



Danshig Naadam Games

This short trip offers plenty of Mongolian experiences in only two days and just outside of Ulaanbaatar. A few weeks after the National Naadam Festival, the Danshig Naadam festival will be held on the first weekend of August 2019. The festival grounds are located at Hui Doloon Hudag, a large plain about 40km west of Ulaanbaatar. Before we visit the festival on the main day, that features among many highlights the ritual Tsam Mask dances, we explore Hustai National Park for a full day. Here we meet a local nomadic family and go on a game drive to see the Przewalski's horses that have been successfully reintroduced to the wild. Like the National Naadam, Danshig Naadam includes archery, horse racing and wrestling competitions, but there is in addition a strong focus on the history and practice of Buddhism. In 2015, Danshig Naadam was celebrated for the first time in 93 years. The revival of Danshig Naadam by the administration of Ulaanbaatar city and the Gandantegchinlen Monastery under the auspices of the "Historic, Harmonious and Hospitable" initiative aims to reintroduce the religious aspects of Naadam by including several performances and events highlighting Buddhism's influence on the people and culture of Mongolia.

Saturday August 3rd—Hustai National Park

We pick you up from your hotel after breakfast and leave Ulaanbaatar in westerly direction to Hustai National Park. We drive for about two hours. We have lunch with a local herding family, who live on the fringes of Hustai with their herds of livestock. Here we have the chance to learn about the Hustai buffer-zone program. After lunch you may join the everyday activities of the nomad family. In the afternoon we explore the interior of the park by vehicle. We can also go on a small hike up on one of the ridges to catch fantastic panoramic views of the surrounding landscape. After an early dinner at the Hustai Ger Camp Restaurant we go on an evening game drive to see the Przewalski's horses (*Equus ferus przewalskii*), that roam the park in small herds. During the day they are usually hiding from the heat at higher altitudes, but chances are quite good to see them at close range, when they come down to drink and graze before sunset. We drive to Hustai Ger Camp and check into our gers.



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Sunday August 4th Danshig Naadam at Hui Doloon Hudag

After breakfast we will see the horse races, wrestling and archery competitions, as well as the Lamaist ritual mask dances, called Tsam in Mongolian. Danshig actually is the more traditional Naadam, drawing on the yearly gatherings of the seven Mongol princes of the Khalka province. It is a symbolic demonstration of unity as well as a religious and political event for the Khalka Mongols. After the People's Revolution of 1921, the religious elements of this festival were discontinued and the name was changed from Danshig Naadam to simply 'Naadam'. There are many stalls set up, offering a variety of local snacks and dishes. Different monasteries from throughout Mongolia have their own tents, where the monks meet the public. In the late afternoon we drive back to Ulaanbaatar and drop you off at your hotel.

Prices & Practicalities

Accommodation: The gers at Hustai Ger Camp has 2-4 beds in each, and they are furnished with beds, stools and a table. WC and showers are in communal shower blocks.

Includes: Guide. Lunch and dinner on the first day at Hustai National Park. Accommodation and breakfast at Hustai Ger Camp. Transfer to / from Hustai National Park and the Danshig Naadam Festival grounds.

Excludes: Drinks. Lunch on the 2nd day.

Options: It is possible to stay at Hustai Ger Camp for an additional night. Chinggis Khan international airport is a 50 minutes drive away. We also offer Danshig Naadam as a day trip. Please enquire!

PRICE 2019 ex Ulaanbaatar:

USD 380 per person (min 2members)

