Two inches under the sky - Wakhan

17-day mountain bike trip through the Pamirs via the Wakhan route

16 days 9 stages

Land: Tajikistan
Category: Mountainbike
Complexity: Medium-hard ●●●
Group size: 6 - 12
Route: 580 km
Altitude: 8.100 hm
: Support vehicle + luggage transport
: Full board during the tour
: plus flight from 700 €

Price per person from:

From 2890 €

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Highlights of Our Pamir Mountain Bike Trip

The Pamir is one of the most spectacular and at the same time most remote high mountain regions in the world. Rising over 7,000 meters in the East of Tajikistan, travelers can expect a unique cultural landscape and boundless hospitality.

Our journey takes us by 4x4 vehicle from Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, along the legendary Pamir Highway to Rushan. Here we get on our bikes and ride through the scenic and historically fascinating Wakhan Corridor in initially 7 stages. The trip offers views of the ice giants of the Hindu Kush as well as the 6,000-meter peaks of Marx and Engels. After a rest day with wildlife observation in the Zor Kul Nature Reserve, we ride across the East Pamir Plateau to Kyrgyzstan, where we conclude our tour at the foot of the mighty Peak Lenin (7,134 m).

- ✓ Conditionally demanding mountain bike tour through the impressive Wakhan Corridor
- ✓ Legendary views of the peaks of the Hindu Kush and Pamirs
- ✓ Visits to fortifications from the time of the great Silk Roads
- ✓ Bathing in hot springs on several days
- ✓ Unique excursion into the realm of Marco Polo sheep
- ✓ Support vehicle and luggage transport during the bike tour

Day by day Itinerary

Day-by-Day | Map of Itinerary

Day 1 Travel to Dushanbe

With a Kyrgyzs 2 Vehicles, we start Dushanbe at the early morning hours. After transferring to our comfortable bus, we will first visit Tajikistan Ministry of Tourism to get our Gorno-Badakhshan Permit. Then we will continue our journey to Khorog. We will have our lunch at Tajik Restaurant in Dushanbe. Overnight in Khorog. Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner. Lunch only, and on all subsequent days the lunch box may also be included.

- Hotel
- Guesthouse

Day 2 Travel to Jaw Pamir Highway to Khorog

Today we will drive through the Pamir Highway and Panj River. We are heading south on the provincial road through the Wakhan. This means we are following the Afghan Border which will not be very regardful to other sight. Our destination for the day is Langar, Tajik's Wakhan District. Langar is a small village with a few shops and a few guesthouses. Langar is a very beautiful place with a very friendly people. It is a beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. We are accommodated in the simple guesthouse of the family.

- 6 hours / 150 km elevation gain
- Guesthouse

Day 3 Stage 2: Langar - Bozai Gumbaz

Today we will start a beautiful hiking trip from the Pamir Valley. Among mounts that remind the Swiss Alps. Lunch (whenever) in the way. Overnight in Bozai Gumbaz. Bozai Gumbaz is a small village with a few shops and a few guesthouses. Bozai Gumbaz is a very beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. Bozai Gumbaz is a place with a very friendly people. We are accommodated in the simple guesthouse of the family.

- 6 hours / 900 m elevation gain
- Guesthouse

Day 4 Stage 3: Bozai Gumbaz - Ishkashim

Today we will start a beautiful hiking trip from the Pamir Valley. Among mounts that remind the Swiss Alps. Lunch (whenever) in the way. Overnight in Ishkashim. Ishkashim is a small village with a few shops and a few guesthouses. Ishkashim is a very beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. Ishkashim is a place with a very friendly people. We are accommodated in the simple guesthouse of the family.

- 6 hours / 900 m elevation gain
- Guesthouse

Day 5 Stage 4: Ishkashim - Khorog

In Ishkashim we have arrived at the Afghan Bazar. The road has reopened for unauthorized person both and exclusively for the Locals. We have to take our time to pass through the Afghan Bazar. It is good exercise, we can catch sight of the Hindu Kushgirls from the Afghan Bazar. Afterwards we will drive through the Wakhan Valley. We will have our lunch at Tajik Restaurant in Dushanbe. Overnight in Khorog. We are waiting for a rarity. After a nearly lunch break, we cross two smaller passes before we descend the final stretch of Ivan and Panj River. We will have our lunch at Tajik Restaurant in Dushanbe. Overnight in Khorog. Meals included: breakfast, dinner.

- 7 hours / 1,200 m elevation gain
- Guesthouse

Day 6 Stage 5: Khorog - Chorgh

Today we will start a beautiful hiking trip from the Pamir Valley. Among mounts that remind the Swiss Alps. Lunch (whenever) in the way. Overnight in Chorgh. Chorgh is a small village with a few shops and a few guesthouses. Chorgh is a very beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. Chorgh is a place with a very friendly people. We are accommodated in the simple guesthouse of the family.

- 6 hours / 900 m elevation gain
- Guesthouse

Day 7 Stage 6: Chorgh - Yamchun

Today we will start a beautiful hiking trip from the Pamir Valley. Among mounts that remind the Swiss Alps. Lunch (whenever) in the way. Overnight in Yamchun. Yamchun is a small village with a few shops and a few guesthouses. Yamchun is a very beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. Yamchun is a place with a very friendly people. We are accommodated in the simple guesthouse of the family.

- 6 hours / 900 m elevation gain
- Guesthouse

Day 8 Stage 7: Yamchun - Jiroud

From the garden of an guesthouse, we enjoy the beautiful view over the Panjin during breakfast. The nearby fortress of Yamchun is a very beautiful place to visit. Afterwards we will drive through the Wakhan Valley. We will have our lunch at Tajik Restaurant in Dushanbe. Overnight in Jiroud. Meals included: breakfast, dinner.

- 6 hours / 900 m elevation gain
- Guesthouse

Day 9 Stage 8: Jiroud - Ishkashim

Today is a beautiful of the southern of the Pamir Valley. Among mounts that remind the Swiss Alps. Overnight in Ishkashim. Ishkashim is a very beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. Ishkashim is a place with a very friendly people. We are accommodated in the simple guesthouse of the family.

- 6 hours / 900 m elevation gain
- Guesthouse

Day 10 Stage 9: Ishkashim - Zor Kul

After breakfast we will drive through the Wakhan Valley and Afghan Bazar. Lunch (whenever) in the way. Afterwards we will drive through the Tajik Lake. At Jazmirch the Tajikpass? Stop in front of the lake (lake Yashil). Afterwards we will drive the road along the Tajik Lake. We will have our lunch at Tajik Restaurant in Dushanbe. Overnight in Zor Kul. Meals included: breakfast, dinner.

- 6 hours / 900 m elevation gain
- Guesthouse

Day 11 Stage 10: Zor Kul - Jeldi Gumbaz

After breakfast we will drive through the Tajik Lake. We will have our lunch at Tajik Restaurant in Dushanbe. Afterwards we will drive through the Wakhan Valley. We will have our lunch at Tajik Restaurant in Dushanbe. Afterwards we will drive through the Afghan Bazar. In the evening we will arrive at our last Kirgiz military post (Jeldi Gumbaz). Jeldi Gumbaz is a small village with a few shops and a few guesthouses. Jeldi Gumbaz is a very beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. Jeldi Gumbaz is a place with a very friendly people. We are accommodated in the simple guesthouse of the family. Meals included: breakfast, dinner.

- 6 hours / 900 m elevation gain
- Guesthouse

Day 12 Day off in Karakul Lake

The Kyrgyzs of Jeldi Gumbaz' coastline another lake for the Zor Kul is Karakul lake. Here lives the largest population of Marco Polo Sheep. Karakul lake is a very beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. Karakul lake is a place with a very friendly people. We are accommodated in the simple guesthouse of the family. Operating time in the winds above is comfortable, with railway high pressure impulses, and sensitive, above continuous or sudden changes in the weather. Meals included: breakfast, dinner. Lunch only, and on all subsequent days the lunch box may also be included.

- Guesthouse

Day 13 Jeldi Gumbaz - Karakul

Today we will start a hiking with the mount Ak Ko to cross Karakul and with our Kyrgyz Kazak Yurtha towards the centre of the world. The drive through Karakul offers immense highlights: as we set out off early, Karakul lay now still at the foot of the Sarezk Kuchkung, Kuchkung and Ak Ko. Lunch (whenever) in the way. Overnight in Karakul. Karakul is a very beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. Karakul is a place with a very friendly people. We are accommodated in the simple guesthouse of the family. Meals included: breakfast, dinner.

- 6 hours / 900 m elevation gain
- Yurt camp

Day 14 Stage 11: Karakul - Yaz Tash

Today we cross the long stage ahead of us. The Pamir Highway runs along the Chinese border over the Ak Baital Pass up to the Tajik Kirgiz Yurtha. Lunch (whenever) in the way. Overnight in the Tajik Kirgiz Yurtha. Tajik Kirgiz Yurtha is a very beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. Tajik Kirgiz Yurtha is a place with a very friendly people. We are accommodated in the Kirgiz Yurtha. Meals included: breakfast, dinner. Lunch only, and on all subsequent days the lunch box may also be included.

- 6 hours / 900 m elevation gain
- Yurt camp

Day 15 Stage 12: Bozai Tash - Pik Lenin

Today we cross the long stage ahead of us. The Pamir Highway runs along the Chinese border over the Ak Baital Pass up to the Tajik Kirgiz Yurtha. Lunch (whenever) in the way. Overnight in the Tajik Kirgiz Yurtha. Tajik Kirgiz Yurtha is a very beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. Tajik Kirgiz Yurtha is a place with a very friendly people. We are accommodated in the Kirgiz Yurtha. Meals included: breakfast, dinner. Lunch only, and on all subsequent days the lunch box may also be included.

- 6 hours / 900 m elevation gain
- Yurt camp

Day 16 Pearl Lake

Today we will start our last stage and cross the Pamir Lake the morning. Meals and lodging in the shelter of our last day in the mountains. Lunch (whenever) in the way. Overnight in the Kirgiz Yurtha. Tajik Kirgiz Yurtha is a very beautiful place of the surrounding mountains. Tajik Kirgiz Yurtha is a place with a very friendly people. We are accommodated in the Kirgiz Yurtha. Meals included: breakfast, dinner. Lunch only, and on all subsequent days the lunch box may also be included.

- Yurt camp

Day 17 Return Flight

Today we leave Kyrgyzs Land, we will be taken to the airport and fly back home. Meals included: breakfast.

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Inclusions

+ Included activities

- ✓ 16 overnight stays with breakfast (3 x hotel, 9 x guesthouse, 2 x yurt, 2 x tent), on the night of arrival, a hotel room is available regardless of the arrival time.
- ✓ Meals as specified in the travel description (full board during the cycling tour)
- ✓ Drinks (water, tea, coffee) and snacks during the tour (dried fruits, nuts, chocolate bars, fruit)
- ✓ Luggage transport and accompanying vehicle that can be switched to if needed
- ✓ Airport transfers on the arrival and departure day of the group trip
- ✓ Domestic flight Osch – Bishkek
- ✓ Registration for Tajikistan and GBAO special permit
- ✓ Professional German-speaking Epic Trails MTB guide, second guide for groups of 9 or more
- ✓ local accompanying staff during the tour (guide, cook, driver)
- ✓ High-quality VAUDE tents for individual use for each participant
- ✓ comfortable camping equipment (shower tent, camping toilet, comfortable sleeping pads, communal tent)
- ✓ City tour in Dushanbe
- ✓ Visits in Khorog, Yachchum, Yamg
- ✓ Excursion to the Shorbulog Observatory and visit to the Marco Polo sheep (only possible in good weather)
- ✓ Participant T-Shirt
- ✓ Replacement bicycle and technical support in case of breakdowns
- ✓ well-equipped emergency kit

Whats not included

- ✕ Arrival and Departure
- ✕ unnamed meals and drinks
- ✕ optional excursions
- ✕ Rental bicycle

Bikes

2019er SCOTT Spark 970 (29”)

Type Race-Fully Sizes S, M, L, XL

29” wheels, aluminium frame, 120mm travel (RockShox/X-Fusion) with Twin Lock system, dropper seat post, SRAM NX 1×12 drivetrain, Shimano hydraulic disc brakes

Per tour: **280€** / Per day: **35€**

GIANT Anthem (27,5”)

Type Race-Fully Sizes S, M, L

27,5” wheels, aluminium frame, 100mm travel (RockShox) with Twin Lock system, Shimano Deore 2×10 drivetrain, Shimano hydraulic disc brakes, Giant Connect components

Per tour: **280€** / Per day: **35€**

Any other questions?

Will I be able to complete the tour?

We have categorized all our trips on a scale from 1 – easy to 5 – difficult. Please check the corresponding rating under the "Requirements" tab.

In most groups, participants have varying levels of fitness and riding skills. This is not a problem—we adapt accordingly. On several days, ambitious riders have the option to extend routes or choose alternative trails.

Our tours are designed so that each stage can be completed comfortably, even at a slower pace. In case of emergency, you can switch to the support vehicle. Our tours are not races—there's plenty of time for photos!

If you have any doubts, just get in touch with us.

Internet, calling and charging batteries!?

A digital detox with mountain views definitely has its charm! ✨ Still, here are some tips for electricity, internet, and phone use: SIM cards are available at the airport or in the city for €5–10. International roaming packages or providers for global eSIMs (e.g., www.airalo.com) are a good alternative. Need to charge your devices? Fixed accommodations have standard Type C outlets. In yurts or when camping, it gets tricky—so don't forget a power bank. Network coverage in the mountains is usually nonexistent, but in cities and most villages you get good access to the internet.

Do I need a visa, registration, or permit for Tajikistan Pamir?

For entry into Tajikistan, citizens from Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Italy need a passport that is valid for at least six more months, proof of return or onward travel documents (tickets), and **no visa is required** for stays of up to 30 days. Citizens of other countries are advised to check with their respective embassies.

Foreign nationals are generally required to register with the Tajik Interior Ministry within three days of arrival. We will handle the **registration** with the OVIR (Department for Visas and Registration) on your behalf.

For travel to the Pamir, the **GBAO permit** (Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast) is required. We also take care of obtaining this permit for all participants on our trips.

Is Tajikistan a safe country to travel to?

Yes, Tajikistan is a safe and pleasant country to travel to. The risk of robbery or assault is very low. The Tajiks are very open-minded people, and you will be warmly welcomed with hospitality and politeness. There is little street crime. However, we will make you aware of "critical" situations on our trips on the first day. This includes usual advice: avoid walking around the city at night, don't display valuables openly, and it's best to leave expensive watches, valuable jewelry, and similar items that are not necessary for the trip at home.

Situation in Badakhshan – Pamir Region – specifically Ishkashim:

Following the events in Afghanistan and the Taliban takeover, the German Foreign Office has long advised against traveling to the border regions of Afghanistan, particularly the Ishkashim district.

However, we continue to run our trips in this region as planned. The basis for the trip will always be a thorough assessment of the security situation in consultation with our local partners. We closely monitor the security situation in all Central Asian countries. We only conduct trips where we can assume a safe situation. Should the security situation ever be deemed unfavorable for a planned trip, we reserve the right to change the route or, if necessary, cancel the trip.

When is the best time to visit Tajikistan?

The best time to travel to Tajikistan and especially the Pamir is June–September.

✅ Good weather but extreme temperature differences: You will need to prepare for extreme climatic conditions. In cities like Dushanbe and the lower parts of the Pamir and Fan Mountains, daytime temperatures can reach up to 35°C. However, on the Pamir Plateau (above 3,500 meters) and at the Pik Lenin yurt camp in Kyrgyzstan, it can be quite cold even in summer, with nighttime temperatures dropping below freezing.

❄️ Winter (December–February): Very cold weather, especially in the Pamir. The high mountain passes are often inaccessible during this time.

Important information

Requirement

Crossing the Pamir, the second highest mountain range in the world, is a highlight, but it also requires very good physical condition.

Endurance: difficult

The tour is very demanding due to the climatic conditions and especially the altitude. A good physical condition is required for stages of up to 100 km. We are traveling at over 4,000 meters on several days. Due to the altitude, the extreme climate, and the poor trail conditions, the daily stages are challenging and are perceived by our participants as significantly more strenuous than comparable stage lengths in the Alps. The tour progression allows for a gradual altitude adjustment.

Riding technique: easy

The tour is technically easy to manage. We ride on paved roads 30% of the time. For 70%, we are on paths with gravel as well as some rubble and sand.

Weather and Climate

The Pamir is one of the highest and most remote mountain regions in the world, with elevations up to 7,500 meters. Therefore, we must prepare for extreme climatic conditions. In Dushanbe and Osh, as well as in the lower-lying parts of the Pamirs, daytime temperatures can reach up to 35° C. On the Pamir Plateau and in the Pik Lenin yurt camp, it can also be quite cold at night in summer, with temperatures dropping below freezing.

Single room surcharge

The single room surcharge refers to the overnight stay in hotels in Dushanbe, Khorog, and Bishkek. In the guesthouses in Kalai-Kumb, Garm-Chachma, Ishkashim, Yachum, Langar, Zor Kul, and Vudz, we try to accommodate single room requests but cannot guarantee single occupancy. During the camping nights, the single use of a two-person tent is included in the travel price.

Travel itinerary and route

The Pamir is poorly developed in terms of infrastructure, and the roads are often in a dilapidated state. Due to weather conditions, it may happen that we cannot pass the roads. Therefore, there may be **changes in the program schedule**. The program as outlined above represents the optimal variant. Our travel dates are based on the usually favorable weather conditions at that time.

Due to the meltwater and the water levels of many rivers, we travel in July via the **Wakhan Route** and at the end of August/September via the **Bartang Route** through the Pamir. Both trips are comparable and have the same requirements. Information about the character and the differences between both routes can be found here.

Entry and Documents

For entry into Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, citizens from Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Italy do not need a **visa** for this trip. Upon entry, a passport that is valid for at least **6 more months** must be presented. We will handle the **registration** for stays of 10 days or more and the application for the **GBAO Permit** in Tajikistan for all participants.

Please inform yourself about the current travel and safety advisories as well as the entry requirements online. German citizens can find information at the Federal Foreign Office at www.auswaertiges-amt.de, Austrian citizens at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at www.aussenministerium.at, and Swiss citizens at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs at www.eda.admin.ch.

Vaccinations and Health Care

There are **no mandatory vaccinations** for entry into Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. However, it is important that your standard vaccinations against tetanus, diphtheria, and polio are up to date. Additionally, we recommend considering vaccinations against hepatitis A. For longer stays or certain activities, vaccinations against hepatitis B and rabies may also be advisable. It is best to discuss this with your doctor or a tropical medicine specialist. Center for Travel Medicine: www.crm.de; Robert Koch Institute: www.rki.de These sites do not replace a doctor's visit. Allow enough time and ideally contact your doctor several months before the trip to create a vaccination plan.

Pack a **personal travel pharmacy** tailored to your needs. It is sensible to include medications for diarrhea, headaches, and colds, as well as bandages and plasters. We carry a general emergency pharmacy and a well-equipped first aid kit on the tour. However, these are only for real emergencies and should not replace personal preparation.

If you have any chronic health issues, you should definitely consult your family doctor before the trip. Due to the altitude in the Pamirs and the associated low oxygen levels in the air, as well as a very large temperature difference between day and night (about 20 °C), your body is under significantly more strain than normal. Especially with cardiovascular problems or asthma, we strongly recommend discussing these issues with your family doctor.

Literature

Tajikistan: Between Dushanbe, Pamir and Fan Mountains (Trescher Series Travel), 4th Edition 2025 by Dagmar Schreiber

Pamir – two handbreadths under the sky (Sportverlag), 1st Edition: 1977, by Volker Krause

Packing List

With your travel booking, you will receive detailed tour documents from us, including a packing list.

We will be traveling in extreme climate zones (Dushanbe 700 m, Karakul high plateau 4,000 m). You need to prepare for hot, cold, and sometimes wet weather. Please bring **clothing and equipment that you feel comfortable in** and that you would also use otherwise. You do not need to buy equipment for the trip that you wouldn't also use in the mountains of Central Europe.

It is important to have a **sleeping bag** with a comfort temperature down to -5° Celsius and a pillow, if desired. We will take care of sleeping pads, tents, etc.

Please bring only **one large piece of luggage** (suitcase/travel bag) and one carry-on (backpack). If you bring your own bicycle, please pack it in a box or a bike bag (e.g., Evoc). Hard-shell cases for bicycles are not suitable for this trip.

Dates & Availability

TAJIKISTAN / MOUNTAINBIKE

Starting Monday **6 Jul** › Ending Monday **20 Jul** Bookable Book now