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International Press Service

Ressort: Reise & Tourismus

# Ouzbekistan

Mons, 14.11.2026 [ENA]

In 2026, Uzbekistan marks 35 years of independence since 1991. The nation has transitioned from a Soviet republic into a fast-growing Central Asian power. Through massive economic reforms, cultural revival, and active diplomacy, Uzbekistan has opened to the world while preserving its rich heritage.

In 2026, Uzbekistan marks 35 years of independence since breaking from the Soviet Union in 1991. The nation's journey spans two distinct eras. The first 25 years under Islam Karimov focused on nation-building, sovereignty, and a state-controlled economy. A pivotal shift occurred in 2016 with President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, who initiated the "New Uzbekistan" vision. This reform era opened up the economy, eradicated forced labor, normalized regional foreign relations, and significantly modernized infrastructure. Today, as a regional leader, Uzbekistan successfully balances rapid modernization and foreign investments with the deep preservation of its ancient Silk Road heritage.

Before its independence in 1991, Uzbekistan's history was shaped by ancient empires, Silk Road trade, and foreign conquests. The region was a vital cultural and economic hub, home to legendary cities like Samarkand and Bukhara. It was ruled by the Persian Achaemenids, Alexander the Great, and later integrated into the Islamic world, becoming a center of science and artistry. In the 14th century, Timur (Tamerlane) founded a massive empire with its capital in Samarkand. By the 19th century, the area was divided into Uzbek khanates before being conquered by the Russian Empire. Following the 1917 revolution, it was integrated into the Soviet Union, becoming the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic in 1924, which endured until its collapse.

Bericht online lesen: https://www.european-news-agency.de/reise_tourismus/ouzbekistan-94673/

Redaktion und Verantwortlichkeit:
V.i.S.d.P. und gem. § 6 MDStV: Cedric Carre

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