Golden Eagle Festival
Close Up
Sep - Oct 2017
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 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.
Golden Eagle Festival Close Up 2017

An intimate trip that will introduce you to the rich Mongolian culture and nomadic hospitality of the Mongolian Kazakhs in Western Mongolia. At the annual Golden Eagle festival, you will witness the ancient skill of hunting with these regal birds, as well as other traditional Kazakh games such as tug-o-war on horseback with a goat skin, and races on horses and camels.

Fly to the most westerly province of Mongolia, Bayan Ulgii for seven days of immersion into an eagle hunter’s life. There will be the opportunity to ride with the hunters to the festival where you will witness incredible skill from both hunter and his bird. For photographers of all levels, this is a dream journey. The light at the end of September and in October is incredible and the vistas of snow capped mountains are a perfect backdrop.
## Itinerary Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>25-Sep</th>
<th>Arrive Ulaanbaatar and transfer to hotel</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>26-Sep</td>
<td>Fly to Ulgii, Western Mongolia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>27-Sep</td>
<td>Eagle training with hunter and his family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>28-Sep</td>
<td>Eagle training with hunter and his family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>29-Sep</td>
<td>To private camp near festival site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>30-Sep</td>
<td>Golden Eagle Festival, Ulgii</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>1-Oct</td>
<td>Golden Eagle Festival, Ulgii</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>2-Oct</td>
<td>Horse ride to see Turkic stone &amp; visit families</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>3-Oct</td>
<td>Fly to UB, transfer to hotel. Afternoon in city</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>4-Oct</td>
<td>Day trip to Chinggis Monument &amp; Terelj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>5-Oct</td>
<td>Transfer to airport for departure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Start
25 Sep 2017

### Duration
11 Days

### Group Size
3-8 pax

USD/3,795
MONDAY 25TH 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

TUESDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER
DAY 2

ULAANBAATAR – ULGII – ALTANTSOGTS

Up early for your airport transfer and flight to Ulgii. Head into town to have 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. Drive east to Altantsogts stopping on the way at Oni mountain to see some nests where eagles lay eggs in early March - the chicks stay there until mid July when they start to fly, so the nests will be empty now. Continue on to meet your hosts, Kazakh eagle hunter and his family. Perhaps this evening (or on one of the following days) you will enjoy a Kazakh dinner called 'Beshparmak' (meaning five fingers because one uses five fingers to eat it).

Travel Details – 4 hrs flight UB – Ulgii, 1hr to Altantsogts
Accommodation – Shared ger alongside eagle hunters
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner
WEDNESDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER
DAY 3

FAMILY VISITS & EXPLORING ALTANTSOGTS

Experience first hand Kazakh hospitality and the nomadic lifestyle. Your host is one of the most experienced eagle hunters in the region and is training his son to become an eagle hunter too. 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. They call their eagles from a distance and drag dead pray (usually a stuffed rabbit or fox skin) for the bird to catch. Sometimes they go for a days hunting before the festival and if you are lucky the bird will catch a rabbit or fox. 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 – No long drives today
Accommodation – Shared ger alongside eagle hunters
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner

THURSDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER
DAY 4

EAGLE HANDLING AND TRAINING

Today will be spent with our Kazakh eagle hunting friends, learning about their way of life, their eagles and about hunting. Decide who you might like to back in the upcoming festivities and begin to really immerse yourself in the ways of the west. There will inevitably be some excitement as the men of the household prepare to head off on horseback to the festival. If you would like to join them, this can be arranged (you would need some riding experience). Alternatively the plan would be to spend more time where you are, including riding in the local area and further understanding Kazakh traditions and ways, which differ from those of Mongolians.

Travel Details – No long drives today
Accommodation – Shared ger alongside eagle hunters
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner
FRIDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER
DAY 5

TRAVEL TO FESTIVAL SITE

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 on the mountain and admire the stunning and remote scenery.

If you have riding experience, you may like to join some of the hunters as they ride, eagles in hand, to the festival site.

SATURDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER
DAY 6

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.

Travel Details – 2-3 hrs (45km) Altantsogts - Ulgii
Accommodation – Shared ger, private camp
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner

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

**TURKIC MAN STONE & KAZAKH FAMILIES**

After a leisurely breakfast, enjoy a horse ride (approx 3 hours) to reach the ancient Turkic man stone carving. These stone statues have many different names including balbals and standing stones, but all have the similarity of being a stone sculpture in the image of a human being. They were, supposedly, set upon the grave of outstanding people and are monuments of the brace commander, wise ruler, talented town folk or simply a prominent figure who passed away.

A nice relaxing day spent meeting Kazakh families, horse riding and not travelling too far from camp.

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

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**Accommodation** – Shared ger, private camp  
**Includes** – Breakfast, lunch, dinner
TUESDAY 3RD OCTOBER  
DAY 9

ULGII - ULAANBAATAR

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 visit places of interest such as the Gandan Monastery or 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. We'll be on hand to guide you around 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 – 4 hrs flight Ulgii – UB, 45 mins to hotel  
Accommodation – King/Twin room, Tuushin Hotel  
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner

WEDNESDAY 4TH OCTOBER  
DAY 10

TERELJ AND CHINGGIS STATUE

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.

Travel Details – 2 hours UB - Chinggis Monument  
Accommodation – King/Twin room, Tuushin Hotel  
Includes – Breakfast, lunch, dinner
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 – 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 sky scrapers. UB, as the capital is affectionately known, also has some excellent museums, galleries, theatres, bars and restaurants.

Gandantegchinchlen 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 guilded 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 nations 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.
ULGII

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.
CHINGGIS KHAAN MONUMENT

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".
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.
TESTIMONIALS

“I truly enjoyed my trip to Mongolia – our group was exceptionally good and we got on very well!”

Karine Dummer

“A magical trip in a remote and unspoilt part of the world. We were made to feel like welcome guests.”

Doug Howes

“Ger living is magical! Cosy and comfortable, our stove fire was topped up at intervals during the night so that we were never cold.”

Martina Callender
**Golden Eagle Festival Close Up**

Sep - Oct 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Group Size</th>
<th>$</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 Sep 2017</td>
<td>11 Days</td>
<td>3*-8 max</td>
<td>USD/3,795**</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 x1 pax +$1.200 x2 pax +$600
** 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
**Golden Eagle Festival Close Up**

Sep - Oct 2017

**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](http://www.panoramicjourneys.com/Countries/Mongolia). We will also send you a comprehensive Mongolia Practicalities document once you have booked.