

QUEST FOR MONGOLIA

(Overland Adventure)

Date: June 10 – 25, 2024

TRIP SUMMARY

With a focus on history, nomadic heritage, flora and fauna and geography, this is one of our most comprehensive quests for discovering Mongolia. Our trip begins with a flight north to Lake Hovsgol, Mongolia's "mother ocean" which contains 1% of the world's fresh water. The lake is considered to be the headwater to Lake Baikal located not far away, in Siberia, and is one of the oldest lakes in the world.

The journey then continues overland to the 13th century Mongolian capital site of Kharakhorum in Orhon Valley, then south to the Gobi desert where our trip concludes. This ambitious, off-the-beaten-path quest will take us through some of the most diverse ecosystems of Mongolia. We will examine ancient burial sites, historical landmarks, Buddhist monasteries, nomadic families and paleontological localities with a series of interesting lectures provided by our national expedition leader. We will also have the opportunity to fish, trek and ride horses and camels while enjoying meeting local nomads along the way. The trip will conclude at the Gobi Desert, where great wide basins host dinosaur fossil valleys, sand dunes and rich flora and fauna.



ITINERARY

Day 1, Jun 10 Arrival

Upon arrival at the Hinggis Khan International Airport in Ulaanbaatar, meet your guide and transfer to your hotel. After resting in your hotel room, enjoy a brief city tour including a visit to the Zaisan Hill where you can get a bird watch view of the city. This old Soviet period relic is a popular place for the locals to hang out and offers a great panoramic view of the entire city. In the evening, enjoy a welcome dinner at one of the fine local restaurants. Overnight at hotel. (Hotel Bayangol or similar; D)

Day 2, Jun 11 Ulaanbaatar sightseeing



Today, explore some of the city's best-known museums and historical sites. Begin with the visit to Gandan, Mongolia's largest Buddhist Monastery. Visit the temple of Megjid Janraisag, where a 60 feet tall Buddha stands. Reconstructed in early 90s, the statue stands as the symbol of Mongolia's revival of religious freedom after the communist regime that fell over. The temple itself used to be the largest building in Ulaanbaatar early 1900s. Also, visit the main temples where monks chant Buddha's sutra's on daily basis.

Then, visit the National History museum which showcases Mongolia's best collection of traditional tools, artworks and other exhibits presenting different periods of Mongolia's history. Among the museum highlights is the collection of traditional costumes of different tribes, hall of the 13th century Mongolia and section which showcases a typical Mongolian ger and various nomadic tools. Also, visit the Zanabazar's Fine Arts museum with excellent collection of Mongolia's arts including golden Buddha statues of 17th century and some of the best preserved tankas in the world. In the evening, enjoy a dinner. Overnight at hotel. (Hotel Bayangol or similar; B, L, D)

Day 3 June 12 Ulaanbaatar / Lake Hovsgol



After breakfast, fly north to the Lake Hovsgol, known also as the "dark blue pearl" of Mongolia. The magnificent lake Hovsgol, one of the most scenic regions in the country, is located at the foothills of the breath taking Horidal Saridag Mountains to the west and a Siberian larch forest to the east. After our arrival in Muron (1.5 hour flight), the capital of Hovsgol province, we drive north to our ger camp located on the shore of the lake. (About 3 hours driving; Ger Camp; B, L, D)

Day 4 June 13 , Horseback riding



After breakfast, enjoy a full day of horseback riding along the lake-shore. We will start riding south and return to the camp from its northern direction by making a large loop. There will be plenty of opportunities to stop and explore the local flora and fauna along the route. Overnight in gers. (Ger Camp; B, L, D)

Day 5, June 14, Lake Hovsgol



Enjoy a full day at the lake, relaxing or trekking in the hills. The forested mountains along the lake shore team with wild flowers and birds. Or enjoy taking a kayak and floating on the lake which allows an opportunity to explore the lake shore. Overnight in gers. (Ger Camp; B, L, D)

Day 6 June 15 Muron / Zuun Nuur / Terkhiin Tsagaan Lake



In the morning, drive back to Muron, stopping at lake Erhel for a quick birding stop. We will continue driving until we arrive at Terkhiin Tsagaan Lake where we will stay in a ger camp. (Approx. 6 hours driving; Ger Camp; B, L, D)

Day 7, June 16, Horgo Terkh National Park



After breakfast, we will set out for a day trip to explore the local flora and fauna. In the morning, enjoy hiking to the dormant Horgo volcano which offers an amazing view of the surrounding area. After lunch, we will visit the “Yellow dog cave” and spend the rest of the day exploring the lake shore. Overnight in gers. (Approx. 6-7 hours driving; Ger Camp; B, L,D)

Day 8, June 17, Kharakhorum



After early breakfast, begin your overland journey towards Kharakhorum (6 hours driving), stopping for a picnic lunch on the way. The construction of Kharakhorum city was completed during Ogedei Khan, Chinggis Khan’s third son who inherited the empire his father created after his death in 1228. It’s located within a beautiful valley of Orkhon river, which bears hundreds of historically and archeologically significant sites, awaiting its unlocking, including 2000 years old burials, deer stones (believed to

form of burial) and ruins of cities pre-dating the time of Chinggis Khan (contrary to the popular spelling of “Genghis Khan” in the west, the correct pronunciation of his name among Mongolians is Chinggis Khan). Unfortunately, it did not survive the battle period of the time and it was destroyed by Ming dynasty’s army in the 14th century after the collapse of Mongolia’s Yuan dynasty in China. Its’ remaining were used in the construction of Mongolia’s largest Buddhist Monastery Erdenezuu, erected on its’ place, which stands today. Reach your ger camp in time for dinner and overnight. (Ger Camp; B, L, D)

Day 9, June 18, Erdenezuu and Tovkhon Monasteries



After an early morning breakfast, we will begin the morning with a visit to the magnificent Erdenezuu Monastery, one of Mongolia's most beautiful temple grounds. Strolling through its 108 stupas, you will find plenty of opportunities to photograph its temple grounds. Next, we will drive to the amazing Tovkhon Monastery, located on the top of one of the Khangai Mountains. It was originally built by Mongolia's first

religious leader and a renowned sculpture Zanabazar as his retreat for meditation. It partially survived the destruction of the communist purge of the 12930s and is now under reconstruction. Return to the ger camp at Kharakhorum in the afternoon, (Approx. 5-6 hours driving in the afternoon in between the sites) Overnight in gers. (Ger Camp; B, L, D)

Day 10, June 19 Ongi Monastery



Today, begin your overland journey south to the Gobi desert via Ongi Monastery (5-6 hours driving). We will also have our first opportunity to stop along the way and visit a nomadic horse herder family. Mongolians are known for their hospitality offered in form of food and shelter. Nomadic children, who often spend their summer school breaks with their parents, are found helping their parents. Continue driving until you reach Ongi Monastery, a ruin of monastery located on the northern tip of the Gobi desert. The Ongi Monastery was once

called the "Pearl of the Gobi" and was on the cross roads of Central Asian Silk road camel caravan merchants. We will explore the monastery ruins and surrounding hills on foot and stay at a ger camp located on the Ongi river banks. (Approx. 6 hours driving; Ger Camp; B, L, D)

Day 11, June 20, Khongoryn Els dunes

After breakfast, we will continue driving south until we arrive at the Khongoryn Els, Gobi's largest of the dunes. In the late afternoon, we will enjoy climbing tallest of the dunes followed by an opportunity to ride Bactrian camels at a camel herder family. Over night in gers. (Approx. 6 hours driving; Ger Camp; L, D)



Day 12 \, June 21, Havtsgait Petroglyphs



After another of Gobi's magnificent sunrises, we will head east to our next exploration. En route, stop at and The Flaming Cliffs, explore the Havtsgait Petroglyphs, an amazing collection of early bronze-age rock paintings located on the top of a mountain. Next, transfer to our ger camp near the Gobi Gurvan Saikhan National Park. Overnight in gers. (Approx. 4 hours driving; Ger Camp; B, L, D)

Day 13 June 22, Yol Valley / Flaming Cliffs



The Flaming Cliffs

In the morning, drive to the Yol Valley in the Gobi Gurvan Saikhan National Park, named after the raptor bird the bearded vulture or lammergeier. Yol Valley is one of the most beautiful valleys in the park and strolling through the gorge could allow rare spotting of mountain wild sheep and the elusive wall creeper. Also, visit the local Natural History Museum located at the entrance.

In the late afternoon, drive to the Flaming Cliff, a red cliff stretching about 3 km in wide, where hundreds of dinosaur fossils have been found. Paleontological expeditions from many countries, including from U.S., Poland, Japan, and Russia have worked here in the last 80 years. Each year rain and wind reveal yet more fossils and every summer discoveries are made. Next, drive Return to the ger camp in the evening. Overnight in gers. (Ger Camp; B,L, D)

Day 14 June 23, Ulaanbaatar

In the morning, we will transfer to the airport for our return flight back to Ulaanbaatar for our last day of exploration. Spend the remainder of the day for last-minute shopping and sightseeing.

In the evening, enjoy a cultural performance featuring the khoomii or “throat” singing followed by a hearty farewell dinner at a fine local restaurant. (Hotel Bayangol or similar; B, L, D)

Day 15, June 24, Departure

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for departure. (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:	\$4,275 per person , standard twin occupancy;
Based on 3-5 participants:	\$3,990 per person , standard twin occupancy;
Based on 6-9 participants:	\$3,850 per person , standard twin occupancy;
Based on 10+ participants:	\$3,600 per person , standard twin occupancy;
Optional single supplement:	\$480 per person
Optional Deluxe accommodation upgrade:	\$850 per person
Domestic airfare:	\$230 per person

LAND PRICES INCLUDE:	LAND PRICES DO NOT INCLUDE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodations based on a standard hotel and ger camp throughout; • Land transportation as indicated in the itinerary based on using Land cruisers; • Airport arrival & departure transfers; • All meals indicated as B, L or D; • All entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary; • Optional camel and horse riding fees; • English speaking Mongolia Quest expert guide throughout your stay; • A soda per person per meal; • A bottled water per person per day. 	<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

- 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!