATES:

15.03.2025; 22.03.2025; 29.03.2025; 05.04.2025; 12.04.2025; 19.04.2025; 26.04.2025; 03.05.2025; 10.05.2025; 17.05.2025; 24.05.2025; 31.05.2025; 07.06.2025; 14.06.2025; 21.06.2025; 28.06.2025; 05.07.2025; 12.07.2025; 19.07.2025; 26.07.2025; 02.08.2025; 09.08.2025; 16.08.2025; 23.08.2025; 30.08.2025; 06.09.2025; 13.09.2025; 20.09.2025; 27.09.2025; 04.10.2025; 11.10.2025.

ITINERARY

Day 1 - Bishkek

Your adventure begins in Bishkek, the vibrant capital of Kyrgyzstan. Upon arrival, you will be greeted and transferred to your hotel. After settling in, enjoy the rest of the day at your leisure to relax or explore the city at your own pace. This day is all about unwinding and preparing for the journey ahead. Overnight in Bishkek. (Dinner)

Day 2 - Bishkek / Burana Tower / Chon Kemin National Park

After a late breakfast, we'll embark on a guided city tour of Bishkek, where you'll uncover its rich history and Soviet-era charm. Together, we'll visit iconic landmarks such as Ala-Too Square, the Monument of Manas, Oak Park, and Victory Square, dedicated to the heroes of WWII. Following our exploration of the city, we'll journey to the picturesque Chon Kemin Valley, making a stop along the way to explore the historic Burana Tower, a fascinating remnant of the ancient Silk Road. Once we arrive in Chon Kemin, you can settle into a cosy guesthouse and relax for the night. Overnight in Chon Kemin. (Breakfast, Dinner)

TOUR INCLUSIONS AND OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Included

<u>International flights</u>

Domestic flights in Turkmenistan
Accommodation
Breakfasts - daily
Lunches as indicated
Dinners - daily
High-speed day train
English - speaking guides
Guided tours & entrance fees
Airport & railway transfers

Not included

Personal travel insurance
Optional excursions

Practical information

About Go Russia company

Accommodation options

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Day 3 - Chon Kemin / Bokonbaevo

We'll start the day with a refreshing morning hike in the scenic Chon Kemin Valley, where the views of the surrounding mountains and pristine landscapes will leave you in awe. If you prefer, you can explore the local gorges or immerse yourself in cultural activities like horseback riding or learning the art of yurt construction. Later, we'll set off for Lake Issyk-Kul, and as we approach, you'll catch your first breathtaking views of its vast, shimmering waters framed by majestic mountains. Along the way, we'll visit Kyzyl Tuu village, renowned for its traditional yurt-making craftsmanship. Our journey continues to Bokonbaevo, where you'll meet a skilled eagle hunter and experience the ancient art of falconry in action. We'll spend the night in Bokonbaevo, surrounded by the charm of Kyrgyzstan's nomadic heritage. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 4 - Bokonbaevo / Skazka Canyon / Djety Oguz Canyon / Karakol

Journey along the shores of Issyk-Kul Lake to the breathtaking Fairy Tale (Skazka) Canyon, where vibrant rock formations craft a truly mesmerising landscape. Next, we'll continue to the Djety Oguz Canyon, famed for its dramatic red cliffs, including the iconic "Broken Heart" rock and the striking "Seven Bulls" formations. From there, we'll proceed to Karakol, a town rich in cultural heritage. Here, you'll visit remarkable landmarks such as the Dungan Mosque, designed in the style of a Chinese pagoda, and the beautifully preserved Russian Orthodox Holy Trinity Cathedral. You'll also explore the N. M. Przhevalsky Museum, dedicated to the life and achievements of the renowned Russian explorer. We'll spend the night in Karakol, soaking in its unique atmosphere. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 5 - Karakol / Border Crossing / Kolsai Lakes / Saty

Cross the border into Kazakhstan and journey to Saty Village, a charming settlement nestled within the stunning Kolsai Lakes National Park. Here, you'll have the opportunity to explore the area's breathtaking surroundings, including a hike to the serene Kolsai Lakes, often referred to as the "Blue Necklace" of the Tien Shan Mountains for their striking beauty. If time permits, we'll also visit the nearby Kaindy Lake, renowned for its submerged forest and crystal-clear turquoise waters that create an otherworldly scene. Overnight in Saty Village. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 6 - Saty / Charyn Canyon / Almaty

Depart for Almaty, with an unforgettable stop at the awe-inspiring Charyn Canyon along the way. Here, you'll explore the "Valley of Castles," a stunning area celebrated for its dramatic rock formations and sweeping panoramic views that showcase nature's artistry. After soaking in the beauty of this natural wonder, we'll continue the drive to Almaty, Kazakhstan's largest and most dynamic city. Upon arrival, you'll check in to your hotel and have the evening to relax and unwind after a day filled with exploration. Overnight in Almaty. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 7 - Almaty

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Your day in Almaty begins with a visit to Panfilov Park, where you'll learn about the 28 heroes who gave their lives for the country's freedom. Admire the Zenkov Cathedral, the city's oldest wooden building, and pay respects at the Memorial Complex with its eternal flame. Next, explore the bustling Green Bazaar for souvenirs, visit the central Mosque, and stop at Republic Square to see the Independence Obelisk and other national symbols. In the afternoon, head up to Kok-Tobe Hill for panoramic views of Almaty, followed by a stroll through Kok-Tobe Park, home to a monument dedicated to "The Beatles." Finish your day with a scenic cable car ride back to the city centre before returning to your hotel. Overnight in Almaty. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 8 - Almaty / Dushanbe

In the morning, transfer to the airport for a short flight (approximately 1 hour 40 minutes) to Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan. Upon arrival, settle into your hotel and enjoy a free evening to relax or explore this tranquil city at your own pace. Overnight in Dushanbe. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 9 - Dushanbe

Explore the vibrant charm of Dushanbe with a guided city tour, starting with the grand Navruz Palace, a stunning example of modern Tajik architecture. Wander through the lively local markets, where the sights, sounds, and colours of traditional Tajik life come to life as you browse for local handicrafts and fresh produce. Next, relax in the tranquil surroundings of Rudaki Park, a lush green space dedicated to the famous Persian poet Rudaki. Overnight in Dushanbe. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 10 - Dushanbe / Iskanderkul / Penjikent

Today, we'll drive from Dushanbe to Penjikent, a picturesque town nestled in the foothills of the Fann Mountains. As we travel through the stunning Tajik landscape, you'll witness the dramatic scenery of winding rivers and rugged peaks. If the group is interested, we can take a short detour to visit the stunning Iskanderkul Lake, named after Alexander the Great. This serene alpine lake, surrounded by towering mountains, offers a perfect spot for a brief pause and some scenic photography. After the detour, we'll continue our journey to Penjikent, where we'll settle in for the night. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 11 - Penjikent / Seven Lakes / Penjikent

Today, we'll spend the day exploring the Seven Lakes, a breathtaking series of alpine lakes nestled in the Fann Mountains. Each lake, with its unique colour and surrounded by dramatic peaks, offers stunning views and opportunities for photography. You'll enjoy a day of hiking through the picturesque landscapes, connecting with nature as we pass through lush valleys and pristine terrain. After immersing yourself in the natural beauty of the lakes, we'll return to Penjikent for the night. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 12 - Penjikent / Sarazm / Border Crossing / Samarkand

Today, we'll cross into Uzbekistan and travel to the

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legendary city of Samarkand, one of the most iconic destinations along the Silk Road. On our way, we'll make a stop at Sarazm, an ancient archaeological site and UNESCO World Heritage Site, where you can explore the remains of one of Central Asia's earliest urban settlements, dating back to the early Bronze Age. After our visit to Sarazm, we'll continue to Samarkand. Upon arrival, we'll begin our city tour, featuring the awe-inspiring Registan Square, the grand Bibi-Khanym Mosque, and the magnificent Shah-i-Zinda necropolis, a complex of beautiful mausoleums. Overnight in Samarkand. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 13 - Samarkand / Bukhara

After breakfast at the hotel, we'll transfer you to the train station for your journey from Samarkand to Bukhara on the high-speed "Afrosiab" train. The train journey takes just an hour and a half. Upon arrival in Bukhara, we'll take you to your hotel to check in and relax. Your guided tour of Bukhara will begin with a visit to the historic Lyabi-Khauz complex, which includes Central Asia's oldest pool, surrounded by stunning medieval structures such as the Nadira Divan-begi madrasah and Khanaka, both famous for their exquisite mosaic facades. You'll also explore the Kukeldash madrasah, the largest in Bukhara. Later, we'll visit the impressive Poi-Kalyan Complex, home to the iconic Kalyan Minaret, the Kalyan Friday Mosque, and the active Miri-Arab madrasah, all offering a glimpse into the rich architectural heritage of Bukhara. Overnight in Bukhara. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 14 - Bukhara

The following day, meet your guide in the hotel lobby to continue your Bukhara sightseeing adventure. Begin by exploring the historical sites, starting with the Samanids Mausoleum, one of Bukhara's oldest and most revered landmarks. Then, visit the Ark Citadel, which served as the residence of the Emir for many centuries and offers stunning views over the city. Next, head to the distinctive Chor-Minor, a unique structure with four minarets. Finally, explore the beautiful Sitorai-Mohi-Khosa Palace, the summer retreat of the Bukhara Emirs, set in tranquil gardens. Overnight in Bukhara. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 15 - Bukhara / Border Crossing / Mary

Begin your day with free time to explore the enchanting city of Bukhara at your leisure. Take a final stroll through its historic streets, revisit favourite landmarks, or relax in one of its tranquil courtyards before we depart for Mary in Turkmenistan. Upon arrival in Mary, enjoy an introductory tour featuring visits to the History Museum of the Mary Region, the Russian Orthodox Church, the bustling local bazaar, and the impressive Gurbanguly Haji Mosque, a stunning example of modern Turkmen architecture. After the tour, transfer to your hotel to settle in and relax. Overnight in Mary. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 16 - Mary / Merv / Ashgabat

After breakfast, set out for the Ancient City of Merv, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most important cities along the historic Silk Road. Explore the expansive historical park, including the impressive Sultan

Sanjar Mausoleum, the Large and Small Gyz Gala, Erk Gala, Gyaur Gala, the Keshk Fortresses, the Muhammed ibn Zaid Mausoleum, and other remarkable landmarks that showcase the city's rich history. After immersing yourself in Merv's fascinating heritage, return to Mary for a short flight (approximately 40 minutes) to Ashgabat, Turkmenistan's modern capital. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel and settle in for the evening. Overnight in Ashgabat. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 17 - Ashgabat / Nissa / Ashgabat

After breakfast, we'll set out on a full-day city tour of Ashgabat, exploring its most iconic landmarks. Our journey begins at the National Museum, where we'll delve into the rich history and culture of Turkmenistan. We'll then visit Independence Park, home to grand monuments symbolising the nation's sovereignty, followed by the Rukhnama Monument and the impressive Neutrality Arch. Next, we'll enjoy a ride on the Ferris Wheel, offering panoramic views of the city, and visit the Magtymguly Monument, dedicated to the revered Turkmen poet. A highlight of the day will be exploring the ancient ruins of Nissa, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with fascinating remnants of Parthian architecture. Finally, we'll visit the magnificent Turkmenbashi Mosque-Mausoleum, a stunning blend of spirituality and artistry. After a day filled with discovery, we'll transfer to the hotel for an overnight stay. Overnight in Ashgabat. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 18 - Ashgabat / Dashoguz

After breakfast, we'll continue our exploration of Ashgabat with an introductory tour of its fascinating landmarks. We'll visit the Ahalteke horse stables to learn about Turkmenistan's cherished horses, followed by the stunning Ertogrul Ghazi Mosque and the historic Lenin Monument. At the bustling Russian Bazaar, you can experience the vibrant local culture before heading to the poignant Earthquake Monument and the Soviet War Memorial Complex. Our tour also includes the Carpet Museum, showcasing intricate Turkmen craftsmanship, and a stop at the Wedding Palace panoramic viewpoint, offering breathtaking views of the city. In the evening, we'll transfer to the airport for a flight (approximately 40 minutes) to Dashoguz. Upon arrival, you'll be met and transferred to your hotel for an overnight stay in Dashoguz. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 19 - Dashoguz / Kunya Urgench / Khiva

In the morning, we'll drive to Kunya Urgench, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of Turkmenistan's most significant historical landmarks. Here, we'll explore the fascinating historical park, including the towering Kutlug Timur Minaret, the beautiful Mausoleum of Turabek Khanum, the Mausoleum of Tekesh, the Mausoleum of Il Arslan, and the Caravansaray Gateway, among other remarkable sites. Afterward, we'll head to Dashoguz for lunch and visit the History Museum of the Dashoguz Region, the Central Mosque, and the lively local bazaar. In the afternoon, we'll cross the border into Uzbekistan and drive to Khiva, a well-preserved Silk Road city full of history and charm. Upon arrival, we'll check into our hotel for an overnight stay. Overnight in Khiva. (Breakfast,

Day 20 - Khiva

Meet your guide in the hotel lobby for a Khiva sightseeing tour, where you'll explore the wonders of Ichan Kala, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Start with the Kalta-Minor Minaret, a striking yet incomplete structure that stands 26 meters tall with a base diameter of 16 meters, originally intended to be the tallest minaret in Central Asia. Next, visit Kunya-Ark, the first palace of Khiva's khans, and the Pahlovan Mahmud Mausoleum, a beautiful example of Islamic architecture. Continue to the Islam Khodja Madrassah and Minaret, completed in 1908, followed by a visit to the unique Juma Mosque, known for its flat roof supported by 218 intricately carved wooden columns, offering exceptional acoustics. These historical and architectural gems will give you a deep insight into Khiva's rich heritage. Overnight in Khiva. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 21 - Khiva / Tashkent

After breakfast, we'll transfer to the airport for a short flight to Tashkent, which takes approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes. Upon arrival, we'll transfer to your hotel, where you'll have the rest of the day free to relax, explore at your leisure, or enjoy some downtime in the city. Overnight in Tashkent. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 22 - Tashkent

Today, we'll immerse ourselves in the rich history and vibrant culture of Tashkent. Start with a visit to the historic Old Town and the Khast-Imam Architectural Complex, home to the revered Osman Quran. We'll then head to Amir Timur Square, dedicated to the legendary conqueror, and visit the Courage Monument, commemorating the resilience of Tashkent's people. Next, we'll admire the grand Opera and Ballet Theater and stroll through Mustaqillik (Independence) Square, where modern landmarks celebrate Uzbekistan's independence. The day continues with a visit to the lively "Chorsu" Eastern Bazaar, a bustling market filled with local crafts, spices, textiles, and traditional Uzbek artistry. This tour blends the old and new, showcasing the cultural, historical, and architectural treasures that make Tashkent truly unique. Overnight in Tashkent. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Day 23 - Tashkent

After breakfast, we'll transfer you to the airport for your flight home, marking the end of your unforgettable journey through Central Asia. Safe travels and we hope to welcome you on another adventure soon! (Breakfast)

AVAILABLE PACKAGES

COMFORT - 3* PACKAGE

Dates	Excl. flights	Incl. flights*	Single suppl.
15/03/2025 - 06/04/2025	£4695	£5395	£495
22/03/2025 - 13/04/2025	£4695	£5395	£495
29/03/2025 - 20/04/2025	£4695	£5395	£495
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12/04/2025 - 04/05/2025	£4695	£5395	£495
19/04/2025 - 11/05/2025	£4695	£5395	£495
26/04/2025 - 18/05/2025	£4695	£5395	£495

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PREMIUM - 4* PACKAGE

Dates	Excl. flights	Incl. flights*	Single suppl.
15/03/2025 - 06/04/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
22/03/2025 - 13/04/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
29/03/2025 - 20/04/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
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12/04/2025 - 04/05/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
19/04/2025 - 11/05/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
26/04/2025 - 18/05/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
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14/06/2025 - 06/07/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
21/06/2025 - 13/07/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
28/06/2025 - 20/07/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
05/07/2025 - 27/07/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
12/07/2025 - 03/08/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
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02/08/2025 - 24/08/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
09/08/2025 - 31/08/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
16/08/2025 - 07/09/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
23/08/2025 - 14/09/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
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20/09/2025 - 12/10/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
27/09/2025 - 19/10/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
04/10/2025 - 26/10/2025	£4945	£5645	£625
11/10/2025 - 02/11/2025	£4945	£5645	£625

ALTERNATIVE TOURS AND TAILOR-MADE ARRANGEMENTS

In addition to organised group tours, we also offer individual trips. This could be an entirely separate holiday

arrangement or an extension to a regular "Go Russia" trip. Whether you would like to travel independently, or just with the group of your friends or colleagues, we can help to realise your holiday plans. Depending on your preference for either comfort or budget, we can help you to design the ideal itinerary and provide the optimal value-for-money quote. Please contact us for a quote.

Based on your chosen tour we believe you might be interested in alternative trips listed below:

- > Best of Kyrgyzstan: Discover Finest Lakes, Steppe Land & Historic Towns (SR-05), Price from £1,395, 8 days
- > Great Uzbekistan Discovery: from Fergana to Khiva (SR-06), Price from £1,695, 13 days
- > Best of Uzbekistan: Tashkent, Chimgan, Samarkand, Shakhrisabz, Bukhara, Khiva (SR-07), Price from £1,395, 10 days
- > Bishkek to Almaty: a Journey through Kyrgyzstan & Kazakhstan (SR-09), Price from £1,795, 8 days

INFORMATION ABOUT VISAS

Go Russia provides assistance in processing visas and visa fees are included in the cost of most of our trips as detailed in the tour dossier. The visa application process is very straightforward. We have years of practical experience in dealing with tourist visas, and our in-house visa team provides assistance with completing the forms and checking the documents before consular submission. Please do not worry that your application will be unsuccessful (unless you have had any immigration issues with the relevant authorities in the past). All our tourists get their visas.

All nationalities require a full passport valid for at least six months beyond the intended length of stay. Please also make sure there are enough blank pages in your passport: Russian consulate requires minimum two blank pages.

UK, USA, Germany, France, Spain residents

We have in-house visa teams in the UK, USA, Germany, France and Spain. Upon your booking we will email you detailed guidance notes how to fill in the visa forms and what additional documents depending on nationality and your immigration status will be required. You will need to post your application pack to our visa processing office including your original passport. Please allow about two - three weeks for each visa application to be processed. The actual visa processing times are published on our website. Please advise us if you require your passport urgently, we can arrange urgent processing for an additional charge.

Non-UK, USA, Germany, France, Spain residents

If you are not resident in the above countries, we will issue official paperwork and email the required documents to you. You will need to apply for your visa at the local consulate. The process is very straightforward and we can assist you with completing the visa forms. You will have to pay the correct visa fee at the consulate in the country of your residence.

You can read more information about visa, processing times and application forms on our website: www.justgorussia.co.uk/en/visa_services.html

HOW TO BOOK

Step 1 - Choose Your Holiday & Departure Dates

It is important that you choose a trip that is well suited to your interests, capabilities and experience. All our staff has first hand experience of a range of Go Russia holidays and will be happy to talk to you about your chosen trip, enabling you to assess its suitability. We also recommend that you read the descriptions of the relevant region, general information about our services, booking conditions, and trip dossiers carefully. Once you know what tour is right for you, as well as your departure dates, you can start your booking.

Step 2 - Complete the Booking Form

Online: log on to www.justgorussia.co.uk and open the tour you wish to book and click "Book now". To provide you with a more personalised and relevant experience in all your contact with Go Russia, when you book online we ask you to register on our system. Once registered you can retrieve your bookings, brochure requests, update newsletter subscriptions, passenger and emergency contact details, submit special dietary requests, view invoices and receipts, download trip documents.

Email: alternatively, you can book your tour per email - info@justgorussia.co.uk, or

Phone: call us on +44 (0)20 33 55 77 17

When booking by email or over the phone please confirm your personal details (full name and address), chosen tour,

www.justgorussia.co.uk +44 (0) 20 33 55 77 17 info@justgorussia.co.uk Page 8/10

departure date, package type (hotel / cabin category), and available upgrades.

Step 3 - Confirmation of your booking

On receipt of your booking form, we will make any necessary reservations for you and send you confirmation invoice, including the flight details, and additional information about your destination: advice on visas, vaccinations and what to take. The invoice will also show you the exact due date of the payment.

Step 4 - Payment

Please note, if your departure date is more than 56 days you will need to pay the deposit, which should cover the full cost of the flight (if applicable), plus 10% of the land-only arrangements (minimum £100) per person towards your tour. The outstanding payment must be made 56 days prior to departure. If you book less than 56 days before departure, full payment must be made at the time of your booking. You can make your payment by bank transfer, debit or credit card, cheque, bankers draft or postal order. You will find all relevant payment details in your invoice.

www.justgorussia.co.uk +44 (0) 20 33 55 77 17 <u>info@justgorussia.co.uk</u> Page 9/10

YOUR NOTES

On request we can organise an additional programme for you, please <u>inquire</u> about the price and availability of the optional excursions.

rtease find below some space to write down your queries of comments regarding this trip.			