TJK + KGZ

Tajikistan border crossing:
Batken – Isfara: Easy crossing. A seat in a marshrutka from Khojand to Isfara takes 2 hours and costs 10 Tajik Som. A seat in a shared taxi from Isfara to Batken takes half an hour including border formalities and costs 10 Tajik Som. There are no marshrutkas or buses from Isfara to Batken. A seat in a shared taxi from Batken to Osh takes 5 hours and costs 1000 Kyrgyz Som(4 passengers). A shared taxi from Isfara to Osh costs $35 but don't count on this as the taxi driver will drop you at Batken and leave.

Getting to Batken is very easy; 15 Tajik Somoni from Khujand to over the border. Then change and it's 50 Kyrgyz Sum to Batken. In Batken head to the bus station and ask around for marshutkas to Chon Kara. This is the first town on a series of back roads through industrial areas that will take you to Kyzl Kia avoiding the enclaves. From KK it's then another 150 or so Sum to Osh. I speak some Russian but it's pretty rough. I just said 'biz uzbekistana' (without Uzbekistan) and people got what I meant. I also said I had only a Kyrgyz visa (u menya yest tolka Kyrgyzi visa) and this also got me there! I spent 150 on the first marshutka and then hitching with passing cars (never waited toooo long (15 was most)) was depending on how far but again from 50 to 150. In total I spent around 400 or 500.

If you come from Khojand, you'll fisrt have to go to Isfara (not to be confused with IsfaNA in Kyrgyzstan) which should not be a problem with cheap shared vans. From the bus station at Isfara, you'll have to take a taxi to the Kyrgyz town of Batken 28 km south from. From Batken it is possible to take shared taxis to Osh. The latter leave from next to the Batken post office in the early morning. If you have to spend the night in Batken, I recommend a private B & B that costs about US$ 3 pp./night in Kyrgyz Som. It's at Ulitsa 60 ('shest-desyat') Let Oktyabria, 14 (the green gate). Landlady is Damira Checheeva.

One can spend the night in Batken. The Checheeva bed and breakfast mentioned in the Lonely Planet Central Asia is wonderful! Large room, new, tiled shared toilet & shower, a large shared living room, and a lovely courtyard garden. I paid 300 som, including a wonderful breakfast with eggs, tomatoes, grapes, bread, butter, honey, yogurt and tea. The address is Ulitsa (street) 60 (shest-desyat) Let Oktyabria, 14. Landlady is Damira Checheeva. Batken is a pleasant village in which to wander.

Enklavy:
Central Asia has nine exclaves. Tajikistan has three exclaves within Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan: Sarvan, Vorukh and Kaigarach. Uzbekistan has five exclaves within Kyrgyzstan: Sokh, Shakhimardan, Qalacha, Dzhangail, and Tayan. Kyrgyzstan has one exclave in Uzbekistan: Barak. The two largest exclaves are the Tajik exclave of Vorukh and the Uzbekistani exclave of Sokh. Both are within Kyrgyzstan.



Cycling or driving from Osh and to Tajikistan is not an issue at all. Locals in the area are generally known as friendly and will usually point you in the right direction, but not everyone is fully aware of where the border is drawn.
There is a check point 100 km from Osh where you will be guided to an unfinished but smooth dirt road to the left. This is a steady climb and then down around the enclave area. You will come into a town at the end of the road. Turn left here and follow the signs to Batken. If you turn right you will hit another checkpoint which you cannot go through.
It's another 100 or so km to Batken and 10km more to the border crossing from there. Again there is nothing to worry about at all. You won't stumble into Uzbekistan if you stay on the main road.
Two important notes. The road around mentioned above is not on Google Maps and there is a road directly from Batken to Isfara which is also not on Google Maps but is on Openstreet Maps. There are a lot of border crossings that are only for locals on Google Maps. Don't follow these, just make sure that you ride all the way on the nicely paved road to and through Batken and then follow the road out of town.