



Photo: Andrea Pregonan



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Photo: Marcus Olsson



Photo: Jacob König



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Jalman Meadows

Khan Khentii Strictly Protected Area

Just a three-hours drive northeast of the Mongolian capital Ulaanbaatar, yet remotely located in the uppermost parts of the Tuul River Valley, lies Jalman Meadows. It is a beautiful pasture teeming with wildflowers in the summer. It is located within the Khan Khentii Strictly Protected Area, which is Mongolia's only true wilderness area, extending all the way up to the Russian-Siberian frontier. The area constitutes the transition zone of steppe and the southernmost reaches of the boreal forests of Siberia. Hence, there are steppe valleys, lush meadows along the Tuul River, and extensive larch forests with patches of birch. Wildlife such as wolf, lynx, brown bear, red deer, gazelle, moose and wild boar are certainly present but hard to see during the summer. The surroundings are perfect for hiking or horseriding, and we offer a whole range of other activities including rafting, kayaking or relaxing in a river-side ger sauna.

While to the south in Gorkhi-Terelj National Park, the southernmost extension of that wilderness area, conventional tourism has been allowed to develop, Nomadic Journeys's low impact ger camp, is located completely on it's own next to the Tuul River. The camp is 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.

Day 1: To Jalman Meadows

We leave Ulaanbaatar in north easterly direction for the Upper Tuul River Valley in the Khan Khentii Strictly Protected Area, a 3 hours (120km) drive by bus or jeep. If you arrive in the city before 10 a.m. or have arrived the day before, we first visit the Gandan Monastery, the liveliest Buddhist monastery in all Mongolia. For the first hour of our trip we drive on a tarmac road out of the city, and then, leaving the tarmac, we follow a beautiful steppe valley, dotted with gers (yurts) and herds of livestock. We cross a mountain ridge at Zamtiin pass and drive up through forests until we reach the Upper Tuul River Valley. These are the winter pastures of the local herdsmen, why most of them are not in the area in the middle of summer. This allows for a profusion of wildflowers, such as edelweiss. At the Jalman Meadows Ger Camp we are met by yak carts, onto which our luggage is loaded, and move into the comfortable gers.

Day 2-3: Khan Khentii

Two full days can be used for exploring the area. Either on foot, on horseback or using the Russian catarafts or inflatable kayaks available at camp to float down Tuul river. You choose your pace of journey here, and also the modes of transport according to your preferences. The Khentii Mountains are covered with larch and birch forests and rivers flow down broad steppe valleys past wooded and alluvial meadows with broad leaf forests.



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The strictly protected area was established in December 1993 and covers most of the Khentii wilderness, stretching all the way up to the Russian-Siberian frontier. While herdsmen keep their livestock in the southern areas, following a lifestyle essentially unchanged since the time of Genghis Khan, to the north there is only uninhabited wilderness. Although rarely seen, wolves are numerous in the area. There are also wild boars, moose, red deer, marmots and gazelle. As for other activities, on hot days swimming in the river is quite refreshing. There are also mountain bikes and kayaks available at the camp. If you wish to relax we can set up a ger sauna on the riverbank or you can enjoy a good read in the library ger.

Day 4: To Ulaanbaatar

After breakfast we drive back to Ulaanbaatar and bring you to your hotel. See the capital city on your own. Distances are short and nearly all points of interest can be reached by foot.

Practicalities

Low Impact Ger Camp: Nomadic Journeys is committed to the principles of Sustainable Tourism and has entered into a concession agreement with Erdene district and the Khan Khentii Protected Area administration, to bring additional jobs into the area, that are based on traditional livelihoods. These involve the provision of yak carts, packhorses, riding horses and labor. The camp has a maximum capacity of 30 guests in double occupancy gers. Vehicles are parked away from the camp. The entire ger camp is fully collapsible, and does not have the usual shower and WC blocks. The toilets are long drop style allowing for natural decomposition. Showers are housed in small gers, where water is heated on a wood burning stove. All trash is separated. The camp may be relocated leaving no more impact on the area than a

herdsmen's family would. Solar panels and windmills generate some electricity for refrigerator and kitchen use. Jalman Meadows Ger Camp is indeed a fully collapsible hotel.

Staff: An English speaking Mongolian guide will accompany you at all times. The camp staff consists of a English speaking camp manager, a cook and several local employees. Additionally the services of local herdsmen can be employed to provide riding horses or transport animals.

Riding skills: Complete horse riding novices should not attempt to ride individually on horses. However, as the Mongols historically were the most equestrian people on Earth and remain so today, anyone at ease with horses will enjoy riding here. Use of riding horses is included in the tour cost. If you are a keen and competent horse rider, please let us know beforehand, so that we can pre-arrange the right horse for you. For this, we need your age, height and weight in

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 700 per person (min 2 members)

Single Supplement (3n): **USD 120 per trip**

Additional night: **USD 150 per night**

Includes: Guide, all local transport, all meals outside Ulaanbaatar. All activities in the camp. All overnights in double occupancy gers (3n.).

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

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

DATES ex Ulaanbaatar:

Daily 15May-21Sep.

