



## Mongolia Traveler

<b>Duration of the trip:</b>	14 days/13 nights
<b>Areas of interest:</b>	Ulaanbaatar; Gobi desert (southern region); Kharkhorin (central region); Khovsgol Lake (northern region)
<b>Trip activities:</b>	Classic introduction to Mongolia's culture, people and environment. Visit areas of natural beauty, historical and cultural significance. Two internal flights, extensive driving, optional hiking, camel and horse riding.

**Day 1:** Arrive in Ulaanbaatar, the capitol of Mongolia (called "UB" by locals and visitors alike). After immigration and customs, you will be met by your guide and driver and transferred to your hotel. Referred to as "The City of Contrasts", where modern constructions stand beside traditional dwellings and ancient monasteries, UB is a rapidly growing and developing city with a population of nearly a million people. Conveniently located in downtown UB, your hotel is within walking distance from Sukhbaatar Square, museums, theaters, and shops. Depending on an arrival time, you may enjoy a short city orientation tour before dinner.



**Day 2:** In the morning, catch your flight for the Gobi, this arid semi-desert land with sparse vegetation, where gazelles roam and eagles soar the skies. Once the bottom of a sea, the Gobi offers spectacular views, colors and shapes. Upon arrival, you'll be met by Boojum driver/vehicle. Drive south towards the Yolyn Am canyon. Famed for its rich bird habitat, Yolyn Am (Vulture Mouth) was originally established as a bird preserve and later for its stunning beauty and great hiking Yolyn Am became one of the major destinations in Gobi. Explore the area on foot. Overnight in gers.

**Day 3:** Continue your Gobi exploration with Bayan Zag and Khongoryn Els sand dunes. Visit Bayan Zag, renowned as "The Flaming Cliffs" by American explorers for its dramatic shapes and colors (especially at sunset). Presenting the first dinosaur eggs ever to be found in the history of world paleontology, Bayan Zag still offers numerous fossils yet to be found. Picnic lunch at the site. Drive towards Khongoryn Els. Stretched along the narrow rift valley of the Gobi Altai Mountain range, Khongoryn Els dunes offer great dune climbing and "surfing" opportunities presenting spectacular views of the desert land within the rocky mountains in its nearly 200 kms length. Overnight in gers.

**Day 4:** Enjoy the day in and around Khongoryn Els. Optional camel riding. Overnight in gers.

**Day 5:** Head north to reach Ongiin Khiid. In the early evening you will reach the ruins of this once active Buddhist monastery. Hidden within the rolling hills of this desert land, these



dramatic ruins offer visitors a story of the sad events of the 1930's when political purges rolled through Mongolia. Overnight in gers.

**Day 6:** Continue north to Kharkhorin, the site of the capitol of 13th century Mongolian Empire. Originally established in 8th century and named as Khar Khorum (The Black Fortress) as a



military training and weapons production unit, this town was taken over by Chinggis Khaan and made a capitol for its strategically important location to launch military campaign and boost trade. Now, there is a big Erdene Zuu monastery, originally made as a prototype of the ancient capital. Built on the site and constructed using the ruins of the ancient capital some 300 years ago, this monastery was the seat of Buddhism in Mongolia which also

succumbed to purges. Now there is a museum and restored, active temple functioning at the site. Overnight in gers.

**Day 7:** Drive further northwest to reach Tsenkher hot springs. Situated in a mountain meadow, this resort offers great opportunities for nature lovers to hike and horse ride. Take a hot soak and relax after a day of activities. Overnight in gers.

**Day 8:** Head northwest towards Khorgo a dormant volcano and Terkhiin Tsagaan Lake. As you hike up the volcano, the dramatic scenery of the beautiful alpine lake to the west and volcanic lava flows to the east will open in front of you. Explore the area on foot. Stay overnight at the beautiful spot at the shore of the lake. Overnight in gers.

**Day 9:** Drive to Jargalant hot springs. A perfect stop over for travelers heading north to Khovsgol Lake. Enjoy the hot spa. Overnight in gers.

**Day 10:** Drive to Khatgal, the gateway to the Khovsgol National Park and the southernmost settlement on the shore of the Khovsgol Lake. Stop en-route in the Valley of Kings for the display of the ancient burial grounds of the Turkik nobles and a view of the carved "Deer Stones". Overnight in gers.



**Day 11:** Free day and relaxation in Khatgal. Enjoy the view of the beautiful lake Khovsgol, a crystal clear water lake that stretches over 100 miles. Explore the area on foot.

**Day 12:** Catch your flight back to UB. In the evening, watch "Tumen Ekh" folk theater perform throat singing, traditional dance, contortion and more. Overnight at hotel.

**Day 13:** Full day sightseeing and shopping in UB. Visit Gandan monastery, a major Buddhist monastery. The winter palace of the Bolgdo Khaan displays interesting exhibits of the lifestyle of Mongolian nobles. Overnight in hotel.



**Day 14:** Transfer to the airport for your international departure.

**What's Included:** Meals begin and end in UB (dinner on arrival day through breakfast on departure day), all transportation upon arrival in Ulaan Baatar, hotel in UB and ger accommodations, guide/translator, vehicle/driver.

**What's Not Included:** Roundtrip international airfare to/from UB, airport taxes, gratuities, excess baggage fees and item of personal nature.