DARVAZA

NEW YEAR TOUR

2026–2027 | 4 DAYS

29 DECEMBER 2026 — 1 JANUARY 2027

Farap • Merv • Ashgabat • Darvaza • Dashoguz • Shavat

CELEBRATE 2027 AT THE GATES OF HELL

Organized by Darvaza Tour

TOUR 29 DEC 2026 — 1 JAN 2027

Four Days. One Extraordinary New Year.

Celebrate New Year in one of the most extraordinary places in Central Asia.

This special four-day journey combines the ancient Silk Road heritage of Merv, the white-marble capital of Ashgabat and an unforgettable New Year's Eve celebration beside the legendary Darvaza Gas Crater in the heart of the Karakum Desert.

The program is designed as a small-group New Year experience with professional guides, comfortable transportation, festive experiences, Turkmen culture, camel rides, a culinary master class and a midnight countdown beneath the desert stars.

DATES	ROUTE
29 December 2026 – 1 January 2027	**Farap – Merv – Ashgabat – Darvaza – Dashoguz – Shavat**
HOTEL	**DESERT NIGHT**
2 nights at Sport Hotel 4★, Ashgabat	**1 night in a heated traditional Turkmen yurt near Darvaza**

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- UNESCO heritage at Ancient Merv and Ancient Nisa.
- Ashgabat city tour with a festive New Year atmosphere and on-board music/karaoke.
- Turkmen cooking master class and Master Chef of Karakum competition.
- Camel caravan ride and photo experience in the Karakum Desert.
- Open-air New Year celebration and midnight countdown beside Darvaza.
- Warm traditional yurt overnight with heating, bedding and shower facilities.

SMALL-GROUP EXPERIENCE

Designed for a friendly group atmosphere while preserving comfort, coordination and personal attention throughout the route.

DAY 1

29 DECEMBER 2026

Welcome to Turkmenistan: Ancient Merv & Journey to Ashgabat

08:00 — Arrival at Farap Border

The Darvaza Tour team and English-speaking guides meet the group on the Turkmen side of the Farap border, assist with the necessary formalities and introduce guests to the journey ahead.

— Transport

For the long-distance journey, guests travel in comfortable Toyota Sienna vehicles with clean leather interiors. Approximately five guests are accommodated in each vehicle to keep the journey comfortable and spacious.

10:00 — Drive toward Ancient Merv

The journey begins through the landscapes of eastern Turkmenistan and the Karakum Desert — golden scenery, small settlements and the vast Central Asian sky.

— Lunch en route

Lunch boxes with freshly prepared food are provided during the journey, allowing the group to save time for the sightseeing program.

15:00 — Ancient Merv — UNESCO World Heritage Site

Once one of the great cities of the Silk Road, Merv connected merchants, scholars and civilizations travelling between East and West.

- Mausoleum of Sultan Sanjar
- Greater and Lesser Gyz-Kala
- Ancient archaeological remains of Merv
- Historic sites connected with the civilizations of ancient Margiana

18:00 — Dinner stop at Restaurant “Ashgabat”, Mary

After the excursion, the group stops for a relaxing dinner featuring Turkmen cuisine, fresh bread, hot dishes and tea.

19:00 — Departure for Ashgabat

Continue west toward Ashgabat. Late in the evening, arrive in the capital and check in at Sport Hotel 4★.

OVERNIGHT

Sport Hotel 4★ — Ashgabat

Day 1 — Visual Highlights

Greater Gyz-Kala, Ancient Merv

Merv experience with Darvaza Tour guests

Ancient walls, Silk Road stories and the first shared memories of the journey.

DAY 2 — 30 DECEMBER 2026 — Ashgabat City Tour & New Year Celebration Opening

Morning — Breakfast at Sport Hotel

Begin the morning with breakfast at the hotel before a full day exploring Turkmenistan's extraordinary capital.

11:00 — Group Meeting at Sport Hotel

All participants gather at the hotel. Guests joining the tour directly in Ashgabat may also join the main group here. After introductions and a short briefing, the Ashgabat City Tour begins.

Ashgabat City Tour

The group travels together in a spacious tourist coach. The journey between attractions becomes part of the celebration itself: New Year music plays on board, and the microphone and sound system can be used for karaoke between sightseeing stops. Guests can sing, laugh and get to know one another while the festive atmosphere builds.

Sightseeing Program

- Turkmenbashi Ruhy Mosque — one of Turkmenistan's most impressive religious monuments, distinguished by its white-marble structure and golden dome.
- Ancient Nisa — UNESCO World Heritage Site and an important centre of the ancient Parthian Empire.
- Turkmen Carpet Museum — an introduction to Turkmenistan's renowned carpet-making traditions and monumental handmade carpets.

— Lunch stop at Tagamchi New

Enjoy Turkmen cuisine with the group before continuing the afternoon sightseeing program.

Afternoon Ashgabat Tour

- Independence Park
- Monument of Neutrality
- Cyclist Monument
- Magtymguly Park
- Bagt Köşgi — Palace of Weddings

During the New Year period, Ashgabat becomes especially atmospheric with decorative lights throughout the city.

Evening at Alem Cultural and Entertainment Center

Walk through the illuminated surroundings, enjoy the seasonal atmosphere and take a memorable group photograph beside the giant New Year tree.

New Year Opening Evening at Ak Saher Restaurant

Darvaza Tour welcomes the group to a festive evening featuring music, Turkmen culture and entertainment.

- Traditional Kushtdepdi performance
- Oriental dances
- Lezginka performance
- Karaoke
- New Year competitions
- Gifts and souvenirs from Darvaza Tour
- Festive photo opportunities
- Group dinner

Large shared tables create a warm social atmosphere where guests can meet one another before travelling together into the Karakum Desert the following morning.

OVERNIGHT

Sport Hotel 4★ — Ashgabat

Day 2 — Visual Highlights

Ashgabat illuminated after dark

Ancient Nisa — UNESCO World Heritage Site

From Parthian history to a capital glowing for the New Year season.

DAY 3

31 DECEMBER 2026

Ashgabat to Darvaza — New Year's Eve in the Karakum Desert

THIS IS THE MAIN DAY OF THE JOURNEY.

Today we leave the white-marble capital behind and travel deep into the Karakum Desert to celebrate New Year beside one of Central Asia's most extraordinary landmarks.

Morning — Breakfast at Sport Hotel

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before checking out and preparing for the journey into the desert.

08:30 — Departure from Ashgabat

The group departs in comfortable Toyota Sienna vehicles. Approximately five guests travel in each vehicle for extra space and comfort. New Year music accompanies the journey, with photo stops arranged whenever conditions allow.

Arrival at Darvaza

After travelling deep into the desert, the legendary Darvaza Gas Crater finally appears. This is where the main New Year adventure begins.

Turkmen Cooking Master Class & Master Chef of Karakum

Darvaza Tour will organize a special outdoor culinary experience in the desert. Turkmen chefs demonstrate traditional dishes over an open fire, including Turkmen plov and grilled meat. Guests can participate, learn about local culinary traditions and enjoy the experience together.

MASTER CHEF OF KARAKUM COMPETITION

Guests are divided into teams for a friendly culinary competition. The chefs judge the results and select the winners.

- Handmade Turkmen souvenirs
- Darvaza Tour T-shirts
- Traditional gifts
- Special New Year prizes

The winner receives the honorary title "Master Chef of Karakum 2026".

Camel Caravan Experience

After the culinary program, guests experience the atmosphere of the ancient Silk Road with a camel caravan. A camel ride and photo session are included in the tour.

Golden-hour moments at the Darvaza Gas Crater

The final sunset of 2026 — beside one of the world's most extraordinary desert landmarks.

DAY 3 — 31 DECEMBER 2026
Darvaza New Year Open-Air Celebration

As darkness falls, Darvaza transforms completely. The orange glow of the crater becomes brighter against the dark desert sky, and the Darvaza Tour team prepares the New Year celebration.

OPEN-AIR CELEBRATION AREA

Instead of a large temporary tent beside the crater, the celebration is organized as a special open-air New Year area in the approved visitor zone. A long festive table is prepared for the group and decorated with warm lighting and Darvaza Tour branding.

New Year Table

- Freshly prepared Turkmen plov
- Shashlik and grilled meat
- Fresh bread
- Salads
- Fruit
- Traditional sweets
- Tea and soft drinks
- Beer and wine for adult guests

Darvaza Tour service staff take care of food and drinks throughout the evening so guests can relax and enjoy the celebration. A dedicated sound system fills the desert with New Year music, international hits and Turkmen songs while guests dance beneath the stars.

New Year Games, Competitions & Prizes

Darvaza Tour coordinators organize entertaining group competitions. The microphone and sound system bring everyone together for games, questions, challenges and karaoke.

- Handmade Turkmen carpets or traditional handicrafts
- Darvaza Tour T-shirts
- Turkmen souvenirs
- Special New Year gifts

Warm Yurt Area

Traditional Turkmen yurts in the nearby yurt camp serve as the group's warm resting and overnight area. Inside are traditional carpets, bedding and heating/stoves for winter desert conditions. Guests who want to warm up or rest can return to the yurt area before joining the celebration again.

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

23:30 Preparation for New Year

23:45 Everyone gathers for the celebration

23:55 Final countdown begins

00:00 HAPPY NEW YEAR 2027!

"Happy New Year from Darvaza Tour! We wish you happiness, health, success and unforgettable journeys. May all your dreams and wishes come true in 2027!"

The celebration continues with music, dancing and time together beneath the stars of the Karakum Desert.

OVERNIGHT

Warm traditional Turkmen yurts near the Darvaza Gas Crater — heated, carpeted and prepared for winter conditions.

Darvaza after dark

Traditional yurt camp in the Karakum Desert

Celebrate under the stars, then return to the warmth of a traditional Turkmen yurt.

DAY 4 — 1 JANUARY 2027
New Year Morning at Darvaza & Journey to Shavat

07:30 — New Year Breakfast in the Yurts

The first morning of 2027 begins in the heart of the Karakum Desert. Because winter mornings can be cold, breakfast is served inside the warm yurts. Hot tea, fresh bread, eggs, fruit and other breakfast dishes are prepared for the group. Darvaza Tour coordinators help each group and make sure everything runs smoothly.

09:00 — Free Time at Darvaza

Enjoy the peaceful atmosphere of the first morning of the year. Take final photographs of the crater, walk through the desert surroundings and enjoy the silence of the Karakum.

10:30 — Group Meeting

Luggage check, final preparations and comfort stop before departure.

11:00 — Departure toward Dashoguz and Shavat

The group begins the journey north toward the Uzbekistan border. Music accompanies the drive, with a short coffee and refreshment stop planned along the way.

16:00 — Arrival at Shavat Border

Before saying goodbye, the group takes one final photograph together with the Darvaza Tour team. After four days of travelling together, it is time to exchange contacts, say goodbye to new friends and continue your journey into Uzbekistan.

You started among the ancient monuments of the Silk Road.

You discovered the white-marble capital of Turkmenistan.

You crossed the Karakum Desert.

And at midnight on 31 December, you welcomed 2027 beside the burning Darvaza Gas Crater.

This was not simply another New Year celebration.

THIS WAS NEW YEAR AT THE GATES OF HELL.

The Karakum at sunset — a final memory from Darvaza

DETAILS

BORDER-TO-BORDER SERVICE

What Your Tour Includes

DARVAZA TOUR — ALL ESSENTIAL SERVICES

The following services are included in the tour package:

Visa support	Full Turkmenistan e-Visa support and foreigner registration.
Accommodation	Comfortable 4-star hotel accommodation with breakfast, in twin rooms with two separate beds, shared according to guests' gender. Single room available on request for an extra US$35 per night.
Yurt night stay at Darvaza	Overnight in a traditional yurt near the Darvaza Gas Crater, including dinner, breakfast, bed linen and shower facilities.
Transport	Comfortable air-conditioned vehicles with experienced drivers throughout the tour.
Transfers	Border pick-up, city-to-city transfers, sightseeing transfers and drop-off at the border.
Meals	All meals in the program — breakfasts, lunches and dinners, including the New Year feast at Darvaza.
Guide	Licensed English-speaking guide throughout the route.
Sightseeing and entrance fees	City tours, sightseeing program and entrance tickets to museums and sites included in the itinerary.
Medical insurance	Insurance coverage up to USD 67,000 per guest.
Driver and guide expenses	Gasoline, meals, accommodation and all route-related expenses for the driver and guide are included.
Taxes and organization	All taxes, road fees and organizational expenses are included.
Border-to-border service	The tour starts at the Turkmenistan border and ends at the Turkmenistan border.
Flexible program	You will see everything possible within the available time. The tour can be adjusted on the go depending on time, logistics and local conditions.

NOT INCLUDED

Visa and border fees	About US$90 per person: e-Visa about US$40 + COVID test US$49 on arrival.
Additional alcoholic drinks	Extra alcoholic drinks beyond the New Year table.
Personal expenses	Souvenirs, snacks, alcohol, laundry, minibar, SIM cards, extra hotel services and other personal purchases.
Tips	Tips are not included, but are always welcomed.

IMPORTANT

E-Visa support is included in the tour service. The actual visa and border fees are paid separately by the guest.

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Four days.

The Silk Road.

The Karakum Desert.

One extraordinary New Year.

Celebrate 2027 at the Gates of Hell with Darvaza Tour.