



MONGOLIAN ARCHEOLOGICAL QUEST

Aug 10-23, 2024

In partnership with Ulaanbaatar State University

TRIP SUMMARY



Over two millennia ago, a powerful confederacy of nomadic tribes known as the Xiongnu Empire (Hunnu in Mongolian) thrived in what is now Mongolia. For many Mongolians, this is when the nation began. Xiongnu were the dominant power in Central Asia, forcing its southern neighbor, the Han dynasty to maintain a “peace and kinship treaty.” Dr. Erdenebaatar of Ulaanbaatar State University and his dedicated archaeological team have been excavating largest known tomb of Xiongnu aristocrats to date. The site, known as Gol Mod-2, is located in the picturesque Arhangai Province. Excavations have yielded never before seen crafts of the Xiongnu Empire, including gold, silver, and jade ornaments as well as parts of horse chariots, tools, and human and animal remains. With activate crowdfunding, this team is planning to open yet another tomb at the site. On this exclusive journey, we will be given exclusive access to visit the excavation site and to spend a few days with the scientists and students. We will have the opportunity not only observe the excavation work, we will be able to help in unearthing an ancient treasure never seen before by the modern world.

ABOUT GUEST LECTURER



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ITINERARY

DAY 1, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10: ARRIVAL

Upon arrival at Chinggis Khan International Airport, meet your Mongolia Quest guide and transfer to a centrally located hotel in downtown Ulaanbaatar.

In the afternoon, we will make a short city tour including a stop at the towering Zaisan Hill, where you can get a bird's eye view of the entire city, huddled in between the valley of Tuul River and Bogd Khan Mountain. This scenic mountain is believed to be the first national park in the world. The Mongolian State Library keeps copies of letters exchanged between the governor of Ulaanbaatar and Qing Emperor from 1778, mentioning local celebrations arranged for the occasion of making the Bogd Khan Mountain an official protected site. In the evening, we will commence our trip with a briefing by our expedition leader, followed by a welcome dinner at a fine local restaurant.

Overnight at hotel. (Hotel Bayangol or similar; D)

DAY 2, THURSDAY, AUGUST 11: AMARBAYASGALANT MONASTERY



After breakfast, we will drive north to the Amarbayasgalant Monastery (approx. 5 hours), enjoying a lunch along the way at a local road café. We will reach the temple grounds in the afternoon. The monastery is named after twin children ("Amar" and "Bayasgalant") who were found playing by monks travelling in this valley in search of a location for the monastery. Established in the 17th century by a Manchurian king who dedicated it to Zanabazar, the first Buddhist theocrat of Mongolia, the monastery flourished until the arrival of communism in Mongolia in the early 20th century. Though partially destroyed, Amarbayasgalant Monastery has been partially reconstructed over the course of the last 30 years and is recognized as one of the few surviving examples of traditional Mongolian architecture and construction. It is also remarkable that all the construction materials are of local origin. (Ger Camp; L, D)

DAY 3, FRIDAY, AUGUST 12: URAN TOGOO, BULGAN PROVINCE

Our destination of the day will be Uran Togoo, a beautiful dormant volcano surrounded by mountains, forests and colorful wild flowers. We will have a chance to exercise and trek in the foothills of the mountains. Overnight in tents. (Tent Camp; B, L, D)

DAY 4, SATURDAY, AUGUST 13: KHANUI VALLEY



Gol Mod-II site. Photo by Ulaanbaatar University

After breakfast, we will drive to the main destination of our journey, the Gol Mod 2 site, located in the beautiful Khanui Valley. Gol Mod-2 is located at the base of the Bugatiin Nuruu Mountains and measures about 2.2 kilometers by 1.3 kilometers. There are over 98 large tombs, each comprised of a ramp leading up to a level platform. The largest of these tombs has a 3-meter-tall platform and measures 83 meters in length. There are also about 335 smaller burials at the site, marked by stone

circles, either associated with the tombs or located independently—making this a literal treasure-trove of ancient life in Mongolia. In the afternoon, we will arrive at our site and will join the team from Ulaanbaatar State University who are carrying out the excavation works at the next major tomb site. Enjoy dinner hosted by Dr. Erdenebaatar, the expedition leader and begin learning about his remarkable discoveries at this site.

Overnight in tents. (Tent Camp; B, L, D)

DAYS 5-9, SUNDAY-THURSDAY, AUGUST 14-18: EXCAVATION WORK AND SIGHTSEEING



Excavation site. Photo by Ulaanbaatar University

We will spend our time here for the next few days as the Mongolian team attempts to uncover remnants of a new aristocratic cemetery. Each day, we will also hike in the surrounding mountains, possibly surveying for new evidence of burial sites. Each evening, we will be joined by Dr. Erdenebaatar as he talks about the day's findings. We will also have an opportunity to enjoy horseback riding and visit local nomadic families to hear about the history and legends behind the Gol Mod site. Overnight in tents. (Tent Camp; B, L, D)

DAY 10, FRIDAY, AUGUST 19: KULTEGIN MONUMENT, OGII LAKE



In the morning, we will bid farewell to the university field staff and begin driving south to our next destination. We'll drive to Ogii Lake and onto the Kultegin Monument complex, a 7th century Turkic site. We will overnight in gers at Lake Ugii. This beautiful steppe lake is an ideal place for horseback riding and fishing. Overnight in gers. (Ger Camp; B, L, D)

DAY 11, SATURDAY, AUGUST 20: KHARAKHORUM, ERDENEZUU MONASTERY



After an early morning breakfast, we will begin our overland journey towards Kharakhorum (1 hour driving). The construction of Kharakhorum city was completed during the reign of Ogedei Khan, Chinggis Khan's third son who, in 1128, inherited the empire his father created. It is located in the picturesque valley of Orkhon River, which historically and archeologically significant sites going back 2000 years, still waiting to be discovered. These include 2000 year old burial sites, deer stones and ruins of

cities pre-dating the time of Chinggis Khan. We also will pay a visit to the magnificent Erdenezuu Monastery, one of Mongolia's most beautiful Buddhist structures. Strolling through its grounds, surrounded by 108 stupas, you will find plenty of opportunities to photograph its temples and local visitors. This evening, enjoy a traditional Mongolian barbeque for dinner. (Ger Camp; B, L, D)

DAY 12, SUNDAY, AUGUST 21: UYGHUR CITY RUINS, TSOGT PRINCE CASTLE SITE



In the morning, we will complete our epic journey and begin driving back to Ulaanbaatar. Along the way, stop at two historically significant city ruins. Our first stop is at the ruin of the large citadel of the Uyghur Empire capital, Khar Balgas. Uyghurs were people of Turkic origin, who dominated the grasslands of central Mongolia between the 8th and 9th centuries. The next stop will be at the ruins of Prince Tsogt, a famous central Mongolian prince and patriot who fought for the independence of Mongolia in the 17th century. Reach Ulaanbaatar later in the afternoon and enjoy dinner at a fine local restaurant. (Hotel Bayangol or similar; B, L, D)

DAY 13, AUG 22: ULAANBAATAR



Today, we will explore some of the city's best-known museums and historical sites. Begin with a visit to the Gandan, Mongolia's largest Buddhist Monastery. An imposing 90-foot-tall statue of Megjid Janraisag (Avalokites-vara in Sanskrit) stands in the largest temple in the middle of the monastery. This statue is considered the religious symbol of Mongolia's independence and democracy after the country's democratic transition in 1990. When a Mongolian student in the mid -1990s discovered fragments of the original statue (which was destroyed by Soviet authorities in the 1930s) in St. Petersburg, a nationwide campaign began to collect money for rebuilding the Buddha. After several years of hard work and struggle, this magnificent Buddha was resurrected and is now standing proud, making all

Mongolian Buddhists happy. Next, we will visit the halls of the National History Museum which showcases Mongolia's best collection of traditional tools and crafts. Other exhibits present different periods of Mongolia's history. Among the museum highlights are collections of traditional costumes of different Mongolian clans, a hall of 13th century Mongolia, and nomadic family belongings. After lunch, we will move to Zanabazar Museum of Fine Arts with its excellent collection of Mongolia's arts including golden Buddha statues of 17th century and some of the best preserved tankas (traditional Buddhist paintings) in the world. In the evening, enjoy a cultural performance featuring khoomii or "throat-singing," followed by a farewell dinner at a fine local restaurant. (Hotel Bayangol or similar; B, L, D)

DAY 14, AUG 23: DEPARTURE

After breakfast transfer to the airport for your return flight home. (B)

B = Breakfast | L = Lunch | D = Dinner

Ger camp = The traditional portable, circular, wooden dwelling used by the nomadic peoples.

Field camp = A bit more sophisticated camping/glamping, more permanent in nature.

Tent camp = Expedition style, often moving regularly and smaller in size and scale.

MONGOLIA QUEST RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ALTER THE ABOVE ITINERARY IF DEEMED NECESSARY.

LAND PRICES

Based on 2 participants:	\$4,250 per person , standard twin occupancy;
Based on 3-5 participants:	\$3,890 per person , standard twin occupancy;
Based on 6-9 participants:	\$3,650 per person , standard twin occupancy;
Based on 10+ participants:	\$3,490 per person , standard twin occupancy;
Optional single supplement:	\$550 per person

LAND PRICES INCLUDE:	LAND PRICES DO NOT INCLUDE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land transportation as indicated in the itinerary based on using a Mitsubishi Delica Van for every 4-5 passengers; • Accommodation in a standard room at hotels and standard gers in the countryside; • Airport arrival & departure transfers; • Sleeping bags; expedition style tents and mats; • All meals indicated as B, L or D; • All entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary; • Camel and horse riding fees; • Guest lecturer's expenses and participation; • English speaking national guide throughout your stay; • A bottled water per person per day and unlimited supply of boiled waters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International and domestic airfare; • Personal laundry; • Drinks not mentioned in the itinerary; • Travel insurance; • Medical evacuation costs; • Excess baggage charges; • Visa fees; • Gratuities; • Photography and video fees • Any other item not mentioned as included.

HOW TO BOOK THIS TRIP

You may book any trip with us by filling out our Trip Application Form, which you can download using Adobe Acrobat Reader and can send to us as an electronic file via e-mail at

- Info@MongoliaQuest.com

All reservations are subject to deposit of \$400 per person. Deposits are refundable until 90 days prior to the start of the program less a \$250 administrative fee. Please arrange a wire transfer to Mongolia Quest bank account as per following instructions:

Beneficiary name: MONGOLIA QUEST LLC

Beneficiary's address:

Suite #00, Apt.26B, 1st Horoo, 13th Sud-district, Sukhbaatar District,
Ulaanbaatar 14230, Mongolia;

Tel: (976) 7000 9747

Email: info@MongoliaQuest.com

Beneficiary's account number: 3005111070

Beneficiary's bank name: Golomt bank

Beneficiary's bank address:

Monnis branch

3rd floor, Monnis tower, Chinggis avenue

Khoroo #1, Sukhbaatar district

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Beneficiary's bank swift code: GLMTMNUB

Once we receive your trip application form, we will send you information about how to wire your deposit to us, and a confirmation letter with information related with visa and international airfare reservations. You will also receive our pre-departure Travel Guide, which will include information on weather, suggested reading list, a list of items to pack, etc.

About 4 weeks prior to your arrival date, we will send you Final Departure Information which will include your final itinerary along with any other necessary updated information regarding the logistics of your trip.

PAYMENT AND CANCELLATION POLICY

As mentioned above, a deposit of \$400 per person is required to reserve space for the trip that you have chosen. Full payment is due 90 days prior to the start of the trip. In the case of a cancellation, please contact us in written form.

Notification of cancellation must be received in writing by Mongolia Quest. At the time, we receive your written cancellation, the following penalties will apply:

- **Up to 90 days** prior to departure: **\$250 per person** handling fee;
- **89-60 days** prior to departure: **20% of the trip cost** per person;
- **60-45 days** prior to departure: **50% of the trip cost** per person;
- **44-30 days** prior to departure: **75% of the trip cost**, per person;
- **29 days** prior to departure, or after the trip starts: **no-refund**.

Some airfares may be nonrefundable. Once an expedition has departed, there will be no refunds from MQ for any unused portions of the trip. The above policy also applies to all extensions and independent travel arrangements made in conjunction with this program.

Tier pricing

Our prices are based on tier pricing. At the time of booking, we will bill you for the amount based on the confirmed number of trip participants. In case the number of travelers increases at the last moment, we will reimburse the balance of your payment in accordance with the corresponding tier pricing, after you return home.

TRAVEL NOTES

How to get to Mongolia

The official Mongolian international civil flight carriers Mongolian Airlines or MIAT. Currently it serves flights between Beijing, Seoul, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Bangkok and Frankfurt. Other popular airlines include Asiana, Pusan and Turkish airlines. South Korea is the most common international gateway city to Ulaanbaatar. Mongolian Airlines and Turkish Airlines fly daily to/from Istanbul. If you are coming from Europe, you may also find Turkish Airlines a convenient connection. During the summer season, if no seats are available on any of these major carriers, there are ways to fly to Mongolia through local cities in China and Russia. Please contact us for more information. The seats are usually in high demand and booking needs to be done well in advance.

Visa Information

U.S, Canadian, Japanese, Australian and citizens of most European counties are allowed to enter Mongolia without a visa for up to 30 days. All other nationals are required to get a visa before entering Mongolia.

THE LIST OF THE COUNTRIES TO BE EXEMPTED FROM VISA REQUIREMENTS TO VISIT MONGOLIA UP TO 30 DAYS IN THE YEARS OF 2023-2025

- Czech Republic
- Republic of Austria
- Kingdom of Belgium
- Hungary
- Hellenic Republic
- Kingdom of Denmark
- Kingdom of Spain
- Italian Republic
- Republic of Latvia
- Republic of Lithuania
- Swiss Confederation
- Republic of Bulgaria
- Republic of Ireland
- Republic of Philippines

- Principality of Liechtenstein
- Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
- Republic of Malta
- Kingdom of the Netherlands
- Republic of Poland
- Portuguese Republic
- Slovak Republic
- Republic of Slovenia
- Republic of Finland
- Republic of Croatia
- Canada

- Kingdom of Sweden
- French Republic
- Republic of Estonia
- Kingdom of Norway
- Republic of Iceland
- Republic of Cyprus
- Romania
- Principality of Monaco
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- Commonwealth of Australia
- New Zealand

Weather

Mongolia enjoys over 280 sunny days a year. However, because Mongolia has a continental weather pattern, weather can fluctuate drastically during any given day. We recommend packing warm clothes even if you are coming during the hottest months. Our pre-departure information will provide details regarding the weather along with a suggested packing list. Layering is the best plan to be ready for a wide array of Mongolian weather patterns.

Accommodation



Newly renovated Soviet era hotels are located at some of the best locations in downtown Ulaanbaatar. They offer comfortable rooms and friendly services. There are also newer hotels like Kempinski Khan Palace, Ramada Ulaanbaatar and Best Western Inn. The countryside accommodations are arranged in “ger camps,” which provide authentic nomadic felt tents with centralized bathroom and toilet facilities located nearby. They offer clean, comfortable beds and plentiful meals.

Safety

Mongolia is devoid of any political, religious and ethnic sectarian conflicts and is considered one of the safest countries in the world for international travelers. However, like in any other country, crimes do happen, so a good sense of caution and respect shown to the locals can help to avoid unnecessary confrontations. Mongolians are generally hospitable people who love to interact with foreigners.

Food



Mongolia’s capital, Ulaanbaatar, hosts an excellent collection of fine restaurants of international cuisine. In the countryside, tour establishments offer hearty meals with a balance of meat and vegetables. Meat in Mongolians excellent in that the whole country is essentially “free-range” terrain. Even your strictest dietary restrictions can now be met with proper information in advance and preparation by us.

Information about Currency and Payment Methods

Mongolia's national currency is called tugrik and the exchange rate is about 3,400 tugrik to a US dollar. Major currencies can be exchanged at the hotels and pawnshops, and ATM machines are widely available throughout Ulaanbaatar and provincial centers. However, Australian dollars can usually only be exchanged at banks. Traveler's checks can be cashed at banks and major credit cards are accepted at most places in the capital, but only Mongolian cash is accepted in the countryside. We recommend that you travel with Mongolian national currency equal to at least \$200 when touring in the countryside.

Souvenirs

Like any other places, Mongolia offers great souvenirs ranging from camel wool sweaters to cashmere scarves and traditional wooden puzzle games. Mongolian vodkas can be an excellent gift. At several stores, you can also find a range of traditional Mongolian musical instruments such as the famed Morin Khuur or "horse headed fiddle." Bargaining is not very customary; most items are sold for the price on their labels. If you plan to shop for souvenirs, we recommend purchasing locally as many items as possible since your purchases will be a direct contribution to the local community.

Travel Insurance

With Mongolia stretching over 1.5 million square kilometers and its population concentrated in the cities, we will be traveling through some remote areas away from good roads and medical facilities. We strongly recommend that you consider getting standard emergency medical evacuation insurance as a means to protect yourself from unexpected accidents that can happen during any trip. Nothing is better than traveling with peace of mind knowing that you have prepared for the trip as much as possible in advance.

Traveling with Mongolia Quest

Because it is still a developing country, traveling in Mongolia requires a sense of humor and patience. New roads and bridges are being built every year, but the paved road system is still limited in the countryside. You may experience flight delays and find road conditions bumpy and dusty. But the experience of traveling in Mongolia will far exceed some personal compromises in comfort. We like to say that the best part of traveling in Mongolia is spontaneous events and interactions, which lead to unexpected interactions, discoveries, and experiences that will make your trip unique and memorable. At Mongolia Quest, we ensure the integrity of your overall itinerary but at the same time, will go out of our way to make necessary changes in order to enrich your travel experience with us.

ENJOY YOUR TRIP!