

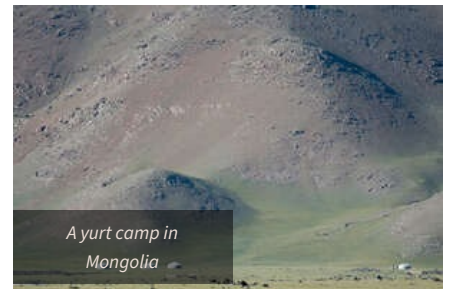


Across the Orkhon Valley

MONGOLIA

This fabulous **trail ride in Mongolia** will take you right through the historical Orkhon Valley. From Karakarorum, ride across vast steppes, experiencing the warm and friendly welcome of the locals. Discover the **Orkhon valley on horseback**, explore the Ulaan Tusutgalan falls and the beautiful **8 Lakes nature reserve**. A wonderful opportunity to take in the stunning landscapes of Mongolia on horseback, with plenty of opportunities for unforgettable gallops in the wilds of Central Asia.

Trail Riding	 14 days / 8 days riding	 From £1,610		Open to non-riders
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ITINERARY

Highlights

- A short itinerary to discover the Orkhon valley, in central Mongolia - ideal for a first-time riding holiday in Mongolia.
- Easy going Mongol horses, the native horse breed of Mongolia well-known for their incredible stamina.
- Many opportunities to meet the locals and learn about the fascinating nomadic culture.
- The beautiful views of the Orkhon valley and the 8 Lakes Nature Reserve.

Day 1 — 1: EUROPE - ULAANBAATAR

Flight from Europe to Ulaanbaatar - it is likely that you will have to change planes at least once. This will likely be an overnight flight and you should make sure to arrive on the morning of Day 2.

Flights are not included but can be booked upon request, please contact us.

Day 2 — 2: ULAAN BATAAR

 Alpha Hotel

Your English-speaking translator will meet you at Chinggis Khan airport. You will be taken to your hotel to drop off your bags and, depending on your arrival time, you may have time for a quick nap. At lunchtime, you will meet your guide in the lobby and head out for lunch (not included). In the afternoon, you will visit Gandantegchinlin Monastery and the National Museum of Mongolian History.

Dinner (not included) and night at a hotel (2* - twin or triple room).

Day 3 — 3: Ulaanbaatar – Orkhon Valley - 6-7h drive



Early morning start. After breakfast, you will start the long drive to the to Kharkhorin, capital of the Mongol Empire, at the crossroads of the Silk Road in the 13th century. It was also the legendary city of Gengis-Khan, erected in 1220.

After setting up camp in the afternoon, you will have the opportunity to visit the ErdeneZuu monastery, built at the end of the 16th century and thought to be one of the finest monasteries in the whole country.

Dinner and stay overnight at camp under the open skies in the fringes of the Orkhon valley.

Day 4 — 4: Orkhon Valley - 4-6hrs riding



Today marks the start of your riding adventure in the Orkhon Valley. Your picnic lunch and everything else will be brought by the support vehicles, so you can ride more comfortably.

The Orkhon Valley can be considered the “cradle” of the Mongol people and is a UNESCO world heritage site. The area is well-known for the incredible variety of its landscapes and its sumptuous colours. It is also one of most densely populated regions of Mongolia, as the fair weather still attracts many families who make their living from breeding livestock.

You will be camping again tonight.

Day 5 — 5: Khangai Mountains - 4-6 hrs riding



Another day of your trail ride, riding further into the wilderness of Mongolia. If you are lucky, you may catch a glimpse of the local fauna: deer and wild boar abound, and you might see some wolf tracks. The ride deeper into the Khangai Mountains.

Dinner and overnight at camp.

Day 6 — 6: Tuvkhun Monastery - 4-6 hrs riding



Today you ride to the Tuvkhun Monastery and enjoy a visit of this sacred place. There will be time to watch the Buddhist monks at work and learn about their heritage. The history of this temple is a long and fascinating one: first established in 1648, it was destroyed just 40 years later by Oirat Mongols during a military campaign against Eastern Mongols. After its restoration, it suffered severe damage during the Stalinist purges before it was made a UNESCO world cultural site in 1996. The Monastery stands at 2400m and dominates the surrounding valley: you will encounter many small temples, the most ancient dating back to the 17th century, as well as two stupas (a structure containing relics and used for meditation).

Dinner and overnight at camp.

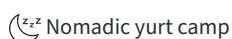
Day 7 — 7: Orkhon Falls - 4-6 hrs riding



In the early morning light you ride out towards the Ulaan Tsutgalan falls, born 20 000 years ago from an earthquake and volcanic eruption. The Ulaan Tustgalan reaches the Orkhon and spills into the river, forming the impressive falls that you will see today – late July and August are the best times to see the falls, after the seasonal rains.

Dinner and overnight at camp.

Day 8 — 8: NaimanNuur Park (with pack yaks) - 4 to 6 hrs riding



You are entering NaimanNuur Park. No vehicles are allowed in the park, which means that all the equipment and your personal items will have to be loaded on pack yaks. Wide open spaces give way to wild and remote landscapes, somewhat slowing you down today.

You will meet your next nomadic family, which are yak breeders. You will stay there for 2 nights in separate yurts (4-5 persons per yurt).

Lunch and dinner with the family. Overnight in yurts.

Day 9 — 9: Naiman Nuur Park (with pack yaks) - 4 to 6 hrs riding

🐾 Campsite

Breakfast with your host families before you start today's ride through beautiful forest mountains heading to the lakes of NaimanNuur Park.

Dinner and stay overnight in the yurt.

Day 10 — 10: Naiman Nuur Park - Orkhon Valley (with pack yaks) - 4 to 6 hrs riding

🐾 Campsite

Goodbyes to your host family. You head back to the Orkhon Valley leaving NaimanNuur Park via a steep mountain road. After a day in the saddle, you will set up camp near the forest which is located in between the NaimanNuur Park and Orkhon Valley.

Dinner and overnight at camp.

Day 11 — 11: Nomad family experience - 1-2 hours riding

🐾 Campsite

You ride to a nomadic family in the Orkhon Valley. Picnic lunch on the road.

This day is fully dedicated to getting to know the daily nomad life. Feel free to be a part of the daily activities of the family.

Your translator and the equestrian guides will tell you more about their local traditions as you enjoy your nomadic life. Dinner and stay overnight (your yurt is separate from the hosts' yurt).

Day 12 — 12: Okrhon Valley - Khogno Khan Park - 4 hours driving

🐾 Touristic yurts camp

You leave the Orkhon Valley behind and say goodbye to your equestrian guides and host family. The drive to Khogno Khan Park takes around 4h - sometimes more.

Khogno Khan is known as the "mini-Gobi" due to its desert-like landscapes. In the afternoon, you get to visit the Ovgon Khiid Monastery.

Dinner and stay overnight at a yurt camp (single beds, 4 to 5 persons per yurt, showers in a separate building).

Day 13 — 13: Khogno Khan Park – Ulaanbaatar - No riding

🐾 Alpha Hotel

Departure for UlaanBataar: after a few days in the wilderness, it can be a bit of a shock to get back to civilization and the busy streets of the capital! You arrive in the afternoon, and after a last picnic lunch you will be offered to go shopping (cashmere and souvenir) with a guide for the rest of the afternoon.

Dinner not included. You can choose from the wide range of choices of Ulaanbaatar cuisine. Night at a hotel (2* – twin or triple room).

Day 14 — 14: Ulaanbaatar - Europe

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

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	PRICE INCLUDING FLIGHTS	STATUS
12/06/2023	25/06/2023	£1,610		Open
26/06/2023	09/07/2023	£1,610		Guaranteed departure
08/07/2023	23/07/2023	£1,850		Guaranteed departure

24/07/2023	06/08/2023	£1,610	Open
07/08/2023	20/08/2023	£1,610	Open
18/08/2023	31/08/2023	£1,610	Open
04/09/2023	17/09/2023	£1,610	Open
18/09/2023	01/10/2023	£1,610	Open

Price details

- International flights are not included but we can add this your quotation upon request.

- Groups are made up of 4 to 10 riders max.

- Please note: the ride will also confirm for 3 riders on payment of a supplement of c. €250/£225/\$295 per person. Once the group has reached 4 people, we will remove this supplement from your invoice and refund you if you have already paid it.

- Single supplement for hotels in Ulaanbaatar, if not willing to share: €80/£70/\$95 (Ulaanbaatar only, no single tents during the trail)

- This ride is open to young riders aged 14+ as long as they are confident riders and accompanied by an adult.

- A visa is required and is your own responsibility

- Please note that there is a weight limit of 100 kilos / 15.7 st / 220 lbs

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 tour leader

1 local interpreter

LOGISTIC

1 vehicle and driver

Cook and horsemen

1 horse per rider

INLAND TRANSPORTS

Transfers mentioned in the itinerary

Airport transfers

ACCOMMODATION

10 nights in yurts or tents

2 nights at an hotel in UlaanBataar

MEALS

Full board with picnic lunches and hot dinners from breakfast on day 3 to lunch on day 13

EXTRA

Museum and temple fees in Ulaanbaatar

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverage and personal extra
Meals in Ulaan Baatar

TRANSPORTS

International flights bookable on request

EXTRA

Tips to local team at your discretion
Visa fees
Small group supplement - see above for the details

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.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be a rider of at least an intermediate level who is used to riding outdoors across varied terrain for several hours.

Please note that there is a weight limit of 100 kilos / 15.7 st / 220 lbs

PACE

The main paces are the walk and the trot, with opportunities for unforgettable gallops across the steppe. The horses are not especially difficult, although some can be more spirited than others.

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.

When riding in NaimanNuur Park, a team of yaks will follow the ride as no vehicles are allowed inside the park.

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 Mongols relate to their horses in a different way to us.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Kazakh/Russian saddles.
Tall riders may want to bring their own stirrup leathers.
You may also want to bring a seat saver.

Helmets are mandatory and not provided.

COMFORT

- In Ulaanbaatar (first and last night) you stay in a hotel with private bathrooms and wifi
- Nights in yurts with the nomads: 5-6 beds in a yurt, basic toilet facilities outside, bucket shower.
- Nights at camp: two-man tents. Mattresses are provided but you need to take your own sleeping bag. Camp is simple with two-man tents, simple mattresses, and a sanitary tent for showers.

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.

Picnic lunch.

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 summer 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.

Winds can be strong, particularly in spring and autumn and the weather can change quickly, so take layers and be prepared!

GUIDE AND LOCAL TEAM

You will be accompanied by local horse guides. There will also be a cook to prepare meals and a vehicle driver.

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!

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 celsius, but would recommend at least minus 8 or 10 celsius.
- Sleeping bag liner - silk, cotton or fleece - adds an extra layer
- Pyjamas or tracksuits or thermals for sleeping in

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. We recommend taking a backpack or similar. 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