



MONGOLIA: NAADAM FESTIVAL & THE KHAN LEGACY - A MARCO POLO JOURNEY (2024)

On a journey filled with unique cultural experiences, retrace the footsteps of the Khan legacy as you take in a centuries-old Mongolian festival and explore the far-flung wilds of the Gobi Desert.

Small Group Journeys, Marco Polo Small Group Journeys



Asia, Mongolia



10 days from AU\$22,385 pp



18 Guests

Journey Overview

On a journey filled with unique cultural experiences, retrace the footsteps of the Khan legacy as you take in a centuries-old Mongolian festival and explore the far-flung wilds of the Gobi Desert.

Journey Highlights

- Experience one of the continent's oldest celebrations of skill, strength and daring at the annual Naadam Festival, witnessing the pageantry of the opening ceremonies and taking in the traditional contests of archery, wrestling and horse racing
- Spend three nights in the Gobi at Three Camel Lodge, a boutique property modelled after traditional Mongolian *gers*
- Ride a camel through Moltsoog Els, taking in a vast dunescape seldom seen by Western eyes
- Explore the Flaming Cliffs, a haunting landscape where palaeontologists first unearthed fossilised dinosaur eggs



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Arrive in in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar, where you are transferred to your hotel.

Shangri-La Ulaanbaatar

Day 2: Ulaanbaatar | Introduction to an Empire

Visit the recently opened Chinggis Khaan Museum, the largest in Mongolia, with thousands of artifacts on display. View items from tombs and private collections, and other priceless objects related to Genghis Khan and Mongolian history, accompanied by an expert on the subject. Return to your hotel for time at leisure. Tonight, gather for a special welcome dinner at your hotel.

Shangri-La Ulaanbaatar / Meals: BLD

Day 3: Gobi Desert | Dunes, Canyons & Wide-Open Skies

Fly to the Gobi Desert, home to such diverse species as Bactrian (two-humped) camel, mountain sheep, golden eagle and many endemic reptiles. Begin with a visit to the Gobi Museum of Nature and History for an introduction into the region's extensive natural riches and interesting history. This afternoon, witness local archers demonstrate a skill that gave rise to the former Mongol empire. This evening, savour a Scenic Sundowner and a sunset dinner. Later, marvel as the stars paint the vast desert skies.

Three Camel Lodge / Meals: BLD

Day 4: Gobi Desert | Valley of the Eagles

Journey overland to the Yol Valley, a narrow, craggy chasm. Hike the valley for a chance to spot vulture-like lammergeier, Altai snowcock, ibex, yak and Argali mountain sheep.

Three Camel Lodge / Meals: BLD

Day 5: Gobi Desert | Camel Ride & the Flaming Cliffs

Ride Like a Local on a Bactrian camel through the dunes of Moltsoo Els for insight into a way of life that has endured for centuries. Afterward, visit the Flaming Cliffs, a place rich with dinosaur fossils and the site where dinosaur eggs were first found.

Three Camel Lodge | Meals: BLD

Day 6: Gobi Desert | The Art of Ger Construction

Visit a local camel-herding family in their home and later witness the construction of a ger (traditional Mongolian dwelling). In the afternoon, you may opt to hike through the Havsagit Valley to discover ancient petroglyphs atop a mountain.

Three Camel Lodge | Meals: BLD

Day 7: Ulaanbaatar | Past Meets Present

Fly to Ulaanbaatar where you visit Gandan Khiid Monastery with its 75-foot statue made of copper, gold and precious stones, accompanied by a top-ranking lama who discusses monastic life. Afterward, visit a fine arts museum, followed by a performance featuring traditional Mongolian dancers and khoomi throat singers. Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.

Shangri-La Hotel Ulaanbaatar | Meals: BLD

Day 8: Ulaanbaatar | Naadam Festival

Attend the opening ceremonies of the annual Naadam Festival, where the nation's best athletes compete in tests of strength and skill. Take in all of the pageantry of the elaborate opening ceremony, an event showcasing local dancers, athletes, horse riders and musicians.

Shangri-La Hotel Ulaanbaatar | Meals: BLD

Day 9: Ulaanbaatar | A Parting Glimpse

Enjoy a second day at the Naadam Festival, attending a range of events and competitions featuring archery, traditional wrestling and horse racing. This evening, gather with fellow guests for a farewell dinner.

Shangri-La Hotel Ulaanbaatar | Meals: BLD

Day 10: Depart Ulaanbaatar

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight.

Meals: B

Journey Details

Internal air included: Ulaanbaatar/Dalanzadgad/Ulaanbaatar

Minimum age is 10 years.

This journey contains some active elements.

First group event: welcome briefing at 9:00 a.m. on Day 2.

Last group event: farewell dinner at 7:30 p.m. on Day 9.

Departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 2 guests.

Program Note: Travel in this remote region entails extended drives over unpaved roads, visits to sites with limited accessibility for those with mobility challenges, and limited access to Western cuisine.

Included with every Marco Polo Journey

- English-Speaking Resident Tour Director and Local Guides
- Hand-Selected Luxury Accommodations (Where Available)
- Airport Meet and Greet with Private Transfers
- Travelling Bell Boy Luggage Handling
- Breakfast in Bed on Select Days
- Full Breakfast Daily; Select Lunches and Dinners
- Traveller's Valet Laundry Service
- Internet Access (Where Available)
- Entrance Fees, Taxes and All Gratuities Except Resident Tour Director
- 24/7 A&K On-Call Support
- Guaranteed Departures with Just Two Guests

Customise this Journey

Talk to one of our expert Journey Designers or your travel agent about booking this tour as a private journey for your own small group with family or friends. Or, if you would prefer to travel privately, find out more about creating the perfect bespoke Tailor-Made Journey based on this itinerary.

Map



Accommodation

Shangri-La Ulaanbaatar



Soaring 95 metres over the city, the 21-storey, glass-walled Shangri-La Ulaanbataar is located in the heart of the Mongolian capital. The first thing that strikes you when you enter is the four monumental chandeliers hanging above a marble lobby – a sign of what’s in store throughout the hotel. Venture inside to find 290 guest rooms, each spanning at least 42 square metres, amongst the largest in the city. All rooms are delicately designed with an indigenous flavour and modern amenities: a deluxe deep-soaking bathtub and rain shower, minibar, LED TV, Italian sheets, air-conditioning and complimentary Wi-Fi. Rooms and suites overlook either Nayramdal Park to the south or Great Chinggis Khaan Square and panoramic vistas of the city to the north.

Impressive culinary delights await in the hotel’s four restaurants: Café Park presents a variety of cuisines from around the globe with a theatrical open-kitchen concept – the first in the city. Naadam boasts commanding views of the city, mountains and more and regional Chinese dishes are the flavour at Hutong. The refined surrounds of the Lobby Lounge make for excellent people-watching over afternoon tea and beverages. The Health Club includes a gym, Jacuzzi, sauna and steam bath and restorative massage and aromatherapy treatments are available.

Why we like it

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- Panoramic views in some of the largest guest rooms in the city
 - Only moments from the Great Chinggis Khan Square and other iconic sites
 - Four excellent restaurants
 - Spacious bathrooms with deep-soaking bathtubs and rain showers

Three Camel Lodge



Spectacularly located against a backdrop of the Altai Mountains, a scattering of felt-covered gers peppers the vast expanse of the Gobi. This is Three Camel Lodge, an extraordinary ecolodge that celebrates the traditions of Mongolia's nomads accommodating guests in traditional tents in breathtaking surrounds.

The 40 gers are authentic and locally made from latticed wood covered in thick felt and canvas. Hand-painted, carved furniture, wool carpets and wood-burning stoves have been carefully selected to create a comfortable, warm and luxurious environment. Like the gers, the main lodge reflects its surroundings. It was designed in the style of ancient Buddhist temples, using traditional wooden peg construction and hand-moulded roof tiles.

Throughout the lodge, modern conveniences are subtly integrated into the traditional design. Meals are a combination of western and regional fare, while the cosy bar is the place to recline with a drink and reminisce about the day's adventures. Other facilities include a spa offering massage treatments, a well-stocked library and an entertainment centre with TV, movies, and games.

The lodge offers a full spectrum of activities to experience the Gobi and become immersed in its intriguing nature and culture, from visits with nomads in their homes to throat-singing performances, and exploring the Flaming Cliffs with leading paleontologists.

Why we like it

- Stay in the traditional-style felt tents of Mongolia's nomadic herders
- Unobstructed views of the majestic desert and the Gobi-Altai Mountains

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- Main lodge designed in the style of an ancient Buddhist temple
 - Admirable environmental and cultural sustainability practices
 - Stargazing across the vast Gobi desert sky

Dates & Pricing

Prices are in AUD, per person, based on double occupancy

Jul 4, 2024 - Jul 13, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$22,385 pp	AU\$6,145	Included	Call for Availability

Jul 9, 2024 - Jul 18, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$22,385 pp	AU\$6,145	Included	Call for Availability

Abercrombie & Kent

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