

adventurewomen

THE DESTINATION IS JUST THE BEGINNING

MONGOLIA

Mongolia: Nomads, Eagle Hunters, and the Land of Genghis Khan



June 18 - 28, 2023



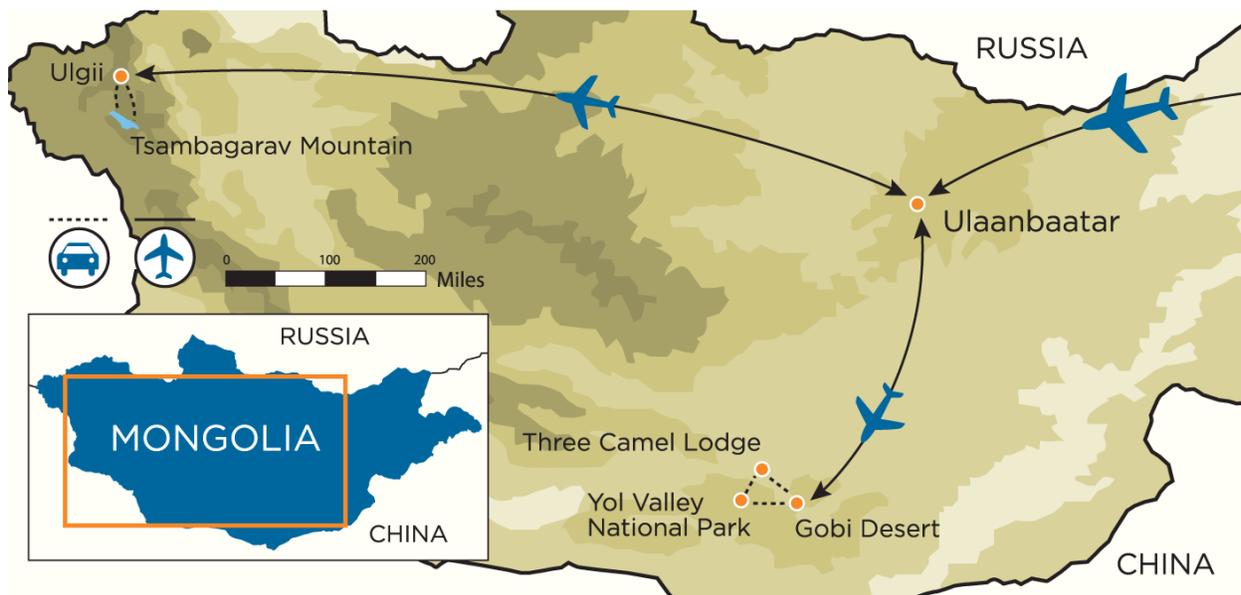
MONGOLIA

Mongolia: Nomads, Eagle Hunters, and the Land of Genghis Khan

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Meet Kazakh eagle hunters to learn about their ancient practice of training and hunting with golden eagles
- ▶ Witness live horseback riding, wrestling, and archery competitions at an authentic local Naadam festival in the Gobi desert
- ▶ Spend time with a local nomadic family for a demonstration on making traditional handicrafts and felt products
- ▶ Look for dinosaur fossils at Flaming Cliffs, a site for important paleontological discoveries

TRIP ROUTE



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QUICK VIEW ITINERARY

- Day 1 arrive in Ulaanbaatar, relax after your long flight
- Day 2 visit Gandan Monestary, the National History Museum, and the Mongolian Art Gallery
- Day 3 fly to Ulgii, drive to the mountains, short hike and dinner
- Day 4 spend time with the traditional eagle hunters, horse demonstration
- Day 5 fly back to Ulaanbaatar
- Day 6 fly to the Gobi Desert, visit Yol Valley National Park
- Day 7 attend a local Naadam Festival to see wrestling, horseracing, and archery
- Day 8 learn how to make thread, spin wool, and make felt
- Day 9 explore sand dunes by camel, take a cooking class, visit the Flaming Cliffs at sunset
- Day 10 fly back to Ulaanbaatar, enjoy a throat singing performance, farewell dinner
- Day 11 depart Mongolia

ACTIVITY LEVEL

Moderate

TRIP PRICE

Main Trip: \$7,995
Optional Single Accommodations: \$1,700
Internal Air: \$950

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your adventure
in depth

DAY 1
Sunday
6/18/23

Arrive in Ulaanbaatar

The contrast between ancient traditions and the dawning of a 21st century democracy is most visible in Ulaanbaatar, where traditional gers and Buddhist monasteries coexist with modern high-rises.

Pick-up and Transfer

You will be picked up at the Ulaanbaatar Airport by your guide and transferred to your hotel. Spend the evening relaxing after your long flights. Meals will be on your own today as you rest after your journey to Mongolia.

Accommodations
Best Western
Premier Tuushin

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DAY 2
Monday
6/19/23

Ulaanbaatar

Human habitation in what is Ulaanbaatar today dates from 300,000 years ago. These Upper Paleolithic people hunted mammoth and woolly rhinoceros, the bones of which are found abundantly around Ulaanbaatar. Royal tombs of the Xiongnu era have also been discovered in the area. Many nomadic empires encompassed Ulaanbaatar throughout history.

Gandan Monastery

Begin the day with a visit to Gandan Monastery, the seat of Buddhism in Mongolia. Woven through Mongolia's nomadic culture is a rich Tibetan-Buddhist tradition with ancient Shamanist practices still evident. Explore the monastery grounds, where you will hear the low tones of the horns used to call the lamas to the temple and can observe their daily rituals, including the reading of sutras (teachings of the Buddha). Continue to the recently renovated Chenrezi and Kalachakra Temples, as well as 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 one of the Gandan's biggest temples.

National History Museum

Visit the museum for 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.

Lunch

Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.

Mongolian Art Gallery

This afternoon, visit the Mongolian Art Gallery which was started in order to encourage and promote local artists to showcase their talents. The gallery is home to many works of modern and contemporary artists that depict images representing a country emerging from a rigid socialist tradition to a free democracy confronting globalization. The collection includes traditional paintings, figurative pieces, and contemporary sculptures.

Welcome Dinner

Enjoy a welcome dinner this evening with your group!

Accommodations
Best Western
Premier Tuushin
Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 3
Tuesday
6/20/23

Ulaanbaatar to Tsambagarav Mountain

At the end of the 17th century, escaping from tribal warfare, a group of Kazakhs settled in Bayan Ulgii. Dominated by the Mongolian Altai Mountains, the highest mountains in Mongolia with several peaks reaching upwards of 14,000 feet, the isolated area has preserved the language, culture, and traditions of the Kazakhs and provides some of the most spectacular scenery in Mongolia. Ninety percent of the population of Bayan-Ulgii is Kazakh and you will have ample opportunity to meet local families and experience the unique Kazakh culture.

Fly to Ulgii

Fly from Ulaanbaatar to Ulgii this morning. The flight is about three hours.

Drive to Tsambagarav Mountain

Drive through stunning mountain valleys to your camp which is located at the base of the permanently snow-capped Tsambagarav Mountain (13,783 ft). This mountain valley is home to two ethnic minorities of Mongolia: the Kazakhs and the Uuld people. Your camp sits in the autumn pasture of the Uulds, a Mongol-speaking people belonging to the Oirat ethnic group. They still use animals for carrying loads, and they are very proud of their rich history and the Uuld king Amarsanaa Khan, who led the rebellion against the Qin Dynasty's invasion of Mongolia.

Explore on Foot

After lunch, explore the surrounding area on foot.

Short Hike and Dinner

After settling into your camp, head out on a short hike to explore the surrounding area followed by dinner at your camp.

Accommodations
Tent With Sleeping
Bag
Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 4
Wednesday
6/21/23

Altai Mountains

The Altai Mountains, in Central and East Asia, are where Russia, China, Mongolia, and Kazakhstan come together, and are where the rivers Irtysh and Ob have their headwaters. “Altai” means “Gold Mountain” in Mongolian. The Altai mountains have an array of habitats and are home to diverse fauna, including the Siberian ibex, moose, forest reindeer, Siberian musk deer, and Siberian roe deer.

Spend the Morning with Eagle Hunters

Learn about the ancient tradition of hunting with eagles. Kazakh hunters ride dressed in traditional dark coats and scarlet hats with eagles perched on their arms. Weighing as much as fifteen pounds, these magnificent birds are trained from a young age to respond to hand signals and return to their owners after capturing small game.

Horse Demonstration

After lunch with the group, you will witness the horsemanship of the local nomads as they demonstrate how they lasso horses and ride bareback. Join in the fun as you watch several local games that involve riding horses.

Dinner at Camp Enjoy another dinner at camp tonight.

Accommodations
Tent With Sleeping
Bag
Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 5
Thursday
6/22/23

Altai Mountains to Ulaanbaatar

Ulaanbaatar is one of the oldest reserves in the world; it has been protected by law since the 18th century. The forests of the mountains surrounding Ulaanbaatar are composed of evergreen pines, deciduous larches, and birches, while the riverine forest of the Tuul River is composed of broad-leaved, deciduous poplars, elms, and willows. Ulaanbaatar lies on roughly the same latitude as Vienna, Munich, Orléans, and Seattle, and roughly the same longitude as Chongqing, Hanoi, and Jakarta.

Fly to Ulaanbaatar

Fly back to Ulaanbaatar where you will be transferred to your hotel to check in and have lunch before having some time to relax this afternoon.

Dinner

Enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

Accommodations
Best Western
Premier Tuushin
Meals Included
breakfast, lunch

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DAY 6
Friday
6/23/23

Ulaanbaatar to the Gobi Desert

Of all the world's arid lands, the Gobi (which means simply "desert") has about it the greatest air of mystery, perhaps because it lies at the heart of Asia's remotest hinterland between the Siberian wilderness to the north and the Tibetan Plateau to the south. Contrary to the sterile sameness that the word "desert" suggests, the Gobi holds many fascinations including sites of some of the most important paleontological discoveries of this century.

Yol Valley National Park

Fly from Ulaanbaatar to the Gobi Desert. Drive to Yol Valley National Park, cradled between the foothills of the Altai Mountains. An ancient river carved this surprisingly green valley. Now, its remnant streams create ice formations at the base of the valley that sometimes persist as late as July.

Drive to Your Lodge

Drive to Three Camel Lodge, Mongolia's premier eco-lodge, where you will settle in and enjoy lunch.

Explore the Area

Spend the evening exploring the surrounding area on foot. You may want to enjoy a massage or a drink in the lounge before eating dinner at the lodge.

Accommodations
Three Camel Lodge

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 7
Saturday
6/24/23

Gobi Desert

Naadam is the most widely watched festival among Mongols, and is believed to have existed for centuries. Naadam has its origin in sporting competitions such as archery, horseback riding and wrestling, that followed the celebration of various occasions, including weddings or spiritual gatherings. It later served as a way to train soldiers for battle. The three games of wrestling, horse racing and archery are called “Danshig” games.

Local Naadam Festival

Attend the local Naadam Festival celebrations. Wrestling, horseracing, and archery are the three age-old competitions traditionally used to measure the courage and strength of nomads and warriors. Afterwards, enjoy lunch with the group.

Explore Havsgait

If time permits, you will visit Havsgait late this afternoon to see ancient petroglyphs of the Gobi which can be seen clearly when the sun hits the rocks at just the right angle. The hike to the top of the mountain is over steep and loose gravel-covered ground.

Dinner

Enjoy dinner at the lodge tonight.

Accommodations
Three Camel Lodge

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 8
Sunday
6/25/23

Gobi Desert

When Marco Polo described crossing the Gobi Desert in the 13th century, he said that “this desert is reported to be so long that it would take a year to go from end to end; and at the narrowest point it takes a month to cross it. It consists entirely of mountains and sands and valleys. There is nothing at all to eat.” The word “Gobi” means “large and dry” in the Mongolian language.

Thread and Felt Making

After breakfast, drive to visit a nomadic family living nearby the lodge where you will spend an entire day learning to make traditional handicrafts. Begin with a hands-on lesson on thread making and spinning wool. Afterwards, learn about felt making and how felt is used as an insulator for gers and as textile for clothing and boots. Making felt is a time-consuming process and is customarily done in conjunction with other families. Felt is first beaten by hand with wooden sticks to break down the fiber and aides in the removal or dirt deep in the wool. Afterwards, water is applied and the felt mass is rolled tightly into a long column and dragged across the ground by horse in order to join the fibers. When the felt is rolled out, it is dried in the sun and ready for household use. Have lunch before heading back to the lodge.

Relax at the Lodge This Evening

Enjoy dinner and then take the evening to relax at the lodge.

Accommodations
Three Camel Lodge

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 9
Monday
6/26/23

Gobi Desert

The Flaming Cliffs, also known as Bayan Zag, is a region of the Gobi Desert in the Ömnögovi Province of Mongolia, in which important fossil finds have been made. The area is most famous for yielding the first discovery of dinosaur eggs. Other finds in the area include specimens of Velociraptor and eutherian mammals. The red or orange color of the sandstone cliffs (especially at a sunset), give them their name.

Moltsog Els on Foot or by Camel

Moltsog Els is one of the few regions of the Gobi covered by sand dunes. Explore the sand dunes on foot or on back of a Bactrian camel. You will also have the opportunity to visit a local camel herding family and experience their hospitality.

Cooking Class

Learn to make delicious Mongolian Buuz (dumplings) and Khuushuur at the lodge.

Visit the Flaming Cliffs

In the evening, drive to Bayan Zag, commonly known as the Flaming Cliffs, to experience the orange glow of its rock at dawn and dusk. It was here in 1923 that Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews and his exploration team from the American Museum of Natural History found the first nest of dinosaur eggs. Although not obvious to the untrained eye, the Flaming Cliffs are rich with dinosaur fossils and have been the site of important paleontological discoveries.

Dinner

Enjoy dinner at the lodge tonight.

Accommodations
Three Camel Lodge

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 10
Tuesday
6/27/23

Gobi Desert to Ulaanbaatar

Leave the Gobi Desert and head back to Ulaanbaatar today.

Fly to
Ulaanbaatar

Fly back to Ulaanbaatar this morning.

Visit MIM

MIM is a Mongolian and Irish collaboration that was formed to encourage and empower Mongolian women and their families. At MIM, Mongolian women are trained in the traditional felt-making skills as part of Asral NGO's sustainable training program. With the support from the Irish government and the Dalai Lama, MIM's hand crafted products have become identified as the highest quality felt in Mongolia.

Lunch

Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.

Throat Singing

This evening, enjoy a traditional Mongolian Dance and Khoomi throat singing performance at a local theatre.

Farewell Dinner

Enjoy a farewell dinner this evening and celebrate the end of an exceptional trip.

Accommodations
Best Western
Premier Tuushin
Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 11
Wednesday
6/28/23

Ulaanbaatar and Depart

Enjoy one last morning in Ulaanbaatar before departing for the US.

Transfer to the Airport

Say goodbye to your new AdventureWomen friends as you transfer to the airport for your flights home.

Please note: AdventureWomen will attempt to adhere to the itinerary as much as possible. However, certain conditions (political, climatic, environmental, and cultural) may necessitate changes in the itinerary. AdventureWomen reserves the right to alter any itinerary at any time, if necessary. We will attempt to notify participants of changes as far in advance as possible. Costs incurred by such changes will be the responsibility of the participants.

Meals Included
breakfast

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Accommodation Details

Best Western Premier Tuushin Hotel

Centrally located in Ulaanbaatar, the Best Western Premier Tuushin Hotel is within walking distance of many of the attractions in the city. The comfortable rooms are an excellent place to relax between forays into the countryside.

Amenities: soap, shampoo, conditioner, hairdryer, electricity with outlet adapters, WiFi

Tent With Sleeping Bag

Your tents are Cabela's Alaskan walk-in tents. Each tent has a foldable camp cot (two in a double tent and one in a single tent). You will be provided with an inflatable air mattress, and a Creek wenzel sleeping bag with a cotton sleeping bag liner. There are separate toilet (bio-chemical, pump-flush toilet) and shower tents (solar-heated water).

Three Camel Lodge

The remote location of Three Camel Lodge is not for the impatient traveler, but those seeking a true escape which will be richly rewarded. Three Camel Lodge offers a luxurious take on the traditional nomadic lifestyle. Built in the heart of the Gobi Desert according to environmentally and culturally sustainable development guidelines, the Three Camel Lodge offers a blend of adventure and sophistication, combining traditional style with superb service to create the ultimate expedition experience.

Amenities: private bathroom with walk-in shower, bathrobe

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Included:

- ▶ Accommodations as per itinerary based on double occupancy
- ▶ All meals as listed in the itinerary
- ▶ English-speaking guide(s) throughout the trip
- ▶ All ground transportation
- ▶ Activities as indicated in the itinerary
- ▶ Drinking water available in large jugs to refill personal bottles
- ▶ All gratuities except guide and driver

Not Included:

- ▶ International airfare
- ▶ Meals not specified in the itinerary
- ▶ Optional activities
- ▶ Alcoholic beverages (unless otherwise specified)
- ▶ Fees for passport, visas, immunizations, or travel insurance
- ▶ Cost of hospitalization or evacuation
- ▶ Items of a personal nature
- ▶ Gratuities for main guide and driver

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Cancellations and Refunds

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

For cancellations received 61-90 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable. For cancellations received 1-60 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. Travel insurance information will be sent to you once you have registered for your trip.

Switching Trips

Our deposits are nonrefundable and nontransferable. If for some reason you need to switch to a different trip, please call us and we will do our best to accommodate you, but switching is not guaranteed.

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.

Health Insurance

You must have your own health insurance to participate in an AdventureWomen trip.

Adventure Travel Today

At AdventureWomen, we want everyone to 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!**

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!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a