

THREE CAMEL LODGE
The Gobi, Mongolia



Dear Explorer,

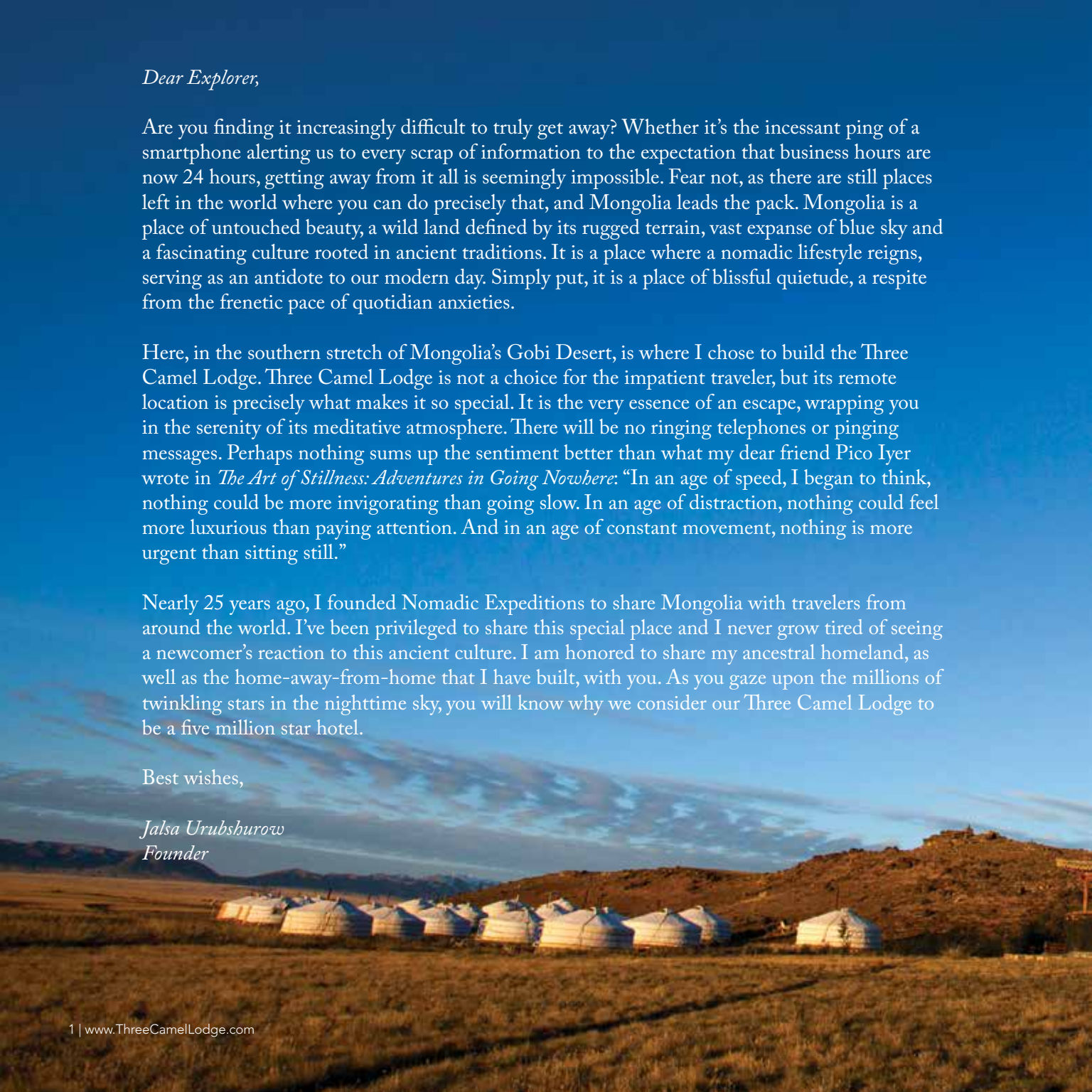
Are you finding it increasingly difficult to truly get away? Whether it's the incessant ping of a smartphone alerting us to every scrap of information to the expectation that business hours are now 24 hours, getting away from it all is seemingly impossible. Fear not, as there are still places left in the world where you can do precisely that, and Mongolia leads the pack. Mongolia is a place of untouched beauty, a wild land defined by its rugged terrain, vast expanse of blue sky and a fascinating culture rooted in ancient traditions. It is a place where a nomadic lifestyle reigns, serving as an antidote to our modern day. Simply put, it is a place of blissful quietude, a respite from the frenetic pace of quotidian anxieties.

Here, in the southern stretch of Mongolia's Gobi Desert, is where I chose to build the Three Camel Lodge. Three Camel Lodge is not a choice for the impatient traveler, but its remote location is precisely what makes it so special. It is the very essence of an escape, wrapping you in the serenity of its meditative atmosphere. There will be no ringing telephones or pinging messages. Perhaps nothing sums up the sentiment better than what my dear friend Pico Iyer wrote in *The Art of Stillness: Adventures in Going Nowhere*: "In an age of speed, I began to think, nothing could be more invigorating than going slow. In an age of distraction, nothing could feel more luxurious than paying attention. And in an age of constant movement, nothing is more urgent than sitting still."

Nearly 25 years ago, I founded Nomadic Expeditions to share Mongolia with travelers from around the world. I've been privileged to share this special place and I never grow tired of seeing a newcomer's reaction to this ancient culture. I am honored to share my ancestral homeland, as well as the home-away-from-home that I have built, with you. As you gaze upon the millions of twinkling stars in the nighttime sky, you will know why we consider our Three Camel Lodge to be a five million star hotel.

Best wishes,

Jalsa Urubshurow
Founder





 NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
UNIQUE LODGES
OF THE WORLD™





Adventurer George Mallory was once asked why he climbed Mt. Everest, to which he quipped, “because it’s there.” It’s precisely what wasn’t there that spawned Three Camel Lodge. Jalsa Urubshurow, CEO of Nomadic Expeditions and founder of Three Camel Lodge, had been sharing the wild beauty of Mongolia with travelers since the country’s reopening in 1990, yet he was never able to find the right lodge for his guests. He wanted a place that truly captured the spirit of Mongolia and its nomadic culture, while still offering a luxurious take on adventure, but how do you offer an authentic experience that enriches a traveler’s life while simultaneously protecting the very culture and environment being showcased? Therein lies the conundrum, but not for Urubshurow. Instead, it was his *raison d’être*. After careful consideration for the preservation of the region’s environment, culture and people, he opened Three Camel Lodge in 2002. It was, and remains, the only luxury eco-lodge in Mongolia’s Gobi Desert. Built by and staffed by locals, Three Camel Lodge isn’t just a place to stay; it’s a state of mind.

This unique outcropping of gers, or traditional felt and canvas tents used by Mongolian nomads, rests in the heart of the starkly beautiful Gobi Desert. In addition to over 35 gers, Three Camel Lodge’s main lodge was modeled after traditional Buddhist temples, adhering to strict Mongolian Buddhist canons of “*soum style*.”

The Lodge is tucked beside a rock outcrop bearing ancient petroglyphs, but it is the vast expanse of desert and the nighttime sky filled with a million twinkling stars that will leave a lasting imprint on your heart.

Three Camel Lodge is a founding member of National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World. We are proud to be counted among this collection of hotels, lodges, inns and resorts located in extraordinary places, each offering exclusive and unique experiences and distinguished by a dedication to high-quality service and sustainable tourism practices.

What Makes Us An Eco-Lodge?

Sustainability isn't just a buzzword at Three Camel Lodge. It was a founding principle that still guides our daily operations. To us, sustainability is holistic. We believe it goes beyond taking care of the land and its flora and fauna and extends to protecting a place's traditions, cultures and people.

DESIGN

When we designed Three Camel Lodge, our goal was to design a retreat that at once blended with the surroundings while standing out as a showpiece. Our good looks go beyond the surface to create a true sense of place. From the handcarved wood furnishings created by local artisans to the well house crafted to resemble a miniature temple, there is no doubt you are firmly planted in the Mongolian Gobi Desert.



CONSTRUCTION

Three Camel Lodge was built entirely by locals and we continue to employ a staff of native Mongolians. We quarried the stone ourselves from a local rock canyon and imported our logs from the Siberian taiga for the buildings because Mongolia had no reforestation program at that time. Local artisans practiced ancient construction traditions, such as hand-molding the roof tiles and using authentic nomadic gers as our guest rooms. Since we wanted to showcase Mongolian craftsmanship, we collaborated with local carpenters, woodcarvers and painters who handcrafted furniture in the traditional Mongolian style.



Green Practices

Three Camel Lodge practices recycling. We initiated a “No Plastic Bags in the Gobi” campaign to reduce the use of plastic by local residents and merchants.

Considering our location in the Gobi Desert, water is particularly precious. As such, we designed septic drainage fields four times larger than required to minimize the potential of adverse effects on the aquifer and the water supply. We also limit the water usage in showers. Lodge guests are given reusable bottles filled with filtered drinking water, thereby reducing our consumption of plastic water bottles.





Cultural Preservation

Three Camel Lodge promotes cultural tourism through our guests' experience. Each guest learns about the nomadic way of life, as well as its traditions and customs, through visits with nomadic families.

We sponsor local Naadam festivals, which are integral to Mongolian culture. The lodge also organizes its own Naadam on the third weekend of June each year.

We employ local artists and craftsmen. Our sister company, Nomadic Expeditions, uses Mongolian calligraphers, wood carvers and felt craftsmen to create unique mementoes for our clients.

We support the local school's arts program to ensure that Mongolia's rich culture is upheld. Students learn to play traditional musical instruments and are taught to perform ancient songs and dance.



Economic and Social Engagement

Three Camel Lodge is actively engaged in the local community. We take our commitment to the region very seriously and have made donations to support struggling nomads who have lost their animals or those needing extra help preparing for harsh winters.

Three Camel Lodge rebuilt the community well, now used by nomads and local families to water their herds of livestock.

Every member of our staff, including top management, is Mongolian. Additionally, all food suppliers and tour guides are local to the region.

We support the local school in Bulgan through a partnership with Pack with a Purpose. Guests traveling to the lodge pack school supplies that are distributed each fall to this school. We also support their award-winning volleyball team.

We are proud to have created a scholarship at the Mongolian Academy of Sciences and its Paleontology Department. It honors the late Dr. Badamgarav with whom we worked closely for over two decades. The scholarship supports young researchers working to preserve the Gobi's paleontological heritage.

Environmental and Wildlife Protection

Past and present live as one in the Gobi, where wildlife preservation includes the protection of dinosaur fossils from nearby paleontological sites. We are proud to have led the fight against unauthorized removal from these sites.

With the assistance of the Lodge's staff, local children have participated in the cleanup of national park areas including the Yol Valley and the Flaming Cliffs.

The Lodge sponsored and funded planting of 2,000 trees at a local public school in Dalanzadgad, the provincial capital of the South Gobi.

We are also very proud to be a base for scientific and wildlife monitoring.

The Three Camel Lodge has a first-of-its-kind cooperative agreement with the Bulgan Sum Township and Gobi-Gurvansaikan National Park authorities. As such, hunting has been prohibited within a 12-mile radius of the lodge. We are also an active member of local grassroots conservation organizations, such as the Ongii River Movement, a prize-winning organization that aims to protect Mongolia's Ongii River (one of the few rivers that run into the Gobi) from the damaging effects of the burgeoning mining industry.

In order to preserve indigenous Gobi plants and provide cover for migratory birds that visit nearby Mt. Bulagtai, we have planted over 6,000 native plants and trees throughout the Lodge's property since 2003.





“Loved the Three Camel Lodge. It was a chance to move through the world at a slower pace in a beautiful setting.”
- *Joyce Clifford*



Where in the World?

With half a million square miles of sand dunes and endless blue sky, the Gobi Desert defines Southern Mongolia. Nestled in the heart of the Omnogobi Aimag (South Gobi Province), the southernmost province bordering northern China, Three Camel Lodge is a serene haven from the hectic modern day. It is nestled in the crossroads of the Gobi's diverse desert ecosystems and serves as a habitat for animals such as shaggy two-humped Bactrian camels, Gobi bears, ibex and gazelle.

Getting Here

Three Camel Lodge is located approximately 8 hours by car from Mongolia's capital city of Ulanbaatar. Most guests prefer to take the 1½ hour flight from Ulanbaatar to the closest city of Dalanzadgad (70km or 43 miles southeast of the lodge). Guests are met at Dalanzadgad by a driver and escorted by Land Cruiser for a 1 hour off-road adventure to the lodge. Private planes and helicopters are able to land on the Lodge's private air strip.

What to Know

Mongolia's weather is highly unpredictable and is marked by cool temperatures with short, mild summers and long winters. Mid-May through early October is the best time to visit. Warm hats, gloves and jackets are recommended for those traveling in spring or autumn and layers are recommended throughout the year, as temperatures change often within one day.

The Mongolian unit of currency is the tugrug. All prices at the lodge are listed in tugrugs, though credit cards are accepted.

Electrical power in Mongolia is 220V, 50Hz. Plugs require a two-pin socket with round pins. Most adapter/converter kits will have the necessary configuration, but a 220-volt surge suppresser is recommended for sensitive electronics.





RUSSIA

Lake Hovsgol

Selenge

Orkhon

HENTII
MOUNTAINS

ULAANBAATAR

Herlen

MONGOLIA

AI MOUNTAINS



CHINA



Accommodations

The free-spirited nomadic lifestyle is a defining characteristic of Mongolian culture. Nomads pick up and move their gers, or traditional felt and canvas dwellings, several times a year based on the availability of food for their animals and the weather patterns. Three Camel Lodge offers a slice of the nomadic lifestyle with an elevated take on the classic ger.

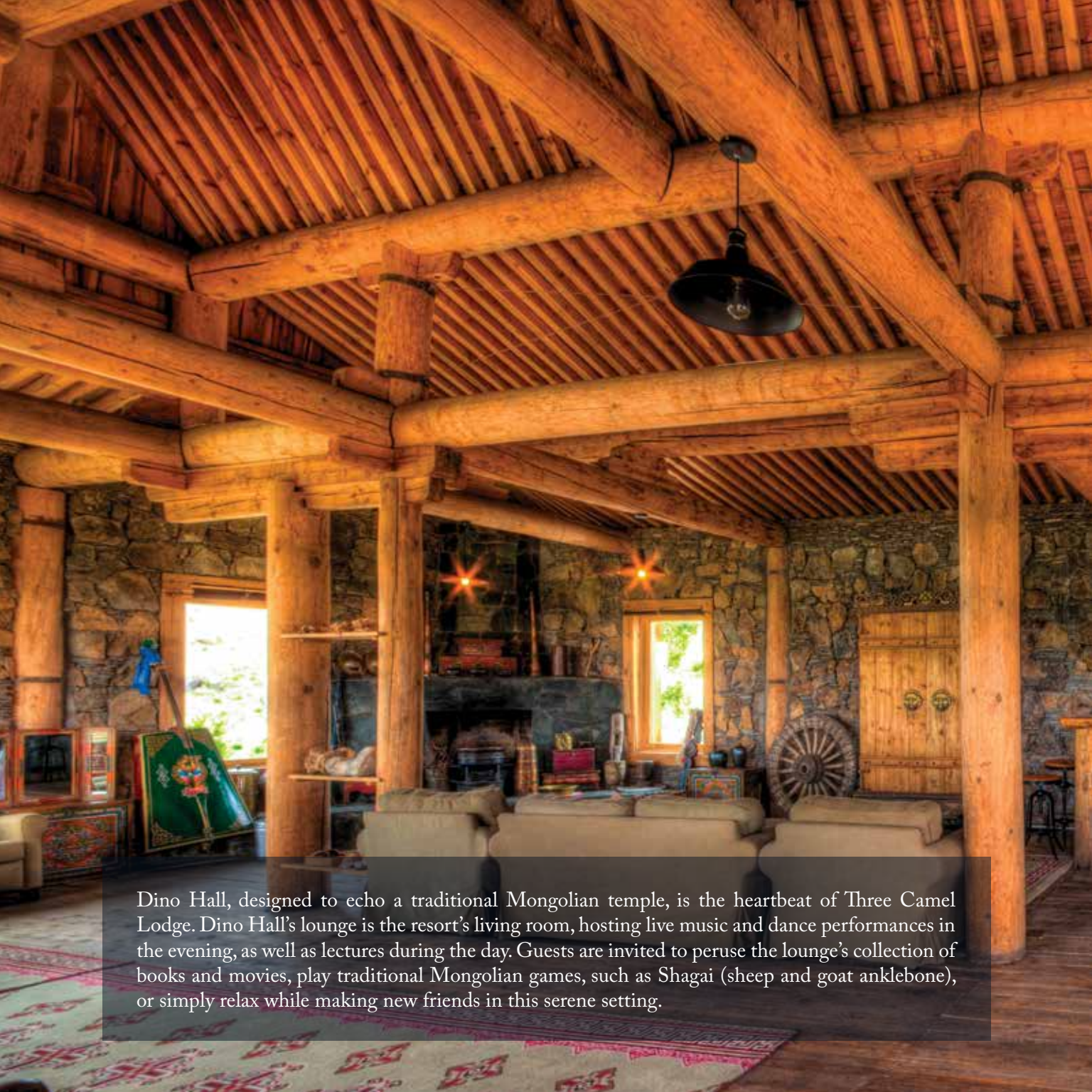
The simple elegance of the gers blends with the Gobi's remarkable landscape, and in keeping with Mongolian tradition, each has a southward-facing entrance. Gaze upon unobstructed views of the desert and the Gobi-Altai Mountains from the privacy of your deluxe ger. The ger's oculus, or central opening to the sky, may have a practical use for nomads as a sundial, but it translates to spectacular stargazing at night from the privacy of your bed.

Three Camel Lodge is comprised of 35 individual gers. Handmade using a latticed wood construction and covered with layers of felt and canvas, each ger at the Three Camel Lodge is heated by a wood stove and appointed with handpainted wood-framed king or double beds and custom furnishings. Each ger also features a private bathroom equipped with a toilet, sink and shower. Mongolian felt slippers and bathrobes are among the locally influenced in-room amenities.

Our two family gers, complete with two bedrooms linked by a bathroom, are perfectly suited to families traveling with children ages 8 and older or those travelers needing additional space.

Three Camel Lodge provides a true escape from the everyday. As such, there are no telephones or access to the Internet.





Dino Hall, designed to echo a traditional Mongolian temple, is the heartbeat of Three Camel Lodge. Dino Hall's lounge is the resort's living room, hosting live music and dance performances in the evening, as well as lectures during the day. Guests are invited to peruse the lounge's collection of books and movies, play traditional Mongolian games, such as Shagai (sheep and goat anklebone), or simply relax while making new friends in this serene setting.





Dino Hall is also the home of Bulagtai Restaurant and the Thirsty Camel Bar. Bulagtai Restaurant is housed within an authentic oversized ger, similar to those used by great Khans centuries ago. Here, you will taste Mongolian classics, such as buuz, a meat or vegetable stuffed dumpling that is to Mongolian families what ravioli is to Italians, as well as tsuivan, a noodle dish mixed with meat and vegetables. In addition to traditional regional fare, Bulagtai also presents Western-style dishes for those seeking a taste of home. Most of the restaurant's vegetables and fruit are harvested from organic farms in nearby Bulgan, and most dairy products are purchased from local nomadic families



and pasteurized on site. By tradition, Mongolia's livestock roam free and feast on a wide variety of grasses. Purchasing local food not only assures the best quality, but it also provides this remote region with opportunities for economic growth through responsible tourism.

Also located in Dino Hall, the Thirsty Camel Bar is the ultimate hideaway to sip a cocktail and review the day's adventures with newfound friends.

Lodge Amenities

SPA GER

After a full day of trekking through sand dunes atop Bactrian camels or hiking the foothills of the Gobi-Altai Mountains, reward yourself with a Mongolian-inspired massage in our Spa Ger. Massage is a centuries-old, traditional healing art practiced in Mongolia. Until the 20th century, surgery was rare and not a preferred method of treating illness. Instead, specialized massage, mastered by a highly respected practitioner, or bariach, was used to treat most ailments. The tranquil setting of the Spa Ger complements the soothing massage performed by a local therapist.



CONFERENCE ROOM

Three Camel Lodge has a conference room that comfortably seats up to 20 guests for a presentation, lecture or meeting. It is equipped with a projector, screen and a computer.







Exploration

Imagine a place where a clear blue sky extends without limit and sand dunes seduce with their curves. A place where the valleys showcase emerald green grass and glistening ice formations that sparkle in the sun, and the evening sun casts an otherworldly orange glow upon the canyons and cliffs. This is the Gobi; a playground for adventurers, naturalists and history buffs. From hiking and mountain biking to wildlife excursions atop Bactrian camels or aboard 4x4 vehicles, there are so many ways to explore the Gobi.

Nearby

Just behind the lodge, ancient petroglyphs are inscribed on the rock outcrop.

Located to the east of the lodge is the breathtaking Gurvan Saikhan Mountains, part of the Mongol Altai Mountain Range. This mountainous area is home to lammergiens, argali, ibex, and the elusive Gobi bear, wild camel and snow leopard.

Bulagtai Mountain is an ancient volcanic outcrop that shelters the lodge and rises 1591 m (5220 ft) above sea level. During clear weather conditions, one can see nearly 20 miles.




A wooden balcony with a swing overlooking a vast green field with yurts and mountains in the distance.

Not to be Missed

Three Camel Lodge is an ideal base for exploring the Gobi. We arrange a variety of excursions with overnight tenting accommodations.



The image shows a vast, arid landscape of the Gobi Desert. In the foreground, there are prominent, layered red sandstone cliffs with visible erosion patterns. The background features rolling, hazy hills under a clear, warm sky. The overall lighting is soft and golden, characteristic of late afternoon or early morning.

The Flaming Cliffs are perhaps the most famous and dramatic sight in the Gobi Desert. The evening sun casts a magical glow on these red sandstone cliffs, but it was the 1923 discovery of dinosaur eggs here that established the Gobi as one of paleontology's most important research destinations. Join an excavation under the guidance of a paleontologist from the Mongolian Academy of Sciences.





Hongoryn Els is a 60-mile stretch of dunes that reaches nearly 200 meters high. Hongoryn Els is alternately known as the “Singing Sands” for the eerie groan of the wind through the towering drifts.





Cradled in the foothills of the Altai Mountains, Yol Valley National Park is a deep desert valley named for the bone-eating bearded vultures that make their home here. An ancient river carved this surprisingly green valley, and its remnant streams create ice formations at the base of the valley that sometimes persist as late as July. A hike through the valley leads to the habitat of indigenous vulture-like Lammergeiers, Altai snowcocks, ibex, yaks and Argali mountain sheep.



Three Camel Lodge is an excellent base for exploring some of Mongolia's must-see destinations. While undulating sand dunes are certainly an integral part of the Gobi Desert, they are not the only landscape you will encounter on your visit to this starkly beautiful region. Instead, you will find vastly different eco-systems, including green valleys and rugged mountain ranges. The sheer diversity of landscapes coupled with the region's fascinating history make a visit to the Gobi truly unforgettable.

2 Day Excursion

Day 1

Yol Valley National Park

Visit this national park, cradled in the foothills of the Altai Mountains. An ancient river carved this surprisingly green valley, and its remnant streams create ice formations at the base of the valley that sometimes persist as late as July. A hike through the valley leads to the habitat of indigenous vulture-like Lammergeiers, Altai snowcocks, ibex, yaks, and Argali mountain sheep.

Havtsgait Valley

In the evening, drive to the Havtsgait Valley, site of ancient rock drawings left by early Gobi settlers for more than 15,000-40,000 years ago. Hundreds of petroglyphs adorn rocks scattered on the top of the mountain.

Return to Three Camel Lodge for dinner and overnight.

Day 2

Moltsog Els Sand Dune

In the morning, drive to Moltsog Els, one of the few regions of the Gobi covered by sand dunes. This would be your opportunity to ride Bactrian camel and also to visit a local camel herding family.

Return to the lodge for lunch.

Flaming Cliffs

In the afternoon, drive to Bayan Zag, commonly known as the Flaming Cliffs, for the orange glow of its rock at dawn and dusk. It was here in 1923 that Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews and his exploration team from the American Museum of Natural History found the first nest of dinosaur eggs. Although not obvious to the untrained eye, the Flaming Cliffs are rich with dinosaur fossils and have been the site of important paleontological discoveries.









3 Day Excursion

Day 1

Yol Valley National Park

Visit this national park, cradled in the foothills of the Altai Mountains. An ancient river carved this surprisingly green valley, and its remnant streams create ice formations at the base of the valley that sometimes persist as late as July. A hike through the valley leads to the habitat of indigenous vulture-like Lammergeiers, Altai snowcocks, ibex, yaks, and Argali mountain sheep.

Day 2

Tugrugyn Shiree

Visit this site where the famous “Fighting Dinosaurs” fossil of a Protoceratops and Velociraptor locked in combat position was discovered in the 1970s. Explore this white sandstone escarpment and nearby sand dunes.

Bulgan

Drive to this small town near a natural spring. Bulgan has one of the only farms in the Gobi, which supplies local ger camps with fruits and vegetables. This is a prime example of local businesses being supported by eco-tourism.

Havtsgait Valley

In the evening, drive to the Havtsgait Valley, site of ancient rock drawings left by early Gobi

settlers more than 15,000-40,000 years ago. Hundreds of petroglyphs adorn rocks scattered on the top of the mountain.

Return to Three Camel Lodge for dinner and overnight.

Day 3

Moltsog Els Sand Dune

Drive to Moltsog Els Sand Dune, one of the few regions of the Gobi covered by sand dunes. Explore the sand dunes on foot or atop a Bactrian camel. You may also have the opportunity to visit a local camel herding family and experience first-hand their warm hospitality.

Return to Three Camel Lodge for lunch.

Flaming Cliffs

In the afternoon drive to Bayan Zag, commonly known as the Flaming Cliffs for the orange glow of its rock at dawn and dusk. It was here in 1923 that Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews and his exploration team from the American Museum of Natural History found the first nest of dinosaur eggs. Although not obvious to the untrained eye, the Flaming Cliffs are rich with dinosaur fossils and have been the site of important paleontological discoveries.

Special Projects

Three Camel Lodge and Nomadic Expeditions have a combined 20+ years of experience welcoming travelers to Mongolia and the Gobi Desert. We are more than a luxury lodging experience; we are your conductor orchestrating every last detail. From arranging logistics for medical teams traveling to remote villages by horseback and helicopter to official visits by international delegations to workshops, expeditions and film shoots, we leverage our knowledge and our network of local experts to guarantee a seamless experience from arrival to departure.

We are proud to have shepherded academic research study tours for leading universities and environmental expeditions for leading non-profits. We arranged Land Rover North America's first Mongolian overland expedition and have assisted brands and publications on fashion magazine shoots. We have also worked extensively with film crews, providing pre-production and ground services for IMAX and The Discovery Channel, among other renowned media outlets.

Celebrations

Celebrate a wedding (either traditional Mongolian style or modern) or mark a birthday, anniversary or other special occasion with a memorable trip to Three Camel Lodge. We are prepared to make your moment a once-in-a-lifetime memory. Imagine having a wedding in this out-of-the-way location... we've been privileged to host families seeking a truly unique destination wedding. In addition to weddings, we have watched guests blow out the candles on milestone birthdays and celebrated many years of wedded bliss. Whether it's a hideaway for two or a buyout of the entire resort, we are delighted to share our home with you as you mark your special occasion.

Events

Impress and delight attendees with a truly unique destination for your next incentive trip, board meeting or donor cultivation trip. Three Camel Lodge has a meeting room located within Dino Hall that seats up to 20 guests. It is ideal for intimate groups seeking a place to recharge and brainstorm without any distractions, and the Lodge's many excursions are ideal for teambuilding.





Nomadic Expeditions



Three Camel Lodge is the offspring of Nomadic Expeditions, an award-winning expedition outfitter to Mongolia, Tibet, Bhutan, Siberia and China founded by Mongolian-American Jalsa Urubshurow in 1992. Nomadic Expeditions crafts active adventures and exceptional cultural journeys for travelers seeking off-the-beaten-path journeys. All Three Camel Lodge bookings and tours are arranged by Nomadic Expeditions.

For more information about traveling with us, please visit www.NomadicExpeditions.com

Both Three Camel Lodge and Nomadic Expeditions have been honored with industry accolades because of our dedication to excellence and commitment to preservation and protection of the lands we showcase.

Nomadic Expeditions

Condé Nast Traveler

“Top Travel Specialist” for Mongolia
Jalsa Urubshurow, President

National Geographic Adventure

“One of the 50 Best Adventure Travel Companies on Earth”

Travel + Leisure

“Best Life Changing Trips”
“One of the Best Adventure-Travel Outfitters”
“20 Life Changing Trips”

Three Camel Lodge

National Geographic Traveler
National Geographic Adventure

“World’s Best Lodges”
“Top 50 EcoLodges”



THREE CAMEL LODGE

The Gobi, Mongolia

 NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
UNIQUE LODGES
OF THE WORLD™



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