

# TRUE MONGOLIAN QUEST: Land of Horses, Nomads and Dinosaurs

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(May 30 – Jun 13, 2025)



## TRIP SUMMARY

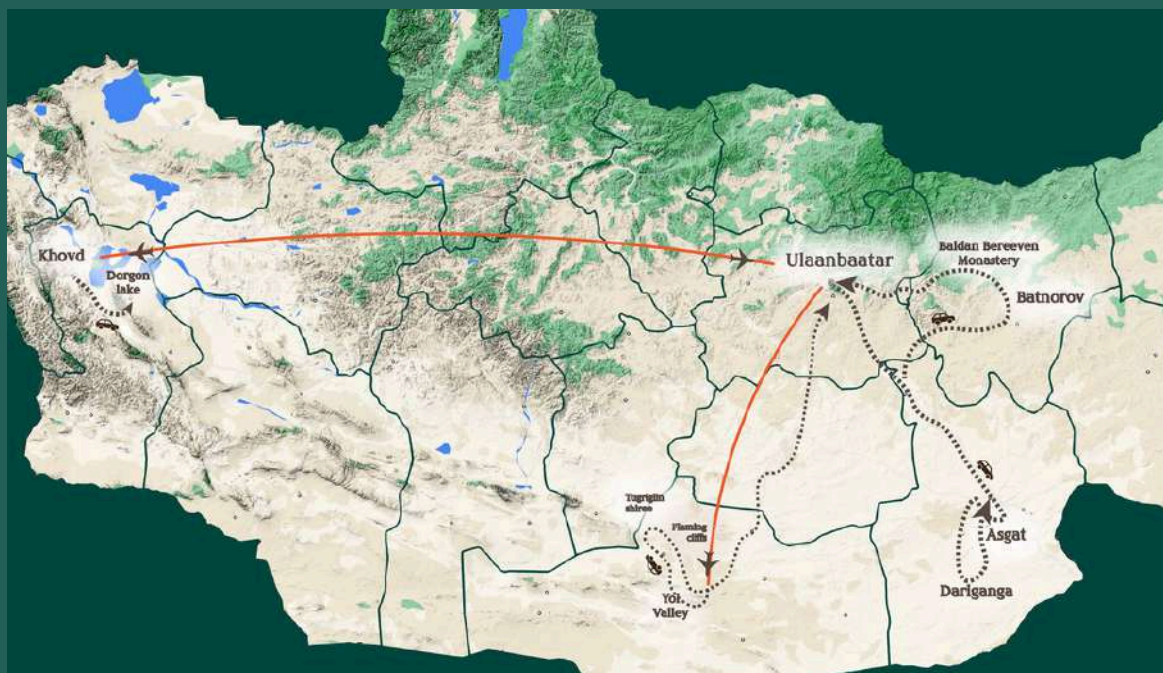
We invite you to join us on an exclusive journey to discover Mongolia with Dr. Christopher Atwood of the University of Pennsylvania, USA, one of North America's leading Mongolian experts. With a focus on history, nomadic culture, flora and fauna, and geography, this is one of our most comprehensive quests to date for exploring Mongolia.

The trip begins in eastern Mongolia, tracing the footsteps of the founders of the 13th-century Great Mongolian Empire. The journey will take you to lesser-known historical sites directly linked to the rise of Chinggis Khan. This unique opportunity will allow you to learn about the secretive ways of early Mongolian noblemen and the mysteries surrounding them. The trip continues to western Mongolia, where the Altai Mountains loom large. The Altai has long been a cradle of Mongolian nomadic civilization and is home to some of the country's most scenic national parks. From ancient burial sites to rock paintings and from snow-capped peaks to crystal-clear lakes, the Altai Mountains are considered one of Mongolia's most beautiful areas and a hidden jewel.

You will have the chance to experience the traditional nomadic way of life firsthand by visiting authentic nomadic families. The journey then continues to the Gobi Desert, a land of dinosaurs and snow leopards, with a focus on natural history. Dr. Atwood's special presentations and talks throughout the journey will enrich your experience like no other. There will also be opportunities to fish, trek, and ride horses and camels during this trip, with accommodations in both expedition-style tents and traditional gers.



# TRIP OVERVIEW



## This trip is perfect for:

- History buffs
- Culture enthusiasts
- Nature lovers
- Adventure seekers

## Highlights:

- Explore lesser-known historical sites linked to Genghis Khan
- Learn about nomadic traditions from authentic families in the Altai Mountains
- Discover Mongolia's natural beauty, from snow-capped peaks to the Gobi Desert
- Participate in activities like fishing, trekking, and horseback riding
- Gain insights from Dr. Atwood's exclusive presentations

## Route

UB- Sukhbaatar province-  
Khentii province- UB-Khovd  
province-Southern Gobi- UB

## Activity level

Moderate, Challenging

## Theme

Educational trip

## Group size

Min- 6  
Max- 15

## ABOUT GUEST LECTURER

Christopher Atwood is the Chair and Professor of the Mongolian and Chinese Frontier and Ethnic History Department at the University of Pennsylvania. His initial research, showcased in his dissertation and first book ("Young Mongols and Vigilantes in Inner Mongolia's Interregnum Decades, 1911-1931"), delves into the nationalist movement in Inner Mongolia.



Currently, his active research areas include employing source-critical methods to reconstruct lost Mongolian sources of the Mongol Empire and developing a new, non-"tribal" framework for the social history of Central Eurasian nomads. A recognized expert, he has made appearances on numerous television shows exploring the Mongol world empire and is the author of the "Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire."

Among his recent accomplishments is an inventive and important new translation of Mongolia's historical classic, "The Secret History of Mongolia," into English. Since his initial visit in 1989, Professor Atwood has been a frequent visitor to Mongolia, indulging in his passion for exploring the countryside during his free time. An avid bird watcher, he equally enjoys a range of field activities, from camping to horse and camel riding, as well as hiking.

## ITINERARY

### DAY 1, MAY 30 ARRIVAL



Upon arrival at the Chinggis Khan International Airport in Ulaanbaatar, meet your national 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's eye view of the city. This old Soviet period relic is a popular place for locals to hang out and offers a great view of the entire city. In the evening, meet Dr. Atwood and enjoy a welcome dinner at one of fine local restaurants. (Hotel Shangri La or similar; D)

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### DAY 2, MAY 31: ULAANBAATAR / SUKHBAATAR PROVINCE/ASGAT

In the morning, begin driving to south-eastern Sukhbaatar province (approx. 600 km), which is known for dormant volcanos, a collection of 13th century “man” statues, wide open grassland and important historical events associated with Mongolia's re-establishment of its independence in the early 20th century. Enjoy a picnic lunch along the way and reach your destination in the late afternoon. Overnights in Mongolia Quest field tent camp. (Approx. 8-9 hours driving; B, L, D)

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### DAY 3, JUNE 1: SUKHBAATAR PROVINCE / ALTAN OVOO/DARIGANGA



After breakfast, travel to Altan Ovoo, one of the sacred mountains of Mongolia and a UNESCO World Heritage site in Sukhbaatar Province. Surrounded by stunning landscapes, it offers a glimpse into Mongolia's past and is a popular destination for hiking and exploration. Home to Mongolia's Dariganga ethnic group, Sukhbaatar province is a classic Mongolian steppe, with low mountains and rolling hills. En route back visit a selection of archeological monuments called “man statues,” at Hurugt, Shiveetm Shartyn Had, and Tavan Tolgoi. These stone statues are closely associated with the 13th century Mongolian rise of the Great Mongol Empire and its founding families. Overnights in Mongolia Quest field tent camp. (Field camp; B, L, D)

## DAY 4, JUNE 2. SUKHBAATAR PROVINCE / BATNOROV VILLGAE

Today's journey will bring us to Batnorov Village, the place where Chinggis Khan met one of his first and most loyal friend Bo'orchu. Begin the day by driving northwest towards Baruun-Urt the capital of Sukhbaatar province and visit a local museum. Continue driving until you reach Batnorov village in the late afternoon. Your campsite in this area will be one of the most scenic spots on this journey, overlooking the glorious friendship statue of Chinggis Khan and Bo'orchu. Overnight in tents. (Approx. 370 km driving; Field Camp; B, L, D)

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## DAY 5, JUNE 3: BATNOROV / BALDAN BEREVEN MONASTERY



This morning, we will begin driving to eastern Khentii province. Enroute, drive through Binder soum, located on the confluence of beautiful Onon and Khurkh rivers. Reach your campsite at the magnificent Baldan Bereeven, one of Mongolia's most beautiful monastery grounds. Here, we will camp by a larch forest and explore the monastery grounds in the evening.

This picturesque monastery is surrounded by several Buddhist relics, which we will explore and thoroughly examine. This stop will offer an excellent opportunity to explore Mongolia's Buddhist history. Overnight in tents.

(Approx. 5-6 hours driving; Tent Camp; B, L, D)

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## DAY 6, JUNE 4: BALDAN BEREVEN MONASTERY / ULAANBAATAR



After breakfast, begin driving back to Ulaanbaatar, enjoying a picnic lunch along the way. Enroute stop at Chinggis Khan Equestrian Statue – the largest of its kind in the world. Upon arrival in UB, check-in to your hotel. Dinner is independent.

(Approx. 270 km driving; Hotel Shangri La or similar; B, L)

## DAY 7, JUNE 5: ULAANBAATAR / KHOVD PROVINCE



In the morning, fly over central Mongolia to reach western Mongolia's Hovd province (2.5 hours), known as the home to all 17 tribes of Mongolian ethnic groups. The province is also home to many iconic sites in the country such as Tsenheriin Cave, a bird-sanctuary Khar-Us Lake and snow leopard habitat areas of Jargalant and Bumbat Khaikhan mountains. Upon arrival, drive to your tent camp. Enroute, visit Tsenheriin Cave, or known as Khoid Tsenkheriin Agui in Mongolian. This cave is considered as one of the region's most important and widely visited cultural heritage sites, containing rich archaeofaunal materials. Continue driving and reach your camp site.

**(Approx. 6-7 hours driving, Tent camp; B, L, D)**

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## DAY 8-9, JUNE 6-7: EXPLORING NOMADIC WAY OF LIVING

Spend these days expending a quality time among the nomadic herders of Hovd province. Each year, herders in a particular region bring their summer homes to a mountain top of Baatar Khaikhan which is a towering sub-range of Altai mountains. Learn about their ancient way of living while observing how traditional Mongolian vodka is made! In the following day, enjoy a one-day hiking trip trailing along the mountain ridge, enjoying a breathtaking view of the surrounding area. Overnight in tents.

**(Tent camp; B, L, D)**

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## DAY 10, JUNE 8: DORGON LAKE



After breakfast, we will continue our journey and drive down to the valley to Lake Dörgön. Mongolia's seventh largest lake, is one of the lakes in Mongolia's "Great Lakes Basin" where dunes and lakes exist side by side. Enjoy walking along the lake shores in the afternoon, bathing in its slight salt waters, and overnight in tents. Bringing swim attire is recommended. **(Approx. 5 hours driving; Tent camp; B, L, D),**

### **DAY 11, JUNE 9: 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 Shangri La or similar; B, L)**

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### **DAY 12, JUNE 10 ULAANBAATAR / GOBI DESERT / YOL VALLEY**



After an early morning check-out, transfer to the airport for your flight south to the Gobi Desert, departing at 04:20 and arriving in the Gobi at 05:20 am. Upon arrival, drive to your ger camp for resting.

After lunch, drive to the scenic the Yol Valley located in the Gobi Gurvan Saikhan National Park, the largest park in size in the country. Yol Valley is named after the “Yol” or Lammergeyer, the huge, rare birds of prey who dwell in the higher cliffs of the valley. Ice built up by a small stream over winter persists in the valley’s canyon as late as July. This starkly picturesque valley is home to many of the Gobi’s wildlife, including Ibex, Argali sheep and Snow leopard.

**(Ger Camp; B, L, D)**

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### **DAY 13, JUNE 11. TUGRIGIIN SHIREE / FLAMING CLIFFS**



In the morning, we will drive to the Tugregiin Shiree, which was discovered by Mongolian scientists and co-explored by Polish expeditions in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Tugregiin Shiree is perhaps most known for its famous "Fighting Dinosaurs" (a fossil of a Protoceratops and a Velociraptor locked in combat), which were discovered in the 1970s. We will explore this white sandstone escarpment for dinosaur fossils.

In the late afternoon, will drive to the Flaming Cliffs, red sandstone formations that stretching over 3 kilometers in width. Paleontological expeditions from the U.S, Poland, Japan and Russia have worked here during last 90 years. Each year, rain and wind reveal more fossils and every summer, exceptional new discoveries are made.



We will explore the cliffs in the footsteps of legendary Roy Chapmen Andrews who discovered the first dinosaur eggs here, that the world had ever seen. Enjoy a sunset view at this majestic place before returning back to our ger camp.

(Ger Camp; B, L, D)

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#### **DAY 14, JUNE 12. GOBI DESERT / ULAANBAATAR**



After an early morning breakfast, begin driving back to Ulaanbaatar with a picnic lunch along the way. Upon arrival, we will transfer to our hotel.

In the evening, enjoy a traditional Mongolian cultural performance followed by a farewell dinner at a fine local restaurant.

(Approx. 9 hours driving Hotel Shangri La or similar; B, L, D)

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#### **DAY 15, JUNE 13. DEPARTURE**

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

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**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 6-9 participants:	\$6,100 per person, standard twin occupancy;
Based on 10-15 participants:	\$5,800 per person, standard twin occupancy;
Optional single supplement:	\$750 per person, (including a single tent)

**\*Please note:** As a part of our effort to support international and Mongolian research and conservation efforts, Mongolia Quest may decide to subsidize the trip cost for one or two students or scholars in joining this expedition. **They will not influence the tier pricing and only fully paid participants will determine the final per person price.**

LAND PRICES INCLUDE:	LAND PRICES DO NOT INCLUDE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic flights as indicated in the itinerary;</li> <li>• Land transportation as indicated in the itinerary based on using Toyota Land Cruiser jeeps seating 3 passengers each;</li> <li>• Accommodations in a standard room at hotels, gers in the countryside based on a twin occupancy and expedition style camping in the countryside;</li> <li>• Airport arrival and departure transfers;</li> <li>• Sleeping bags; expedition style tents and mats;</li> <li>• All meals indicated as B, L or D;</li> <li>• All entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary;</li> <li>• Guest lecturer's Mongolia land expenses and participation;</li> <li>• English speaking national guide throughout your stay;</li> <li>• Bottled water per person per day and unlimited supply of boiled waters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International airfare;</li> <li>• Personal laundry;</li> <li>• Drinks not mentioned in the itinerary;</li> <li>• Travel insurance;</li> <li>• Medical evacuation costs;</li> <li>• Excess baggage charges;</li> <li>• Visa fees;</li> <li>• Gratuities;</li> <li>• Photography and video fees</li> <li>• Any other item not mentioned as included.</li> </ul>

## 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 #1205, Dalai Tower, 1st Horoo, 13th Sud-district, Sukhbaatar District,  
Ulaanbaatar 14231, 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.

**\*Please note:** As a part of our effort to support international and Mongolian research and conservation efforts, Mongolia Quest may decide to subsidize the trip cost for one or two students or scholars in joining this expedition. **They will not influence the tier pricing and only fully paid participants will determine the final per person price.**

## 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

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|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Czech Republic</li> <li>• Republic of Austria</li> <li>• Kingdom of Belgium</li> <li>• Hungary</li> <li>• Hellenic Republic</li> <li>• Kingdom of Denmark</li> <li>• Kingdom of Spain</li> <li>• Italian Republic</li> <li>• Republic of Latvia</li> <li>• Republic of Lithuania</li> <li>• Swiss Confederation</li> <li>• Republic of Bulgaria</li> <li>• Republic of Ireland</li> <li>• Republic of Philippines</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principality of Liechtenstein</li> <li>• Grand Duchy of Luxembourg</li> <li>• Republic of Malta</li> <li>• Kingdom of the Netherlands</li> <li>• Republic of Poland</li> <li>• Portuguese Republic</li> <li>• Slovak Republic</li> <li>• Republic of Slovenia</li> <li>• Republic of Finland</li> <li>• Republic of Croatia</li> <li>• Canada</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kingdom of Sweden</li> <li>• French Republic</li> <li>• Republic of Estonia</li> <li>• Kingdom of Norway</li> <li>• Republic of Iceland</li> <li>• Republic of Cyprus</li> <li>• Romania</li> <li>• Principality of Monaco</li> <li>• United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland</li> <li>• Commonwealth of Australia</li> <li>• New Zealand</li> </ul> |
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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!**