



Discover Mongolia's diverse land and people, from the bustle of Ulaanbaatar and alpine beauty of Khovsgol Lake to the vast expanse of the Gobi Desert. Meet with nomadic herding families, learn about ancient shamanistic beliefs, ride a camel in the desert dunes, and discover why Mongolia is known as the "Land of Blue Sky" during stays in authentic ger tents—just as modern-day nomads and their ancestors have done for centuries.

For more information and registration, visit us at
www.uaf.edu/summer/travel
or call (907)474-7021

Travel insurance with at least \$50,000 in medical coverage and \$200,000 in emergency medical evacuation coverage is required for this trip. Additional information about the coverage requirements and insurance options will be provided when you register.

Note about Mobility: Our tours are designed for people who can walk comfortably for up to 3 miles per day, sometimes on uneven terrain, as well as handle stairs easily. If you have any concerns about this tour, please contact Summer Sessions.

Due to the remote locations of this adventure, the itinerary is subject to change. While you will still enjoy all the included activities, frequent updates to local flight schedules may result in a change in the order of your itinerary.

Tour Dates:

September 18 -
October 4, 2027

Tour Cost:

\$7,995.00

Single supplement: \$600

Extra room night, 9/17/27,
\$250

Inclusions:

- 24/7 Tour Director/Guide
- Accommodations
- In country transportation
- Entry fees
- Gratuities
- Educational programs
- Three meals per day
- Transfer to and from the airport

Transportation costs to and from Mongolia are NOT included in this tour price. All travelers must arrange their own transportation to and from the starting and ending cities.

Arrival Day, September 17: Arrive in Ulaanbaatar

This is your extra room night. You will be met at the airport and transferred to the hotel. The remainder of the day is free to rest and recover from travel. Explore and dine independently. This additional night allows travelers to be rested and ready for the start of the program on September 18.

Day 1, September 18: Ulaanbaatar

Begin your Mongolian adventure with a late afternoon welcome briefing followed by a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 2, September 19: Discover Ulaanbaatar

Our journey commences with an introduction to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia's capital and largest city. Visit Gandan Monastery, one of Mongolia's most important Buddhist centers, where you will meet with a lama and learn more about Buddhism and its role in Mongolian culture. Take time to admire the monastery's distinctive architecture and listen for the sounds of chanting monks. After lunch, enjoy a walking tour within the vicinity of the hotel.



Day 3, September 20: Gorkhi-Terelj National Park

Visit a local market to browse stalls featuring produce, dairy products, and other local goods. Share a traditional lunch in the home of a Kazakh family and have an opportunity to learn about the culture and daily life of Mongolia's Kazakh community. Continue to Gorkhi-Terelj National Park, a spectacular region of forested hills, granite formations, mountain streams, and wide-open valleys.

Meet a local nomadic family, and explore their way of life, and learn to turn milk into cheese.

Settle into your traditional *ger* accommodations individual tents, like those used by Mongolian nomads, and each *ger* comes with its own private bath facilities, and enjoy some time to explore the camp and surrounding landscape.



Day 4, September 21: Gorkhi-Terelj National Park

Spend the day exploring the natural beauty of Gorkhi-Terelj National Park. Hike to Aryabal Meditation Temple, a peaceful Buddhist temple situated high above the valley. From the temple grounds, enjoy panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and countryside. On the return, stop at the park's famous Turtle Rock, a dramatic granite formation that has become one of Mongolia's most recognizable landmarks. After lunch, learn about the ancient art of falconry.





Day 5, September 22: Gorkhi-Terelj National Park

Travel to the impressive Genghis Khan Equestrian Statue, one of Mongolia's most famous landmarks. The enormous statue depicts Genghis Khan on horseback and stands above a visitor center and museum offering insight into his life and legacy. Return to the ger camp for lunch, then visit a nomadic horse-breeding family. Learn about the central role horses play in Mongolian culture and daily life and gain a firsthand glimpse into the traditions of Mongolia's pastoral communities. Enjoy a final evening at the ger camp, including a traditional khorkhog, or Mongolian hot-stone barbecue.



Day 6, September 23: Ulaanbaatar

Return to Ulaanbaatar and visit Magical Land: Child Protection and Development Center of Mongolia, supported in part by the Grand Circle Foundation. Learn about the organization's work supporting children and addressing issues affecting vulnerable youth in Mongolia. After lunch, check into the hotel and enjoy free time to explore Ulaanbaatar on your own. This evening, travel in small groups to the homes of local families for a Home-Hosted Dinner. Help prepare the meal, share conversation, and learn more about everyday life in Mongolia from your hosts.



Day 7, September 24: Lake Khovsgol

Fly from Ulaanbaatar to Moron, the administrative center of northern Mongolia's Khovsgol Province. From Moron, travel overland to the shores of beautiful Lake Khovsgol, one of Mongolia's most picturesque destinations. Lake Khovsgol is surrounded by forests, mountains, meadows, and crystal-clear streams. The region is also home to several Mongolian ethnic groups and reindeer herding communities.

Day 8, September 25: Lake Khovsgol

Begin the day with a boat excursion on Lake Khovsgol, weather permitting. Enjoy the clear waters and spectacular scenery of this pristine alpine lake. Later, visit a local female shaman and learn about Mongolian shamanism, one of the country's oldest spiritual traditions. Discover how shamanistic beliefs continue to influence aspects of Mongolian culture and nomadic life. In the afternoon, experience the landscape from horseback during a ride in the area surrounding the lake.



Day 9, September 26: Lake Khovsgol

Meet a yak-herding family on the Mongolian steppe and learn how the family depends on their animals for food, clothing, and other necessities. Participate in some of their daily activities, like milking yaks and helping with camp chores, and talk with your hosts about life as a nomadic family.

Continue to the village of Khatgal, and meet a local entrepreneur who operates an ice cream business while herding yak on the side.

Day 10, September 27: Ulaanbaatar

Travel back to Moron and fly to Ulaanbaatar.

After lunch at a local restaurant, the remainder of the afternoon is free. Consider visiting Zaisan Hill, and climbing 284 steps for panoramic views of the city and the four sacred mountains that surround it, it—Bayanzurkh, Chingeltei, Khaikhan, Bogd Khaan, or explore the city at your own pace.



Day 11, September 28: Ulaanbaatar

Meet with an expert in international affairs to discuss Mongolia's relationship with its two powerful neighbors, Russia and China, and the challenges of maintaining its independence while developing relationships with countries around the world.

Visit a workshop where traditional morin khuur, or horse-head fiddles, registered on UNESCO's World Heritage of Art and Cultural Objects list, are made.

Learn about traditional Tsam dance during a visit to nearby Dashchoilon Monastery, the first Buddhist monastery to introduce Tsam dancing to Mongolia. A masked and costumed performance, Tsam combines music, storytelling, and religious symbolism to bless and purify the community, and is traditionally performed by monks. This evening, attend a traditional Mongolian performance, which may include throat singing, morin khuur music, folk singing, dancing, and other traditional arts.



Day 12, September 29: Gobi Desert

Wake up early for a short flight to the Gobi Desert, a vast and diverse landscape of rocky outcrops, rolling gravel plains, and desert valleys. The Gobi is the world's northernmost desert and is renowned for its dinosaur fossils. When Marco Polo, seeking the fabled capital of the Kublai Khan, encountered this vast and unforgiving landscape in the 1270s, he proclaimed, "It consists entirely of mountains and sands and valleys. There is nothing at all to eat." But nomads—and wildlife—do survive here (and you will certainly be well-fed as we venture into this mysterious, otherworldly region). It is home to nomadic families and wildlife, including the rare Bactrian (two-humped) camel, Gobi bear, and snow leopard.

Get settled in our desert camp, participate in an optional archery lesson, and explore.



Day 13, September 30: Gobi Desert

Begin the day by exploring one of the few regions of the Gobi covered in dunes at Moltsoog Els. Visit a family who breeds Bactrian camels. There, we'll have an opportunity to ride one of their twin-humped animals through the desert sands.

Drive to Bayanzag, more commonly referred to as the Flaming Cliffs. This region is famous as the location of the first nest of dinosaur eggs and other fossils found here by the American paleontologist Roy Chapman Andrews in the 1920s—and it was he who nicknamed the site "Flaming Cliffs" for the surreal, glowing orange color of the surrounding rocks and cliffs.

Enjoy a bit of light trekking among Flaming Cliffs before driving back to our camp.



Day 14, October 1: Gobi Desert

Visit the Yol Valley (also known as Vulture Valley). We'll travel across the Gobi Desert toward the Gurvan Saikhan Mountains and enter the deep gorge of this national park. This area sees little precipitation; however, it does contain a deep ice field that grows to more than 10 feet thick and over 2 miles long by the end of winter. Decades ago, it remained intact year round, but due to the effects of climate change, it now tends to disappear by July.

Visit a small museum at the entrance to the protected zone, where we'll learn more about the petrified trees, flora, and fauna of the Gobi Desert.

Enjoy a 2-hour hike amid impressive mountain scenery, taking time to notice the region's endemic plants and local wildlife, including the valley's namesake, the lammergeier vulture (*yol* in Mongolian). You may wish to take advantage of the camps' amenities, such as the pool, sauna, and spa.



Day 15, October 2: Ulaanbaatar

Enjoy our last day at camp in the Gobi Desert. This evening, we depart camp and drive to Dalanzadgad, where we board a short flight to Ulaanbaatar.



Day 16, October 3: Ulaanbaatar

Explore on your own in Ulaanbaatar today. You may choose to shop, rest, pack, or visit the the Zanabazar Museum of Fine Arts, home to a collection of Mongolian art from prehistory through the early 20th century.

This evening, gather to celebrate our adventure at our Farewell Dinner.



Day 17, October 4: Return to the U.S.

Transfer to the airport for your return flight home.