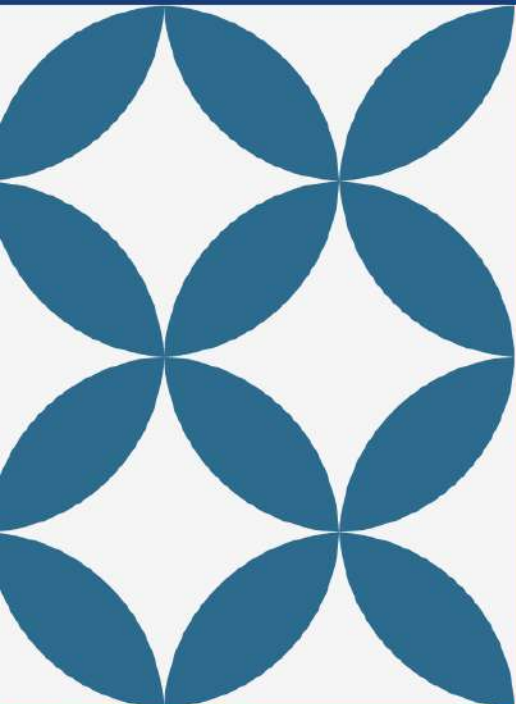




ALMA
ALMATY MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY

2026/2027

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information in this guide at the time of going to print. However, this information is subject to change and the University accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions. Students are advised to refer to the various web-links provided throughout the guide for the most up-to-date information, and contact global@almau.edu.kz with any further questions.

**We look
forward to
meeting you!**

**Кездескенше!
До скорой встречи!**

Welcome!

ҚОШ КЕЛДІҢІЗДЕР!

ДОБРО ПОЖАЛОВАТЬ!

This pre-arrival and orientation guide has been produced for exchange students who are coming to study at AlmaU from outside Kazakhstan. It provides practical guidance on coming to live and study in Almaty from an exchange student's perspective and information on some of the University's central support services. Its intention is to complement other sources of guidance you are likely to receive as part of your induction from the university.



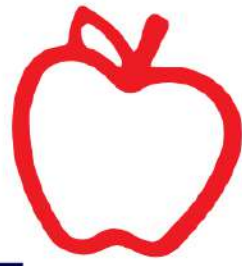
ALMA
ALMATY MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY



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About Almaty...



Almaty is the largest city of the Republic of Kazakhstan. It is a cultural, educational and economic centre with a population of about 1.8 million people.

Almaty used to be the capital of Kazakhstan, until 1997 when it changed to Astana, and is now generally considered the southern capital of Kazakhstan. Almaty literally means 'City of apple trees', and, because of its relatively mild climate, it has a wide range of apple trees. The Almaty area is said to be the genetic home of many varieties of apples, and the area is frequently visited by researchers and scientists from around the world, in order to learn more about the complex systems of genetics, and also to discover the true beginnings of the domestic apple. Almaty is a city of parks, squares and green spaces that occupy 10 000 hectares of its territory. The central streets and avenues slipping down from South to North follow the example of the three mountain streams - Esentai, Large and Small Almatinka - that rush down to feed small canals, fountains, fields and gardens.



Navigating Almaty...



Almaty is rapidly evolving into a university city with great flair and character. Over 200 000 students study here, a number that grows every year. The city has a vast array of tourist and cultural destinations, so be sure to take the opportunity to explore the region while you are here!

We recommend that you download Yandex Maps on your phone, as it is an extremely accurate and useful resource for navigating Almaty. It works similarly to Google Maps but is generally more accurate for our specific city. You can use it for navigation and route planning; you can input a start point and a destination and it will offer you routes and travel times depending on your preferred mode of transport. You can book Yandex taxis through this app as well.

Living in Almaty



Aigul Kospanova is our Visa Officer, and she is here to help you find somewhere to live that is comfortable and convenient for your stay in Almaty. You can indicate to her your monthly budget, and whether you are happy to share your accommodation, and she will work hard to find a place that is right for you.

Aigul Kospanova – Visa Officer
a.kospanova@almu.edu.kz

ACCOMMODATION:

Please, think about your accommodation before your arrival in Almaty, because, according to Kazakhstan Law, there are only 3 days to register as a foreign student in the country; an address is required for this. At AlmaU, we do not provide university accommodation for students (ie. Halls of residence or University owned property), but we certainly offer dedicated help to find you a home away from home in our beautiful city.

Prices for renting an apartment can vary drastically in Almaty and start from approximately 200 000 KZT for a month. Rent depends on the number of rooms in the flat and its location. The most expensive apartments are located in the centre, and southwards, on the higher grounds closer to the mountains. The cheapest rooms can be found down from Rayimbek avenue and in the west of the city. There is also an option to rent rooms, living with other people or the owner of the apartment, which will be cheaper than renting the whole apartment.

NOTE: Temporary accommodation on arrival

Depending on availability of accommodation, exchange students may have to temporarily stay in a hostel or hotel indicated by the university. This is not definite but depends on whether your apartment is ready for you to move into; if this is required, Aigul will inform you and ensure it is sorted.

COST OF LIVING:

Almaty is a relatively cheap city to live in, especially compared to other large international cities. Your biggest monthly expense will definitely be rent, but aside from that, it is quite easy to live on a fairly low budget. It is a good idea to have a vague idea of a budget before you arrive, but you will get a good idea of your necessary expense when you arrive (ie. daily transport, weekly food shop etc.) This website has some generally accurate information about living costs in Almaty to help you plan for your stay:

<https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/in/Almaty>

CLIMATE:

Almaty is situated in a mountainous area, which largely influences the climate of the city. The climate here is considered typically humid continental, which means it has hot summers and cold winters. Over the course of the year, the temperature typically varies from -11°C to 30°C and is rarely below -18°C or above 35°C. In spring and early summer months there is a lot more rain than usual.



Almaty Cost
of Living



Yandex
Translate App



Kazakh
Phrases!



Russian
Phrases!

There are two official languages in Kazakhstan, which are Kazakh and Russian. Most people speak both, and most signs, menus and general information is offered in both. Many people can also speak English, or have at least some understanding of English. If you ever need to use a translation tool, YandexTranslate seems to be the most generally accurate - the app also has a feature that allows you to scan text using your camera, which can be very useful. Above are some websites that have common everyday phrases in Kazakh and Russian!

Things to think about:

Mobile Phones

You may wish to purchase a SIM card to use during your studies in Kazakhstan. While many international phone companies offer abroad rates and roaming, we would still recommend getting a Kazakhstan phone number as it gives you access to various services and is often cheaper than international rates. There are two main options; ESIM (eSIM is a digital SIM card embedded into the latest smartphones); a physical SIM .Tele2 ; Altel ; Beeline ; Activ ; Kcell are all network providers.

If you need any help with this, don't hesitate to contact the Academic mobility team

Electricity

The voltage of mains electricity in the Kazakhstan is 220v. The standard plug in Kazakhstan is a two-pin model, compatible with Type C, Type E and Type F. If this is different from the standard in your home country, it is advisable to purchase converters to bring to Kazakhstan with you. Mobile charging points and charging points in establishments often have a direct USB mains socket.

Money

The currency of Kazakhstan is Kazakhstani Tenge - ₸ - KZT. Although cash is in circulation, most people pay using contactless card, or, for the majority, by Kaspi. Often if you pay for something in cash, if you don't have the exact right amount, the vendor can't give you any change. There are various international card companies (Wise, Revolut etc.) that you can use for the majority of payments, online or in person with very small exchange fees. However, we recommend that you set up a Kaspi account as this is the most broadly used. There are Kaspi banks and cash machines located accessibly all over the city.



Kaspi is a service used by nearly everyone in Kazakhstan. It works as a bank, as well as an online shop and ticket office. We highly recommend that you set up a Kaspi account as soon as you arrive, as it is by far the easiest way to pay for services and transfer money between friends. In order to set up a Kaspi account, you will need a Kazakhstan IIN (Individual Identification Number) as well as a Kazakhstan local phone number.

To get your IIN you will need to visit the local CON (Public Service Centre) to fill in an application form. You need to have a notary certified copy of your passport, and if your original passport is not in Russian, you will need a notary certified translation of the passport. You will also need to pay a small administration fee in cash.

Public Service Centre - Bostandyk district

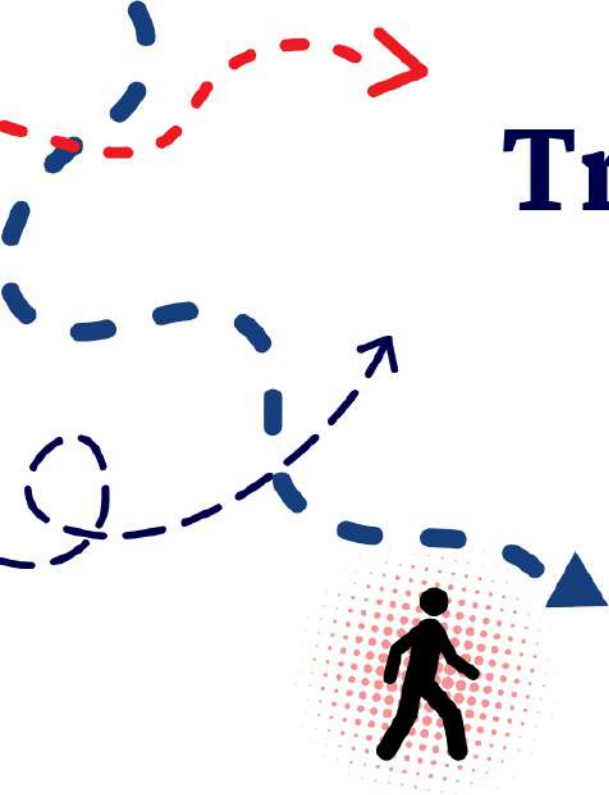
9a, Almagul microdistrict

Working hours: 09.00-20.00 (Mon-Fri), 09.00-13.00 (Sat)

Once you have received your IIN, you can set up your Kaspi bank account. To do this, you can visit a Kaspi Bank Centre, located in various locations around the city. You need to provide your passport, IIN and local phone number, as well as your home country address and identification number (ie. National Insurance Number or National Identification Number) Once complete, you will receive a physical bank card. You can also add this card to your mobile wallet and download the Kaspi app to pay from your phone using QR codes or phone numbers.

If you have any questions, or need help setting up your Kaspi account, don't hesitate to contact Aigul or our managers.

Travelling around the city



Walking is, of course, the cheapest option! Almaty is a beautiful city, so walking can be a nice way to actively explore and navigate the streets. There are several pedestrianised areas and parks all around the city, and the broadly accessible maps make it an overall enjoyable experience, especially when the weather is good! Almaty is a very big city, however, so we would advise you to ensure you have access to a map at all times (Yandex Maps, Google Maps etc)!



Smart Scooters are readily available all around the city and can be a fun way to get around quicker than on foot. OZIM is one of the providers

(<https://ozim.kz/>). You can download the app, connect your card, and then rent a scooter for however long you like by scanning the QR code.

It is important to stay safe on these scooters, so make sure you try and stay on designated cycle tracks, watch your speed when riding near pedestrians, and remember that cars and vehicles have right of way (and are much bigger than you!). It is the law to wear a helmet when riding a scooter, so even if you see other people without a helmet, we strongly advise that you use one to avoid a fine and above all, to avoid injury.



Cycling is a popular way to travel around Almaty, and a good way to stay active while enjoying the sights of the city. There are several places you can temporarily rent bikes (similar to the bike rental initiatives in other international cities). You can find more information at <https://almatybike.kz/>.

It is important to remember:

- We drive on the right-hand side of the road in Kazakhstan.
- You cannot cycle on the pavement unless it is specifically marked for dual use. There are also designated cycle tracks in busy areas.
- You should wear a helmet to keep yourself as safe as possible
- Be respectful to others and do not cycle in pedestrian areas or on pavements.

It is extremely important to be mindful of all traffic on the roads when navigating our city. Not all road users are as considerate as others, so make sure you are aware of your surroundings at all times and remember that cars and other vehicles have right of way when crossing the road. Electric scooters are very common in our city, and often ride on the pavement so make sure you are alert even when walking in these areas. Stick to pedestrian zones and cross at designated crossings!



Buses are a great way to get around Almaty. The public transport network in Almaty is well-established and fairly reliable, not to mention easy to use. Bus schedules and live maps can be viewed on the YandexMaps app which is available to download on international devices.

The flat-rate fare for all bus journeys in Almaty is 200 KZT if you pay in cash with the driver. If paying in cash, you should make sure you have the exact right amount, as the driver often doesn't have change.

The main way people pay for their bus fare is using ONAY. ONAY is a single card that allows you to pay for all public transport in the city, including buses, trolleybuses and the metro. You can get a physical card or download the app and use it on your phone. With ONAY, the flat-rate fare is 100 tenge for all journeys. You can pay by scanning a QR code or by inputting the code indicated on posters inside the bus. You can top this card up whenever you need to by attaching your card to your account. You can also use the ONAY app to view a live tracker of buses on your desired route.



Almaty Metro is the city's rapid transit system. It consists of one line with eleven stations, running between Rajymbek Batyr and Bauyrjan Momyshuly. It is usually not very busy, as the route is quite limited, but even so it is a fast way to move around the city. Even if you don't need to use it daily, we would recommend trying it at least once as the soviet style stations are quite beautiful, and often very different to metro stations in other countries. The operating hours are 06:20-00:00 daily, and the fare is 100 KZT for one trip, which is payable via ONAY or contactless payment cards.



Taxis are an efficient way to get around Almaty, but of course, prices and availability can vary. Most people use Yandex Taxis as they are cheap and fairly reliable. You can order a Yandex taxi via the YandexGo app, although sometimes this app cannot be downloaded on international devices. Alternatively, you can order a Yandex taxi using the Yandex Maps app. When using this service, it will tell you in advance how long your journey will take, as well as how much it will cost, and there is also the option to share and track your live journey with somebody else, making it safer and more convenient. You can attach your card or Kaspi account to this app and pay automatically in advance, or you can choose the pay in cash option. It is worth remembering, however, that taxi drivers often don't have the correct cash to give as change, so make sure you have the right amount ready, or expect to give a tip!



Ozim Scooters
Website



JET Scooters
Website



Almaty Bikes
Website



ONAY App

Student Clubs

The student community at AlmaU is very welcoming, and the student clubs and societies reflect that! There are always student-run events happening on and around campus for you to get involved with, and make new friends! To find out more about this, head to **page 15**

things to do

IN ALMATY ~

Museums

There are so many museums to visit in Almaty, from The Museum of Archaeology to the house of Kunaev himself! No matter your interests, there is sure to be something for you. To find out more about what Almaty has to offer, check out:

<https://visitalmaty.kz/en/category/culture/museum/>

Cinema & Theatre

There are a huge number of cinemas and theatres in Almaty, so wherever you are staying, there is bound to be one nearby! The best place to find out what's going on is the ticketon.kz website. Here, you can find out about shows, performances and events happening in Almaty, and buy tickets directly on the site.

Eating

Almaty is home to an immense range of different cuisines and restaurants - whatever food you fancy, you are almost certain to find it here! You can also get food delivered directly to your door using the Wolt or Glovo apps (which are both available in English!)



shopping!

SUPERMARKETS:

There are supermarkets everywhere in Almaty; Magnum, SMALL, Ramstore, Galmart and more. The following Magnum store is open 24hrs, and is close by:

- **Magnum - НА ГАГАРИНА :**
Radostovtza Street, 292 (500m from AlmaU)

There are other 24hr supermarkets around the city, but this one is probably the most conveniently located.

You can also order your groceries online to be delivered, using apps such as Glovo and Wolt, or through the Magnum window on the Kaspi App.

PHARMACIES:

There are pharmacies all over the city, and many of them are open 24hrs. The Kazakh word for pharmacy is 'дәріхана' and the Russian word is 'аптека',

so look out for these word on signs! The most popular pharmacies are Eurofarma, Biosfera, Apteka Plus, and Central Pharmacy. If you ever need help getting medicine if you're sick, or need to go to the pharmacy, you can mention it to the Academic Mobility Team or your buddy and someone can go with you.

RETAIL THERAPY!

If you enjoy shopping, you will feel right at home in Almaty! There are numerous large shopping centres and malls throughout the city, including a huge MEGA Centre just down the road from AlmaU!

<https://visitalmaty.kz/en/read/to-p-10-shopping-malls/>

THE GREEN BAZAAR: **ЗЕЛЁНЫЙ БАЗАР** **KÖK BAZAAR**

The Green Bazaar on Jibek Joly is an enclosed market where traders sell all kinds of fresh produce, meat, spices and homewares. It is a popular tourist destination for people visiting Almaty, but also for locals. It is definitely worth a visit. The Rakhat Chocolate Factory is also located in this area; you will be able to smell it before you see it!



Sightseeing

- IN ALMATY !

The ski resort **Shymbulak** is known not only in Kazakhstan; thousands of tourists come to the slopes of Zailiy Alatau from the whole of the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States). In the early 1940s, ski enthusiasts discovered the Shymbulak tract, which has everything you need for perfect skiing —unique snow covers with unbeatable traction and slip, long slopes and a variety of terrain. The climate of Shymbulak resort, located at an altitude of 2260 meters above sea level, is also almost perfect — 90 % of days are sunny, and the sun is warm even in the bitter cold.

There is snow cover from November to May and the average winter temperature is -7C. The length of the longest track is 3620 meters. The elevation of the slope is more than 900 metres (from 3163 to 2260 metres) and the width of the tracks ranges from 100 to 600 metres. In addition to shallow slopes for beginners and more challenging slopes for advanced skiers, the resort offers off-track skiing, half-pipe for snowboarders, and a special track for mogul. Downhill and giant slalom are certified according to the standards of FIS and place among the world's top ten complex tracks.



<http://www.shymbulak.com/>



Big Almaty Lake is located in the mountains of Zailiy Alatau at an altitude of 2,500 meters above sea level. It was formed over a long period of time by an ancient glacier. In the 1960s a hydroelectric power station was built on Big Almaty Lake, intake facilities were installed, and now, it supplies all of Almaty with water. The local name of the lake is Zhasylkol, which means 'blue lake'. It is small in size, about 500m to 1000m, depending on season and water level. Big Almaty Lake is surrounded on all sides by mountain peaks and glaciers. This is a very popular place to visit in any time of the year.

The Medeu Sports Centre, located near Almaty, boasts the highest skating rink in the world at 5,545 feet (1,690 m) above sea level. It was built in 1972 and also has a surface area as large as two football fields. The ice surface occupies 10.5 thousand sq. m, which allows it to hold contests in skating sports, hockey and figure skating. The high-mountain skating rink is beautiful in any weather. You can admire its beauty from the viewpoint by going up the popular stairs of ascension that are built on the side of Mokhnatka mountain. From the city it looks like a slope covered with dense trees, hence the name.



<https://medeu.kz/>



Charyn Canyon stretches for 154 km along the canyon of the river Charyn in Kazakhstan. The canyon is located 195 km to the east of Almaty, near the border with China. The canyon is in the territory of Charyn National Park, established on 23 February 2004. It is a natural monument, built of sedimentary rocks that are around 12 million years old! The height of the steep mountains of the canyon reaches 150-300 m. The most interesting place for tourists is the so-called 'Valley of Castles', the length of which is about 2 km, with a width of 20-80 m.

One of the city's most beautiful and amazing places is **Kok-Tobe** mount, located at an altitude of 1100 m above sea level. You can go up to Kok-Tobe by cable car, aerial tram, on foot or in a minibus. From the top you can see amazing views of the mountains and the city, and at the top there are cafes, restaurants and various other attractions. It is especially beautiful at night when the city is illuminated with coloured lights.



<https://en.koktobe.com/>

@mafia.almau



Mafia

Student club that host different games at the university every Friday. They also host various events, tournaments and sporting activities.

Mission: To develop students' self presentation, persuasiveness, negotiation, non-verbal influence, leadership and listening skills, all in a fun, game environment.

Student Clubs!

TO FIND OUT MORE, YOU CAN CHECK OUT EACH CLUB'S INSTAGRAM PAGES...

@almau_hunters



Hunters

Brand Ambassadors of AlmaU. They are engaged in promoting the university in Kazakhstan and beyond by raising awareness of all that the university has to offer. Hunters provides information and advice on all matters related to AlmaU, and organises events such as tours and open days.

Mission: To interest and attract as many people as possible to AlmaU.



Remus

An event-planning organisation that was established in May 2015. They organise entertainment events of various sizes, with over 100 events completed successfully.

Mission: To help young people develop their personal and professional qualities to help them find a place among the intellectual, political and business elite of Kazakhstan.

@remus.almaty

@mof.almaty



MOF

A student-run urban event collective that organises among some of the most high-profile events throughout the city. MOF is a chosen family that honours traditions and passes on its knowledge through generations of AlmaU students.

Once a MOF, always a MOF



Dat

A student collective created to promote and celebrate all things Kazakh! They aim to create an authentic Kazakh environment for all participant by raising awareness about Kazakh traditions and culture, and creating a space where people can speak Kazakh freely! They also provide opportunities to develop your Kazakh language skills.

Mission: To promote the Kazakh culture and language as far as possible and overcome the language and culuture barrier.

@dat.almau

Cheerleaders



The AlmaU cheerleading team, incorporating dance, acrobatics and gymnastics. They organise showcases throughout the year for students to enjoy.

Mission: To develop the acrobatic skills of students, and create school-wide spirit and support for the AlmaU sports teams!

Pride



A student collective that organises events at various levels and covers all the news within the walls of AlmaU. It is aimed at developing professional qualities in students and strengthening relationships between participants

Mission: To create conditions for students' self-development and cultivation of organisational skills. To create a friendly, "family" atmosphere between students

Skyline



A student group interested in increasing trade turnover in the country; raising the economy to a new level; exporting more than importing, and thus, improving living conditions in Kazakhstan

Mission: To provide a space to find like-minded people, and ultimately turn their ideas into reality

Lumos



A creative student collective that organises events throughout the year. It aims to develop creative potential and talent among students, as well as develop skills in event planning and running.

Mission: To be a creative outlet for students and provide experience in event organisation.

Synergy



SYNERGY
ДЕБАТНЫЙ КЛУБ

An organisation that allows students to participate in debates, and open discussions about important socio-political topics, creating a space where students can develop their communicative & managerial skills and gain experience in political discourse.

Mission: To build a civil society by increasing social and political engagement amongst young people, and building a culture of parliamentarianism

Sport Life



A sports club that organises sporting and charity events in the city and at university level. For 12 years the club has followed the 3 golden rules: Respect, Discipline, Mutual assistance

Mission: To help students grow up freely by organising quality city events

PRE-ARRIVAL

Checklist



HEALTH

- If you are receiving on-going medical treatment and / or medication, you must obtain a letter from the doctor in your home country (in English) with the details of your prescription, as it may be useful for your new doctor. Check whether you can take your medication on your flight and through customs.
- Apply for health insurance before travel



TRANSPORTATION

- Plan your onward journey to Almaty.
- Consider baggage restrictions on your flight.
- Check any restrictions on goods that can be brought into Kazakhstan
- Check current requirements for entering Kazakhstan (vaccination status, identification etc.)



FINANCES

- Consider how much money to bring to Almaty, Kazakhstan (and whether your home country restricts the amount of cash that can be taken out of the country)
- Ensure you have sufficient money in cash / credit card to cover your expenses until you have opened a Kaspi bank account.
- Establish whether your current bankcard, if applicable, can be used in Kazakhstan and whether your bank can provide any advice about transferring money to Kazakhstan.



PACKING

- Make sure you consider Almaty's climate when packing!
- Bring passport photos – you'll need them for various things in the first weeks.
- As mentioned earlier, be sure to pack any medication you need!
- Depending on your home country, remember you may need electrical plug converters.
- If you have room, it might be nice to bring some pictures to remind you of home!

Tip!

Dollars [\$ USD] are the easiest to exchange for Tenge [₸ KZT] once you are here!

Tip!

If you're going to be in Almaty in the colder months, bring clothes that you can layer - it will be cold outside but warm inside!

also...

Even when the weather is not warm, the sun can be very strong and bright, so you might want to bring some sunglasses!

Exchange Student Support

WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

The International Student Office provides specialist support to exchange students at AlmaU. If you have any questions about the information provided in this guide or have a query related to coming to live and study in Kazakhstan that has not been included, email global@almau.edu.kz

BUDDIES!

When you arrive at AlmaU for the first time you will be given a buddy! They will be a student who is there as a personal contact if you have any questions or need support when settling in. They will act as an informal mentor, offering recommendations and tips about AlmaU and about the city, and more importantly, a friend!



QR Code Index



Visit Almaty
- Museums



Ticketon
App



Ticketon
Website



Yandex Maps
Website



AlmaU on
Map



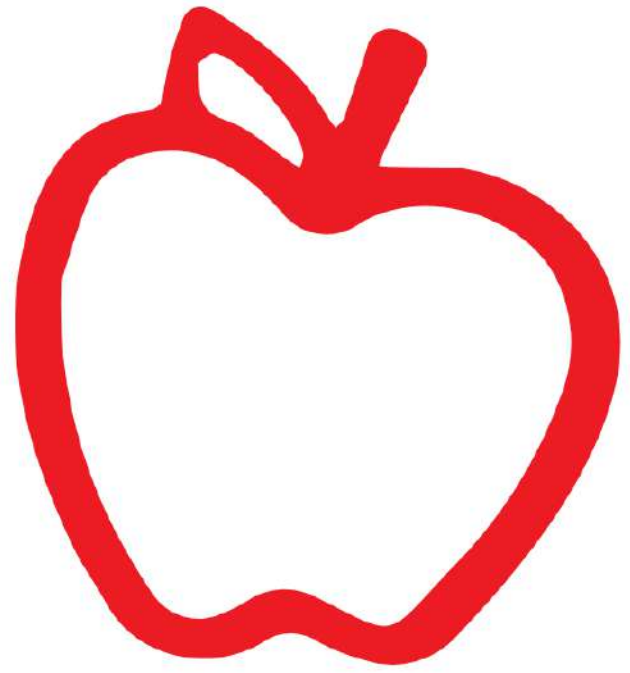
Malls in
Almaty



Green
Bazaar



notes:



ALMAU
Exchange
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