



Tour 431

The cry of the eagle



Travel description:

Take part in an unforgettable journey and join us for the "Golden Eagle Festival" in the Altai Mountains in western Mongolia. "Under the moon", would be a textual translation for the word Altai and that is a fitting description for this unique landscape. Bright blue sky, crystal clear rivers and a landscape colored golden yellow in autumn. Simply pure nature.



In the northwest of Mongolia, lives the minority of Kazakhs, who have preserved their traditions over the years. The annual hunting season in autumn is opened with the great traditional eagle festival. In the warm summer it is impossible to hunt with the eagle.



The origin of the Beizjagd is in central Asia. It is believed that it has been practiced for more than 3,500 years. An adult eagle has a wingspan of up to 230 cm and can weigh up to 7 kg.

To the celebration, on the first weekend in October, the eagle hunters come together every year in the west of Mongolia to their probably unique eagle celebration, in order to determine in a competition the best eagles. In the disciplines speed, agility and accuracy, the eagles compete against each other to determine the best eagle. The festival will be accompanied by folklore performances. In addition to the eagle competitions, there are a number of other competitions and events that take place during the festival. The Golden Eagle Festival is a very special experience, probably not for the faint of heart, but it gives the guest a deep insight into the cultural life of the Altai people.

On this trip we combine the Eagle Festival with the Altai Mountains experience. The Altai Mountains are an almost untouched region in Mongolia because of its isolated location and because it is difficult to access. Our journey to the Eagle Festival will be through the village of Khovd. This gives us the opportunity to explore a part of the fascinating Altai Mountains.

During our journey through the autumn Altai Mountains, we can also experience the distinct warm hospitality of the nomads in the mountains. Far away from civilization, the people here live in their own rhythm, in harmony with nature. We will have the opportunity to see the eagle hunters away from the big eagle festival, we will see how the famous nomadic carpets are made in the yurts in laborious handwork and we will have the time and peace to enjoy the hospitality of the families.

This trip leads to regions of Mongolia that are partly not yet developed for tourism. Therefore, please be prepared for partly very simple conditions. Partly we will stay overnight with nomadic families.

Route:

Ulaanbaatar – Karakorum – Tsenker – Terkhiin Tsagaan Nuur – khetsuu khad – Olgy – Khovd – Khoton Lake – Tavan Bogd – Bayan Ulgii – Khovd - Ulaanbaatar



Itinerary:

1. Day Arrival in Ulaanbaatar, check-in at hotel, program briefing. After that we will visit Ulaanbaatar. You will see the famous Gandan Monastery with the 27 m high Buddha statue, the largest statue in the world, the monastery museum of the Tschoidshjin - Lama, the most important Lama in the history of Mongolian Buddhism and a small city tour are also on the program.
Accommodation: Hotel, Meals: - / L / -

2. Day Departure in the direction of Hustain Nuruu. Immediately after leaving the city, we will stop at a Mongolian Ovoo to make peace with the earth gods for the rest of the journey. Ovoos are omnipresent in Mongolia. Hike, respectively exploration of the Hustain Nuruu National Park. The Przewalski horses are best seen before the heat of midday or at dusk in the evening. The name of the park is derived from the birch forests that are often found here. For some years now, specimens of the almost extinct Przewalski horses have been living again in the steppes of Mongolia; they are considered to be the last wild horses. But a new study shows: they are not real wild horses. According to the study, the robust animals with their thick coats and bristly manes are similar to mustangs, but only feral. They are descended from tamed Botai horses, which until now were considered the origin of all domesticated horses. After the surprising result of a genome study the horse history must be rewritten thus a piece, report international researchers in the scientific magazine "Science". Genuine wild horses no longer exist in the world. The Przewalski project has great significance for the Mongolians, as the horse generally stands for freedom and independence.

Drive to the sand dunes of Elsen Tasarkhai. The drive leads through the steppe landscape typical for Mongolia. The dunes of Elsen Tasarkhai are fossil dunes, which were formed by the sand transport from the Gobi. The dunes are interesting for those who want to get an impression of the Gobi desert, but want to save themselves the many kilometers of driving there. The sand dune is divided into two parts by the main road to Karakorum. North of the road in Khugnu Tarnyn Els and south in Mongol Els. In the area of sand dunes you can find a variety of different birds and small animals.

Accommodation: Gercamp, Meals: B / L / D

3. Day Very close to our gercamp lives a horse breeder family known to us. Here we have the opportunity to visit the family and see how the Airag (fermented mare's milk) is made. Airag is the national drink in Mongolia and is used for all occasions, but also for the daily greeting of the day in the morning. In addition, we have a small insight into the hard life of the horse breeders and learn something about the handling of the Mongolian horses.

The oldest Buddhist monastery in Mongolia is located in the Öwörchangai-Aimag near Charchorin: Erdene Zuu Khiid. It is an impressive complex, founded as early as the 16th century, and today it is considered a tourist highlight of this area. The current outer wall consists of 108 stupas from the 17th century, which are whitewashed and therefore stand out beautifully against the landscape. Inside, there are now four temples and a monastery, where a few monks still live. Once about 1,000 monks are said to have lived, worked and prayed here.

In the courtyard of Erdene Zuu there is a relaxed atmosphere. It is advisable not to just wander from temple to temple, but also to simply sit in the shade and observe the lively activity of others. In the area, which today also serves as a monastery, no photos may be taken. Instead, here you can taste the famous fermented mare's milk Airag.

Accommodation: Gercamp, Meals: B / L / D

4. Day Through the mountains of Archangai with its diverse rock formations, we will go to Tuvhun Monastery. This monastery is an ancient hermitage that has been extensively restored and is located at the birthplace of the first Bogd Khan. In 1996 the hermitage was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. A small footpath then takes us to the top of the mountain. From here we have a magnificent view over the landscape and can experience the unique tranquility of this hermitage.

Continue towards Tsencher warm water springs. Arrival and rest at the water springs. This spring is located south of the town of Tsetserleg in Arkhangai province and springs from a very deep part of the ground and its water is not mixed with the ground water. The spring has a temperature of about 85°C. The Tsenkher hot springs have healing properties, especially for joint diseases and diseases of the nervous system (entrance to the springs is optional).

Accommodation: Gercamp, Meals: B / L / D

5. Day Continue to Tsetserleg and a short sightseeing tour before we leave for Ikh Tamir Rock. Arrival at Ikh Tamir. Visiting the strangely shaped Taikhar Rock. The Taikhar Rock is a monolith and you can find different rock carvings, as well as inscriptions on the rock. There are several legends and tales about this rock.

Drive to Terchiin Tsagaan Nuur, located in western Mongolia, around which there is an interesting legend of its origin. A giant is said to have grabbed a large boulder and thrown it away. When he looked back, he saw a bright surface and exclaimed in amazement: "Look, a white lake! The exclamation has been preserved as the name of the lake. Accommodation: Gercamp, Meals: B / L / D

6. Day Arrival in Tosontsengel, the small administrative center on the northwestern edge of the Archanhagai Mountains. The opportunity is taken to replenish supplies. The southern part of the village is located on the foothills of the Tarvagatai Mountains, which are part of the Archangai Mountains. The climate is quite extreme and Tosontsengel is the "cold pool" of Mongolia. Temperature well below -53 °C was measured and the temperature difference was +38 °C in summer.

Drive to Telmen Nuur, a salt lake, which is about 200 sq km. It is located at an altitude of 1789 m. It is the largest lake in Zavhan Aimag, 30 km long, 16 km wide. Its greatest depth is only 5.5 m. On the northern shore you can find ancient stone tombs. Overnight stay on the shore of the lake and due to the salty air, you have the feeling of being on the seashore.

Accommodation: Gercamp, Meals: B / L / D

7. Day Today we will go to Khyargas Nuur, one of the many drainless lakes in western Mongolia. Slightly salty, but important for bird and animal life. On the northern shore are some hot springs. On the eastern shore are the "White Rocks" (Khetsuu Khad) To which we will drive to spend a day. Accommodation: Gercamp, Meals: B / L / D

8. Day Khetsuu Khad or the White Rocks, an absolute must and unforgettable experience when traveling to the northwest of Mongolia. The rocks on the northern shore are located in the middle of crystal clear water and are a center of attraction for the many migratory birds, whose remains have colored the rocks white over the many years. The salty air, the cry of the seagulls give you the feeling of being by the sea when you close your eyes here. We have here the whole day time for this unique area, which we will explore inflow.

Accommodation: Gercamp, Meals: B / L / D

9. Day South of Khygargas Nuur we drive to the small village of Zavhan. A small ferry will take us across the natural channel that connects the entire lake area in the region. From Zavhan we drive to Khar - Us Nuur and to the district capital Khovd. Khar Us Nuur is a freshwater lake, but only 4.5 mtr deep and an important bird sanctuary. In the late afternoon we reach Khovd, the city on the edge of the Altai Mountains, which rises to the south of the city. Khovd is a very old trade center. Remains of the ancient Chinese fortifications can be seen in the city.

Accommodation: Hotel, Meals: B / L / D

10. Day Drive from Khovd, along the northern Altai Mountains in the direction of Tolbo. On the way we pass the 4200mtr. high Tsambagarav massif. The drive leads over the newly built asphalt road and is for us, after the many kilometers on the dirt roads a rest. The journey continues via the village of Tolbo to the uniquely situated Khoton Nuur in the middle of the Altai Mountains.

Accommodation: Nomadenjurte, Meals: B / L / D

11. Day Today we will spend at Khoton Lake, which is nestled between the highest mountains of the Altai range. We will go for a hike in the surrounding area. We will visit one of the biggest waterfalls in the region, we will also visit rock paintings, deer stones and historical tombs. On our way along the Khoton Lake we will meet some Kazakh nomadic families. If you like, you can also rent a horse and explore the region on horseback.

Accommodation: Nomadenjurte, Meals: B / L / D

12. Day Among the highest mountains of the Altai Mountains, we drive to Tavan Bogd Massif, the highest mountain of the Altai Mountains. The mountain range is an attraction for mountaineers and excursions due to the beauty of its landscape and flora (nature reserve "Golden Mountains") and the Altai culture. Up to altitudes of 1800 m the mountain slopes are covered with cedars, pines, larches, spruces and

birches. Up to the snow line (2400 to 3000 m) there are high mountain pastures and steppes. On the way we will experience the different ways of life of the nomads from this region here and we will visit some of the famous "deer stones". In sight of the 20 KM long Potaniin glacier we will reach our camp.
Accommodation: Gercamp, Meals: B / L / D

13. Day Day hike to Potanin glacier. Potanin - glacier is the longest glacier in Mongolia with about 14 kilometers and is located in the Altai Tavan Bogd in the Altai Mountains. The glacier is named after the discoverer Grigory Potanin. Like many other glaciers in the world, the Potanin Glacier is gradually receding.
Accommodation: Gercamp, Meals: B / L / D

14. Day Drive from Tavan Bogd massif to Bayan Olgi for eagle festival.
Accommodation: Hotel, Meals: B / L / D

15. Day We go to the opening ceremony of the Eagle Festival. The festival is opened by a magnificent parade of all participants. The participants ride into the stadium on horses. On their arms they hold the mighty eagles. After that, each participant displays his equipment. The most magnificent and elaborately made equipment is awarded the highest score. In the afternoon the competitions of the eagles take place. Here, small prey animals, which have been killed before, are pulled on a line by the riders, which the eagles have to catch successfully. It is about speed and skill. We spend the whole day on the competition area.
Accommodation: Hotel, Meals: B / L / D

16. Day Today is the second day of competition at the "Golden Eagle Festival" in the morning we experience the eagle competitions, where the eagles have to capture a fox skin. Here it is about speed, but also about obeying the orders. In the afternoon we experience the traditional game of the Kazakhs "Kek-bar". A competition of the young men for a goat or sheep skin. In this game everything is allowed to get the skin. There are no rules. In this game, everyone against everyone, things get pretty wild. The winner of the competition then throws the captured fur on a yurt roof and the family may then at the end of the festival, the closing ceremony for the competitors. Which is a great honor for the family in question. We then take part in the award ceremony for the competitors and their eagles.
Accommodation: Hotel, Meals: B / L / D

17. Day On the new asphalt road, along the beautiful valleys it goes very quickly through the Altai Mountains to Khovd, an old administrative center. We have the afternoon to ourselves and everyone can explore the city and the commercial center on their own.
Accommodation: Hotel, Meals: B / L / D

18. Day In the morning return flight to Ulaanbaatar. Arrival in Ulaanbaatar, airport transfer, check-in at hotel and then free time in the city.
Accommodation: Hotel, Meals: B / L / -

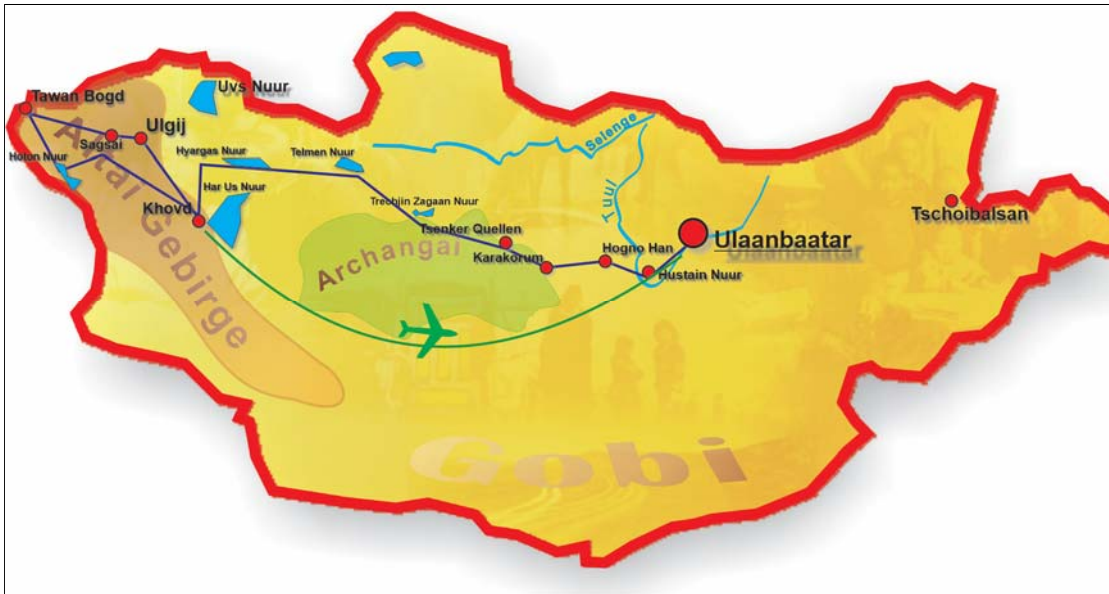
19. Day Transfer to the airport and return flight
Accommodation: ---, Meals: B / - / -

Due to the conditions (weather conditions, condition of the route, high water, snow and ice) within Mongolia, there may be deviations in the exact itinerary. The tour description is only a guideline for the course of the tour. The tour can be driven in reverse order due to e.g. adverse weather conditions.

Necessary equipment:

All the technical equipment, such as tents, cooking equipment, etc. is provided by "Steppenfuchs". You only need the things for your personal needs. The list given here is limited only to the things that are necessary from our point of view and is only meant to give an indication.

Personal clothing, T-shirt or similar, warm jacket, rainwear, sun hat or similar, warm sleeping bag, warm sleeping clothes for the night, sleeping mat, small pillow, washing utensils, towel, bathing suit, sturdy shoes, good sunglasses, sunscreen, photo equipment, small flashlight, medication, if available GPS device. **Please be sure to take warm weatherproof clothes, gloves, scarf and hat. Snow and ice are to be expected in the Altai Mountains at this time of year.** Backpack, or large travel bag, to accommodate everything. Suitcases are rather impractical for this type of travel.



Service description:

Overnight stay in Ulaanbaatar in a middle class hotel (double room, half board), airport transfer in Ulaanbaatar, German speaking tour guide, entrance fees for museums, national parks and cultural program, provision of off-road vehicles incl. gasoline and incidental expenses (Russian off-road vehicles), national flights, overnight stay in the countryside in nomadic yurts or simple hotels, full board in the countryside.

Not included:

Costs for personal needs, costs for drinks, like. beer etc., dinner in Ulaanbaatar, travel souvenirs, health costs, film- photo fees (if necessary), tips, visa costs, or costs related to the visa regulations of Mongolia, possibly additional nights in gercamps, vegetarian food in the country.

What else:

The reservation for the trip becomes valid only after the signed registration form has been returned to Step-penfuchs Reisen. We recommend the conclusion of a foreign health and travel cancellation insurance. An enstp. You can take out insurance here: [Hanse Merkur Versicherung](http://www.hansemerkur.de)

You can find more very useful information about the itinerary and preparation for the trip at the following link: <http://www.mongolei.com/texte/ReiseInformationen.pdf> (german)

Minimum number of participants: four.

Termine:

Start	End	
16.09 Fr	04.10 Tu	2022
17.09 Su	05.10 Th	2023

Prices:

2.180 € p.P *

2.350 € p.P **

*) Self-organized accommodation and program in Ulaanbaatar

**) Overnight stay and program in Ulaanbaatar as described

Supplements:

Single room hotel only possible in Ulaanbaatar
Single yurt, if possible
Supplement for vegetarian food in the countryside

250 €	Pauschal
25 €	p.Night / Person
7 €	Pers/ Day

If the minimum number of participants is not reached

Small group supplement	1 Person	600 €	p.P
	2 Person	300 €	p.P
	3 Person	150 €	p.P

Notes:

All prices in EURO

Dates for 2022/23

Indicated are arrival/departure city in Ulaanbaatar

Price without flight plus current flight tariff MIAT or Aeroflot

The cheap flight to the trip

Benefit from the fact that Steppenfuchs Reisen has concluded a very favorable agreement with Mongolian Airlines (MIAT) for the necessary flights from Germany to Mongolia. In the season, several times a week directly from Frankfurt or Berlin Tegel to Ulaanbaatar.

Flights from 870 € pers. (if you use our flight dates) and from 950 € for individual flight dates. Please check our website for our flight offers (<http://www.mongolei.com>)