

MONGOLIA - CHARISMATIC CHALLENGE FOR ADVENTURERS



Mongolia is one of those countries anyone considers twice before actually visiting them. On the one hand, its character is very unique and the element of surprise is always present. On the other, the country is not very developed and thus traveling around in the typical 'western' style tourism is basically impossible here.

Mongolia is located in East Central Asia and is completely unpredictable. Many who have visited this country claim that one can experience all four seasons within one single day here. Even today nearly 40% of locals still live in the countryside and lead a nomadic life.

The Mongolian wilderness is the most appealing aspect of this country; many adventurers prefer to explore it on their own; it is possible to hire or even purchase a horse here and spend a week in the wild. Those who prefer the slightly less adventurous way should start their trip in Ulaanbaatar, the country's capital. It has a spacious feel to it and heritage lovers will enjoy local museums, temples and monasteries.

Here, the tourists are welcome to stay in guesthouses, which also provide pre-designed travel packages. For US \$35-50 per day, the tourists get a car and an experienced guide/driver who shows them around. It is crucial to understand that local roads are almost non-existent. Mostly, one has to follow rutted tyre tracks leading through the dirt.

When in the countryside, the adventurers should be aware there are no hotels/hostels. Having a tent in Mongolia is a definite must. Nevertheless, locals are very hospitable and friendly; very often they invite the tourists to spend the night in their homes.

The highlight of Mongolia is the Gobi Desert. It is very cold and many dinosaur fossils have been found here. The diversity of wildlife is very surprising.

Other tourist magnets of the country are Karakorum, Chinggis Khaan's famous city. Its history goes back to the 13th century. Not much is left from its past glory, however a visit here is still a powerful experience.

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