

## Teahouse

Teahouse in Tajik called *choykhona* is one of the traditional social spaces for having lunch, tea or simply gathering for conversation and meetings. Teahouses are common among Tajik people and in the last two centuries they have been integrated into the city's landscape as an official dining place.

Traditional teahouses consists of two separate spaces that is kitchen and sitting space. Some teahouses have traditional *kats* – trestle benches on which up to 10 people can sit on it the furnishing consists of a table and padded mattresses for sitting and pillows to relax. Teahouses outside the city are usually located by the streams or rivers banks. These places are used by the populace for rest and dinning. The city teahouses have fountains or other ponds to add it relaxed mode.

Teahouses are built in crowded places such as market places or the main streets. In some teahouses table board games including nard and chess are provided for the customers to play and rest. Traditional teahouses served only limited types of food and mainly concentrated on tea and varieties of traditional baking and sweets. The person serving in teahouse is called *choykhonachi*

– that is teahouse host. In teahouses they serve different types of tea according to the request of the customers.

Teahouses also perform social function for holding meetings, announcing special events and or public discussion of certain issues relevant to the social life of the community. Some teahouses are furnished with TV and radios as well. The street or traditional performers also often come to teahouses to perform for the public and earn money. Forms of the traditional singing performed in teahouses include national epic songs and folk music.

In the northern regions of the Tajikistan the social event *gashtak* often are held in the teahouses. Usually for such occasion those organizing *gashtak* would bring their own ingredients and cook their own meal where teahouse host provides them with a space to conduct their event.

Tajikistan is rich with the beautiful teahouses such as «Rohat», «Saodat» and «Istaravshan» teahouses in Dushanbe. Across the country there are many teahouses owned privately or as joint venture corporation.





