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Shahrisabz Group Day Tour (Self-Guided)

Duration: 1 days / 0 nights

## Day 1: Day 1: Samarkand to Shahrissabz Discovery

Full-day self-guided adventure from Samarkand to Shahrissabz, exploring the birthplace of Amir Temur with stops at Teshik Tosh viewpoint, Konigil village artisan workshops, and UNESCO World Heritage monuments. Flexible timing for photography and personal exploration.

### AM:

#### Hotel Pickup in Samarkand

Morning pickup from your Samarkand hotel or accommodation. Meet your English-speaking driver and begin the scenic journey south toward the Kashkadarya region.

#### Takhtakaracha Mountain Pass Crossing

Scenic drive across the magnificent Takhtakaracha Pass (2,675m elevation), offering panoramic views of the Zarafshan mountain range. Watch the landscape transform from ancient cities to rural farmlands, vineyards, and highland scenery. Perfect photo opportunities of the winding mountain road.

#### Teshik Tosh Natural Viewpoint

Stop at Teshik Tosh ("Rock with the Hole"), a dramatic natural arch formation with stunning views of Karatepinskoe Reservoir below. This scenic location was chosen as the filming site for the famous Soviet Western movie "Apachen" due to its resemblance to the American Southwest. Capture photos and enjoy the wild landscape.

#### Konigil Village Artisan Workshops

Visit traditional Konigil village to witness centuries-old crafts. Watch master artisans demonstrate silk paper-making using mulberry bark—a technique brought from China via the Silk Road over 1,000 years ago. Explore pottery workshops showcasing traditional Uzbek glazing methods, and see the oil-making factory using ancient pressing techniques. Opportunity to purchase authentic handmade souvenirs.

### PM:

#### Ak-Saray Palace Ruins

Arrive in Shahrissabz and explore the towering Ak-Saray Palace gateway (38m high), once the largest portal in Central Asia. Marvel at the intricate blue and white tilework bearing Temur's inscription: "If you doubt our power, look at our buildings!" Walk through the ruins imagining the original palace that covered 6 hectares. Take your time photographing the architectural details.

#### Lunch Break

Free time for lunch at local restaurants in Shahrissabz (own expense). Your driver can recommend authentic Uzbek eateries serving plov, shashlik, lagman, and regional specialties. Vegetarian options available.

#### Kok-Gumbaz Mosque

Visit the elegant Kok-Gumbaz Mosque ("Blue Dome Mosque") with its stunning turquoise dome and peaceful courtyard. Built in the 15th century, this active mosque showcases the mathematical precision of medieval Islamic architecture. Please dress modestly (shoulders and knees covered).

#### Dorut-Tilavat Memorial Complex

Pay respects at the Dorut-Tilavat complex housing the mausoleums of Amir Temur's family members and his spiritual teacher Shamsiddin Kulol. Learn about Timurid dynasty history and the architectural significance of these sacred structures. Quiet reflection time in the peaceful gardens.

#### Return Journey to Samarkand

Late afternoon departure from Shahrissabz via the scenic mountain route. Enjoy the changing light on the Zarafshan mountains as you ascend Takhtakaracha Pass for the return journey. Relax and reflect on the day's discoveries.

#### Hotel Drop-off in Samarkand

Arrive back in Samarkand and drop-off at your hotel or preferred location in the city center. End of service.