



# EQUUS Journeys

HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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## Across the Orkhon Valley

### MONGOLIA

Embark on a **horseback adventure** through the **legendary Orkhon Valley**. Gallop through endless green plains, channelling the freedom and grandeur that once inspired ancient Mongol warriors. Explore Genghis Khan's legendary city, **Karakorum**, and discover the beautiful landscapes of the **"Eight Lakes"**. Find refuge in the warmth of a **local yurt**, where welcoming **local families** share their **traditions** with your group of riders.

<b>Trail Riding</b>	 <b>13 days / 7 days riding</b>	 <b>From £1,698</b>	
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Across the Orkhon Valley



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### ITINERARY

## Highlights

- Ride in the heart of the Orkhon Valley - a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Experience the power and hardiness of the Mongolian horse!
- Meet nomadic families and share in their daily life.
- Experience a variety of landscapes such as lakes, mountains, rivers, fields, forests and hot springs.
- Visit three large Buddhist monasteries.
- Opportunity on one departure to attend the Naadam Festival in Ulaanbaatar.

### Day 1 — 1: ULAANBAATAR - No riding

International flight to Ulaanbaatar. You will most likely arrive in the early hours of the morning. You will be met by a member of the local team and transferred to your hotel to have a rest.

Later, you will meet your guide and the rest of the group, then you'll head out for lunch and to explore the city -- including visits to the National History Museum and the Gandan Monastery, the largest religious center in Mongolia.

You'll notice that Ulaanbaatar is an intriguing city with both communist and capitalist influences. You will visit the National Museum, which will provide a solid historical foundation for discovering the country, and later you'll enjoy an evening of traditional songs and dances performed by the National Academic Ensemble of Mongolia, before going for a group dinner.

Overnight at the hotel.

### Day 2 — 2: ULAANBAATAR – KHUSTAIN NURUU - KHUJIRT - No riding, 4-6 hours driving

After breakfast, you'll pack your bags and leave the bustling capital and begin your adventure through the vast central Mongolian steppes. As you head west on an asphalt road, you'll encounter your first glimpses of authentic Mongolia, with the chance to spot wild horses galloping along the roadside and solitary yurts smoking in green valleys.

You'll stop along the way to witness a spectacular Mongolian horse-riding performance: men and women in vibrant traditional costumes showcasing their mastery of horseback acrobatics, galloping at full speed under the open sky.

In the afternoon, you'll arrive in Khujirt, where you'll be warmly welcomed by your first nomadic family. Inside the cozy ger, you'll taste your first Suutei Tsai (salty milk tea) and Aaruul (dried Mongolian cheese).

Overnight in a yurt at the first family camp.

## Day 3 — 3: KHUJIRT – GYATRUUN - No riding

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Today, you will dive into the famous Orkhon Valley, the true heartland of the Mongol people and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The region's diverse landscapes make it a rich tapestry of colours and textures. More populated than other regions, the valley has been home to many nomadic families due to its favourable climate and abundant pastures. It also boasts archaeological remnants dating back to the 6th century.

Crossing a high pass with a spectacular view of the Orkhon Valley, you will journey westward to the camp of your next host family, about 50km away in the valley's depths. Today will include 3-4 hours driving on dirt roads.

Overnight in a yurt at the next family camp.

## Day 4 — 4: GYATRUUN HOT SPRINGS - 4-6 hours riding

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Today you will begin your horseback journey, exploring the forested hills in the southern part of the valley, winding along narrow trails amid larch forests that lead us to the Gyatruun hot springs. These springs, one hot and the other cold, are famous for their healing properties. You'll enjoy a relaxing soak in this beautiful setting.

Overnight in a yurt at the same family camp.

## Day 5 — 5: HORSEBACK TREK TO KHUISIN NAIMAN NUUR - 4-6 hours riding

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Over the next three days, you will explore the stunning natural area of Naiman Nuur – the eight lakes. Sitting at 2,200m, ancient volcanic craters contain nine clear blue alpine lakes surrounded by tall forested mountains. The area's thousands of plant species include medicinal varieties, and if you're lucky, you may see deer, wild boar, or wolves.

Overnight in a yurt at another family camp.

## Day 6 — 6: HORSEBACK TREK TO KHUISIN NAIMAN NUUR - 4-6 hours riding

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You'll continue to explore the natural wonders of Naiman Nuur, a region which is rich in flora and fauna. Riding from lake to lake in this idyllic setting, the more adventurous can swim.

Tonight, a new family will welcome you into their yurt for a truly authentic Mongolian evening.

Overnight in a yurt at the next family camp.

## Day 7 — 7: HORSEBACK TREK TO KHUISIN NAIMAN NUUR - 4-6 hours riding

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Continue to explore the natural wonders of Naiman Nuur, a region which is rich in flora and fauna. Riding from lake to lake in this idyllic setting, the more adventurous can swim. At the end of the day you'll meet the support vehicle with your belongings, and get to enjoy a warm shower.

Overnight in a yurt at the tourist camp.

## Day 8 — 8: GYATRUUN – ULAAN TSUTGALAN - 4-6 hours riding

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Today you'll cross the valley. Heading across grassy plains dotted with basaltic rocks and bordered by dormant volcanoes, you will eventually reach the Ulaantsutgalan Waterfall, a 20m cascade formed around 20,000 years ago by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Overnight in a yurt at another family camp.

## Day 9 — 9: ULAAN TSUTGALAN - TUVKHUN - 4-6 hours riding

Today is a long day of riding as you venture westward along the Orkhon River, galloping freely across the vast plains.

You'll eventually arrive at the home of the next family, located at the foot of the Tuvkhun Monastery, where you can relax for the remainder of the afternoon.

Overnight in a yurt at the family camp.

## Day 10 — 10: TSAGAAN SUM HOT SPRINGS - 4 hours hiking, 4 hours riding

In the morning, you will hike to the Tuvkhun Monastery, beautifully nestled in its natural surroundings and devoted to Zanabazar, the first spiritual leader of the Mongols. The peaceful atmosphere makes it an unforgettable stop.

After lunch, you'll ride north over a high mountain pass offering sweeping views of the Khangai Mountains, before descending into a green valley to reach the Tsagaan Sum Hot Springs. With waters reaching up to 65°C and rich in hydrogen sulfate, these springs are famed for their healing qualities.

Overnight in a yurt at the same family camp.

## Day 11 — 11: TUVKHUN – KHUGNU KHAN - No riding, 4-6 hours driving

It's time to say farewell to your nomadic friends and horses. You will begin your return journey to the capital, (approx. a 4-6 hour drive), with many interesting stops along the way.

First stop: the legendary city of Kharkhorin, founded by Genghis Khan in 1220. Once the capital of the Mongol Empire and a key hub on the Silk Road, Kharkhorin played a crucial role in global economic, political, and cultural history. Here, you'll visit the Erdene Zuu Monastery (late 16th century), one of Mongolia's most important Buddhist sites, with 108 surrounding stupas and beautifully preserved temples.

In the afternoon, you'll continue to the Khugnu Khan Nature Reserve, where green steppes meet massive sand dunes in a striking natural contrast.

Overnight in a yurt at the last family camp.

## Day 12 — 12: KHUGNU KHAN - ULAANBAATAR - No riding, 4-6 hours driving

You will make your final drive back to Ulaanbaatar today, (approx. 4-6 hours, along some paved and some rough roads) arriving at your hotel around noon.

You will then have a free afternoon to shop for souvenirs and explore the city, followed by a farewell dinner in the evening.

Overnight at the hotel.

## Day 13 — 13: DEPARTURE - No riding

After breakfast at the hotel, a driver will pick you up for your transfer to Ulaanbaatar airport for your flight home.

### DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
18/07/2026	30/07/2026	£1,698	Full
08/08/2026	20/08/2026	£1,698	Guaranteed departure
29/08/2026	10/09/2026	£1,698	Guaranteed departure

## Price details

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

- Groups are composed of between 4 and 8 international riders, plus guides.

- Rates are per person, based on 2 or more riders sharing yurts and rooms at hotels.

- It is possible to confirm a departure for 2-3 riders with the payment of a supplement. Once the group has reached 4 people, we will remove this supplement from your invoice and refund you if you have already paid it.

For two riders, the supplement is c. \$700 / £520 / €600 per person.

For three riders, the supplement is c. \$125 / £95 / €110 per person.

- There is no single supplement if you are willing to share. Please note, yurts may be shared between male and female riders, and up to 5 people. It is possible to guarantee a single room in the hotel (on the first and last nights of the trip) on payment of a supplement of c. \$125 / £95 / €110. It is also possible to book a single yurt at the tourist camp for an additional \$50 / £40 / €45. Please note that single accommodation is not possible when staying with local families.

- Airport transfers are included.

- You can arrive a day earlier in Ulaanbaatar if you wish. For an extra night at a hotel in Ulaanbaatar, there is an additional fee of \$105 / £80 / €90 for a single room and \$75 / £60 / €70 for a twin or double room.

- It is possible to organise a 1-day/night extension to enjoy the Naadam Festival in Ulaanbaatar on the departure 29/06/2026 - 11/07/2026, staying until 12/07/2026. The price for the extension is \$195 / £150 / €170 (shared hotel room) and \$225 / £170 / €195 (single room). There is no single supplement if you are open to sharing a room with another rider of the same sex.

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

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### SUPPORT TEAM

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1 English-speaking guide

1 or 2 local equestrian guide(s) during the trail

### LOGISTICS

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1 support vehicle

### INLAND TRANSPORT

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Airport transfers

### ACCOMMODATION

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Hotel in Ulaanbaatar - shared room (2-4 riders) with private bathroom

Yurts - shared between 2 and 5 people

### MEALS

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Full board from lunch on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 13

Water

### EXTRAS

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Entry fees to parks and museums mentioned in the itinerary

## Price doesn't include

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## MEALS

Beverages and personal extras

## ACCOMMODATION

Sleeping bag - available to rent

## TRANSPORT

International flights

## EXTRAS

Tips to the local team

## INSURANCE

Visas

Cancellation and travel insurance are not included in the above listed price. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend taking out an insurance policy as soon as your trip is booked to cover you in case of cancellation

## Optional

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### ACCOMMODATION

Single room in the Ulaanbaatar hotel

### EXTRAS

Naadam Festival Extension (one departure only)

## EQUESTRIAN INFO

## Horses

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The legendary Mongolian horse, known for its role in conquest and history, is small but energetic, enduring, and perfectly suited for equestrian trekking across all terrains. Though renowned for their gentle nature, these horses are semi-wild, requiring some adaptation from riders. While some horses are livelier than others, all are carefully selected by the team for their temperament.

## Guide & local team

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

## Minimum riding ability

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### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be an experienced rider who is used to riding outdoors across varied terrain for several hours. Please note that Mongolian horses, while friendly, may also be semi-wild. Riders should be prepared for a range of temperaments, and to adjustment their riding as required.

Weight limit: 80 kilos, 176 lbs, 12.6 st.

(N.b. Heavier riders with the relevant experience may be able to pay an additional fee to arrange for a second horse -- please contact us).

### PACE

While a significant part of the ride is at walk, this is still an active ride, with lots of trots, spirited canters and some gallops.

### TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

Each horse is saddled and unsaddled by the accompanying Mongolian herders. Feel free to participate in the process if you'd like – but please check with the herders first and ask for their guidance.

## TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You should be in good health as you will be riding in a remote location, far away from medical help. Riders should also be physically fit, as you will be spending several hours in the saddle on riding days.

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

Please also note: This ride is designed for those seeking adventure – you should be comfortable spending long periods outdoors in a remote area (with no phone service in some parts), and with staying at family camps where there are limited bathroom facilities. Please inform your travel advisor of any allergies or medical conditions in advance.

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.

## EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

The saddles used include Kazakh, Russian, and Mongolian styles. Comfort levels may vary from rider to rider, so please inform the team of any discomfort on the first day so adjustments can be made.

Recommendations:

- Riders over 1.90m tall should bring their own adjustable stirrup leathers, as local saddles may not offer sufficient length.
- Consider bringing a sheepskin or extra padding to ensure comfort during long rides. Use strings to attach it securely to the saddle.
- A helmet is strongly recommended for safety and hygiene. Be sure to bring your own riding helmet or hat.
- Please note: Saddlebags are not available on this ride as Mongolian horses aren't used to them. But you will have a support vehicle and the guides will carry water. Backpacks are not to be worn whilst riding.

## TRAVEL INFO

### COMFORT

- For the 2 nights in Ulaanbaatar, you will stay in a hotel with private bathrooms and wifi.
- For 9 nights, you will be hosted by local families. You will sleep in yurts with other guests, separate from the family. There are 3-5 beds in a yurt. There are no shower facilities but you will have the chance to bathe in lakes and rivers. Toilets are typically compost toilets or holes in the ground.
- You will spend 1 night in a tourist camp, sleeping in yurts with 3-6 beds. There are toilets, showers and a dining area at the camp. You will also be able to shower on Day 10 at the Tsagaan Sum Hot Springs.

Please note:

Yurts may be mixed between male and female guests.

When staying with local families, beds vary in comfort. You will need to bring your own sleeping bag and camping pillow.

There is no electricity throughout the ride. We recommend bringing a good solar charger or power bank. You will also be able to charge your devices in the support vehicle on driving days.

### MEALS

Meals are overall simple, and consist mainly of meat and some vegetables. Most dinners will be prepared by the Mongolian families who are hosting you, except on the camping night when meals will be prepared by a member of the local team. Vegetarians can be catered for, but please note that nomadic families have a limited amount of vegetables and don't tend to use many spices. Vegetarians are advised to bring some additional food or ingredients to supplement their meals.

Water:

Do not drink from unknown sources. You will be supplied with fresh water to drink. You may also bring water-purification tablets such as Micropur.

### CLIMATE

Mongolia enjoys over 260 sunny days a year and experiences very little rainfall. However, summer brings the most precipitation. The country often sits at the centre of a high-pressure system, keeping the skies clear most of the year, earning it the nickname "The Land of Blue Skies."

Despite the sunshine, Mongolia experiences an extreme continental climate due to its geographical features: a vast, semi-desert plateau averaging over 1,500m in altitude. Summer temperatures can fluctuate wildly, ranging from +3°C to +35°C during the day and from -3°C to +6°C at night.

Recommendations:

- Wear loose, comfortable, and warm clothing (fleece jackets are ideal).
- Bring t-shirts for layering, which allows you to adjust your temperature more easily.

- Always carry full rain protection, as weather can change quickly.

## 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 \$65-75 / £50-55.

## PACKING LIST

Please pack carefully and sensibly: the following guide is here to give you an idea of what to bring. When packing, please use a soft sided case/bag which can easily be transported. A support vehicle will carry your luggage for most of the ride so there is no weight limit as such, but we recommend approximately 20kgs. Please remember that the region can be cold and the weather extremely changeable -- please bring layers and rain gear. We recommend that you pack essentials in your hand luggage - such as your sleeping bag, towel and sanitary products (within allowance), rain jacket and riding gear -- just in case your luggage is delayed.

Please note: you will need to separate your belongings and pack a small bag (we'd recommend a dry bag) for days 5-7 when you visit the Naiman Nuur lakes (max 8-10kg), as the luggage will be carried by pack horses. You can leave the rest of your luggage in the support vehicle and pick it up later.

### 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

### 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. No ponchos or anything that can flap around!

### 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. We would suggest something with a good grippy sole.
- Waterproof shoes/boots can be useful for abundant dew in the mornings or when it rains
- Trainers or equivalent light shoes for moving around 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). It is possible to request a sleeping bag from the local team (limited availability)
  - 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 June/September: pack accordingly.

### Other useful items

- Water-purification tablets
- Swimsuit - for swimming/bathing in lakes
- 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)
- Small plastic bags for rubbish
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)
- Solar charger/powerbank

#### 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

#### Gifts for local families

Mongolian tradition wants the traveller to thank his host for his kind hospitality by offering small gifts. Some ideas for gifts include fresh vegetables and fruits (to be bought on the way), cakes or sweets (from home or bought locally), other local products/specialities from your home country, toys or books for children, kitchen utensils or camping accessories. You may also wish to take some photographs or postcards of your home with you to show your hosts.

Please avoid offering soaps, pens, or used clothes.

#### Other recommendations:

- Please print copies of your passport and insurance documents and take them with you.
- Backpacks should not be worn whilst riding. We recommend bringing a small bum bag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc). The guides will carry saddle bags carrying water.

## 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](#) .