



Golden Eagle Festival

The Kazakhs is an ethnic minority in Mongolia, but the majority in Bayan-Ölgii province. Most of the ancient Kazakh traditions survives here, outside the actually territory of Kazakhstan. These hardy Turkic speaking people are sunni muslim nomads and they hunt foxes and other small mammals with domestic Golden Eagles. Only the females, as they are heavier than male eagles. The eagle festivals marks the start of the eagle hunting season, which is throughout the winter in the surrounding Altai Mountains. Hunting with eagles seems to be ancient, dating back some 6000 years. The traditions have been revived over the past two decades following the democratization in Mongolia. Now there are such festivals in March, September and October in various communities.

We03thOct—Arrival in Ulaanbaatar

Arrive in Ulaanbaatar, the capital city of Mongolia. Transfer to Bayangol Hotel. Free in the city. Tour briefing before dinner.

Th04thOct—Arrival in Bayan-Ölgii

Transfer Likely, in the early morning we will transfer to the airport and fly 3½ hours to Ölgii or Hovd. Both towns are small towns, being capitals in their respective provinces. Both towns have a local interesting museum on its natural history. Hovd was a town already during Manchurian times, prior to 1910 and it has several ethnic minorities with a majority of Mongols. Hovd has both mosques and Buddhist temples. Ölgii is younger and with a majority of Kazakh people. Tuvans and Uriankhai peoples also live here. If we land in Hovd, there will be a nice drive of four hours with the Altai Mountains on both sides of the road, being the Hökh Serkhiin Nuruu and Tsambagarav Uul National Parks. We will use the time for sightseeing.

Fr05thOct—Excursion

Exploration of the surrounding countryside and Ölgii village. There is a mosque, a bazaar, a local museum. Visit go to the local museum which is worth of seeing.

Sa06tOct—Opening ceremony

The Golden Eagle festival starts this day, which is organized in first weekend of October. It is a spectacle with eagles released from the hills, hunting for model artificial foxes. Horse games such as the Central Asian game bouzkhasi, which is on horse-back tug-of-war with a goat carcass. Quite wild at times. You will explore the eagle hunters' traditional custom and culture. Most certainly Aisholpan will be there, the now famous young "Eagle Huntress". A friend of Nomadic Journeys.

Su07stOct—Eagle festival

Explore another full day at the festival. Some shows of eagles are played. Eagles fly to the own trainers' hand and catch the moving objects or prey while flying. In the evening, traditional concert of Kazak ethnic group is performed and have farewell dinner.



Mo08thOct—To Ulaanbaatar

After breakfast, transfer to the Ölgii airport and fly back to Ulaanbaatar.

Tu09thOct—Ulaanbaatar

After breakfast, visit to Gandan Lamasery, Sukhbaatar Square and National Museum of Mongolia.

We10thOct—Departure

Transfer to the airport for international flight out.

Practicalities

Transport: This tour is supported by a jeep or minibus depending on the number of travelers.

Accommodation: In Ölgii we will lodge at a comfortable temporary ger camp. If the flight schedules are unfavourable, we will stay in a small two-star hotel in Hovd or Ölgii.

Operations: Domestic flight days and times are confirmed latest in April. It means you may fly to any of Ölgii, Hovd or Ulaangom airports.

Staff: An English-speaking Mongolian guide will accompany you at all times. Other language guides such as Russian, French, German, Italian, Korean etc. available at additional cost, upon request.

Meals: The meals will be provided in the ger camp, or as picnic lunches.

PRICE ex Ulaanbaatar:

2 - 12 members: **USD 3750 per person**

Single supplement (5n): **USD 1320**

Includes: All meals outside the Ulaanbaatar. Breakfast every day in Ulaanbaatar. Domestic flight. All transfers.

Excludes: Beverages, lunch and dinner in Ulaanbaatar. Air or train tickets in and out of Mongolia.

DATES 2018 ex Ulaanbaatar:

05 October - 10 October 2018.

