

Meeting the Reindeer Herders



Big Mongolia
TRAVEL



| Summary

In the boreal forests in the northern mountains of Mongolia lives a group of people called the Dukha, Tsaatan in Mongolian. This group of people believe have a strong connection to nature and practice Tengherism, or shamanism, and believe the spirits in the forest watch over them. Historically, the Tsaatan have led a sustainable life by herding reindeer, from which their lives and culture depend on. Recently, as reindeer populations have shrunk and wars over the past 100 years has displaced them, there are said to be only 40 families left.

During the summer, the Tsaatan camp can only be reached by horse. You will fly up north and depart on an expedition by car and horse to live among the Tsaatan for a few days along with your guides, drivers, and your own cook!

Many nonprofits and government agencies donate necessary goods to the Tsaatan's way of life, although it does not help them keep their culture. Tourism can marginally help provide a supplement to their income as travelers, respectfully, visit this area and take an interest in their reindeer and their way of life.

Highlights

- ✓ Meet the Reindeer Herders and spend time living among them.
- ✓ Embark on an unforgettable expedition by horseback.
- ✓ Experience the alpine mountains of northern Mongolia.
- ✓ Private 4x4 vehicle with a driver and guide. Enjoy the changing scenery inside your own vehicle.
- ✓ Experience the Mongolian Gers (yurts) in comfortable lodges in rural Mongolia.



Time of year to go: June to August
Number of days: 12



Itinerary Overview

| | | |
|----------|---|----------|
| Day 1 | Arrival in Mongolia | Hotel |
| Day 2 | Flight to Murun | Ger camp |
| Day 3 | Drive to Darkhad Valley | Tent |
| Day 4 | Tsagaan Nuur area and Khogorgo Valley | Tent |
| Day 5 | Horse Ride to Reindeer camp | Tipi |
| Days 6-7 | Reindeer Herder Days | Tipi |
| Day 8 | Horse ride and drive Back to Tsagaan nuur village | Tent |
| Day 9 | Drive back to Murun | Ger Camp |
| Day 10 | Flight back to Ulaanbaatar | Hotel |
| Day 11 | Ulaanbaatar Day | Hotel |
| Day 12 | Departure Day | |



| Days 1 and 2

Day 1:

Arrival in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Welcome to Mongolia! You will arrive in Ulaanbaatar, the capital, where your guide and driver will be waiting for you. You will then be transferred to your hotel where you can freshen up. If you are not too tired from your long flight, your guide will take you to the Mongolia Museum of Natural History, the Gandan Buddhist Monastery, and in the evening, you can see a traditional Mongolian folk concert with dance and throat singing.

- ◆ Accommodation: Hotel
- ◆ Travel: None
- ◆ Meals Included: Lunch, Dinner



Day 2: Flight to Murun

After breakfast, we will take a flight to the north of Mongolia to a town called Murun. Once we land in, our guide and driver will welcome us and take us to our ger camp. We will take a short coffee and tea break, then head out on a short tour to the Uushgiin Uvur deer stone monuments. These deer stones date back to the bronze age. While Mongolia is known to hold many deer stone monuments, these are particularly known for having stayed in such good condition. After our short tour of the deer stone monuments, we will head to the local town to visit the museum and the local markets.

- ◆ Accommodation: Ger Camp
- ◆ Travel: 600 KM (370 miles); 1hour 15 minute flight - 18 km (11 miles); 30 minute drive
- ◆ Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



| Days 3, 4 and 5

Day 3: Drive to Darkhad Valley

In the morning, we will head to the border office to register and get permission to head into the Darkhad valley, bringing you another step closer to visiting the Reindeer people. Darkhad valley is 40km wide and 160km long, situated in between the Ulaan Taiga and the Khoridol Saridag mountain range. This area's stunning beauty will knock you off your feet with its lakes, rivers, and lush forests.

- ◆ Accommodation: Tent
- ◆ Travel: 200 km (124 miles); 6 hour drive
- ◆ Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 4: Tsagaan Nuur area and Khogorgo Valley

Once we break camp, we will then journey on towards the Khogorgo River via Tsagaan Nuur village. This village, established in 1985 during the communist era of Mongolia, is the closest town to where the Reindeer herders live. After arriving, we will first make a quick stop to confirm your border permission at the border office, and then make a short drive to the Khogorgo valley to meet a Mongolian family. The Mongolian family that you meet are a different ethnic group than the Tsaatan (Reindeer Herders). In the evening, our horses and horse wranglers will join us for our next step in our journey.

- ◆ Accommodation: Tent
- ◆ Travel: 170 km (105 miles); 5 hour drive
- ◆ Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 5: Horse ride to Reindeer camp

Once we load all our bags on the horses, we will continue our expedition into the Taiga on horse towards the Reindeer people's camp. After we make our initial greetings with the Reindeer herders, we will set up our camp.

- ◆ Travel: 60 km (37 miles); 5 hour by horse
- ◆ Accommodation: Tipi
- ◆ Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

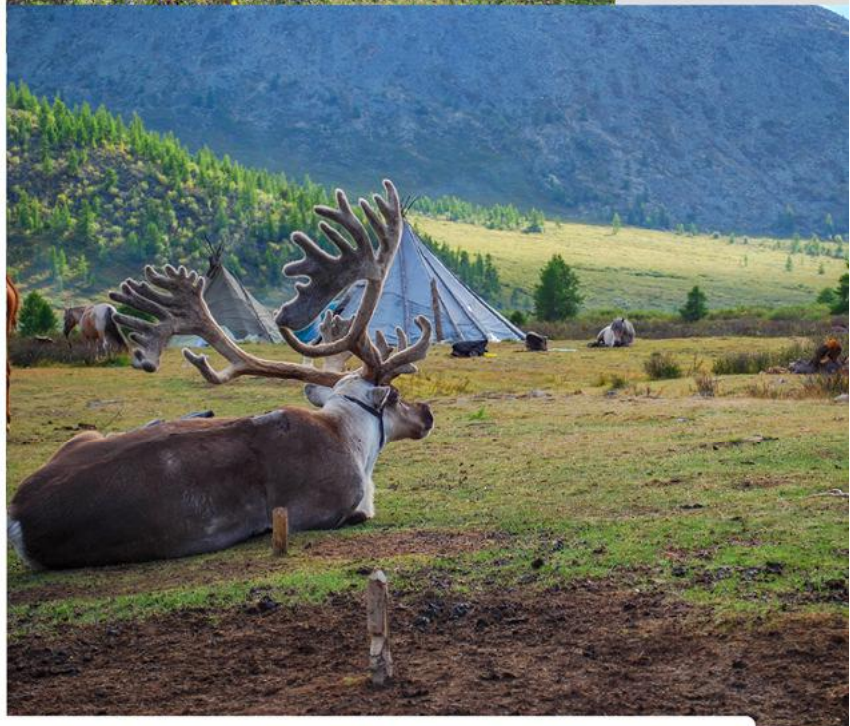


| Days 6 and 7

Days 6 and 7: Reindeer Herder days

During our stay with the Reindeer people, we will spend time learning about their lifestyle and helping out with their day to day work. Some of these activities can include milking reindeer, tethering calves, and rounding up and herding the reindeer in the evening.

- ◆ Travel: None
- ◆ Accommodation: Tipi
- ◆ Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

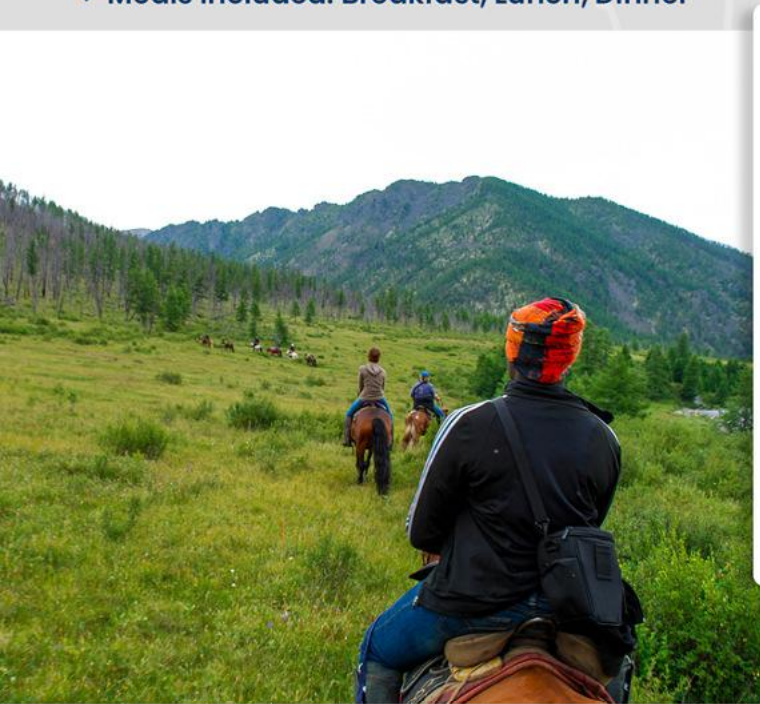


| Days 8 and 9

Day 8: Horse ride and drive back to Tsagaan Nuur village

Today, we will say our farewells to the reindeer people and head back towards Tsagaan Nuur village by horse. We will meet our drivers at a location that the cars are able to reach, and then head to the village. This will be the last day on horse and in the Taiga so we will take it slow and enjoy the beautiful scenery and the ride. We will arrive in Tsagaan Nuur village in the evening and stay at a local ger camp. Today we will say goodbye to our Reindeer people and head back to Tsagaannuur village.

- ◆ Travel: 60 km (37 miles); 5 hours by horse
- ◆ Accommodation: Tent
- ◆ Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 9: Drive back to Murun

Today is our driving day back to Murun. As we return, you will be able to enjoy the various scenery as we make our way towards the ger camp. Welcome back to civilization!

- ◆ Accommodation: Ger camp
- ◆ Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- ◆ Travel: 270 km (168 miles); 9 hour drive



| Days 10, 11 and 12

Day 10: Flight back to Ulaanbaatar

We will have our breakfast and then head towards the local airport in Murun. We will take an hour long flight back to the capital, Ulaanbaatar, and check into your hotel. After having a nice dinner back in civilization, we can rest up for the night, or head out to see some nightly sites.

- ◆ Accommodation: Hotel
- ◆ Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- ◆ Travel: 600 KM (372 miles); 1hour 15 minute flight



Day 11: Ulaanbaatar day

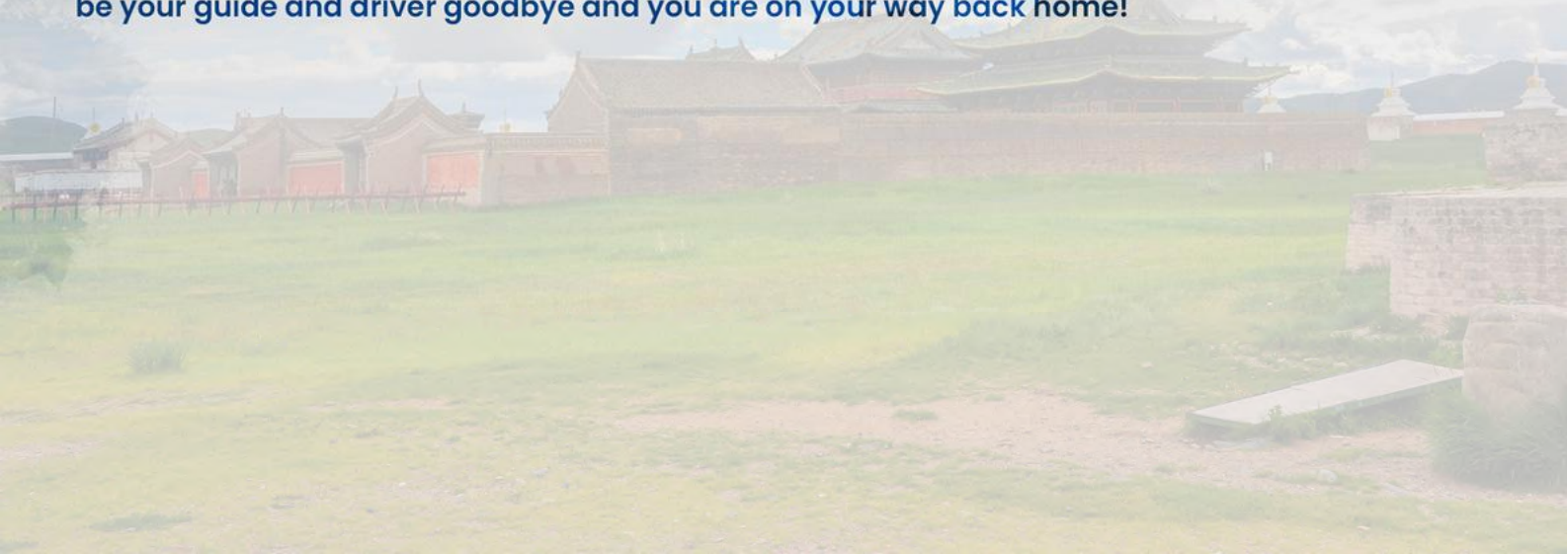


Today you will have time to see more of the sites and museums around the city that you may have missed! Undoubtedly, you will want to do some shopping for Mongolian souvenirs and some of the famous and inexpensive Mongolian cashmere. Let us take you to some of our favorite spots and even a cashmere factory if you would like!

- ◆ Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- ◆ Travel: None
- ◆ Accomodation: Hotel

Day 12: Departure day

Your driver will take you to the airport 3 hours before your international flight. You will be your guide and driver goodbye and you are on your way back home!



| Additional details

Accommodation

Tents and Tipi: While out in the field, we will be staying in comfortable 2 person tents with air mattresses. While we are staying with the Reindeer Herders, we will sleep in their local tipis with air mattresses. We will also have a dining tent in which we will gather and for our cook to prepare our meals. Pump showers and toilet tents equipped with toilet seats for comfort and privacy will be provided.

Ger Camp: Ger camps are Mongolia's answer to a countryside hotel. These camps are made up of many traditional gers, a Mongolian yurt, along with a communal dining hall and western bathroom facilities. Hot water showers are provided during specified times of the day. Each ger can house a couple or a family with comfy beds and clean sheets.



Vehicles

Our vehicles of choice are the Toyota Landcruiser, the Mitsubishi Delica, or the sturdy Russian UAZ Van. All three of these machines are suited to handle the wilds of Mongolia and our drivers know them inside and out like the back of their hands. Our standard is the landcruiser or the delica, but a UAV can be provided upon request.



Guides

All of Big Mongolia Travel's experienced guides not only have a deep knowledge of the land that you are traveling through, but also a passionate to share that knowledge with all its visitors. Each of our multilingual tour guides are chosen to perfectly fit your specific itinerary and your needs.



| Booking

Includes

- Personal cook while out in the field
- All accommodations based on twin share
- All transportation and domestic flights
- All meals on the expedition
- All local staff and field guides
- Entertainments as shown in the itinerary
- National Park and Protected Area fees

Not included

- International flights
- Overweight baggage fees
- Gratuities
- Travel Insurance

Pricing

- **2 Travelers:** \$5,850 per person
- **3-4 Travelers:** \$4,150 per person
- **5-8 Travelers:** \$3,400 per person

Our tours are all-inclusive.

From the moment you land till the moment you take off.

All pricing is based on twin share rooms. Please be aware that changes in the trip can lower or raise the cost per person. If your group has more than 8 people, please contact us and we will send you updated pricing for your specific needs. Please contact us if you are a lone traveler.

How to book

Give us a call or send us a message to check availability.

Have a question about this tour? Need it to be shorter? Longer? Changed up a little? Let us know.

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Big Mongolia

T R A V E L

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