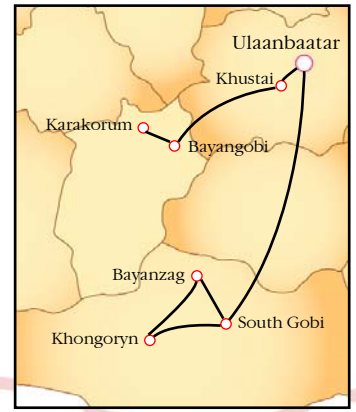


# Highlights of Classic Mongolia with Naadam Festival



The Gobi Desert is one of the most interesting and mysterious places in the world. Travelers are interested in the area not only for its spectacular scenery and camel treks, but for its trove of dinosaur fossils. The site of an ancient inland sea, the Gobi is a treasure chest of fossilized dinosaur bones and eggs.

The Great Gobi Desert is in the territory of Umnugobi province and it takes just 90 minutes to fly there from Ulaanbaatar.



## Day 1: Ulaanbaatar

The Mongolei Reisen crew will greet you at the Buyant-Ukhaa International Airport for transfer to the 4 star hotel, conveniently situated in downtown Ulaanbaatar. After freshening up from your trip, we will spend the day touring some of the capital's most noteworthy sites starting out at the capital of Mongolian Buddhism, Gandan Monastery. The monastery was one of the few preserved through the 20th century and features a spectacular 25 meter, 20 ton statue of the Megjid Janraysig Buddha. From here, we will go to the Natural History Museum which holds the skeletons of several of the unique dinosaurs discovered in Mongolia, including the famed 'Fighting Dinosaurs' skeletons - considered to be one of the most unique in the world. The heart of Ulaanbaatar, Sukhbaatar Square, is just a short walk away. Here we will see the statue of Sukhbaatar, the hero of the Mongolian revolution, the Parliament house, National Opera, and City Hall. Afterwards we'll visit Zaisan Hill, which offers great views of the city. In the evening, you will attend a performance

of traditional dancing and khoomii (Mongolian throat singing).

Overnight in hotel. **(L, D)**

## Day 2: South Gobi

We take an early-morning flight to the South Gobi Desert - a stunning landscape of mountains, rock and sand. In the afternoon we'll visit the world-famous paleontological site of Bayanzag - also known as the "Flaming Cliffs" - where the American scholar Roy Chapman Andrews first discovered complete dinosaur skeletons and fossilized eggs in the 1920s. We'll also visit a local camel-breeding family and discover their unique nomadic lifestyle.

Overnight in ger camp. **(B, L, D)**

## Day 3: Vulture's Gorge

We spend the day touring the magnificent Gobi Gurvan Saikhan national park where we will see the remarkable "Vulture's Gorge", an exotic setting of green meadows and dense glaciers situated deep within the arid Gobi. You may have the chance to

catch sight of some of this area's abundant wildlife, including the rare argali sheep and mountain goat. In the afternoon, we'll visit the small local nature museum for a complete overview of Gobi flora and fauna.

Overnight in ger camp. **(B, L, D)**

## Day 4: Khongoriin Els Sand Dunes

Traveling westwards along the Altai Mountains to the Khongoryn Els Sand Dunes, an extraordinary mountain of sand rising up to 120 meters in height, and extending over 180 kilometers. Locally known as the "singing dunes", the sands produce an eerie rumbling sound as they shift slowly in the wind.

Overnight in ger camp. **(B, L, D)**

## Day 5: Bayanzag

We travel back through the region of Bayanzag, with a chance to explore saxaul groves and sand dunes along the way. The scene is memorable with dramatic landscapes of the Gobi, dotted with grazing camels and herders' yurts.

Overnight in ger camp. **(B, L, D)**

**Day 6: Ulaanbaatar**

We'll take a return flight to Ulaanbaatar and check in at Mongolia's Buddhist Gandan Monastery, the highlight of which is a magnificent 26-metre statue of the Megjid Janraiseg (Avalokitesvara) Buddha. We'll also tour the Fine Arts Museum and Bogd Khan's Winter Palace Museum, the residence of Mongolia's holy sovereign until 1924. The museum features displays of exotic Buddhist thankas and embroideries, statues and objects illustrating the lifestyle of Mongolia's last Emperor.

Overnight in hotel. (B, L, D)

**Day 7: Naadam Opening Ceremony**

Spend a full day experiencing the celebrations of Naadam, Mongolia's national holiday, in the capital city. Experience the magnificent celebrations at the Central Stadium-beginning with the mounted escort of Genghis Khaan's nine standards from the Government House. Enjoy the colourful parades and musical entertainment of the official opening ceremony, followed by an address by the President of Mongolia. Watch as hundreds of wrestlers take to the field in the stadium centre for a two-day contest of skill and strength-testing the classic virtues of the ancient Mongol warrior-while archers compete for the title of best sharp shooter, and long-distance horse-races get underway in the nearby countryside. In the evening we'll enjoy a folklore show performed specially for the Naadam celebrations.

Overnight in hotel. (B, L, D)

**Day 8: Bayangobi**

We begin driving into the rolling steppe of Central Mongolia, arriving in the late afternoon at Bayangobi, an unusual strip of sand dunes surrounded by grassland, which extends from the Gobi all the way into the central region of the country. This is a great area for relaxing and seeing Mongolia's spectacular countryside.

Overnight in ger camp. (B, L, D)

**Day 9: Karakorum - Erdene Zuu Monastery**

We'll head west, taking a short drive to Karakorum - former capital of the world's greatest land empire, established by Chinggis Khaan. The Erdene Zuu Buddhist Monastery was established on the ruins of Karakorum in 1586 by Abtai Sain Khan. At its peak, Erdene Zuu was home to more than one



thousand monks; today only a handful of the temples remain standing, but the vast extent of this religious complex, surrounded by a great wall linking together 108 stupas, gives a sense of its former importance. We will have enough time left in the day to admire the exquisite architecture and works of art contained within the Erdene Zuu Monastery Museum, and wander through the ruins of Karakorum.

Overnight in ger camp. (B, L, D)

**Day 10: Khustain Nuruu National Park**

We'll spend the day in the grassy valleys of Khustain Nuruu National Park, looking for wild horses, wolves, and other rare wildlife species. We'll also get the special opportunity to meet with Park Rangers and learn about the internationally-acclaimed project to reintroduce the Przewalskii Horse into the wild.

Overnight in ger camp. (B, L, D)

**Day 11: Ulaanbaatar**

Return to Ulaanbaatar. The remainder of the day is free for you to rest, go shopping or catch any other

sites of the city that interest you.

Overnight in hotel (B, L, D)

**Day 12: Ulaanbaatar**

The remainder of the day is free for you to rest, go shopping or catch any other sites of the city that interest you.

Overnight in hotel (B, L, D)

**Day 13: Departure**

Our adventure together ends with your transfer back to the Buyant-Ukhaa International Airport for your departure.

**Tour includes:**

- \* 5 nights in 4 star hotel
- \* 7 nights in ger camps
- \* 3 meals per day
- \* **Mongolei Reisen team:**
- English speaking guide and driver
- \* All domestic transportation
- \* Local entry fees

**Tour excludes:**

- \* Personal items
- \* International travel + tax
- \* Travel insurance
- \* Alcoholic drinks

**Departures:**

- 05.07.06 - 17.07.06
- 04.07.07 - 16.07.07

