



MONGOLIAN
ART EXPEDITION

(June 1 – July 11, 2024)

TRIP SUMMARY



Mongolia is a place with rich cultural and natural heritage. Buddhism came to Mongolia as a result of three big waves, lasting from the times of Xionnu or Hunnu in the 3d century BC and past the times of the Great Mongol Empire. In 1578 during the third wave it came from Tibet when Altan Khan has proclaimed Sonam Gyatso, a leader of a rising Gelug lineage a Dalai Lama – leader of all Buddhists. In return he himself was recognized as a direct descendant of Chinggis Khaan himself. Since then Buddhist monasteries have sprung around Mongolia in many numbers and by the early 20th century have reached 4000 in number. During the 300 years of history, Mongolian artisans have created thousands of masterpieces, established own school of Buddhist art and have been recognized throughout the world as a Buddhist nation with its own distinct differences. This program will allow to discover the best of Mongolian Buddhist art through one of our expert guides.

ITINERARY

DAY 1, JULY 1 ARRIVAL



Upon arrival at Chinggis Khaan International Airport, meet your Mongolia Quest guide and transfer to your hotel.

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 Blue Sky or similar; D)

DAY 2, JULY 2 ULAANBAATAR



Today, we will explore some of the city's best known museums and Zaisan Memorial. Begin with a visit to the Gandan, Mongolia's largest Buddhist Monastery. An imposing 90-foot-tall statue of Megjid Janraisag (Avalokitesvara 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 statue. After several years of hard work and struggle, this magnificent Avalokiteshvara was resurrected and is now standing proud, making all Mongolian Buddhists happy.

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 Blue Sky or similar; B, L, D)

DAY 3, JULY 3 OVGON MONASTERY, HOGNO KHAN MOUNTAINS



Drive to Hogno Han Mountains at the stunning confluence of three geographical zones (steppe, desert, and forest). Visit the Ovgon monastery originally built in 1660 but later destroyed by the armies of Galdan Boshigt from western Mongolia in the 18th century. Consequently the monastery was rebuilt to be demolished by communists in the 30s of the last century. Some temples are being restored these days.

In the evening, hike in the area. In the countryside you will stay at the traditional, made of a latticed wood

structure covered with layers of felt. The camp restaurant and western-style toilet and shower facilities are located in a centrally located building. Dinner and overnight in gers (Approx. 5 hours driving; Ger Camp; B, L, D)

DAY 4, JULY 4 KHARKHORIN (QARAQORUM), ERDENE ZUU MONASTERY



After an early morning breakfast, we will begin our overland journey towards Kharakhorin (1 hour driving). The construction of Kharkhorin city was completed during the reign of Ögedei 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 bears hundreds of 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 Erdene Zuu 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 5, JULY 5 SHANKH MONASTERY, NOMADIC ENCAMPMENT



In the morning visit Shankh Khiid, a monastery within a short driving distance of Erdene Zuu and Kharkhorin that was once frequented by Zanabazar, the renowned Buddhist artist and religious leader. It was here that the Black Banners of Chinggis Khan have been kept until the communists came and destroyed the monastery and killed many of the monks. Today the monastery is rebuilding its grounds and operates out of few smaller temples. Come

back to the camp for lunch. In the afternoon, opportunity to visit a local herder family to learn about nomadic ways of lifestyle, sample some of the dairy products and help them with their daily chores. (Ger Camp; B, L, D)

DAY 6 / JULY 6 TSETSERLEG, BUYANDELGERUULEKH MONASTERY



Today we drive to the capital of Arkhangai, a province considered one of the most beautiful in Mongolia, visit Buyandelgeruulekh Monastery, which was once home to almost 1,000 monks. During the communist purges of the 1930s the monastery was converted into a museum and thus saved from destruction. Buyandelgeruulekh has become the town's main monastery and now holds weekly religious services, but is still home to many spiritual)

and sacred artifacts from its days as a museum. In the afternoon visit the local market and sample Arkhangai Province's rich and delicious dairy products. Stay in a local ger camp. (Ger Camp; B, L, D

DAY 7, JULY 7 TÖVKHÖN MONASTERY, KHARKHORIN



Trip to Tövkhön monastery, built in mid 17th century for famous Buddhist ruler of Mongolia Zanabazar. Though it was heavily destroyed during communist purges of the 20th century now it is being rebuilt. Situated on the top of a high mountain range the monastery grounds offer spectacular view of the surrounding landscapes. The trip will involve 4 hour hike in the area through some grassy slopes. Packed lunch. Return to the ger camp for dinner and overnight. (Ger camp; B, L, D)

DAY 8, JULY 8 ULAANBAATAR VIA KHAR BALGAS AND TSOGT TAIJ RUINS



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 Blue Sky or similar; B, L, D)

DAY 11, JULY 7: KHOVD / ULAANBAATAR

After an early morning breakfast, drive back to Hovd city for your return flight back to Ulaanbaatar. Upon arrival, check-into your hotel and the remainder of the day is free for resting. Dinner is independent. (Hotel Kempinski; B, L)

DAY 9, JULY 9 ULAANBAATAR, DAMBADARJAALIN AND DASHCHOILIN MONASTERIES



We spend the day exploring some of the most interesting monastery grounds in Ulaanbaatar city. First we visit the obscure Dambadarjaalin Monastery, located in the north-east of Ulaanbaatar within so called ger districts, was built in 1761- 1765 by a Manchu Emperor in memory of the Second Bogd Khan. The Second Bogd Khan Luvsandambiidonme was a direct descendant of the Chinggis Khan himself. The monastery was constructed in 1765 and 10 years later some 500 lamas were residing at the monastery. It was partially

destroyed during the communist purges of the 1930s. It was reopened to the public in 1990 as a monastery and today it has several resident lamas, offering prayers, and some of the destroyed temples are being rebuilt. After lunch on one of the centrally located restaurants we visit the Dashchoilin monastery, also known as the Züün Khüree, which was originally built in 1890. Once again the communist purges have wiped out most of the temples and post democratic changes of the 1990s the monastery moved into three concrete structures built in a shape of original Mongolian. The monastery is now home to over 100 monks. Resident monks have reconstructed the famous religious play called Tsam after a long disruption during the communist times. In the evening enjoy your dinner at a local restaurant.

(Hotel Blue Sky or similar; B, L, D)

DAY 10, JULY 10 ULAANBAATAR



Today we explore the Chojjin Lama museum, a gem of the historical and cultural heritage of the 20th century. The monastery was active until 1938. The museum is an ensemble of Buddhist architecture and consists of 5 temples and 5 arched gates. In the main temple there is the sculpture of Chojjin Lama and the embalmed mummy of his teacher. It also contains the great coral mask of Begtse, created under the direction of protectors using over 6000 pieces of coral. Yidam temple and Amgalan temple contain rare artifacts made by the famous Mongolian artist and sculptor, Zanabazar. In total the museum has over 5000 items out of which 12 are unique and 200 are particularly valuable.

After lunch continue explorations of the city by a visit to the Bogd Khan Winter Palace museum. This palace known as the Green Palace was built between 1893 and 1903 by Mongolian masters and dedicated to the Eighth Bogd Khan, the head of Buddhism in Mongolia and last khan of Mongolia. After Bogd Khan's death, his winter palace was turned into a museum, becoming the first national historical museum of Mongolia. The collections of the museum include unique and valuable objects related to Mongolia's political, religious, and artistic history from the 17th to early 20th centuries: bronze castings, silk paintings, mineral paintings, and paper icons made by well-known artists and artisans of the period, among others the first Bogd Khan Zanabazar and his school; as well as objects owned and used by the Eighth Bogd Khan and his wife, queen Tsendiin Dondogdulam, including royal clothing and equipment, gifts from domestic and foreign guests or representatives, and items purchased by the king for his own diversion. Enjoy farewell dinner at a fine local restaurant.

(Hotel Blue Sky or similar; B, L, D)

DAY 11, JULY 11 DEPARTURE

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your departure 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	\$3,850 per person , standard twin occupancy;
Based on 3-5 participants:	\$3,400 per person , standard twin occupancy
Based on 6-9 participants:	\$3,100 per person , standard twin occupancy
Based on 10+ participants:	\$2,850 per person , standard twin occupancy;
Optional single supplement:	\$390 per person , (including a single tent)

LAND PRICES INCLUDE:	LAND PRICES DO NOT INCLUDE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land transportation based on using a Huandai mid sized bus; ▪ Accommodations in a standard room at hotels and gers in the countryside-based on double occupancy • Airport arrival and departure transfers • All meals indicated as B, L or D • All entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary • Guest lecturer's participation • English speaking national guide throughout your stay • A bottle of water per person, per day and unlimited supply of boiled water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International 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

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 |
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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!