

12-Day Grand Afghanistan Cultural & Heritage Tour

Afghanistan | 12 days / 11 nights | From USD 1,649 per person

Discover the diverse history, ancient civilizations, cultural heritage, traditional markets, religious landmarks, and spectacular mountain landscapes of Afghanistan on an unforgettable 12-day journey with Nawi Saadi Travel & Tourism. This carefully designed tour starts and ends at Kabul International Airport and takes you through some of Afghanistan's most significant historical and cultural destinations.

ROUTE

Kabul > Ghazni > Kandahar > Herat > Bamyan > Band-e-Amir > Mazar-i-Sharif > Balkh

HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore historic Kabul and its traditional bazaars
- Discover the ancient heritage of Ghazni
- Experience the cultural heart of Kandahar
- Explore the legacy of Ahmad Shah Durrani and Mirwais Hotak
- Discover the Silk Road heritage of Herat
- Visit the Friday Mosque, Herat Citadel, and Timurid monuments
- Experience the UNESCO heritage of Bamyan
- Explore the breathtaking lakes of Band-e-Amir
- Travel through the spectacular Hindu Kush and Hajigak landscapes
- Discover ancient Balkh and Bactrian civilization
- Visit the Blue Mosque of Mazar-e-Sharif
- Experience Afghan culture, markets, handicrafts, carpets, and gemstones
- Enjoy professional guiding, transportation, accommodation and meals

DAY BY DAY (12 DAYS)

Day 1: Arrival in Kabul & Kabul City Tour

- Welcome to Afghanistan!
- Upon arrival at Kabul International Airport, our professional tour guide and driver will welcome you and transfer you to your hotel.
- After check-in, your guide will provide a brief orientation about the tour, itinerary, local customs, and the days ahead. Depending on your arrival time, breakfast or lunch will be arranged.
- You will have time for currency exchange and a visit to a local tailor shop where you can explore traditional Afghan clothing and, if desired, arrange a local outfit.
- Begin your Kabul experience at Bibi Mahro Hill, home to the famous Afghan flag and offering panoramic views over Kabul city.
- Continue to Mandawi Bazaar and the Bird Market, followed by a walk around Pul-e-Khishti Mosque, Nadir Pashtun Wat, Chahar Chatta Bazaar, and Pul-e-Bagh-e-Omumi.
- Experience the atmosphere of Kabul's traditional markets, meet local people, and discover everyday Afghan culture and lifestyle.
- The day concludes with a visit to the historic Shah-Do-Shamshira Mosque, one of Kabul's distinctive landmarks associated with an early Islamic legend.
- Overnight: Kabul

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Transport: Private 4WD vehicle; walking as described

Day 2: Kabul to Ghazni | Ancient Ghaznavid Heritage

- After breakfast, depart Kabul for Ghazni on an approximately 3-hour road journey.
- Ghazni was an important Buddhist center during the 7th century and later became the magnificent capital of the powerful Ghaznavid Empire.
- Upon arrival, complete the required registration with the provincial tourism authorities.
- Visit the historic Minarets of Ghazni, remarkable monuments from the Ghaznavid period, associated with the reigns of Sultan Mas'ud III and Sultan Bahram Shah.
- Continue to Bala Hesar Citadel, overlooking the historic city. Explore the area surrounding the citadel, where traditional mud-brick houses, local shops, and bazaars reflect the character of old Ghazni.
- Overnight: Ghazni

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Transport: Private 4WD vehicle; walking as described

Day 3: Ghazni to Kandahar | Journey Through Zabul

- After breakfast, depart Ghazni for Kandahar on an approximately 6-hour road journey.
- Travel through Zabul Province, passing traditional villages, mud-brick houses, local bazaars, mosques, and beautiful rural landscapes.
- Several stops will be made along the route for photography, refreshments, and lunch.
- Upon arrival in Kandahar, complete the required registration with the provincial tourism authorities.
- Spend the remaining time exploring Kandahar, meeting local people, and experiencing the city's unique culture and daily life.
- Overnight: Kandahar

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Transport: Private 4WD vehicle; walking as described

Day 4: Explore Kandahar | Heritage of the Durrani Era

- After breakfast, begin a full day of exploration in historic Kandahar.
- Visit Char Suq, the old bazaar where four principal market streets meet in the heart of the city. Explore traditional shops, markets, handicrafts, and the atmosphere of old Kandahar.
- Continue to Shahidanu Chawk (Martyrs' Square) before visiting some of the city's most important historical and religious landmarks.
- Visit the Shrine of the Cloak of the Prophet, one of Kandahar's most significant religious sites.
- Continue to the Mausoleum of Ahmad Shah Durrani, founder of the Durrani Empire and a pivotal figure in Afghanistan's history.
- Visit the Tomb of Mirwais Hotak, the influential Ghilzai leader associated with Kandahar's independence from Persian rule in 1709.
- Explore Chihilzina (Forty Steps), a historic rock-cut monument overlooking the Kandahar plain, featuring inscriptions connected with the Mughal conquest.
- The day concludes with a visit to the historic Red Mosque.
- Overnight: Kandahar

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Transport: Private 4WD vehicle; walking as described

Day 5: Kandahar to Herat | Across Western Afghanistan

- After breakfast, depart Kandahar for Herat on an approximately 8-hour overland journey.
- Travel through Helmand and Farah Provinces, experiencing the changing landscapes of southern and western Afghanistan.
- Enjoy several stops at scenic locations along the way for photography, refreshments, and lunch.
- Arrive in Herat and transfer to your hotel for check-in and overnight accommodation.
- Overnight: Herat

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Transport: Private 4WD vehicle; walking as described

Day 6: Explore Herat | Silk Road & Timurid Heritage

- After breakfast, complete the required registration with the tourism authorities before beginning your Herat city tour.
- Visit the magnificent Masjid-e-Jami (Friday Mosque), one of Afghanistan's greatest examples of Islamic architecture and an important center of religious and cultural heritage.
- Explore the historic Old City of Herat, discovering its traditional streets, architecture, markets, and cultural atmosphere.
- Where accessible, visit the historic neighborhood associated with Herat's Jewish Afghan community, including surviving synagogue and bathhouse sites.
- Continue to the historic caravanserais around Chahar Suq, which reflect Herat's important role along the ancient Silk Road.
- Visit the spectacular Musalla Complex, associated with Queen Gawhar Shad and the Timurid period.
- Explore the historic Citadel of Herat, traditionally associated with Alexander the Great and later developed by successive dynasties.
- Continue to the Shrine of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, the celebrated Sufi poet, scholar, and philosopher associated with Herat.
- Inside the complex, discover the remarkable Haft Qalam Stone (Seven Pens Stone), a distinctive black-marble sarcophagus dating from the Timurid period.
- Overnight: Herat

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Transport: Private 4WD vehicle; walking as described

Day 7: Herat to Kabul by Flight | Kabul to Bamyán

- After an early breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight back to Kabul.
- Upon arrival in Kabul, continue the journey toward Bamyán by road.
- The approximately 4-hour drive takes you through spectacular mountain landscapes and across the fascinating Hajigak Pass, reaching approximately 3,700 meters above sea level.
- Enjoy several stops at picturesque viewpoints and rest areas for photography, refreshments, and lunch.
- Continue to Bamyán and check in to your hotel.
- Overnight: Bamyán

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Transport: Private ground transport; domestic flight arrangements and cost to be confirmed

Day 8: Bamyán & Band-e-Amir | Ancient Heritage & Natural Wonders

- After breakfast, complete the required registration with the provincial tourism authorities and begin exploring the Bamyán Valley.
- Visit the Bamiyan Valley, part of the UNESCO World Heritage cultural landscape and home to the monumental niches of the famous Buddha Statues.
- The Great Buddha was approximately 55 meters high, while the Small Buddha measured approximately 38 meters. Although the statues were destroyed in 2001, their historic niches remain powerful symbols of Afghanistan's ancient Buddhist heritage.
- Continue to the ruins of Gholghola City, also known as the City of Screams, an ancient fortified settlement associated with the Ghaznavid period and later destroyed during the Mongol invasion.
- Visit the historic ruins of Zuhak City (Red City), an ancient fortress traditionally associated with the early medieval period.
- Continue toward Band-e-Amir National Park, Afghanistan's spectacular natural landmark famous for its deep-blue lakes surrounded by dramatic cliffs.
- Enjoy hiking, sightseeing, photography, and the peaceful natural environment of Band-e-Amir before returning to Bamyán.
- Overnight: Bamyán

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Transport: Private 4WD vehicle; walking as described

Day 9: Bamyan to Mazar-e-Sharif | Across the Hindu Kush

- After breakfast, depart Bamyan for Mazar-e-Sharif on an approximately 12-hour road journey.
- Travel through the dramatic landscapes of the Hindu Kush, passing through the Salang area and continuing along mountain roads toward northern Afghanistan.
- The journey includes the Dara-e-Ghorband route and the Shibar Pass, following the Ghorband River and passing through Sia Gird District.
- Along the way, experience local villages, traditional bazaars, markets, and spectacular mountain scenery.
- Several stops will be made for refreshments and photography.
- Arrive in Mazar-e-Sharif in the evening.
- Overnight: Mazar-e-Sharif

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Transport: Private 4WD vehicle; walking as described

Day 10: Mazar-e-Sharif & Balkh | Ancient Bactria

- After breakfast, complete the required registration with the tourism authorities.
- Begin the day with a visit to the magnificent Blue Mosque (Shrine of Hazrat Ali), the architectural and spiritual landmark of Mazar-e-Sharif.
- Explore the city center and traditional bazaars, including Banjara Bazaar, where you can experience local culture, daily life, and traditional commerce.
- Afterward, take a short drive to the historic Balkh District, one of the world's most ancient cultural centers.
- Visit Masjid-e-Haji Piyada (Nuh Gunbad Mosque), one of Afghanistan's earliest surviving Islamic monuments.
- Continue to Khwaja Abu Nasr Parsa Mosque and the Tomb of Rabia Balkhi, one of the most celebrated early female poets of Persian literature.
- Explore the ruins of Bala Hisar-e-Balkh, associated with the ancient history of Balkh and traditionally linked to Alexander the Great.
- Visit the historic area associated with Mawlana Jalaluddin Balkhi (Rumi), the celebrated Sufi poet and philosopher who was born in Balkh.
- Continue to Burj-e-Ayaran, an impressive remnant of the ancient city's defensive structures.
- After exploring Balkh, return to Mazar-e-Sharif.
- Overnight: Mazar-e-Sharif

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Transport: Private 4WD vehicle; walking as described

Day 11: Mazar-e-Sharif to Kabul by Flight | Kabul Heritage Tour

- After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your early flight back to Kabul.
- Upon arrival, begin your final Kabul sightseeing experience.
- Visit the beautiful and historic Bagh-e-Babur (Babur's Garden), the Mughal garden associated with Emperor Babur.
- Continue to Bala Hissar, the historic high fortress overlooking Kabul and one of the city's most important defensive landmarks.
- The final visit of the day is Ziarat-e-Sakhi (Sakhi Shrine), an important religious and cultural landmark in Kabul.
- Overnight: Kabul

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Transport: Private ground transport; domestic flight arrangements and cost to be confirmed

Day 12: Kabul Shopping & Departure

- After breakfast, enjoy your final opportunity to explore Kabul, depending on your flight schedule.
- Visit Chicken Street, one of Kabul's best-known traditional shopping destinations.
- Discover a wide selection of Afghan handicrafts and souvenirs, including handmade carpets and rugs, gemstones, calligraphy, miniature artworks, antiques, decorative pieces, and traditional crafts.

- Depending on your departure time, additional sightseeing or shopping in Kabul can be arranged.
 - Enjoy lunch before our professional team transfers you to Kabul International Airport for your return flight.
 - After an unforgettable 12-day journey across Afghanistan, filled with ancient history, cultural discoveries, spectacular landscapes, traditional markets, and memorable experiences, your tour with Nawi Saadi Travel & Tourism comes to an end.
 - Departure: Kabul International Airport
- Meals: Breakfast & Lunch
- Transport: Private ground transport; domestic flight arrangements and cost to be confirmed

INCLUDED

- Accommodation: 3-4 Star Hotels
- Transportation: Private 4WD Vehicles
- Meals: 3 Daily Meals + Drinking Water
- Professional Tour Guide
- All Required Permits
- Letter of Invitation
- Entrance Fees to Listed Attractions
- Local SIM Card & Wi-Fi

NOT INCLUDED

- Visa Fees
- International Flights
- Personal Expenses, Shopping, Soft Drinks & Snacks
- Travel Insurance

GOOD TO KNOW

Season & group size

Spring and summer departures, with a maximum of 8 travellers. Dates and departure availability are confirmed by the Kabul team.

Price & booking

Advertised starting price: USD 1,649 per person. Request a written quotation for your dates, group and room arrangements. International flights, visa fees, insurance and personal expenses are excluded.

Domestic flights

Where a domestic flight appears in the itinerary, its schedule, availability and inclusion in the final price must be confirmed with the Kabul office before booking.

Permits & access

The package includes a letter of invitation and required local permits. Site visits, road journeys and activities remain subject to permissions, local access, weather and operating conditions. Confirm the final route before booking.

Accommodation & connectivity

Packages are based on 3-4-star hotels. Hotel names, room occupancy and availability are confirmed in your quotation. Local SIM and Wi-Fi access depend on coverage and availability.

FLIGHTS, AND CHANGING ANYTHING ON THIS ITINERARY

Flights are quoted on request. We hold IATA accreditation and can ticket any airline from Dubai alongside this itinerary.

Every itinerary here is a starting point. We rebuild any of it around your own dates, hotels, pace and budget, for couples, families or groups.

Prices are a lead-in fare and move with the season, the airline and the hotel chosen. Tell us your dates and we will confirm a firm quotation.

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