



*Altai Explorer  
including Sagsai Eagle Festival*

WITH  
PANORAMIC JOURNEYS

# Altai Explorer

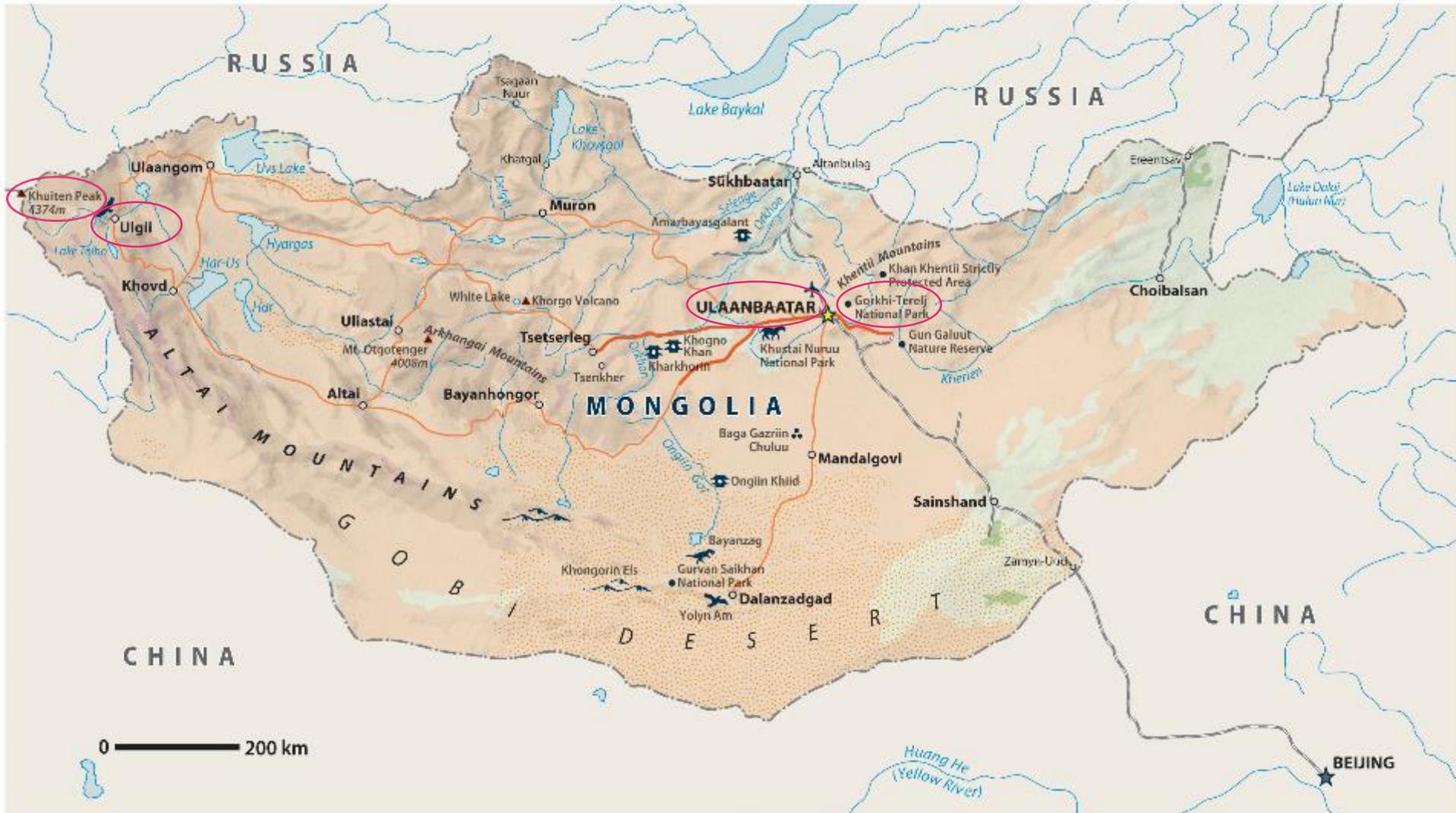


This journey takes you to the high desert steppe of the Tavan Bogd National Park in the Altai Mountains of Western Mongolia. Camel trek onto the Potani Glacier, summiting Malchin, the highest non technical mountain climb in Mongolia before trekking to stay with an eagle hunting family, preparing for the Eagle Festival. You will ride out with the hunter and help him with his final preparations and training of his young eagle before travelling through the for 2 days, alongside the hunter as he travels through valleys and over passes to the Sagsai eagle festival, setting up camp enroute.

The culmination of the trip is the two day eagle festival at Sagsai. The competition is intense and this will be the first time 'your' eagle will be competing, so anything could happen! As well as the skills of the hunters with their eagles, you will see displays of the Kazakh's horsemanship as they race and take part in other horseback games. You will really feel part of the action as you watch the games from horseback, like a true local, cheering on your hosts – a once in a lifetime experience.



# MAP OF MONGOLIA



DAY	ITINERARY	ACCOMMODATION	TRAVEL DETAILS
1	<p><b>ARRIVE ULAANBAATAR</b></p> <p>You will be met at the airport and transferred into Ulaanbaatar to your centrally located hotel. Depending on your flight time, this afternoon, visit Gandantegchinlen Khiid (Gandan for short). This is the largest and most important working monastery in Mongolia. The main attraction is the magnificent Migjid Janraisig Temple which houses a 25m high, 20 ton gilded statue. There are 150 monks in residence. If you decide instead to rest this afternoon, meet in reception at 7pm where we will take you to dine in one of our favourite restaurants.</p>	Hotel 9 – 3* Standard room	Airport transfer (45mins)
2	<p><b>FLY TO ULGII</b></p> <p>This morning fly to Ulgii (Time TBC) It is a 3 hour flight and you will need to put your clocks back an hour. There will be time today to look around the museum and perhaps visit the local mosque. A walk through the town and in the local market will give you a real flavour of the region and its people. Stock up on any snacks and drinks at the local supermarket for your upcoming trek. Dinner tonight in a local restaurant.</p>	Local Hotel or Ger Camp	45mins to ULN airport and a 3hr flight
3	<p><b>DRIVE TO TAVANBOGD NATIONAL PARK</b></p> <p>Drive 180km westwards, for a spectacular drive through high desert mountain landscapes to the Altai Tavan Bogd National Park. Set up camp and meet your horse and camel guides at the trek start point.</p>	Camping – Tents at 2715m	A bit longer drive today 7-8hr
4	<p><b>TREK OR CAMEL RIDE TO POTANIN GLACIER BASE CAMP</b></p> <p>After breakfast, the camels will be loaded and you begin the trek to the base camp (3095m) of the snow-capped Tavan Bogd massif. The hike rises steadily and takes you over lush alpine tundra with views directly across the glacier with the peaks in the distance. This is a good acclimatisation hike for tomorrow. You will find yourself crossing glacial run offs and sometimes it can be very muddy. Set up camp for two nights next to the 20km long Potanin glacier which is the largest and most imposing of the twenty glaciers in Mongolian Altai.</p> <p>Tavan Bogd means “the Holy Five” referring to the five highest peaks – of which Khuiten Uul (mountain) towers above them all at 4,374m and is the highest mountain in Mongolia. The other four are Nairamdal (4,082m), Burged (4,071m), Ulgii (4,113m), and Malchin (4050m). which you will climb tomorrow. Enjoy time taking in the awe-inspiring landscape and snow capped peaks above.</p>	Camping – Tents	Camp @ 3095m Ascent of 630m Descent of 260m  14km trek; 5-6hrs

## SUMMIT MOUNT MALCHIN

5	<p>Today you will climb to the highest altitude reached throughout the entire trek to summit Malchin Peak (4050m) which rises directly from the camp to the Russian border. Start early, as it is a full day's trekking, there can be sudden weather changes and the altitude will impact on your usual performance. It is a long climb, mostly on unstable scree. Although the terrain is rocky with some loose rocks but it is non-technical and the peak can be summited without any climbing equipment and you will see a wonderful view of all the glaciated peaks of the Alai Tavan Bogd, and Potanin glacier as well as Russia and Kazakhstan to the North and Mount Khuiten to the South.</p>	Camping – Tents	Camp @ 3095m Ascent of 955m Descent of 955m  13km trek; 9-10hrs
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## CAMEL RIDE TO TSAGAAN GOL VALLEY

6	<p>Most of the morning will be spent trekking up the valley toward the head of Tsagaan Gol valley. This grassland is where Tuvan people spend their summer and there may be still some families here in early September. Tuvan are shaman, and although rare nowadays, some do still practice in the valleys where the presence of spirits is most strongly felt, in order to help the sick and as part of traditional ceremonies. Here you will meet back with your vehicles.</p>	Camping – Tents	Camp at approx. 2900m  15km trek; 5hrs
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## DRIVE TO KHUITAS VALLEY TO MEET YOUR EAGLE HUNTER HOSTS

7	<p>A beautiful drive today through wide high desert and steppe, across mountain passes and through ancient burial sites to Khuitas valley (5hrs) near the Snake river. Meet Auez and his family, your hosts for the next 3 nights, where you will stay in gers set up next to the family. The facilities are comfortable but basic - the gers are equipped with beds and a stove, but washing facilities will be limited to a bowl of water and the toilet is a hole in the ground.</p>	Shared Ger	A 5hrs drive today
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## EAGLE TRAINING WITH ORAL

8	<p>Experience first hand Kazakh hospitality and the nomadic lifestyle. Your host's cousin Oral, is an experienced eagle hunter with a young bird which will compete in the eagle festival this year. He will be happy to talk to you about Kazakh eagle hunting skills and history. Before going to the festival, hunters do some final training with their birds, head up into the mountains to help with the final preparations.</p>	Shared Ger	Take it easy, no long drives today
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## EXPLORING THE REGION OR NOMADIC LIFE

9	Today will be spent with our Kazakh eagle hunting friends, learning about their way of life. There will be a chance to ride out with Auez who is a horse trainer. It is a beautiful area, with some good day rides. Alternatively, if the group prefers, you could explore some of the lakes, approximately an hours drive away.	Shared Ger(s)	TBC
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## RIDE TO SAGSAI (APPROX. 95KM OVER 2 DAYS) THROUGH THE KHOVD RIVER VALLEY.

10	There may be a chance to hunt with the eagle on the ride today or tomorrow. There will be a support vehicle carrying tents and other equipment which will meet you in tonight's camping spot. Anyone who needs to can travel in the support vehicle. Help set up camp and settle down for a hot cooked meal.	Camping – Tents	6hrs riding
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## RIDE TO SAGSAI

11	Continue your ride to Sagsai, stopping by some deer stones and balbals (Turkic stone man) enroute. Today is the final day that the eagle hunters can train their birds. Travel alongside the hunters as they ride towards the festival ground to practice the hunting. Whilst dragging prey behind them, the hunters will call their eagles for the bird to catch it at pace. Enjoy a picnic lunch and stunning scenery enroute to the festival site and your Festival Camp set up which will be home for the duration of the Golden Eagle Festival. Settle in to your camp which may be shared with other PJ festival guests over these next couple of nights.	Shared Ger(s)	6hrs riding
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## SAGSAI EAGLE FESTIVAL

12	If you are keen, you may like to join some of the hunters this morning as they ride, eagles in hand, to the festival. Day one of the Eagle Festival, a two day festival which shows off the skills of eagle and hunter/trainer. Dressed in full regalia and mounted on groomed and decorated horses, the eagle hunters compete for various awards including 'Best Eagle at Hunting Prey'. Other 'manly' sporting activities you'll watch include horse racing, camel racing, and the highly entertaining 'Bushkashi' - goat skin tug-o-war on horseback.	Shared Ger(s)	No long travel today
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## SAGSAI EAGLE FESTIVAL

13	Day two of the festival; return to the site for today's events, which, altogether, play a major role in preserving traditional Kazakh culture. After the festivities each day, head back to your ger at the PJ camp which is not too far from the festival site. On one of the nights you may enjoy a traditional performance from local musicians.	Shared Ger(s)	No Travel this Day
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## TO ULAANBAATAR

14	Fly back to UB (Time TBC). Afternoon at your leisure in the capital. Meet again in the hotel reception at 4.30pm to go to a concert of traditional Mongolian music and dance including throat singing followed by dinner.	Hotel 9 – Standard Twin	A 3hr flight back; 40min drive from ULN to hotel .
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## CHINGGIS MONUMENT AND TERELJ

15	Today, head east out of the city to visit the giant Chinggis Khan Equestrian Monument at Tsonjin Boldog. At the base of the statue, you can try on traditional Mongolian costumes, tour the numerous portraits of the Khan lineage and climb to the horse's head for a panoramic view over the surrounding landscape towards Chinggis' birth place. Continue northwards to the Gorkhi-Terelj National Park to see Turtle Rock and visit a local temple built on a hill. Alternatively, you are free to have a day in UB on your own. Enjoy a farewell dinner at another of our favourite restaurants in the city.	Hotel 9 – Standard Twin	3-4hr round drive to Terelj NP
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## DEPART

16	Transfer to the airport approximately 3.5hrs before your flight departure home.	N/A	
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## READY TO BOOK?

### 1. GET IN TOUCH

This itinerary is just a suggestion, a starting point, something to build upon. Everyone of our itineraries is unique to you – we can add or lose days, tweak the activities, change the accommodation or hire a private jet until it's perfect for you. So, let's have a chat. Call Denise, Kath or James to discuss creating you private journey to Mongolia

### 2. BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY

Once we've crafted the perfect journey for you we can sign you ready to go. We accept bank transfers, Visa, Mastercard or American Express, and UK cheques. Full payment methods are detailed in our booking conditions. We shall then send you a booking confirmation together with an invoice for the full payment of your holiday which is due 90 days before your departure date.

### ANY QUESTIONS?

Call one of our experts on +44 (0)1608 676821 or email us at [info@panoramicjourneys.com](mailto:info@panoramicjourneys.com).

Some quick travel facts can be found in the Essentials section on the Mongolia page of our website [www.panoramicjourneys.com/Countries/Mongolia](http://www.panoramicjourneys.com/Countries/Mongolia). We will also send you a comprehensive Mongolia Practicalities document once you have booked.

