



Photo: Haroldo Castro



Photo: Jan Wigsten



Photo: Andrea Pregonan



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Yak Trek in the Khan Khentii

The best way to personally experience the pace and lifestyle of the local people is to travel the same way and use the same modes of transport as the Mongolian herdsman themselves. On this journey we trek for three full days into the Khan Khentii Strictly Protected Area and enjoy the beautiful wilderness of the Khentii Mountains. We will use yaks to pull the traditional wooden carts on which all our equipment will be loaded and transported. If you are an experienced rider, a horse may also be rented for you. No support vehicles will be required, nor are they practical in the roadless area where we are to trek. The yaks will determine the pace of our nomadic journey over easy terrain (max. 20 km per day). A cook who is adept at western and Mongolian cooking will be with us in the field. We will also carry a ger, the traditional felt tent, in which most rural Mongolians still live today. Essentially, this means we can use the services of the local people in the area where we are to travel. They are the experts and we will be able to get a first-hand experience of how to build a ger and move a camp in the traditional Mongolian way.

DAY 1: To Upper Tuul River Valley

After breakfast we leave Ulaanbaatar for the Upper Tuul River Valley in the Khan Khentii Strictly Protected Area (some 110 km away); a three-hour drive by bus or car. After one hour we leave the tarmac road and carry on through a beautiful steppe valley, where there are many herding families with their gers and livestock. Crossing a ridge at Zamtiin pass we now drive mainly through forests until we reach the Upper Tuul River Valley. Here we meet the local herders, who will accompany us with their yak carts. We pitch camp next to the river.

DAY 2: To Baruun Bayan

Today we load all our luggage and provisions onto the yak carts and start our trek. Our first campsite will be in a steppe valley, surrounded by the Khentii hills, which are covered with larch and birch forests. Herdsmen keep their livestock in the southern areas of Khan Hentii, following a lifestyle that has been essentially unchanged since the time of Genghis Khan.

DAY 3: To Zaraa Tolgoi

Along the way we will split from the yak cart caravan and hike up into the mountains. We will enjoy stunning panoramic views from the ridges. Today we reach the northernmost point of our journey and set up camp at Zaraa Tolgoi (Hedgehog's head).

DAY 4: Upper Tuul River Valley

We are now in a very scenic area, where rivers flow down broad steppe valleys. Around us are forested hills and mountains. Along the rivers there are wooded and alluvial meadows with broad-leaf forests. We will set up our camp near the trailhead on a beautiful meadow.



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DAY 5: To Ulaanbaatar

After breakfast we drive back to Ulaanbaatar (3½ hrs). In the afternoon there is free time to explore the city. Distances are short and nearly all points of interest can be reached by foot.

Practicalities

Transport: On this tour, apart from the short drive to the starting point of our trek and back to the city we will not rely on any motor vehicle support. Instead we utilize traditional wooden carts, that Mongolian families occasionally still use, when moving from one pasture to another. Here we will travel by yak carts and horses.

Accommodation: Very spacious Scandinavian style Tepees, with foldable bed-cots and full bedding. There is no need to bring a sleeping bag. The showers and toilets are in traditional Mongolian tents. A Mongolian ger (yurt) will serve as mobile restaurant. We trek in style!

Staff: An English speaking Mongolian guide will accompany the group at all times. There will also be a cook. In addition, local herdsmen will be employed. They provide the horses, yak carts and will accompany us on the trek.

Meals: Our cook will prepare the meals. We pride ourselves in having excellent cooks adept at both western and Mongolian cooking on our trips. There is no problem accommodating vegetarians on our trips. We can usually buy fresh milk and yogurt from local herdsmen.

Riding horses: This tour doubles very well as horse riding trip. There will be an opportunity for experienced riders at the time of booking to order a saddled riding horse, with a horse-man to follow.

Trip Extension: Instead of returning to Ulaanbaatar you may also choose to transfer to our nearby Jalman Meadows Ger Camp and extend your stay in the forest steppe zone. We also offer fixed dated treks supported by camel carts in the East Gobi. At Ikh Nart Nature Reserve you can experience fascinating desert landscapes.

Additional: We can organize hotel accommodation, city tours and transfers in Ulaanbaatar. Please make sure to arrive in Ulaanbaatar by the evening before as there will be a welcome dinner and trip briefing.

PRICE ex Ulaanbaatar:

2 - 10 members: **USD 950 per person**

Single supplement (4n): **USD 160**

Rent of riding horse: **USD 140**

Private trip supplement:

2/4 members **USD 300 per trip**

5/up members no charge

Children: 0-2 years free. 3-12 years 25-50%.

Group discounts available on request for 4 persons or more.

Includes: Guide and all meals outside Ulaanbaatar. Camping equipment and all local transport.

Excludes: Drinks. Rent of riding horse. Transfers and accommodation in Ulaanbaatar. Air or train tickets in and out of Mongolia. Visa fee.

DATES 2018 ex Ulaanbaatar:

YAK01: 21-25May (Mo/Fr)

YAK02: 31May-04Jun (Th/Mo)

YAK03: 10-14Jun (Su/Th)

YAK04: 20-24Jun (We/Su)

YAK05: 30Jun-04Jul (Sa/We)

YAK06: 17-21Jul (Tu/Sa)

YAK07: 27-31Jul (Fr/Tu)

YAK08: 07-11Aug (Tu/Sa) Danshig AVL

YAK09: 17-21Aug (Fr/Tu)

YAK10: 27-31Aug (Mo/Fr)

YAK11: 06-10Sep (Th/Mo)

