



Photo: Fredrik Sträng



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Photos: Jan Wigsten

## Jalman Meadows

### Khan Khentii Strictly Protected Area

*Surprisingly near the Mongolian capital, Ulaanbaatar, is the southernmost reach of the boreal forest of Siberia, which extends uninterrupted all the way to Europe and across the circumpolar north. These southern reaches are in fact the world's southernmost distribution of wolverine habitat. The Tuul River originates at Jalman Meadows in the Khan Khentii wilderness, an area devoid of people, which is three times the size of Yellowstone National Park in the USA. Within surprisingly short distances, we will experience some of the diverse landscapes of Mongolia and meet the nomadic people that call these landscapes home.*

### Brief Outline Itinerary

On this short journey we will leave for the Khan Khentii wilderness, near Mongolia's capital, Ulaanbaatar, yet remotely located in the Upper Tuul River Valley with its alluvial wooded meadows. The locals have horses, cows, sheep, goats and yaks. On this journey you will stay at low impact ger (yurt) camps. They are fully collapsible "lodges", built in the nomadic style. These camps are put up for the summer season and taken away in the winter, leaving no traces anywhere. We use low-impact indigenous, thus appropriate, technology to offer lodging and sometimes also transportation with the assistance of yak carts or riding horses. Essentially, it means that we can be hosted by the services of the local people living in the area where we travel. There is an option – at additional cost - to camp out by building your own private base next to the river. Bring a yurt on a yak cart and erect it yourself with the help of your local hosts and a private cook.

### Day 1: Ulaanbaatar

Arrive in the Mongolian capital by train or air. We then leave Ulaanbaatar for the Upper Tuul River Valley in the Khan Khentii Strictly Protected Area, some 120 km out of town, a 3 hour drive by bus or jeep. However, if you arrive before 10 a.m. first we will visit the Gandan Lamasery, the liveliest Buddhist monastery in Mongolia. Thereafter we drive one hour on tarmac road out of town, one hour through a beautiful steppe valley, seeing many herdsmen with their livestock. The last hour crosses the ridge at Zamtiin Dava and driving up through forests we reach the Upper Tuul River Valley. These are the winter grazing lands of the local herdsmen, which is why most of them are not in the area in the middle of the summer. This allows for a profusion of wildflowers, such as edelweiss. Met by yak carts, we will load luggage onto them and walk to Jalman Meadows Ger Camp by the Upper Tuul River.



### Day 2-3: Khan Khentii

One full day of exploration of the area. Either on foot, on horseback or using the Russian cataracts available at camp. You choose the pace of your journey here, and also the modes of transport you would like to use. The Hentii Mountains are covered with larch and birch forests. This protected area was established in December 1993 and covers most of the Hentii wilderness, stretching all the way up to the Russian-Siberian frontier. Herdsmen keep their livestock in the southern areas, following a lifestyle that is essentially unchanged since the time of Chinggis Khan. To the north is uninhabited wilderness. Although rarely seen, wolves are numerous in the area. There are also wild boar, moose, red deer (*Cervus elaphus*), marmots and gazelle. Rivers flow down broad steppe valleys past wooded and alluvial meadows with broad leaf forests.

### Day 4: To Ulaanbaatar

After breakfast transfer back to your hotel in Ulaanbaatar (3-3½ hrs).

**Staff:** A Mongolian leader will accompany you at all times. The service will be in English. In addition, the services of the local herdsmen will be hired along with their animals.

**Riding skills:** Complete horse riding novices should not attempt to ride individually on horses. However, the Mongols historically have been the most equestrian people on Earth, and remain so to this day. Anyone at ease with horses will enjoy riding. The use of riding horses is included in the tour cost.

**Ger Outing:** Jalman Meadows Ger Camp is equipped with nomadic and thus mobile support systems. There are gers (yurts), and yak carts. Should you wish to enjoy a private camp with your own campfire and a private cook, we can arrange for you to have a novice cook who has been brought along to prepare meals for your guide and, with the help of one of our nomad neighbors, we supply a folded yurt on a yak cart.

All of you can head out for a walk, and you can choose your spot by the river or elsewhere. You will erect the yurt with the help of your hosts and spend the night right there. We supply the bedding, stove and provisions. This service needs to be pre-booked and will cost an additional USD 90 per person, regardless how many there are in your small group.

**Meals:** Our cooks will prepare the meals. We pride ourselves in having cooks adept at both western and Mongolian cooking on our trips. There are always vegetables available, and we have no problem accommodating vegetarians. For breakfast we can usually buy fresh yogurt from the herdsmen in the local area.

#### PRICE ex Ulaanbaatar:

**USD 650 per person (min 2 members)**

Single Supplement: **USD 30 per night**

Additional night: **USD 100 per night**

Ger outing: **USD 90 per person**

**Includes:** Guide and all meals outside Ulaanbaatar. All overnights gers (3n.) and all local transport.

**Excludes:** Imported drinks, laundry. Air or train tickets in and out of Mongolia. Visa fee.

**Children:** 1-4 years free. 5-12 years 50%.

#### DATES ex Ulaanbaatar:

Daily 18May-21Sep.

Reservations:

