

General Information about Tajikistan

Tajikistan is the official name is the Republic of Tajikistan. It is the only one Persian lingual state in the former Soviet Central Asia, the smallest state in Central Asia.

Tajikistan is located in the foothills of the Pamir, borders on Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in the West and in the North, China – in the East, Afghanistan – in the South. Dushanbe is the capital.

Area: 143.1 km².

Population: about 8 million people.

State language: Tajik, Russian - the language of international communication.

Capital: Dushanbe.

State holidays: Independence Day (9th of September, 1991)

Currency unit: somon.

Tajikistan is located in the Southeastern part of **Central Asia**. It borders on Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in the West and in the North, Afghanistan – in the South, and China - in the highlands of the East. The largest glaciers in Central Asia – Fedchenko and Zaravshanskiy are in the mountains of Tajikistan. The Fedchenko Glacier (length – 77 km., width – 1700 – 3100 m.) – is the largest valley glacier in the **Pamir Mountains**, named in honor A.P. Fedchenko, the naturalist. The hydro-meteorological station is at the height of 4169 m.

Tajikistan is a multi-ethnic republic. The major part of the population is the Tajik (about 68%). Since the IX - X centuries the Western Iranian language, which became the foundation of the modern Tajik language, had been spreading in Central Asia. Since that time there had been the process of gradual consolidation of various Iranian groups which inhabited Central Asia into a single nation of the Tajik. High rate of the population growth is the characteristic feature for the present-day Tajikistan: since the 20-s the number of inhabitants of the republic has been growing by almost 6 times. It is a result of high birthrate and declining death rate in the XX century. Most families in Tajikistan are families of many children.

The territory of Tajikistan – is one of the centers of world civilization. In the I millennium BC. the East-Iranian people lived here. In the IV BC. Alexander of Macedon made a campaign against Central Asia. His name is associated with many legends. At the end of the VII century –beginning of the VIII century the states, situated on the territory of today Tajikistan, were conquered by the Arabs. The flourishing of political and cultural power fell to the epoch of the Samanid and Takhirid dynasties (IX - X centuries). There were many small principalities in Tajikistan during the subsequent period. In 1868 the northern part of Tajikistan was won by the Russian. In 1929 the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic was formed. In 1991, the independence of Tajikistan was proclaimed.

Religion

The official religion in Tajikistan is Islam. However, the Muslims there are divided into various religious branches. Basically, they are Sunnism and Shiism. Here is the historical background ...

Prior to Arabian conquests in the beginning of the 7th century the basic religious cults of people living on the territory of Tajikistan were Zoroastrism, Manichaeism, Buddhism and Hinduism as well as Nestorian Christianity and Judaism.

Arabian invasion brought complete "islamization" of the territory which was finished by the middle of the 11th century. However, earlier, in the 7th century, after the death of Prophet Muhammad Islam had been divided into several branches with Sunnism and Shiism being the most important.

The followers of Shiism - Shiites recognize only the fourth caliph Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad, as the lawful heir of Prophet Muhammad, as well as his descendants.

In their turn Shiites are subdivided into several branches. For example, Ismailites, who live mainly on the territory of Gorno-Badakshan. The name originated from Ismail, the son of Jafar as-Sadik, the sixth imam, and the head of Shiite community. The present head of Ismailite community is Prince Karim Agakhan IV (born in 1936 in Geneva; permanent residence - France).

Unlike Shiites, Sunnites do not recognize the opportunity of intermediation between the God and people after the death of Prophet Mohammed and deny the idea of special origin of Ali and his and his descendants' rights to imamate.

Sufism is another branch of Islam. Some regard it as mystic-ascetic. In the 11th - 12th centuries the first Sufi brotherhoods or orders headed by pirs and ishans were established. Some of these orders still exist. The most known Sufi orders are Nakshbandia, Kubravia, Kadiria, Yasaviya.

Language

Tajik is the official language and is spoken by most people in Tajikistan. A member of the southwest group of Iranian languages, it is closely related to the mutually intelligible dialects of Farsi and Dari in Iran and Afghanistan, respectively, though it differs from these dialects in that it is written in the Cyrillic alphabet. The dialects of the Pamirs and the Yaghnob River valley, which were classified as Tajik during the Soviet era, actually belong to the eastern group of Iranian languages; speakers of these dialects must use Tajik as a lingua franca to communicate with outsiders. Russian is widely used for administration and business, but few speak it natively. Uzbek is the second most widely spoken language and is written in the Cyrillic script, unlike in Uzbekistan where Uzbek is written in a modified Latin alphabet.

Tajikistan is known for many sights of ancient history and culture. There are unique monuments among them. One of them is the city **Penjikent** located in the north of the republic, in the valley of the **Zarafshan river**. In the V - VIII centuries, before the Arabian conquest, Penjikent was the center of one Sogdian principality. Here archaeologists found remains of houses and public buildings, the citadel with the palace, the necropolis, beautiful wall paintings (scenes from the life of the local community before the arrival of the Arabs in Central Asia). The museum-reserve was formed at the archaeological site. Not far from Penjikent, on the Mug Mountain the Penjikent ruler's archive of documents, written in the Sogdian language, was found. The decryption of these documents allows to reason about social, economical and political life of the population of Central Asia in the VIII century. In the south of Tajikistan, in the borough Adzhinatepe, near the town of Kurgan-Tube, the archaeologists found traces of the ancient Buddhist monastery of the VII - VIII centuries, including the 12-meters figure of the lying Buddha. High mountains, difficult and dangerous for climbing slopes, glaciers - all this in Tajikistan attracts sportsmen and athletes.

The Legislative power is under the authority of the Parliament – Majlisi Oliy (Supreme Assembly), and the Executive power is under the authority of the President. The President forms the government with the concurrence of the Parliament. There are many political parties and associations in the Republic.

History of Tajikistan

The settlement on the territory of present Tajikistan appeared in prehistoric times. Since the VI-IV centuries BC. the provinces of Bactria and Sogdiana were located in this region of Central Asia and composed a part of the Persian Empire.

In the IV century BC. this region was ruled by Alexander of Macedon, who destroyed the Persian Empire. In the II century BC. after the defeat of the Greeks in Bactria, a new state – Tokharistan appeared, which later together with Sogdiana and other regions of Central Asia marked the beginning of great Kushan Empire. The Silk Road, starting in China and India, passed through the west of Tokharistan and led to Greece and Rome. In the V century BC. Sogdiana and Tokharistan were under the authority of the Ephthalites, and in the VI century AD. – under the nomadic Turkic tribes. Around this time, (VI-VII centuries AD.), a lot of principalities appeared, but in the VIII c. BC these principalities were conquered by the Arabs. The present territory of Tajikistan became a part of the Baghdad Caliphate.

In 874 AD. after numerous wars Tajik feudal state under the rule of the Samanids and practically independent of the Arabs formed the Tajik nation.

The common language – Tajik began to dominate. The Samanids were peaceful for about 100 years. It was really a time of revival that gave to the world such brilliant poets as Rudaki and Firdousi.

At the end of the X century the state of the Samanids was captured and divided by the Turkic tribes. In the northern part of Tajikistan, the state of the Karakhanids was formed, and the Ghaznavids - in the south. At the beginning of the XII century Central Asia was conquered by Genghis Khan. The territories conquered by him were divided between his sons; the major cultural centers in Central Asia came into possession of the eldest son Chagatai. In the XIV century the most part of present-day Tajikistan became a unit of the empire of Amir Timur (Tamerlane).

He formed a great power with its capital in Samarkand. In the XVI century it belonged to the state of Bukhara Khanate. In the XVII and XVIII centuries the territory, populated by the Tajiks, belonged to various khanates and states. In 1880, Central Asia was conquered by Russia, and the area, including the

northern part of Tajikistan, was proclaimed Turkestan.

After the Socialistic Revolution in Russia in April, 1918, the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed, and it was considered as a part of the Russian Federation. In October, 1924 Tajik ASSR became the unit of Uzbek SSR. In 1929 Tajikistan became Tajik SSR and a part of the Russian Federation.

Perestroika in the USSR, 1985-1991 generated a wave of democracy and the revival of national traditions. Therefore, by 1991 the Islamic democratic opposition had formed in Tajikistan. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 25, 1991 the independent Tajik government was headed by the former secretary of the Communist Party and the Khujand oligarch Rahmon Nabiev, who chose the policy of maneuvering between different political forces.

In 1991, after the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Republic of Tajikistan became an independent state and a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Tajik cuisine

The culinary art of the Tajik people had been forming for many centuries. Despite some similarities of national Tajik dishes with the dishes of other Central Asian peoples, the Tajik cookery at the same time has its own peculiarities, the original kind of technology of cooking many dishes.

The most characteristic feature of the Tajik cuisine is the usage of meat products in a large quantity and the limited use of fish, eggs, certain types of cereals (buckwheat, oat, barley). The most accepted types of meat are lamb, goat, rarely hen and chicken; and almost completely ducks and geese are eaten.

In some regions game, for example, partridge and quail are popular. The horse meat is usually used for cooking the sausage "kazy".

Another peculiarity of the Tajik cuisine is the overconsumption of legumes and rice. The significant proportion in the food ration consists of flour, they are: flat bread, lagman, ugro, sambuse, khvorost and others.

Primary and cooking some food are distinctive. For many dishes, for example, meat is used without pre-boning. For cooking first courses meat with bones is cut beforehand and fried. With this method the ready meal assumes a peculiar taste and brown color. The skin of poultry is removed before or after the heat treatment. Fish, meat and vegetables are fried in a great deal of the hot fat. Fats, especially cottonseed oil, is previously overheated to a temperature of smoke formation with the addition of onion (whole heads) and meat bones.

The treatment of some kinds of vegetables is also typical. For example, the rhizome of onion is cut in the form of the cone. Potatoes and carrots for first courses are boiled as a whole.

The products are exposed to heat treatment in the iron pots - cauldrons, and in special pans - mantovarkas or pans with the liners, on the grill and in the tonurs.

Food frying on the grill, in the tonurs makes a special taste and smell to ready dishes. Thanks to cooking on the steam, ready meals do not lose their nutritional value, mineral salts and vitamins are stored in them, meat becomes delicate and has a piquant taste.

Most Tajik dishes are abundantly seasoned with onions, spices, herbs and sour milk (katyk). Such spices as red pepper, zira, barberry, anise, saffron and others are widely used. Heady herbs (coriander, dill, parsley, mint, raykhon, green onion, sorrel, etc.) are added to salads, first and main courses, and sour milk in the grinded form.

Instead of tomato sauce fresh tomatoes are preferred for filling first courses. Besides, suzma, sour milk, sour cream and kurut are used for filling soups and salads.

Salads of fresh vegetables, pomegranate seeds, rhubarb, and radish are separately served to main dishes.

The peculiarity of the Tajik cuisine is a semiliquid consistency of the main dishes, a large amount of meat sauce "vazhu," and the density of the first dishes.

The national tableware includes tea bowls of different capacities, kasy, round and oval dishes, pottery teapots, trays, bowls and other kinds of wooden and ceramic plates and dishes.

The favorite drink of the Tajik is green tea. Neither reception of guests, nor a friendly meeting and conversation go without a tea bowl of this hot drink. Even the dinner begins with tea. Bowls with tea are served on the trays. The tray with sweets, fruits and flat cakes are served separately. Then, the soup is served in large bowls, and main dishes are served in large round dishes. Vegetable salads are usually served in small plates as the addition to main courses.

The Tajik eat meal sitting on the sofa round low tables. It should be noted that the Tajik have a respectful

and considerate attitude to food, especially bread; one is ought not to throw and drop bread to the ground or floor, it is not appropriate to put it on the tablecloth (table) upside down; you should break it carefully.

Culture and Traditions of the Tajik people

The national culture of Tajikistan has ancient history. The Tajiks consider themselves as the informants and keepers of thousand-year-old traditions, related to the culture of the whole Persian-speaking area. The state emphasizes its continuity with the early medieval state formations, first of all, the Samanids power with its capital in Bukhara. It is believed that during this period the Tajikethnos was formed. In 1999 the Republic celebrated the 1100th anniversary of the Samanid state. Shakh Ismoil Somoni, the patron of arts and sciences, is highly respected among the Tajiks. The highest peak (the former Communism Peak, 7495 meters) was named in his honor.

The golden age of classical Persian-Tajik culture, especially literature (Rudaki, Firdousi, Saadi and others) fell on the end of the I - first centuries of the II millennium AD. The advanced stage came at the end of the XIX century after including Tajik regions into the Russian Empire, especially since the 1920s, when the introduction of Soviet culture began. It accompanied by the wide spread of literacy in the Russian and Tajik languages (script, based on the Russian alphabet).

Sadriddin Aini (1878-1954), the famous writer took the prominent place in the formation of the modern literary language. The classics of literature are also poets A.Lakhuti (1887-1957) and M.Tursun-Zade (1911-1977). The name of the historian and orientalist, as well as the statesman B.Gafurov is widely known.

Music and dances play a great role in the Tajik culture. Questions of the professional music education and musical heritage of the Tajik people were discussed by the scientists from Tajikistan, Russia, France, at the festival "Tajik musical culture of the beginning of the XXI century: development priorities ". The fourth festival of books and music for children and youth, organized in the framework "Peace Fund for Children" was held in Dushanbe. Universal values were the aims of the festival. Children's dance group "Jakhonoro" ("Decoration of the world") at the international festival "Children of Peace and Art", held in Turkey, took the first place among 36 member countries.

National Currency of Tajikistan

As of October 30, 2000, Somoni is a national currency of Tajikistan, which became a worthy replacement of the Tajik Rouble. International designation – TJS. One Somoni is equal to 100 Dirams. Present day on the territory of Tajikistan banknotes of the following nominal are involved in the monetary circulation: 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 and 1, 5, 20, 50 Dirams and coins: 1, 5, 10, 20, 25, 50 Dirams and 1, 3 and 5 Somoni. Name of the Tajik national currency derives from the name of Ismail Somoni, the founder of the first Tajik state. There is the national emblem and flag of Tajikistan on each banknote. All the denominations have different colours, sizes and specific images. Mostly all the bills have depictions of Tajik outstanding people, historical and cultural monuments.

Somoni is the Tajik currency. You can change money at the airport or in hotels, in most banks of Dushanbe and Khujand (outside many banks may not even have an exchange department, so you should take care about it in advance), or in exchange offices in all cities of the country. Due to the constantly riding dollar rate, you should exchange money as required. The use of credit cards and traveler's checks is almost impossible, except for international hotels and large shopping centers in Dushanbe. There are automatic cash terminals (ATMs) in Dushanbe and Khujand, but their number is limited.

There is a rule to bargain at the bazaars and markets, in shops the prices are fixed. The prices for handicrafts of local masters, which are sold both in stores and in small markets, are low.

Climate in Tajikistan

The climate in Tajikistan is very diverse. The climate is subtropical in the valleys, and it is cold in the mountains. That is why it is possible to grow sun-loving crops. In the high mountains of Tajikistan there are large clusters of snow and ice.

Resources and power

Tajikistan possesses rich mineral deposits. Important metallic ores are iron, lead, zinc, antimony, mercury, gold, tin, and tungsten. Nonmetallic minerals include common salt, carbonates, fluorite, arsenic, quartz sand, asbestos, and precious and semiprecious stones. The chief mining and ore-dressing area is in the north; coal mining and oil extraction are among the oldest industries in the country. The extraction of natural gas began in the mid-1960s at Kyzyl-Tumshuk and in fields near Dushanbe, and a chemical plant built in 1967 produces nitrogen fertilizer.

Energy resources include sizable coal deposits and smaller reserves of natural gas and petroleum. Tajikistan is among the countries with the greatest potential for hydroelectric power in the world, and most of the electric power generated in Tajikistan is hydroelectric. Some of the fast-flowing mountain streams have been exploited as hydroelectric power sources. In 1976 construction began on the Rogun Dam, slated to be the world's highest and tallest dam, with an installed capacity equivalent to that of three nuclear power plants. The project languished after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, but construction resumed in 2016. Major power stations operate on the Syr Darya at Qayroqqum and on the Vakhsh River at Norak and Golovnaya. A thermal station supplements them near Dushanbe. In the summer months, the country has access to plenty of electricity and is a major exporter of electricity. In the winter, however, conditions in Tajikistan are unfavorable for the production of hydroelectric power, so the country imports electricity and relies on coal energy then.

Pamir Region in Tajikistan

Pamirs, also called Pamir, highland region of Central Asia. The Pamir mountain area centres on the nodal orogenic uplift known as the Pamir Knot, from which several south-central Asian mountain ranges radiate, including the Hindu Kush, the Karakoram Range, the Kunlun Mountains, and the Tien Shan. Most of the Pamirs lie within Tajikistan, but the fringes penetrate Afghanistan, China, and Kyrgyzstan. The core of the Pamirs is in the highlands of Tajikistan, with the highest mountains in the Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous oblast (province).

The word *pamir* in the language of the region denotes the high undulating grasslands of the eastern portion of the mountains, especially where they abut Afghanistan and China. Deep river valleys mark the boundaries of the Pamirs in the north beyond the ridges of the Trans-Alai Range, and the valleys of the Vākhān region (Wakhan Corridor) of Afghanistan form the southern limit. The Sarykol pamir in the Uygur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang in western China bounds the eastern margin, and a series of southwestern-aligned valleys that eventually drain into the Vakhsh and Panj rivers serrate the western boundary.

Physiography

The Pamirs are a combination of east-west and north-south ranges, with the former predominating. The east-west Trans-Alai Range, which forms the northern frame of the Pamirs, falls steeply to the intermountain Alai Valley. The high central part of the Trans-Alai, between the Tersagar Pass on the west and Kyzylart on the east, averages between 19,000 and 20,000 feet (5,800 and 6,100 metres), reaching its highest point at Lenin (Ibn Sīnā) Peak, 23,405 feet (7,134 metres). South from the Trans-Alai extend three north-south ranges. Of these the western, the Akademii (Akademiya) Nauk Range, and the central, Zulumart, are relatively short; the eastern, the Sarykol Range, forms the border between Tajikistan and China. The mountains east of the Sarykol Range are sometimes called the Chinese Pamirs.

The north-south Akademii Nauk Range extends into the northwestern Pamir system, where it rises into a huge barrier, reaching 24,590 feet (7,495 metres) in Imeni Ismail Samani Peak (formerly Communism Peak), the highest point in the Pamirs. The eastern flank of the Akademii Nauk Range is covered on the south face by the Fedchenko Glacier. The western flank intersects other ranges that lie still farther to the west: the Peter I Range, with Moscow (Moskva) Peak (22,260 feet [6,785 metres]); the Darvaz Range, with Arnavad Peak (19,957 feet [6,083 metres]); and the Vanch and Yazgulem ranges, with Revolution (Revol'yutsii) Peak (22,880 feet [6,974 metres]). The ranges are separated by deep ravines. To the east of the Yazgulem Range, in the central portion of the Pamirs, is the east-west Muzkol Range, reaching 20,449 feet (6,233 metres) in Soviet Officers Peak. South of it stretches one of the largest ranges of the Pamirs, called Rushan on the west and Bazar-dara, or Northern Alichur, on the east. Still farther south are the Southern Alichur Range and, to the west of the latter, the Shugnan Range. The extreme southwestern Pamirs are occupied by the Shakhdarin Range, composed of north-south (Ishkashim Range) and east-west

elements, rising to Mayakovsky Peak (19,996 feet [6,095 metres]) and Karl Marx (Karla Marksa) Peak (22,067 feet [6,726 metres]). In the extreme southeast, to the south of Lake Zorkul (Sarī Qūl), lie the east-west Vākhān Mountains. It is customary to divide the Pamirs into a western area and an eastern area, distinguished by their forms of relief. In the eastern Pamirs a medium-mountain relief predominates on a high raised foundation. While the heights above sea level average 20,000 feet (6,100 metres) or more, the relative heights of the peaks above their foundation do not in most cases exceed 3,300 to 5,900 feet (1,000 to 1,800 metres). The ranges and massifs have mainly rounded contours, and the wide and flat-bottomed valleys and troughs between them, situated at heights of 12,100 to 13,800 feet (3,700 to 4,200 metres), are occupied either by quietly running, meandering rivers or by dry channels. The valleys and slopes of the ranges are covered by layers of loose material.

In the western Pamirs the relief is high-mountain and sharply disjointed, alternating between low ranges and alpine ridges capped by snow and glaciers; and there are deep, narrow ravines with high, rapid rivers. The valleys and depressions are filled with outwash debris, so that almost the only suitable places for human settlement are the alluvial fans in the valleys of tributaries of the Panj River. The transition from the eastern-Pamirs type of relief to the western-Pamirs type occurs gradually. The conventional boundary is a line joining the ridge of the Zulumart Range with Karabulak Pass in the Muzkol Range; from Pshart Pass it follows the ridge of the Northern Alichur Range to Lakes Yashil and Sarez, where it turns south to the valley of the Pamir River.

Drainage

Like the adjacent Hindu Kush and Karakoram mountains to the south, the Pamirs exhibit considerable glaciation as a result of high winter snowfall. The Fedchenko Glacier dominates the central Pamir massif, with other glaciers, similarly named for 19th-century Russian scientists (e.g., Garmo and Grumm-Grzhimaylo), feeding into it. Glaciation is less extensive in the Alai and Trans-Alai mountains.

Some meltwater from the Pamirs flows to the Tarim Basin in western China, but the vast bulk drains into the Panj and Vakhsh rivers and their tributaries. There are large irrigation projects associated with the Kyzylsu-Surkhob-Vakhsh river system (each of the rivers flows successively into the next). The Amu Darya (ancient Oxus River), formed by the confluence of the Vakhsh and the Panj, conveys meltwater to other irrigation projects downstream. Earthquakes occasionally generate landslides that dam rivers to produce lakes. Lake Sarez in the Murgab River valley is dammed by a massive landslide that was probably initiated during an earthquake.

Geology

The Pamirs are divided into three broad zones according to the characteristics of their rock formations: the northern, central, and southern Pamirs. The southern zone consists of metamorphic rocks (gneiss, quartzite, marble, and others) to which most researchers attribute a Precambrian age (more than 540 million years old). The zone on the whole represents a huge anticline, or series of stratified arches. The central zone of the Pamirs contains limestone, sandstone, and shale rocks of the Jurassic, Triassic, and Permian periods (about 300 to 145 million years ago) and also red-coloured rocks of the Early Cretaceous Period (145 to 100 million years ago). There are some marine rocks from the first half of the Paleozoic Era (i.e., about 540 to 440 million years ago) and lava and tuffaceous rocks of the Paleocene Epoch (65 to 55 million years ago). The structure of the central Pamirs is that of a huge downwarp (an inverted arch caused by fracturing); it is separated from the northern Pamirs by a deep fracture.

Climate

The climate of the Pamirs is arid and continental, typified by frigid winters and warm, relatively dry summers. In the western valleys, convectional storms, in combination with cyclonic storms, are common in the summer. Many of the region's weather patterns are associated with the so-called Afghan winds that form in northwestern Afghanistan, intensify over the horseshoe ridges of the lower Pamirs, and bring summer dust storms and subsequent rain to the western mountains. Snowfall is substantial in the western valleys; the village of Sangvor, for example, at an elevation of 7,000 feet (2,100 metres), has a snow cover of up to 4 feet (1.2 metres) from November to April. The growing season lasts 200 days in Sangvor but reaches 230 days in the deep valley of the Panj at Khorog and Qalaikhum. At the highest elevations, snowfall equals that of the Karakorams to the southeast, and glaciation is considerable. Temperatures range from summer daily highs of 73 °F (23 °C) and winter lows of 1 °F (−17 °C) at Murghob in the high

eastern Pamirs to 81 °F (27 °C) in summer and 21 °F (– 6 °C) in winter at Garm in the lower western Pamirs; isolated outposts in the eastern Pamirs record temperatures below –58 °F (–50 °C) in winter.

Plant life

In their vegetation, the eastern Pamirs bear a striking resemblance to the treeless western portion of the Plateau of Tibet. Large expanses of bog, interspersed with plants of the *Artemisia* and *Ephedragenera* on higher ground, typify the flora of both regions. The western Pamirs present a striking contrast. The forced emigration of mountain residents, which started in the late 1930s, has halted the overgrazing and cutting of firewood that has continued in adjoining ranges such as the Hindu Kush and the Karakoram. Since the exodus, juniper has regenerated on the valley slopes, caespitose shrubs have become established on the drier margins, and erosion has halted. Watercourses above 6,500 feet (2,000 metres) are lined with willows, thornbushes, oleander, poplars, and occasional birches. High-elevation pastures, above 10,000 feet (3,000 metres), are rarely grazed by cattle.

Animal life

The high tablelands of the eastern Pamirs are the prime breeding area of the mountain goat and the argali (Marco Polo) wild sheep; occasional sightings of blue sheep and urial are reported. Ibex are common where human activity is minimal, and markhor inhabit the lower ranges between the Panj and Vakhsh rivers. Brown bears feed on the abundant marmots, as do wolves. Relatively strict prohibitions against the hunting of wild sheep and goats have resulted in sufficient prey to support a small population of snow leopards. Lammergeiers (bearded vulture) and Himalayan griffons frequent the highest peaks, while partridges, pheasant, and snow cocks are found in the western mountains. Large numbers of migratory waterfowl flying between Siberia and South Asia visit the eastern Pamirs.

FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions. Tajikistan

What is the best time to visit Tajikistan

The best time to visit Tajikistan is from May to the middle of October.

Water

It is not recommended to drink raw water, even if the local people say that it is esculent. It is insistently recommended to wash fruits and vegetables before use.

Food

The basis of the Tajik cuisine are dishes of rice and beans. Different kinds of flat bread substitute bread itself. The favorite food of the Tajiks is plov and manti. Some dishes have their own characteristics to prepare. For example, meat, onion and vegetables are fried in powdered form till half readiness, and then they are diluted with water or broth and cooked until full readiness. Many second courses have a semi-liquid consistency. You should be ready to the fact, that most of the dishes of the Tajik cuisine are abundantly seasoned with onion, spices, herbs, sour milk (katyk). The most popular drink is tea - green and black. For the dessert the Tajiks serve fruits, both fresh and dried.

Language of communication in Tajikistan

Tajikistan people speak Tajik and Russian

Restrictions on clothing in Tajikistan

There are no special rules on clothing. But when visiting the religious places, mosques, mausoleums and others it is not recommended to bare shoulders and knees.

Mobile communication in Tajikistan

The list of main mobile operators in Tajikistan: Public Corporation "Tajiktelecom», Public Corporation "MegaFon", Close Corporation "Indigo Somonkom", LLC "Takom" (trade name - Beeline).

Visa to Tajikistan

Passports and Visas: what is required?

All foreign nationals are required to obtain an entry visa to Tajikistan. Moreover GBAO (Gorno-Badakshan Autonomous Oblast) permit is necessary for any travel to the Pamirs. The entry visa may be obtained at Tajikistan diplomatic/consular institutions, if they exist in the country where you would like to apply for or at the airports of Dushanbe and Khujand upon arrival. At the airport, it is mandatory to show your visa support or Letter of Invitation (LOI) prepared in advance by a travel agency, before they stamp it in your passport. The border crossing points do not provide visa.

According to Tajikistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs citizens of the following countries can apply for a single-entry tourist visa valid for up to 45 days at Tajik embassies or consulates abroad on the basis of personal application and letter of invitation from a travel agency without visa support letter.

Can I obtain visa on arrival at Dushanbe International Airport?

Visa to Tajikistan can be collected at the airport of Dushanbe in the presence of letter of invitation from a travel agency. Moreover the tourists can get Tajikistan visa at the airport of Khujand upon arrival.

What is the process for obtaining a GBAO permit?

Tajikistan diplomatic/consular institution abroad issue GBAO permits. You should request for the permit separately from the visa and pay extra for it.

If you are already in Tajikistan, the permit will be issued by OVIR departments.

Electricity

Line voltage in Tajikistan is 220 volts. Frequency: 50 Hz.

Visa to Tajikistan

Tajikistan Visa Requirements

Visa exemption

The passport holders of the following nationalities (countries) are eligible to enter Tajikistan without visa.

Afghanistan - with Diplomatic passports up to 30 days

Armenia

Azerbaijan - for diplomatic, official and the ordinary passports up to 90 days

Belarus

Georgia

Kazakhstan

Kyrgyzstan

Moldova

Russian Federation

North of Korea - for diplomatic, service passports

South of Korea - for diplomatic, service passports up to 90 days

China - for diplomatic, official and service passports of common mission up to 30 days

Brunei - Darussalam - for diplomatic, service passports up to 14 days

Hungary - for diplomatic and service passports up to 90 days

Romania - for diplomatic and service passports up to 90 days

Pakistan - for diplomatic passports up to 90 days

India - for diplomatic and service passports up to 30 days

The Islamic Republic of Iran - for diplomatic and service passports up to 30 days

Turkmenistan - for diplomatic passports up to 30 days

Ukraine - for diplomatic, official and the ordinary passports up to 90 days

Uzbekistan - for diplomatic, official and the ordinary passports up to 30 days

Visa at the airport

Tajikistan has simplified visa obtaining for the citizens of 81 countries to promote tourism and create favorable conditions for investors. The rules differ if there is a Tajik embassy in the applicant's home-country.

Citizens of the following countries with no Embassy or the Consulate of the Republic of Tajikistan will be able to obtain tourist visa upon arrival. For this, it is required to fill out online application on the [website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan](#) and make the payment of 5 USD for consideration of your application. MFA of the Republic of Tajikistan will review the application during 1-5 days and send back confirmation to the electronic address of the applicant. Based on this confirmation, one can get the tourist visa at the airports of Dushanbe and Khujand. Picking a visa at the airport will cost 35 USD. But for entering the country through border crossing points e-visa (www.evisa.tj) will be needed; it will cost 52 USD. List of countries eligible to collect visa at the airport include:

Australia

Algeria

Andorra

Argentina

Bahrain

Bulgaria

Brazil

Brunei

Canada

Chile

Croatia

Cuba

Cyprus

Czech Republic

Denmark

Estonia

Finland

Hungary

Greece

Iceland

Indonesia

Ireland

Israel

Italy
Jordan
Latvia
Lebanon
Libya
Lithuania
Liechtenstein
Luxembourg
Morocco
Malta
Mexico
Monaco
Mongolia
Netherlands
New Zealand
Norway
Oman
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Senegal
Singapore
South Africa
Spain
Slovakia
Slovenia
Sweden
Syria
Thailand
Tunisia
Vatican
Venezuela
Vietnam
Yemen

Stateless persons who were citizens of the Republic of Tajikistan

E-visa or simplified visa

Citizens of the following countries are not eligible for visa upon arrival, as there is an embassy or consulate of the Republic of Tajikistan in their home country. Still, the visa application procedure is simplified; they only need to fill out the application on the [website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan](#). After, MFA of Tajikistan will review the application during 1-5 days and send a confirmation to the electronic address of the applicant inviting to the interview, where they will photograph and take fingerprints.

They also can obtain electronic visa on the website www.evisa.tj that will free from the hassle of visiting the embassy. E-visa will cost 52 USD.

Simplified visa procedures or e-visa are applicable to the following nationalities:

Austria

Belgium

China

Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Germany

Egypt

France

India (in terms of categories of visas “Diplomatic” and “Service”)

Iran

Japan

The Republic of Korea

Kuwait

Malaysia

United Arab Emirates

Pakistan (in the categories of visas “Diplomatic” and “Service”)

Qatar

Saudi Arabia

Switzerland

Turkey

Turkmenistan

USA

Uzbekistan (in the categories of visas “Diplomatic” , “service”, “investor”, “free Economic Zone”, “driver “ and “ athletes and creative groups”)

Standard visa to Tajikistan

If your country of residence is not included in any of the above mentioned lists, you can obtain visa to Tajikistan in any country where there is an embassy or the consulate of the Republic of Tajikistan. The list of documents, as well as amount of consular fees may differ depending on the citizenship of the applicant and the point of visa issue. Application fee starts from 25 USD. Standard documents package for Tajik visa include:

Visa support (invitation);

Valid passport with 2 clear pages for visa and entry/exit stamps. Six months validity rule is imposed.

Visa application* in 2 copies;

Colorful photo (3,5 x 4,5);

Receipt on payment of state duty and consular fee;

(!) If you plan to visit Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous region a.k.a Pamir region, you should submit a letter requesting a permit.

* Tajikistan tourist visa application is available [here](#). This application is accepted in all embassies and consulates of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Tajikistan Embassies abroad

Tajikistan Embassy in Afghanistan

Address: Vazir Akbarkhon st.10, bld.#3, Kabul city
Telephone: 8(10-93) 230-03-92, 210-10-80, Fax: 8(10-93) 230 03 92
e-mail: tajembaf@rambler.ru

Tajikistan Embassy in Turkmenistan

Address: 19, Kurungan str., Ashgabad
Telephone: 810(99312)35 56 96, 39 34 31, 39 42 55, Fax: 810(99312) 39 31 74
e-mail: tadjemb_tm@mail.ru

Tajikistan Embassy in Germany

Address: Perlebergerstr. 43, 10559 Berlin
e-mail: maktubho@yahoo.de, info@botschaft-tadschikistan.de
Website: <http://www.botschaft-tadschikistan.de/>

Tajikistan Embassy in Iran

Address: Niyovaron sq., Shahid Zainali Avenue., 3rd Street. 10 , Tehran
Telephone: (98-21) 229 95 84, 280 92 49, Fax: (98-21) 280 92 99
e-mail: tajemb-iran@tajikistanir.com

Tajikistan Embassy in China

Adress: Beijing, 100 600, № 5-1-41 Ta Yuan Diplomatic Compound
Telephone: (86-10) 65 32 30 39, 65 32 25 98, Fax: (86-10) 65 32 30 39
e-mail: tajikistanchina@yahoo.com

Tajikistan Embassy in Great Britain

Address: Grove House, 27 Hammersmith Grove, London, W6 0NE
Telephone: +44 2086002520
e-mail: info@tajembassy.org.uk

Tajikistan Embassy in Kyrgyzstan

Address: 720031, Kok-Djar district, Kara-Darya str., Bishkek
Telephone: 8109 (96 312) 51 14 64, 51 23 43, 51 25 87, Fax: 8109 (96 312) 51 14 64
e-mail: tjemb@ktnet.kg

Tajikistan Embassy in Pakistan

Address: House 90, Main Double Road, F-10/1, Islamabad
Telephone: (92-51) 229 34 62, Fax: (92-51) 229 97 10
e-mail: tajemb_islamabad@inbox.ru

Tajikistan Embassy in Austria

Address: Wien Wsterreich Universitats Street.8 tur. 1a
Telephone: (43-1) 409 82 66, Fax: (43-1) 409 82 66 14 , 409 82 66 21
e-mail: tajikembassy@chello.at

Tajikistan Embassy in India

Address: E -12/6., Vasant Vihar, New Delhi – 110057
Telephone: (91 11) 26 15 42 82, Fax: (91 11) 26 15 42 82
e-mail: tajembindia@gmail.com

Tajikistan Embassy in Kazakhstan

Address: 15, Marsovaya str., Chubary district, Astana
Telephone/Fax: +8 (7172) 24-09-29, 24 13 15
e-mail: embassy_tajic@mbox.kz
Representative office in Almaty: 16, Sanatornaya str., Baganashyl village
Telephone/Fax: +8 (7272) 269-70-59
e-mail: tajemb_almaty@ok.kz

Tajikistan Embassy in Turkey

Address: Ferit Recai Ertugrul Caddesi No:20, Diplomatik Site,ORAN-ANKARA, Ankara, Turkey
Telephone: +(90-312) 491 16 07, 491 17 08, Fax: +(90-312) 491 16 03
e-mail: tajemb_turkey@inbox.ru

Tajikistan Embassy in the Russian Federation

Address: 103001, 13, Granatniy pass, Moscow
Telephone: +7 (495) 690-38-46, 690-41-86, 690-61-74, 690-46-57, Fax: +7 (495) 691-89-98
e-mail: tajembassymoscow@mail.ru
Consular department:
Telephone: +7 (495) 690-57-36, 690-02-70, Fax: +7 (495) 690-57-36

Tajikistan Embassy in Egypt

Address: 82 Street, Willa 19, Al-Maadi, Cairo;
Telephone/Fax: (202) 237 83 210 - 238 03 955;
e-mail: emtaj.eg@rambler.ru, tajemb_eg@yahoo.com;
Website: <http://www.tajikembassy-eg.org>

Tajikistan Embassy in the USA

Address: 1005 New Hampshire Avenue, NW Washington, D.C., 20037
Telephone: (1202) 223 60 90, Fax: (1202) 223 60 91
e-mail: tajikistan@verizon.net

Tajikistan Embassy in the Ukraine

Address: 01034, office 44, 16, Streleckiy str., Kiev
Telephone: (+38 044) 482-38-07, Fax: (+38 044) 482-36-92

Tajikistan Embassy in Uzbekistan

Address: 700090, 61, Kakhar str., 6, Tashkent
Telephone: (+998 71) 254 99 99, 254 84 13, Fax: (+998 71) 254 89 69
e-mail: tajembasy_uz@mail.ru, tojembuz@yandex.ru

Tajikistan Embassy in Belarus

Address: 17, Kirov str, Minsk
Telephone: 8103 (7517) 222 37 98, 289 11 36, Fax: 8103 (7517) 227 76 13
e-mail: tajemb-belarus@mail.ru

Tajikistan Embassy in Belgium

Address: Boulevard General Jacques 16, 1050 Bruxelles
Telephone: (322) 640 69 33, Fax: (322) 649 01 95
e-mail: taj-emb@edpnet.be