



ADVENTURES  
*in good company*



## MAGIC OF MONGOLIA

### Trip Summary

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Experiencing many facets of a little known and very intriguing country
- Learning about traditional nomadic culture
- Exploring some of Mongolia's magnificent landscapes
- Visiting ancient towns and temples while learning about Mongolia's complex history
- Riding across the Mongol Els astride a Bactrian camel

Phone: 877-439-4042

Outside the US: 970-833-3132

Email: [info@goodadventure.com](mailto:info@goodadventure.com)

## TRIP AT A GLANCE

Location:	Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
Activities:	Hiking
Arrive:	Arrive in Ulaanbaatar on Day 1 (you will need to leave North America one or two days earlier)
Depart:	You can leave anytime on the last day

### Trip Overview

Mongolia has fascinated travelers for centuries. Sandwiched between Russia and China, it's known for its vast and rugged landscape, its nomadic peoples, and a history that has literally shaped much of eastern and western civilization. Once the largest empire in the world, and then shrouded behind the veil of Russian communism, Mongolia is now proudly emerging as a modern nation while trying to hold on to its rich heritage. It is a time of rapid change, where 25% of the population still live a nomadic lifestyle and 50% live in the modernizing city of Ulaanbaatar. During our two-week journey we will explore the many different aspects of Mongolia, both past and present, as we experience the warm hospitality and wide-open landscape of the least densely populated country in the world.

**Maximum group size: 12**

### Rating

This trip is suitable for active women in good health and physical condition who are flexible and have a sense of adventure. We have given the rating of 2 and 3 because of the availability of vehicle transport during all or part of the longer hikes. To prepare for a rated 3 trip participants should be engaging in aerobic conditioning, such as walking vigorously up hills, jogging, cross country skiing or stair stepping for 30 - 45 minutes at least 3 - 4 times a week. Please note the "driving" times listed in the itinerary. We cover a lot of territory which means there will be time spent riding in vehicles.

**Rating:** 1 [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#) 4 5

### What's Included

- A local English-speaking guide and an Adventures in Good Company guide (depending on registration numbers)
- 13 nights double occupancy lodging as described

- All meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on Day 14
- All transportation during the trip
- Gratuities for drivers, cook, and activities noted in itinerary
- Drinking water where water to purify is not available from Day 2 - Day 13

**Not included:** Travel to and from Ulaanbaatar, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages (other than drinking water noted above), guide gratuities, and emergency evacuation/medical insurance.

## OUR ITINERARY

Below is the itinerary we have planned for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

### DAY 1

After a long flight, we arrive in Ulaanbaatar (also called Ulan Bator, "Red Hero"), the capital city of Mongolia, and immediately know that the arduous travel will be totally worth it. As we drive into the city, we see Gers next to modern apartment buildings and young fashionably dressed women sharing the sidewalk with men who clearly just arrived from the countryside. Ugly block buildings that were constructed during the years of Communist domination stand next to gleaming new architecture. Clearly this is a country in transition. The afternoon will be filled with a guided city sightseeing tour. We'll visit Gandan Monastery, one of the few monasteries that escaped the destruction of Stalin's purges in the 1930s. It is the seat of Buddhism in Mongolia and is best known for its seven-story-tall statue of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, gilded with gold leaf and encrusted with over 2,200 gems - it really is magnificent. We'll also visit Sukhbaatar Square, a potent symbol of Mongolia's turning away from its Communist past and embracing a new national identity rooted in its proud past. In the evening we'll gather for a traditional art performance, including Mongolian throat singing, and a welcome dinner.

Driving time: minimal. Hiking/sightseeing in Ulaanbaatar. Accommodation: trip hotel (D)

### DAY 2

This morning we pack up and leave Ulaanbaatar and travel to a nomad community in Altanbulag soum (a local administration unit in Bulgan province). On the way we will visit Khar Bukhiin Balgas, an interesting remnant of an ancient town that dates back to 10th century. In the afternoon, we will reach the nomad community. We'll experience the traditional hospitality of a nomad family, as they welcome us with offers of special home-made dairy products, such as "aaruul"- dried curds and Mongolian salty milk tea - Suutei tsai. During our visit we'll learn more about their lifestyle.

Tonight, we'll stay in a community based Ger camp. A Ger is a traditional round yurt-like structure, still used by the nomad population today. Bathrooms with private toilets and showers are usually located in a communal building a short walk from the Gers. Gers, because they can easily be broken down, are the perfect solution to a tourist season that is made short by some of the most brutal winter conditions of any country. Hotels virtually do not exist outside of Ulaanbaatar. After settling into our Gers, we can explore the neighborhood a bit, experience horseback riding Mongolian style, enjoy a horse demonstration show by our Mongolian hosts and friends and even get in a little archery practice (a favorite Mongolian sport). After dinner, we will be mentored with a lesson on "Shagai", a traditional Mongolian game and enjoy playing with the family members. A fully packed day followed by our first night in a traditional Ger.

Driving: 1- hour. Hiking/Walking time: will vary depending on personal choices. Accommodation: Gers (B,L,D)

### DAY 3

After breakfast we'll hop back into our jeeps and head for Elsen tasarkhai, a beautiful national park with mountains, forests, steppes, Bobi-type desert and mineral water sources. We will arrive at our next get camp by lunch. The area is famous for both its massive sand dunes and its historical sights. At the base of the Mount Khugnu Khaan, there are ruins of temples. These temples are as well-known among the history of Mongolian Buddhist Monasteries and Monks as Erdenekhamba Khiid. We will visit an active small temple and start our hiking to the ruins of the Uvgun monastery. The first half of the path will be rocky and a bit challenging, but the rest will be easy and comfortable to walk. In the evening, you can walk around the sand dunes and enjoy the beautiful sunset.

Driving: 2- 3 hours. Hiking: 1 - 3 hours. Accommodations: Gers (B,L,D)

#### DAY 4

While Mongolia is best known for its horse culture, camels are more important in some parts of the country so today we'll try camel riding. We'll visit a camel herder's family and learn something about their lifestyle. Then, following some brief instruction about how to ride Mongolian Bactrian camels (the kind with two humps), we will get acquainted with the camels and their tack. Our camel ride across the sand dunes of Ikh Mongol Els. After our morning camel ride, we'll hop back into our jeeps and drive to Kharakhorum (aka Kharkorin), about 60 miles. Kharakhorum is the ancient capital of Mongolia, where Chinggis Khaan (the correct name of Ghengis Khan) established his headquarters in 1220, choosing this location to be on the major trading route of the Silk Road. Kharakhorum was a cosmopolitan city and the heart of the Mongolian Empire until Kublai Khan, Chinggis' grandson, moved the capital to Beijing. Destroyed by clan infighting, nothing remains of the original city. However, building materials were later salvaged and used to build Erdenezuu Monastery in the 16th century, the largest and first Mongolian Buddhist temple complex. Best known for the 108 stupas that surround it, it is still quite magnificent, and we will spend a couple hours visiting it. In late afternoon we will visit a local cooperative to attend a workshop for making small felt items.

Driving: 1 hour. Walking/sightseeing: 2 - 4 hours. Accommodations: Gers (B,L,D)

#### DAY 5

Today we travel to the very popular Tsenkher hot spring, about 60 miles away. Set between forested hills, several Ger camps have been built around the hot spring. Its water stays about 86.5+ degrees Celsius and is reputed to have healing properties, especially for arthritis and other joint and nervous system problems. After a rest we can hike in the surrounding forested mountain and in the evening enjoy taking a hot spring bath.

Driving: 1- 2 hours. Hiking: 2 - 3 hours, optional. Accommodation: Gers (B, L, D)

#### DAY 6

Today we'll make our way to the famous Orkhon valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that stretches 75 miles. The area is known as the cradle of Mongolian nomadic civilization, where many of Mongolia's ancient monuments lie within its borders. On the way we will explore Tuvkhun temple, high on the mountain, that marks the north side of the Orkhon valley. We'll visit the site that the first Mongolian religious leader, Zanabazar, founded in 1653 and where he lived, worked, and meditated for over 30 years. Several pilgrimage sites have grown up around the temple and hermit's caves, including one that is said to be Zanabazar's boot imprint. We'll then continue our drive to Orkhon valley.

Driving: 2 - 3 hours. Hiking: 3- 4 hours. Accommodation: Gers (B, L, D)

#### DAY 7

After breakfast, we will walk for about 1 kilometer to the Waterfall Orkhon. After a heavy rain the magnificent seasonal Orkhon waterfall is one of the best sights in the Central Mongolia. About 250 meters downstream from the waterfall, you can climb down to the bottom of the gorge; it is 22 meters deep and dotted with pine trees. The Orkhon river, longest river in Mongolia, begins at the state worshipped mountain Suvraga Khairkhan in the Khangai range. The drainage basin of the river is 132,835 square kilometers. The river is 10-60 m wide to begin with, but it becomes 120-150m around the end and the speed of the river flow decreases. The view of the falls from the bottom of the gorge is spectacular and lends itself to both picture taking and a bit of relaxing by the water. After that, we will visit yak herding family and do hiking for 1-2 hours in the valley.

Driving: 0 hours. Hiking: will vary depending on individual choice. Accommodation: Gers (B,L,D)

## DAY 8

Today we will start our hiking through the 8 lakes area. The area is mountainous and untouched; our hike will sometimes be in the forest but most of the time on the beautiful steppe. Our accommodations for tonight will be in a community ger camp run by local families. This ger community is most like what most Mongolian families experience on the steppe. There are no shower facilities or 'indoor plumbing' but wonderful starry skies at night and friendly Mongolian families to enjoy. All of our trip supplies and our luggage will be transported by horses and yaks. There are many memorable days and moments on this trip, but the days spent at the family ger camps may be the best!

Driving: 0 hours. Hiking: 5 - 6 hours. Accommodations: Primitive community Gers (B,L,D)

## DAY 9

After breakfast, we will hike to the biggest lake of the area, Shireet. This lake has the reputation of being the most beautiful and breathtaking. Along the way we'll see other lakes, enjoy the beautiful landscape and relish our breaks to both enjoy the scenery and take pictures.

Driving: 0 hours. Hiking: 5 - 6 hours. Accommodations: Primitive community Gers (B,L,D)

## DAY 10

Today our hike begins alongside Shireet lake. We'll get to enjoy once more both the beauty and the solitude of this magnificent lake before we turn our feet to the mountains. We will cross over the Shireet mountain pass and walk to the other side to meet our 'non-foot' transportation (our jeeps). We'll travel about 7 miles to our next community ger (this time with a shower AND indoor bathroom)! One very interesting site along the way is a large rock, named Shurange. Myth tells us that if you throw a stone over the rock, your wish will come true. Make the wish a good one!

Driving: 30 minutes. Hiking: 5 - 6 hours. Accommodations: Gers (B,L,D)

## DAY 11

After having a good night near the Shuranga rock, today will be a travel day - headed to Ogi Lake. Ogi Lake is one of the beautiful lakes in Mongolia and is located in Arkhangai province. It has 25.7 km square area, average depth is 6.64 meters, in some sections 15.3 meters and coastal length is 24.7 kilometers. It is an amazing place for birdwatching, fishing and swimming. There are 150 species of birds along with many extremely rare species of birds who come to the "Ogi". Upon arrival, there will be time for exploring around the lake, birdwatching and swimming.

Driving: 2 - 3 hours. Hiking: will vary depending on individual choices. Accommodations: Gers (B,L,D)

## DAY 12

After a short morning walk, we'll hop back into our jeeps and travel to Khustai National Park. It's a bit of a drive (about 150 miles) but well worth the effort. On the way, we'll stop by an ancient ruin of a Palace dated back to 8th century and try to imagine life in the 8th century as we walk along the ruins. Arriving at our ger for the night, we'll settle in, have dinner and then head to Khustai National Park. The park encompasses an area of 125 acres and is the habitat of the resurrected wild Mongolian horses, popularly known as Takhi (Przewalski's Horse). On the verge of extinction, by 1950 the only remaining 12 horses lived in zoos. Fortunately, the species is a conservation success story and through a joint program between English and Mongolian scientists, the horse has been successfully reintroduced and now numbers over 1500. Three hundred of them live in Khustai National Park where they are protected. We'll start with a visit to the Information Center for an introductory presentation of the National Park. Around sunset we'll enter the park to see the Takhi horses in the wilderness.

Driving: 1 - 2 hours. Hiking: 1 - 1.5 hours. Accommodation: Gers (B,L,D)

## DAY 13

After taking a morning walk in the national park, we will head back to Ulaanbaatar, arriving in time for lunch. After checking into our hotel, there will be time for a bit of shopping for cashmere and other souvenirs before gathering for our Farewell dinner.

Driving: 1-hour. Hiking: 1 - 1.5 hours. Accommodation: Trip Hotel (B, L, D)

## DAY 14

After breakfast there will be a group transfer to airport for departure.  
(B)

## ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

### Getting There

You will be flying into Chinggis Khann International Airport (ULN) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. The airport is approximately 12 miles from Ulaanbaatar. Airport transfers are on a group basis on Day 1 and are included in the trip price. Once all travel plans are known, the group transfer time will be established. If you are arriving early and/or staying late, or prefer not to wait for the group transfer time, and would like to pre-arrange transportation to/from the airport to the trip hotel (or any other hotel), AGC is happy to arrange that as well. Getting Home: On day 14, after breakfast there will be a group transfer to the Chinggis Khann International Airport (ULN) for departure.

If you would like assistance with airfare, we recommend contacting our AirDesk Partner, [Exito Travel](#). Start by submitting this [form](#). Just fill in your dates and destinations, including any additional notes about preferred carriers, class of service, possible stopovers, etc., and an agent will typically respond via email within a few hours. If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

Please note: Most of the international airlines are in-network for Exito, so they do not charge extra for their services (and often have access to discounted rates). When necessary, processing fees out-of-network carriers are minimal at around \$35-\$50 per ticket.

### Accommodations

We will be spending 2 nights in 3-star hotel in Ulaanbaatar, 9 nights in Community/Family/Tourist Ger camps, and 2 nights in primitive community gers. Gers are very roomy and large canvas structures, the perfect accommodation in an area that only sees visitation about four months out of the year. Please note: Single supplements are offered but only guaranteed for the hotel portions of the trip. Where possible at Community/Family/Tourist Ger camps they may be possible. There is no possibility for singles at primitive community ger camps.

### Travel Insurance

We recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, visit [www.travelexinsurance.com](http://www.travelexinsurance.com) or call 1-800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0331.

Travelex Insurance Services, Inc CA Agency License #0D10209. All products listed are underwritten by, Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company, NAIC #22276.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellation charges reflect the many expenses Adventures in Good Company cannot recover if you cancel, even if you must do so due to illness, injury, or personal emergencies. These fees are not meant to be punitive. The charges made reflect the expenses Adventures in Good Company has incurred in administering your reservation and planning for your participation. We recognize that the majority of those who cancel their reservations do so out of necessity. Please note that we do not make any refunds for any unused portion of your trip, not arriving, arriving late, or leaving the trip early.

[Click here for our Cancellation & Payment Policies and Booking Terms & Conditions.](#)