



# Samarkand

**CULTURAL VISIT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF  
31ST CONFERENCE OF THE WOAHP REGIONAL  
COMMISSION FOR EUROPE,  
SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 4,  
SAMARKAND, UZBEKISTAN**

## *Samarkand – Crossroad of Cultures*

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The historic town of Samarkand is a crossroad and melting pot of the world's cultures. Founded in the 7th century B.C. as ancient Afrasiab, Samarkand had its most significant development in the Timurid period from the 14th to the 15th centuries. The major monuments include the Registan Mosque and madrasas, Bibi-Khanum Mosque, the Shakh-Zinda compound and the Gur-Emir ensemble, as well as Ulugh-Beg's Observatory.  
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The historic town of Samarkand, located in a large oasis in the valley of the Zerafshan River, in the north-eastern region of Uzbekistan, is considered the crossroads of world cultures with a history of over two and a half millennia. Evidence of settlements in the region goes back to 1500 BC, with Samarkand having its most significant development in the Timurid period, from the 14th to the 15th centuries, when it was capital of the powerful Timurid realm.



To the south, there are architectural ensembles and the medieval city of the Timurid epoch of the 14th and 15th centuries, which played a seminal role in the development of town planning, architecture, and arts in the region.

The modern city extends around this historical zone. This area represents traditional continuity and qualities that are reflected in the neighbourhood structure, the small centres, mosques, and houses. Many houses retain painted and decorated interiors, grouped around courtyards and gardens.

The major monuments include the Registan mosque and madrasahs, originally built in mud brick and covered with decorated ceramic tiles, the Bibi-Khanum Mosque and Mausoleum, the Shakh-i-Zinda compound, which contains a series of mosques, madrasahs and mausoleum, and the ensembles of Gur-Emir and Rukhabad, as well as the remains of Ulugh-Bek's Observatory.



**THE ARCHITECTURE AND TOWNSCAPE OF SAMARKAND, SITUATED AT THE CROSSROADS OF ANCIENT CULTURES, ARE MASTERPIECES OF ISLAMIC CULTURAL CREATIVITY.**

ENSEMBLES IN SAMARKAND SUCH AS THE BIBI KHANUM MOSQUE AND REGISTAN SQUARE PLAYED A SEMINAL ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE OVER THE ENTIRE REGION, FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN TO THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT.

**CULTURAL VISIT WILL INCLUDE:**

- ✓ **REGISTAN ENSEMBLE**
- ✓ **GURI EMIR MAUSOLEUM**
- ✓ **KONIGIL PAPER MILL**
- ✓ **BIBIKHANUM MOSQUE**
- ✓ **AFRASIYAB MUSEUM**