

# MONGOLIA EXPLORER

*Nine Days*

*Season: May – October*



NOMADIC EXPEDITIONS





## MONGOLIA EXPLORER

*Nine Days*

For restless people, there's a land where no one settles. Seamlessly explore this storied realm of nomadic adventure, ancient culture, and otherworldly beauty. Whether exploring the must-see sites of the capital of Ulaanbaatar, camel trekking across seas of dunes, or discovering fossils at the iconic Flaming Cliffs—you will connect deeply with one of the wildest places on Earth. Staying in luxuriously appointed traditional gers and meeting eminently hospitable local people—you will come to know more than a place, but a timeless way of life.

It is said that only in wide-open spaces do we ever truly have vision, and majestic Mongolia is sure to inspire with its diversity of landscapes, plants and wildlife, starry skies, and dramatic sunrises and sunsets.

## DEPARTURE DATE(S):

This is a private journey offered from May to October

## RECOMMENDED FOR:

Travelers who want to experience the incredible landscapes and nomadic culture of Mongolia in a shorter timeframe.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

Flaming Cliffs

Hike through Yol Valley National Park

Ride camels in the Gobi

Terelj National Park

## ACCOMMODATIONS:

4 nights at Shangri-La Hotel, Ulaanbaatar

1 night at Terelj Hotel & Spa, Terelj

3 nights at the award-winning Three Camel Lodge, Gobi

Buddhism began in 1990 when Mongolia became a democracy.

Monasteries across the country are again opening their doors to worshippers, and the few lamas who survived the purges are training. Strolling through the monastery grounds, hear the low tones of the horns used to call the lamas to the temple and observe their daily rituals, including the reading of sutras, the teachings of the Buddha. Also visit the magnificent statue of Migjid Janraisig, "the lord who looks in every direction." This 82-foot high statue, gilded in pure gold and clothed in silk and precious stones, completely fills one of Gandan's temples.

Next, explore the National Museum for an excellent overview of Mongolia's history and culture. The newly remodeled museum displays traditional implements of daily nomadic life including Stone and Bronze Age artifacts, historical costumes of Mongolia's minority tribes, sacred religious relics, and agricultural, fishing, and hunting equipment.

After visiting the National Museum, you will visit the Zanabazar Fine Arts Museum. Named in honor of Zanabazar, the renowned 17th-century artist and politician who was also the first Buddhist leader of Mongolia, the museum contains one of the best collections of Buddhist art and artifacts in the world, including many of Zanabazar's original works.

Drive to Zaisan Memorial, built by the former Soviet Union to commemorate fallen soldiers of World War II. Those who climb the 300 steps will be rewarded with a beautiful panoramic view of the capital city, the Tuul River, and the surrounding countryside. Enjoy your welcome dinner at a local restaurant.

*(Shangri-La Hotel - Deluxe Room; B, L, D)*

## Day 1

### WELCOME TO ULAANBAATAR

The contrast between ancient traditions and a 21st-century democracy is most visible in Ulaanbaatar, where traditional gers and Buddhist monasteries sit side by side with modern high-rises.

Upon arrival at the airport, you are welcomed by your Mongolian guide and transferred to a centrally located hotel within walking distance of various museums and shops.

*(Shangri-La Hotel - Deluxe Room)*

## Day 2

### IN ULAANBAATAR

Begin the day a visit to Gandan Monastery, the seat of Buddhism in Mongolia. Although Buddhist monasteries were either destroyed or converted into museums during the Stalinist purges of the 1930s, Gandan Monastery continued to operate as a showpiece for government officials. However, in spite of the government's efforts to suppress Buddhism and other religious beliefs, Mongolia's spirituality persisted and a significant resurgence of

## Day 3

### GORKHI TERELJ NATIONAL PARK

After breakfast, drive to nearby Gorkhi-Terelj National Park (2 hours). Comprised of the southern Khentii mountain range, this mountain, forest, steppe region provides habitat for a variety of bird and plant life.

In the afternoon, embark on a hike towards the Aryabal Monastery. A hike up along a steep road, leads to a wooden suspended bridge called "The Bridge that leads to wisdom". After crossing the bridge, you trek up 108 steps to finally arrive at the temple. Along the way, the path is lined with signboards displaying Buddha's teachings. The monastery is special for its spectacular views of the surrounding valley.

*(Terelj Hotel & Spa - Deluxe Room; B, L, D)*





#### Day 4

### RETURN TO ULAANBAATAR

After breakfast, depart for Ulaanbaatar. En route, visit the Chinggis Khan Equestrian Statue in Tsonjin Boldog. The massive statue made of 250 tons of gleaming stainless steel will take your breath away. Once inside the two-story base of the statue, visitors can see a replica of Chinggis Khan's legendary golden whip and also take an elevator to a deck on the horse's head and marvel at the surrounding area overlooking the beautiful Mongolian steppes.

Return to Ulaanbaatar and in the afternoon visit the Central Museum of Mongolian Dinosaurs to explore dinosaur fossils artifacts and some real paleontological gems. The museum displays openly mounted skeletons of original fossils and is truly a rare sight to behold. Continue on to the paleontology laboratory where you will join a paleontologist for a behind-the-scenes tour of a local laboratory and examine the latest batch of dinosaur fossils excavated from the field.

*(Shangri-La Hotel - Deluxe Room; B, L, D)*

#### Day 5

### FLY TO GOBI | YOL VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

Set off in the morning across the vast steppe to the Gobi (1.5 hours). Contrary to the sameness that the word 'desert' suggests, the Gobi is a fascinating and diverse region, and includes the sites of some of the most important paleontological discoveries of the 20th century.

Upon arrival, drive to Yol Valley National Park (45 minutes), 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.

After your exploration of Yol Valley, drive to the award winning Three Camel Lodge (1.5 hours) located at Bulagtai Mountain on the edge of Gobi Gurvan Saikhan National Park. The lodge offers a wide variety of activities to travelers from archery, biking, nature walks, cooking class, reading a book on Mongolia to watching a documentary about nomadic culture, and from learning traditional Mongolian games to enjoying a relaxing massage.

The Three Camel Lodge has partnered with The Mongolian Bankhar Dog Project to breed, train and place this native breed of dogs with qualified herder host families. Bankhar dogs play a critical role—safeguarding the livestock of Mongolian herding families from predator species such as snow leopards and wolves. Today we visit with one of the families who had adopted one of the Bankhar dogs.

*(Three Camel Lodge - Deluxe Ger; B, L, D)*

#### Day 6

### HAVTSGAIT VALLEY | MOLTSOG ELS

In the morning, drive to the Havtsgait Valley, site of ancient rock drawings left by early Gobi settlers for more than 5,000-7,000 years ago. Hundreds of petroglyphs adorn rocks scattered on



  
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the top of the mountain. In the late afternoon, drive to Moltsoq Els, one of the few regions of the Gobi covered by sand dunes. Explore the sand dunes on foot or on back of a Bactrian camel.

*(Three Camel Lodge - Deluxe Ger; B, L, D)*

#### Day 7

### MOLTSOG ELS SAND DUNES | FLAMING CLIFFS

Spend the morning on horseback and explore the area surrounding the lodge.

In the late afternoon, travel to the legendary "Flaming Cliffs" It was here, in 1922, that Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews and his exploration team from the American Museum of Natural History found the first nest of dinosaur eggs the world has ever seen. After a safety briefing, mount your camels and explore the area surrounding the dunes on back of a bactrian camel (1.5 - 2 hours).

*(Three Camel Lodge - Deluxe Ger; B, L, D)*

#### Day 8

### RETURN TO ULAANBAATAR

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Ulaanbataar. Upon arrival, join a paleontologist for a behind-the-scenes tour of a local laboratory and examine the latest batch of dinosaur fossils excavated from the field.

On arrival, explore Mongolian Art Gallery or an art gallery exhibit of young Mongolian upcoming artists. Spend the afternoon at leisure or explore the city's shops, art galleries and museums.

Enjoy farewell dinner at a fine local restaurant..

*(Shangri-La Hotel - Deluxe Room; B, L, D)*

#### Day 9

### DEPARTURE

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your departing flight.

*(B)*

*B=Breakfast L=Lunch D=Dinner*

*Nomadic Expeditions reserves the right to change the above itinerary if necessary.*



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## LAND PRICE

2 Travelers: From \$7,925 per person

Internal Airfare: \$380 per person

Single Supplement: From \$1,055 per person

NOTE: Land Price is based on double occupancy and Internal Airfare is subject to change by airlines

## LAND PRICE INCLUDES:

- Ground transportation in Mongolia as described in the itinerary;
- Transfers upon arrival and departure;
- All accommodations based on double or twin occupancy (hotel rooms and gers);
- Meals as noted in itinerary;
- Bottled/filtered water throughout the trip and soft drinks at meals;
- Horse and camel riding as mentioned in the itinerary
- All excursions, entrance fees, and visits as described in itinerary;
- Extensive pre-departure Travel Guide, reading list, important information about your trip, map, and luggage tags;
- Bilingual Nomadic Expeditions guide throughout your stay.

## LAND PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- International airfare; internal airfare is quoted separately and subject to change by airlines;
- Passport and visa fees;
- Comprehensive medical and trip insurance;
- Airport taxes;
- Excess baggage charges;
- Photography and video fees;
- Tips to guides and drivers;
- Food and beverages not included in the group meals;
- Items of personal nature, including alcoholic beverages, laundry, and telephone calls;
- Other items not specifically mentioned as included.

# WHY TRAVEL WITH NOMADIC EXPEDITIONS?

## *Unrivaled Expertise*

Nomadic Expeditions was founded in 1992. Nothing can compete with the experience we have attained over 25+ years of designing luxury adventure travel to Asia. While each trip we design is slightly different than its predecessor, our breadth of knowledge, network of contacts, and experience in the field is unrivaled.

## *Our People*

We hire the best in the business to create and execute memorable journeys for our clients. From our Expedition Specialists in the United States, Ulaanbaatar, Lhasa, and Thimpu who turn wish lists into reality to our English-speaking, professionally trained guides who share their extensive knowledge of the culture and natural history of our destinations, our staff is what makes Nomadic Expeditions successful.

## *Passion for Travel*

While our journeys open your eyes to a whole new world of experiences, we understand that choosing to book a trip with us requires time spent away from friends, family, and work. Your time is precious and we take that to heart. It's why we design journeys that go beyond a checklist of attractions. When you travel with us, we want you to remember drinking tea with a nomadic family or digging for fossils with a renowned paleontologist. We imbue our trips with encounters, whether it's with a local resident, a high-ranking government official, or a renowned wildlife conservationist, so you take home more than a set of photographs to frame on your nightstand.

## *Our Philosophy*

Nomadic Expeditions was founded on the principle of treading lightly long before sustainable travel was a buzz phrase. Every expedition is undertaken with the greatest respect for the lands we explore and the local people we meet. Those who travel with us do so with the assurance that the preservation and protection of the ecosystems and cultures we visit is of the utmost importance to us, both as individuals and as a company. Respect for the places we travel to is at the heart of everything we do, but over our 25+ years we have realized additional opportunities where we can lend a hand. We have gone beyond simply treading lightly and have wholeheartedly partnered with local communities and regions. Read more about our sustainable practices and philanthropic efforts on our website.

*We would love to share this exceptional adventure with you!*

Our Expedition Specialists are available from 9:00 AM- 5:00 PM EST, Monday thru Friday

Nomadic Expeditions, Inc. | 57 Station Road | Cranbury, NJ 08512 USA

Phone: 800-998-6634 or 609-860-9008 | Fax: 609-860-9608 | Email: [info@nomadicexpeditions.com](mailto:info@nomadicexpeditions.com)

