



BEYOND THE STEPPE TOUR – MONGOLIA

TOUR OVERVIEW

July 2900 USD
12-night tour in Mongolia

SUMMARY

This fantastic tour is carefully planned and put together to offer visitors the chance to see more of Mongolia, incorporating many of its highlights and traditional hospitality.

We will meet together in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar before we fly out to Mongolia's far western reaches. We will start exploring this region from Ulgii city, located within the Kazakh area of Mongolia, known as Bayan Ulgii. This mountainous region is stunningly beautiful; it is pitted with lush green valleys surrounded by snow-capped mountains. We will make our way through this area by visiting the Tavan Bogd National Park; this Park borders China and Russia and is home to the Friendship Peak and a fantastic glacier. After our mountain hike, we visit the base of this glacier. We later make our way to the town of Hovd, where we will see a nomadic family for a truly local experience. Here we will also meet a real Shaman, as well as listen to some local throat singing. We will sleep in traditional Mongolian gers (yurts), and camp with local nomads next to beautiful lakes, mountains, and rivers. While in Hovd we will also catch the local Naadam festival.

Naadam festival is the most important holiday and celebration in Mongolia. The origins of the festival date back to past the time of Chinggis Khan in the 13th century. As it was initially a way of training horses and preparing men for battle, the festival revolves around the three 'manly' sports of wrestling, archery and horse racing. In some ways, Nadaam is more a festival today than it was in the past, as it is an excellent opportunity for the young to meet, chat, and possibly meet a future partner. For those not so interested in the three main games, Nadaam gives an excellent chance for people-watching, as well as for viewing the various stalls with their wares that are on sale around the festival's fringes.

SAFETY

At Koryo Tours, our main priority (besides tour enjoyment) is your and the group's safety. Since 2012 we have worked with a local travel agency who help us ensure that the journey is safe in terms of vehicles we use and the areas we visit. You are entering the country as a legal tourist and must obey the local laws and customs. One of our experienced Koryo Tours guides will accompany the trip.

The Experts in Travel to Rather Unusual Destinations

WHY SHOULD I BOOK THIS TOUR?

Many passengers visit Mongolia every year, but many only scratch the surface by stopping while on the Trans Siberian train journey for 3 or 4 days. At Koryo, we will help broaden this experience by taking you further, and off of the central tourist route, to gain a better experience and understanding of this truly unique country. With visits to Mongolians, Kazakh eagle hunters, Shamans, Tuvan's, the Naadam festival and glaciers, you will not be disappointed.

MAP & OVERVIEW



DAY 1	Arrival in Ulaanbaatar
DAY 2	Fly to Bayan Olgii. Drive to Khar Us Lake
DAY 3	Drive to Khurgan & Khoton Lakes
DAY 4	Khoton Lake
DAY 5	Drive to Shiveet Khairkan.
DAY 6	Hike (or ride) to Tavan Bogd
DAY 7	Drive to Tsengle
DAY 8	Return to Bayan Olgii
DAY 9	Drive to Tolbo Lake
DAY 10	Drive to Hovd
DAY 11	Nadaam Festival
DAY 12	Fly to Ulaanbaatar
DAY 13	Departure Day



DAILY ITINERARY

Arrive in Ulaanbaatar (DAY 1)

Upon landing in Mongolia's capital, we make our way to our centrally located hotel to recharge before our adventure begins. If you're feeling energetic, you can take our optional walking tour to get your first taste of this fascinating city before returning for our 4 pm hotel briefing.

Here, we'll give you an overview of the country and culture, along with some etiquette tips for visiting the homes of the Shamans, Kazakhs, and Tuvan people we'll meet along the way. Then join us for a city walk, this time by night. Get a glimpse of Sükhbaatar Square, named after the revolutionary hero Damdinii Sükhbaatar; the statues of Genghis Khan and other Mongolian generals are even more impressive when lit up at night.

Meals | Dinner

Overnight | Hotel 9, Ulaanbaatar. A local hotel situated in the heart of Ulaanbaatar, within 5 minutes walk from the main square. This hotel offers a great location from which to step out and explore the city.



Tour of the city, and then fly to Bayan Olgii (DAY 2)

We start our day with a visit to Gandantegchinlen, Ulaanbaatar's largest Buddhist monastery, where we can see practising monks and learn about the role of Mongolia's largest religion.

After visiting Ganden Monastery, we'll head back to the city's heart, stopping for supplies at the State Department Store. Today privately owned, this is a throwback to the old Soviet sales system where everything is under one roof and you pay with multiple receipts before returning for your purchases. This is an ideal opportunity to stock up on trip supplies, even outdoor gear, so if you've discovered your sleeping bag has a hole, now's the time to upgrade.

After lunch, we'll take a two-hour flight to Bayan Olgii and pile into our UAZ 452s. We'll begin our drive as soon as we arrive, heading out into the Altai Mountains to Khar Us Lake. Bayan-Olgii (or Ulgii) Province, known locally as the 'Roof of Mongolia', is a remote land of glaciers and mountain peaks; travellers can go for days without seeing a soul. This area is home to the Kazakh people, practising Muslims and Mongolia's most significant ethnic group; here, we'll learn how nomadic life in the mountains differs from that on the steppe.

We'll stop by mud-brick winter houses that Kazakhs use when the temperature drops below -30°C in the winter months and the famed Kazakh yurts can't keep out the cold. As we journey, we will cross high passes and trundle through beautiful picturesque summer valleys made all the more stunning as herds of yak frolic in the sun.

We will arrive at our host eagle hunting family in the late afternoon in time to pitch our tents before learning a little more about the Kazakh way of life.

Most families keep their golden eagles for hunting rabbits, hares, and even small deer; it is even claimed that many eagle hunters treat their eagles as well as their children.

Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight | Camping / Tent. We will build tents as a group next to a local family on this night with the assistance of our local team.



Khurgan and Khoton Lakes (DAY 3)

Today's journey takes us through the western Mongolian wildlands, over moraines (glacial debris) and ancient burial sites, with stone-age rock carvings of animals and hunting scenes covering the mountainside. The spectacular Khurgan and Khoton Lakes lie at an altitude of 2,073 metres, surrounded by snow-capped mountains.

We'll set up camp not far from the shore of Khoton Lake amongst the trees of the high alpine forest alongside a local family. Once the tents have been erected and our friendly hosts have greeted us, it's time to relax.

You may wish to spend the afternoon relaxing, exploring, or swimming in the crystalline waters of the nearby lakes. After dinner, should you wish, we will interact a little more with our Kazakh hosts, enjoying their hospitality around an evening bonfire all the while the mighty snow-capped Altai mountains silhouette our stay.

The Altai mountains are a rocky border that divides the untamed nomadic lands of Mongolia from its vast southern neighbour, China.

Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight | Camping / Tent. We will build tents as a group next to a local family on this night with the assistance of our local team.



Exploring the Khoton Lake region (DAY 4)

For some, today may be a day of leisure and further relaxation whilst for others a day of exploration, adventure and excitement in this beautiful yet secluded part of the world. For those who wish, it's an early wake-up to help our host family round up the herd to complete the morning milking.

After breakfast, you'll have a chance to enjoy some independent hiking in the surrounding hills, go for a dip in one of the glacial streams that run past the family's yurt, or head back to the lakes with one of the drivers and try your hand at a spot of fishing. (If you don't catch anything, don't worry, neither do they!)

For those who wish, this afternoon is your opportunity to ride the Mongolian horse most famed of all Mongolian animals. Our journey takes us on a three-hour round trip as we ride up into the foothills of the Altai mountains. We'll pass local nomadic encampments, bubbling brooks and raging rivers, our destination, one of Mongolia's largest waterfalls, Turgen Falls.

Turgen Falls sit in a most picturesque setting surrounded by alpine forests, lush green summer meadows, and framed by the snow-capped peaks of the Altai range. If the weather is good, you may feel that you have just entered a chocolate bar commercial.

After returning to camp we'll have a chance to repack and prepare for tomorrow's long drive to Tavan Bogd National Park.

Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight | Camping / Tent. We will build tents as a group next to a local family on this night with the assistance of our local team.



Tsagaan Gol and Shiveet Khairkhan Mountain (DAY 5)

After breakfast, we'll bid farewell to our host family and work our way through the mountains to reach the mouth of Tsagaan Gol (White River), a mighty water source with enough limestone deposits to give the milky river its name.

We'll stop for pictures at the stunning Shiveet Khairkhan, home to some of the best rock carvings in Mongolia. Shiveet Khairkhan is an important mountain, especially to the indigenous Tuvan people and the wide variety of animals that call this remote mountain their home. Each year Tuvan shamans climb to Shiveet's summit and perform various rituals, making offerings to the local ghosts and paying ancestral respects. The Tuvan are traditional herders found across the region renowned for their archery skills.

As we draw nearer to the National Park entrance, we'll begin to catch glimpses of Tavan Bogd (Five Saints), a mountain massif on the border of Mongolia, China and Russia, our destination.

Once we have passed through the park entrance, completing the formalities as needed, we'll build our camp for the night. The area is beautiful, surrounded by the region's most beautiful peaks, along with the roaring sound of the white river. After a bit of exploration and a visit to a local Tuvan family, we will tuck into another fine meal, served up in the warmth of our very own Ger.

Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight | Camping / tent. Camping on this night will be based around a pre-booked *ger*, offering us the chance to prepare meals and equipment ready for tomorrow's hike. The scenery here is amazing, surrounded by snow-capped mountains while listening to the roar of the white river.



Hike to the base camp of Altai Tavan Bogd (DAY 6)

We'll leave our vehicles and none essential luggage at the foot of the mountains today. The kit needed for our overnight stay is to be carried by our camels. We will then begin our trek up Tavan Bogd with the help of our local Tuvan guide.

The journey to the camp is around 15 kilometres, located next to the stunning Potanin Glacier, Mongolia's largest. The hike is truly unique as we walk across lush alpine tundra, through mountain valleys and cross bubbling mountain brooks, all the while rewarded by views of untouched mountains. Once at our camp, we can relax and soak up the area's ambience; the distant rumble of mountain avalanches and the crackling can be heard in the distance.

After lunch and a good old cup of tea, we'll follow our local guide for a hike up over the moraines to look at the natural marvel of the Potanin Glacier. From a distance, the moraines look small, but it will take over an hour to reach the glacier. Once there, should you wish, we would only advise walking on its frozen surface with the assistance of the local guide. Around the glacier, the ring of mountains makes this breathtaking journey truly awe-inspiring.

Once we have finished our exploration, it's back to camp for a well-deserved meal and rest as we bed down early, making use of our warm sleeping bags before the evening chill sets in.

Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

Overnight | Camping / tent. Camping at the Tavan Bogd base camp. Toilet facilities are provided, and we will build a restaurant tent for dinner and breakfast. This area is remote, yet beautiful being at the base of the main mountain range and only a stone's throw from the main glacier.



Return trek to Tsagaan Gol (White River) and on to Tsengle (DAY 7)

Today we'll make the journey back down the valley. For those who rented horses yesterday, you have the option again today, or you can walk with the others back to the Tsagaan Gol ranger station, where our trucks and drivers will be waiting.

As we walk down through these mountain valleys, it is truly amazing to see the small rivers and streams from the glacier forming into the mighty White River. Once repacked and refreshed, we'll continue the adventure and board our UAZs.

We'll retrace some of our journey down the long valley, eventually passing small local villages, now sparsely populated if at all. At one of these small habitations, we will stop to visit one of the caretaker families, with whom we will enjoy a cup of tea and see his central ward, the local school. We'll drive on to make camp in the beautiful Tsengle Valley tonight, close to the Khovd River, where we camp near another local family we have known for several years.

Tonight, our host family are locally known wrestlers, so should you be thinking about entering Naadam as a wild card entrant, I am sure our host will oblige with a few tips and pointers.

Before dinner tonight, there is the possibility of washing and freshening up in one of the small tributaries and enjoying a few drinks or snacks from the nearby village.

Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

Overnight | Camping / Tent. Tonight we pitch tents with another local family located near to the town of Tsengle in a low river valley. We look at life here and experience yet another regional variation in hospitality.



Drive through Bayan Olgii (DAY 8)

We bid farewell to our Nomadic friends and take a scenic drive back to Olgii, where we'll spend the night in a Kazakh Tourist Camp, stopping for pictures and greeting nomad families along the way. We may also catch a local festival nestled in this mountainous region if we're lucky. This afternoon we will have time to explore Bayan Ulgii's capital, Olgii city. Olgii is an exciting place with a mix of Soviet period architecture and more recent builds.

Olgii Market is a perfect site to pick up a few bargains and souvenirs and if you don't need to shop, then people-watching and photography is also an excellent option.

From the market, we will continue to the Central Mosque, a great way to learn a little about the religion in this region. The Central mosque is a newer building, brightly coloured and welcoming, a true reflection of the people in this part of remote Mongolia.

The city centre is also interesting to explore the home to an ageing yet interesting Soviet period history museum and numerous newer built but refreshing coffee shops. After exploring the town, we will make one final stop at an impressive mountain viewpoint offering views over Olgii city and the surrounding countryside.

Our ger camp tonight is a real treat after the past few days under canvas – hot and cold running water, showers, and beds. This evening after an authentic regional Kazakh meal, we'll have the chance to listen to some traditional Kazakh music from a group of musicians trying to keep part of their Kazakh culture alive. They will serenade us playing Dombra and Jetigen.

Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight | Tourist Ger (yurt) Camp. We'll stay in one of the tourist *ger* areas found on the outskirts of Ulgii city. This camp offers a shower block with warm running water and wash facilities as well as a restaurant area from where our chief can provide some more delicious food.



Drive to and enjoy Tolbo Lake (DAY 9)

We'll leave Olgii City at a more leisurely pace, our drive made all the easier on one of the country's newer roads as we head east to the picturesque Tolbo Lake. Tolbo sits at an altitude of 2,080 meters. It is famous for its remote beauty, and as the site of a crucial 1921 battle between the Bolshevik and White Russian forces – the locals still find belt buckles and buttons in the field.

We will not only spend the night in gers by the side of the lake but have the chance for further enjoyment of the area. You'll have time to swim or bathe in the lake's clear waters, or just unwind and take in the mountain views. The site also boasts lovely hiking routes around the shoreline and over the protruding rocky outcrops, perfect for a bit of exercise or to catch some fantastic photos of the gorgeous surroundings.

In the evening our team will provide another delicious meal, after which you may choose to visit the on-site sauna or take an early night before tomorrow's adventure.

Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

Overnight | Tourist *Ger* (yurt) Camp. We'll stay in a tourist *ger* camp found on the shores of the lake where you may swim relax or enjoy a sauna.



A morning swim, a Shaman visit and an afternoon around Hovd market (DAY 10)

This morning, the hardy amongst you may want to take a chilly early morning dip in the lake or sip on a coffee and watch the sunrise above Tolbo; no matter your choice, after breakfast it's back into our trucks as we journey on to the last leg of our adventure. We'll head east, leaving Bayan Olgii behind us and entering Khovd, our destination is Khovd city which will be our home for the next few nights.

Khovd city is the province's capital, established in the early 17th century. Khovd has a rich history and it is home to 10 ethnic groups and not commonly on the tourist trail so it makes for an interesting stop on our adventure.

Once we have pulled into town and checked into our gers, we'll immediately use our time by visiting the local Uriankhai Shaman.

Although predominantly a Tibetan Buddhist country, Shamanism is still an essential part of many people's everyday life in Mongolia, especially in these more rural parts. We will witness some of the ancient and mysterious rituals that the community still holds dear such as mirrors that repel evil spirits or sacred fire and water.

Following our Shamanistic introduction to Khovd, we will also call at the local monastery, which is in a picturesque setting on the city's outskirts, home to a few resident monks, and a perfect stop to learn further about the religion of the region.

From temple to market we go as we stop at another important local institution; Khovd Market is found at the heart of the city and will likely be busy as many locals prepare for tomorrow's big holiday, Naadam. Naadam sees most locals wanting to look their best, opting to wear their traditional dress, the Deel, and prepare a few meals for friends and family from afar. We will call at the local market and check out the best dress shop in town, perfect for photographers and those into local traditions alike. They may not have time to suit and boot you, but it's great to see.

After our slice of local life, we'll return to our ger camp in time to charge those all-important batteries ready for tomorrow's big day, Nadaam!

Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight | Tourist *ger* (yurt) Gamp. One of only two camps found around the city of Hovd. This camp has fantastic views over the surrounding countryside while being situated on the outskirts of the central city. It has a separate shower block and facility for our chef to prepare breakfast, lunch and dinner.



Experience the local Mongolian Naadam Festival (DAY 11)

Although there have already been many highlights on this adventure, today is an important one as it is the Naadam Festival; this annual event takes place all across the country drawing many nomadic folk from their isolated existence to designated hubs to celebrate.

Naadam is held in the capital, Ulaanbaatar, provincial capitals, small towns and even pre-arranged points out in the middle of nowhere.

Ulaanbaatar's Naadam is the most widely known, but that is now the domain of overcrowded tour buses, overpriced tickets and a tad sterile. For us, a world-famous cultural event such as this should be celebrated at its roots with the real, local people. Khovd's Naadam is still a truly local affair, virtually unchanged over generations. Khovd town is a rural town for many Mongolians gathering for this fantastic event.

Naadam in Khovd draws people from all over the region, with some locals even returning from overseas. To compete in the traditional events is a real honour – especially wrestling, horse racing and archery and even lesser-known events such as ankle bone shooting. Naadam is also a time for families and friends to reconnect, share their news eat their favourite foods, and maybe even find a future husband or wife.

Whilst attending, we'll learn a lot more about the events, such as the unusual wrestling costume of undershorts and an open waistcoat. Legend has it that a woman in disguise once outwrestled all the men and so, to prevent future humiliation, the outfits were altered.

Our aim today is to view the opening ceremony, watch the wrestling, archery and ankle bone shooting which all take place in the same location. Following a local Naadam lunch, we will head out of town to catch a few of the long-distance horse races.

Once all of the excitement is over, we will head back to our ger camp for one more treat of local Mongolian Throat Singing.

Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight | Ger (yurt) Tourist Camp.



Fly to Ulaanbaatar (DAY 12)

Leaving our horses, camels, and Russian jeeps behind for good, we'll board our plane and return to Ulaanbaatar. The flight takes us out across central Mongolia, from where the views from the plane will drive home how vast this country really is.

We should arrive back in Mongolia's capital around lunchtime; after we have transferred to our hotel, you'll have the rest of the day free.

This afternoon, time permitting, you can shop 'til you drop at the city market, the State Department Store or search out one of the many souvenir shops. Cheap cashmere, felt curios, leather bags and purses, and Soviet antiques are often the pick of the day,

History lovers can stop by one of the many museums found in the capital or walk to the beautiful Winter Palace of the Bogd Khan (1869-1922), who became Khagan (theocratic ruler) when the country split from China in 1911.

If none of the above appeal after our nomadic expedition, you may just wish to chill and relax with a coffee or cocktail at an outdoor café and watch this fascinating city unfold before you.

Before we say goodbye, we'll have one more meal together at one of Ulaanbaatar's popular haunts, where we will enjoy a mix of food and a few goodbye drinks to boot.

Meals | Breakfast, Dinner with a city family

Overnight | Hotel 9, Ulaanbaatar.



Departure day (DAY 13)

We end our adventure in the morning, with transfers to the airport for international flights. Pack your souvenirs, your dirty clothes and your memories, and have a safe trip home!

For those adventurous souls that can't stop travelling, you can also add the option to join our Gobi Explorer Tour. If you wish to add this, please contact your tour manager for more information.

ACCOMMODATION

We will be staying in a range of accommodation on this adventure from comfortable hotels in Ulaanbaatar to tourist ger camps in Bayan Ulgii and camping while out in the countryside.

*All accommodation is based on a shared option.

Single supplement is 55 USD per person: This will guarantee you a single room option in our hotel stay and camping. While in the ger camp, you may still be sharing.

FOOD

Most meals are included in this tour, although there is time allowed in Ulaanbaatar for your exploration. Your tour guide will be able to advise on the options when you arrive.

While camping, we will have a cook journey with us cooking a fusion of western and Mongolian dishes.



DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Vegetarian food choices can be minimal once we leave Ulaanbaatar, although our chef may be able to take special dietary requirements into account on tour. If you have any special dietary requirements, please make sure that you let us know in advance.

In this region, the availability of certain specialised products for restricted diets, e.g. gluten-free or dairy-free is minimal or non-existent. As such we would strongly recommend you bring these dietary items if you need them.

TRANSPORT

All ground transport and domestic flights are included in this tour.

We use a mixture of vehicles: in Ulaanbaatar, we will utilise larger private busses, and when we travel in the countryside Russian Built Uaz 4x4s are the vehicle of choice. Due to the nature of the adventure, there will be long and sometimes bumpy drives. We will break these up where possible.

VISAS

Many nationalities still require a visa for a visit to Mongolia. Please do not hesitate to contact your tour manager to see if this is the case.

The application process for a Mongolia visa is quite simple; you can apply for a visa yourself at your nearest Mongolian embassy. You will need to fill out an application form and submit one or two passport photos along with your passport. At times you may be required to provide proof of a tour booking with a Mongolian travel company. We can, of course, send this if needed.

PACKING

Generally speaking, we recommend you pack as lightly as possible and make sure that you can carry and lift your luggage and walk with it for short distances.

Most travellers carry their luggage in a backpack or wheeled luggage, although an overnight bag with a shoulder strap would suffice if you travel lightly. Smaller bags or backpacks with wheels are convenient. A lockable bag or small padlock is useful as your luggage may get stowed separately and unattended while out and about.



ESSENTIALS

- Clothing: Daytime temperatures are warm, we recommend lightweight clothing plus some warm layers for that night time temperature drop in high desert areas and the mountains of Mongolia. A good waterproof jacket is always a bonus in case we experience more torrential rains which can occur.
- Day pack — for carrying essentials when exploring destinations like water, camera, snacks, jacket, etc.
- Sleeping bag: it can be cold at night, especially when at altitude I would recommend a three-season bag.
- Lightweight clothing/wind and waterproof jacket — a mixture of covering lightweight clothing and some warm layers are recommended. It is best to check the weather and seasonal information before travelling.
- * Please note temperatures can get a very low overnight in the Mountainous areas. If you get cold quickly, make sure to bring extra layers of clothing or, e.g. a thin fleece sleeping bag.
- Comfortable shoes for full-day walking/trekking — closed-in shoes will help to protect your feet from cuts and scratches when walking through cities as well as bush/grass-lands, and will also act as a barrier protection in rare cases against bites or stings.
- Sun protection (we'll be at some high altitudes!) — hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, and lip balm.
- One large main piece of luggage (lockable) soft holdall, kitbag or frameless rucksack although hard cases can be accepted. Keep luggage to a strict minimum as you will be expected to carry your bag throughout. Porters are not available in Mongolia. Please note that the luggage allowance for the domestic flights at the time of writing is 15kg per person for the hold plus 5kg hand luggage. It is possible to pay for small amounts of excess baggage at the cost of approximately \$3 per kilogram. Excess baggage can also be kept securely in Ulaanbaatar until our return to the city.

RECOMMENDED

- Personal medical kit — we recommend you carry items such as mild painkillers, electrolytes, Band-Aids and insect repellent.
- Water bottle — we recommend a 1.5-litre capacity for which we can provide potable water. Bottled water is also available, but we prefer to use safe drinking water rather than contribute to polluting the environment.
- Spare batteries — our trips have access to power to recharge batteries for phones and cameras most days, but we recommend you take extra batteries for your camera.
- Electrical travel adapter plug.
- Inner sleep sheet/bag for added comfort during overnight stays.
- Money belt.
- Torch or flashlight.
- Hand sanitiser.
- Neck pillow for those long, bumpy drives



OPTIONAL

- Earplugs can be a bonus to guard against street noise and snorers.
- A good book, journal and music player can be an excellent choice for long drives.
- Walking/ trekking poles if needed.
- Images from home — during our trip there will be many opportunities for you to meet and talk with locals. One way to start any conversation is with pictures. We recommend that you bring some photos/postcards of your family, home, city or country where you live, animals peculiar to your country etc.

VALUABLES

Please try to avoid bringing unnecessary valuables, and use your hotel safe. We strongly recommend that you photocopy all relevant documents, e.g. air tickets, passport, vaccination certificates, etc. and keep the copies separate from the originals. While not valid, a photocopy makes it easier to obtain replacements if necessary.

CURRENCY

The official currency of Mongolia is the Tugreg. Mongolia is predominantly a cash economy with most small businesses and shops unable to take a credit card. Only change money at officially authorised currency exchanges; these are often found at banks, hotels and shopping malls. There are ATMs in Ulaanbaatar and other larger towns, but none in rural areas and they may not always accept foreign cards or have enough cash to dispense. US dollars are the most widely accepted foreign currency; other currencies such as Euros, UK sterling, Russian Rubles, and Chinese Renminbi can be exchanged in Ulaanbaatar.

TRAVELLING ON A GROUP TRIP

As you travel on a group trip, you will be exposed to all the pleasures and maybe some of the frustrations of travelling together. Your fellow travellers will probably come from all corners of the world and likely a range of age groups too.

We ask you to be understanding of the various needs and preferences of your group — patience with your fellow travellers is sometimes required for the benefit of everyone's travel experience. Remember too that you have responsibilities to the group. If you are requested to be at a place at a specific time, ensure that you don't keep the rest of the group waiting.

We have found time and time again that the very best trips we operate are those where the dynamics within the group work well — this takes just a little effort on your part.

Due to privacy reasons, we are unable to provide you with contact details and any personal information about your fellow travellers booked on your trip before departure.

The Experts in Travel to Rather Unusual Destinations



IMPORTANT TRAVEL NOTES

- As a responsible tour operator, your safety is our priority. Mongolia is a safe country to visit, but your tour leader and local guides will be able to advise you further about travel in this location.
- This tour is not suited for children under the age of 12 (please check with Tour Manager if you would like to bring a child on tour), as well as those who are less able as some hiking is involved (albeit, relaxed) and camping in more remote locations.
- If you have a medical condition which may affect your health or safety during your trip, you must inform us before the visa application.
- After the tour, we will send out a list of all participants' emails so you can keep in touch, swap photos etc. If you do not wish to be on this list, then please let us know.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

CANCELLATION If our partners cancel the tour, we will fully refund the tour price. Please note this tour is charged in US\$. If we receive any other currency, this will be converted to US\$ on that day's exchange rate fixed by the Bank of China. Any refund will be made according to the US\$ amount we received and not the original currency sent. With all refunds, Koryo Tours will not be held liable for any bank charges. We do have a deadline for cancellations although due to the nature of travel in Mongolia we may need to book certain services earlier such as flights and hotels. In many cases, these are none refundable. Your tour manager will let you know when this needs to be done. After this it would be impossible to offer a full refund should you then need to cancel.

STANDARD DISCLAIMER: Koryo Tours reserves the right to withdraw service and cancel a tour at any time. In this eventuality, a full refund of any monies paid by the customer will be made.

Koryo Tours cannot be held responsible for any mishap to yourself or your property and in particular any consequence or effects of flight/train cancellation/delay, robbery, sickness, government intervention or other such happenings.

INSURANCE Koryo Tours insist that tourists travelling on all of our tours have full medical insurance. You are advised to insure yourself against any possible risk that may occur and in particular to ensure that sufficient insurance has been obtained in respect of any dependant relatives. It is your responsibility to be covered by insurance which must include medical expenses and the cost of repatriation should you become too ill to continue.