



Karakorum & Orkhon Valley Mongolia Tour

Key Information:

Trip Length: 7 days/6 nights.

Trip Type: Easy to Moderate.

Tour Code: **SMT-KMT-7D**

Specialty Categories: Adventure Expedition, Cultural Journey, Camel riding, Birdwatching, Driving tour, E-co Travel,

Hiking, Horseback riding, Hot Springs, Local Culture, Nature & Wildlife.

Meeting/Departure Points: Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia (excluding flights).

Small Groups: **2-16 travelers-guaranteed!**

Private Departures: **June-September 15th (on requests!).**

Total Distance: approx. +1000kms/622miles.

Airfare or Train Included: No.

Tour Customizable: Yes

Tour Highlights: Upon your arrival in **Ulaanbaatar New Airport** (52 km / 31.33 miles, 2hrs driving, depending on the high traffic!), meet **Samar Magic Tours team**. Drive to reach **Gorkhi/Terelj National Park**. Seeing grasslands and beautiful vistas. **Gorkhi/Terelj National Park** is located N/E of Ulaanbaatar. The valley is about 20kms/12miles long at 1600m. This picturesque National Park is a part of Khan Khentii Strictly Protected Area. It is a great place for hiking, trekking, even you can rock climb here at its natural steep granite walls. Explore the **Turtle shaped original giant rock**. Enjoy walking & hiking to **Arryabal Meditation Temple** on the top of the small hill. Next, drive to visit **an authentic nomadic family** on the way, and experience the traditional customs and lifestyle of local residents. Optional ride horses on the steppes. Visit the **40-meter (~133, 3 feet) Genghis Khan Equestrian Statue**. Visit an small underground museum-has exhibitions relating to the Bronze Age and Xiongnu archaeological cultures in Mongolia, which show everyday utensils, belt buckles, knives, sacred animals, etc. and a second exhibition on the Great Khan period in the 13 and 14th centuries which has ancient tools, goldsmith subjects and some Nestorian crosses and rosaries. Visitors walk to the head of the horse through its chest and neck of the horse, where they can have a panoramic view. Next, drive towards west to explore **Hustain Nuruu Wild Horses National Park** (hustai is Mongolian for birch and nuruu means mountains) measures about 57,000 hectares, or including the buffer zone 120.000 ha., and is located on about 120 km (74.7645 miles) west from the capital Ulaanbaatar. The flagship species for the Hustain Nuruu Nature Reserve is the reintroduced Przewalski or takhi horse. Currently the park is home to a hundred fifty specimens. Journey to **Karakorum-the Genghis (Chinggis) Khan's 13th century capital** and heart of the mighty Mongolian Empire and in the UNESCO World Heritage Orkhon Valley. Its ruins lie in the north-western corner of the Ovorkhangai Province of Mongolia, near today's town of Karakorum, and adjacent to the **Erdene Zuu monastery**. Explore **Khugnu Khaan Mountain Nature Park**-it is located about 280 km (173. 984 miles) west of Ulaanbaatar. Covering an area of 47000 hectares, this park contains many historical monuments, forests of silver birches and poplar trees, and sources. The ecosystem of this park is particularly interesting because the steppe and the taiga meet here. Created in 1997 as a natural reserve, it became in 2003 a natural park. One of the main attractions of this area is the **small Uvgun monastery** which was built in 17th century by Saint **Zanabazar** who was a great sculptor and the biggest representative of Buddhism in Mongolia. Continuous drive further to visit **Elsen Tasarkhai (also known as Bayangobi desert)**-is a part of the 80kms/50 miles long Mongol Els Sand Dunes and is located on about 280 km (173. 984 miles) west from the capital Ulaanbaatar. The nature in this area is really spectacular and great for relaxing. During the trip, you will also have opportunities **to ride two-humped Bactrian camel**, walk on sand dunes, experience staying in a traditional Mongolian dwelling, the ger, and walk and relax in beautifully serene nature. **We would be pleased to have you join us!**

The Best Time to Travel to Mongolia: The travel season begins in the **end-May**, when the tourist Gers camps are working already!. **June, July and August** are the peaks tourist season. **September** is autumn.

Mongolia Top Destinations:

Gorkhi-Terelj National Park-is located on the bank of the Terelj river, about 70 km (43.496 miles) north/east of the Ulaanbaatar city. The national park covers an area of 1,127 square miles (2,920 sq km). Although it extends across such a large area, it is only the 14th largest national park in Mongolia. The Terelj River flows across the park, which much of the protected zone located to the north of the river. The Terelj settlement is located along the river and this region provides visitors with opportunities to shop and dine. This tourist area also provides opportunities to rent horses or camels for doing a more adventurous exploration of the area. Some of the attractions are challenging to experience because of their remoteness and the lack of park development. The park sits at an average altitude of 5,249 feet (1,600 m), with Avkhan Mountain serving as the highest point at 8,740 feet (2,664 m). The forested park is home to an abundance of wildlife with some of the most popular including brown bear, boar, red deer, roe deer, foxes, and wolves. There are several types of predator bird species as well. The national park also provides cultural and historical experiences with the Arryabal Meditation Temple which was constructed between 1998 and 2004. The design follows the shape of an elephant with the 108 staircase leading to the temple representing the elephant's trunk. There are numerous rock formations spread out across the park. Two of the more famous rock croppings include Turtle Rock and the Praying Lama Rock. Of course, the renowned Turtle Rock looks like a turtle with its head sticking up leading the way. The Praying Lama Rock is also known as the Old Man Reading a Book rock formation. The surrounding landscapes make both of these rock formations quite photogenic. There are beautiful places to explore and trek across the national park. Hiking is one of the more popular activities whether it is exploring outside the settlement area or discovering some of the more remote areas. Karakorum-is located about 390kms/242miles west from the capital Ulaanbaatar in Ovorkhangai province. This is the Genghis (Chinggis) Khan's 13th century capital and heart of the mighty Mongolian Empire and Okhon river Valley, cradle of Mongolian civilization. Visitors, such as Marco Polo, described its ornate building, including a 2500 sq. meters Palace of Worldly Peace. In 1792 the Monastery still had 62 temples and 10,000 lamas. But in 1930 it became a victim of the Stalin's purges. All but three of the Temples were destroyed and most of the monks were either killed or sent to Siberia. Now there is a museum and restored. Wikipedia.

The Genghis Khan Equestrian Statue-part of the Genghis Khan Statue Complex, is a 40-metre (130 ft) tall, stainless steel statue of Genghis Khan on horseback and the world's tallest equestrian statue. It is located on the bank of the Tuul River at Tsonjin Boldog, 54 km (33.55 miles) east of the Ulaanbaatar city. The statue is symbolically pointed east towards his birthplace. It is on top of the Genghis Khan Statue Complex, a visitor centre, itself 10 metres (33 ft) tall, with 36 columns representing the 36 khans from Genghis to Ligdan Khan. It was designed by sculptor D. Erdenebileg and architect J. Enkhjargal and erected in 2008. Visitors walk to the head of the horse through its chest and neck, where they have a panoramic view. The main statue area will be surrounded by 200 Gers (they haven't built it yet!), designed and arranged like the pattern of the horse brand marks that were used by the 13th century Mongol tribes. The attached museum has exhibitions relating to the Bronze Age and Xiongnu archaeological cultures in Mongolia, which show everyday utensils, belt buckles, knives, sacred animals, etc. and a second exhibition on the Great Khan period in the 13 and 14th centuries which has ancient tools, goldsmith subjects and some Nestorian crosses and rosaries. Adjacent to the museum is a tourist and recreation centre, which covers 212 hectares (520 acres). Wikipedia.

Khustain Nuruu National Park (Mongolian: Хустайн нуруу, Birch Mountains): located in Tuv Province (Aimag), is a national park of Mongolia. It is also known as Hustai National Park. The Tuul River runs through the park. The Mongolian Government declared Hustai National Park as a Specially Protected Area in 1993, one year after the initiation of the reintroduction project of the Takhi (Przewalski's horse) to the Hustain Nuruu. The HNP extends through the Khentii Mountains and includes the western edge of the Mongolian steppe at the boundaries of Altanbulag, Argalant and Bayankhangai Soums (districts or regions) of Tuv Province. The park is about 120 km (74.7645 miles) from the capital city of Ulaanbaatar to the west.

In 2002, the Man and the Biosphere Reserves organization of UNESCO certified the HNP as a **member of the world biosphere network of natural reserves**. The HNPT was enrolled as a member of IUCN in 2007.

Since 1993, the HNP has implemented the following international projects, supported by the **Dutch Government**:

- Hustain Nuruu nature reserves, 1993–1997.
- Conservation of the biodiversity of the HNP, 1998–2003.
- Support to the management of the HNP, 2004–2008.
- Development of sustainable livelihoods in the buffer zone of the HNP, 2004–2008.
- Adaptation to changing conditions in the HNP and its buffer zone, 2009–2012. Wikipedia.

Karakorum-is located about 390kms/242miles west from the capital Ulaanbaatar in Ovorkhangai province. This is **the Genghis (Chinggis) Khan's 13th century capital** and heart of the mighty Mongolian Empire and Okhon river Valley, cradle of Mongolian civilization. Visitors, such as **Marco Polo**, described its ornate building, including a 2500 sq. meters Palace of Worldly Peace. In 1792 the Monastery still had 62 temples and 10,000 lamas. But in 1930 it became a victim of the Stalin's purges. All but three of the Temples were destroyed and most of the monks were either killed or sent to Siberia. Now there is a museum and restored. Wikipedia

Orkhon Valley-is located west of Ulaanbaatar, along the Orkhon River in Ovorkhangai and Arkhangai Provinces, was the center of the Mongol Empire, the center of the Uighur Empire, and the birthplace of Mongolian Buddhism. Today, the cultural heritage of the valley constitutes a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. Wikipedia

The Kharkhorin (Karakorum) Rock: is a statue of a penis raised on a platform on the steppe, located near the Erdene Zuu Monastery (built in 1585) in Mongolia. The statue has dual functions; primarily it is a reminder to the monks to remain celibate, but it is also a symbol of fertility and human life.

Khugnu Khan National Park (Mongolian: Хөгнө Хан) is centered on Khugnu Khan Mountain, about 60 km (37.2823 miles) east of Kharakorum. The park features many historical sites, including the ruins of a 17th-century monastery. It is located in Gurvanbulag District of Bulgan Province, about 280 km (173. 984 miles) west of Ulaanbaatar. Wikipedia.

Elsen Tasarkhai (Bayangobi Desert)-is a part of the 80 km/50 miles long Mongol Els Sand Dunes and is located on about 280 km (173. 984 miles) west from the capital Ulaanbaatar. The nature in this area is really spectacular and great for relaxing. During the trip, you will also have opportunities to visit a local nomadic family, ride two-humped Bactrian camel, walk on sand dunes, experience staying in a traditional Mongolian dwelling ger, and walk and relax in beautifully serene nature. Wikipedia.

Brief Itinerary:

Day 1-Upon your arrival in Ulaanbaatar New Airport, meet Samar Magic Tours team. **(L)**

Day 2-Ulaanbaatar-Gorkhi/Terelj National Park. **(B)(L)(D)**

Day 3-The Genghis Khan Equestrian Statue-Hustain Nuruu National Park. **(B)(L)(D)**

Day 4-Hustain Nuruu National Park-Karakorum-Orkhon Valley. **(B)(L)(D)**

Day 5-Erdene zuu monastery-Karakorum museum-Khugnu Khan National Reserve-Uvgun Temple-Elsen Tasarkhai Sand Dunes (Bayangobi Desert)-Bactrian Camel riding. **(B)(L)(D)**

Day 6-Bayangobi desert-Ulaanbaatar. **(B)(L)**

Day 7-Departure Mongolia. **(B)**

Day-by-day Itinerary:

Day 1-Upon your arrival in **Ulaanbaatar (UB or ULN) New Airport** (52 km / 31.33 miles, 2hrs driving, depending on the high traffic!), meet **Samar Magic Tours team**. Change money. Transfer to confirmed hotel. The check-in time at hotel is after **02:00PM**. **Welcome lunch in traditional Mongolian Barbecue local restaurant. Ulaanbaatar City tour:** visits the **National History Museum**, where you will see artefacts from Mongolia and Central Asia from the Stone Age to the present, the **Sukh Baatar square**-this is the main square in the heart of Ulaanbaatar. **Here you will see a large statue of the Genghis Kan**-inaugurated in 2006 on the occasion of 800th Anniversary of the Great Mongolian Empire of Genghis Khan (1206-2006), the **Sukh Baatar Hero** along with The Parliament House, Stock Exchange, the Drama Theatre and the Palace of Culture. **06:00PM-Enjoy the National Performers** (concert which includes the Tsam dance, traditional Mongolian singers, dancers, Tuvan throat singing and contortionists). Transfer to hotel. Overnight at hotel. **(L)**

Day 2-Breakfast. **09:00AM**-Visit the **Gandantegchinlen Monastery** is a Tibetan-style Buddhist monastery that has been restored and revitalized since 1990. The Tibetan name translates to the "Great Place of Complete Joy". It currently has over 150 monks in residence. It features a 26.5-meter-high statue of Avalokitesvara. It came under state protection in 1994. Next, we will visit **a small museum of fossils of dinosaurs**. The central piece of the museum is the Tarbosaurus bataar (cousin of the Tyrannosaurus rex) of 4 m of height, 3 tons of ultraviolet light and a smaller Saurolophus, with its distinctive cranial crest. The Tarbosaurus bataar It reached the international headlines in the year 2012, when it was sold for more than US \$ 1 million at an auction in Texas. The Government of Mongolia protested, because the fossil had been illegally removed from Mongolia and demanded its return. The legal battle ended when a US judge ruled in favor of Mongolia. The museum also includes examples of Velociraptor and Protoceratops, and an egg nest of Oviraptor. It is located inside the old Lenin Museum, built in 1974. While there are plans to expand it to a world-class institution, for now it is still somewhat limited in specimens. **Lunch is included in local restaurant. Afterward, drive north further to Gorkhi/Terelj National Park.** The valley is about 20kms/12miles long at 1600m. This picturesque National Park is a part of Khan

Khentii Strictly Protected Area. It is a great place for hiking, trekking, even you can rock climb here at its natural steep granite walls. **Explore on foot the Turtle shaped original giant rock. Hiking and walking to Arryabal Meditation temple**, on the top of mountain. During the trip, you will also have opportunities to **visit a local nomadic family**. Overnight in tourist Gers camp. **(B)(L)(D)**

Day 3-Breakfast. 08:00AM-Afterward, drive towards N/E to **visit the 40-meter (~133,3 feet) Genghis Khan Equestrian Statue**. Visitors walk to the head of the horse through its chest and neck of the horse, where they can have a panoramic view. Next, drive outside of Ulaanbaatar, directly to explore **Hustain Nuruu National Park of Wild Horses** (**hustai** is Mongolian for birch and **nuruu** means mountains) measures about 57,000 hectares, or including the buffer zone 120.000 ha., and is located on about 120 km (74.7645 miles) west from the capital Ulaanbaatar. The flagship species for the **Hustain Nuruu Nature Reserve** is the reintroduced Przewalski horse. Overnight in tourist Gers Camp. **(B)(L)(D)**

Day 4-Breakfast. 08:00AM-Trip towards west to Karakorum-the Genghis (Chinggis) Khan's 13th century capital and heart of the mighty Mongolian Empire and Okhon river Valley, cradle of Mongolian civilization. Visitors, such as **Marco Polo**, described its ornate building, including a 2500 sq. meters Palace of Worldly Peace. In 1792 the Monastery still had 62 temples and 10,000 lamas. But in 1930 it became a victim of the Stalin's purges. All but three of the Temples were destroyed and most of the monks were either killed or sent to Siberia. Overnight in tourist Gers Camp. **(B)(L)(D)**

Day 5 -Breakfast. 08:00AM-Today in the morning, **we visit Erdene zuu monastery, two turtle monuments, the statue of a penis raised** on a platform on the steppe, located near the Erdene Zuu Monastery (built in 1585), **and the Karakorum museum. Afternoon, drive further to explore Elsen Tasarkhai (also known as Bayangobi desert)-** is a part of the 80kms/50 miles long Mongol Els Sand Dunes and is located on about 280 km (173. 984 miles) west from the capital Ulaanbaatar. The nature in this area is really spectacular and great for relaxing. During the trip, you will also have opportunities **to ride two-humped Bactrian camel**, walk on sand dunes, experience staying in a traditional Mongolian dwelling, the ger, and walk and relax in beautifully serene nature. **Continuous drive to explore Khugnu Khaan Mountain Nature Park-**it is located about 280 km (173. 984 miles) west of Ulaanbaatar. Covering an area of 47000 hectares, this park contains many historical monuments, forests of silver birches and poplar trees, and sources. The ecosystem of this park is particularly interesting because the steppe and the taiga meet here. Created in 1997 as a natural reserve, **it became in 2003 a natural park**. One of the main attractions of this area is the **small Uvgun monastery** which was built in 17th century by Saint **Zanabazar** who was a great sculptor and the biggest representative of Buddhism in Mongolia. Overnight in Tourist Gers Camp. **(B)(L)(D)**

Day 6-Breakfast. 06:00AM-Drive back to Ulaanbaatar, about 280 km (173. 984 miles, 6 hrs driving). Arrive and transfer to hotel (the check-in time at hotel is after **02:00PM**). **Shopping for souvenirs and cashmere**. Transfer. Overnight at hotel. **(B)(L)**

Day 7-Breakfast. By hotels policy the check-out time is before **12:00** noon. Transfer. Departure Mongolia or Post tour. **(B). End of our services.**

What's Included?

2 nights at confirmed hotel in Ulaanbaatar, based on double/twin standard room, with breakfast.

4 nights in traditional tourist camps, based on standard Gers for 2 people.

Full Board, excepted the 1st day, and the last day, as specified (**B**-breakfast, **L**-lunch, **D**-dinner), including one bottle of mineral water, per person/a day.

Welcome lunch in traditional Mongolian Barbecue local restaurant.

Services of English or Spanish speaking local guide (according to your request!).

All transportation on comfortable 4WD Land Cruiser Toyota vehicle in private, including the all petrol.

Entrance fees to the all specified protected areas, national parks, the 40-meter (~133,3 feet) Genghis Khan Equestrian Statue, museums, and the monasteries.

One Mongolian traditional folk songs concert.

Bactrian camel riding to Elsen Tasarkhai sand dunes (**1** hr).

Meeting Nomadic people. Taxes and services.

Letter-visa support (if necessary).

What's Not Included?

Flights and occasional flight delays or cancellation.

Visa.

Excess baggage.

The binoculars, telescopes and tripod (if necessary). Any rescue costs or costs of early departure. Changing of date of departure from Ulaanbaatar.

The traveller is responsible for having proper travel documents, such as a valid passport, proper visa, the necessary passport pictures, and the international airfares.

Travel insurance.

Items of personal nature such as gratuities to porters at hotels, telephone / telex / fax charges, laundry, beverages, meals, optional activities, and services not specified in the itinerary.

Any circumstances beyond of our control, such as the imposition of quarantine restrictions, weather conditions, etc.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

HOW TO JOIN: All the tours are "Land Only", so you need to book your own international flights, unless otherwise specified in the tour description. Joining information will be sent to you upon confirmation.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE: These require a booking form and a deposit which is non-refundable. Booking requests with deposits will be considered in order of their receipt. A booking form is accepted and acceptance becomes definite only from the date that we have confirmed acceptance in writing and issued a confirmation invoice.

Payment of the balance: of the tour cost is due not later than **twelve or ten weeks before the departure date**. **Your tour price is guaranteed:** once Samar Magic Tours has received your full payment. All tour prices are in US dollars and in Euro and are based on tariff and rates of currency exchange in effect at the time of printing. No further reminder will be sent and, if payment is not received by the due date, I reserve the right to treat the booking as cancelled and charge a cancellation fee, the amount of which will not exceed the total cost of the holiday. You are therefore strongly recommended to take out travel insurance at an early stage to cover you in event of cancellation. All itineraries are as written but reserve the right to alter these due to any unforeseen circumstances and will notify you of any changes as soon as possible.

Refunds: Deposits are non-refundable.

90-19 working days prior to departure: 50% of Land Cost.

18-00 working days prior to departure: No refund.

Air or Train cancellation terms are additional: The air fares or train tickets are subject to change based on availability at the time of entering the reservation. Rates in international or national flights or train tickets only freeze the issuance and payment in full of the tickets. Tickets are not refundable and can only be annulled on the day of issue. All cancellation requests are required in writing. Telephone / verbal cancellation is not accepted.

HOTELS: By hotels policy check-in time is after **14:00**. By hotels policy check-out time is before **12:00** noon.

PASSPORT, VISA AND HEALTH REQUIREMENTS: All participants are responsible for, and must be in possession of, a full passport, valid for at least six months beyond the end of the tour. In addition, participants must obtain any necessary visas and vaccination certificates required for the tour.

ACCEPTANCE OF RISK: The Client acknowledges that the nature of the tour is adventurous and that such holidays may involve a significant amount of personal risk. The Client hereby assumes all such risk and does hereby release the Company from all claims and causes of action arising from any damages or injuries or death resulting from these inherent risks.

CHARGE FOR CHILDREN IN MONGOLIA:

0-3 years old: free;

From 4-11 years old: 50% at the regular adult price.

From 12 years old and above: 100% at the regular adult price.

For children 11 and under: if they are sharing bed with either parent and do not ask for a third bed in the same room, they will be charged the child fare. If they need the third bed in parents' room, they will be charged 80% of the adult fare.

For children 12 and over: they will be charged at the regular adult price.