



BEST OF MONGOLIA

Classic Tour | 16 Days | Physical Level 2

Ulaanbaatar - Terelj - Dalanzadgad - Khongoryn Els - Bayanzag - Ongii -
Grasslands - Kharkhorin - Khustai National Park

Discover Mongolia's wide-open landscapes and rich traditions on this unforgettable journey. Travel from the grassy plains of the steppe to the vast Gobi Desert, staying in traditional ger camps along the way. Meet local nomadic families, explore ancient sites linked to Genghis Khan, and enjoy a mini Naadam festival. You'll also visit Khustai National Park, home to wild horses, and get a real sense of life in one of the world's most remote and beautiful places.

- Journey through the dunes, cliffs, and wide-open plains of the Gobi Desert
- Discover Bayanzag's 'Flaming Cliffs' where dinosaur fossils were first unearthed
- Walk around the iconic Turtle Rock in Terelj National Park
- Visit Orkhon Waterfall, a dramatic 20-metre cascade in the Orkhon Valley
- Spot the famous Takhi horses grazing freely in Khustai National Park

To book call **0800 936 3998** or visit your local travel agent

Visit wendywutours.co.nz

TOUR MAP



BEST OF MONGOLIA TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides
- Safe and secure with IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

CLASSIC TOURS:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of Mongolia on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully inclusive basis so you'll travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escort whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 2:

All of our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights.

‘Best of Mongolia’ is rated as a **physical level 2** tour. A moderate level of fitness is required. You will be on your feet for most of the day, with longer walks that include ascents and descents on steps or uneven paths. Travelling conditions may be more challenging in some areas.

Travelling in Mongolia is both rewarding and challenging because of the lack of basic infrastructure, such as roads or a transportation system. This tour covers a vast distance and reaching the sites involves travelling through areas of Mongolia which are barren, remote and without any modern facilities.

- There will be short periods of walking whilst sightseeing often on steep or uneven ground.
- There are periods of driving on rough unsealed roads or tracks. Expect long drives.
- Outside of Ulaanbaatar, your accommodation will be in ger camps. Whilst we use premium ger camps, facilities still may be more basic than what you’re used to. The camp in Orkhon Valley has shared bathroom facilities (see page 11 for more details).
- The walk through Yol Valley may be icy, depending on the time of year.

Of course, our National Escorts and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you require any more information about the pace of the tours, please contact our reservations team who will be happy to answer your questions.

DETAILED ITINERARY**Days 1-2: Fly overnight to Ulaanbaatar**

Meals: D

Fly overnight to Mongolia's capital Ulaanbaatar. On arrival, you will be met in the arrival hall by a local guide from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes to your hotel.



Early check-in is not included. Additional nights' before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.

Destination Information

Ulaanbaatar – Home to nearly half of Mongolia's population, Ulaanbaatar is the country's political, cultural and economic heart with centuries-old monasteries sitting alongside modern glass-fronted buildings. As the gateway to the steppe, it's the perfect place to experience modern Mongolian life before heading into the wilderness.

Day 3: Explore Ulaanbaatar

Meals: B, L, D

Begin the day at Gandan Monastery, Mongolia's largest and most important monastery, where you can observe the monks' morning chants and learn about the country's unique form of Buddhism. Continue to the central Genghis Khan Square before exploring the National Museum of Mongolia, home to a rich collection of artefacts spanning the nation's history.



This evening, enjoy a traditional music and dance performance featuring throat singing, folk instruments and colourful costumes. Sightseeing today is leisurely and flat, taking around 2-3 hours on foot.

Destination Information

Gandan Monastery – Mongolia's most important monastery and a peaceful place to watch local life unfold. It's still home to many practising monks and a giant golden statue of a Buddhist figure called Avalokitesvara. You'll often hear the sound of morning chanting as you explore the grounds.

Genghis Khan Square – Located in the centre of Ulaanbaatar, this large square is named after Mongolia's most famous leader. A huge statue of Genghis Khan sits in front of the Parliament building, making it a great spot to take in the city's mix of modern and traditional life.

National Museum of Mongolia – This excellent museum offers a journey through Mongolia’s rich and complex history, from prehistoric times to the present day. Highlights include traditional costumes from Mongolia’s many ethnic groups, artefacts from the era of the Mongol Empire, and exhibits on the country’s Soviet past. It’s a great first stop for understanding the culture and identity of the nation.

Day 4: Terelj National Park

Meals: B, L, D

Today you’ll head out of the city and into the wild beauty of Terelj National Park, driving around 2-hours by coach. On the way, make a stop to admire the colossal Genghis Khan Equestrian Statue, an eye-catching monument on the open steppe and the largest of its kind in the world. Continue on to Terelj National Park to see the iconic Turtle Rock and visit the serene Aryabal Temple, tucked into the hills.

Later, settle into your premium ger and enjoy time to utilise the sauna, rooftop terrace lounge, and star-gazing facilities.



Destination Information

Genghis Khan Equestrian Complex – Rising 40 metres from the steppe, the Genghis Khan Equestrian Statue is the largest equestrian statue in the world. Located on the banks of the Tuul River, the statue celebrates the legacy of Mongolia’s most iconic leader. Visitors can take an elevator to the horse’s head for panoramic views, and explore the museum beneath, which offers insight into Mongol history and culture.

Turtle Rock – Shaped by wind and time, this granite formation in Gorkhi-Terelj National Park resembles a giant turtle. It’s one of the most recognisable landmarks in the park and makes a great photo stop.

Aryabal Temple – Located in the hills above Terelj National Park, Aryabal Temple is a peaceful meditation centre with sweeping views. The temple, influenced by Tibetan Buddhism, is reached by a short uphill walk along a path lined with Buddhist teachings. Inside, colourful murals and a quiet atmosphere provide space for reflection.

Day 5: Fly to Dalanzadgad

Meals: B, L, D

Fly 1 hour south to Dalanzadgad, your entry point to the vast Gobi Desert. On arrival, start your travels by comfortable 4WD and stop by a local market for a glimpse of daily life. Then drive around 1-hour into Gobi Gurvansaikhan National Park for a walk through the striking Yol Valley, where towering cliffs and narrow gorges create dramatic scenery. This evening, settle into your premium ger on the edge of the desert.



Please note: the walk through Yol Valley takes about 2 hours round trip. The terrain is generally flat but includes some uneven, rocky sections. Depending on the time of year and weather conditions, there may still be occasional ice patches, so please wear appropriate footwear, exercise caution and follow the guidance of your National Escort.

Destination Information

Yol Valley – Located in the Gobi Gurvansaikhan National Park, Yol Valley (also known as Vulture's Gorge) is a dramatic gorge carved by ancient rivers. Despite being in the heart of the desert, the valley is known for its cool microclimate, narrow canyons, occasional ice and for spotting wildlife such as ibex and eagles.

Day 6: Journey through the Gobi Desert

Meals: B, L, D

Start your 4 hour drive (180km) by 4WD through breathtaking desert landscapes, stopping for breaks along the way. Pass roaming camel herds and their nomadic herders, as you make your way to Khongoryn Els, home to some of the tallest sand dunes in Mongolia. Spend time enjoying the views with a walk from the base of the dunes, or you may wish to climb to the top. Settle into your premium ger camp for a two-night stay and enjoy dinner under the stars.



Please note: climbing the sand dunes is optional. The ascent is steep and strenuous, so only attempt if you feel comfortable.

Destination Information

Khongoryn Els – Known as the “Singing Sands,” Khongoryn Els is one of Mongolia's largest and most spectacular sand dune areas. Some dunes reach heights of up to 300 metres and stretch for over 100 kilometres across the Gobi Desert. The name comes from the sound the sand makes when the wind moves across it.

Day 7: Khongoryn Els

Meals: B, L, D

Today is dedicated to discovering the landscapes and lifestyle of the Gobi. See the dramatic contrasts of Khongoryn Els up close, where rolling sand dunes meet unexpected pockets of green oases. Meet a local camel herding family and learn how they've adapted to life in this harsh but beautiful environment. Later, enjoy time at leisure to relax or take in more of the desert before returning to camp for a hearty Mongolian dinner.

**Destination Information**

Nomadic Camel Herders – Near Khongoryn Els, nomadic families live in the desert and raise Bactrian camels. They use the camels for transport, milk, and wool. Meeting these herders is a special chance to learn about a traditional way of life that has stayed the same for generations.

Day 8: Khongoryn Els – Flaming Cliffs of Bayanzag

Meals: B, L, D

Journey 4 hours (150km) by 4WD across the open steppe to Bayanzag, known as the 'Flaming Cliffs' for the vivid red glow of its sandstone, especially at sunset. Explore the area on foot for around 2 hours, walking through the site where dinosaur fossils were first uncovered in the 1920s. Your guide will share stories of the region's remarkable paleontological discoveries before you settle in for the night at your premium ger camp.



Please note: there are some uneven paths and minor slopes at the Flaming Cliffs. Please wear appropriate footwear, exercise caution and follow the guidance of your National Escort.

Destination Information

Flaming Cliffs – Known for their deep red hues that seemingly glow at sunset, the Flaming Cliffs of Bayanzag are one of Mongolia's most iconic sights. It was here in the 1920s that American explorer Roy Chapman Andrews made groundbreaking fossil discoveries, including the world's first dinosaur eggs. The area remains a key site for paleontologists and offers striking desert views.

Day 9: Bayanzag – Ongiin Hiid – Orkhon Valley

Meals: B, L, D

Depart for the Orkhon River Valley. Taking around 3 hours (160km) by 4WD, stop at Ongi ruins to explore. Once home to one of Mongolia's largest monastic complexes, the ruins here tell the story of a once-thriving spiritual centre. Explore the remains on foot and hear about its turbulent past. After lunch, continue the drive around 5-hours to the Orkhon River Valley, arriving in the evening. Check in to your standard ger for a 2-night stay.



Please note: there are some uneven paths and minor slopes at Ongiin Khiid. Please wear appropriate footwear, exercise caution and follow the guidance of your National Escort.

Please note: your camp for the next two nights has been chosen for its unique experiences. You will stay in a standard ger without a private en-suite, but you'll have access to clean, shared bathroom facilities.

Destination Information

Ongiin Khiid – Ongiin Khiid sits beside the Ongi River and was once one of Mongolia's biggest monasteries. It was destroyed in the 1930s, but you can still see its peaceful ruins and a small rebuilt temple, giving insight into Mongolia's past.

Day 10: Mini Naadam Festival (Orkhon Valley)

Meals: B, L, D

Spend the day delving into Mongolia's proud nomadic culture with a special mini Naadam festival with the nomadic people in the Orkhon River Valley and Bat-Ulzii village, demonstrating each of the "Three Manly Games". Enjoy the spectacle of wrestling bouts featuring 4-8 wrestlers, see spirited horse races, learn the art of archery from a professional Mongolian archer. Weather permitting, take part in a mini Ger assembling contest.



As the day winds down, gather for a hearty stone-grilled mutton dinner "khorkhog", a true taste of Mongolian hospitality.

Destination Information

Mini Naadam Festival – A special version of Mongolia's most celebrated festival, the Mini Naadam showcases the "Three Manly Games" - wrestling, archery, and horse racing, in a more intimate setting. It offers a close-up look at the country's sporting traditions, complete with colourful costumes and a chance to join in the fun.

Day 11: Orkhon Valley – Kharkhorin

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, visit the Orkhon Waterfall. Then travel 2.5 hours (90km) into the heart of Mongolia as you arrive in Kharkhorin, also known as Karakorum, once the seat of Genghis Khan's great empire. On arrival, visit the Kharkhorin Museum, which offers a comprehensive insight to the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Orkhon River Valley. Check in to your premium ger for a two-night stay.

**Destination Information**

Orkhon Waterfall – Tucked within the UNESCO-listed Orkhon Valley, Orkhon Waterfall is one of Mongolia's most picturesque natural sights. Surrounded by volcanic rock and green steppe, the waterfall cascades 16 metres into a basalt canyon and is particularly striking after summer rains.

Kharkhorin – Once the capital of the Mongol Empire under Genghis Khan, Kharkhorin (also known as Karakorum) lies in the Orkhon Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Though little remains of the ancient city, it's a place of huge historical importance, where the past of the empire meets the culture of modern Mongolia.

Kharkhorin Museum – The museum presents archaeological finds from the Orkhon Valley and artefacts from the 13th-century city of Kharkhorin. Its exhibits include stone inscriptions, ceramics, metalwork, and models that illustrate the layout and history of Mongolia's former capital.

Day 12: Kharkhorin

Meals: B, L, D

Step into the past at the Erdene Zuu Monastery, where Tibetan-style temples stand amid sweeping steppe views. Next, take a short walk to the Orkhon River Valley viewpoint for a panoramic view of the valley. Later, wander around to the remarkable Turtle Stone hill.

Sightseeing today is leisurely with some steps at the monastery.

**Destination Information**

Erdene Zuu Monastery – Built in 1586, Erdene Zuu is Mongolia's oldest Buddhist monastery and stands on the site of ancient Karakorum. Surrounded by white walls and traditional stupas, it blends religious heritage with layers of Mongol history. Though once damaged during Soviet rule, parts of the monastery are still active today.

Turtle Stone Hill - Located near Kharkhorin, this remarkable relic from the era of the 13th-century Mongol Empire is carved from solid stone. These turtle sculptures once marked the sacred boundaries of ancient Kharkhorin, symbolising strength, longevity, and protection.

Day 13: Kharkhorin – Khustai National Park

Meals: B, L, D

Travel 5 hours (250km) by 4WD for Khustai National Park, a protected reserve known for its population of wild takhi horses, also called Przewalski's horses. Brought back from the brink of extinction, these rare animals now roam freely across the grassy plains, alongside deer, marmots and a variety of birdlife. Tour through the park, observing these wild horses in their natural habitat along with other native wildlife. Enjoy the scenic beauty of the rolling steppes before settling into your premium ger.

**Destination Information**

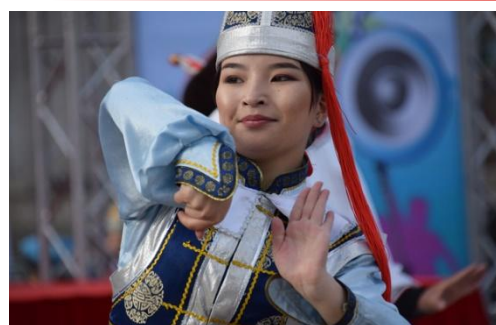
Khustai National Park – Located just two hours from Ulaanbaatar, Khustai National Park is best known for its successful reintroduction of the wild takhi horses. But the park is also home to a range of wildlife, including marmots, red deer, and golden eagles, as well as rolling steppe landscapes.

Takhi – The takhi, also known as Przewalski's horse, is the world's last truly wild horse. Once extinct in the wild, it was reintroduced to Mongolia in the 1990s through conservation efforts. Stocky and strong, the takhi is a symbol of Mongolian wildlife and freedom.

Day 14: Return to Ulaanbaatar

Meals: B, L, D

Spend the morning soaking up the natural beauty of Khustai National Park before returning to Ulaanbaatar, taking around 2.5 hours (100km). The afternoon is yours free to pick up some last-minute souvenirs, visit a gallery or explore at leisure. In the evening, gather with your group for a farewell dinner at a traditional Mongolian restaurant, complete with live folk music to mark the end of your unforgettable journey.

**Day 15: Depart Ulaanbaatar to UK**

Meals: B

Any time before your flight is at leisure. You will be transferred from your hotel to the airport, according to the departure time of your international flight.

Late check-out is not included. Additional nights before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.



MONGOLIA TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS:

New Zealand passport holders do not require a visa to enter Mongolia for stays of up to 30 days within a 6-month period. Please note that visa regulations can change at any time, often at the discretion of the relevant embassy or consulate. Wendy Wu Tours acts solely as a third party and cannot influence visa procedures. If you hold a passport from another country, please contact us for guidance.

INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation throughout the tour has been carefully selected for its convenient location, comfort, and authentic character. Outside of Ulaanbaatar, standards tend to be simpler than what you may be accustomed to, with fewer Western-style amenities. Properties are generally rated at a local three- to four-star standard; however, hotels and camps do not follow an international rating system, so facilities and quality may vary from those in New Zealand. Should you have any concerns during your stay, your National Escort will be happy to assist.

Ger camps – A “ger” is the traditional home of nomads across Mongolia. Constructed from a wooden frame covered with layers of felt and canvas, and raised on wooden platforms, these circular tents are insulated to withstand Mongolia’s harsh climate. Inside, you’ll find warm fabrics, furs, and beautifully crafted wooden furniture, designed to provide comfort and practicality. Gers, also known as yurts, typically feature two or three single wooden beds with linens, a heating stove, thick blankets, one electrical socket, and a low table with chairs.

Premium ger camps – For this tour, we have selected the best camps available and included premium gers (locally referred to as “luxury”) to ensure a more comfortable journey. Premium gers feature private en-suite bathrooms and electric heating systems, whereas standard ger camps have shared bathrooms and wood-burning heating.

Electricity and hot water – The supply of electricity is limited in the country, as is the supply of hot water, however the majority of camps we use on the *Best of Mongolia* tour offer 24-hour electricity and hot water. Cafes and communal areas are often located within the camp grounds. Most of the camps will also have a laundry service available, at a small fee payable locally.

EATING IN MONGOLIA:

All meals (plus 1 litre of water per person, per day) are included in our fully inclusive Best of Mongolia tour, from the groups' arrival until the day of departure. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as different ways they are prepared and cooked. Lunches will often be lunch box style provided by the camp due to the long drives between towns.

Food in Mongolia, especially outside Ulaanbaatar, tends to be simple due to limited ingredient availability. Expect to eat mutton (used in a variety of ways), beef, potato, rice, noodles, eggs, peanut butter, cheese, tomato, onion, carrot, sheep's milk, and occasionally yak. We recommend bringing along your favourite tea, coffee, and snacks from home to enjoy during your journey.

Restricted or vegetarian diets can be catered for on a limited basis, offering options like noodles, rice, and steamed vegetables. Expect meals to be repetitive and basic due to the limited ingredient availability. Please let us know in advance if you have dietary needs or any specific concerns.

DEVELOPMENT IN MONGOLIA AND WHAT TO EXPECT:

We encourage you to embrace both the rewards and challenges of travelling in a developing country. While Mongolia is rapidly evolving, it still differs from the UK in terms of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. Concepts of personal responsibility and safety may not always match those at home. For example, you might encounter road hazards like uncovered holes without warning signs or safety barriers. Rest assured, all our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum to prioritise your wellbeing throughout the journey.

Wendy Wu Tours, together with our trusted partners in Mongolia, carefully designs itineraries using local knowledge to offer the best-paced sightseeing possible. However, please be aware that factors such as weather conditions, road construction, and occasional closures of sights may affect the schedule. Your National Escort will do everything possible to minimise disruption but cannot guarantee against delays, changes, or, in rare cases, cancellations of parts of the itinerary.

Some accommodation along the way may be simpler than the usual Wendy Wu Tours standard, offering a more rustic experience. These stays provide a unique chance to connect with Mongolia's traditional nomadic lifestyle in truly memorable surroundings.

English is spoken at a basic level in Mongolia, making your National Escort an invaluable guide throughout your trip.

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and Mongolia is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. In order to avoid any inconvenience, Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your National Escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed to local guides and drivers throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the National Escort.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy but we do recognise that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

TRANSPORT:

There are over 20,000 km of roads across Mongolia, but only around 1,600 km are paved. When travelling outside urban areas, you will encounter a variety of surfaces—from gravel highways to vast open plains where routes are often marked by poles.

Coaches – In Ulaanbaatar and Terelj, we use air-conditioned coaches for comfort.

Domestic flights – Your economy-class domestic flight from Ulaanbaatar to Dalanzadgad is included. The luggage allowance is 23kg for checked baggage plus 5kg for hand luggage. Any excess baggage fees will need to be paid locally. Domestic flights are limited, usually operating once or twice daily. In the event of delays or cancellations, your itinerary will be adjusted accordingly.

4WD Vehicles – For all other parts of the journey, we use comfortable, air-conditioned 4WD vehicles (typically Toyota Land Cruisers, subject to change) that are best suited to the diverse terrain and lengthy drive times. Each 4WD has its own driver who speaks limited English but will communicate closely with your National Escort. Each vehicle accommodates a maximum of three guests, with the National Escort rotating among vehicles as a fourth passenger. Groups will travel together in convoy, aiming to stay within sight of each other throughout the day. Private use of a 4WD is not included. We will ensure groups of 2-3 aren't separated.

Seatbelts – Seatbelts are not compulsory by law in Mongolia, and it is common for local drivers not to use them. Some drivers use seat covers that may obstruct access to seatbelts; if this is the case, please ask for them to be adjusted or removed. For your safety, we strongly recommend that you use seatbelts whenever they are available and remain seated at all times while the vehicle is moving. Please raise any concerns with your National Escort.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

We recommend that you contact either your doctor or Health centre for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Safetravel has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.safetravel.govt.nz

WEATHER:

Mongolia's weather from May to September offers the best conditions for travel, with generally mild to warm temperatures and long daylight hours. Spring (May) can still be quite cool, especially in the mornings and evenings, with occasional chilly winds and the possibility of lingering ice in mountainous areas. Summer (June to August) brings pleasantly warm days, often ranging from 20°C to 30°C, though temperatures can drop sharply at night, so layering is essential. We recommend packing warm, thin layers, a good jacket, gloves, and sturdy walking shoes.

Rain is relatively rare but occasional showers do occur, so a light waterproof jacket is advisable. Due to Mongolia's vast landscapes and varying elevations, weather conditions can change quickly, so be prepared for a range of temperatures throughout your adventure.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances, we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice including a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks before departure.

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