

7 Days Gobi Desert Adventure

Trip overview

Unveil the mysteries of the Far West on this immersive **7-day Gobi Desert adventure**. Starting from **Urumqi**, the hub of Central Asia, this private tour takes you through the burning landscapes of **Turpan** and the towering dunes of the **Kumtag Desert**, ending in the legendary old city of **Kashgar**.

Whether you are a history buff retracing the **Silk Road**, a photography enthusiast chasing the desert sunset, or a family seeking a unique cultural escape, this itinerary offers the perfect blend of rugged exploration and premium comfort. Discover ancient ruins, vibrant bazaars, and breathtaking geological wonders with our expert English-speaking guides and private transfers. Experience the soul of Xinjiang in one unforgettable week.

- **Durations:** 7 Days
- **Destinations:** Urumqi - Turpan - Kumtag Desert - Urumqi - Kashgar
- **Tour inquiry:** <https://asiachinatour.com/7-days-gobi-desert-adventure/>

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Urumqi – Gateway to your Xinjiang Adventure

Welcome to the start of your **7-day Xinjiang Kashgar tour**! As you arrive in **Urumqi**, the capital city of Xinjiang, you'll immediately feel the vastness of a region three times the size of France. Known for its mysterious ethnic cultures, snow-capped mountains, and the endless **Gobi Desert**, Xinjiang is a world-class destination for adventure seekers.

Upon your arrival at **Urumqi Diwopu International Airport (URC)** or the train station, your private professional guide and driver will be waiting to escort you. We'll kick off your journey with a deep dive into the vibrant local culture.

Highlights: A Journey Through Time at the Xinjiang Regional Museum

If your flight schedule permits, we will head straight to the most iconic cultural site in the city.

The **Xinjiang Regional Museum** is a must-visit for anyone interested in **Silk Road history** and archaeology. It is world-renowned for its collection of remarkably preserved **ancient mummies**

(dry corpses).

- **The Loulan Beauty:** Meet the museum's most famous resident, the "Loulan Beauty." Dating back approximately **3,800 years**, this mummy was discovered with her skin still retaining elasticity and her features lifelike.
- **Ancient Civilization:** Witness a diverse range of mummies, including infants and couples buried with ancient ornaments, offering a rare glimpse into prehistoric life.
- **Silk Road Artifacts:** History buffs can explore relics from the **Han (206 BC – 220 AD)** and **Tang (618 – 907 AD)** Dynasties. View precious gold coins, intricate Buddhist statues, and rare documents like ancient Uyghur contracts and Kharosthi wooden slips.

Alternative: Sunset Views at Red Mountain Park (Hongshan Park)

Note: Since the museum is closed on Mondays, we will instead visit **Red Mountain Park**. This is the best vantage point in Urumqi to capture panoramic sunset views and see the city lights sparkle against the backdrop of the Tianshan Mountains.

Check-in & Relaxation: After your first day of exploration, your guide will assist with a smooth check-in at the **Excemon Xinjiang Yilite Hotel (4-star)** or a similar high-end accommodation, ensuring you are well-rested for the desert adventure ahead.

- **Meals:** Self-arranged (Your guide can recommend the best local lamb skewers and hand-pulled noodles!)
- **Accommodation:** Excemon Xinjiang Yilite Hotel (4 stars)

Day 2: Urumqi – Alpine Lakes and the Spirit of the Silk Road

Morning: A Fairyland Escape to Heavenly Lake (Tianchi)

After a hearty breakfast, join your private guide for a scenic 1-hour drive to the **Heavenly Lake of Tianshan (Tianchi)**. This UNESCO World Heritage site is a crescent-shaped alpine lake nestled on the northern slopes of **Bogda Peak**.

- **Nature's Canvas:** Wander along miles of serene wooden walkways through lush spruce forests and cascading waterfalls. The turquoise water against the backdrop of snow-capped mountains creates a breathtaking "fairyland" atmosphere.
- **Myth & History:** Legend tells that the lake was the bathing pool of the **Queen Mother of the West**.

- **Top Viewpoints:** For panoramic views, hike up to the **Queen Mother of the West Temple**. Alternatively, enjoy a relaxing **lake cruise** (approx. CNY 100/USD 14) to see the Bogda Peak reflections from the water.

Pro Travel Tips:

- **Gear Up:** *Wear comfortable hiking shoes and apply high-SPF sunscreen, as the mountain UV rays are strong.*
- **Amenities:** *The scenic area is well-equipped with convenience stores and familiar dining options like KFC.*

Afternoon: Cultural Immersion at Xinjiang International Grand Bazaar

In the afternoon, we return to downtown Urumqi to visit the **Xinjiang International Grand Bazaar**, the largest bazaar in the world by scale. This is the heart of Uyghur culture and the soul of **Urumqi tourism**.

- **Iconic Architecture:** Marvel at the 80-meter **Silk Road Tower** and the Islamic-style domes and minarets that define the skyline.
- **A Feast for the Senses:** Explore the bustling outdoor stalls. Scented smoke rises from **mutton kebabs** and **baked buns (Samsa)**. Don't miss the **Naan Museum**, where you can learn about and taste dozens of varieties of this essential Uyghur flatbread.
- **Smart Shopping:** While the main square is great for photos, follow your guide to the **hidden wholesale markets** nearby. This is where locals shop for authentic wool handicrafts, leather goods, and traditional musical instruments at much better prices.

Evening: Nightlife & Folk Performances

At the end of the tour, we will escort you back to your hotel. However, if you wish to experience the vibrant **Urumqi nightlife**, we recommend staying at the Bazaar for a folk dance performance and a spectacular night view. Your guide can help you arrange a taxi back to your hotel later in the evening.

- **Meals:** Western buffet breakfast, Authentic local lunch
- **Accommodation:** Excemon Xinjiang Yilite Hotel (4 stars)

Day 3: Urumqi to Turpan – The Silk Road Oasis & Ancient Engineering

Journey into the "Fire Land"

After breakfast, enjoy a scenic **3.5-hour private drive** from Urumqi to **Turpan**, a legendary oasis known for its scorching temperatures, sweet grapes, and deep Buddhist roots. Despite being China's "hottest place," Turpan is a treasure trove of ancient Silk Road history.

The Karez Irrigation System: An Underground Wonder

Our first stop is the **Karez System**, a masterpiece of ancient engineering comparable to the Great Wall. This 2,000-year-old network of underground canals is the lifeblood of Turpan, channeling snowmelt from the Tianshan Mountains to nourish the region's famous vineyards.

- **Underground Exploration:** Put on a headlamp and descend into the culverts. You can wade through the ancient waterways and feel the natural **18°C (64°F)** coolness—a stark contrast to the heat above.
- **Travel Tip:** The temperature drop is significant; please **bring a light jacket** for the underground portion.

The Ancient City of Jiaohe: A UNESCO World Heritage Site

Next, we explore the **Jiaohe Ancient City**, the world's largest and oldest earthen city. Carved directly out of a high loess plateau, Jiaohe was once a vital Silk Road capital before its destruction by the Mongols.

- **Archaeological Marvels:** Wander through the remains of government offices, Buddhist temples, and residential quarters. Keep an eye out for ancient wheel tracks and Sanskrit inscriptions hidden in the caves.
- **Survival Guide:** Wear **hard-soled hiking shoes** for the rugged terrain. Bring at least **2 liters of water** and sun protection (mask/hat), as there is no shade or shops within the ruins.

Emin Minaret: China's Tallest Islamic Tower

Conclude your afternoon at the **Emin Minaret (Su Gong Ta)**. Standing 44 meters (144 ft) tall, this iconic 18th-century structure is the tallest minaret in China, featuring exquisite floral and geometric brickwork that showcases the fusion of Uyghur and Islamic architectural styles.

Recommended Evening Activities (Optional)

- **Jiaohe Night Tour:** If the daytime heat is too intense, consider the Jiaohe Night Tour. Experience the ruins under the setting sun with live flute solos and poetry readings (available at your own expense).
- **Turpan Night Markets:** For foodies, visit the **Grape Night Market** for street performances or **Xingfu Road Food Street** for an authentic local dining experience with mutton kebabs

and fresh seasonal fruits.

Meals: Western buffet breakfast, Local specialty lunch

Accommodation: Mercure Hotel Turpan Downtown (4 stars)

Day 4: Turpan – Buddhist Grottoes, Flaming Mountains & Ancient Villages

Morning: Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves – A Legacy in the Cliffs After breakfast, we begin the day at the **Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves**, a striking testament to the lost Uighur Buddhist civilization. Carved into the cliffs between the fiery **Flaming Mountains** and the lush Mutou Valley, this complex dates from the 5th to the 14th century.

- **Cultural Mystery:** Explore the 83 surviving caves. While many murals were removed by early 20th-century explorers, the remaining art tells a fascinating story of religious evolution. You'll notice many figures have missing eyes and mouths—a result of ancient local beliefs intended to "deactivate" the spirits within the paintings.

The Flaming Mountains: China's "Oven" Next, we stop at the legendary **Flaming Mountains**. Known for their scorched, red-sandstone slopes, ground temperatures here can exceed **70°C (158°F)**—hot enough to boil an egg in the sand! Fans of Chinese mythology will recognize this as a pivotal setting from the classic tale *Journey to the West*, featuring the hero **Monkey King**.

Mazha Village: A Living Museum of Uyghur Culture Nestled in the Tuyugou Valley lies **Mazha Village**, the oldest existing Uyghur settlement in Xinjiang with over 1,700 years of history.

- **Timeless Life:** Wander through earthen architectural complexes and see elders resting under ancient mulberry trees. It feels like a corner of the world forgotten by time.
- **Grape Drying Houses:** Get a firsthand look at the unique ventilated earth-block structures used to transform fresh grapes into Turpan's world-famous raisins using only the desert wind.

Afternoon: The Ancient City of Gaochang at Sunset We conclude the day at the **Ancient City of Gaochang**, a UNESCO-listed ruin that served as the capital of the Gaochang Kingdom (5th-14th century).

- **Golden Hour Exploration:** We have specifically timed this visit for the late afternoon. Watching the grand palaces, Buddhist temples, and desert fortresses glow under the setting sun is a photographer's dream.
- **Stay Hydrated:** Even in the late afternoon, the desert heat remains intense, so please drink plenty of water during your walk through the ruins.

After the tour, your private guide and driver will escort you back to your hotel for a relaxing evening.

Meals: Western buffet breakfast, Traditional local lunch

Accommodation: Mercure Hotel Turpan Downtown (4 stars)

Day 5: Turpan – Kumtag Desert Adventure – Urumqi

Morning: Thrilling Exploration at the Kumtag Desert After an early breakfast, we leave the "flaming land" of Turpan for a 2-hour drive to the **Kumtag Desert**. We recommend an early start to beat the intense desert heat. As one of the few deserts in the world that directly borders an oasis, Kumtag offers a unique landscape where golden sands meet lush greenery.

- **Spectacular Views:** Enjoy the powder-soft sand and trek to the top of the towering dunes for an expansive view. On clear days, the contrast between the burning desert and the distant **snow-capped mountains** is a photographer's paradise.
- **Desert Activities:** For adventure seekers, several optional activities are available (at your own expense), including **camel trekking**, sand sliding, and high-energy dune buggy rides.

Insider Tips for Desert Adventurers:

1. **Dune Buggy Rides:** *This is a guest favorite! It's like a desert roller coaster as you navigate the steep, hilly dunes—an absolute must-try for adrenaline junkies.*
2. **Sand Sliding:** *To ensure a smooth and fast ride, choose the steepest slopes. It's the ultimate way to feel the scale of the dunes.*
3. **Foot Protection:** *By midday, the sand temperature can rise significantly. We recommend wearing **shoe covers** (available at the entrance) to protect your feet from the hot sand and keep your shoes clean.*

Afternoon: Scenic Drive Back to Urumqi After a fun-filled morning in the dunes, we begin our **4-hour return journey to Urumqi**. This drive is a highlight in itself, offering a "moving gallery" of Xinjiang's diverse scenery. Keep your camera ready as we pass through sprawling **grasslands**, majestic snow mountains, and the iconic rows of giant windmills at the Dabancheng wind farm.

Upon arrival in Urumqi, your guide will assist with your hotel check-in for a well-deserved rest.

Meals: Western buffet breakfast, Local lunch

Accommodation: Excemon Xinjiang Yilite Hotel (4 stars)

Day 6: Urumqi to Kashgar – The Soul of the Silk Road

Fly into the Heart of Southern Xinjiang This morning, we transfer you to Urumqi Airport for a short **1-hour flight to Kashgar**, the spiritual and cultural epicenter of Southern Xinjiang. As you

cross the majestic **Heavenly Mountains (Tianshan)**, you'll enter a world where time seems to stand still. Upon arrival, your local Kashgar guide will meet you to begin your journey into the **Kashgar Old Town**.

Witness the Ancient Gate-Opening Ceremony If our timing is right, we'll arrive at the East Gate of the Old Town just in time for the daily opening ceremony. Watch as locals in vibrant traditional costumes perform ancient dances to the rhythmic melodies of the **Rawap**. It is a breathtaking welcome that transports you back a thousand years to the height of the Silk Road.

Id Kah Mosque: A Landmark of Islamic Architecture Our first major stop is the **Id Kah Mosque**, one of the largest and most influential mosques in China.

- **Architectural Grandeur:** Admire the iconic bright yellow facade, the grand arch-shaped gate, and the soaring minarets.
- **Peaceful Interior:** Inside, the prayer halls are supported by hundreds of intricately carved green wooden pillars, capable of holding tens of thousands of worshippers during major festivals.

Exploration of Handicraft Street & Local Artisans Next, we wander through the famous **Handicraft Street**, a living museum of Uyghur heritage.

- **Master Craftsmen:** Watch potters shape clay by hand and coppersmiths hammer shimmering vessels.
- **Musical Heritage:** Visit shops filled with pear-shaped **Dutars** and **Rawaps**. You might even catch a spontaneous live performance by the shopkeepers. This is the perfect place to find authentic, locally-made woodcarvings, textiles, and hand-woven carpets.

A Sip of History: The Hundred-Year-Old Tea House We conclude our stroll at the legendary "**A Hundred-Year-Old Tea House**." Cinema fans will recognize this as a key filming location for the movie *The Kite Runner*.

- **The Slow Life:** If we're lucky, we'll snag a window seat—the same spot where Amir's father watched the kite race in the film.
- **Cultural Connection:** Sip traditional medicinal tea, enjoy local snacks, and watch local elders play the **Dombra** and flute. Don't be shy—visitors are often encouraged to join in the singing and dancing!

Meals: Western buffet breakfast, Traditional Uyghur lunch

Accommodation: Radisson Blu Hotel Kashgar (5 stars)

Day 7: Farewell to Kashgar – The Eternal City

Morning: A Peaceful Final Stroll through Kashgar Old Town On your final morning in Xinjiang, we recommend rising early to witness **Kashgar Old Town** at its most serene. Before the tourist crowds arrive, the labyrinthine alleys belong to the locals.

- **The City's Rhythm:** Wander aimlessly through the earth-yellow streets as the morning sun casts long shadows on mottled walls. You'll encounter a side of Kashgar few travelers see: the gentle stroll of Uyghur elders, the chirping of early birds, and the local milkmen (known as 'Aka') making their rounds on bicycles.
- **Capturing the Moment:** This is the perfect time for quiet reflection and final photography, soaking up the ancient atmosphere that has defined this Silk Road hub for millennia.

Departure and Onward Journey Your **7-day private Xinjiang & Kashgar adventure** concludes today. Depending on your flight or train schedule, your private guide and driver will provide a seamless transfer to the **Kashgar Airport (KHG)** or the railway station for your onward journey.

Meals: Western buffet breakfast

[Tailor Your Next Silk Road Adventure Now!](#) Not ready to leave yet? We specialize in creating bespoke itineraries across Central Asia. Whether you want to:

- **Extend in Xinjiang:** Discover the alpine beauty of **Sayram Lake** or the lush **Nalati Grasslands**.
- **The Grand Silk Road Loop:** Continue through the rainbow mountains of **Gansu** and [the salt lakes of Qinghai](#).

Feel free to [contact us](#) to tailor-make your next dream expedition. Safe travels!

Booking Policy

Cancellation Policy

Cancellation by Customer

- Cancellation received before 60 days: FREE of charge
- Cancellation received from 30 days to 59 days prior arrival date: 20% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 15 days to 29 days prior arrival date: 40% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 7 days to 14 days prior arrival date: 70% of total rate
- Cancellation received less than 7 days prior arrival date or No show: 100% of total rate

Children Policy

The rate for children applicable for one child sharing a twin or double cabin with two adults.

- For infant (<04 years old): Free of Charge
 - 04 - 11 years old without bed: 50% adult rate
 - 04 - 11 years old with extra bed: 75% adult rate
 - Above 11 years old with extra bed: 100% adult rate
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