Sagsai Eagle Festival
Close Up
September 2016

WITH

PANORAMIC JOURNEYS
Mongolia

Mongolia, there simply is nowhere quite like it. The birth place of the great Khan is largely the same now as it was then and the country is wonderfully diverse in terms of landscape. The magisterial Western Altai gives way to the fertile central Heartland. The exquisite forested North fades into the endless sea of green steppe to the East and of course the amazing arid southern Gobi make up the five distinct eco regions. Still largely undiscovered there is seemingly endless uninhabited wilderness around every mountain and in every valley.

The people of Mongolia are wonderfully adapted to their climate. Temperatures can differ by as much as 100°C between summer and winter. The Mongolian ger is perfectly designed to withstand such extremes as well as being portable to fit the nomadic way of life almost half of the population lead. Such a demanding climate leads the people of Mongolia to exhibit magical hospitality. Only here does a traveller receive an unreserved welcome at every turn. No description of Mongolia is complete without reference to the ingrained equine culture present throughout the nation. The almost spiritual relationship between man and horse is captivating to all who visit and it remains critical to Mongolian identity.

PANORAMIC JOURNEYS IN MONGOLIA

Panoramic Journeys was conceived in Mongolia, a country which is synonymous with the panoramic view of rugged mountains, endless forests and vast open steppe. As a business we have grown up in Mongolia. It is our home and always will be. Our drivers and guides are old friends and they too care passionately about the experience we deliver in Mongolia. We work with them to constantly improve and expand what we can achieve as a community in Mongolia at the same time as protecting the places we know and love.

WWW.PANORAMICJOURNEYS.COM - +44 (0) 1608 676821 - INFO@PANORAMICJOURNEYS.COM
An extended journey to the west to experience the highlights of the region including the intimate Kazakh eagle festival of Sagsai. Upon arrival in the west, journey south west towards Altai Tavanbogd National Park, stopping along the way to see how traditional felt and other handy crafts are made. Explore the area on foot or on horseback and enjoy the incredible hospitality of Shokhan and his family. The region of Dayan Lake is home to an abundance of wildlife, the perfect destination to begin your travels in the west.

After a few days, travel to Sagsai, festival site for the exciting local eagle festival and stay in a private camp with basic facilities for the duration. End your journey by staying with one of the best eagle hunters in the west and learning about the unique Kazakh culture. Try your hand at controlling the magnificent and precious birds of prey and witness the games and races traditionally held at this festival.
**ITINERARY OVERVIEW**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>09-Sep</td>
<td>Arrive Ulaanbaatar and transfer to hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>10-Sep</td>
<td>Fly to Ulgii, West Mongolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>11-Sep</td>
<td>To Dayan Lake to stay with Shokhan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>12-Sep</td>
<td>Day exploring the stunning region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>13-Sep</td>
<td>Learning about Kazakh culture &amp; eagle hunting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>14-Sep</td>
<td>Family time with Shokhan &amp; his family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>15-Sep</td>
<td>Return to Sagsai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>16-Sep</td>
<td>Drive to Sagsai, near the festival grounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>17-Sep</td>
<td>Sagsai Eagle Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>18-Sep</td>
<td>Sagsai Eagle Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>19-Sep</td>
<td>Travel back to Ulgii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>20-Sep</td>
<td>Fly to UB, transfer to hotel. Afternoon in city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>21-Sep</td>
<td>Day trip to Chinggis Monument &amp; Terelj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>22-Sep</td>
<td>Transfer to airport for departure</td>
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**Start**

09 Sep 2016

**Duration**

14 Days

**Group Size**

8 Max

**Cost**

$ USD/5,235

£ GBP/3,845
**FRIDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER**

**DAY 1**

**ARRIVE ULAANBAATAR**

Arrive in Ulaanbaatar, where you will be met and transferred to your hotel. At 2pm, if you are not too tired from your long flight, you may like to meet in reception for a walk across the Chinggis Khaan Square to visit the excellent Museum of National History where you can gain an understanding of Mongolia’s remarkable past - a worthwhile introduction to your stay in Mongolia. If you decide instead to rest this afternoon, meet in reception at 7pm where we will take you to dine at one of our favourite restaurants where your guide will run through the plan for tomorrow.

**Travel Details** – 30-50 minutes, airport to hotel  
**Accommodation** – King/Twin room, Tuushin Hotel  
**Includes** – Dinner

**SATURDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER**

**DAY 2**

**ULAANBAATAR – ULGII**

Up early for your airport transfer and flight to Ulgii. Head into town to spend time having a look around the fascinating museum and perhaps visit the local mosque. A walk around the town and local market will give you a real flavour of the region and its people and what you might expect from your journey in this western region of Mongolia.

**Travel Details** – 4 hrs flight UB – Ulgii  
**Accommodation** – Local hotel  
**Includes** – Breakfast, lunch, dinner
ULGII - LAKE DAYAN

Drive southwest from Ulgii, towards the beautiful region of Altai Tavanbogd National Park (“The Holy Five”). This national park is just south of the highest mountain in Mongolia. If there are families along the way, you may like to stop to see how Kazakh women are making their felt and other handy crafts. Meet your hosts, Shokhan and his family, who will look after you the next couple of days and show you around the beautiful area that they live.

EXPLORING LAKE DAYAN

The Lake Dayan region is home to an abundance of wildlife including argali sheep, red deer, ibex, beech marten, moose, snow-cock and of course the golden eagle. Exploring this secluded part of the country will be a delight – whether it be on foot or on horseback, Shokhan and his friends will take you off the beaten track to see the best landscape on offer! Decide with your guide how you might like to spend spare time throughout these three days. There will be plenty of time to help the family with chores, try your hand at eagle hunting and learn about the fascinating Kazakh culture. The Kazakh’s are Muslim and speak an ancient Kazakh language. The Tuvan people are Buddhist and Shamanistic so it will be interesting to meet some families and learn about this culture as well.

Travel Details – 5 hrs Ulgii – Lake Dayan
Accommodation – Shared ger alongside eagle hunters
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Travel Details – No long drives on these days
Accommodation – Shared ger alongside eagle hunters
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner
THURSDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER  
DAY 7

TO SAGSAI FESTIVAL SITE

Say farewell to your hosts and make your way back towards Sagsai, the site of the eagle festival commencing on Saturday. Later in the day, settle in to your ger at the PJ camp which is not too far from the festival site. You will be joined by those travelling on our Gobi, Heartland & Altai group for the duration of the festival and will most likely have to share a ger. On one of the nights here you may enjoy a traditional performance from local musicians.

FRIDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER  
DAY 8

EXPLORING SAGSAI & ALTANTSOGTS

Experience first hand Kazakh hospitality once again and the nomadic lifestyle. Your hosts for the day will be some of the most experienced eagle hunters in the region. One is training his son to become an eagle hunter too and they will be happy to talk to you about Kazakh eagle hunting skills and history. Discuss today’s options with your guide – you may like to meet other eagle hunting families, and their magnificent birds and perhaps try a horse ride or hike in the area.

Travel Details – 7 hrs Dayan Lake - Sagsai  
Accommodation – Shared ger, private camp  
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Travel Details – Local drives, Sagsai/ Altantsogts  
Accommodation – Shared ger, private camp  
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner
EAGLE FESTIVAL DAY 1

Day one of the Ulgii 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. 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.

EAGLE FESTIVAL DAY 2

Day two of this exciting festival; return to the site for today's events, which, altogether, play a major role in preserving traditional Kazakh culture. Being a proficient eagle hunter takes years to achieve – by apprenticing with a master hunter. The ultimate goal is the ability to catch foxes, because it takes a very strong, fit and well cared for bird to catch a wild animal. Many hunters followed in their father’s footsteps and were taken to the mountains at a young age to begin training. Alongside the eagle hunters, there are opportunities to purchase local handicrafts, Kazakh tents and other traditional and locally made items.

Travel Details – No long drives today
Accommodation – Shared ger, private camp
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner
ALTANTSOGTS – ULGII

Spend your final morning visiting a local family, horse riding or hiking before making your day back to Ulgii for the evening to check in to your local hotel.

TUESDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER
DAY 12

ULGII – ULANBAATAR

Depart Ulgii for Ulaanbaatar. Afternoon at your leisure in the capital - if you get back in time (flights can be a little unpredictable), you may like to wander down to the Choijin Lama Temple Museum. Or perhaps you may want to stock up on some of the things that have caught your eye during your stay and other items that can be purchased at very reasonable prices. From cashmere jumpers, Mongolian boots and fur hats to caviar, cheap North Face jackets and traditional music, Ulaanbaatar's shops and markets have it all. Your guide be on hand if you want to visit the State Department Store and Gobi Cashmere.

In the evening, meet your guide at 7pm in your hotel reception to go across for dinner at another of our favourite restaurants in the city.

Travel Details – 1 hr Altantsogts – Ulgii
Accommodation – Local hotel
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Travel Details – 4 hrs flight Ulgii – UB, 45 mins to hotel
Accommodation – King/Twin room, Tuushin Hotel
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner
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 visit the subterranean museum before climbing 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 and see the Turtle Rock and visit a local temple built on a hill, surrounded by birch and pine trees. Heading further into the national park, visit a family for lunch that we have worked with to help them set up their own small camp nestled in the foothills of the Khentii Mountains. You can spend the afternoon getting to know them, ride, take a wander or just relax with your hosts. Return to UB in time for meeting at 7pm in reception for your farewell dinner.

TERELJ AND CHINGGIS STATUE

DEPART ULAANBAATAR

Be met by your guide and driver in the hotel reception for transfer to the airport for your international flight home (details tbc).

Travel Details – 2 hours UB - Chinggis Monument
Accommodation – King/Twin room, Tuushin Hotel
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Travel Details – 45 mins hotel – airport
Accommodation – None
Includes – Breakfast
ULAANBAATAR

Ulaanbaatar, meaning 'Red Hero', is the capital city of Mongolia. Situated on the Tuul River, it is a mixture of traditional and modern. The ornate flowing eaves of the monastery temples stand beside communist planned courtyards and modern skyscrapers. UB, as the capital is affectionately known, also has some excellent museums, galleries, theatres, bars and restaurants.

Gandantegchinlen Khiid (Gandan for short) is the largest and most important monastery in Mongolia. The monastery's main attraction is the magnificent white Migjid Janraisig Temple which houses a 25m high, 20 ton gilded statue. It is a working monastery with ceremonies every morning and 150 monks in residence.

Impressive and expansive, Chinggis Khaan Square in the heart of the city, has recently been renamed to honour the nation's creator. Originally this square was named 'Sükhbaatar' after the hero of the revolution "Damdin Sükhbaatar", who declared Mongolia's final independence from the Chinese. His statue takes centre stage in front of the Parliament building and looking south towards Peace Avenue.
ULAANBAATAR

The National History Museum, renovated in 1998, is a comprehensive and well-laid out showcase of key points in Mongolia’s history. Journey through key facts and artefacts from the Bronze age, the Mongol Empire of Genghis Khaan, to the communist Russian years and the democratic revolution of the early 1990s. Learn about nomadic pastoralism of the steppes and the different ethnic groups of Mongolia.

Naraan Tuul, or the Black Market, as it is commonly known (although not illegal) - is a giant flea market 4km from the centre of town. It's a great place to enjoy the hustle and bustle of Mongolian traders, pick up some riding boots or material for getting a deel tailor-made.

Cashmere: Mongolia produces about 3,000 tons of cashmere per year, about 21% of the world market. Many quality cashmere products can be found at low prices. The Gobi company has a store on Peace Avenue and also a factory shop on the outskirts of town. Other central shops include Elite, Goyo - and the State Department Store has a range of cashmere labels all under one roof.
The capital of the westernmost aimag, Ulgii is a predominantly Kazakh city that happens to be in Mongolia. Muslim influence is widespread - from street signs, religion, clothes and food, and gives the town its special atmosphere.

Kazakh culture is quite different from Mongolian. They generally adhere rather loosely to Sunni Islam, but religion is not a major force as they are nomads. Kazakh gers are taller, wider and more richly decorated than the Mongolian version.
EAGLE FESTIVAL

The Eagle Festival showcases the art of hunting with eagles practiced by the Kazakh inhabitants of this village in Western Mongolia. Dark, rocky mountainous terrain forms the backdrop to the festivities which incorporate an opening ceremony, parade, cultural exhibitions, demonstrations and handcrafts in the centre of town followed by sporting activities and competitions out towards the mountains. Sagsai is the smaller of the two festivals which are held during September and October months.
SAGSAI AND ALTANTSOGTS

Sagsai is 20km west of Ulgii and home to a large number of eagle hunters who use golden eagles to hunt foxes and hares in winter. This sum (district) is host to the Altai Kazakh eagle Festival on the last weekend of September, celebrating its heritage.

Altantsogts is 45km east of Ulgii. As with most of western Mongolia, Altantsogts is homeland of ethnic Kazakh. The Kazakhs are a semi-nomadic, pastoral people. Many families move several times a year with their herds between fixed seasonal settlements. Others with smaller herds stay closer to their winter home during the summer but will nevertheless set up a yurt (kiiz yi, meaning ‘felt house’). The summertime yurt (and to a lesser extent the winter house) is richly furnished with embroidered, felt and woven textiles.
This 40 metre tall statue stands on top of the **Chinggis Khaan Statue Complex**, a visitor centre and museum on the bank of the Tuul River where, according to legend, Great Khan found a gold whip. The statue symbolically points east, towards his birthplace. Visitors are able to walk through the chest and neck of the horse to get a panoramic view of the river.
The Gorkhi-Terelj National Park covers an area of 2,864 square kilometres. The Gorkhi Mountains are covered with thick forests rich in wildlife and there are fascinating rock formations from the Mesozoic era. The sparkling waters of mountain rivers - frozen solid over winter months - are the reason why the locals call this place “the museum of natural wealth”.

GORKHI-TERELJ NATIONAL PARK
MONGOLIA - ACCOMMODATION
TUUSHIN HOTEL, ULAANBAATAR

Located in the centre of the capital the Tuushin Hotel provides comfortable rooms to relax and recharge in. All rooms have an ensuite bathroom and Wifi is available throughout the hotel. There is also an on site day spa and both local and international food is available at the hotel's restaurants.
FAMILY STAY

Have a taste of nomad life as you live alongside local families. You’ll be able to help with the daily tasks of milking the animals, collecting wood & dung for the fire. Try your hand at fermenting mare’s milk into airag or cooking traditional treats.

Facilities will be basic, hot water will be provided by your hosts for washing, and there will be a long drop toilet.
PRIVATE PJ CAMP

When attending the exciting eagle festivals in western Mongolia, you may be staying in a ‘private PJ camp’ which has been set up specifically for our guests, away from other visitors and with basic facilities. These will at least include traditional Kazakh-style dining tent, shower tent with (limited) hot water for washing and toilet tent housing the camp’s long drop toilet. The location may vary, depending on suitability on specific dates and will be conveniently situated close to the festival site.
“A stunning country with a fascinating way of life”

Duncan Casson & Jacqueline Edwards

“Like most people who visit Mongolia for the first time, I was very impressed by the sheer size of the place and the open skies stretching from horizon to horizon, plus of course the friendliness of the people. Without doubt, the Eagle Festival was the highlight of the trip”

Duncan Locke

“...a camel herder's ger and our guide, Esee, took us to his home to meet his family. Being allowed such personal encounters made our trip even more extraordinary”

Karen & Bob Carnahan
Sagsai Eagle Festival Close Up – September 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Group Size</th>
<th>$</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09 Sep 2016</td>
<td>14 Days</td>
<td>8 max</td>
<td>USD/5,235</td>
<td>GBP/3,845</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRICE INCLUDES:**
- Accommodation (based on 2 sharing twin rooms / gers. See single supplement below)
- Domestic flights (as specified)
- Meals as per itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Water in vehicles
- Activities as per itinerary
- English speaking guide/s
- Surface transportation (vehicle and driver)
- Park & museum entrance fees
- Festival fees
- Airport transfers

**PRICE EXCLUDES:**
- Travel Insurance
- Passport
- Visas & vaccination charges
- Private excursions
- Bar bills
- Laundry
- Telephone calls & items of a personal nature
- International flights or trains

* Small group supplement applies for less than stated group size
** Deposit $1,000pp plus any extras
  - Single Supplement: $225 (not available in western Mongolia)

Full payment is due if departure is in less than 90 days
Sagsai Eagle Festival Close Up – September 2016

READY TO BOOK?

1. CHECK AVAILABILITY
If you would like to book a place on this journey, contact us to check availability and hold your spot. We can hold you a provisional place for seven days.

2. BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY
Complete our online booking form (a word version is also available) and send us your deposit payment, plus any applicable flight or additional costs. 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.

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