

MELONS, MUSCLES, & THE BRAND NEW ARDA KHIVA:

An exciting summer of events in Khiva, Uzbekistan



19 MAY, 2025

The historic Silk Road city of Khiva – the first UNESCO World heritage Site in Uzbekistan – is gearing up to receive record-breaking numbers of tourists in summer 2025, thanks to improved infrastructure and a lively events programme. The opening of the new Arda Khiva complex significantly increases accommodation capacity and offers new attractions for families, whilst wellness, cultural, and sports events further widen the city's appeal. Read on for our summary of why adventurous, heritage-loving tourists should visit Khiva this year.

- Download royalty-free photos of Khiva [here](#).

Arda Khiva President Mirziyoyev opened Khiva's striking new [Arda Khiva](#) complex on 2 May 2025. This 25-hectare tourism resort overlooking Gavuk Lake includes hotels with accommodation for 1,000 guests, a 3,000-seat amphitheatre for live performances, a waterpark and go-karting track, cinemas, restaurants, craft workshops and retail outlets, and an archaeological museum. Local authorities hope that Arda Khiva will attract 3 million visitors a year, whilst also reducing pressure on the Ichan Kala (walled city).

Days of Khorezm Culture and Art Khiva's Khorezmian culture is distinct from that in other parts of Uzbekistan: the local dance tradition, Lazgi, even has UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage status. From 6-8 June, 2025, there will be live performances across the Ichan Kala (inner walled city), showcasing the region's oral traditions. Expect vibrant storytelling and singing, plus dancing and storytelling.

International Strongmen Festival The International Strongmen Festival, supported by the [World Strongmen Federation](#), will take place in Khiva from 13-15 June, 2025. Inspired by Pahlavon Mahmud, the patron saint of wrestlers, who is buried in the city, sportsmen from more than a dozen countries will compete in this year's tournament. The event includes seven extreme strength challenges such as lifting Atlas stones, the anchor drag, and a sword hold. It is free for spectators to attend.

Global Wellness Day On 14 June, 2025, [Hotel Farovon Khiva](#) will be marking Global Wellness Day with free yoga sessions and a series of talks about women's health and mindfulness. Full details will be distributed on the hotel's social media channels close to the event.

Melon Festival Mad about melons? So, too, are the people of Khiva! The city's annual celebration of their favourite fruit will take place from 8-10 August, 2025. Each region of Uzbekistan will have a pavilion to showcase its local varieties of melons, so you can try dozens of kinds in a single day. There will be melon judging and tastings, melon crafts and souvenirs, and even temporary buildings made to look like melons. Visitors to the free festival will also be treated to live music and dancing, with nightly concerts on the main stage.

Food-loving visitors may also be interested in attending National Dishes of the Khorezm Khans (September 2025 – exact dates TBC) and the Khorezm Fish Dish Festival (25-26 October, 2025), both of which will take place in Khiva

Hotel News In May 2025, [Hotel Bankir Khiva](#) unveiled its stunning new Sunrise wing, adding 18 exquisitely designed guest rooms to this popular 3* boutique hotel in the Dishan Qala (outer walled city). The hotel was founded in 2023, and is managed by Timothy W. Go, a Canadian media personality in Singapore, and Muhammadali Erkinov, a local resident of Khiva. Rooms at the hotel start from \$90 per night. For more details about the hotel and its expansion, see Bankir Khiva's own press release [here](#).

Construction of the 146-room Mercure Khiva is well under way and the hotel is scheduled to open in autumn 2025. It will be the first international hotel in Khiva and the sixth Accor brand property in Uzbekistan.

Transport Uzbekistan has completed the electrification of a new 465 km high speed train line from Bukhara to Urgench and Khiva. Uzbekistan Railways has ordered six electric trains from Hyundai Rotem, and scheduled passenger departures will begin in 2026. This will reduce the train journey time from Tashkent to Khiva from 14 hours on the current diesel sleeper train to 7 hours 40 minutes, and increase passenger capacity to 3 million passengers per year.

In May 2025, President Mirziyoyev provisionally agreed to a public private partnership (PPP) with Incheon International Airport Corp (IIAC), under which IIAC will acquire 100% operating rights for Urgench International Airport. IIAC will invest \$143 million in the site in the next three years, financing a new airport terminal and runway expansion. Urgench is often described as the western gateway to Uzbekistan and is the closest airport to Khiva, a 20-minute drive away.

NOTES:

- Urgench International Airport has direct flights from Istanbul, Paris, Milan, and Rome, as well as connections via Tashkent.
- British and 90+ other nationalities can enter Uzbekistan visa-free for up to 30 days.
- Uzbekistan's official tourism website is www.uzbekistan.travel/en.
- The 4th edition of Bradt Travel Guides' [Uzbekistan](#) – the most comprehensive and up to date English language guidebook to the country – was published in April 2025.
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