

# Tourism

## Overview

The Kyrgyz Republic has unique potential for travel and leisure for tourists. International experts in the field of tourism note a wonderful combination of cultural and natural heritage. Kyrgyzstan – a mountainous country, with more than 90 percent of the territory at a height of 1000 m above the sea level. The highest mountain peaks after the Himalayas and Pamir are located in Kyrgyzstan, such as Pobeda Peak (7439 m/24,406 ft) and Lenin Peak (7134 m/23,405 ft), as well as one of the longest glaciers on earth – Enilchek.

The majestic silence of the snowy ridges in the mountains, the shady forest of slender Tien Shan spruces, the foamy waterfalls and numerous crystal-clear mountain lakes, beautiful green landscapes, including Suusamyr Valley, with yurts, herds of horses, numerous species of flora and fauna, all attract many tourists to Kyrgyzstan.

One of the best known and most popular resorts is Lake Issyk-Kul, which means “the hot lake”. Despite the fact that the lake is located high in the mountains, it never freezes, the water temperature in summer reaches 24 degrees Celsius (75 degrees Fahrenheit). The entire coast of the lake is surrounded by sandy beaches, the crystal clear lake surface, combined with the fresh mountain air creates a unique microclimate, similar to the sea. Near the coast there are many hot mineral springs and therapeutic muds.

Kyrgyzstan attracts foreign tourists as it is a part of the Great Silk Road. Kyrgyzstan was the “bridge” between the West and the East; there are three branches of the famous Silk Road running through the country: Pamir – Altai, southern and northern routes through the snowy mountain passes Temir –Too, and the Pamir.

Since olden times Kyrgyz lands were part of highly developed, civilized areas of Central Asia and served as a “terminal ” base in intercontinental trade. The development of trade led to the interpenetration of cultures, and subsequently, to the growth of cities, and the development of science and crafts. One of these cultural centers at the crossroads of caravan routes is the ancient city of Osh.

## Main types of tourism

- Skiing
- Ecotourism
- Equestrian tourism
- Mountaineering
- Trekking
- Rafting
- Resort and recreational tourism

## Interesting facts

- Tourism constitutes approximately 10% of the country's GDP
- With an overall population of 5.8 million people, Kyrgyzstan is visited by more than 3 million foreign visitors a year
- Kyrgyzstan provides a visa-free regime for more than 60 countries
- Issyk-Kul Lake is the second largest alpine lake in the world
- Permanent snow covers and glaciers make up 4% of the territory of Kyrgyzstan, which is approximately 8000 square km (3088 square miles). It is a considerably larger territory than the glaciers of the Caucasus and Alps combined.
- Globe Spots, an international group of independent travelers, rated the Kyrgyz Republic as one of top 10 countries to visit (2013)

<https://www.kgembassy.org/en/about-kyrgyzstan/tourism/>