



VMFA

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

ALONG CENTRAL ASIA'S SILK ROAD

October 19-November 4, 2020

17 days from \$6,694 total price from Washington, DC
(\$6,095 air & land inclusive plus \$599 airline taxes and fees)



This tour is provided by
Odysseys Unlimited,
six-time honoree
Travel & Leisure's World's
Best Tour Operators award.



**An Exclusive Small Group Tour for
Members of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts**

*With Dr. John Henry Rice, E. Rhodes and
Leona B. Carpenter Curator of South Asian and Islamic Art*

VMFA

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

Dear VMFA Members,

Join VMFA on an exclusive 17-day small group tour to Central Asia. Encounter a mélange of culture and religion, art and architecture that conjures tales of trade and treasure, intrigue and empire. Traveling with you will be **Dr. John Henry Rice, E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Curator of South Asian and Islamic Art.**

Begin in the showpiece Turkmen capital, Ashgabat, with a tour of the National Museum of History and the UNESCO archaeological site of Nisa. Uncover Khiva's storied past with a tour of the Itchan Kala, another UNESCO treasure. In ancient Bukhara, watch silk weavers at work and visit the home of a Sufi miniaturist, where we enjoy lunch. Continue on to legendary Samarkand and witness its treasures, including a visit to the Gur Emir Mausoleum, Tamerlane's tomb. Next is Uzbekistan's fascinating capital, Tashkent, with its treasured 8th-century Quran, Chorsu Bazaar, and a visit to a renowned ceramicist's studio. Conclude the tour in Russian-accented Almaty, Kazakhstan's largest city, ascending a mountain for panoramic views.

Space on this exciting program is limited and will fill quickly. Your deposit is fully refundable up until 45 days before departure. Book risk-free today!

Sincerely,

Adele "Hutch" Livingston
Coordinator of Member Travel

VMFA RESERVATION FORM: ALONG CENTRAL ASIA'S SILK ROAD

Enclosed is my/our deposit for \$_____ (\$500 per person) for _____ person(s) on **Along Central Asia's Silk Road** departing **October 19, 2020**. I/We understand the final payment is due at least 45 days prior to departure. Payment may be made by American Express, Discover, MasterCard, VISA, or by personal check. **Please make check payable to Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., and send, with completed reservation form, to: Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., Attn: Special Interest Groups, One Newton Place, 275 Washington Street, Suite 300, Newton, MA 02458. You may also call Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. toll-free at 888-370-6765, or you may fax your reservation to 617-454-9199.**

Full Passport Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Gender _____

Full Passport Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Gender _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Cell Phone (_____) _____

E-mail(s) _____ Badge Name(s) _____

Please book my/our air from _____ I/We request a Business Class upgrade

I will share a room with _____ I request a single room (limited availability)

Please Note: The undersigned has read the schedule of activities for **Along Central Asia's Silk Road, October 19-November 4, 2020**, and agrees that their signature below represents their acceptance of the General Terms and Conditions.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

Method of Payment Check American Express Discover MasterCard VISA

Account # _____ Security Code _____ Exp. Date _____

Name of Cardholder _____

Signature _____

Final invoicing will be sent by our tour operator, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. The balance of the program price must be paid to Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. Final payment is due at least 45 days prior to departure, and is payable by check or credit card.

ALONG CENTRAL ASIA'S SILK ROAD

17 days from \$6,694 total price from Washington, DC
 (\$6,095 air & land inclusive plus \$599 airline taxes and fees)

Traveling the ancient Silk Road connecting East and West, we encounter a *mélange* of culture and religion, art and architecture that conjures tales of trade and treasure, intrigue and empire. On this exciting small group journey, we relish the exotic – and embrace the humanity we share with the welcoming people of Central Asia.



Day 1: Depart U.S. for Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

Day 2: Arrive Ashgabat Upon arrival in the Turkmen capital late tonight, we transfer directly to our hotel.

Day 3: Ashgabat After time to rest this morning and have lunch on our own, we meet our tour director and fellow travelers at a welcome briefing. Then we begin our journey along the Silk Road with a panoramic tour of this showpiece city known for its 543 white marble buildings and monuments to the glories of the Turkmen. We tour the well-regarded National Museum of History and the Turkmen Carpet Museum, then enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant. *B,D*

Day 4: Ashgabat/Nisa This morning we experience our first Central Asia bazaar, where locals come from both the city and surrounding desert to sell their wares, including large hand-woven carpets. Next we visit an Akhal-Teke horse stud farm for a demonstration by these “Golden Horses,” the national symbol of Turkmenistan, followed by lunch at the farmhouse. Later we visit the UNESCO archaeological site of Nisa, ancient capital of the Parthian Empire dating to the 3rd century BCE. *B,L,D*

Day 5: Ashgabat/Dashoguz/Khiva, Uzbekistan We fly this morning to Dashoguz, Turkmenistan, whose environs host the ancient capital of the Khorezm. Time permitting, we visit the ruins of the Izmukshir Fortress. From here we continue to the Uzbek border crossing then travel on to Khiva. *B,L,D*

Day 6: Khiva We get a taste of Khiva’s storied past as a major Silk Road trading post on a morning tour of the Itchan Kala, the “inner city” whose entirety is a UNESCO site. Here we see the turquoise-tiled Kalta Minor minaret – enormous, stout, and unfinished; Kunya Ark citadel; the immense Madrassah of Muhammad Rahim Khan, with its tiled façade; the double-domed Pakhlavan Mahmoud Mausoleum; and the Hunarmand artisans workshop. This afternoon: Islam Khoja minaret, Khiva’s tallest; Juma Mosque, with its 200 wooden pillars; and 163-room Tash Hauli Palace. *B,D*

Avg. High (°F)	Oct	Nov
Almaty	61	47
Bukhara	72	57
Samarkand	71	59

Small Group Tour Highlights

White marble city of Ashgabat • UNESCO archaeological site of Nisa • Historic walled city of Khiva • Visits with local artisans • Extensive Bukhara touring • Home-hosted lunch in Bukhara • Legendary Samarkand • Central Asian bazaars in five cities • Visit to Gur Emir Mausoleum • Tashkent touring, including world’s oldest Quran • Russian-accented Almaty

Day	Itinerary	Hotel	Rating
1	Depart U.S. for Ashgabat		
2-4	Ashgabat	Nusay Hotel	Sup. First Class
5-6	Khiva	Hotel Asia Khiva	First Class
7-9	Bukhara	Hotel Zargaron Plaza	First Class
10-12	Samarkand	Hotel Grand Samarkand Superior	First Class
13-14	Tashkent	Hyatt Regency Tashkent	Sup. First Class
15-16	Almaty	InterContinental Almaty	Sup. First Class
17	Depart Almaty for U.S.		

Ratings are based on the Hotel & Travel Index, the travel industry standard reference.

Cover photo: Samarkand’s Registan has served as the city’s public square since antiquity.



Almaty's Ascension Cathedral, which we visit on Day 16

Day 7: Khiva/Bukhara This morning we journey through the Kyzylkum Desert to Bukhara, with lunch en route. Upon arrival in this ancient city of Silk Road commerce and religious piety, we visit the Chor Minor madrassah, with its four minarets. This evening we dine at Akbar House, the preserved home of a 19th-century Jewish merchant. *B,L,D*

Day 8: Bukhara Today begins with a walking tour of the 16th-century Lyab-i Hauz religious complex. We continue to the domed Taki-Telpak Furushon bazaar known for its headgear: embroidered skull caps, turbans, and heavy fur hats, then on to a bazaar where we watch silk weavers at work. Next, we return to the Old Jewish Quarter to visit the home of a Sufi miniaturist, where we learn about his craft and enjoy a traditional lunch of *plov* – lamb and rice – the Uzbek national dish. Touring continues this afternoon at the Poi Kalyan religious center and the Chashma-Ayub Mausoleum. *B,L*

Day 9: Bukhara/Gijduvan Today, we call on one of the most sacred pilgrimage sites for Central Asian Muslims: the Memorial Complex of Naqshband. The 14th-century Sufi theologian who mentored the emperor Timur and whose mausoleum is now considered the “Central Asian Mecca,” Bahauddin Naqshband founded the world’s largest order of Sufi Muslims. We continue on to the nearby village of Gijduvan to visit the Narzullaev Ceramics Workshop, where seven generations of potters have been fabricating bowls and plates using traditional methods, designs, and colors for more than a century. After lunch at a local restaurant, we return to Bukhara. *B,L,D*

Day 10: Bukhara/Samarkand We begin our last day in Bukhara with a visit to the massive earthen Ark of Bukhara Fortress, which served as an active fort

from its 5th-century origins until 1920. We continue on to the Sitorai Mokhi-Palace, a jumble of Russian and Bukharan influences and the summer residence of the last emir of Bukhara. Next, we travel by train to Samarkand, legendary stop on the Silk Road. Upon arrival early this evening, we enjoy dinner together then get our first glimpse of vast Registan, the mosaic-tiled public square flanked by three ornate madrassahs that have stood here for centuries. *B,L,D*

Day 11: Samarkand Alexander the Great and Genghis Khan left their marks on Samarkand, as did Tamerlane (Timur), who made it capital of his Islamic empire in the 14th century. Our touring begins at Registan Square, once and current heart of the city. We continue to 15th-century Bibi-Khanym mosque, and Siyob Bazaar, the city’s largest market. This afternoon we visit a historic winery for a tour and tasting. *B,L*

Day 12: Samarkand This morning we visit the Afrasiyab Museum. We then visit the 15th-century Ulugh Beg Observatory and the Meros Paper Mill. We then enjoy a small group highlight as we join a local family for lunch in their home. Our discovery of this crossroads of culture continues at the Shakh-Zinda necropolis and temple complex, whose 20-plus buildings date from the 11th to the 19th centuries. This evening we pay a visit to the Gur Emir Mausoleum, Tamerlane’s resting place. We dine together tonight at a local restaurant. *B,L,D*

Day 13: Samarkand/Tashkent We travel by motor-coach today to the Uzbek capital, passing through Jilanuti Pass. We continue on to Tashkent, arriving early this afternoon. Tonight we attend a performance of ballet, classical music, or opera at the national opera house. *B,L*

“I HAVE NOT TOLD
HALF OF WHAT I SAW ...”

– MARCO POLO

Day 14: Tashkent A morning tour of Uzbekistan’s capital begins in the Old City at the Khazrati Imam Complex of mosques and madrassahs. Here we see the world’s oldest surviving Islamic holy book, the 8th-century Uthman Quran, brought to Tashkent by Tamerlane. Next: Chorsu Bazaar, under whose massive green dome locals purchase everything from pro-duce to clothing. After lunch, we visit the studio of renowned ceramicist Akbar Rakhimov. Tonight we enjoy dinner together at a local restaurant. *B,L,D*



Young Uzbek girl

Day 15: Tashkent/Almaty, Kazakhstan

At the Museum of Applied Arts this morning, we see fine examples of Uzbek crafts, including embroidery, jewelry, ceramics, and carpets. Later, we transfer to the airport for our flight to Almaty. *B*

Day 16: Almaty

Almaty has a decided Russian flavor, as we

see on this morning’s tour. Highlights: Paniflov Park, Ascension Cathedral, and the Museum of Kazakh Musical Instruments. We then ascend nearby Kok Tobe mountain by gondola and enjoy panoramic views of the city and surrounding Tian Shan mountains. Late this afternoon, we attend a falconry demonstration and learn about this ancient nomadic practice before our farewell dinner this evening. *B,L,D*

Day 17: Depart for U.S. Very early this morning we depart for the airport for our connecting flight to the U.S. *B*

Your Tour Price Includes

- Round-trip air transportation from listed cities; all flights within itinerary
- 15 nights’ accommodations in Superior First Class and First Class hotels
- 36 meals: 15 breakfasts, 11 lunches, 10 dinners
- Extensive sightseeing as described, including all entrance fees
- Services of local Odysseys Unlimited Tour Directors
- Private motorcoach transportation throughout your trip
- Luggage handling for one bag per person
- Gratuities for local guides, dining room servers, airport and hotel porters, and all drivers

Museum Curator



Dr. John Henry Rice, E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Curator of South Asian and Islamic Art, joined the VMFA in 2008 as Associate Curator. He received a PhD and MA in the history of art from the University of Pennsylvania, and a BA in art and architectural history from Wesleyan University. A specialist in medieval and early modern South Indian art and architecture, his first task at VMFA was to lead the reinstallation of its world-class South Asian and Himalayan collections in five new galleries.



Cityscape of Bukhara

Tour Departs: October 19, 2020

Prices include int’l airfare and all taxes, surcharges, and fees.

Boston, New York, Washington, DC	\$6,694
Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, San Francisco	\$6,994
Atlanta, Baltimore, Charlotte, Dallas, Philadelphia	\$7,194
Cincinnati, Cleveland, Denver, Detroit, Minneapolis, Orlando, Phoenix, Portland (OR), Seattle, Tampa	\$7,294
Land Only (transfers not included)	\$5,595

Please call if your city is not listed. Prices are per person based on double occupancy and include airline taxes, surcharges, and fees of \$599, which are subject to change until final payment is made.

Single travelers please add \$1,195. All tour prices above (excluding airline taxes, surcharges, and fees) are guaranteed.

Business Class upgrade on round-trip Trans-Atlantic flight: \$4,795 per person in addition to the above costs (upgrade is subject to availability and pricing is subject to change).

Due to strict visa restrictions, no new reservations can be accepted within 95 days of the tour.

Please note: This trip involves a significant amount of walking on uneven terrain and at sites of ancient ruins. You must be in good physical condition to enjoy the tour to its fullest.

For reservations and information, please call Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. toll-free at 888-370-6765

Monday–Friday, 9:00 AM–7:00 PM, Eastern Time
For further information, contact VMFA Member Travel at 804-340-1519

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Please read this information carefully, as payment of a \$500 deposit per person represents your acceptance of the following Terms and Conditions.

Not included in Tour Price: Airfare when purchasing a Land Only Tour package; costs of passports and visas; personal expenses such as beverages, laundry, room service, and meals not specified; airport transfers when purchasing a Land Only package; communication charges; gratuities to your Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director, which are at your discretion (suggested gratuities \$10-\$15 per traveler, per day); optional sightseeing; and travel protection insurance. Additional baggage fees may apply and are subject to change at any time. You should confirm directly with your airline prior to departure.

Cancellations, Refunds, and Changes: If you must cancel your trip, the effective date of cancellation will be upon Odysseys Unlimited, Inc.'s receipt of your notification. Refunds for cancellations are subject to the following per person charges: **cancel 45 days or more before departure: full refund; cancel 44-30 days before departure: 75% of tour price; cancel 29-0 days before departure: no refund.** If you make any changes to your reservation from 44 to 30 days prior to departure, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. will apply a \$400 per person administrative fee, in addition to any fees or penalties imposed by third parties. Changes are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed. If your reservation changes from double occupancy to single occupancy for any reason, you will be charged the single supplement. **No changes are allowed within 30 days of departure. Upon reservation, you must provide your full legal name as it appears on your passport, as well as your date of birth and gender. In the event an airline ticket is issued with incorrect information you have provided, you will be responsible for charges associated with the ticket's reissue.**

Responsibility: The liability of VMFA, as sponsor, and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., as tour operator, is strictly limited. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. purchases transportation, hotel accommodations, and restaurant and other services from independent suppliers not under our control. We serve only as agents for these suppliers in securing tour arrangements, and therefore will not accept responsibility for wrongful, negligent, or arbitrary acts or omissions of these independent contractors, or of their employees, agents, servants, or representatives. VMFA and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. are not liable for injury, damage, loss, accident, or delay that may be caused by events not within our control, including, without limitation, acts of terrorism, war, strikes, the defect of any vehicle, or the negligence or default of any third party. All coupons, receipts, and tickets issued are subject to the terms and conditions specified by the air carriers, cruise lines, and other independent suppliers. We will make every effort to operate our tours as planned, but we reserve the right to make itinerary changes as necessary. If unforeseen circumstances require us to change a hotel, we will select alternative accommodations of the same or better quality.

Health and Medical Issues: We request that you be in good health to participate in this Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. tour. There is a considerable amount of walking, and you must be able to get on and off motorcoaches on your own. We regret that we cannot offer individual assistance; in such cases you must be accompanied by a companion who will assist you. Please note that many of our tour itineraries, for reasons beyond our control, do not accommodate wheelchairs. Please call or e-mail us to inquire and we will do our best to answer any questions you may have. We reserve the right to remove anyone whose physical or mental condition, in our opinion, compromises the operation of the tour or detracts from the enjoyment or safety of the other passengers. In that event, VMFA and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. assume no financial responsibility for any unused portion of the tour.

Air Transportation – Important Information: Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. includes in its tour price round-trip economy air from designated gateway cities as shown, and contracts with those airlines the company feels provide the level of service, routings, and value necessary for your entire trip. While another airline may offer a more direct connection, it may be at a price unavailable at the lower group rates. You will receive your preliminary air schedule approximately 2½ months prior to departure. **Please note that seat assignment on your international flight is usually done at airport check-in. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. is unable to guarantee any seat assignments.** Due to the nature of tour operator tickets, other restrictions apply, including, but not limited to, frequent-flyer mileage accrual, stopovers, alternate travel dates, upgrades, and airline taxes and fees. If you prefer to make your own travel arrangements, Land Only is available on most tours. **Since international and domestic air schedules are subject to change at any time, we recommend that if you choose to make your own airline reservations, you do not purchase non-refundable tickets or those with high penalties for changes. If you choose to make your own air arrangements, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. shall not have any liability for any loss resulting from cancellation of this tour or changes in this tour.**

COVID-19 and Planning Future Travel: We understand that travelers may have some concerns about booking future tours based on the current COVID-19 pandemic. As we look forward, we are hopeful that conditions will be favorable for international travel. However, the safety and security of our guests are always our top priorities and, should U.S. authorities – Department of State and the CDC – deem it unsafe to travel to any of the destinations in the brochure, we would cancel the trip no later than 45 days before departure. In the event of cancellation on our end due to COVID-19 concerns, we will refund all participants in full.



VMFA Travel
200 N. Arthur Ashe Boulevard
Richmond, VA 23220-4007

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JOIN US FOR
AN EXCLUSIVE VMFA
TOUR TO CENTRAL ASIA!

Reserve risk-free: Your deposit is fully refundable up to 45 days before departure