



# **TAJIKISTAN PAMIR HIGHWAY**

**April 18 - May 02, 2025  
Led by Tour Manager David William**

This journey will take you to explore exotic landscapes of snow-covered peaks, high-mountain lakes, and rivers, inhabited by mountain communities living in settlements preserving century-old traditions and customs. History of **Pamir Highway** is over one hundred years, but the history of Pamir itself is over millennia. It was left largely untouched by the ravages of the Soviet occupation and the Taliban's invasion. Archaeological findings testify presence of Zoroastrians, Buddhists, and Muslims in Pamir. The birth date of Pamir Highway can be considered the 14th of March 1981 when lieutenant colonel Bronislav Grombchevskiy read a lecture on "Our interests in Pamir. Military-political outline" at the secret meeting of the General headquarter of the Russian army in Saint Petersburg. The aim of this secret bridgehead was to prepare for any possible invasion of the British Empire to Central Asia.

Ihab Zaki  
Managing Director

Friday, April 18

Arrive in Dushanbe (TAJIKISTAN)



Upon arrival in **Dushanbe**, meet and transfer to *Atlas Hotel* for check-in, rest, and then head to visit the **Museum of Antiquities** with a wonderful collection of Buddhist art from the lost cities of the Kushan Empire, the Greco-Bactrian school of art from various sites along the Oxus and elsewhere. Also see the giant Buddha in Nirvana in the region after the destruction of the Buddhas of Bamiyan. In the afternoon, head to visit **Hisser Historical Complex** then return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. (B,D)

*Note: The night of April 17 is included for immediate check-in.*

Saturday, April 19

Dushanbe - Kala-i-Khum (230 miles)



Begin the day with a drive to **Kala-i-Khum** via M41 Pamir Highway, passing through two Passes with tunnels, with short stops in **Nurek Water reservoir**, **Hulbuk fortress**, before heading to **Kulob town**. Enjoy lunch, then continue the drive through the **Shurabad pass** (2,267 miles), cross some more mountain villages, and enter the Pamirs, where we will see Afghanistan from the right side across the river until Vamar - Rushan district center, where the big difference in lifestyle of Afghan and Tajik Pamirs is visible. See the effort of the Afghans to have their first highway built with no machinery. Transfer to *Karon Hotel* for check-in, dinner and overnight. (B,L,D)

Sunday, April 20

Kala-i-Khum - Bartang (162 miles)



Begin the day with a drive to **Bartang**, visiting en route the **Zoroastrian Historical Fair Temple ruins**, excavated, and preserved by the Government, situated 2.5 miles to the left side of M41 Highway on the top of the mountain after Kalai Khumbb. Drive along the **Panj River** upstream, passing the Vanj Valley, and upon arrival at the **Bartang and Panj Rivers** meeting point, we leave the main road and follow the Bartang River upstream.

Bartang is dotted with small villages, and local farmers carve plots of land out of the mountainsides. Considered one of the most beautiful spots in the western Pamirs, the valley is famous for its superb hiking, hospitable villages, and local musicians. Continue the drive to **Siponj village**, historically used as a shelter from neighboring Afghan slave traders, and upon arrival, transfer to a Homestay for check-in, dinner, and overnight. (B,L,D)

Monday, April 21

Bartang - Kudara (105 miles)



Begin the day with a drive to **Kudara**. This road is through a wild valley with few inhabitants. It is very close to Fedchenko and Grum Grujemaylo glaciers. During the Bolshevik revolution, this valley was the haven for the Basmaches. Upon arrival, transfer to a Homestay for check-in, dinner, and overnight. (B,L,D)

Tuesday, April 22

Kudara - Karakul (81 miles)



After breakfast, begin the drive to **Karakul Lake**, passing through a deserted valley Kok Jar and visit **Shurali Valley**, a large and flat village, with the Kokulbel River flowing to the extreme east. The traces of ancient occupation in the valley include a small Saka necropolis and a collection of intricate geoglyphs without comparison to the Pamirs. Upon arrival in **Karakul**, walk across the lake and village then transfer to a Homestay for check-in, dinner, and overnight. (B,L,D)

Wednesday, April 23

Karakul - Murghab (84 miles)



Begin the day with a drive to **Murghab** (3,630 miles) via the highest pass in the post-Soviet area, **Ak -Baital Pass** (4,655m). Upon arrival, head to visit "Yak House," a handicraft shop, to buy souvenirs then transfer to *Pamir Hotel* or similar for check-in, dinner & overnight. (B,L,D)

Thursday, April 24

Murghab - Bashgumbez (110 miles)



Begin the day with a drive to **Yashil kul and Bulunkul Lakes**, stopping en route at Grot Shakhti to visit Grot **Shakhti** and see the ancient-colored paintings. Continue the drive to Bashgumbez-Yak riding experience and upon arrival transfer to a *Home or Yurt Stay* for check-in, dinner & overnight. **(B,L,D)**

**Friday, April 25**

**Bashgumbez - Langar (93 miles)**



Begin the day with a drive to **Langar** through the Hargushi pass and Khargush pass and upon arrival in **Langar** (3000m), head to visit the first village **Wakhan valley**, one of the wildest landscapes and mostly known for Wakhan Corridor - a result of the Great Game played over the Pamir mountains between Tsarist Russia and England. We will come across shrines with peculiar signs and decorations and about 6,000 petroglyphs near the city, up in the mountain (3900m). Transfer to a Homestay for check-in, dinner, and overnight **(B,L,D)**

**Saturday, April 26**

**Langar - Ishkashim (80 miles)**



Begin the day with a drive to **Ishkashim**, stopping en route to visit **Budha Stupa** in Vrang, a museum of Sufi Muborak Vakhani (Philosopher and poet of the XIX century). His calendar was popular in the East, as was his **Solar Calendar, Ruins of Yamchun fort** (IV-III. BC), and **Bibi Fatima spiritual Hot Spring** named after the Prophet Mohammed's daughter and is well-known as a pilgrimage site for Muslims around the world. Also, visit the **Ruins of Kah Kaha fortress** belongs to a 2nd-century BC monument left from the Kushan era Empire when the Great Silk Road was flourishing. The fortress is the second notable fortification built in Wakhan to defend Western Pamirs after the Yamchun fort. It got its name after a legendary hero and the king of Siaphushes-Qanqaha or Khakha. Continue the drive to Ishkashim, and upon arrival, transfer to a local guesthouse for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

**Sunday, April 27**

**Ishkashim - Khorog**



Begin the day with a drive to **Khorog** (75 miles). Enjoy a tour in one of the side valleys to visit the famous **Garam Chashma Hot Springs** located in a picturesque mountainous landscape, and for many centuries people believed that the water flows out of the rocks on the slope of Shakhdara Range is sacred. Later continue to **Khorog** (2,069m). Upon arrival, transfer to *Laal Hotel* for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

**Monday, April 28**

**Khorog - Kalai Khumb (162 miles)**



Begin the day with a drive to **Kalai Khumb** (162 miles), and upon arrival, transfer to *Karon Hotel* for check-in; the rest of the day is free at leisure and overnight at the Hotel. **(B,L,D)**

**Tuesday, April 29**

**Kalai Khumb - Dushanbe (213 miles)**



Begin the day with an early morning excursion to the **Zoroastrian Fire Temple Karon** near Kalai Khumb, on the top of the Mountain (2000 m). Until the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Zoroastrianism was professed in Karon, as evidenced by the altar of Otashkada (House of fire), preserved in the settlement. Scientists also found during the excavation of dakhma – crypts in which the remains of the deceased were stored. Continue driving to **Dushanbe** through the North Way and Sagherdasht Pass (3252 m), passing through **Tavildara valley, Nurabad district**, where we can see the construction of the biggest Hydro power station and beautiful Mountain scenarios. Pass some other communities and mountain villages until we arrive in Dushanbe and transfer to *Atlas Hotel* for check-in and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

**Wednesday, April 30**

**Dushanbe - Khujand**



After breakfast, transfer to the airport for our flight to Khujand (1hr) and upon arrival, begin the full-day city tour of **Khujand** by visiting the monument of **Ismail Samani**, built to the memory of Ismail Saman-Khuda, founder of the Samanid dynasty in the 10th century, **Lenin Statue** was erected in 1974 on the 50th anniversary of Lenin's death, when Khujand was then called Leninabad Timur Malik fortress, and the **Archeological Museum**, a regional history museum, built within the Khujand Fortress, reconstructed in 1999 on the southeastern corner of the old city wall. Also, visit the **Mosque and madrasah of Sheikh Musle-hidden**, erected on the tomb of Muslihiddin Khudjandi - the ruler of Khujand, a poet who lived in the 12th century and the **Arbob Cultural Palace**, the former headquarters of a Soviet collective farm, built in the 1950s. End the day with a visit to the Bazaar for some shopping and then transfer to *Khujand Hotel* for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

**Thursday, May 01**

**Khujand - Dushanbe (186 miles)**



Begin the day with a drive back to **Dushanbe**. Drive toward **Iskandar Kul Lake** and cross the museum city of

Istarafsha, one of the most ancient trading centers of Central Asia with some of the oldest intact Islamic buildings in Tajikistan. There are many Handcraft shops, masters of well-known Istarawshan knife, mosques, traditional streets, and several significant madrassa complexes, such a **Blue domed Kok-Gumbaz Mosque**, the **mausoleum of Bobo Tago**, a local aristocrat, the Chor-Gumbaz, and the complexes of Sari Mazor and Hazrati Shoh. Drive to **Iskandar Kul** crossing the Shahrison Pass (3370 m) and Aini Valley. After some rest near the Alexander lakes and Waterfall, continue the drive via Anzob pass, through **Anzob Tunnel** and beautiful **Varzob valley** (one of the tourist zones of Tajikistan) to **Dushanbe** (220 miles). Upon arrival, transfer to the *Hotel* for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Friday, May 02  
Dushanbe - USA



OR continue to **UZBEKISTAN**

Enjoy breakfast and then transfer to the Airport for your flight back to the US. **(B)**

**OR** join us on an exciting journey to **Uzbekistan**.

*"We reserve the right to change the order of activities/visits or sites due to unexpected events such as flight cancellations or changes of schedule, or any other reasons beyond our control. We will do our best to ensure that any necessary changes when/if needed to meet the needs of our clients."*

**Special tour Remarks:**

*Tajikistan is rated as challenging touring due to the daily walking involved (at least two miles a day), some hiking, travel at high altitudes, and several very long driving days. A part of the trip is at a high elevation, ranging from 7,000 to over 14,000 feet (the highest points on the itinerary are Kyzyl-Art Pass, Khargush Pass, and Ak-Baital Pass).*

*Those with a history of medical problems, particularly cardiac or respiratory conditions, must consult a doctor before considering this trip. This program uses guesthouses and rustic hotels, especially in the scenic and charming Pamir Mountains. Guesthouse accommodations are extremely basic – toilets, as are showers, are often shared among all group members, and guesthouses may not have electricity. The group may be in multiple separate guesthouses. If you rely on electricity for CPAP or any other reason, you must have your battery or additional back up.*



## Tour Cost (Land Only): \$4,995.00

Per person sharing in double occupancy

## Single Supplement: \$495.00

Price based on group size minimum of 6 participants and maximum of 12 participants

**Trip Grade: III Lodging Level: \*\*-\*\*\***

worldwide. I have organized every imaginable tour from remote, rugged expeditions to overland African journeys to luxury yachts in the Mediterranean. Leading groups and experiencing their excitement as we travel together is the best part of my job.

This path has given me the opportunity to visit 50 States and over 160 countries on all seven continents. My passion for travel and my tour leading skills and my love for Africa are the perfect mix that equips me to share this special tour with you. I look forward to meeting you!

### Tour Includes:

- Airport / Hotel / Airport transfers.
- Travel by private A/C car.
- Domestic flight Dushanbe - Khujand.
- Accommodation in Dushanbe in 5\* & 4\* hotels and Basic guesthouses/small private hotels will be used for portion of the trip in the mountain.
- 4x4 vehicles for Pamir Highway portion.
- Meals as specified in the itinerary (B: Breakfast, L: Lunch and D: Dinner).
- Entrance Fees to all sites and museums.
- Escort of a tour manager throughout the trip (provided minimum number of travelers is reached).
- English Speaking local guide.
- Gratuities to guide, drivers, and porters (provided minimum number of travelers is reached).

### Trip Grade

**III Challenging** - Parts of the trip are physically challenging, involve hiking on rough terrain or in sand or at high altitudes. There may be long drives on rough roads, weather conditions with high heat or humidity. You may have simple picnic lunches, primitive bathroom facilities along the road and remoteness from modern cities.

### Lodging Level

**\*\* Delightful** - Comfortable yet on the Spartan side, usually small but usually with private facilities. Some stay in private homes or small inns that may lack western style amenities. (2 or 3 stars).

**\*\*\* Superior** - Lodges and hotels with additional amenities, refined service, and comfort level acceptable to western standards. (3 or 4 stars).



**About your Tour Manager, David William...** For as long as I can remember, I always had a deep-rooted need to travel. After graduating from university with a degree in hospitality & tourism management that included two years abroad, one in Oxford, England and the other at École Hôtelière in Lausanne, Switzerland my career as a hôtelier was on a successful track, but I longed to get away.

Twenty years ago, I finally found my niche as a travel consultant and tour leader. During the last two decades, I have had the opportunity to organize and lead groups

### Tour does not include:

- International airfare USA – Dushanbe - USA.
- Tajikistan visa - e-visa <https://www.visa.gov.tj/index.html>.
- Beverages and alcoholic drinks with or without meals.
- Items of a personal nature (camera fees, laundry, emails, excess luggage, etc.).
- Transfers if not arriving/departing on tour dates.
- Dayroom/overnights necessitated by changes in airline schedules or misconnections.
- Trip surcharge to operate below required minimum participants.
- Travel protection insurance (HIGHLY RECOMMENDED).

