



ULAANTAIGA WILDERNESS EXPEDITION

Pack camel supported trek'n'float

Located a full days drive from Murun or Khuvsgul Lake, the Ulaantaiga Wilderness is a great addition to any Mongolian adventure. We negotiate the jeep tracks into the remote taiga lifezone, entering the border area with Tuva. The scenery and service is truly world class. We have a string of small luxury camps along one of Mongolia's most wild and scenic rivers. This is part of an exclusive conservation partnership with the surrounding communities. This wonderful adventure comes highly recommended!

Brief Outline Itinerary

Borderzone permits and visit permit to Strictly Protected Area are required for this trip. Instead of heading downstream we will trek upstream, into a totally roadless and rugged wilderness. We have lots of time on the water and plenty of chances for great hikes into the beautiful canyon hillsides. A full-board lunch is served streamside. We will load our equipment and inflatable kayaks and rafts on to pack camels, supplied by the local nomads of the area. You are accommodated firstly at a lovely ger camp, nestled in a beautiful and remote setting. These "glamp" camps have toilet and hot shower facilities. The cook and the camp staffs are some of the best in the business. Reaching into the Ulaantaiga wilderness we will accommodate in tipis. In the evenings, we relax around the fire and watch the fantastic display of stars.

Day 1: Travel to Khuvsgul Canyons

We'll pick you up from your hotel in Ulaanbaatar and transfer you to the airport for domestic flight to Murun. The journey starts with a 4x4 picking you up at Murun. Murun has daily flights from Ulaanbaatar throughout the summer. Pick up can also be arranged at Hatgal on Khuvsgul Lake, in which case a small supplement will be required. The drive to camp is by 4x4. It may take many hours. The drive is utterly beautiful. You pass many yaks, horses, goat and sheep and the nomads living in gers across the steppe. As you near the river, the topography becomes much more rugged and defined by larch and birch trees. Eventually, you will wind your way down through the mountains into Khuvsgul Canyons, to one of our secluded ger camps. You should be on the river in time for an early dinner and very good night's sleep.



Day 2: Khuvsgul Canyons

For a full day, explore the Hulgani river valley and its dramatic vertical cliff landscapes. It is green and full of wildflowers. It is impressive with granite and limestone cliffs rising hundreds of meters above the wild river. We will be hosted by members of local nomads, who eke out their living from this wilderness. They herd goats, sheep, horses, cows, yaks and camels! We have in place inflatable kayaks and rafts, in order to cross the main river today.

Day 3: Into the Ulaantaiga Wilderness

In the morning we will be joined with our local hosts, nomads from the area. They will be bringing their pack camels. One of the best parts of the expedition is the opportunity to interact with traditional nomads. It is a wonderful chance to glimpse one of the world's most unique mountain cultures. On breakfast we break camp and load all of our equipment on to their Bactrian Camels, and head out first following upstream the Delgermurun River. Our equipment includes inflatable raft and kayak. We will hike supported by the camel caravan for the full day to an upstream remote camp. We hike up and down the canyon for impressive panoramic views. Pitch camp with comfortable Tentipis. Ulaantaiga is the name of the strictly protected area, which is the headwaters of Delgermurun River. It is part of the circumpolar boreal forest's stretching the length of Siberia, and it has Wolves, Wolverines, Lynx and its typical prey species.

Day 4: Ulaantaiga Wilderness

We will stay for another night at camp, having the full day for exploration of Ulaantaiga nature. It is bisected by the river. We will ramble up the sides of the canyon, seldom visited. The healthy riparian habitat is good for wildlife. Birds are generally the highlight. The watershed hosts many mammals, but these creatures are shy. There are Roe Deer along the banks. Moose, Red Deer (elk), Wolverines and Brown Bears on the upper stretches. It is common to hear Wolves in the evenings. Sable and Musk Deer is rare. There are fantastically large Siberian Marmots cheerfully whistling along the banks.

Day 5: Ulaantaiga Wilderness

We will break camp, and again load the pack camels and hike upstream and around in nice nature. There are stretches of no current, where we can paddle upstream. Pitch camp in the middle of Ulaantaiga. We are now some twelve miles - 20km - walking distance upstream. However the total river distance is nearly twice this. The river is very windy with a phenomenal amount of structure. We will have trekked much longer as the river winds.

Day 6-7: Float Khuvsgul Canyons

Today we will say farewell to our local hosts and camels, as we load our equipments and luggage on to a raft and head out on the dramatic Delgermurun River. Many stretches we need to wade and push the boats. There are several small pool/drop rapids and plenty of bumpy sections and loads of interesting features, including plenty of riffles and pools. There are no dams and river flow may fluctuate substantially with the weather. There might be a number of class II and a few class III rapids. At high water, it can be quite exciting. Our team of professional river guides use top of the line, US manufactured rafts equipped with all the safety gear you'd expect on a well-outfitted river journey. Travelers have the option of participating in a "paddle" boat, rowing their own inflatable kayak - which need be pre-ordered ahead of time. Or sitting back and enjoying the ride while the guides take the oars. Imagine all the amenities of an African tented safari camp in the middle of remote Mongolia at the end of this day, when we return to our first camp, by a downstream float.





Day 8: To Murun

On the expedition's last day, a 4x4 will pick you up at the ger camp along the river and drive the dramatic out from the taiga, in 5 hours to Khuvsgul Lake or more until Murun. The lake sits in the rift created 25 million years ago, together with Lake Baikal, its bigger sister, 200km away. Khuvsgul Lake sits at 1645 meters above sea level. It is a very transparent lake, same as Baikal, with more than 300 inflows, with just one outlet, the eg River. Reach the lakeside Hatgal village, with Siberian like log cabins.

Day 9: To Ulaanbaatar

After breakfast, we'll transfer you to Murun airport for domestic flight back to Ulaanbaatar. Our service ends after your arrival back in Ulaanbaatar.

Practicalities

Packing List: We will supply you with a complete packing list prior to the trip. Here's some general guidelines.

Dry Bags: We have dry bags at the river for your personal belongings.

Helmets and Life Jackets: The guides will have helmets and life jackets for you.

Clothing: You'll need typical river gear (quick dry shirt(s), quick dry pants/shorts, warm fleece, sandals or tennis shoes, rain jacket and pants, sun hat and sunglasses). Remember that cotton gets very cold when wet. It's generally better to wear quick drying polyester clothing.

Bedding: You'll want to bring a solid sleeping bag. The camps have very comfortable cots, towels etc.

Support Crew: Mongolian culture venerates hospitality and the support crew is no exception. They are wonderful. Hard-working, fun and highly attentive folks. You'll have a great time getting to know them and they will make your visit remarkable. There will be local nomads, a cook and a leader from Nomadic Journeys.

Medicines and Insurance: This trip is an "at your own risk" adventure. It requires that guests be in physical condition required to participate in a white-water rafting trip. We recommend all guests to have medical, including medical evacuation insurance.

Kayaking: If you are comfortable with a own inflatable kayak self paddle, let us know at the time of booking.

PRICE ex Ulaanbaatar:

2 - 6 members: **USD 3350 per person**
Single Supplement (8n): **USD 2400**

Includes: Use of boats and associated gear, guides, ger camps 3n, tents 4n and local hotel 1n, food, drinks, reasonable amounts of alcoholic beverages (wine, beer, and vodka), overland transport and domestic flights.

Excludes: International airfare and gratuities. Accommodations in Ulaanbaatar.

DATES 2019 ex Ulaanbaatar:

Daily 15 June - 15 September.

