

# EXPLORE!



## Mongolian Eagle Festival and the Siberian Altai

MONGOLIA, RUSSIA - TRIP CODE MRE

BEYOND

### Why book this trip?

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Starting in Russia's Altai mountains, we journey through stunning woodland scenery in stunning autumn colours. As we enter Mongolia through the country's North-Eastern border, we stop at local villages and take in the highlight of the trip, witnessing the nomadic eagle hunting festival.

- **Altai Mountains** - Travel through a mountainous and scenically beautiful region of Siberia, stopping at villages of the ethnic Altai people
- **Eastern Mongolia Eagle Hunting Festival** - Watch the Eagle Hunters display their skills at their annual festival and spend two nights with a nomadic family
- **Hustai National Park** - Search for Mongolian wild horses and wapiti deer in their beautiful natural habitat



**INCLUDED MEALS**  
 Breakfast: 15  
 Lunch: 14  
 Dinner: 14



**TRIP STAFF**  
 Explore Tour  
 Leader  
 Driver(s)



**TRANSPORT**  
 Bus  
 Flight



**ACCOMMODATION**  
 2 nights simple ger  
 3 nights simple  
 homestay  
 8 nights  
 comfortable hotel  
 1 nights simple  
 hotel



**TRIP PACE:**  
 Moderate



**GROUP SIZE:**  
 10 - 16

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Our trip starts in Barnaul, the capital of the Siberian Altai region of Russia

Starting from Barnaul Airport, we drive through the area's rolling foothills, grasslands, lakes, rivers and mountains to Gorno-Altai, stopping along the way in Biysk for a lunch of Uighur cuisine, a Turkic ethnic group who live in East and Central Asia. Lamb is a staple and the basis for many dishes, usually combined with hand-pulled noodles, steamed buns, dumplings and homemade bread. Our journey from here is along the Chuya Highway. Considered to be one of the most beautiful roads in the world, it travels through scenery of forested mountain slopes, clear blue rivers and vast grassland steppe. On arrival in the small town of Gorno-Altai we'll take a walk around before enjoying a dinner of traditional Altai cuisine. Altai dishes are generally meat-based and slow cooked, often using the region's favourite ingredients of pine nuts and honey.



**ACCOMMODATION:**  
 Igman Hotel (or similar)

**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



**SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE**





MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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## **DAY 2 - Travel along the northern route of the silk road to Uch-Enmek National Park and experience Tuvan throat singing**

This morning we visit the Anokhina Museum which gives us a great introduction to the historical way of life of the region, and features artifacts from the grave of the 'Siberian Ice Maiden' - a two and half thousand year old mummy of a local woman which was found in an undisturbed burial chamber on the Ukok Plateau and is thought to have been a person of noble blood.

Leaving Gorno-Altai we drive along the northern route of the silk road towards Uch-Enmek National Park, via one of our first mountain passes (Semiskiy Pass). Along the way we may be able to stop for a scenic walk for some hilltop views across the scenic mountain landscapes. Once at Uch-Enmek we'll get an insight in to the unique culture of the region with a performance of Tuvan throat singing. This incredible skill has been recognised by UNESCO in their Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list. The singer produces a continuous note while simultaneously creating other notes that form the melody. The songs in the Altai region tell epic tales of ancient heroes that are passed down from one generation to the next. They are usually sung only after dark, adding to the atmosphere of the performance.



ACCOMMODATION:

Uch-Enmek Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Simple Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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## **DAY 3 - Travel to Chibit along the scenic Chuysky Highway via the village of Kupchegen in the Karakol Valley**

This morning we drive towards the village of Kupchegen, not far from our base in Uch-Enmek. Here we'll pay a visit to the Altai arts centre where saddles with intricate designs and other pieces of art by local artisans are on display. Our journey then continues along the scenic Chuysky Highway where the autumn colours of the hillside forests will line our journey. We will stop a few times including at the confluence of the Chuya and Katun Rivers where there are Turkic Ininsky stelae and kurgan (grave mounds), and at the rocky area with mysterious petroglyphs at Kalbak-Tash. Here there are thousands of depictions of animals and mysterious beasts alongside warriors and shamans, the oldest dating from around 8,000 years ago.

We arrive at the village of Chibit, located on a lush green plain with the Chibit River on one side and the towering peaks of the Altai range on the other. The village is small with only around 700 inhabitants, and was formed by Russian missionaries in 1801.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Kochevnik Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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#### **DAY 4 - Visit the traditional Altaian villages of Ulagan and Balyktuyul and the Pazyryk burials**

Today we venture out from Chibit to explore some of the villages and countryside nearby. We drive through the stunning Katu-Yaryk Canyon, which is the legendary home of the Turkic people to the Altaian villages of Ulagan and Balyktuyul. The inhabitants are Turkic speaking indigenous Altaians who retain ancient beliefs in shamanism; each community's shaman is an important figure whose spiritual knowledge is highly revered and respected. Visiting the villages will give us a chance to learn something of a very ancient way of life and culture. Both are small settlements that consist of traditional style houses made from logs, and in Balyktuyul we will enjoy a home-cooked lunch of local soups and boiled meats in one of the houses.

Close by we visit a cluster of five Pazyryk kurgans, frozen tombs dating from the 4th - 5th century BC. High status people were buried here and the artefacts that they were buried with indicate how sophisticated their society was. Items made of precious metals and complex carts have been uncovered, and the mummies were adorned with intricate tattoos depicting animals and mythical beasts. Some mummies even show signs of having undergone cranial surgery and surviving to live for some time afterwards.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Kochevnik Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



### DAY 5 - Cross the Chuya Plateau and enter Mongolia at Tashanta and drive to Ulgi

Leaving Chibit, a three hour drive across the spectacular Chuya Plateau, which is surrounded by high snow-capped mountain ranges, will bring us to the town of Kosh-Agach. Here we switch to Mongolian registered vehicles and continue to the border at Tashanta. The border formalities can take a few hours, but once through we continue towards the town of Ulgi for our overnight stay.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Eagle Nest Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### DAY 6 - Meet the Nomadic Kazakh eagle hunting community close to Ulgi

We travel along gravel roads across barren landscapes to meet the eagle hunter family that we will be staying with for the next two nights. Accommodation is single-sex dormitory style and either in the home of the family or gers - the traditional round shaped yurt-type dwellings of the nomads. Today we will settle in at the nomadic eagle hunting village, home to the eagle hunting community where the majority of Mongolia's eagle hunters live. In an area of high desert steppe, the Nomads live in small homesteads enclosed by adobe brick walls where they stay in the winter. In the summer they move around the area living in gers, taking their livestock to different grazing pastures. The community are ethnic Kazakhs and they have preserved their native language and culture. Their tradition of using eagles to hunt is almost two thousand years old and involves taking young female golden eagles and training them to capture wild animals, in particular the native red foxes. It is believed that a strong emotional bond is established between the hunter and their bird. We will be able to sit and chat with the nomads and understand how they live, and the part that is played in their lives by their herds of Yaks and their hunting eagles. They will extend us traditional nomad hospitality and we will be offered tea and treated with the deep respect that is offered to visitors.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Sagsai Homestay (or similar)



Grade: Simple Homestay



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 7 - Experience the first day of the Eagle Hunter Festival**

The Eagle festival starts today in a barren valley in the Altai Mountains . It is a spectacular event with many of the area's active eagle hunters attending and begins with the all the hunters entering the arena on horseback with their golden eagles. The skills of the birds and their handlers are demonstrated with various tests and competitions including releasing the eagles from the hills to pursue and capture a fox skin which is pulled behind a fast-moving horse. The hunters are also judged on their costumes, horsemanship and ability to control the birds, making superb subjects for photos. Traditional horse games such as bouzkhasi, a kind of horseback version of tug-of-war, and picking up objects from the ground at full gallop are also played. The purpose of the festival is to celebrate and keep alive the ancient traditions of the community so all that we see is very authentic.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Sagsai Homestay (or similar)

Grade: Simple Homestay



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### **DAY 8 - Another day at the Eagle festival to watch the sports and displays of horsemanship**

Today we'll attend the festival again, with further time to meet the eagle hunters and watch as they demonstrate their skills. There'll be more competitions and local sports and games, some of them rather unusual such as \kiss a woman on horseback\ , \pick up coins from the ground at full gallop\ and 'Kiz Kuar', a horse race between man and woman which involves the woman chasing the man with a swinging whip - the couple who completes the course the fastest wins. These demonstrate the incredible horsemanship of the nomads and their ability to control their animals at speed and with tremendous accuracy. In the late afternoon, the winners of all the different events will be announced in the awards ceremony.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Sagsai Homestay (or similar)

Grade: Simple Homestay





MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### DAY 9 - Drive to Hovd via Tolbo and Doroo Lakes

Driving further east into Mongolia we stop at Tolbo Lake which is renowned for its clear waters for a walk along its shores. We also drive past the dramatic snow-capped Sair Mountain and stop off at the scenic Doroo Lake, one of the Naiman Nuur, or \ eight lakes\ that were formed by volcanic eruptions, before continuing to Hovd. A small town that is a melting pot for many of the region's ethnic minorities. These include the Myangad who are celebrated for their ability to breed and race fast horses, the Dorvods whose ancestors migrated to the area from the Xinjiang region of China around 500 years ago, and the Dzungar tribe who are thought to be successors of the original tribe of Western Mongolia. We'll see a mixture of the traditional dress as we wander around the town's market place with its colourful stalls and visit the museum. This houses some excellent examples of ethnic costumes and Buddhist and Kazakh art from the region.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Orgoo Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### DAY 10 - Visit Khar Us Nuur National Park and walk on Jargalant Hairkhan Mountain

Nearby Khar Us Nuur National Park is our destination today. The park has several large lakes and the largest reed beds of Central Asia. It attracts many birds including wild ducks, geese, wood grouse, partridges and the rare relict gulls. We'll take a walk on Jargalant Hairkhan Mountain, where the incredibly rare snow leopard lives, and enjoy the mountain's landscape of natural springs and a 20 metre high waterfall.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Orgoo Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel





SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### DAY 11 - Fly to Ulaan Baatar

This morning we fly to Ulaan Baatar and take a walk through the town to Sukhbaatar square. Despite its concrete façade, Mongolia's capital has a bohemian edge, and an energy that contrasts with the tranquillity of the Mongolian countryside. Many of its inhabitants can be seen in their traditional dress and a huge proportion continue to live in gers in the suburbs. In the square we'll see Government Palace which houses the offices of the President and Prime Minister and is flanked by impressive statues of Genghis Khan, considered the founding father of the country, and his sons who succeeded him, Ogedei and Kublai Khan. The centre of the square has statue of Damdin Sukhbaatar, the hero of the struggle for independence in the early 1920s after whom the square is named. He daringly smuggled a letter asking for Soviet support in the hollowed out handle of his whip and then led the Mongolian People's Partisans as their commander-in-chief. Around the square is the Cultural Palace which contains the Mongolian National Modern Art Gallery and the National History Museum presenting Mongolia's 5000 years of history from the stone age through the Genghis Khan era to the modern age and there is time to visit both of these and get an understanding of Mongolia through the ages.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Puma Imperial Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### DAY 12 - Visit Gandan Monastery and drive to Hustai National Park to see Przewalski wild horses and rutting deer

This morning we visit Gandan Buddhist Monastery. The name translates as 'the big place of complete joy' and is home to several hundred monks. It houses a large statue of Megjid-Janraiseg surrounded by a thousand statuettes of God Amitabha. Megjid-Janraiseg was a monk who had gained enlightenment and devoted himself to helping others to do the same. An earlier statue of him was used as a symbol of the independence movement but was later demolished by Soviet troops and allegedly melted down to make bullets for the siege of Leningrad.



After exploring the monastery we drive to Hustai National Park and take an afternoon jeep safari to see the world's only true wild horses, the majestic Przewalski's horses. They became extinct in the 1960's and were reintroduced from animals that were kept in captivity around the world in 1992. Today the horses are thriving back in their natural habitat. We will also see Wapiti deers; they will be rutting at the time of our visit so they'll be less timid and more vocal than usual, and displaying some interesting behaviour as the males challenge each other for the rights to mate with the females.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hustai Ger Camp (or similar)



Grade: Simple Ger



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### DAY 13 - Explore Hustai National Park on foot

As well as the wildlife, the park's beautiful scenery is varied with mountain steppe, grassland plains, sand dunes and river wetlands. We'll explore on foot today taking a walk through the countryside which gives a sense of the vastness of the Mongolian wilderness and we are likely to enjoy further sightings of the horses and deer. There are several wonderful view points from which we are likely to spot black vultures, eagles and falcons.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hustai Ger Camp (or similar)



Grade: Simple Ger



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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## DAY 14 - Drive back to Ulaan Baatar stopping en route to have a traditional lunch prepared by nomads

We drive back to Ulaan Baatar along a different route, travelling through Hustai National Park and along the Tuul River Valley. This takes us through an area where Halkh Mongolian Nomads live, a culture that although nomadic, differs from the Kazakh nomads we met in Western Mongolia. The Halkh people consider themselves to be the true Mongolians and direct descendants of Genghis Khan. They will prepare a traditional Mongolian meal for us of buuz, steamed dumplings filled with meat, and huushuur, dumplings that are deep fried in mutton fat. These are usually served with rice or noodles.

Once back in Ulaan Baatar there will be some free time to enjoy the town this evening.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Puma Imperial Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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## DAY 15 - Trip ends in Ulaan Baatar

Our trip ends this morning in Ulaan Baatar.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## Trip information

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### Country information

Mongolia

## Climate

Mongolia has an extreme continental climate similar to that of south-central Siberia or Manchuria and enhanced by a mean elevation of 1500m. Winters are long and very cold. There is a swift transition in May to a short, warm summer and an equally rapid return to the winter cold in October. Summer temperatures vary from around 35°C in the desert to as low as 15°C in the mountains. Frost can occur in the mornings in the Terelj National Park. Rainfall is low everywhere; no more than 38-51cm a year in the mountains and as little as 13cm in the drier lowland parts although do come prepared for the occasional downpour. However, temperatures drop very quickly when rainfall does occur. (Rainfall can be heavy, therefore, a good quality rainjacket and waterproof trousers are essential). Be prepared for all weather conditions during your tour. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at <http://www.explore.co.uk/weather>. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Upto-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
+7	2 Pin Round	Buddhist, Atheist	Mongolian

## Russia

### Climate

In European Russia snows usually start in November and stay till late March/early April, when a great thaw occurs with temperatures ranging from about 5°C in October and April to -15°C in January.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion
+3	2 Pin Round	Orthodox Christianit, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism

### Language

Russian

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## Budgeting and packing

### Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow US\$ 40 for tipping. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

### Clothing

Daytime temperatures can be warm and we recommend lightweight clothing plus some warm layers for

the drop in night temperatures experienced in the mountains of Mongolia and Siberia. You will also need a good waterproof jacket as rain can be heavy.

## Footwear

Light walking boots and comfortable shoes and sandals.

## Luggage

20kg

### Luggage: On tour

One main piece of lockable baggage ideally a soft holdall, kitbag or frameless rucksack. Keep luggage to a strict minimum as you will be expected to carry your bag throughout. Porters are not available in Mongolia.

Please note that the luggage allowance for the domestic flight is 10kg per person for the hold plus 5kg hand luggage. It is possible to pay for small amounts of excess baggage at a cost of approximately £1 per kilogram. Excess baggage can also be kept securely in Ulaan Baatar until our return to the city.

## Equipment

You'll need to bring a two to three seasons sleeping bag for the nights staying with the Eagle Hunting Family, and a torch is useful.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow US\$ 40 for tipping. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

## Mongolia

### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£5	£13	£1.5	£0.7

## Foreign Exchange

### Local currency

Tugrik.

### Recommended Currency For Exchange

Most people spend around \$200 to \$300 over the two weeks. It is easier to carry your funds in small denomination US\$ cash as this is the most readily accepted form of currency for the ger camps. Please bring only clean bills issued after 1991.

### Where To Exchange

In major cities and towns

### ATM Availability

Limited

### Credit Card Acceptance

In major restaurants.

### Travellers Cheques

Can be exchanged in Ulaan Baatar.

## Russia

### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£12.00 - 16.00	£2.00 - 4.00	£1

## Foreign Exchange

### Local currency

Rouble.

### Recommended Currency For Exchange

We recommend that you take your money in Euros or US Dollars cash. For US Dollars notes should be in good condition (not torn or marked), issued after 1990 (pre-1990 are often refused) and ideally in small denominations. Euros and Dollars are easily transferable into the local currency, Roubles.

### Where To Exchange

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

### ATM Availability

Cash can be withdrawn both in Moscow and St. Petersburg

### Credit Card Acceptance

Local currency (Russian Roubles) can also be drawn on credit cards from ATM's in both Moscow and St Petersburg.

### Travellers Cheques

Travellers cheques are accepted in Moscow and St Petersburg but are very time-consuming to change and attract unfavourable exchange rates

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## **Transport, Accommodation & Meals**

### **Transport Information**

Bus, Flight

### **Accommodation notes**

The ger camps in Mongolia consist of several canvas and felt tents plus a large dining tent or restaurant. Each ger used on this tour has two beds, bedding, plus a table and stools. Although they are comfortable, we advise that you try to leave behind your western standards to fully appreciate the atmosphere of these traditional dwellings. Toilet and washing facilities are shared and separate to the living gers, with a mixture of flushing and long-drop style toilets.

Should you wish to charge your cameras and electronic devices during your trip, there is electricity in the restaurant gers.

When staying with the Eagle Hunting family there will be up to 6 people in each ger, separated by gender, and you'll need a two or three season sleeping bag. Pillows and towels are provided. The gers are heated but there is no electricity, although this is available on site for charging equipment.

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## **Essential Information**

### **FCO Advice**

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

### **Under 18 immigration guidance**

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### **Price Guarantee**

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

### **Visa and Passport Information**

Russia: All nationalities require a single entry visa in order to enter Russia. As part of the visa

requirements you will need to obtain a Russian Travel Voucher and Authorisation from the local Russian authorities. Explore will request this on your behalf approximately 8 weeks prior to departure. Please allow a minimum of 5 working days for the travel voucher and authorisation to be processed. Due to the visa processing times, Explore are unable to accept bookings within one month of travel

For British passport holders: All applicants must present themselves in person to the Russia Visa Processing Centre in London, Manchester or Edinburgh, on the day of application, to provide biometric information (fingerprints). There is currently no appointment system in place for this new process, so applicants will be seen on a first come, first serve basis. It is likely this will mean lengthy queues and waiting times. The biometric process is not optional, and any applicant who refuses to provide their fingerprints will automatically be refused a visa. This information is not stored and applicants will therefore need to travel to the Processing Centre each time a visa is required. In the event an application is rejected due to inaccurate or incomplete information, fingerprints must be resubmitted as part of the revised application. For more information regarding this process - we recommend contacting the Russian Embassy direct, their website is <http://rusemb.org.uk/visa/>

It is essential that you provide Explore with the correct passport information at the time of booking, as this will be required in order to request the travel voucher and letter of invite, as well as pre-book any applicable train tickets. Corrections and amendments will incur additional charges, so please double check that the information we have for you is up to date and correct, this includes your passport number, full name as per passport (including middle names), date of birth and place of birth; if customers renew or reissue their passports from the details initially given to Explore, train tickets must be cancelled and purchased again, which involves extra costs and may result in customers being in differing train carriages to the rest of the group. If you intend to renew your passport please let Explore know at the point of booking and please ensure that you have the new passport no later than 8 weeks prior to travel.

You will be required to enter a reference number and a confirmation number on your visa application. These can be found at the top of your authorisation letter under the heading 'Voucher Number'. The 6 digit long number is the reference and the 4 digit number is the confirmation number.

In order for Explore to provide the necessary documentation to support your visa application (i.e. your visa authorisation), all pre and post tour accommodation must be booked through Explore and not booked independently.

Please ensure that your passport has a minimum of 6 months validity from the date of return to your home country.

All visa information is subject to change regularly, so please check with your local consulate for the most up to date advice for the countries you are visiting. All other nationalities should check with the Russian embassy.

For nationalities that require proof of their travel insurance through Explore as part of their visa application, please contact us for a copy of this.

Mongolia: A single entry visa is required by British, Irish, New Zealand & Australian citizens and must be obtained prior to departure. A Mongolian visit visa is usually valid for a stay of up to 30 days within six months from the date of issue. All passports must have at least 6 months validity remaining on entry to Mongolia.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

## **Booking conditions**

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

## **Transfers**

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

### **Booking a land only package with Explore**

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

### **Joining Tour Abroad**

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## **Insurance**

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the



entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## **Flight information**

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them here.

### **Flight Information**

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### **Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore**

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## **Mongolia**

### **Vaccinations**

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, infectious hepatitis and polio. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

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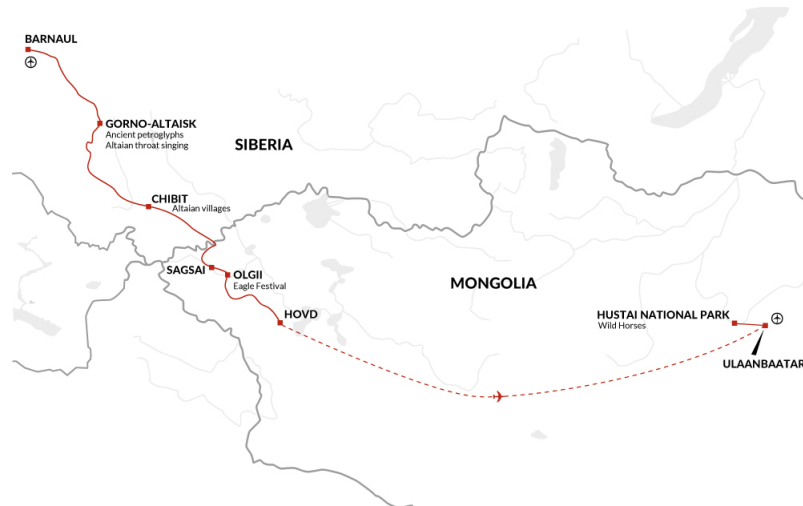
## **Russia**

### **Vaccinations**

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A, polio and diphtheria. Tick-borne encephalitis is recommended by some medical sources if travelling in certain areas of Eastern Europe, at specific times of the year. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling. The Russian government advises that certain medications must be declared upon entry into the country, and you may also be required to carry a prescription with you. You should consult your local consulate for up to date information prior to travel.

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## Additional Information



## Why book this trip

This trip visits the incredible Mongolian Eagle Festival where the traditional way of life of the Nomadic Eagle Hunters is celebrated. We travel to the region through Russian Siberia where the mountain scenery is stunning and dotted with villages where shamanistic beliefs still prevail.

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EXPLORE LEADERS**



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