

FIVE STANS 31 – ASHGABAT – LARGER VIEWS

Posted on 2024-04-15 by spd_wp_admin

Dear Reader (2024-04-15)

The post Five Stans 29 provides some background on Ashgabat. After yesterday's smaller views (Five Stans 30), today is for larger views.

Circus

The Turkmen State Circus is the main arena circus in the city, boasting a seating capacity of 1,700 seats. It is administered by the Ministry of Culture and Broadcasting of Turkmenistan. [1]

Independence Monument

Ashgabat loves large figures with gold accents. Along a pedestrian mall there is a parade of great figures from Turkmen history, which in my mind is part of Turkmenistan establishing a post soviet identity. There are also figures from history surrounding the Independence Monument

“The independence monument is one of the symbols of the city. The base of the monument symbolizes a traditional yurt, on top of which is a column 118 meters high. The column is topped with a crescent moon and five stars like on the Turkmen flag. Inside the dome, there is an ethnographical museum, and on top, there is a viewing platform. The main monument is surrounded by 27 prominent and important people in the history of Turkmens. [2]

AIMAG

In 2017 Turkmenistan hosted the Fifth Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games (AIMAG). An athletic complex was built specifically for the event complete with its own monorail. My understanding is that the complex is now mostly unused. The horse overlooking the stadium remains.

The Arch of Neutrality

The Arch of Neutrality was built in 1998 and is dedicated to Turkmenistan's policy of neutrality after gaining independence from the Soviet Union. It is 95-meters-high, and on top there is a golden statue of the first president of Turkmenistan. [2]

Yyldyz Hotel

Turkmenistan most luxurious hotel, Yyldyz Hotel, is surrounded by desert and kilometers of black hoses that drip feed water to what may one day become a forest (or not). We were fortunate enough to have lunch on the top floor where the service was impeccable. The views were stunning and surreal.

Wedding Palace

“Built in 2011, the Wedding Palace is a civil building, but it looks as though it was created by a wealthy eccentric. The lower floors of the white and gold structure are star-shaped and stacked in a staggered fashion so that their points do not overlap. Atop the initial floors is a huge globe that features gold maps of Turkmenistan. The oversized disco ball is enclosed by a frame of eight-sided Turkmen stars.

“Inside, the building delivers essentially what its name would suggest, acting as both the office where newlyweds can legally register their union as well as a venue in which to hold the ceremony. There are 11 floors in the complex, all devoted to getting people hitched. The grandest hall in the structure, known as the “Shamchyrag,” is located smack in the middle of the giant globe.

“Unique to the Wedding Palace, couples who wish to tie the knot in the opulent castle must have their photo taken in front of a portrait of the President of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow. Who better to feature in the pictures of your special day? [3]

Halk Hakydasy Memorial Complex

Opened in 2014, the complex has 3 large sculptures around a vast plaza, Monument Ruhý Tagzym, Monument Baký Şöhrat, Monument Milletiň Ogullary.

Monument Ruhý Tagzym is dedicated to the victims of the 1948 Ashgabat earthquake. The bronze sculpture is 10 meters high, mounted on a marble podium, rising above an area of 24 meters, a monument built on the initiative of Saparmyrat Nyýazow as a mighty bull tossing the world on its horns, and the bodies of the dead people, and on top a woman, with her last desperate hand movements saving her baby, lifting it over the ruins of the city. The basis of the design of the monument is an ancient legend about a fantastic bull holding the Earth on its horns, and its bellowing is heard as underground earthquake noises. [4]

Monument Baky Şöhrat is also known as the Eternal Flame and is dedicated to those who fell in the 1941–1945 Great Patriotic War. [4]

Monument Milletiň Ogullary depicts the Mother bowing her head and holding her son in an arm. It was built in commemoration of the heroes of other battles for the Motherland (Turkmenistan). [4]

Footnotes

[1] – Adapted and quoted from <https://ayan-turkmenistan.travel/turkmen-state-circus.html>

[2] – Adapted and quoted from <https://kalpak-travel.com/blog/ashgabat-top-places-see/>

[3] – Quoted from <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/wedding-palace>

[4] – Adapted and quoted from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halk_Hakydasy_Memorial_Complex







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You are welcome to share a link to this page with others.
As always, all comments are welcome and sought.
Cheers, Sean

2 Replies to “Five Stans 31 – Ashgabat – Larger Views”

1. **Keith Cartmell** says: 2024-04-15 at 19:59

3. It's kind of weird seeing so much empty road. I can't tell if those are apartment buildings or hotels or what, but you'd think with that many rooms there's be a bit more activity on the street.

It would seem getting married is a big deal. Maybe any excuse for a party. But a wedding portrait in front of the president? That's a little creepy.

1. **spd_wp_admin** says: 2024-04-16 at 16:33

Thank you for visiting and commenting. The roads and thoroughfares of Ashgabat appeared to be far larger than was warranted by the traffic. Given that most areas in The Stans is going to or is having issues with water, I don't see a lot of possibility for growth, even if governments are encouraging it.