



Photo: Jan Wigsten



Photo: Andrea Pregnan



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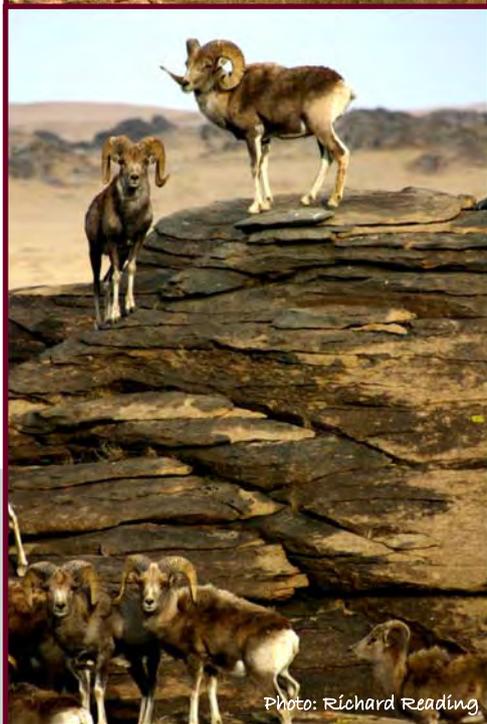


Photo: Richard Reading

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. 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 operates a small seasonal ger camp at Ikh Nart. You travel there southeasterly on the Trans-Mongolian railway line towards Beijing by a slow train from Ulaanbaatar. Disembark at Shivee Gobi, or Tsomoo, small stations following after Choir. Then drive 40 km. Red Rock Ger Camp is located on its own at the reserve. Ikh Nartiin Chuluu Nature Reserve was established in 1996 as a wildlife 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 as Gobi nomadic communities still roam the reserve. The return journey to Ulaanbaatar would be by night train, but you may order a private day time transfer to Ulaanbaatar.

Day 1: To Ikh Nart

Arrive at Tsomog or Shiveegobi railway stations, 40 or 60km away from the Ikh Nart plateau. If you arrive from Ulaanbaatar arrival time to Shivee Gobi is 16h20, 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. Met by local driver or our camp vehicle and drive to Ikh Nart.

Day 2-3: Ikh Nart

For two days you may explore the Ikh Nart upland on foot, trekking through interesting rocky areas and hoping to view different kinds of wildlife. There are Argali Sheep (*Ovis ammon*), which are the most likely to be seen, but there is also Siberian Ibex (*Capra sibirica*) and a variety of bird life. Three parallel research projects are being carried out on an on-going basis by Mongolian and foreign scientists. One study is concerned with Argali Sheep and Siberian Ibex.



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Photo: René Pop

Pallas Sandgrouse.

A second is gathering data on small carnivores such as Corsac Fox (*Vulpes corsac*), Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), Badger (*Meles meles*) and Pallas's Cat (*Otocolobus manul*), along with Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) and Wolves (*Canis lupus*) when possible. Learning about prey species such as Gerbils, Jerboas and Hedgehogs is also part of this project. For avifauna there is a third on-going research study of Cinereous Vultures and Lesser Kestrels (*Falco naumanni*). Botanists are also regular visitors to the reserve. Herders come and go in the Ikh Nart area, as they rely on pastures and sufficient precipitation. Being Gobi herders, they migrate often to find food for their animals and are interesting, hospitable and hardy people.

Day 4: To Dalanjargalan

A.m. Our camp vehicle or local driver will transfer you 40km to Dalanjargalan village after an evening early dinner. In time for the night train departure to Ulaanbaatar. We may also suit transfers to the international trains to China departing Choir, 86km away.

Practicalities

Transport: This journey is supported by a local jeep or minibus to and from Ikh Nartiin Chuluu Nature Reserve. Drivers do not speak any English and you need to make advance booking with us, as also challenging to find the camp location even with a GPS. As is impossible to drive in a straight line between the rock formations on the Ikh Nart plateau. Just request any additional train tickets, hotels and Ulaanbaatar transfers from us, which are easily added to your bill.

Staff: Red Rock Ger camp has an English speaker camp manager on staff to assist you get your bearings for activities around the reserve.

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 2017 ex Shivee Gobi/Tsomog:

3d/2n: **USD 290 per person**

4d/3n: **USD 415 per person**

5d/4n: **USD 540 per person**

Single supplement: **USD 40 per night**

Additional night: **USD 125 per night**

Rent of riding camel: **USD 35 per day**

Private transfer supplement: **USD 200 per vehicle**

Additional transfer supplement if Japanese Jeep is ordered: **USD 250**

Includes: All meals at camp. All overnights in double occupancy ger. Transfer to and out of camp on scheduled times.

Excludes: Imported drinks. Railway transfer in Ulaanbaatar. Local train tickets to and from Ulaanbaatar.

Children: 0-2 years free. 3-12 years 50%.

Arrival transfer daily from mid May to end of September:

Everyday at 16h20 from Shivee Gobi railway platform from incoming train from Ulaanbaatar, or half an hour later at Tsomog. Dalanjargalan village at Tsomog has a new small hotel and café. Nature Reserve office is located at Dalanjargalan.

Departure transfer daily from mid May to end of September:

Everyday at 20h00 from camp to Dalanjargalan connecting to local night train to Ulaanbaatar.

To/from China: You may arrive or depart also off international trains to/from Hoh Hot or Beijing in China. The international trains will only stop at Choir, 86km from Red Rock Ger Camp. Transfer supplement apply. Enquire the international train schedules from us. We also provide train tickets from Mongolia to China and Russia.

