

Photo: Jan Wigsten



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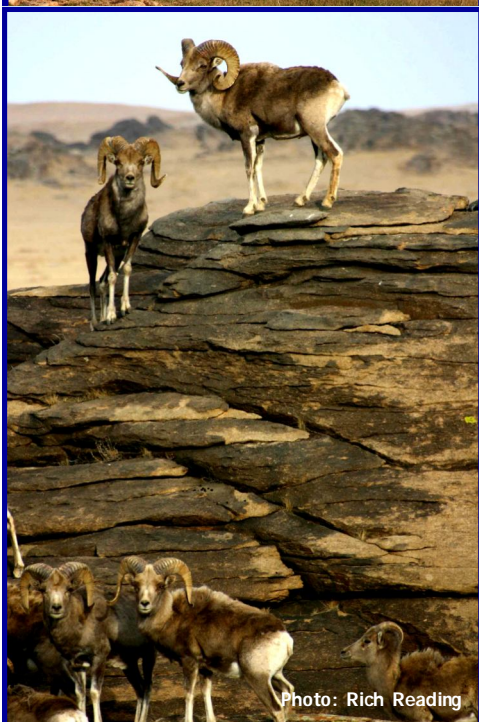


Photo: Rich Reading

## Ikh Nart Nature Reserve

### Argali Sheep of Dornogobi

*Ikh Nartiin Chuluu Nature Reserve is a community reserve where local people have partnered with the Denver Zoo Foundation, the Mongolian Academy of Sciences and Nomadic Journeys for research and the conservation of the Ikh Nartiin Chuluu Plateau. It is an upland with many rocky outcrops. Often hot and dry, it is an arid Gobi kind of area, only a 4 hours drive southeast from Ulaanbaatar. The unique wildlife feature of Ikh Nart is its approximately 600 argali sheep (*Ovis ammon*), the largest wild mountain sheep in the world. Although there is no guarantee, they are not that shy here. Also Mongolian gazelle (*procapra gutturosa*) are frequent visitors and are relatively easy to come across and view. Ikh Nartiin Chuluu, the full name, means, in Mongolian, "Rocks with plenty of sunshine". The reserve also has a sizeable population of the world's biggest vulture, the black or cinereous vulture (*Aegypius monacha*), as well as some 200 Siberian ibex (*Capra sibirica*).*

### Brief Outline Itinerary

Nomadic Journeys operate a seasonal ger camp at Ikh Nart. You travel there southeasterly along the Trans-Mongolian railway line towards Beijing by a slow train (6h20) from Ulaanbaatar. Disembark at Shivee Gobi, the next small station after Choir. Then drive 60 km. Red Rock Ger Camp is located on its own next to the reserve area. Ikh Nart Nature Reserve was established in 1996, practically as a game reserve as it has intact populations of Gobi fauna. There are plenty of opportunities for wildlife walks and drives. There may be camels for rent. Transfer back to Ulaanbaatar is by fine tarmac road most of the way.

#### Day 1: To Ikh Nart

A.m. Pick up at your hotel at in Ulaanbaatar at 09h15 and transfer to the railway station. Depart by the slow train at 10h00 and spend 6h20 traveling southeast over the grassland steppe, which gradually becomes the more arid Gobi steppe. Disembark at Shivee Gobi, a train platform seemingly in the middle of nowhere, but actually near the small town of Shivee Gobi, which serves a nearby open pit coal mine. Shivee Gobi is the next small platform after Choir. Drive to Ikh Nart.

#### Day 2-3: Ikh Nart

For two days we will explore the Ikh Nart area on foot through the Ikh Nart rocks areas and try view different kinds of wildlife.



Photo: René Pop

Pallas Sandgrouse.

There is Argali Sheep, which are most common to be seen, but also Siberian Ibex (*Capra sibirica*) and bird life. Walks. Three parallel mammal research projects are on-going by Mongolian and foreign scientist's. It is on Argali Sheep and Siberian Ibex, as well as on small carnivores primarily geared towards as Corsac Fox (*Vulpes corsac*), Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), Badger (*Meles meles*) and Pallas's Cat (*Otocobolus manul*) but also collecting any possible data on Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) and Wolves (*Canis lupus*) as well as its prey species such as gerbils, jerboas. And hedgehogs. For avifauna there is on-going research of Cinereous Vulture and Lesser Kestrels (*Falco naumanni*). Botanist's are also regular visitors. Research outcomes will be made available at camp through our guides, as well as directly by Mongolian student researchers, as it develops. Herders come and go at the Ikh Nart area. They are essentially reliant on pastures and any precipitation, why they are migrating a lot. Being Gobi herders, they migrate a lot. Very interesting, hospitable and hardy people.

#### Day 4: To Ulaanbaatar

A.m. Drive to the tarmac road and cross over it towards Choriin Bogd Mountains, and drive towards where there are some remote Buddha statues in the rock faces. Picnic lunch. P.m. Drive to Ulaanbaatar 4 hours.

#### Practicalities

**Transport:** This journey is supported by a private jeep or minibus to and from Ikh Nartiin Chuluu Nature Reserve. We use train to/from Ulaanbaatar and jeep/bus for the return transfer.

**Staff:** An English-speaking Mongolian guide will accompany you at all times.

**Meals:** The meals will be provided in the ger camp, or as picnics.

**Overnights:** The gers have 2 beds in each, and they are furnished with beds, stools and a table. Triples are possible as an additional bed may be added.

#### PRICE ex Ulaanbaatar

4d/3n: **USD 700 p.p.**

Single ger supplement: **USD 30 per night.**

Additional night: **USD 100 per night.**

Transport supplement if you pre ordered a Japanese jeep: **USD 190.**

**Includes:** All meals outside Ulaanbaatar. All overnights in double occupancy ger. Transfer to and out of camp on scheduled dates.

**Excludes:** Laundry, imported drinks. Arrival and departure transfers and hotel nights in Ulaanbaatar.

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

#### DATES ex Ulaanbaatar:

Daily May 17th to September 15th

Reservations: