

FIVE STANS 15

Posted on 2024-03-01 2024-03-01 by spd_wp_admin

Dear Reader (2024-03-01),

You may want to either grab a beverage of your choice or skip this post entirely as there are a lot of words and the images for this post are for illustration purposes – they don't stand alone as images outside of this post. With that said, in today's post I will try to unjumble my thoughts on Tajikistan in the form of a set of semi-connected impressions.

But before we begin, I feel I need to remind myself and respect the request our tour guide gave us at the start of our trip. That was to not take pictures of people without permission. In one particular case, a couple of women gave our band of travelers permission to be photographed under the condition that the photos would not be published on social media. Now, what only a few of you know is that I enjoy street photography and one of my first "Blurb" books was called "The Street Book". Moving forward I am going to make sure that I respect the original request of our tour guide. This means that I will not be posting candid images of people, if they are recognizable. There are of course nuances to this approach where exceptions are perfectly acceptable. For instance, tourist destinations are often pieces of theatre or spectacle in which many people are participating. Weddings in a very public place may also be exceptions. Though I will not be sharing candid photography on social media, I will be creating a short run "Blurb" book tentatively called "Stans from the Street". Please let me know if you might be interested in purchasing a copy of this currently non-existent book. My wag (wild ass guess) is the price will be around \$75 plus or minus.

- Approximate GDP per Capita in \$US and population. All figures as of 2022 sources:

~ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>

~ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL>

Canada	\$ 55,520	38,930,000
Kazakhstan	\$ 11,490	19,620,000
Kyrgyzstan	\$ 1,650	6,970,000
Tajikistan	\$ 1,050	9,950,000
Turkmenistan	\$ 8,730	6,430,000
Uzbekistan	\$ 2,260	35,650,000

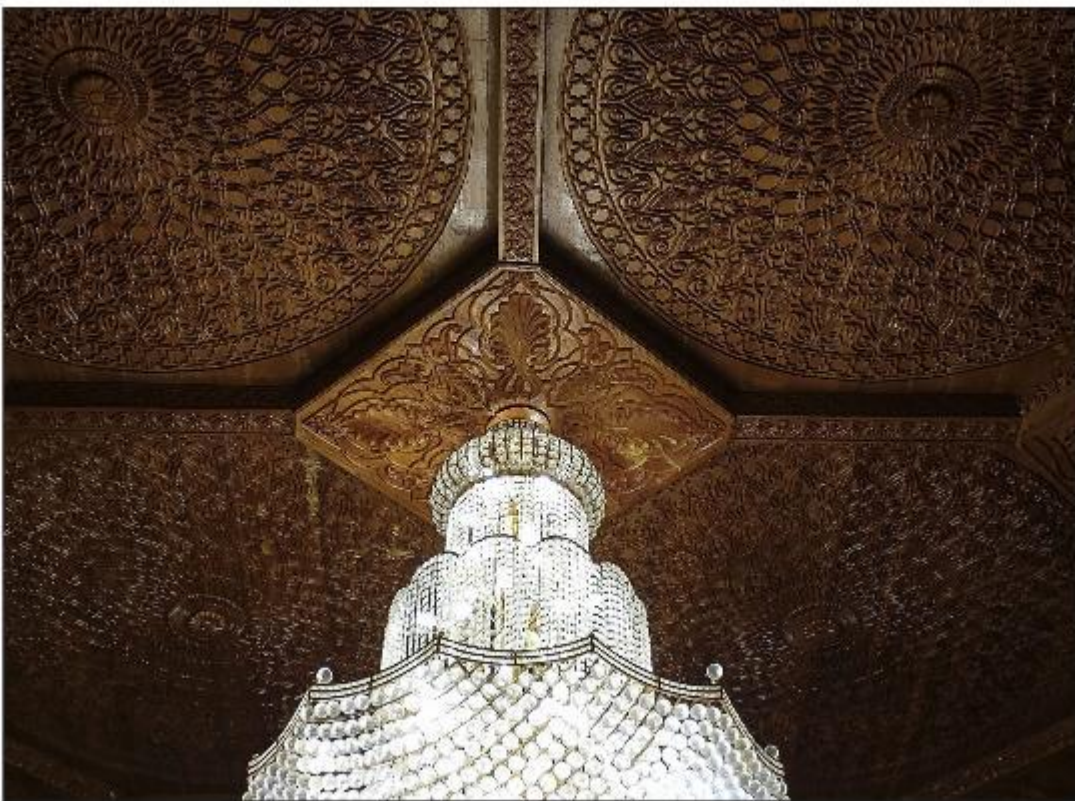
- Tajikistan is the poorest of the five countries we visited. There are also massive teahouses slash wedding palaces with vaulted ceilings, intricately carved wooden pillars, ornate wooden panels

(01, 02), and chipped slate tiles on the floor that don't lie flat. We visited two teahouses. One had been abandoned (3 – domed green building) and the other was empty but still being used.

- Throughout the Stans, weddings are massive and expensive affairs, where women still wear meringue dresses. We saw any number of wedding photographs being captured. In all but one case the brides did not look happy.
- There was a lot of litter in Kyrgyzstan. Tajikistan is clean. I saw a woman who looked like a public employee (because she was wearing a vest) sweeping the side of a country highway using a broom made of branches from bushes.
- Tajikistan needs infrastructure but does not have the money for it. China has provided money for roads in exchange for access to mineral resources. We were told that in the far eastern part of the country Tajikistan had sold China some land. Chinese dump trucks (04) are either yellow or orange and depending on where we were there were at times a constant parade of these trucks.
- There is a richness of decoration (05) throughout Tajikistan and often in surprising places. For instance, the dining room (07) of our decent but not luxurious hotel (08) was gorgeous. For some of us part of our daily ritual after a day of visual wonders was to have a drink of something, preferably outside. Below (06) was our lounge for cocktail hour at that same hotel. Behind us and across the street were reminders of the former Soviet Union.
- As I have mentioned before I love visual and conceptual collisions. Tajikistan is full of these discontinuities. For instance, some views (09, 10) would not be out of place anywhere in Europe, and some shop windows (11) would not be out place in the richer showrooms of Calgary. In a similar vein, parts of those ornate wooden are be created using CNC machines (12).
- Up to this point in these Five Stans posts I fear I might not have been tough enough on my editing. So I have now reviewed all my images from Tajikistan and will be presenting them in 5 more posts in quick succession. The 5 sets are labelled On The Road, Monumentalism, Livin, Marvels, Out and About. On The Road will e posted later today.



01



02



03



05







07



08



09



10



11



12

One Reply to “Five Stans 15”

1. **Keith** says:

2024-03-03 at 17:32 Edit

Not on social media. Hmm. I totally get their request, and would respect it myself. A blog is pretty clearly social media. Publishing in a book in years past would, I think, be considered social media in the sense they used it, but probably is not now. Is there a difference between publishing in a paper book and an e-book? What about publishing as prints in an exhibit?

Some of the wording around photo publication is “expectation of privacy” and paraphrased, is the person a celebrity? Some building owners are fussy about photos in their building or even on their property, (I’m looking at YOU Brookfield Place!) but I would love to hear the actual reasoning behind the rules, and how they apply to people carrying a DSLR-like camera, as opposed to a cell phone.

I digress. Such discussions are best over beer.

1, 2, 6,7- More intricate detail that someone spent a lot of time on. 9, and other photos throughout, relating to lettering that is not English. Not knowing what the signs say would make me nuts. I’m so used to reading signs and absorbing the information without even thinking about it.

12-My first thought was, “But that’s cheating!” Then again, why wouldn’t you use the available technologies?