

Experience Mongolia's Winter Magic: Ice & Camel Festivals

MN-09



Embark on a thrilling 10-day journey, where you'll embrace Mongolia's winter wonders and immerse yourself in its rich cultural traditions during the annual March ice and camel festivals. The renowned Ice Festival features captivating ice sculptures and an array of traditional winter sports, including ice marathons, wrestling, horse sledding, and ice driving competitions. Venturing to the South Gobi, you'll encounter the Camel Festival, organised by a local non-governmental organisation committed to preserving the Bactrian camel population. This extraordinary festival offers a unique opportunity to explore the world of camels and engage with nomadic herders.

During this festive season, you'll witness locals adorned in traditional winter attire, complete with fur hats and winter deels, and the grand finale will be a fireworks display. For those daring souls unafraid of the cold, don't miss this chance to partake in these cherished winter traditions!

DEPARTURE DATES:

ITINERARY

Day 1 - Ulan Bator

Arrival in Ulan Bator and transfer to your hotel. (D).

Day 2 - Lake Khuvsgul

On day two we will meet our team and drive to Chinggis Khaan Airport. After a short flight we'll arrive to Murun, the centre of Khuvsgul province. Upon arrival, we'll drive to the atmospheric frozen lake Khuvsgul. We will then have dinner and spend the night in a ger camp on the lake shore. (B/L/D).

Day 3 - Lake Khuvsgul

After a relaxing breakfast, we will enjoy the dramatic opening ceremony of the Ice Festival. We will watch in awe as traditional instruments are played as part of the Mongolian folk music concert and we will also witness a unique shamanic ritual. Today will also mark the start of the first round of the Ice Marathon. During this round, ice skaters will participate in a 100 km (63 miles) race. Our group will have plenty of opportunities for photography and horse riding on the frozen lake. Another highlight is our visit to a nomadic family in the area. After dinner, there is a special ceremony where the foreigner wearing the best Mongolian Deel will be elected and awarded with a medal and a certificate by the office of the province governor. (B/L/D).

Day 4 - Lake Khuvsgul

The ice driving competition is the focus of today. During this part, local drivers will compete and display their skills. We will also watch ice wrestling, horse sledding and horse riding and make a visit to a nomadic family. After dinner, the closing ceremony will be celebrated with fireworks. Spend the night in a ger camp. (B/L/D).

Day 5 - Ulan Bator

Breakfast at the ger camp and then we'll drive back to

TOUR INCLUSIONS AND OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Included

International flights
Domestic flights in Mongolia
Accommodation
Full board meals
English - speaking guides
Guided tours & entrance fees
Airport transfers

Not included

Personal travel insurance
Optional excursions

Practical information

Mongolian visa procedure

Murun for the flight back to Ulan Bator. Transfer to a hotel. Have a leisurely day in the capital and spend the night at our hotel. (B/L/D).

Day 6 - Ulan Bator

Meet our team and then drive to the Chinggisiin Khuree area to attend the Eagle Hunting Festival. Here, we will watch the eagle hunting competition, horseback archery competition and eagle training demonstration. Our alfresco picnic lunch will be in beautiful snowy surroundings. After the festival finishes (by 5pm), we will drive back to Ulan Bator and transfer to the hotel. (B/L/D).

Day 7 - Dalanzadgad

Travel to the airport for the morning flight to Dalanzadgad (1.5 hours). The capital of Umnugobi province, this is a semi-arid desert zone in the south-Gobi and it is the southernmost province of Mongolia. It is a wonderful and highly photogenic - not to mention desolate - part of the world. Check in to your gers and enjoy dinner at the lodge. (B/L/D).

Day 8 - Dalanzadgad

Today is all about camels! The competition begins with the race of adult camels, which is followed by the two-year-old camels' race. It is possible to place a bet and back the camel of your choice. The camels are judged on their speed during the 12 km (7.5 miles) and 15 km (9.5 miles) races. The first three camels to cross the finishing line fastest in each age category are awarded with gold, silver and bronze medals respectively. Enjoy lunch in Bulgan Soum. In the afternoon, the most awaited competition begins. This competition is the Camel Relay. It consists of catching, taming, training and finally loading a camel with an actual ger. There are several teams of 5 member and each person performs a different task. The closing ceremony takes place later in the afternoon, where the winners are presented with trophies. This is a truly magical and highly memorable day. Dinner and overnight stay in a camp. (B/L/D).

Day 9 - Ulan Bator

After an early breakfast we will drive to Dalanzadgad for our return flight to Ulan Bator. Upon arrival in Ulan Bator, transfer to your hotel. (B/L/D).

Day 10 - Ulan Bator

Breakfast at the hotel and transfer to the airport for international departure. (B).

ALTERNATIVE TOURS AND TAILOR-MADE ARRANGEMENTS

In addition to organised group tours, we also offer individual trips. This could be an entirely separate holiday arrangement or an extension to a regular "Go Russia" trip. Whether you would like to travel independently, or just with the group of your friends or colleagues, we can help to realise your holiday plans. Depending on your preference for either comfort or budget, we can help you to design the ideal itinerary and provide the optimal value-for-money quote. Please [contact us for a quote](#).

Based on your chosen tour we believe you might be interested in alternative trips listed below:

> [Great Mongolian Discovery: Ulan Bator, Terelj, Gobi Desert, Karakorum, Hustai \(MN-01\)](#), Price from £3,395, 15 days

- > Best of Mongolia Jeep Tour: Ulan-Bator, Gobi Desert, Karakorum (MN-03), Price from £2,495, 10 days
- > Glimpse of the Gobi by Air - a Brief Encounter with the Desert (MN-08), Price from £1,395, 3 days

INFORMATION ABOUT VISAS

Go Russia provides assistance in processing visas and visa fees are included in the cost of most of our trips as detailed in the tour dossier. The visa application process is very straightforward. We have years of practical experience in dealing with tourist visas, and our in-house visa team provides assistance with completing the forms and checking the documents before consular submission. Please do not worry that your application will be unsuccessful (unless you have had any immigration issues with the relevant authorities in the past). All our tourists get their visas.

All nationalities require a full passport valid for at least six months beyond the intended length of stay. Please also make sure there are enough blank pages in your passport: Russian consulate requires minimum two blank pages.

UK, USA, Germany, France, Spain residents

We have in-house visa teams in the UK, USA, Germany, France and Spain. Upon your booking we will email you detailed guidance notes how to fill in the visa forms and what additional documents depending on nationality and your immigration status will be required. You will need to post your application pack to our visa processing office including your original passport. Please allow about two - three weeks for each visa application to be processed. The actual visa processing times are published on our website. Please advise us if you require your passport urgently, we can arrange urgent processing for an additional charge.

Non-UK, USA, Germany, France, Spain residents

If you are not resident in the above countries, we will issue official paperwork and email the required documents to you. You will need to apply for your visa at the local consulate. The process is very straightforward and we can assist you with completing the visa forms. You will have to pay the correct visa fee at the consulate in the country of your residence.

You can read more information about visa, processing times and application forms on our website:

www.justgorussia.co.uk/en/visa_services.html

HOW TO BOOK

Step 1 - Choose Your Holiday & Departure Dates

It is important that you choose a trip that is well suited to your interests, capabilities and experience. All our staff has first hand experience of a range of Go Russia holidays and will be happy to talk to you about your chosen trip, enabling you to assess its suitability. We also recommend that you read the descriptions of the relevant region, general information about our services, booking conditions, and trip dossiers carefully. Once you know what tour is right for you, as well as your departure dates, you can start your booking.

Step 2 - Complete the Booking Form

Online: log on to www.justgorussia.co.uk and open the tour you wish to book and click "Book now". To provide you with a more personalised and relevant experience in all your contact with Go Russia, when you book online we ask you to register on our system. Once registered you can retrieve your bookings, brochure requests, update newsletter subscriptions, passenger and emergency contact details, submit special dietary requests, view invoices and receipts, download trip documents.

Email: alternatively, you can book your tour per email - info@justgorussia.co.uk, or

Phone: call us on +44 (0)20 33 55 77 17

When booking by email or over the phone please confirm your personal details (full name and address), chosen tour, departure date, package type (hotel / cabin category), and available upgrades.

Step 3 - Confirmation of your booking

On receipt of your booking form, we will make any necessary reservations for you and send you confirmation invoice, including the flight details, and additional information about your destination: advice on visas, vaccinations and what to take. The invoice will also show you the exact due date of the payment.

Step 4 - Payment

Please note, if your departure date is more than 56 days you will need to pay the deposit, which should cover the full cost of the flight (if applicable), plus 10% of the land-only arrangements (minimum £100) per person towards your tour. The outstanding payment must be made 56 days prior to departure. If you book less than 56 days before departure, full payment must be made at the time of your booking. You can make your payment by bank transfer, debit or credit card, cheque, bankers draft or postal order. You will find all relevant payment details in your invoice.

On request we can organise an additional programme for you, please inquire about the price and availability of the optional excursions.

Please find below some space to write down your queries or comments regarding this trip.

[illegible]