



"The Grande Dame" of Women's
Adventure Travel Since 1982

2013 ~ Celebrating 31 Years!

DATES

September 30 - October 12, 2013

COST

\$6,395 from Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia,
includes all internal airfare in Mongolia
(\$800 deposit)

RATING

Moderate

ACTIVITIES

Hiking, Cultural Exploration, Golden Eagle
Festival, Camel Trekking, Sea Kayaking,
Natural History, Sightseeing, Wildlife
Viewing, Birding, Photography

MAIN ATTRACTIONS

- Attend the spectacular Golden Eagle Festival, with up to 60 Kazakh hunters and their magnificent Golden Eagles.
- Visit ancient monasteries and natural wonders, from the Gobi Desert to the Altai Mountains in far Western Mongolia.
- Travel to the Flaming Cliffs, where legendary explorer Roy Chapman Andrews discovered the first nest of dinosaur eggs.
- Stay in unique accommodations from traditional Mongolian gers (yurts), to the luxury Three Camel Lodge, in a magnificent Gobi setting.
- Visit nomadic families in their gers, decorated with the colorful textiles of Western Mongolia's Kazakh craftswomen.
- Experience an active itinerary, with opportunities for beautiful hikes and mystical landscapes of the Gobi Desert atop a two-humped camel.

AdventureWomen is the oldest
adventure travel company for
active women over 30.

MONGOLIA

In Search of Dragons and Eagles: Journey to the Land of the World's Last Nomads

Mongolia is home to one of the last nomadic, horse-based cultures in the world. The spirit of adventure that lives within the people of Mongolia might best be described by a traditional proverb: "While your father is alive, know as many people as you can... while your horse is strong, see as many places as you can."

Are you ready to know the people of Mongolia and to explore their ancient culture in one of Asia's few remaining pristine ecosystems? Then join AdventureWomen for a luxurious journey through landscapes where mounted soldiers once galloped across the the golden steppes of the Gobi Desert with the warrior Genghis Khan, and to the Altai Mountains, where Kazakh hunters celebrate their traditional culture and magnificent Golden Eagles.

Our journey begins in Bayan-Ugii Province at the Golden Eagle Festival. Each year the region's Kazakh hunters attend the festival with their Golden Eagles, known as berkut, entering them in competitions testing speed, agility, and accuracy. Ceremonies, dance performances, a parade in the provincial capital's city square, and a Kazakh play in honor of the hunters and their eagles are among the highlights of this unique experience.

Continuing the expedition in the vast and dramatic Gobi, we'll explore an incredible array of unforgettable landscapes, including the sand dunes of Moltsoq Els and the deep desert valley of Yol Valley National Park. We'll visit the Flaming Cliffs, the legendary site where the first nest of dinosaur eggs was discovered, and Tugregiin Shiree, where paleontologists unearthed the "Fighting Dinosaurs" fossil. We'll travel through the diverse and wild beauty of Mongolia's scenic wonders in comfortable 4 X 4 vehicles with knowledgeable guides, past fields of wildflowers, snow capped mountains, alpine lakes, and towering garnet sandstone cliffs. This is truly a journey back in time to a place where more than half the population still lives on the Mongolian steppes in lavishly decorated tents called gers.

In this land of nomads, we explore the Gobi on the back of a Bactrian camel, visit local families, a farm and sewing cooperative, walking in the wide-open countryside under immense skies. We'll explore monasteries, dinosaur sites in the Gobi, and dune formations called the "Singing Sands."

Accommodations during this trip are in 4-star hotels, charming gers, and the luxury Three Camel Wilderness Lodge Ger Camp. Meals are prepared with fresh regional ingredients.

Come to Mongolia with AdventureWomen and discover a beautiful, welcoming land where the rest of the world seems a million miles away. Take this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to sample life as a nomad, under Mongolia's wide, blue skies.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THIS TRIP

- 11 days and 10 nights in Mongolia in the best available hotels, lodges, ger camps, and a luxury ger camp: double occupancy with private baths (or western-style baths close to the gers.)
- 2 round-trip airfares from Ulaanbaatar: to and from Ulgii in the Western Province for the Eagle Festival; to and from the Gobi Desert, Three Camel Lodge. (Included price for these flights is \$1,115 and will remain the same even if the price increases.)
- Group airport transfers upon arrival and departure.
- All meals and sightseeing in Mongolia, from arrival to departure.
- All ground transportation within Mongolia, as described in the itinerary.
- All excursions, activities, entrance fees, and visits as described in the itinerary.
- Bottled/purified water throughout the trip.
- The services of knowledgeable, bilingual local guides throughout our trip.
- One AdventureWomen trip escort.
- Complimentary luggage tags and passport wallet

NOT INCLUDED

- Round-trip airfare from your hometown to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers. We recommend \$8/person/day for local guides; \$3/person/day for drivers; and \$1 per bag for hotel baggage handlers.
- A Mongolia visa is not required for citizens of the United States for a stay up to 90 days. For other nationalities, a visa is required and is not included in the cost of this trip.
- Any airport taxes in Mongolia.
- Items of a personal nature, including alcoholic beverages, laundry, and telephone calls.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Round-trip airfare from the U.S. to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia is **NOT** included in the cost of the total trip package price.

Your 2 internal airline flights within Mongolia (a total price of \$1,115), **ARE** included as part of your total package price of \$6,395.00.

You need to arrive in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia, no later than the evening of **October 2, 2013**.

As of **June 2012**, the cost of and the easiest way to get to Ulaanbaatar, round trip from Los Angeles, is Korean Air (via Seoul, Korea): **\$1,367.44** midweek, including all taxes and fees.

We suggest you book your international air reservations from the U.S. to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, with our travel consultant EARLY and soon after registering for this trip, to get a good price! Please contact **Ciretta Green at Montana Travel** to make your airline arrangements:

1-800-247-3538 OR FAX 1-406-586-1959

email: ciretta@mttravel.com

CANADIAN RESIDENTS, please call 406-587-1188

Other gateway cities to Mongolia's capital Ulaanbaatar are Beijing (Air China or Mongolian Airlines), and Tokyo (Mongolian Airlines). Additionally, there are weekly flights from Berlin (Mongolian Airlines) and Hong-Kong (Mongolian Airlines) as well. Due to the time difference, passengers originating from the USA or Europe, will have to leave 1-2 days prior to the trip commencement date.

Please be aware, however, that if you are traveling to Mongolia via China, you are only permitted 24 hours or less in the Beijing airport without a visa. If you plan on leaving the airport or have a layover, it is imperative that you obtain a double-entry Chinese visa in advance.

HOW TO REGISTER

First, call (800-804-8686) or email (advwomen@aol.com) the AdventureWomen office to determine space availability. We will hold a space for you for 5 days while you complete the application process, and make personal and travel arrangements.

Next, complete and sign the registration form on our website by clicking "Book Now" on our homepage. We can also fax or mail a registration form to you. Return the form to us by mail, fax, or scan and email, and be sure to include the required deposit that can be made by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or Discover), personal check, money order, or cashier's check. You can also register over the phone with a credit card. Once we receive your deposit, we will mail you a packet of information verifying your registration.

Then, call our travel consultants at Montana Travel, 800-247-3538, and ask for Ciretta to make your airline reservations.

Note: We will only hold your space for 5 days without a trip application and deposit payment!

LIABILITY FORM AND FINAL PAYMENT

Part of what ADVENTUREWOMEN, INC. hopes to foster is the taking of more self-responsibility for our own lives, health, and safety. Please read the LIABILITY FORM carefully, sign it, and return it with the remainder of your balance due by:

JUNE 1, 2013

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and 50% of the registration deposit is non-refundable.

For cancellations received 60-89 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable. For cancellations received 1-59 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance to cover emergency situations. Information will be sent to you in your registration packet.

SWITCHING TRIPS

Before your final balance due date, you may change your deposit to another trip within the same calendar year by paying a \$75 fee to switch. You may not switch your deposit to a trip in another calendar year.

NO SMOKING POLICY

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen vacations.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS, HEALTH REQUIREMENTS, AND HEALTH INSURANCE

Citizens of the United States must possess a valid passport, which must be valid 6 months beyond your intended stay in Mongolia. If you do NOT have a passport, **GET IT NOW!** Please don't wait until the last minute. You should always carry 2 extra passport photographs with you in case of emergency (if your passport is lost or stolen.)

As a U.S. Citizen, you do **NOT** need a visa for travel into Mongolia.

Most other nationalities, including Canadian and European, **DO** need a visa to enter Mongolia. Please let us know if you need an invitation letter to support your visa application.

If you are traveling through Beijing, China, you are only permitted 24 hours or less in the Beijing airport without a visa. If you plan on leaving the airport or have a layover, it is imperative that you obtain a double-entry Chinese visa in advance. Please make sure your passport has at least one full blank page for the Chinese visa.

No special inoculations are required for travel to Mongolia, but you should be up-to-date on all vaccinations such as tetanus, typhoid, and hepatitis A and B. Please consult your personal physician.

This trip is rated as **MODERATE**. While hiking is not extremely strenuous, you must be fit and in very good health. You should be able to walk/hike 5-8 miles in hilly terrain and on rocky paths on day hikes, be able to climb flights of stairs to monasteries, and walk on sightseeing tours within the villages and cities.

You must have your own health insurance, and not have any physical problems or conditions that would be adversely affected by walking at higher altitudes (approximately 5,000 feet in most of our locations), driving on bumpy roads, and the general rigors of international travel.

THE EXCITING ITINERARY FOR OUR MONGOLIA – IN SEARCH OF DRAGONS AND EAGLES: JOURNEY TO THE LAND OF THE WORLD'S LAST NOMADS

DAYS 1-2, Monday and Tuesday, September 30 – October 1, 2013

Travel from the USA to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Lose one day crossing the International Dateline.

DAY 3, Wednesday, October 2 *Arrive in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia*

The contrast between ancient traditions and the dawn of a 21st century democracy is most visible in Ulaanbaatar, where traditional gers and Buddhist monasteries coexist with modern high-rises. Upon arrival, you are welcomed by our guides and transferred to a comfortable, centrally-located hotel within walking distance of various museums and shops. This evening we will enjoy a welcome dinner at a large ger, like one once owned by Genghis Khan.

(Dinner)

Overnight at the Ulaanbaatar Hotel (or similar)

Ulaanbaatar Hotel

The Ulaanbaatar Hotel, a historical landmark centrally located on Sukhbaatar Square, is the only 5-star property in Mongolia and is conveniently located to major cultural attractions. Each of the hotel's 119 rooms has air conditioning, hair dryer, mini-bar, coffee maker, radio, and cable TV. There is also a business center, beauty salon, and fitness center on site.

DAY 4, Thursday, October 3 *Ulaanbaatar, the Capital of Mongolia*

Today we enjoy a full day of sightseeing in Ulaanbaatar. Our first visit is to the Gandan Monastery, the seat of Buddhism in Mongolia. Woven through Mongolia's nomadic culture is a rich Tibetan-Buddhist tradition and ancient Shamanist practices are still evident. Although Buddhist monasteries were either destroyed or converted into museums during the Stalinist purges of the 1930s, Gandan Monastery continued to operate as a "showpiece" for government officials. However, in spite of the government's efforts to suppress Buddhism and other religious beliefs, Mongolia's spirituality persisted and a significant resurgence of Buddhism began in 1990 when Mongolia became a democracy.

While strolling through the monastery grounds, you can hear the low tones of the horns used to call the lamas to the temple and observe their daily rituals, including the reading of sutras (teachings of the Buddha). Visit the Chenrezi and Kalachakra Temples, which have recently been renovated, and the magnificent statue of Migjid Janraisig ("the lord who looks in every direction"). This 82-foot high statue, gilded in pure gold and clothed with silk and precious stones completely fills the biggest of Gandan's temples.

Monasteries across the country are again opening their doors to worshippers, and the few lamas who survived the purges are training a new generation. Massive reconstruction and renovation projects are underway, and priceless artifacts that were hidden for safekeeping are now being returned to monasteries by nomadic families.

We also visit the National History Museum to see an excellent overview of Mongolia's history and culture. The newly remodeled museum displays traditional implements of daily nomadic life including Stone and Bronze Age artifacts, historical costumes of Mongolia's minority tribes, sacred religious relics, and agricultural, fishing, and hunting equipment.

The dinosaur halls of the Museum also showcase the spectacular fossils unearthed in the Gobi. On display are fierce *Tarbosaurus* fossils (closely related to

Tyrannosaurus Rex), dinosaur eggs, large *Hadrosaur* fossils (duck-billed dinosaurs), and many others, all of which illustrate the richness and importance of the paleontology sites in the Gobi desert.

After lunch we drive to Zanabazar Fine Arts Museum. Named in honor of Zanabazar, the first Buddhist leader of Mongolia and a renowned sculptor, artist, and politician from the 17th century, the museum contains one of the best collections of Buddhist art and artifacts in the world, including many of Zanabazar's original works.

(All Meals)

Overnight Ulaanbaatar Hotel (or similar)

DAY 5, Friday, October 4 *Fly to Ulgii, Capital of Mongolia's Westernmost Province*

This morning after breakfast we transfer to the airport for a morning flight to Ulgii (3.5 hours), capital of Bayan-Ulgii, Mongolia's westernmost province. Ninety percent of the population of Bayan-Ulgii is Kazakh, Mongolia's largest ethnic minority. The isolation of the Altai Mountains has preserved the language and traditions of the Kazakhs, who live amongst some of the most spectacular scenery in Mongolia. Upon arriving, transfer to the ger camp.

After lunch we'll visit the Local History Museum located in downtown Ulgii, a two-story building showcasing some of the finest embroidery and artifacts collected from the region, including horse and eagle hunting accessories, hand woven carpets, and other arts and crafts. This small but impressive museum offers an excellent introduction to the history and culture of the people who have dwelled in the Altai Mountain region for more than a century.

We'll then visit a Kazakh eagle hunter's family with the chance to view local crafts. Kazakh craftswomen are renowned for their colorful embroidery and textiles, and their gers are beautifully decorated. Handcrafted felt carpets line the floor, and delicately embroidered tapestries adorn the walls of their homes, with each design unique to a particular family. After dinner we'll attend a special performance of traditional Kazakh dance, song, and music arranged for the competition participants, many of whom have traveled as far as 140 miles on horseback.

(All Meals)

Overnight at Ger Camp

Traditional Gers

While in the countryside, we sleep in gers, the traditional felt tents of nomadic herders. Made of a latticed wood structure covered with layers of felt and canvas,

each ger is heated by a wood stove with a smokestack through a hole in the center of the roof and furnished with beautifully painted wood-framed beds. This is the traditional home of herdsman who must move with their animals. A ger is an easily transportable abode, but made to withstand harsh winter weather. The ger camps offer an authentic experience of Mongolian culture and provide a unique opportunity to visit areas which otherwise lack tourist accommodations. Western-style shower and toilet facilities are located in a central building and meals are served in a camp restaurant.

DAY 6 , Saturday, October 5 *Eagle Festival Opening Ceremonies and Competition*

The official opening ceremony of the Eagle Festival commences with the participants parading in on horseback with their eagles. The competition begins with each Kazakh hunter displaying his hunting outfit and accessories, the most elaborate and beautiful of which receive the highest points.

In the afternoon the Golden Eagles will be evaluated for their speed and agility. The eagles will be released from a cliff while their owners stand below, signaling for them to land upon their arms, as they do while hunting. Those with the fastest times and best technique will be awarded the highest scores.

This evening we'll attend a Kazakh play in honor of the hunters and their eagles.

(All Meals)

Overnight at Ger Camp

DAY 7, Sunday, October 6 *Eagle Festival Competition and Awards Ceremony*

In today's competition, the Golden Eagles will be released from a cliff to attack fox skins being dragged by their owners on horseback. The eagles will be judged on speed, gripping technique, and success in grabbing the fox.

As the points for the competitions are being tallied, the Kazakh hunters will compete in a traditional game called kukbar, a tug-of-war on horseback that tests horse-riding skills, strength, and agility. There will also be two horse races and displays of various traditional horseback Kazakh games, including Tenge Ilu, which involves picking money up from the ground in a full gallop, and Kyzguar, which young men and women play as a way to better get to know each other.

In the late afternoon, the winners of the festival will be announced at the awards ceremony, and we'll celebrate with a special dinner this evening.

(All Meals)

Overnight at a Ger Camp along the lakeshore

DAY 8, Monday, October 7 *Fly Back from Bayan-Ulgii to Ulaanbaatar*

After breakfast we drive to the airport for our return flight to Ulaanbaatar, where we transfer to our hotel on arrival.

This evening we'll visit the Made in Mongolia felt workshop to meet with local artists and see their beautiful handmade felt crafts.

(All Meals)

Overnight at the Ulaanbaatar Hotel

DAY 9, Tuesday, October 8 *Fly to the Gobi Desert and Drive to the Yol Valley National Park*

This morning, we fly over vast steppe land to the Gobi (1.5 hours), Mongolia's southern-most province of semi-arid desert. The Gobi (which means simply "desert") has an air of mystery. Perhaps because of its location in the heart of Asia's most remote hinterlands, between the Siberian wilderness to the north and the Tibetan Plateau to the south. Contrary to the sterile sameness the word "desert" suggests, the Gobi holds many fascinations including sites of some of the most important paleontology discoveries of this century. For the next few days, we'll explore the stunning landscape of the Gobi, habitat for Bactrian camels, Argali mountain sheep, goitered gazelle, golden eagles, saker falcons, jerboas (similar to kangaroo rats) and many endemic reptiles. The Gobi is also home to some of the Northern Hemisphere's rarest and most elusive mammals such as the dhole, snow leopard, and Gobi bear.

Upon arrival in the Gobi, we'll drive to Yol Valley National Park (1½ - 2 hours), cradled between the foothills of the Altai Mountains. Located in the northern part of the Gobi this surprisingly green valley was once carved by an ancient river. Now, its remnant streams create ice formations at the base of the valley that sometimes persist as late as July. Hiking through this prehistoric canyon, we explore the habitat of indigenous vulture-like Lammergeiers. Similar to most predatory birds, the Lammergeiers feast mostly on the carcasses of dead animals. However, unlike other birds whose diet mainly consists of meat, these vulture-like creatures primarily feed on bone marrow. Therefore, these magnificent birds drop large bones from the sky in an attempt to break them into smaller pieces.

Natural Wonders of the Gobi

The Gobi ("gravel-covered plain") is the largest desert region in Asia. It covers parts of northern and north-western China, and southern Mongolia. The desert basins of the Gobi are bounded by the Altai Mountains, the grasslands and steppes of Mongolia on the north, the Tibetan Plateau to the southwest, and

the North China Plain to the southeast. The Gobi consists of several distinct ecological and geographic regions based on variations in climate and topography. This desert is the fourth largest in the world. The Gobi is most notable in history as part of the great Mongol Empire, and as the location of several important cities along the Silk Road. The Gobi is a rain shadow desert formed by the Himalaya range that blocks rain-carrying clouds from reaching the Gobi.

At the end of the day, we'll drive to the Three Camel Lodge (2 hours), a luxury ger camp located near the Gurvansaikhan Gobi National Park. We enjoy 3 nights at this award-winning lodge in wonderful gers with beautiful shared bath and shower facilities.

This evening we'll enjoy dinner made of locally grown organic products and prepared by the lodge's local chef.
(All Meals)

Overnight Three Camel Lodge

Three Camel Lodge

Three Camel Lodge was built to complement its natural surroundings and to utilize renewable energy sources, taking advantage of both wind and solar power. Local artisans and workers crafted the roofs of the building in accordance with the canons of Mongolian Buddhist architecture, all without using a single nail. Three Camel Lodge is more than a luxurious destination camp; it is also a center of education in the Gobi region. The lodge funds and organizes nature conservation clubs for children in local secondary schools, and serves as a base for scientific research and wildlife monitoring in the fragile Gobi eco-system.

The centerpiece of the Three Camel Lodge, however, is Dino House. Built in the architectural style of a traditional Mongolian temple, here guests will find games, a small library, and can enjoy music and dance performances in the evenings.

The Bulagtai Restaurant, named for the ancient volcanic outcrop that shelters the Lodge, uses locally grown organic fruits and vegetables, dairy products produced by local nomadic families, and organic meat from Mongolia's free-range livestock herds to create regional dishes and traditional specialties.

In the Thirsty Camel Bar, located in a naturally ge-cooled room below the restaurant, a wide selection of beers, wines, spirits, and soft drinks are available. Refreshments, snacks, and locally crafted gifts may be purchased in the Lodge shop. There is also an on-site laundry service and a spa staffed by professionally trained massage therapists. Ahhh!

The Three Camel Lodge has been featured in **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ADVENTURE, TOP 50 ECOLOGES**: "To the uninitiated, the Gobi looks strikingly lifeless. But Three Camel, a solar-powered huddle of yurts with a stylish lodge, reveals a rich herdsman's culture and rare wildlife like ibex, argalis, and snow leopards. Hike in the Gobi-Altai foothills, chat with the nomads at the refurbished well, and listen to performances of Hoomi, haunting local song."

DAY 10, Wednesday, October 9 *Fighting Dinosaurs, a Local Farm, and Mongolian Cooking Class*

We wake early this morning to the sight of the sun rising over the vast Gobi landscape. After breakfast we begin another day of desert exploration with a drive to Tugrigin Shiree (1.5 hours), a white escarpment where the famous "Fighting Dinosaurs" fossil of a *Protoceratops* and *Velociraptor* locked in combat was discovered in the 1970s.

Driving back to Three Camel Camp, we stop along the way to visit the town of Bulgan, home of a local settlement established near a natural spring, one of the only farms found in the Gobi. This farm supplies local ger camps with fruits and vegetables and is an example of a local business supported by ecotourism.

After lunch we'll have a fun opportunity to join the Lodge's distinguished chef for a cooking class, learning to make a traditional Mongolian dish. Time permitting in the afternoon, we'll visit the local women's cooperative that makes traditional Mongolia clothing, the del.

(All Meals)

Overnight Three Camel Lodge

Day 11, Thursday, October 10 *From the Flaming Cliffs to Moltsoq Els, and an Afternoon Camel Ride*

This morning we drive to Moltsoq Els Sand Dunes (1.5 hours), one of the few regions of the Gobi covered by sand dunes, where we'll explore the area on foot.

After lunch back at the lodge we'll continue on our way to the legendary Flaming Cliffs, known for its glowing orange sandstone. It was there, in 1922, that Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews and his exploration team from the American Museum of Natural History found the first nest of dinosaur eggs the world had ever seen. To the trained eye, the ancient formations of the Flaming Cliffs are rich with fossils, and paleontologists continue to make significant discoveries at this site.

This afternoon we'll have an opportunity to ride the Bactrian camel. Though short, the ride and interactions with the local wranglers allows us a glimpse into a nomadic camel herder's daily family life.

The Bactrian (two-humped) camel has adapted to arid plains and hills where water sources are few and vegetation is sparse. Shrubs constitute its main source of food. Herds of these camels roam wild in this area, mainly in and around mountains near springs and melting snow. A few herds contain up to 100 camels, but most have only 2 to 15 members. The small herd size reflects the aridity of the environment and incessant hunting.

(All Meals)

Overnight Three Camel Lodge

Other activities at the Three Camel Lodge

There are plenty of other interesting diversions in and around the Lodge. For example, on the rock outcrop just a short stroll from the camp there are rock paintings that date back thousands of years. These petroglyphs depict animals of the Gobi such as ibex and antelope, and are a vivid reminder of those who called the desert their home during the Bronze Age.

Another memorable activity is cooking one of the delicious local dishes served by the Three Camel Lodge's Bulagtain Restaurant. Guests can learn to prepare traditional Mongolian food, such as buuz dumplings, from the Lodge's expert chefs.

DAY 12, Friday, October 11 *Fly Back to Ulaanbaatar*

After breakfast we say goodbye to the Gobi Desert and Three Camel Lodge and drive to Dalanzadagad for our return flight to Ulaanbaatar. Upon arrival we are transferred to our hotel and the afternoon is free for individual sightseeing or shopping.

For our last evening together in Mongolia, we enjoy a performance that features traditional Mongolian dancers and *hoomi* (throat) singers, followed by a Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant.

(All Meals)

Overnight at the Ulaanbaatar Hotel (or similar)

DAY 13, Saturday, October 12 *Departure from Mongolia*

Transfer to the airport for departure.

MONEY

Mongolia's unit of currency is the Tugrik (togrog). As of June 2012, the exchange rates are:

1 US Dollar = 1.325 Mongolian Tugrik
 1 Mongolian Tugrik (MNT) = 0.0007547 US Dollar (USD)

It is not normally possible (and it is certainly not necessary) to purchase Mongolian currency outside the country. Travel with U.S. currency, which is widely

accepted. Money can be exchanged at the airport on arrival and at your hotel in Ulaanbaatar.

You can check the following website to find out the current rate of exchange: <http://money.cnn.com/markets/currencies>.

Credit cards (VISA and MasterCard) can be used at a variety of hotels, restaurants, and shops in Ulaanbaatar. Outside of the capital, travelers should have U.S. cash, not travelers checks.

FOOD/MEALS

There is an increasing diversity of food choices in Mongolia; however meals are typically meat-based and include noodles, rice and/or breads. Although vegetables and fruits are not widely cultivated or consumed in Mongolia, most meals are also likely to include potatoes, carrots, cabbage, cucumbers, and/or tomatoes. Fruit may be available fresh, but is typically canned. Breakfast usually includes eggs, sausages, toast, tea, and coffee. Lunch is the main meal of the day and includes salad, a bowl of soup, and meat with rice or potatoes. Dinner usually consists of a salad and meat with rice or noodle and vegetables. In Ulaanbaatar, there are a variety of international restaurants that offer delicious Chinese, Continental, Bhutanese, and Indian Cuisine. Grocery stores in the capital sell western imported food and fruit, such as crackers, peanut butter, tuna fish, and raisins.

A vegetarian diet can be accommodated on this trip if clients let us know their dietary restrictions.

LANGUAGE

The official language of Mongolia is Mongolian, although English is now beginning to be widely used by many residents of the capital. Mongolian is the language of most of the population of Mongolia, Inner Mongolia, and of separate groups living in other provinces of the People's Republic of China. The modern Mongolian language was developed after the Mongol People's Revolution of 1921 on the basis of the Khalkh dialect. The Cyrillic script was introduced in the 1940s and now most Mongolians use the alphabet. However, there have been several calls during the last nineteen democratic years for the traditional script to be reintroduced. There are a total of 35 letters in the Mongolian Cyrillic alphabet. Many phrasebooks and dictionaries are available in the capital now.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity is 220V, 50Hz. The sockets throughout the country accommodate the European-style 2-pin plugs with round pins.

**ABOUT ADVENTURE
TRAVEL TODAY
Please Read Carefully!**

At AdventureWomen, we would like to ensure that all participants understand that our excursions are *adventure travel vacations*, and not “tours.” We define “adventure travel” as travel in which one *actively participates*, as opposed to a “tour,” in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes vacations all over the world for women who want to experience an *active, out of the ordinary vacation, and meet new friends*. Most of all, we want our trips to be fun!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a *good-natured realist* and have a sense of humor! *Adventure vacations, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist*. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. *Being on time is important*, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well being of both individuals and the group!

It is best to bring as few electrical appliances as possible, as their use is limited. At ger camps the use of electricity is extremely limited, but there is some ability to recharge digital camera batteries, video cameras, and battery packs. So make sure you bring extra batteries and memory cards for your digital cameras.

SHOPPING

Most of Mongolia’s economy is based on natural products. Hand woven carpets, leather clothing and articles, woolen clothing, furs, cashmere, camel hair products, Mongolian oil and water paintings, and wooden toys, puzzles and games. There are a number of souvenir shops. The most popular items are paintings, antiques, handicrafts, carpets, books, cashmere, traditional Mongolian clothing, leather goods, wall hangings, puzzles, postcards, snuff bottles, and woodcarvings. The food markets are well stocked with Mongolia, Russian, and East and West European products although they may be a little more expensive than you expect.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The rewards of visiting a seldom-explored country require traveling with a spirit of adventure and flexibility, as well as a willingness to accept local standards of amenities and services. Mongolia is a developing country in terms of infrastructure; delays or changes in the itinerary are possible, and indeed likely. Accommodations are comfortable and clean and include first-class hotels in major cities, beautiful traditional nomadic gers in the Mongolian countryside (dome-shaped tents constructed of latticed walls, covered by felt and canvas), and in luxury gers at a luxury lodge in the Gobi desert. There is a great range of food choices in Mongolia. However, meals are typically meat-based. Transportation is by bus and 4-wheel drive vehicle. Most roads are unpaved and are very bumpy and dusty.

We make every effort to accommodate special diets. However, it is ultimately your responsibility to let us know about your dietary restrictions.

Please note that all scheduled flights originate in Ulaanbaatar.

Therefore, to fly from one destination within Mongolia to another, you always return to Ulaanbaatar first. Also, it is not possible to arrive in

Ulaanbaatar and connect with another flight on the same day. Therefore, we must overnight in Ulaanbaatar for at least one night before flying to another destination.

Itineraries are subject to change due to weather, airline schedule changes, road conditions, and other reasons beyond our control. When changes occur in routing or activities, we will do our best to provide the best alternatives possible.

CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

In our rapidly changing and shrinking world, travel is increasing to destinations that were once inaccessible. Contact between unique cultures, such as the traditional nomadic horse-based culture of Mongolia, and the outside world, can have a definite impact on both sides. By promoting cultural interaction based on mutual respect and an understanding of cultural differences, we strive to maintain a delicate balance, neither accelerating the modernization of ancient cultures, nor suppressing their natural evolution.

WHAT TO BRING

Due to the variety of climates we encounter in any one day, you should pack for “layering.” This means that you can put on more clothing if it is cold or take off layers as it warms up. August is a wonderful month to travel in Mongolia, with warm days and crisp, cool (and sometimes cold!) nights. Temperatures can range from 40 – 80 degrees F.

Luggage

We recommend you take a duffel bag with wheels, or a soft-sided suitcase. We also suggest you use your daypack as your carry-on bag for our flight to Mongolia. In addition to your passport, money, credit cards, and airline tickets, your daypack should contain all essential personal items: toiletries, medications, one set of clothing, camera and accessories, etc. You should wear (or carry in your carry-on bag) the comfortable lightweight boots that you will use for walking.

Domestic airline flights in Mongolia (we have 4 of them) limit us to a maximum baggage weight of 44 pounds per person, including your carry on bag. Since we are always flying back to Ulaanbaatar and staying overnight between trip segments, you can leave your major suitcase in Ulaanbaatar, and take just what you need for the next segment of our trip. Therefore, it would be wise to bring an empty duffel to pack for consecutive trip segments.

You must be able to lock all your luggage, including your carry on luggage and extra duffel for all flights.

Clothes

Choose pants and shirts that you can use for outdoor activities as well as in a more formal place like a monastery. (For visiting monasteries, you need modest clothing that covers your shoulders—no sleeveless blouses or T-shirts). The new low maintenance and wrinkle resistant fabrics are great (see the TravelSmith catalog that we enclose in your registration packet).

- Lightweight hiking boots, well broken-in. Please do not buy heavy, leather boots as there are numerous, light- and medium-weight, high-quality hiking boots on the market. Asolo, Garmont, Merrill, Vasque, and other makes are widely available and designed especially for women. Since they are waterproof, Gore-tex boots, although a bit more expensive, are our first choice. Other boots should be waterproofed with one of the excellent waterproofing products available such as Nikwax. **MAKE SURE** your boots fit properly and are well broken-in. Please do not come on this trip with a pair of boots you have never worn before.
- Pair of comfortable shoes and/or sport sandals, for relaxing in the evening.
- Pair of rubber beach sandals or flip-flops to use in the ger bath facilities.
- 3-4 pairs polypropylene liner socks, 3-4 pairs thick, natural fiber walking socks.
- 5-6 pairs quick drying underpants and a few bras (you will need to wash out bras and panties). See the TravelSmith catalog. Also keep in mind that a sports bra would be good on bumpy roads, camel

rides, and horseback rides.

- 2-3 pairs comfortable, lightweight pants.
- A pair of long (hiking type) shorts. The locals do not appreciate short shorts.
- One pair of nicer pants or a skirt for our hotel stays.
- Swiss army knife or equivalent with scissors (make sure you pack this in your checked luggage, and not your carry-on).
- 3-4 cotton bandannas (for uses too numerous to mention. Anyway, it's an AdventureWomen tradition!).
- Field shirts: 2 long-sleeved, 2 short-sleeved, and a few T-shirts.
- Lightweight polar fleece jacket, or lightweight down jacket.
- Sleepwear.
- Lightweight long underwear (polypropylene) – top and bottom – if you sleep cold at night.
- Waterproof rain gear, jacket, and pants. Your rain jacket may double as an outer shell or windbreaker jacket to layer over your fleece jacket for cool weather at higher elevations.
- Small umbrella.
- Sun hat and swim suit.
- Extra shoe or boot laces.
- Hat for sun protection.
- Lightweight flashlight.
- Small travel alarm clock.
- Sun glasses and strap.
- Water bottle. We recommend the 22 oz. Nalgene Everyday OTG Tritan Bottle. Made of Eastman Tritan™ copolyester, the bottle is completely BPA-free. Tritan™ copolyester provides excellent impact resistance and is suitable for both warm and cold beverages.
- Collapsible cup (for using boiled water).
- Earplugs (for snoring roommates or grunting camels).
- Washcloth.

Photography and Camera Equipment

Since photography is such a large part of this trip, we suggest you bring the following:

- Digital camera, lots of memory cards and extra batteries, battery charger, and adapter. You can charge your digital batteries in hotels and lodges, but less frequently in ger camps. Bring a wall outlet plug adapter #6 (a 2-prong round pin adapter plug that works in Southern Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean). Most digital cameras have a built in converter so you only need to bring an adapter. Adapters can also be bought while in-country.
- Photographers who have traveled to Mongolia recommend the use of a polarizing filter to cut the glare on sunny days.

- Cotton swabs such as Q-tips are useful for cleaning hard-to-reach areas while in the countryside and conditions are dusty.
- Large, heavy-duty garbage bags or ziplocks to protect your camera in inclement weather. For travel in wet conditions, you might want to consider bringing a dry bag or Pelican Case. Please be particularly careful in the Gobi, as both dust and sand are plentiful and can wreak havoc on camera equipment.

Please note: It is very important to obtain permission prior to taking photographs of the local people. Generally, Mongolians are quite receptive to having their picture taken, and may even ask you to take their photograph. However, particularly in public places, you may encounter people who do not want their photograph taken and may attempt to forcibly prevent you from doing so.

There may also be fees for taking photographs and video at most monasteries and museums. Our guide will let us know what the appropriate fee is at each location (prices range from \$3 for unlimited photographs to \$5 per picture, depending on the location).

Personal Items

- Passport. Make sure it is valid for at least 6 months after returning from our trip.
- 2 spare passport photos (in case of lost passport.)
- Spare glasses and/or contact lenses, cleaner, saline solution, extra eyeglasses with safety band.
- Money belt/fanny pack.
- Cash, Visa, and MC credit card.
- Address book, writing paper, journal, pen/pencil.
- Locks for your suitcase/duffel bag/etc.
- Ziploc-type bags (at least a dozen, of various sizes) for packing shampoo or other liquids, or wet, dirty washcloth.
- Personal toiletries in small leak-proof bottles.
- Biodegradable bar soap (can double as laundry soap.)
- Tampons or sanitary napkin supply.
- Kleenex in small packages (there is often no toilet paper in public toilets).
- Thread, needles, safety pins for minor repairs.
- Insect repellent (small.)
- Antibacterial hand wipes and antiseptic gel.
- Your favorite snacks for a "pick me up" during the day.
- Walking stick(s) that telescope and pack into your suitcase easily.

Personal First Aid Kit

- Regarding foot care: To prevent blisters, many hikers use moleskin. However, we recommend bringing a small roll of ordinary duct tape as an alterna-

tive. Applied when you feel a "hot spot" before the blister forms, duct tape reduces friction better than moleskin. If you develop a blister, Spenco "2nd Skin" is a very comforting necessity. Also bring foot powder for moisture absorption; cloth, not plastic Band Aids; about 10 individually wrapped alcohol pads; and a small tube of Neosporin or other antibiotic cream.

- Aspirin/ibuprofen, etc.
- Cold-symptom relief tablets, antihistamine, cough drops.
- Sun screen and lip balm with sunscreen.
- Tweezers, Band Aids.
- Ace bandage.
- Antibiotics.
- Prescription medicines in their original bottles.
- Motion sickness preventatives (may be needed for long, bumpy drives).
- Acidophilus enzyme (available in capsules in health-food stores). This often helps your digestive system get in shape for "new" flora and fauna (eating yogurt does the same, however it is not always available).
- Immodium, Lomotil, or similar anti-diarrhea medicine.
- Pepto-Bismol tablets and/or liquid (in leak-proof bottle).

Optional

- Lightweight, small, binoculars.
- Pictures of your home, pets, and family (the Mongolian people love to see this, and it can be used as a non-verbal opener to conversation!)
- Reading material.
- Cards, small games, etc. (for long airport waits).

Pre-Departure Tasks

- Obtain or renew passport.
- Evaluate and obtain trip cancellation, baggage, and medical insurance.
- Consult with physician for updated vaccinations.
- Break in primary footwear.

Last-Minute Reminders

- Make photocopies of your airline tickets and the first two pages of your passport and put them in different locations (suitcase, carry-on bag, etc.)
- Bring two additional photos to use in emergencies.
- Leave valuable jewelry and other valuables at home (don't wear expensive gold and diamond jewelry.)
- Make sure passport, tickets, and visas are valid and in the correct name.
- Check with airline to reconfirm reservations and departure time (most airlines want to hear directly from the client for confirmations.)

Some Extra Items to Add to your "What to Bring" List

With more than 30 years of experience flying around the world, we think these items help make your long airline flights much more comfortable:

- Neck pillow: Inflatable neck pillow for support and deep sleep. It folds into itself and has a self-sealing valve. The soft microfleece cover removes for washing. Check out the Eagle Creek® Large Inflatable Travel Neck Pillow at TravelSmith.
- Sleep mask /Comfort eye shade: Ultra lightweight and comfortable, the Comfort Eye Shade screens out light and distractions for a cozier flight. Ultra-soft micro fleece for comfort. Adjustable elastic strap for a perfect fit. Made of Molded Polyester Micro Fleece. Check out the Eagle Creek® Comfort Eye Shade at TravelSmith.
- Travel compression socks: Reduce ankle and leg swelling and reduce the risk of deep vein thrombosis. These doctor-designed socks stimulate circulation through gradual compression that stops swelling and guards against (DVT). Made of coolmax®-lycra®-nylon. The TravelSox® cushion Walk Socks have extra-padded soles and are made of moisture wicking SoftPrim®. Check out TravelSox® Cushion Walk Sock™ at TravelSmith.

Noise canceling headphones: Block out unwanted sounds of children crying and airplane engine drone, and/or enjoy great audio sound. Reduce distortion and increase perceived loudness so you can enjoy sound at a lower volume. Get the around the ear design, which is very comfortable.

Bose Quiet Comfort 2: List Price: \$199.99. Oval shaped around-the-ear design, an iPod fits nicely in the center of the case between the headphones. You can get the next generation of Bose Quiet Comfort 3, but the cost is \$349.00.

Audio Technica ATH-ANC7- List Price: \$219.95
Excellent sound quality and above average noise can-

cellation. Comfortable leather cushioning around the ear and can be worn for long periods of time with no discomfort. Excellent headphones with a reasonable price tag.

Giving Gifts

Gifts that are appreciated by nomadic families include both small tokens of friendship and also practical presents. Nomads in the remote areas of Mongolia do not have stores nearby and they appreciate useful gifts. It is not necessary to bring large quantities of gifts - just a few items. Examples of suitable presents include:

- pens, notebooks, and notepads
- postcards depicting landmarks from your home
- small world maps
- soap or hand cream
- books with photographs (e.g. dinosaur books for nomads living in the Gobi)
- fabric, scarves, warm socks, and gloves
- small flashlights with batteries
- small pocket knives
- lighters

We ask that you do not give chocolate or sweets to children in remote areas who do not have regular access to processed sugary goods. Since their dental care is appropriate only for the local diet, we do not want to contribute to tooth decay. Suitable gifts for young children include:

- colored pencils, pens, and pads
- children's picture books or coloring books
- decorative stamps or stickers
- small plastic toys, such as farm animals
- colored shoelaces and hair ribbons
- warm socks and gloves

We also ask that you do not give candy or gifts to groups of children. While begging is not currently a problem in Mongolia, we do not want to encourage this behavior. We would prefer that you collect any gifts and have a representative of your group present these to the head of the household in order that the gifts may be distributed fairly.

*Thank you for choosing to travel with AdventureWomen!
If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call, write or email us.*

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