



Winter in Hustai Nuruu - Takhi re-introduction

*Hustai National Park is the site of a unique re-introduction scheme of Przewalski's horse (*Equus ferus przewalskii*), called Takhi in Mongolian. It became extinct in the wild in the 1960s, and since 1992 has been successfully re-introduced to Hustai and other parts of Mongolia, from zoos around the world. Hustai National Park is located around the Hustai Nuruu (Birch Mountains), north of the Tuul River some 2-3 hours drive west of Ulaanbaatar. You will be transferred there by vehicle and during our stay in Hustai there will be some shorter hikes supported by packhorses. The conservation success story of Hustai does also include numerous Marmots and a Wapiti Deer population that has increased to thousands, which have benefited a large population of wolves. Species that live in Hustai but are usually not seen are Lynx, Argali Sheep and Roe Deer. Sometimes herds of Mongolian Gazelle may be seen. There are also visible remains of Neolithic graves. Except for the middle of the winter, i.e. also in spring and fall, there is the possibility to have a more luxurious or private experience requesting a 360 ger camp, private for you in the landscape.*



Photo: Hustai National Park



Day 1: To Hustai National Park

Pick up at your hotel in Ulaanbaatar. Once out of the city, we drive for about two hours to Hustai National Park. We will arrive at the Hustai Ger Camp, operated by the Hustai Trust on the northern edge of the Hustai range. After lunch at the camp we will use the afternoon to drive out to the remarkable Neolithic graves of Öngüt, dating to the 6th or 7th century A.D.. From there we will make our way to the Tuul River and its riparian willow forests for some birding. In the evening we will take a game drive with a high probability of seeing some of the free roaming herds of Takhi. Wildlife viewing is easier in winter Overnight in gers prepared for winter.

Day 2: Hustai National Park

Today we need adjust our explorations to the snow conditions and your interests. We can do walks or game drives through the varied habitats of Hustai National Park. Starting out from the ger camp we can hike along the ridges with views over the distant Moltsoog Sands, as well as the partly forested Hustai Mountains. Trekking up a gully to an incredible look out point, we have a reasonable chance to see Wapiti Deers. The population has grown until about 2000.



Photos: Jan Wigsten



Day 3: To Ulaanbaatar

After breakfast we will visit some of the community groups who live on the fringes of Hustai with their herds of livestock. Here we have the chance to learn about the Hustai buffer zone program. We will enjoy a local lunch of buuz (steamed meat dumplings) provided by a local family, who partners in the conservation of Hustai. We will return to Ulaanbaatar in the afternoon and bring you to your hotel.

The Takhi

A national symbol of Mongolia, the Przewalski's horse or Takhi, has returned to its country of origin. Having never been domesticated it remains the only truly wild horse in the world today. The stockily built horses have recovered from a captive existence abroad to now again roam free in the wild forests and steppes of the Hustai National Park. Today after intense breeding programmes and research spanning over three decades, Przewalski's horse prosper in Hustai National Park. They display their natural group-behaviour, withstand the harsh winters, protect their young from wolves and produce offspring.



Photo: Haroldo Castro

Practicalities:

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

Accommodation: We stay in Ger (your) Camps for the duration of this trip. These permanent camps are equipped with a restaurant and shared bathroom and shower blocks.

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 camps, or as picnic lunches.

Winter dynamics: There is not much snowfall in Mongolia with about 274 sunny days per year. However, when snow does fall it tends to collect in droves at the wrong places due to the wind forces. Therefore our route may be adjusted accordingly.

Additional: We can organize hotel accommodation, city tours and transfers in Ulaanbaatar.

PRICE ex Ulaanbaatar

2 - 12 members, 2d/1n: **USD 380 per person**

2 - 12 members, 3d/2n: **USD 450 per person**

Single supplement (2n): **USD 80**

Includes: Guide, all meals outside Ulaanbaatar. All overnights in ger camps. All local transport and entrance fees.

Excludes: Beverages. Transfers and accommodation in Ulaanbaatar. Air or train tickets in and out Mongolia.

DATES ex Ulaanbaatar:

Daily in off season.

