



Kazakhstan

The world's largest landlocked country, where endless steppe meets snowy mountains, and every guest is welcomed with tea and warm fried bread.

AT A GLANCE

Facts to know

CAPITAL

Astana

POPULATION

About 20.6 million (official estimate, mid-2026)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Kazakh is the state language; Russian is also used officially, as set out in the constitution

CURRENCY

Kazakhstani tenge (KZT, symbol ₸), introduced on 15 November 1993

AREA

About 2,724,900 km², the ninth-largest country in the world and the largest landlocked one

GOVERNMENT

Presidential republic. A new constitution, approved by referendum on 15 March 2026 and in force since 1 July 2026, replaces the two-chamber parliament with a single chamber called the Kurultai

HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

Khan Tengri, about 7,010 m including its ice cap (6,995 m of rock), on the border where Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and China meet

LONGEST RIVER

The Irtysh, 4,248 km in total, which flows from China through northeastern Kazakhstan into Russia. The Ural, Ishim and Syr Darya also cross the country

NEIGHBOURS

Russia to the north and west, China to the east, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to the south. Across the Caspian Sea lie Azerbaijan and, further south, Iran

DRIVES ON THE

Right

CALLING CODE

+7, shared with Russia. The code +997 was reserved for Kazakhstan in 2021, but as of 2026 +7 is still used

A 45-minute trip to Kazakhstan

Everything you need is in this pack. No preparation beyond printing. Adapt the timing to your group.

- 0 to 5 min** Welcome. Show the map page and find Kazakhstan together. Ask: who has been there, or knows someone from there?
- 5 to 15 min** Read the facts at a glance, then three moments from the story: 3500 BC: The Botai herd horses; 1949: The first Soviet nuclear test; 2026: A new constitution.
- 15 to 25 min** At the table: talk about Beshbarmak and Kazy. Idea: bring a small taste (bread, cheese, fruit, tea) if your kitchen can help.
- 25 to 30 min** Say it like a local: practise "Сәлеметсіз бе? (Sälemetsız be?)" (Hello (polite)), "Сәлем (Sälem)" (Hi), "Қалыңыз қалай? (Qalyñyz qalai?)" (How are you?). Everyone says them together.
- 30 to 40 min** Quiz: read the questions aloud, or play the big-screen version at <https://worldstroll.com/countries/kazakhstan/group>. No scores needed.
- 40 to 45 min** Talk about it (questions page), then stamp or sign everyone's passport page.

You will need

- This printed pack (one per table, or one each)
- Pens for the quiz
- Optional: a world map or globe, a small tasting, music from the country

Kazakhstan and its cities



- Astana (City of republican significance, on the Ishim River in the north): The Baiterek tower, Khan Shatyr, a giant transparent tent, Very cold winters, Expo 2017
- Almaty (City of republican significance, in the southeast at the foot of the Tian Shan): Mountain views and the Medeu skating rink, The wooden Ascension Cathedral, Aport apples, The Green Bazaar
- Shymkent (City of republican significance, in the far south): Silk Road history, Markets and southern food, A gateway to Turkistan
- Karaganda (Karaganda Region, central Kazakhstan): Coal mining, Soviet-era architecture, Central steppe landscape
- Aktobe (Aktobe Region, northwest Kazakhstan): Oil and gas, Metal industry, Gateway to the western steppe
- Turkistan (Turkistan Region, in the south near the Syr Darya): The Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, Pilgrimage, The ruins of nearby Otrar

- Semey (Abai Region, on the Irtysh River in the northeast): The poet Abai Kunanbayuly, The Irtysh River, The history of the Semipalatinsk test site
- Oskemen (East Kazakhstan Region): Metal industry, The Altai mountains, A very deep river lock on the Irtysh
- Atyrau (Atyrau Region, at the mouth of the Ural River): Oil and gas, Bridges between Europe and Asia, The Ural River
- Aktau (Mangystau Region, on the Caspian Sea): The Caspian Sea shore, Mangystau desert landscapes, Oil and shipping

A short history of Kazakhstan

The Kazakh steppe was a highway of peoples. Early horse herders, Saka warriors buried with gold, Turkic tribes and the Mongols all crossed it, and Silk Road cities flourished along its southern rivers. The Kazakh Khanate rose in the 15th century and was slowly absorbed by the Russian Empire. The Soviet period brought both great suffering, above all the famine of the early 1930s and four decades of nuclear tests, and great change, from new cities to the launch pad of the space age. Since 1991 Kazakhstan has been an independent country.

3500 BC **The Botai herd horses**

Between about 3700 and 3100 BC, people of the Botai culture lived in villages of pit-houses on the northern steppe and depended heavily on horses. Wear marks on horse teeth suggest they used bridles, which makes Botai one of the earliest known places where people kept horses, although scientists still debate the details.

300 BC **The Golden Man is buried**

In the 4th or 3rd century BC a young Saka noble was buried in a mound at Issyk, near today's Almaty, with about 4,000 gold ornaments. Found in 1969, the 'Golden Man' has become a national symbol and stands on top of the Independence Monument in Almaty.

1219 **Genghis Khan takes Otrar**

After the governor of Otrar, a Silk Road city on the Syr Darya, had a Mongol trade caravan killed in 1218, Genghis Khan besieged the city in 1219, and it fell after about five months. Its fall opened the Mongol conquest

of Central Asia.

1389 Timur orders the Yasawi mausoleum

Timur commissioned a huge mausoleum in Turkistan for the Sufi poet Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, who died in 1166. Work stopped when Timur died in 1405, so it was never fully finished, but it became the model for Timurid architecture.

1465 The Kazakh Khanate is founded

The sultans Kerei and Janibek led their followers away from the Uzbek khan and founded the Kazakh Khanate. The year 1465 is the date accepted in Kazakh history writing, and in 2015 the country celebrated 550 years of Kazakh statehood.

1731 The Junior Zhuz turns to Russia

On 10 October 1731 Abu'l Khayr, khan of the Junior Zhuz in the west, swore loyalty to the Russian Empress Anna to gain help against his rivals. Over the next hundred years the Russian Empire extended its rule over the whole Kazakh steppe.

1930 The great famine begins

Forced collectivisation took the herds of the nomads and pushed them onto collective farms. In the famine that followed, known in Kazakh as Asharshylyq, an estimated 1.3 to 2.3 million people died between 1930 and 1933, most of them Kazakhs, and many others fled to China and neighbouring lands.

1936 The Kazakh SSR is created

Kazakhstan, until then an autonomous republic inside Soviet Russia, became a full union republic of the Soviet Union, the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, with

Alma-Ata as its capital.

1949 The first Soviet nuclear test

The first Soviet atomic bomb was exploded at the Semipalatinsk Test Site on the steppe west of Semipalatinsk, now Semey. By 1989 there had been 456 tests, with serious effects on the health of local people. The site was closed on 29 August 1991.

1954 The Virgin Lands campaign

The Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev sent hundreds of thousands of young volunteers to plough up the grasslands of northern Kazakhstan for wheat. Harvests rose at first, but soil erosion followed, and the newcomers changed the make-up of the population.

1961 Gagarin flies from Baikonur

On 12 April 1961 Yuri Gagarin became the first person in space, launched from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in the Kazakh steppe. Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite, had also been launched from there in 1957.

1986 The Jeltoqsan protests

In December 1986 young Kazakhs protested in Alma-Ata after Moscow replaced the long-serving Kazakh party leader with a Russian official from outside the republic. The protests were put down by force. Jeltoqsan means 'December' in Kazakh.

1991 Independence

Kazakhstan declared its independence on 16 December 1991, the last Soviet republic to do so. Ten days later the Soviet Union ceased to exist. 16 December is the national Independence Day.

1997

The capital moves north

On 10 December 1997 the capital moved from Almaty to Akmola, on the Ishim River. The city was renamed Astana, meaning 'capital', in 1998, became Nur-Sultan in 2019 in honour of the first president, and went back to the name Astana in 2022.

2005

The Kokaral dam is finished

Soviet irrigation had drained the rivers that fed the Aral Sea, once the fourth-largest lake in the world. In 2005 Kazakhstan completed the Kokaral dam to hold water in the northern part of the sea, and its level and fish have partly come back.

2026

A new constitution

On 15 March 2026 voters approved a new constitution in a referendum. It came into force on 1 July 2026, replacing the constitution of 1995 and creating a single-chamber parliament, the Kurultai. 15 March is now Constitution Day.

What people eat in Kazakhstan

Kazakh food grew out of nomadic life: meat from sheep, horses, cattle and camels, milk in many forms, and dough that could be cooked in a single iron cauldron called a kazan. A festive meal is laid on a low table, the dastarkhan, covered with small dishes of bread, fried boursak, dried fruit, sweets, nuts and cold meats such as horse sausage. Then comes the main dish, usually beshbarmak, with meat carved by the host, followed by bowls of hot broth. Tea, strong and black with milk, is served before, during and after everything, and fermented mare's or camel's milk is drunk in summer. Russian, Uzbek, Uyghur, Dungan, Korean and Tatar cooks have added dumplings, noodles, salads and pastries of their own.

Beshbarmak (Бесбармақ (besbarmaq), also simply et (et, 'meat'))

All of Kazakhstan, the national dish

Large pieces of boiled mutton or horse meat, often with horse sausage, served on a wide platter over sheets of thin boiled dough and topped with onions softened in the rich broth. The broth itself, sorpa, is drunk from bowls alongside. The name means 'five fingers', because it was traditionally eaten with the hands.

Kazy (Қазы (qazy))

All of Kazakhstan

A handmade sausage of horse meat and fat, dried or smoked and then boiled. It is sliced into rounds, each with a ring of white fat, and served cold as a starter with other cold meats, or cooked together with beshbarmak on festive days.

Kuurdak (Қуырдақ (quyrdaq))

All of Kazakhstan

A hearty dish of fried meat and offal, such as liver, heart and kidneys, cut small and cooked with onions in a cauldron. Nomads traditionally made it from a freshly slaughtered sheep, frying it in animal fat; potatoes, which reached the region in the 19th century, are often added today.

Manty (Мәңті (mänti))

All of Kazakhstan, from Uyghur tradition

Large steamed dumplings filled with minced lamb or beef, onion and black pepper, sometimes with pumpkin. They are cooked in a tall steamer with several tiers and served with butter, sour cream or an onion sauce.

Laghman (Лағман (lağman))

Southeast Kazakhstan and all big cities, from Uyghur and Dungan cooking

Long, hand-pulled wheat noodles topped with a stir-fried sauce of meat, peppers, tomatoes, onion and garlic. In Kazakhstan it is known as a national dish of the Uyghur and Dungan communities, and it is found in cafés all over the country.

Nauryz kozhe (Наурыз көже (nauryz köje))

All of Kazakhstan, made for the spring festival of Nauryz

A thick soup made once a year for Nauryz, the spring new year in March. It is cooked from seven ingredients, which vary by region but usually include meat, fat, water, milk, grain and salt. The seven ingredients stand for good fortune and plenty in the coming year.

Boursak (Бауырсақ (bauyrsaq))

All of Kazakhstan

Small puffy pieces of fried dough, golden outside and soft inside, piled high on every dastarkhan. They are eaten with tea, butter, honey or jam, and a family gathering without boursak is hard to imagine.

Shelpek (Шелпек (şelpek))

All of Kazakhstan

A thin, round flatbread fried in oil in a shallow pan, soft and slightly chewy. It is eaten with tea and is also made for gatherings in memory of the dead.

Kurt (Құрт (qūrt))

All of Kazakhstan

Small hard balls of strained sour milk, salted and dried until white. Kurt keeps for months, which made it perfect food for nomads on the move, and today it is sold in every market as a salty snack.

Zhent (Жент (jent))

All of Kazakhstan

A sweet made without baking, from roasted crushed millet mixed with butter, sugar or honey, and often raisins, pressed firmly and cut into pieces. Easy to make in a single cauldron, it is still prepared for festive gatherings.

Kumyz (Қымыз (qumyz))

All of Kazakhstan, especially in summer

Fermented mare's milk, slightly sour, a little fizzy and very mildly alcoholic. It is served in wide bowls, and many Kazakhs value it as a healthy drink. Because mare's milk is scarce, factory versions are often made with cow's milk.

Shubat (Шұбат (şūbat))

Western and southern Kazakhstan, where camels are kept

Fermented camel's milk, white, sparkling and sour, a staple summer drink of the camel-herding west. It spoils quickly, so it is best tasted fresh on a farm or in a local market.

Chalap (Шалап (şalap))

Southern Kazakhstan and the whole region

A cool, salty drink made from thick sour milk (katyk) or strained

yoghurt thinned with water, and in modern times with fizzy water. It is a favourite on hot summer days and with rich meat dishes.

Aport apples (Апорт алмасы (aport almasy))

The foothills around Almaty

Huge, fragrant red apples grown in the mountain foothills around Almaty, usually weighing 200 to 500 g each. Aport is the city's famous apple and is sold in its markets every autumn. It is thought to have come to Almaty, then called Verny, in 1865 and was crossed there with the local wild apple.

GOOD MANNERS

At the table

- A guest is always given the place of honour at the table and a special welcome. Meals are traditionally laid out on a low table called a dastarkhan.
- Tea is poured only part of the way up the bowl, called a kese. A small pour is a sign of respect, because the host will refill it again and again to keep your tea hot. A full bowl can hint that it is time to leave.
- The host carves the meat for beshbarmak and hands out the best pieces to the most honoured guests and to children. The most honoured guest may be offered the boiled sheep's head to share out.
- Tea comes with every meal, usually strong black tea with milk, and a festive meal often ends with kymyz and then more tea.
- Vegetarians should ask before ordering: even dishes without meat are very often cooked in meat stock.

Beshbarmak

Large pieces of boiled mutton or horse meat, often with horse sausage, served on a wide platter over sheets of thin boiled dough and topped with onions softened in the rich broth. The broth itself, sorpa, is drunk from bowls alongside. The name means 'five fingers', because it was traditionally eaten with the hands.

Ingredients

- 1.5 kg lamb on the bone (shoulder or neck), or a mix of lamb and beef
- 2 onions, 1 whole and 1 sliced into rings
- 1 bay leaf, salt and black peppercorns
- For the dough: 300 g plain flour, 1 egg, about 120 ml water and a pinch of salt
- A small bunch of parsley or dill, chopped

Method

1. Put the meat in a large pot, cover with about 3 litres of cold water and bring slowly to the boil, skimming off the foam. Add the whole onion, bay leaf and peppercorns, and simmer gently for 2 to 2.5 hours until the meat is very tender. Salt towards the end.
2. Meanwhile mix the flour, egg, water and salt into a firm dough, knead for a few minutes and rest it for 30 minutes under a bowl.
3. Roll the dough out very thinly and cut it into squares of about 7 cm.

4. Lift the meat out, keep it warm and cut it into large pieces. Put the onion rings in a ladle of hot broth with some pepper and let them soften.
5. Cook the dough squares in the simmering broth, a few at a time, for 3 to 4 minutes, and lay them on a large platter.
6. Pile the meat on the dough, spoon the onions and a little broth over the top, and scatter with herbs. Serve the rest of the hot broth in bowls.

Kuyrdak

A hearty dish of fried meat and offal, such as liver, heart and kidneys, cut small and cooked with onions in a cauldron. Nomads traditionally made it from a freshly slaughtered sheep, frying it in animal fat; potatoes, which reached the region in the 19th century, are often added today.

Ingredients

- 400 g lamb shoulder, cut into 2 cm pieces
- 300 g lamb liver and heart (or all liver), cut into 2 cm pieces
- 2 tablespoons lamb fat or vegetable oil
- 2 onions, sliced
- 2 potatoes, cut into cubes (optional)
- Salt, black pepper and a pinch of ground cumin
- Fresh parsley or dill to serve

Method

1. Heat the fat in a heavy pan or wok until very hot. Fry the lamb pieces for 8 to 10 minutes until browned.
2. Add the heart and fry for 5 minutes.
3. Add the onions and potatoes, if using, with a splash of water. Cover and cook gently for about 20 minutes until the potatoes are soft, stirring now and then.
4. Add the liver and fry uncovered for 3 to 4 minutes, until just cooked through with no pink juices. Liver becomes tough if overcooked.

5. Season with salt, pepper and cumin, scatter with herbs and serve hot with bread.

Manty

Large steamed dumplings filled with minced lamb or beef, onion and black pepper, sometimes with pumpkin. They are cooked in a tall steamer with several tiers and served with butter, sour cream or an onion sauce.

Ingredients

- For the dough: 400 g plain flour, 1 egg, about 180 ml water and a pinch of salt
- 500 g minced lamb or beef (with some fat)
- 3 onions, very finely chopped
- 150 g pumpkin, finely diced (optional)
- 1 teaspoon salt and 1 teaspoon black pepper
- Butter or sour cream to serve

Method

1. Mix the flour, egg, water and salt into a smooth, firm dough. Cover and rest for 30 minutes.
2. Mix the meat, onions, pumpkin, salt, pepper and 2 tablespoons of cold water into a juicy filling.
3. Roll the dough thinly and cut it into 10 cm squares. Put a spoonful of filling in the middle of each, bring the corners together and pinch the edges closed.
4. Brush the steamer tiers with oil, set the dumplings on them with space in between, and steam over boiling water for 40 to 45 minutes. The meat must be cooked right through.

5. Serve hot with melted butter or sour cream.

Baursak

Small puffy pieces of fried dough, golden outside and soft inside, piled high on every dastarkhan. They are eaten with tea, butter, honey or jam, and a family gathering without baursak is hard to imagine.

Ingredients

- 500 g plain flour
- 250 ml warm milk
- 1 teaspoon dried yeast
- 1 tablespoon sugar and 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- 30 g butter, melted
- About 1 litre vegetable oil for frying

Method

1. Stir the yeast and sugar into the warm milk and leave for 10 minutes until frothy.
2. Mix in the egg, melted butter, salt and flour, and knead into a soft dough. Cover and leave in a warm place for about an hour, until doubled.
3. Roll the dough out about 1 cm thick and cut into small squares, diamonds or rounds.
4. Heat the oil in a deep pan to about 170 °C. Fry the pieces a few at a time for 2 to 3 minutes, turning them, until puffed and golden. Hot oil is dangerous: never leave the pan, and keep children away.

5. Drain on kitchen paper and serve warm with tea.

Shelpek

A thin, round flatbread fried in oil in a shallow pan, soft and slightly chewy. It is eaten with tea and is also made for gatherings in memory of the dead.

Ingredients

- 300 g plain flour
- 180 ml milk or water
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, plus more for frying
- 1 teaspoon sugar and a pinch of salt
- Half a teaspoon of baking powder

Method

1. Mix the flour, baking powder, sugar and salt, add the milk and a tablespoon of oil, and knead to a soft dough. Rest it for 10 minutes.
2. Divide into 7 balls and roll each into a very thin round, about 20 cm across.
3. Heat 1 cm of oil in a wide frying pan. Fry each round for about 1 minute on each side until golden with a few bubbles. Hot oil is dangerous: never leave the pan.
4. Drain on kitchen paper and stack them. Serve warm with tea, butter or honey.

Useful phrases

Сәлеметсіз бе? (Sälemetsız be?)

sah-leh-met-SIZ beh · Hello (polite)

Сәлем (Sälem)

sah-LEM · Hi

Қалыңыз қалай? (Qalyñyz qalai?)

kha-luh-NUHZ kha-LIE · How are you?

Рақмет, жақсы (Raqmet, jaqsy)

rakh-MET, zhakh-SUH · Fine, thank you

Рақмет (Raqmet)

rakh-MET · Thank you

Оқасы жоқ (Oqasy joq)

o-kha-SUH ZHOKH · You're welcome

Өтінем (Ötinem)

ur-tin-EM · Please

Кешіріңіз (Keşiriñiz)

keh-shee-ree-NIZ · Excuse me, sorry

Сау болыңыз (Sau bolyñyz)

SOW bo-luh-NUHZ · Goodbye

Қайырлы таң (Qaiyrly tañ)

kha-yur-LUH TAHNG · Good morning

Кеш жарық (Keş jaryq)

KESH zha-RUKH · Good evening

Менің атым ... (Meniñ atym ...)

meh-NING a-TUHM · My name is ...

Сізбен танысқанымға қуаныштымын (Sızben tanysqanyma қуаныштымyn)

siz-BEN ta-nus-kha-nuh-MA kwa-nush-tuh-MUHN · Nice to meet you

Сіз ағылшынша сөйлейсіз бе? (Sız aғылшынша söyleisiz be?)

SIZ a-ghul-shun-SHA soy-lay-SIZ beh · Do you speak English?

Мен түсінбеймін (Men түsinbeimін)

MEN too-sin-BAY-min · I don't understand

Мынау қанша? (Mynau қанша?)

muh-NOW khan-SHAH · How much is this?

Ас мәзірін беріңізші (As мәzirin berіñizші)

AS mah-zih-RIN beh-ree-niz-SHEE · The menu, please

Көмектесіңіз! (Kömektesіñiz!)

kur-mek-teh-see-NIZ · Help!

Things you might not know

1. Kazakhstan is the largest landlocked country in the world and the ninth largest of all countries, with an area of about 2.7 million km², roughly the size of Western Europe.
2. The border between Kazakhstan and Russia is about 7,644 km long, the longest continuous land border in the world.
3. The wild apple forests around Almaty are home to *Malus sieversii*, which DNA studies show is the main ancestor of the eating apple. The city's old name, Alma-Ata, is often translated as 'father of apples', although that meaning is disputed.
4. The first satellite, Sputnik 1, in 1957, and the first person in space, Yuri Gagarin, in 1961, were both launched from Baikonur in the Kazakh steppe. Russia leases the cosmodrome from Kazakhstan until 2050.
5. Astana is the second-coldest national capital in the world after Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia. Winter nights of minus 30 to minus 35 °C are common.
6. Astana has had six names since it was founded in 1830: Akmoly, Akmolinsk, Tselinograd, Akmola, Astana and Nur-Sultan, and then Astana again from 2022. As of 2022 it held the Guinness World Record for the capital with the most name changes in modern times.

7. The Semipalatinsk Test Site saw 456 Soviet nuclear tests between 1949 and 1989. It closed on 29 August 1991, and the United Nations now marks 29 August as the International Day against Nuclear Tests.
8. The Aral Sea was once the fourth-largest lake on earth. It shrank after its rivers were diverted for cotton, but since the Kokaral dam was finished in 2005 the northern part in Kazakhstan has partly recovered.
9. The 'Golden Man' of Issyk, a young Saka noble buried more than 2,000 years ago, was dressed in more than 4,000 gold ornaments. A golden warrior figure based on this find stands on top of the Independence Monument in Almaty.
10. As of 2026, Kazakhstan has seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The newest, added in 2026, are the rock mosques and sacred sites of Mangystau in the west.
11. Kazakh is written in Cyrillic letters, but the country is switching to a Latin alphabet. The target date has moved from 2025 to 2031, so as of 2026 you will see both scripts.
12. Kazakhstan shares the telephone code +7 with Russia. The code +997 was reserved for Kazakhstan in 2021, but the switch was dropped in 2023.
13. Khan Tengri, Kazakhstan's highest peak, is made of marble. At sunset it glows red, and in Kazakh it is also called Kantau, the 'blood mountain'.
14. The dombra, a long-necked lute with two strings, is the principal national instrument of Kazakhstan.

Questions for the group

- Have you ever been to Kazakhstan, or has someone in your family? What do you remember?
- Have you ever tasted Beshbarmak or Kazy? What is a dish you remember from a trip?
- Independence (1991). Do you remember hearing about it? Where were you then?
- The capital moves north (1997). Do you remember hearing about it? Where were you then?
- Have you seen Baiterek, in person or in pictures? Which famous place would you most like to see?
- If you could spend one day in any city of Kazakhstan, which would it be and why?

QUIZ

How well do you know Kazakhstan?

Circle the right answer. The answers are on the last page.

1. Kazakhstan was the last Soviet republic to declare independence. In which year did it do so?

- A) 1986
- B) 1997
- C) 1993
- D) 1991

2. What is the capital of Kazakhstan?

- A) Astana
- B) Shymkent
- C) Almaty
- D) Karaganda

3. *Malus sieversii*, a wild tree of the mountains around Almaty, is the main ancestor of which fruit?

- A) The apricot
- B) The apple
- C) The pear
- D) The cherry

4. The Semipalatinsk nuclear test site was closed in 1991, after hundreds of Soviet nuclear tests.

- A) True
- B) False

5. As of 2026, how many UNESCO World Heritage Sites does Kazakhstan have?

- A) 12
- B) 5
- C) 7
- D) 3

6. What is the currency of Kazakhstan?

- A) Manat
- B) Tenge
- C) Som
- D) Lari

7. Which is the largest city in Kazakhstan by population?

- A) Astana
- B) Karaganda
- C) Shymkent
- D) Almaty

8. From which launch site did Yuri Gagarin fly into space in 1961?

- A) Baikonur
- B) Cape Canaveral
- C) Plesetsk
- D) Kourou

9. Kazy, served sliced on festive tables, is a sausage made from which meat?

- A) Fish
- B) Pork
- C) Horse
- D) Chicken

10. The Kazakh word 'alma' (алма) means apple.

- A) True
- B) False

11. What does 'Sau bolyñyz' mean?

- A) Good morning
- B) Goodbye
- C) Thank you
- D) Help!

12. In Kazakhstan, pouring a guest's tea just part of the way up the bowl is a sign of respect.

- A) True
- B) False

Quiz answers

1. D) 1991

Kazakhstan declared independence on 16 December 1991. Ten days later the Soviet Union ceased to exist.

2. A) Astana

Astana has been the capital since 10 December 1997. Almaty is the largest city and was the capital until then.

3. B) The apple

The apple. DNA studies show that this wild apple is the main ancestor of the apples eaten around the world.

4. True

True. There were 456 tests there between 1949 and 1989, and the site was closed on 29 August 1991.

5. C) 7

As of 2026 there are 7. The newest, added in 2026, are the rock mosques and sacred sites of Mangystau.

6. B) Tenge

The tenge (symbol ₸) was introduced on 15 November 1993. The som is used in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, the manat in Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, and the lari in Georgia.

7. D) Almaty

Almaty has more than two million people. Astana, the capital, is second and Shymkent third.

8. A) Baikonur

Gagarin was launched from Baikonur, in the Kazakh steppe, on 12 April 1961. Sputnik 1 had also been launched from there in 1957.

9. C) Horse

Kazy is made from horse meat and fat. It was once a dish only the

wealthy could afford.

10. True

True. Alma means apple, and the old name of Almaty, Alma-Ata, is often linked with it.

11. B) Goodbye

Sau bolyñyz means 'goodbye', literally 'stay healthy'.

12. True

True. The host refills the bowl again and again to keep the tea hot. A full bowl can even hint that it is time to leave.

Kazakhstan visa page

Name: _____ Date: _____



Next stops

Country: _____	Country: _____	Country: _____
Country: _____	Country: _____	Country: _____

Play the interactive version, collect a stamp in your passport:

<https://worldstroll.com/countries/kazakhstan>