



# Equus Journeys

HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

14a Forest Gate, Pewsham, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN15 3RS - UK

+44 (0) 1905 388977

info@equus-journeys.com

Last updated 18/05/2024

## Wonders of Zavkhan

### MONGOLIA

A **riding holiday in Mongolia** like none other. From snow-capped mountains to rolling hills and deep valleys, sand dunes and turquoise lakes: **Zavkhan** has no shortage of natural wonders. On horseback, explore this beautiful and remote region of Mongolia and experience the warm welcome of the **nomads**. Embark on an unforgettable cultural and equestrian adventure with Equus Journeys.

Trail Riding	 16 days / 9 days riding	 From £2,117	
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Discover the stunning landscapes of Zavkhan on horseback



Mongolian horses in the wild



Discover the local culture and stay in yurts

### ITINERARY

#### Highlights

- Ride across the Zavkhan region from North to South
- The region is very remote and still relatively unknown and untouched
- Explore an astounding variety of landscapes, perfect for riders looking for a truly scenic adventure
- The chance to meet with the locals and learn about their culture

#### Day 1 — 1: EUROPE - ULAANBAATAR


Flight from Europe to Ulaanbaatar - it is likely that you will have to change planes at least once. Flights are not included but can be booked upon request.

#### Day 2 — 2: ULAANBAATAR - No riding

You are met by our local team at the airport. Transfer to your hotel before the beginning of your trip and lunch at the hotel. In the afternoon, venture into the wondrous and mysterious city, combining influences from the East and the West: Ulaan Baatar is a city in constant mutation, gradually switching from the nomadic life to a more sedentary lifestyle. Visit the National History Museum, followed by a tour of the Gandan Monastery that is still the biggest religious centre in Mongolia. This is your opportunity to learn about the history and the heritage of this fascinating country. In the evening, you will enjoy a show of traditional singing and dancing.

Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

#### Day 3 — 3: ULAAN BATAAR - ULIATAI - TELMEN LAKE - No riding

 KHOGNO yurts camp

After a good night's sleep, you are taken to the airport on time for your domestic flight to Uliastai. You land into the Zavkhan region, still relatively

unknown and blessed with an incredible variety of landscapes. You are then taken north to your camp situated on the shores of Telmen Lake (approx. 3-4 hours drive).

Telmen Lake is a sacred lake, where many families come to pray, and you might come across the sacred stone heaps used as altars, called "ovoo". This is a fantastic place to learn about shamanism and animism that are strong in the region.

You meet with nomad families in their yurt: now is your chance to try out the local “cuisine”: specialties include a cured cheese called “aarul” and the traditional milk tea, the “suutei tsai”.

Night at a yurt camp.

## Day 4 — 4: TELMEN LAKE - 2 BUKH - 4-5 hours riding

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 Campsite

After your first night in the isolation of the steppe, you ride west, following a vast valley where the Takhilt river runs. The ground alternates between sandy stretches and grassland. Your camp tonight is in a beautiful place, a gorge situated between two rocky spurs called "2 bukh" (2 bulls), where a sand dune stands.

Night at camp.

## Day 5 — 5: ALONG THE TAKHILT RIVER - 4-5 hrs riding

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 Campsite

The terrain is ever changing - from sandy plains to lush steppes. You ride a remote area that is still very wild, with few signs of civilisation - although you might still find a yurt or two.

## Day 6 — 6: NURAMT CANYON - 5-6 hours riding

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 Campsite

This morning you keep riding west across a sparsely populated land, although you might spot a few yurts. The area becomes more mountainous as you leave the steppe behind, and trees make their appearance. Dunes also start to appear. You set up your camp for the night in the Nuramt canyon.

Night at camp.

## Day 7 — 7: NURAMT - GOL MOD - 4 - 6 hrs riding

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 Campsite

The trail takes you to the Bor Khyar Erg, that stretches over a distance of 90 km. The Ulaagchin river runs through the dunes, creating beautiful green oases. Following the river, you turn south where sand, river and mountains come together in a flurry of colours and contrasts. The scenery is truly stunning! You make camp at the source of the Ulaagchin river amongst larch trees.

Night at camp.

## Day 8 — 8: GOL MOD - UVUR ULAAGCHIN - 4 - 6 hrs riding

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 Campsite

A large valley nestled between the dunes and the steppe is where you ride this morning. The dark mountains that you can see from afar make for an interesting contrast. The yurts start to reappear and dot the green grassland. You follow the river towards your camp for the night.

Night at camp.

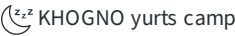
## Day 9 — 9: UVUR ULAAGCHIN - KHAR NUUR - 4-6 hrs riding

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 KHOGNO yurts camp

After crossing the Erg, you finally reach Khar Nuur lake, a beautiful lake famous for its deep blue waters. Nestled between the mountains and the sand dunes, it is a very scenic place, with an impressive display of contrasts. You ride along the shore to take in this stunning scenery before reaching your turistic camp, with lovely views over the lake. Tonight you will have the opportunity for a hot shower at the camp.

## Day 10 — 10: Khar Nuur - No riding



A day to relax around the lac and its crystal-clear waters, surrounded by sand dunes. You can go for a swim near the sand dune of Elsen Shanaa, part of Borkh Els that stretches all the way from the mountains to the lake.

## Day 11 — 11: KHAR NUUR - SENJIT KHAD - 4 - 6 hrs riding



You leave the blue lake behind to reach the mountains and the Senjit rock. The geology and erosion in the area has given birth to strange, misshapen shapes. The area is also famous for its marmots and herds of semi-wild horses.

Overnight at camp

## Day 12 — 12: SENJIT KHAD - MUKHART - 4 - 6 hrs riding



Riding back from the mountains, you reach the steppe and vast sandy stretches before you find the Mukhart oasis, a jewel nestled between the dunes. This is a stunning and fertile place, where you will encounter nomads and their herds.

Overnight at camp

## Day 13 — 13: MUKHART - 3 - 4 hrs riding

Your day is spent around the source of the Mukhart river, in the Borkh Els dune. You will follow the river to its source, and enjoy the stunning scenery that surrounds you.

In the afternoon, say your goodbyes to the team and horses to be taken to your hotel for the night, close to the Uliastai airport.

## Day 14 — 14: MUKHART - ULIASTAI - ULAANBAATAR - No riding

Early morning flight. You arrive in Ulaanbaatar in the afternoon, that is spent at your leisure.

## Day 15 — 15: ULAANBAATAR

Today is a "buffer day": the domestic flights can be unreliable in Mongolia, and we have added this day to be sure you will be back in Ulaanbaatar on time for your flight tomorrow. If your flight from Uliastai was yesterday as planned, you will spend today in Ulaanbaatar. The morning is spent at your leisure. After lunch, you will be taken on a tour of the "Black Market", where you will find a variety of products. You will also stop by a factory that manufactures cashmere clothing. Back to the hotel for dinner and a good night's sleep.

## Day 16 — 16: ULAANBAATAR - DEPARTURE

You will be transferred to Ulaanbaatar airport for your flight back. You may arrive home this evening, or early tomorrow, depending on your flight routing.

### DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
04/06/2024	19/06/2024	£2,117	Open
18/06/2024	03/07/2024	£2,117	Open
02/07/2024	17/07/2024	£2,117	Open
23/07/2024	07/08/2024	£2,117	Open
03/08/2024	18/08/2024	£2,117	Open

13/08/2024

28/08/2024

£2,117

Guaranteed departure

## Price details

- International flights are not included but can be booked for you upon request - please contact us for rates.

- Rates are per person, based on riders sharing tents and yurts, and twin rooms at hotels.

- The group is composed of between 4 and 10 international riders plus guides.

It is also possible to confirm a departure with 3 riders with the payment of a supplement of \$350/£280/€330 per person.

- All applicable transfers are included as per the itinerary, at set times. Private transfers can be organised and are around €30/£25/\$35 per car.

- If you sign up to the ride as a solo rider and there are no other riders likely to share your room in Ulaanbaatar, you will be charged a single room supplement of approx. €60/£55/\$70. You will then be reimbursed if a sharer is found for you at a later date.

- Internal flights between Ulaanbaatar and Uliastai are included in the price. Please note that this flight has a luggage limit of 15kg in the hold plus 5kg of hand luggage so please bear this in mind when packing.

- You can arrive a day before in Ulaanbaatar. Please contact us for rates.

Please Note

The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.

The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

## Price includes

### SUPPORT TEAM

1 English speaking interpreter

Local guide and team leader

### LOGISTIC

1 vehicle and driver

Cook and horsemen

1 horse per rider

### INLAND TRANSPORTS

Internal flights between Ulaanbaatar and Uliastai

Airport transfers

### ACCOMMODATION

11 nights in yurts/camps/touristic camp

3 nights in a hotel in Ulaanbaatar, 1 night in a hotel in Uliastai

### MEALS

Full board from lunch D2 to breakfast D16

### EXTRA

Museum and temple fees in Ulaanbataar

Traditional show in Ulaanbataar

## Price doesn't include

### MEALS

Beverage and personal extra

## TRANSPORTS

International flights bookable on request  
Visa fees

## EXTRA

Tips to local team around £25-35 at your discretion  
Small group supplement

## INSURANCE

Cancellation and travel insurances are not included. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend to take out an insurance policy as soon as your travel is booked in case of cancellation.

## EQUESTRIAN INFO

### Horses

The Mongolian horse is legendary. They are small, energetic and tough but gentle and perfect for trail riding on all types of terrain. The horses are sociable and live happily in a herd. They are not difficult to ride but some will be more spirited than others.

### Guide & local team

You will be accompanied by at least two local horse guides. There will also be a cook to prepare meals and a vehicle driver. An interpreter will accompany you during the ride.

### Minimum riding ability

#### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be an experienced rider who is used to riding outdoors across varied terrain for several hours.

Weight limit: 85 kgs / 187 lbs / 13,3 st

#### PACE

Whilst much of the ride is at a walk there are plenty of opportunities for long trots and canters across the immensity of the steppes.

#### TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

Your horse will be tacked and untacked for you by your Mongolian team. You may be asked to assist with camp tasks such as erecting and dismantling tents.

#### TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

Previous experience of riding a trail for several days is an advantage but is not required. Riders who do not ride regularly are requested to get riding fit before the holiday.

Visiting a new country offers the opportunity to meet other cultures with different mentalities, therefore it is important to accept these differences and respect the local way of life. Be prepared to adapt to a different style of riding and accept that Mongolians relate to their horses in a different way to us.

Your belongings are transported by car.

#### EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Kazakh and russian saddles.

Whilst the stirrup leathers are adjustable, riders who are tall may find that they are short in length and are recommended to take their own pair of leathers.

We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit.

### COMFORT

- In Ulaanbaatar you stay in a hotel with private bathrooms and wifi
- Nights in touristic yurt camps: 5-6 beds in a yurt, bathroom facilities and hot water.
- Nights in camp: two-man tents. Mattresses are provided but you need to take your own sleeping bag.

Accommodation is shared, sometimes between male and female.

### MEALS

The food is simple, abundant and based on fresh products prepared by a local cook and adapted to western tastes. Meals are served on small camping tables with stools, except for some picnic lunches.

Breakfast is usually hearty.

Lunch is often hot when meeting the logistics truck, but sometimes a picnic.

Dinner is a full hot meal (soup, main course, dessert) and may well include lamb/mutton purchased from local nomads.

Water:

Do not to drink water from unknown sources. The cook will boil water each day for you to fill up your water bottles but you should also bring water-purification tablets such as Micropur.

### CLIMATE

Mongolia has over 260 days of sunshine a year! Generally there is very little rain - the annual average in the north is 200-350mm and this decreases in the south. Mongolia is located in the heart of a high pressure system which leads to clear skies and Mongolia is sometimes known as the "Land of Blue Skies".

Winters are long and cold (October - April) and so rides run during the summers months of May - September. There is a short rainy season during mid-July - September but rainfall is usually short and scanty in the late afternoon. Temperatures are mild in the north and hotter in the south. Because of the altitude, nights can be cold even in summer. From September you can expect cold nights, sometimes down to 0°C, Winds can be strong, particularly in spring and autumn and the weather can change quickly, so take layers and be prepared!

### TIPS

If you are happy with the service you receive from your local guides and driver then you may wish to leave a tip. In order to remain consistent with their standard of living, we would recommend something in the region of £50-55.

### PACKING LIST

When packing please remember that the region can be cold and it would be wise to bring layers!

Please note that there is a weight limit of 15 kg (mainly due to the internal flight limitations - 10 kg checked luggage, 5 kilos carry-on). Pack carefully and sensibly: the following guide is here to give you an idea of what to bring. It is possible to bring more than 15kg and pay a supplement at the airport. Soft bags are preferred as they are easier to fit into the back up vehicle

Head

- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit. There are many lightweight options available nowadays
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana
- Warm hat for cold nights when camping

Upper body

- Thermals (long or short sleeved)
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and are an extra layer
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Warm fleece or jumper (and a spare in case one gets wet)
- Warm and waterproof jacket - it can rain at any time of year and the evenings can be particularly cold

Legs

- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub

- Thermals
- Casual trousers for the evenings, such as jeans or tracksuit bottoms
- Waterproof over trousers

#### Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps as an extra layer against inclement weather. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged
- Waterproof shoes/boots can be useful for abundant dew in the mornings or when it rains
- Trainers or equivalent light shoes for moving around the camp in the evenings
- Several pairs of warm, thick socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun, cold or rain whilst riding. Waterproof gloves can be particularly useful

#### Nightwear

- Sleeping bag. You need at least a comfort factor down to minus 5°C, but would recommend at least minus 8 or 10°C (especially outside of July/August)
- Sleeping bag liner - silk, cotton or fleece - adds an extra layer
- Pyjamas or tracksuits or thermals for sleeping in

Please remember it can get very cold at night, especially if you are travelling in September: pack accordingly.

#### Other useful items

- Water-purification tablets
- Swimsuit - for swimming/bathing in rivers
- Towels - camping ones will both dry and pack more easily
- Small backpack for accessing items required during the day (carried by support crew)
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around camp at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Water bottle (2 litres or 2 x 1 litre)
- Wet Wipes or equivalent (for when washing facilities aren't available)
- Toilet paper and a lighter to burn it with
- Small plastic bags for rubbish
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)
- Spare batteries (there will be no electricity)

#### In your hold luggage

- Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant unless they are less than 100ml and all bottles can fit in a small, clear, plastic ziplock bag. We recommend biodegradable washing products where possible.
- Swiss army knife (or equivalent)

#### In your hand luggage

- Any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- Your riding hat

#### Medical kit

- Micropur tabs
- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent, preferably containing DEET
- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets
- Water purification tablets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel

#### Our Recommendations

- Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided with a capacity of 60-80 litres. The luggage limit on the ride is 15kg per person.
- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bumbag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc)

- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!
- Tall riders may benefit from taking a pair of long stirrup leathers with them (the local stirrups are adjustable but are sometimes limited in length)
- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals
- Please take your rubbish home with you. There are no recycling facilities in Mongolia, so take your used batteries, aerosols etc back home and dispose of them appropriately. Try to leave excess packaging material at home before travelling
- You may wish to take some photographs or postcards of your home with you to show your hosts. You may also wish to take some crayons, colouring books etc for the children

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please [see this page](#) .