

Mongolia Tour Trip Key Information

Dates

The start and end dates are the arrival and departure dates from Ulaanbaatar (UB), Mongolia. These are the last day to arrive in Mongolia and the earliest you should plan on leaving Mongolia. Travel to and from your home country are additional to these dates. **September 9–22, 2020**

Included in Your Trip Cost

- Skilled, professional guides, wranglers, cooks and drivers provided by Kobesh Touras, our partners in Mongolia since 2004.
- One experienced US guide provided by FIRE.
- Airport shuttles to and from the Chinggis Khan International Airport (ULN).
- 5 nights in a hotel in Ulaanbaatar, 1 night in a hotel in Olgii City, 7 nights in gers (yurts) in Bayan-Olgii.
- All hotel rooms in UB and Olgii are double occupancy unless an upgrade is made for a single room.
- Gers (yurt) in Bayan-Olgii will have 2 to 4 people per ger.
- Three meals a day.
- All transportation — in-country airfare from Olgii to UB, and vans in UB and Bayan-Olgii.
- All additional in-country expenses — permits, entrance fees and tips.
- The most luxurious, comfortable, and professional food, lodging and facilities possible in Bayan-Olgii, Mongolia. (But please, still, manage your expectations.... this is one of the most remote and least densely populated areas of the world!)

Not Included in Your Trip Cost

- Flights to and from Mongolia.
- Emergency Evacuation Insurance, which is required.
- Travel Insurance, for cancellations. FIRE is unable to provide refunds for canceled trip unless FIRE cancels the trip due to lack of sign ups. Trip insurance is highly recommended.
- Single room supplements for UB and Olgii.
- Additional days in Mongolia.
- Alcohol or other personal items.

Payment

- A non-refundable deposit of \$1,000 is due **January 15, 2020**.
- Non-refundable full payment is due **April 1, 2020**.
- Payments can be mailed check to: **FIRE Projects, PO Box 22187, Flagstaff, AZ 86002**.
- Please contact info@fireprojects.org or call **928-779-2288** to pay by credit card.

Trip Forms

With your full payment, we require the following documents:

- Copy of passport
- Copy of flight schedule to and from Mongolia
- Copy of emergency evacuation insurance
- Signed [liability release](#)

Emergency Evacuation Insurance

Emergency Evacuation Insurance with a limit of at least \$500,000 is required for your own safety and well being. We require a copy of the insurance information before your departure for Mongolia. There are many different companies and plans. Please let us know if you need assistance choosing one.

Travel Protection

Travel Insurance is highly recommended to protect you before and during your trip. Insurance can help with reimbursement of non-refundable and unforeseen expenses. Because we start planning and incurring expenses for your trip as soon as we get your deposit we are not able to give refunds if you cancel your trip. For short trips like this one can often find insurance that combines both Emergency Evacuation and Travel Insurance. Please contact Daniela at Avenues of World Travel in Flagstaff at 800-230-3322. She can help with all your insurance and flight needs.

Single Supplement

You can stay in a single-room in UB and Olgii for a supplement fee. Please let us know if you are interested in this upgrade.

Extended Stays

If you are considering extending your stay in Mongolia on either end of the trip dates, please make sure you are in UB on the necessary dates. Please notify us know of your plans so we can coordinate with any other parties as needed. We can arrange additional nights at the same hotel in UB where we will be staying for your convenience. Please talk to us about options.

Flights to Mongolia

When booking your flights please triple check your arrival and departure dates. Travel in both directions can include multiple calendar days. The easiest cities to fly through on the way to UB are Seoul (ICN) and Hong Kong (HKG). There are also flights through Beijing, Russia and Turkey. Book your flights as early as possible to get the shortest trips, through the easiest ports, at the best prices.

Please do not purchase airfare until the dates and trip is confirmed with the minimum number of participants. You can contact Daniela at Avenues of World Travel in Flagstaff at 800-230-3322 for your flight needs.

Itinerary/Schedule

While we do our best to follow the details of the itinerary, our travel itinerary is subject to changes and delays at anytime for reasons out of our control including transportation issues, weather, swollen rivers or other unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances. Whatever happens must be viewed as a part of the experience. The greatest gifts from Mongolia can come from the process of letting go.

Travel Details

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. However, Americans staying more than 30 days, you will need to “register” during their first 7 days in the country. If you are planning on doing this, you will need a passport size photo and to notify FIRE so we can assist you. If you are only staying for the dates of this trip, you will not need to register.

Vaccinations

Mongolia does not have any required vaccinations. 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.

Arrival in Mongolia

When you arrive in UB, to Chinggis Khan International Airport, a FIRE representative holding a sign with your name on it will meet you and you will be transported to our hotel. The drive to the hotel could take 30 minutes to two hours depending on the time of day you arrive.

Hotel and Lodging

In UB you will be staying in shared rooms at the Blue Sky Hotel and Tower <https://hotelbluesky.mn/>. This hotel is located in the center of UB, directly across from Sukhbaatar Square and within walking distance to most sites in UB. A single room can be provided for an additional charge.

Upon leaving UB you will be staying in private gers (yurts) in Bayan-Olgii next to the families we are visiting. There will be 2 - 4 people per ger. The final night in Bayan-Olgii will be at Makshum Hotel, Olgii's newest and biggest hotel, with shared rooms. A single room can be provided for an additional charge.

Food

Please let us know if you are a vegetarian, vegan, gluten intolerant or have any other food sensitivities.

In UB, breakfast is a buffet conveniently located inside the hotel. A couple of additional meals in UB will be your choice at one of the other restaurants in the hotel. You can learn more about the restaurants located in Blue Sky Hotel here. <https://hotelbluesky.mn/dining/> The remaining meals in UB will be at different restaurants with a great variety of high quality food, as we travel around the city.

In Bayan-Olgii, our group will have a personal chef(s), kitchen/dining ger for our meals. We will have three meals a day - breakfast, lunch and dinner. Breakfast is western-style with porridge, eggs, bread, sausage, butter, jam, honey and a variety of drinks including hot and cold juice, tea, and french press coffee. Lunch will generally be a pack lunch with dessert. Hot and cold drinks will be available.

Dinner will be three courses with soup, a main dish, and desert. Hot and cold drinks will again be provided. The main dish will sometimes include a salad. This will usually be western style, with an occasional Mongolian dish to mix it up. Snacks and water are available at any time and anywhere as long as our support vehicle is nearby.

The final dinner and breakfast in Bayan-Olgii will be at Makshum Hotel in Olgii.

Transportation

Between UB and Olgii, we will be flying a local airline. Please note, Airlines in Mongolia are well known for last minute schedule changes which are out of our control.

In UB, our vehicles will be 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.

Luggage

Any kind of luggage is manageable from backpacks to roller suitcase. Most international flights originating in the US will allow for at least 2, 50-pound bags. 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).

Toilets, Showers and Laundry

Of course, you will have a nice and comfortable bathroom 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. 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.

Laundry can be given to the hotel in UB, but the timing after your return from Bayan-Oglii may not work out, unless you are staying additional days in Mongolia.

Electronics

In UB and Olgii you will be able to charge your electronics in the hotel. Mongolians use two different types of plug sockets (E and C).

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

- [4 port USB travel charger](#)
- [Solar Charger](#)
- [Battery Pack](#)

Phone Calls / Email / WiFi

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

Local Mongolian SIM cards can be used in most international phones. Please let us know if you would like a local number to access local data and phone networks. However, cell service will not be available for most of the time you are outside UB, even on local networks.

WiFi is almost everywhere in UB and almost nowhere outside UB. Plan ahead to be away from email and phone for most of the time in Bayan-Olgii.

Money

ATMs and credit cards are used everywhere in UB. You can use ATMs to withdraw Mongolian tugrik (MNT). Most stores and restaurants in UB also accept credit cards. Travelers checks are no longer accepted anywhere in Mongolia.

You can also bring USD to change into tugrik. If you plan to do this, please let your guide know if you need assistance in changing the USD and bring \$100 bills, as new as possible. They are quick to reject worn bills.

Remember to spend or change all your tugriks back into dollars when leaving the country, as they are not useful outside of Mongolia!

The exchange rate in Mongolia changes often but has been fairly stable at around 1 USD = 2,600 MNT. You can check the current rate here. www.khanbank.com/en/personal/currency-rate

Weather

We can expect temperatures from 20° to 60° 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° F outside and 80° F inside a ger.

Time Zone

Ulaanbaatar (UB) is 15 hours ahead of US Pacific Standard Time from March to November (during Daylight Savings Time), and 12 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. It is always 15 hours ahead of Arizona. Bayan-Olgii is one hour behind UB.

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. But additional support is also welcome if you feel inclined.

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.