

Merv, Margush and Gonur Depe Tour

Duration: 2 days

You will visit: Merv, Margush, Gonur Depe.

Tour Itinerary:

Day 1: Mary – Merv – Mary

Your guide and driver will meet you in the morning at your hotel in Mary. Travel to Merv (40 km, 40min), an ancient trade center on the Great Silk Road and UNESCO World Heritage Site. Your guided sightseeing tour of Merv will include:

- Sultan Sanjar Mausoleum (12th century) – Considered by many to be the most majestic architectural monument of Merv, this mausoleum amazes with its thick walls, symmetrical proportions and domed top that displays amazing architectural craftsmanship for its day.
- Greater Kyz Kala and Lesser Kyz Kala (8th-9th centuries) - These unique fortified homes are built of mud brick, with no known archeological equivalents.
- Askhab Mausoleums (9th-12th centuries) - Built for two of the prophet Muhammad's earliest disciples, the Askhab Mausoleums are one of Turkmenistan's most important pilgrimage sites today.
- Erk Kala (6th century BC), the seat of ancient Merv and its oldest settlement, whose remaining walls are nearly 30 meters high. Climb the walls for a great view of the surrounding area.
- Gyaur Kala (3rd century BC) - Merv's second oldest settlement, famous for its thick walls that stretch for two kilometers.
- Beni Makhan Mosque (7th- 9th centuries) - Also called the Juma Mosque, it's located in the center of ancient Gyaur Kala, along with an intact cistern that still functions today.
- Muhammad Ibn Zeid Mausoleum (12th century) - A popular Sufi shrine and one of the city's finest structures due to its symmetrical architecture and the Arabic inscriptions chiseled into its walls.

After completing the sightseeing tour of Old Merv, return to Mary to visit the Mary History Museum. Housed in a marble hall, the museum has six main exhibition rooms holding artifacts from ancient and modern times.

Overnight in Mary hotel.

Tour duration: 5-6 hours

Day 2: Mary – Margush, Gonur Depe – Mary

After breakfast, your guide and driver will meet you at hotel reception to travel to Gonur Depe (100 km, 1.5hrs).

Gonur Depe (2000 BC) is the largest settlement in historical Margiana, also known as Margush. Spend the afternoon walking among the remains of a sprawling city that contained a palace, temples with fire altars, living quarters, ovens and extensive burial grounds, including a royal tomb with skeletal remains.

Drop off at your Mary hotel. End of Merv, Margush and Gonur Depe Tour.

Tour duration: 5-6 hours

Price includes:

- Private, local guide;
- Entrance fees to the sights as per itinerary;
- Transport throughout the tour (1-2 sedan, 3-8 minivan).