

NEXT STOP? AFGHANISTAN?



Afghanistan as a tourist destination? Actually, there is a lot worth seeing. The country has a rich history and it also boasts with two UNESCO world heritage sites. It is the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam and the cultural landscape and archaeological remains of the Bamiyan Valley. Both of them are understandably inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

There is also the Afghan capital Kabul with various sights. Well known destination is the village of Bamiyan. The country was also the location of the two colossal Buddha statues, which have been destroyed by Taliban in 2006. There are also the ruins of SHAHR-E-ZOHAK (Red Town). The town was destroyed by Genghis Khan in 13th century.

Even though Afghanistan might seem a perfect destination for heritage lovers and many tour operators lure tourists to enjoy the beauties of the country, it is still not advisable to travel to this unstable region. After the U.S. invasion, the country is in chaos and Afghans are used to fight because it is definitely not the first invasion they have experienced. Most Western countries thus warn that it is unsafe to travel there. Visitors should go here only if absolutely necessary. Kidnappings and terrorist acts are quite a common practice here and the visitor may get in danger because of the local bandits as well as the US air strikes.

Despite all the dangers there are still people willing to go there. These travelers usually use the services of agencies that specialize in this kind of trips. For example, the Great Game Travel Company is able to provide tours around the country. They organize well-secured trips to the relatively stable Kabul, Northern Afghanistan and Badakhshan. To ensure safety the company has a full time security officer. Their group leaders are equipped with communication tools like satellite phones to ensure they can stay in contact in any situation. Nevertheless, no company is able to ensure 100 % safety!

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