

Mongolia Key Info

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Dates

The dates below note the arrival and departure dates from Ulaanbaatar (UB), Mongolia. These dates are the latest dates to arrive and earliest you should plan on leaving. Travel to and from your home country are additional to these dates. **September 6–18, 2018**

Details

- Prices include all in-country expenses: meals, lodging, permits, entrance fees, Mongolian and American guides, tips for Mongolian guides, host families, and support staff (wranglers, cooks, drivers), and transportation—including in-country airfare from Olgii to UB.
- These prices do not include flights to and from Mongolia
- All hotel rooms in UB are single occupancy unless otherwise requested. No discount is given for shared rooms / couples. Ger (yurt) stays may have up to 4 people per ger.
- Non-refundable deposit of \$500.00 is due **March 15, 2019**.
- Full payment is due **May 15, 2019**.
- With your full payment, we require the following documents:
 - Copy of passport
 - Copy of flight schedule
 - Signed [liability release](#)
 - Proof of [emergency travel and evacuation insurance](#)
 - All deposits are non-refundable.
- Our preferred method of payment for deposits and final payments is with a mailed check to: **FIRE Projects, PO Box 22187, Flagstaff, AZ 86002**.

Please contact info@fireprojects.org or call **928-779-2288** for more information or to sign up for the trip!

Flights

When booking your flights make sure you check your arrival and departure dates. Travel in both directions can include multiple calendar days.

Extended Stays

If you are considering extending your stay in Mongolia or in a different country on either end of the trip dates, please make sure you are in UB on the necessary dates. Your payment does not cover any extended stay costs. However, we are happy to make hotel reservations for you in UB at the same hotel where we will be staying.

Emergency Evacuation and Travel Insurance

Emergency Evacuation Insurance is required and we need proof before your depart for Mongolia. There are many different companies and plans to choose from. Please visit [this page from the U.S. Department of State](#) for options. Travel Insurance is also highly recommended. For short trips like this one you can sometimes find insurance that combines both Emergency Evacuation and Travel Insurance.

Passport and Visa

Everyone traveling to Mongolia will need a passport with a minimum of six months validity. American citizens do not need a visa. If you are going to stay more than 30 days, you will need to register with the government office before 7 days in the country. If you are planning on doing this, you will need a passport size photo and we will help you with the registration. If you are only staying for the dates of this trip, you will not need to register.

Vaccinations

Mongolia does not have any requirement by immigration or customs for proof of vaccinations when entering the country. Your doctor or medical practitioner may advise the following immunizations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, TB, Tetanus & Typhoid. Some may also advise to have vaccinations against rabies.

Guide Books and Language

Lonely Planet Mongolia (Travel Guide)

Lonely Planet Mongolian Phrasebook & Dictionary

Mongolia – Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs & Culture (by Alan Sanders)

Bradt also makes a good guide book.

IN MONGOLIA

Arrival

When you arrive in UB, a FIRE representative holding a sign with your name on it will meet you and you will be transported to our hotel.

Money

If you plan to shop you will need money. Banks and exchange offices in Ulaanbaatar will change money with relative efficiency. Banks in provincial centers are also fine; they change dollars. Both UB and provincial centers will have ATM machines that will allow you to use your US debit card and receive local Mongolian Tugriks. You will also be able to use your credit card in most of the shops in UB.

ATMs are everywhere, but only a few accept debit cards with a microchip. Credit cards are widely accepted at shops, hotels and restaurants.

The Mongolian unit of currency is the Mongolian **tugrik** (this spelling reflects the pronunciation most accurately). It comes in notes of 5 MNT, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500, 1000, 5,000, 10,000 and 20,000. The exchange rate in Mongolia changes often. As of January 15, 2018, \$1 = 2,660 MNT (\$10 = 26,600 MNT)

Travelers checks are no longer accepted anywhere in Mongolia.

Remember to change all your tugriks when leaving the country, as they are worthless elsewhere.

Tipping

Traditionally, Mongolians don't tip. However, Mongolians working in tourism-related fields (guides, drivers, cooks) are now accustomed to tips. Tips to your Mongolian guides, drivers, wranglers, cooks and host families are included in your trip cost.

Food

In UB you can get whatever food you like, but outside UB it is a different story. If you have ever eaten “Mongolian Beef” at a Chinese restaurant or eaten at a “Mongolian Grill”.... real Mongolian food in Mongolia is nothing like that! The food in Mongolia is mostly meat and starch. There is a lot of mutton and beef—usually boiled, sometimes fried—with a lot of fat and gristle. The food is generally seasoned with salt and pepper and little else. It is predominantly the same few ingredients (meat, potatoes, carrots, pasta, rice and cabbage) in a variety of combinations. Outside UB, food choices can be difficult for vegetarians and picky eaters.

Please let us know if you are a vegetarian or vegan. Gluten sensitivities will be very difficult to accommodate.

When in Bayan-Olgii, we will have three meals a day. Breakfast, dinner, and some lunches, will be served in a dining ger set up just for our meals.

Breakfast will be western-style with porridge, eggs, bread, sausage, butter, jam, honey and variety of drinks including hot and cold juice, tea, and french press coffee.

Lunch will generally be a pack lunch with desert. Hot and cold drinks will also be available.

Dinner will be three courses with soup, a main dish, and desert. Hot and cold drinks will also be provided. The main dish will sometimes include a salad. This will usually be western style, with an occasional Mongolia dish to mix it up.

Snacks and water are available at anytime and anywhere as long as our support vehicle is nearby.

Transportation

In UB, our vehicles will be Land Cruises or large vans. In Bayan-Olgii we will be traveling in Russian Furgons.

On days when we will be out all day on horseback, there will be vehicle support within radio distance, ready with snacks, drinks, your day packs, and for any emergency.

Between UB and Olgii, we will be flying. Air travel in Mongolia has a baggage limit of 22 pounds (10 kg). Each additional 2.2 pound (1 kg) will cost roughly \$1.20. (1 kilogram = 3,000 MNT)

Lodging

In UB you will be staying at the Springs Hotel. This will be the nicest lodging of the trip. Upon leaving UB we will be staying with host families in private gers (yurts) with 3-4 people per ger.

Toilets and Showers

Of course, you will have nice and comfortable bathrooms in your hotel room in UB. Around UB you will also have mostly comfortable toilet facilities. Toilet paper can be difficult to find in the “off the beaten path” sites we might visit, even in UB. Once in the countryside you need to be comfortable not using a western-style toilet on occasion. It is recommended that you carry travel size tissue or wet wipes with you. This trip is a lot like one long camping trip! In Bayan-Olgii, each campsite will have at least one toilet tent with a western style sitting toilet and at least one shower tent. If there are more than 8 people we will add a second toilet tent and shower tent.

Electronics

In UB you will be able to charge your electronics in the hotel. A good type of travel charger for Mongolia is a multiple USB port adapter which includes compatible plugs such as a [4 port USB travel charger](#). Mongolians use two different types of plug sockets (E and C) and this will ensure that you are covered for type C. As these types of chargers come with interchangeable plugs and can handle 100 - 240 volts it makes them ideal for multiple countries in Europe, Asia, North America and Africa just by changing the supplied heads over.

In Bayan-Ogii, there will be a generator set up every night so you can charge your electronic gear as needed. This will only run for a couple of hours each night, so please come prepared with an ample supply of batteries and back-up battery chargers.

Weather

We can expect temperatures from 30 to 60 degrees F, and it can be very windy. Mongolia is landlocked in the middle of a huge continent; there is no ocean to help regulate the temperature. The temperature can change dramatically in a single day. Be prepared. Layers are very good. It could be 20 degrees outside and 80 degrees inside.

Itinerary/Schedule

Our travel itinerary will be largely in the hands of Kobesh Travel. But keep in mind all travel in Mongolia is subject to delays due to schedule changes, sickness, road conditions, weather, swollen rivers, mechanical problems, etc. Whatever happens must be viewed as a part of the experience. The greatest gifts from Mongolia come from the process of learning to let go of our own Western conditioning and ideology enough to be able to adapt to the Mongolian culture.

Phone Calls

Contact your wireless service provider for information on using your cell phone outside your country.

Local SIM cards can be used in whatever phone you bring. Buying a SIM card in Mongolia may work out cheaper than paying roaming charges on your home country network. Cell service may not be available in much of the area we are traveling through.

For more detailed information on mobile phone usage and options in Mongolia, here is a useful link: http://mongoliatravel.guide/useful_information/view/phone-internet/

E-Mail

Wifi will be almost everywhere in UB and almost nowhere outside UB.

Time Difference

Ulaanbaatar (UB) is 16 hours ahead of U.S. Standard Pacific Time. As an example, 12:00 noon in UB is 8:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time, and 11:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. During our trip, the U.S. (except Arizona) will be observing Daylight Savings Time.

Jet Lag

Jet lag is usually not as bad going to Mongolia, especially if you arrive late at night. If you arrive late it's a good idea to stay awake on the flight so that you are ready to sleep when you arrive in Mongolia. This will put you instantly in-sync with the time in Mongolia.

The trip home is usually more difficult. For some reason, going backwards in time seems to make things harder. If you arrive on the west coast in the AM, it is a good idea to sleep on the plane. That way you will be ready to start your day when it is daytime in the US.

The best way to deal with jet lag is with prevention. This means make sure you are rested, well fed and well hydrated for several days before your flight. Make sure you drink enough water when flying and stay as relaxed as possible. Stretch and walk if you need to.

When you return home, we recommend giving yourself at least a few days of downtime to adjust—scheduling few obligations. The longer you are gone, the harder the adjustment.