



Winter in Ikh Nart

- Gerscape Journeys

*Ikh Nartiin Chuluu Nature Reserve is a community reserve where local people have partnered with the Denver Zoo Foundation, the Mongolian Academy of Sciences and Nomadic Journeys for research and the conservation of the Ikh Nartiin Chuluu Plateau. It is an upland with many rocky outcrops. Often hot and dry, it is an arid Gobi kind of area, only a 4 hours drive southeast from Ulaanbaatar. The unique wildlife feature of Ikh Nart is its approximately 600 argali sheep (*Ovis ammon*), the largest wild mountain sheep in the world. Although there is no guarantee, they are not that shy here. Also Mongolian gazelle (*procapra gutturosa*) are frequent visitors and are relatively easy to come across and view. Ikh Nartiin Chuluu, the full name, means, in Mongolian, "Rocks with plenty of sunshine". The reserve also has a sizeable population of the world's biggest vulture, the black or cinereous vulture (*Aegypius monacha*), as well as some 200 Siberian ibex (*Capra sibirica*).*

Brief Outline Itinerary

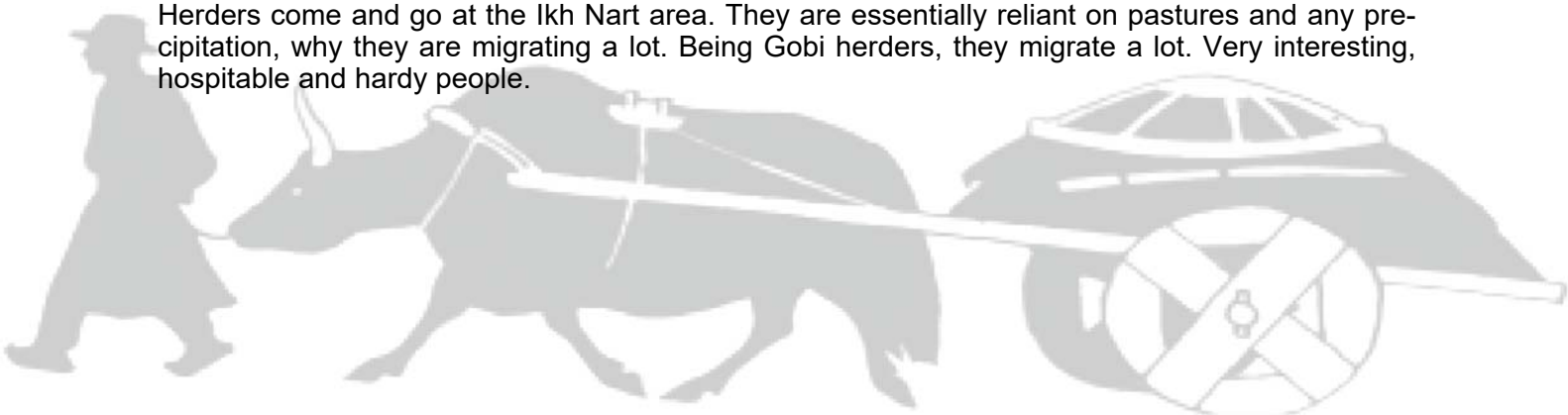
Nomadic Journeys operate a seasonal ger camp at Ikh Nart. You travel there southeasterly along the Trans-Mongolian railway line towards Beijing by a slow train (6h20) from Ulaanbaatar. Disembark at Shivee Gobi, the next small station after Choir. Then drive 60 km. IkhNart Rocks Ger Camp is located on its own next to the reserve area. Ikh Nart Nature Reserve was established in 1996, practically as a game reserve as it has intact populations of Gobi fauna. There are plenty of opportunities for wildlife walks and drives. There may be camels for rent. Transfer back to Ulaanbaatar is by fine tarmac road most of the way.

Day 1: To Ikh Nart Nature Reserve

Depart from Ulaanbaatar at 21h00 with domestic night train to Tsomog, a train platform seemingly in the middle of nowhere, When you arrive at Tsomog at 04h00 in the morning, you will be met and transferred to IkhNart Rocks Ger Camp. Along the way, depending on the sunrise time we'll stop by en route for a sunrise picnic breakfast.

Day 2-3: Ikh Nart Nature Reserve

For two days we will explore the Ikh Nart area through the IkhNart rocks areas and try view different kinds of wildlife. There is Argali Sheep, which are most common to be seen, but also Siberian Ibex (*Capra sibirica*) and bird life. Three parallel mammal research projects are ongoing by Mongolian and foreign scientist's. It is on Argali Sheep and Siberian Ibex, as well as on small carnivores primarily geared towards as Corsac Fox (*Vulpes corsac*), Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), Badger (*Meles meles*) and Pallas's Cat (*Otocolobus manul*) but also collecting any possible data on Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) and Wolves (*Canis lupus*) as well as its prey species such as gerbils, jerboas. And hedgehogs. For avifauna there is ongoing research of Cinereous Vulture and Lesser Kestrels (*Falco naumanni*). Botanist's are also regular visitors. Research outcomes will be made available at camp through our guides, as well as directly by Mongolian student researchers, as it develops. Herders come and go at the Ikh Nart area. They are essentially reliant on pastures and any precipitation, why they are migrating a lot. Being Gobi herders, they migrate a lot. Very interesting, hospitable and hardy people.





Day 4: To Ulaanbaatar

A.m. Drive to the tarmac road and cross over it towards Choiriin Bogd Mountains, and drive towards where there are some remote Buddha statues in the rock faces. Picnic lunch. P.m. Drive to Ulaanbaatar 4 hours.

Practicalities

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

Accommodation: For this winter trip you will stay a fully collapsible ger camp, including showers and compost toilets. The gers are each equipped with cot beds (including full linen), chairs and a table, and a wood burning stove.

Staff: A Mongolian English speaking guide will accompany the group at all times. In addition, the services of local herdsmen will be employed along with their animals.

Meals: Our cook will prepare the meals. We pride ourselves in having excellent cooks adept at both western and Mongolian cooking on our trips.

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

PRICE ex Ulaanbaatar:

2 - 8 members: **USD 1050 per person**
Single supplement (3n): **USD 900**

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

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

DATES 2018 ex Ulaanbaatar:

01st April - 15th May
30th September - 01st November

