CENTRAL ASIA
SILK ROUTE, KYRGYZSTAN AND TAJIKISTAN
Optional Extension: Uzbekistan
19 SEPTEMBER - 5 OCTOBER 2020
Ignacio Palacios
Kyrgyzstan is a rugged Central Asian country along the Silk Road, the ancient trade route between China and the Mediterranean. The Tian Shan mountains, which surround the old caravan route and dominate the country, are home to snow leopards, lynx and sheep. In the south, the millennia-old city of Osh has a huge, busy bazaar that was once a stop on the Silk Road.
Kyrgyzstan is the gateway of Central Asia. It is a nation defined by its natural beauty. Amazing landscapes, stark craggy ridges and rolling jailoos (summer pastures) are brought to life by semi-nomadic, yurt-dwelling shepherds.

As dusk descends, shepherds guide their flocks home in the Fann mountains of Uzbekistan.
Over 90% of the land in Tajikistan is upland with some of the most inspiring, high-altitude landscapes in the world. In among this natural marvel are scattered villages and towns that survive through each extreme seasonal condition. It hasn't been easy for these traditional communities to adapt to the changing world beyond their mountain strongholds, but despite this they are unfailingly welcoming of outsiders.
Central Asia is a region that sparks curiosity, intrigue, and adventure. An expedition across Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan will take you across borders, over high mountain passes, and into remote communities, all while growing your photography skills.

You will see this iconic land at its best and if your partner is not a keen photographer, we would invite you to bring her/him along as you will both enjoy the rich photo opportunities as well as an amazing cultural experience and natural wonders. With its beautiful light, wild landscapes and rich cultural heritage, Central Asia will feed the imagination of any traveler/photographer.

“If you’re a lover of landscape photography or a lover of portraiture, join us as we drive across the Tian Shan range of Kyrgyzstan into the Pamir Mountains of Tajikistan.”

The medieval ark fortress in Khiva, Uzbekistan
DAY 1 - 19 September - Arrive in Bishkek
Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, borders Central Asia’s Tien Shan range. It’s the gateway to the Kyrgyz Ala-Too mountains and Ala Archa National Park, with glaciers and wildlife trails. The city’s arts scene encompasses the monumental State Museum of Fine Arts and the colonnaded Opera and Ballet Theater. The vast, central Ala-Too Square features the Manas monument, honoring the hero of the Kyrgyz Epic of Manas.
Upon arrival, you will be met by your expedition leader and you will be transferred to your hotel. Today is a free day to wander the city and explore the sights while your fellow travelers fly in from around the world through the day. Overnight at the Ambassador Hotel.

DAY 2 - 20 September - Bishkek to Bokonbayevo via Tokmok
Bokonbayevo is a picturesque village located at 1800m on the south shore of Lake Issyk-Kul. Located between the Terskey Ala-Too Mountains and the shore of Issyk-Kul, it draws in visitors with its natural beauty and traditional Kyrgyz character. On the way to Bokonbayevo, we’ll stop at the Burana Tower, a large minaret in northern Kyrgyzstan. The tower, along with grave markers, some earthworks and the remnants of a castle and three mausoleums, is all that remains of the ancient city of Balasagun, which was established at the end of the 9th century.
We’ll also stop at scenic places along the way for some landscapes and in case we encounter any photogenic shepherds, nomads, or riders. Depending on our arrival time, we can meet some local hunters who use Golden Eagles for an evening shoot. Overnight at Guest House.

DAY 3 - 21 September - Bokonbayevo to Kochkor
The day will start with a portrait session with another local hunter who uses Golden Eagles. After breakfast, we’ll set out towards Kochkor. Enjoy the scenery of beautiful lake Issyk-Kul and stop along the way for landscapes. Later, in Kochkor, we will meet with some traditional Kyrgyz wrestlers. This will be a great opportunity to practice both natural light portraiture as well as learning how to expertly use off-camera flash and reflectors. If there’s still daylight when we’re done, we can explore the village of Kochkor and meet with more locals for portraiture. Overnight at a local homestay.

DAY 4 - 22 September - Kochkor to Songkol Lake
Enjoy the scenery and nomadic life as we stop at several nomadic camps to meet Kyrgyz nomads and learn more about their life. We’ll eventually get to Songkol Lake, where our home for two nights will be a shepherd’s yurt. Songkol Lake is an alpine lake at an altitude of 3,016 meters. It’s a remote location, surrounded by pasture land and mountains. We’ll stay in a shepherd’s yurt, a traditional round tent used by nomads in Central Asia, which will be our home for two nights. Basic nomadic accommodations in a yurt. Sharing.

“One of the last travel frontiers, Central Asia is vast, remote and incredibly beautiful. And it has opened to the world... so it is a great opportunity to visit and photograph this amazing country. If you love the outdoors, you’ll fall in love with this region.”
DAY 5 - 23 September - Songkol Lake
After an evening well spent in the yurt and with local shepherds, we have a whole day to engage with Songkol Lake. This will give us some great access to local nomadic living and the opportunity to explore environmental and “work” portraits as our hosts go about their daily lives, albeit with more paparazzi. Basic nomadic accommodations in a yurt. Sharing.

DAY 6 - 24 September - Songkol to Osh
A long drive will take us to Osh, Kyrgyzstan’s second largest city and the largest city in the southern regions near the Pamirs. The landscape on the drive is beautiful with steppe and rolling hills. As it’s a long journey, our photographic stops will be short. Today is mostly a travel day.

Osh is the oldest city in Kyrgyzstan and has a diverse population of Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, and Tajiks. It has excellent markets, a rich history on the Silk Route, and a bustling main square. While we won’t have time to explore the city on this day, an optional extension at the end of the trip can take you around Osh and across the border to Uzbekistan. Overnight at the Classic Hotel.

DAY 7 - 25 September - Osh to Karakul
The expedition to the Pamir begins! The change in landscape will be clear as we drive from green, pasture-filled Kyrgyzstan to more rugged Tajikistan. We’ll leave in the morning to head to Karakul village in Tajikistan. We’ll cross land borders in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan before landing on the edge of Karakul Lake, meaning Black Lake in Kyrgyz. The lake itself is at 3,960 meters above sea level and has a diameter of 52 kilometers. Much grazing occurs around the lake, so we’ll use this opportunity to take portraits and landscapes. Overnight at homestay.

DAY 8 - 26 September - Karakul to Murghab
After a morning of exploring the village, understanding the high-altitude life, and photographing locals, we will continue on the Pamir Highway to Murghab. En route, we cross the pass of Akbaital at 4,655 meters. Those interested in landscapes will have plenty of opportunities, as well as those interested in wildlife. Marmots dot the roadside and, if we’re lucky, curious foxes and large birds of prey will cross our path.

For the portrait enthusiast, Murghab is a great place. It is the largest town in the eastern half of Gorno-Badakshan, though it tops out at just a few thousand. Murghab is at the junction of trade with China, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan with many local tradespeople. Though in Tajikistan, the population is 75% Kyrgyz. Each has a unique story about the town. Overnight at homestay.
A spirited game of Buzkashi, played with a goat carcass at full gallop, is the national game across Central Asia. “A culture of huge hospitality makes locals more accessible. It is great to meet people willing to open their doors to strangers…”

DAY 9 - 27 September - Murghab to Jarty Gumboz
After enjoying Murghab in the morning light, we’ll depart for Jarty Gumboz via Aidinkol Lake. Today, we’ll be looking for Marco Polo sheep. Near the lake, there is a wilderness gorge where we may be able to spot the sheep with the longest horns of any sheep. While they’re shy and quick animals, near-threatened in the region, we’ll spend the day trying to photograph their spiraling horns. In the evening, we can visit the nomads in their camp yurts or take a break relaxing in the nearby hot springs. Overnight at homestay. Sharing.

DAY 10 - 28 September - Jarty Gumboz to Langar
Today will be the Pamir Highway in all its glory – a long, bumpy drive included! But, the reward will be arrival in the Wakhan Valley. We’ll have lunch in Alichor, another famous Marco Polo stop. To break up the drive, we can also stop to visit pastures of the nomads. We’ll cross Khargush Pass at 4,130 meters. The Hindu Kush will be in full view, and you’ll feel at the intersection of some epic adventures with Pakistan and Afghanistan so close. Descending the pass, we’ll enter the picturesque village of Langar with many opportunities for portraits. Overnight at homestay.

DAY 11 - 29 September - Langar to Yamg
Continuing along the Panj River, which separates Tajikistan and Afghanistan, we’ll journey to Yamg. Along the way, we’ll stop in Vrang to visit the Buddhist Stupa there, which is estimated to have been built in the 4th century. In Yamg, we’ll begin to get to know the village by visiting the Museum of Suli Mulbork-Kadami Vakhan. Set in a traditional Pamiri house, the family-run museum details the local Sufi scholar, traveler, and poet who was influential in the region until his death in 1910. We’ll then continue interactions with the locals, visiting homes and drinking tea. Portraits will abound, and we can play with many different lighting techniques. Overnight at homestay.

DAY 12 - 30 September - Yamg to Ishkashim
From Buddhism to Sufism, on our drive today we’ll explore Yamchun Fortress with Zoroastrian history. Built in 3rd century BC, the fortress overlooks an interlacing Panj River and once controlled trade and provided defense across the Wakhan Valley. From the fortress, it is a short drive to Ishkashim. Ishkashim shares a name with the Afghan town across the river. A bridge links the two towns and countries. We’ll explore nearby villages for portraits and experience Pamiri hospitality. Overnight at homestay.
DAY 13 - 1 October - Ishkashim to Khorog
Khorog, the capital of the Gorno-Badakhshan region, is our next stop. Khorog has historical importance in the region as a site in The Great Game and in modern Tajik history following Tajikistan's civil war. It is the Pamir's largest town. With a couple of universities, the day can be spent wandering the city’s parks and cultural sites while engaging with friendly locals. This is also a day to freshen up and enjoy a cup of coffee! Overnight at Guest House.

DAY 14 - 2 October - Khorog to Bulun Kul
Veering back to the Pamir Highway, we’ll head east out of Khorog to Bulun Kul Lake. We’ll visit several villages along our way, such as Gund, for portraits. We’ll then cross the Koi Tezek pass at 4,250 meters providing for landscape opportunities. Bulun Kul is one of two fresh-water alpine lakes in the area. The wetlands and vegetation around the lake support many species of birds. We’ll have the day to explore the village and local scenery high in the Pamir Mountains. Overnight at homestay.

DAY 15 - 3 October - Bulun Kul to Rangkol
We’ll be coming full circle today. Departing early to get a jump on the Pamir Highway, we’ll head to Rangkol. Rangkol is close to the Chinese border, and we’ll cross back through Murghab on the way. Landscape opportunities are en route, as well as a visit to the Shakti Cave rock paintings. At the village of Rangkol, we’ll explore the village, interact with locals, and take portraits. Overnight at homestay.

DAY 16 - 4 October - Rangkol to Os
Our final day on the Pamir Highway will start early as we head back to Osh in Kyrgyzstan. We’ll use the same route we took to come into Tajikistan, but this time it will be seen in a new light. We’ll cross the borders in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, descending into Sarytash for lunch. From Sarytash, we’ll continue to Osh. After freshening up in Osh, we can sneak in some last portraits in Osh’s markets, town square, and diverse neighborhoods. Overnight at Classic Hotel.

DAY 17 - 5 October - Depart via Osh or Bishke
Catch a local flight from Osh to Bishkek or an international flight from Osh with plenty of full memory cards, loaded hard drives, and new photography skills!

Or, if you’re curious to explore more of the heart of Central Asia? Hope across the border in Osh to the Ferghana Valley of Uzbekistan on our extension expedition.
A culture of huge hospitality makes locals more accessible. It is great to meet people willing to open their doors to strangers.

Optional Extension: Uzbekistan (8 days, 7 nights)
If your interest in the Silk Route and Central Asia is piqued through your travels through Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, an extension expedition to Uzbekistan will bring it full circle. Crossing the land border from Osh, Kyrgyzstan into the Ferghana Valley of Uzbekistan, you will immediately be struck by the historical significance of the country. Spend time testing your photographic skills at Uzbekistan’s incredible monuments and engaging with locals in the rural villages of the Nurata Mountains. Then there’s also an option to photograph the epic game of buzkashi.

Day 1 - October - Osh to Tashkent
Minivan from Kyrgyzstan to Uzbekistan, cross the land border from Osh, Kyrgyzstan into Uzbekistan in the morning. You’re now in the rich Ferghana Valley of Uzbekistan, which is famous for agriculture, industry, and trade. While we’ll drive to Uzbekistan’s capital Tashkent today, we’ll stop on route to visit local artisans. First, we’ll visit an ikat designer and weaver who produces the fabrics that are once sold along the Silk Route. Bukhara as a region has been inhabited for over five millennia, and it has over 140 architectural monuments. The great UNESCO World Heritage Site, the blue-tiled madrasas and mosques are stunning. In the evening, we’ll have a brief tour documenting some of the city’s history both in ancient and modern times. We’ll also scout out some locations to shoot so that we can take full advantage of our full day here tomorrow. Overnight at Komil Bukhara Boutique Hotel.

Day 2 - October - Tashkent to Bukhara
As the evening light begins, we’ll either fly or take the train from Tashkent to Bukhara, a hub on the Silk Route. Bukhara as a region has been inhabited for over five millennia, and it has over 140 architectural monuments. The great UNESCO World Heritage Site, the blue-tiled madrasas and mosques are stunning. In the evening, we’ll have a brief tour documenting some of the city’s history both in ancient and modern times. We’ll also scout out some locations to shoot so that we can take full advantage of our full day here tomorrow. Overnight at Komil Bukhara Boutique Hotel.

Day 3 - October - Bukhara
We’ll wake early to catch some of the monuments in their morning light and when people are scarce. The madrasas shine in this light and the city vendors are just waking to set to work. Following the morning shoot, we’ll enjoy a typical Uzbek breakfast in the 19th century dining room of the Komil Hotel. During the day, we’ll continue a city tour spanning old caravanserais and trading domes of the Silk Route to the Ark of Bukhara fortress that stood until it fell to Russia in 1920.

As the evening light begins, we’ll either fly or take the train from Bukhara to the Nurata Mountains where we’ll be staying at a local village. The Nurata Mountains will be much smaller than what we saw in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan—the highest point is only 2,169 meters. Villages are scattered throughout the mountains, and legend has it that people have been living in the mountains since Alexander the Great’s time. When we arrive, we’ll have a traditional lunch of plov, then set out on a hike to catch the light at sunset. Overnight at homestay.

Day 4 - October - Nurata Mountains
Depending on your photographic interests, this day in rural Uzbekistan will be spent doing portraiture in homes or doing more active portraiture. Villagers, who are ethnically Tajik, will open their doors for home-based portraits. We’ll have numerous cups of green tea and local bread while sharing stories. Here, we’ll focus on indoor portraits. As the light outside begins to change, it’s possible to arrange to see a “work” portraits of herding and cooking. There will be landscape opportunities as well. Overnight at homestay.

Day 5 - October - Nurata Mountains to Samarkand
We’ll depart early from the village to travel to the big city of Samarkand. For many in the region, the thought of Uzbekistan, they think of Samarkand and the famous Registan. Following, we’ll visit an ikat designer and weaver who produces the fabrics that were once sold along the Silk Route. It was one of the oldest, continuously inhabited cities in Central Asia. It was an important location on the Silk Route, it was also one of the greatest cities of Central Asia. As the evening light begins, we’ll visit the famous Mausoleums of Shah-i-Zinda. Translating to “The Living King,” this is an incredible necropolis. Completed over eight centuries, Shah-i-Zinda consists of numerous mausoleums as well as numerous legends. The variety and detail of the various mausoleums inside and out will be a final celebration of change. We’ll then take an evening train back to the modern-day capital of Samarkand. Overnight at Sharq Hotel.

Day 6 - October - Samarkand to Tashkent
In the morning, we’ll set out on a tour of ancient Samarkand. In the 14th century, Samarkand was the capital of the empire of Timur—who also known as Tamerlane—one of the most powerful rulers of the Muslim world at the time. Timur’s Mausoleum and a return to the Registan—consisting of three distinct Madrassas—will kick off the morning. We’ll also visit the local market to interact with the vendors and sample Samarkand’s famous breads.

For history lovers, we will go to the ancient city of Afrasiyab, just north of Samarkand. It was occupied from 500 BC until 1220 AD and was a center of Sogdian culture. Telling wall paintings are kept in the museum at the site, which document ancient interaction with the Chinese traders and royalty and Zoroastrian religious leaders from Iran.

Finally, we’ll head to Shah-i-Zinda. Translating to “The Living King,” this is an incredible necropolis. Completed over eight centuries, Shah-i-Zinda consists of numerous mausoleums as well as numerous legends. The variety and detail of the various mausoleums inside and out will be a final celebration of change. We’ll then take an evening train back to the modern-day capital of Samarkand. Overnight at Sharq Hotel.

Day 7 - October - Bukhara to Tashkent
In the morning, we’ll either fly from Bukhara to the Nurata Mountains where we’ll be staying at a local village. The Nurata Mountains will be much smaller than what we saw in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan—the highest point is only 2,169 meters. Villages are scattered throughout the mountains, and legend has it that people have been living in the mountains since Alexander the Great’s time. When we arrive, we’ll have a traditional lunch of plov, then set out on a hike to catch the light at sunset. Overnight at homestay.

Day 8 - October - Tashkent
Today, you’ll catch your international flight from Tashkent, a well-connected international airport. If the flight is later in the day, we can explore Tashkent’s main market and its sprawling post-soviet gardens by hopping on the metro, which is a piece of art in itself.

Optional Addition: Bukhara
Depending on the time of year, it’s possible to arrange to see a local buzkashi match. Bukhasti, meaning “goat pulling,” is a Central Asian sport—a game of较量 over a goat carcass, trying to get it into a goal on the other side of the pitch. It’s an action-packed game, which is great pride to the locals. The game makes for beautiful, intense, and passionate pictures. If you’re interested, let us know, and we’ll see how this can line up with our itinerary. The Nurata Mountains are often a good place to catch a match in Uzbekistan, as is Panjakent just over the border in Tajikistan.
Camera skills
We will assist you out in the field with the camera skills needed to capture those incredible moments. Regardless of your level and your camera equipment, you will improve your skills as a photographer and you will learn the craft with an expert team.

Post-processing
During the workshop, we will have the opportunity to process and enhance your images using Lightroom, Photoshop, Capture One and other editing software. If the weather is good, we will be out in the nature photographing but there are always opportunities to sit down and work on your images when we are in our hotel/accommodation.

Critique sessions
The purpose of critiques is to offer one’s impression of a photo. During sessions, you will have professional views of your work with a constructive evaluation to include feedback, suggestions and tips. Photography is an art and therefore critiques can often feel personal, but it is often a great learning exercise to have your images reviewed by some professional photographers.

Level of photography
All skill levels are welcome. We will be providing instruction on all aspects of image capture and post processing and it does not really matter whether you are a beginner or an expert photographer. We welcome photographers using equipment from mobile phones & tablets, compact cameras to digital SLR cameras. If you haven’t traveled with me before, you will need to fill a pre-tour questionnaire, so I understand your level and where to focus.

Physical requirements
Our guides will take us to a range of different locations most of which involve some short walks. Sometimes, we may take longer walks, but all excursions are optional and if you are tired, you can always sleep in and relax in the homestays/hotels. This expedition requires high altitude travel and participants should be in good general health, however, there is not much strenuous walking/trekking involved. Temperatures can range drastically in the mountains from day to night. Packing layers is essential.

Note: A doctor’s letter that certifies health and fitness of participants who are over 70 years old is mandatory for this tour.

“Geographically, linguistically, culturally and historically – Tajikistan’s a country that revels in the obscure and will surprise you greatly.”
IGNACIO PALACIOS

Ignacio Palacios is a Spanish/Australian travel photographer based on Planet Earth that stops in Sydney from time to time. He is best known for his travel, landscapes and fine art photography. His previous background was in engineering and management consultant for various companies in wind and renewable energies. Although he has been a part time photographer since 1998, he became a full time professional photographer in 2012 following the footsteps of three generations of photographers in his family. Ignacio has traveled around the world since 1998, gathering an extensive collection of images of people, places, wildlife and landscapes across more than 80 countries in five different continents. He is one of the world’s few full-time professional photographers/guides and he has led tours to Patagonia, the Altiplano, the Atacama Desert, Galapagos, Spain, Norway, Finland, and Iceland since 2013.

Ignacio writes and provides images to numerous magazines and publications around the world, such as Luminous Landscape and Lonely Planet books and guides. He has received Australian and International awards and has been finalist and highly commended in some prestigious competitions such as the NSW AIPP Epson Awards, BBC Veolia Environment Wildlife Photographer, National Geographic Travel Contest, Australian Geographic Photographer of the Year, Travel Photography or the Year, IPA, Head On, Eyes on Asia and the International Loupe awards. In 2014 he was awarded with a LUX Gold in Spain (the most prestigious professional photography award in his country).

www.iptravelphotography.com.au

“Thanks to its natural resources Kazakhstan is probably the best developed of the – stans. It is the world’s biggest country and the country’s capital, Astana, is a 21st century city of modern architecture. Whatever your expectations are, leave them in the airport, Kazakhstan defies them all and will greatly surprise you.”

Accommodation

For this photography expedition to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, we’ll mostly be staying at guest houses and homestays. In Kyrgyzstan, we also have the opportunity to stay in yurts with shepherds. While at times “rough,” these accommodation options provide excellent local interactions and possibly some of the best portraits as you get to know your hosts. There will be a few standard hotels along the way to recuperate from the remote environment.

For the extension trip to Uzbekistan, we’ll be staying at historical local hotels whenever possible. These hotels are done in traditional styles, incorporating local techniques and fabrics into their rooms. We’ll also have a couple nights in a local homestay in order to interact with local, rural communities. In Uzbekistan, it’s necessary to register at each place you stay for immigration purposes. Each location on this itinerary is able to provide registration.
**WORKSHOP DATES AND PRICES**

Tour dates: 19 September - 5 October 2020

The tour commences and ends in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. For the extension tour, we will fly from Osh (Kyrgyzstan) to Tashkent, in Uzbekistan and then back home directly to Bishkek.

Standard trip cost: US$11,990 per person, twin share; optional single supplement US$1,490

Extended trip cost: US$55,990 per person, twin share; optional single supplement US$2,290

Maximum 12 participants, two photography instructors. Guest photographer/instructor to be confirmed.

A deposit of US$2,000 is required when you book the workshop.

**Terms of payment**
- A deposit of US$2,000 must be paid to secure your place.
- The deposit is non-refundable unless you can sell your place to someone else.
- Note: the workshop is quoted in US$. To calculate the rate in AUD, the currency exchange rate will be obtained from the Westpac website at the time of transferring the deposit and balance (https://www.oanda.com/personal/banking/services/currency-converter).
- If you are located outside Australia, I accept payments in USD through PayPal only.
- The Registration Form must be filled in and signed by each participant at the time of paying the first deposit.
- Otherwise, participation will be declined.
- The remaining balance must be paid on or before 1 April 2020.
- Bookings will be accepted strictly in the order they are received.
- Important: the workshop requires a minimum of 6 participants to run so please don’t book your flights until you have confirmed on this tour. However, if you feel that any staff has given you exceptional service, please approach your airline about the lowest restrictions. Whatever level of camera equipment you have, we will try our best to set the most out of it. Check the camera equipment checklist at the end of the brochure but if you want to discuss specific equipment for this trip, contact me.

**What's included**
- Full 17 nights (6 nights in Kyrgyzstan and 11 nights in Uzbekistan). The trip extension to Uzbekistan is 7 extra nights.
- All meals
- All excursions
- English speaking guide throughout the tour
- All local taxes
- Entrance fees in the parks/reserves.
- All flights from Bishkek
- Flights to/from Tashkent
- Overnight accommodation prior to and following the expedition
- Travel and cancellation insurance. Please note that travel insurance with emergency evacuation is mandatory as a condition of booking.
- Visa (if required)
- Camera/Equipment Insurance
- Optional personal activities
- Alcohol consumption, extra beverages and souvenirs purchased during the tour
- Any other personal expenses
- Tips/gratuities.
- Note on tips: gratuities for local guides, hotel staff, butlers etc. are not included on this tour. However, if you feel that any staff has given you exceptional service, please approach your airline about the lowest restrictions. Whatever level of camera equipment you have, we will try our best to set the most out of it. Check the camera equipment checklist at the end of the brochure but if you want to discuss specific equipment for this trip, contact me.

**What’s not included**
- Open ticket return from Bishkek
- Additional travel insurance
- Bookings made after 1 April 2020 must be paid in full
- No refunds will be made for unused portions of the workshop. The photography workshop is sold as a land package (no airfares included)
- Cancellation fees are not transferable.

**Camera gear**
There is really no limit to what camera gear you take. Check with your airline about weight restrictions. Whatever level of camera equipment you have, we will try our best to set the most out of it. Check the camera equipment checklist at the end of the brochure but if you want to discuss specific equipment for this trip, contact me.

**Health and fitness considerations**
- Sometimes participants will be requested to climb on uneven terrain or tracks and hiking.
- A basic level of walking fitness will be required for a hiking tour or a trekking tour so nothing extreme will be required. If you have any concerns about your own capabilities or health, please check with your doctor before booking this trip. By signing the Registration Form, you guarantee that to the best of your knowledge, you do not have any physical or other disability that could create a risk for you or other tour participants. Once a booking has been accepted by IP Travel Photography, medical circumstances will not be accepted as a reason for the Cancellation Policy above.

**Cancelling the booking and fees**
- Within the Registration Form, please indicate any health or dietary issues, allergies or dietary requirements.
- Bookings made after 1 April 2020 must be paid in full
- No refunds will be made for unused portions of the workshop. The photography workshop is sold as a land package (no airfares included)
- Cancellation fees are not transferable.

**Rights**
- IP Travel Photography reserves the right to:
  - Substitute hotels/ accommodation
  - Change the itinerary of the workshop at any time due to adverse currency exchange fluctuations, airline schedule changes, fuel and tax price changes
  - Change the price of the workshop at any time due to major unforeseen increases in expedition related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.

**Liability**
- The operation of the workshop is at the sole discretion of Ignacio Palacios (IP Travel Photography Pty Ltd), having in mind the wellbeing and interests of all participants and the safe and sensible operation of the program as specified within this itinerary.
- IP Travel Photography does not accept any liability for the acts, omissions or default, whether negligent or otherwise, of third party providers.
- IP Travel Photography disclaims liability for any injury, damage, loss, delay, additional expense or trouble caused by force majeure or any other reason which is not preventable by reasonable diligence on IP Travel Photography’s part.

**IP Travel Photography**
- IP Travel Photography is an ASIC business name with Australian Business Number 16578586693 and registered in Australia under the Business Names Registration Act 2011. IP Travel Photography Pty Ltd (Ignacio Palacios) will guide and provide assistance to any participant in the workshop without the guest photographer as originally specified, in which case this substitution will not entitle the participant of a refund.
- The tour leader and guest photographer as originally specified, in which case this substitution will not entitle the participant of a refund.
- Accept or refuse any person as a participant in the workshop.
- Change the price of the workshop at any time due to adverse currency exchange
- Claims or changes in the itinerary or transport if required due to changes in airline schedules, or when necessary. We may be forced to change or alter the itinerary due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware, however, that we will attempt to stick as close to the original program as possible.
- Cancellation of the workshop prior to departure, in which case a full refund of all payments; received will be given. If such event occurred, IP Travel Photography will not be responsible for any other expenses such as nonrefundable air fares, visa fees and other related expenses.
- A written notice of any substitution will be given. If such event occurred, IP Travel Photography will entitle the participant of a refund.
- Any other personal expenses
- Camera/Equipment Insurance
- Optional personal activities
- Alcohol consumption, extra beverages and souvenirs purchased during the tour
- Any other personal expenses
- Tips/gratuities.
- Note on tips: gratuities for local guides, hotel staff, butlers etc. are not included on this tour. However, if you feel that any staff has given you exceptional service, please approach your airline about the lowest restrictions. Whatever level of camera equipment you have, we will try our best to set the most out of it. Check the camera equipment checklist at the end of the brochure but if you want to discuss specific equipment for this trip, contact me.

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- Additional travel insurance
- Bookings made after 1 April 2020 must be paid in full
- No refunds will be made for unused portions of the workshop. The photography workshop is sold as a land package (no airfares included)
- Cancellation fees are not transferable.

**Cancellation Policy**
- A VALID PASSPORT is essential to all international travel; please check the expiry date of your passport, and ensure you have a sufficient number of blank pages for Visas, entry/exit stamps etc. for the entire intended duration of travel.
- VISA requirements to Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan vary by country.
- Citizens of many countries can enter Kyrgyzstan without a visa. Tajikistan has an online visa process for most countries. When applying for Tajik visa, you must include the GBAO permit, which only funds the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region. Uzbekistan has recently made entry and exit requirements for tourists much easier, and a letter of reservation is no longer required.

**Rights**
- IP Travel Photography reserves the right to:
  - Substitute hotels/ accommodation
  - Change the itinerary of the workshop at any time due to adverse currency exchange fluctuations, airline schedule changes, fuel and tax price changes
  - Change the price of the workshop at any time due to major unforeseen increases in expedition related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.

**Liability**
- The operation of the workshop is at the sole discretion of Ignacio Palacios (IP Travel Photography Pty Ltd), having in mind the wellbeing and interests of all participants and the safe and sensible operation of the program as specified within this itinerary.
- IP Travel Photography does not accept any liability for the acts, omissions or default, whether negligent or otherwise, of third party providers.
- IP Travel Photography disclaims liability for any injury, damage, loss, delay, additional expense or trouble caused by force majeure or any other reason which is not preventable by reasonable diligence on IP Travel Photography’s part.
CHECKLIST

Camera equipment
• DSLR. To bring a couple of bodies is always recommended. (check your baggage allowance with your airline/travel agent)
• Tripod with quick release plate
• Standard zoom, wide angle and telephoto lense
• Plenty of batteries and a couple of chargers
• Shutter cable release
• Polarising filter and ND filters
• Laptop computer with Photoshop and Lightroom and/or Capture One
• External backup drives (SSD recommended) and memory cards for storage.

We recommend to shrink-wrap your baggage at your departure airport. Ensure your telephoto lenses are packed in protective packs designed for such lenses.

We also recommend that you pack your camera equipment as your hand luggage as much as possible so that if the checked-in baggage is lost or delayed at least you can start photographing as soon as you arrive.

Note: Please contact me if you want to discuss equipment for this trip.

What to bring, clothing and other

Our accommodation is clean and comfortable with all bedding and towels provided. In terms of clothing you’ll obviously need plenty of warm and weatherproof clothing.

The following are very much recommended: A good pair of strong waterproof warm walking boots and ideally those offering some thermal lining or maybe even a pair of thermal overshoes such as those made by Neos to go over your walking boots. Keeping warm feet, hands and head should be your priorities. Good waterproof over trousers lined ones are best as they keep you warmer especially with a normal pair of trousers and some thermal leggings underneath as well.

For the top half it’s very much a question of having several layers – like a thermal type vest, t-shirt, thin jumper, fleece and then a waterproof down coat that is built for keeping out the wind chill. You’ll know your own cold thresholds but it really is a question of build it up in layers.
• Hiking boots (well-worn in) and good socks – Gore-Tex – mandatory
• Gloves and hat – mandatory
• Water bottle or camel pack
• Hat, gloves (thin and thick), sunscreen, insect repellent
• Sunglasses
• Raincoat/waterproof jacket/ wind jacket and warm jumper – mandatory
• Head torch – mandatory
• Alarm clock/smart phone.

IP Travel Photography reserves the right to cancel this workshop. In the event of this happening, all payments received will be refunded but participants shall have no further claim against IP Travel Photography arising from such cancellation. Any such refund will not include payments for any bookings for other services made in addition to the itinerary outlined above. The responsibility for such bookings lies with the participant. As such, IP Travel Photography recommends participants to purchase a travel protection and cancellation insurance prior to paying the first deposit.

To reserve your place for 2020 or to make an enquiry, please email iptravelphotography@gmail.com

“Uzbekistan is opening up to tourists. With easier access, there’s never been a better time to explore this central Asian country.”

A 15th century Madrassah complex in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
A game of Buzkashi in Tajikistan