



**MONGOLIAN
HORSES**



**GOBI
DESERT**



**PREZWELSKI
HORSES**



**NOMADIC
LIFE**

SCOTT TREES PHOTO TOURS 2020 DESTINATION: MONGOLIA



**A Lifetime Photographic
Experience**

A chance to see and photograph one of the few remaining nomadic cultures in the world.



Day 1, Jul 30. Arrival in Ulaanbaatar

Arrival in Ulaanbaatar and transfer to hotel. Meet other participants and have a welcome dinner. Overnight in a 4-star hotel.

Day 2, Jul 31. Ulaanbaatar ! Dalanzadgad " Three Beauties Mountains

Gather at 0730 in the hotel lobby, meet our local guide then drive to the airport for the short domestic flight down to the Gobi Desert. Land in Dalanzadgad, the capital city of the South Gobi Province. Once a remote desert town, it today serves as the center of logistics for the developing mining industry.

Over the last decade, massive exploration operations have revealed the Gobi Desert has an abundance of precious metals and minerals. As a result, the once peaceful desert is being trampled by excavators, monster trucks, and massive drills, all in the hope of making a quick fortune. Luckily, most of these mines are far from the eye, but their environmental impact can be seen and felt throughout the massive desert.

Upon landing in Dalanzadgad, we meet our drivers and embark on a one and a half hour drive to the "Gobis Beauties" Nature Reserve. Once at the reserve, head to "Vultures Valley", a beautiful oasis at the foot of the "Three Beauties" mountain range. Take an easy hike along the beautiful stream, and if lucky, see some of the wildlife inhabiting the reserve. Overnight in a ger camp- the cozy yet simple, Mongolian version of a lodge, consisting of traditional felt-made dwellings the nomads of Central Asia often refer to as yurts.



Day 3, Aug 1. Three Beauties Mountains " Khongor Sand Dunes

After breakfast, we embark on a five hour drive to the beautiful Khongor Sand dunes. Along the way, we take it easy stopping from time to time to stretch and photograph camels, horses, sheep or goats that inhabit the countryside and the beautiful Gobi landscapes.

Arriving at the dunes after picnic lunch, we will rest and prepare ourselves for our first private session with a camel herder family for a sunset shooting session over the dramatic dune with his herd helping us to highlight the desert colors, and to hint on the rich local culture. Overnight in ger camp.

(approximate driving distance & time: 150 km, 5 hours)

Day 4, Aug 2. Khongor Sand Dunes " The Flaming Cliffs

With an early wake up, go back to the sand dunes for another photo session with the herders and camels in the morning light. Late in the morning, we visit his home for some more indoor portraits of the family members. We then revert to the camp, have breakfast and leave for The Flaming Cliffs. , famed for its red sandstone cliffs which take on beautiful red and orange hues during sunset. The area is also recognized as one of the world's largest dinosaur graveyards. In 1921, the American Roy Chapman Andrews discovered in this area some of the most important Paleontological findings of the last century.

Arrive at Bayan Zag in late afternoon and we visit another Gobi family to learn about their unique way of life and take some portraits of the family. Afterwards we explore the cliffs on foot while waiting for the golden light of the sunset to set the cliffs aflame, weather permitting.

Afterwards have an evening picnic watching the sun yield to the darkness of the night , and again enjoy a desert starry night for some of the best night scenes anywhere on earth.

Overnight in the same ger camp we stayed on the first night in the Gobi.



Day 5, Aug 3. Back to civilization

This morning drive back to Dalanzadgad for the return flight to Ulaanbaatar. Upon arrival in the Mongolian capital, pay a visit to Gandad Monastery, Mongolias largest religious institute and home to the 26 meter tall Janaraysag Statue and one of the only religious institutes to survive the anti religious purge of the 1930's.

In the afternoon visit the Black Market. This huge market contains every single item a Mongolian might need, whether they are nomads or urban apartment dwellers. Goods brought from all corners of Mongolia can be found here for sale. A visit to the market is a colorful experience which gives the visitor an insight to the everyday life of the people of Ulaanbaatar.

In the evening take a walk through the main square, where many city dwellers come to chill and play at the end of a long workday. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet (and photograph) the locals on their own turf. Overnight in a 4-star hotel.

Day 6, Aug 4. Ulaanbaatar " Mongol Nomadic " Khustai Nuruu

Today drive back in time, to a place that recreates the lives of Mongolian nomads at the beginning of the 20th century. This was when Mongolia gained its independence from the Qing Dynasty and established itself as a reemerging nation under a living god-king.

Here, we attend a demonstration of how the nomads lived their lives during this era and learn about some traditions that are carried on to this very day. After lunch in the camp, we will have a private time with the show crew for a private photography session. You will find this time full of color, and great faces and costumes to photograph.

Afterwards we head to Khustai Nuruu Strictly protected area. The SPA was established as part of a unique project to reintroduce the world's last surviving wild horses back to their



natural environment. On the brink of extinction during the last century, only a very few *Takhi* or *Prezwealski's* horses were left in zoos around Europe.

This graceful steppe horse was returned to Mongolia, and today, thanks to this special project, two herds again roam freely through the Mongolian steppes with little human interference

Take a hike through the protected area and learn about the tremendous efforts being put to preserve some of the rarest flora and fauna. End the hike in a vantage point watching the herds of horses sprinting from the mountain tops to the narrow river valley, where they come to drink as the temperatures in the low lands cool down. Overnight in ger camp.

(approximate driving distance & time: 130 km, 3 hours)

Day 7, Aug 5. Full day around Khustai Nuruu

Very early in the morning drive again into the special protected area, for a chance to photograph the wild horses at sunrise, and the early morning light. Then drive to local nomadic family in the reserve's buffer zone. Spend the day with the family and get an insight into the ancient traditions of the Mongol steppe nomads. Join them on their daily chores and get a first-hand experience with their unique lifestyle which has been kept nearly unchanged for hundreds of years. Late in the afternoon return to the ger camp for a relaxing evening.



Day 8, Aug 6. Khustai Nuruu " Karakorum

Leave Khustai Nuruu and take the four to five hour drive to Kharkhorin. Built by Chinggis Khan about 800 years ago, Kharkhorin, better known as Karakorum, was famed throughout Asia as the capital of the Mongol Empire. Within the walls of this spectacular city, kings were chosen, laws made, and the fate of the next city to be conquered were determined.

Pay a quick visit to the ruins of the old city and the Erdene Zuu monastery before driving out of town. Check-in the camp, and after lunch drive to the small local market in the city center.

From here visit the newly constructed Japanese-funded museum, and get an overview over the cities glorious history. Wrap up the day at the Monument of Empires, erected to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the crowning of a boy called Temujin to the King of all Kings: Chinggis Khan. From here watch the sun setting over the Orkhon Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the epic center of several kingdoms and empires that controlled much of central Asia for much of the past Millenia. In the evening revert to the camp for the night.

(approximate driving distance & time: 270 km, 5 hours)



Day 9, Aug 7. Horse Festival in Khashaat Village

Today drive to Khasaat village and celebrate with the people of Khashaat their annual horse festival. A very “local” festival, nomads from the entire region come to compete over challenges such as catching a specific horse from a herd of some 200 running with their version of the lasso called a Uurga. This is a long pole with a looped rope on the end and requires great skill to use. Watch as riders try to stay on a horse that has never been ridden in a Mongolian version of bareback bronc riding. Watch and photograph a thrilling display of horsemanship showing the strong bond between the nomads and their horses which are the pride and glory of the people of the Asian Steppes.

At the end of the festival revert to Kharkhorin for a second and last night in the camp.

(approximate driving distance & time: 40 km, 1 hour)



Day 10, Aug 8. Kharkhorin " Tuvkhon Monastery " Tsenkher Hot Springs

From the Khangai Mountain Range, the Orkhon River runs all the way to Lake Baikal in Siberia. A UNESCO World Heritage Cultural Landscape, the valley has been at the center of several kingdoms and empires that have ruled much of Central Asia. The UNESCO committee states, "Collectively the remains in the site reflect the symbiotic links between nomads, pastoral societies and their administrative and religious centers and the importance of the Orkhon valley in the history of central Asia".



Today head south, driving along the river valley. The first stop of the day would be the Tuvkhon Monastery established during the 1650's by Zambazar one of Mongolia's most respected religious leaders. It is a long uphill hike. Fortunately at the beginning of the trail head there are Mongolian horses in traditional saddles available to rent for a ride to and from the monastery for a nominal fee



The monastery's wooden buildings are integrated with a natural system of caves perched near a hilltop, offering beautiful views of the Orkhon Valley and the surrounding pine forests. With its unique natural features, the monastery was a perfect location for the great religious leader to meditate.

In the late afternoon, we arrive in the region the Mongolians call the "paradise of the horse herders", noted for its lush grasses and open valleys. We will drive through thick pine forests to the Tsenkherhot springs, where water flows out of the ground at 82! C, and where we can enjoy a relaxing soak.



Overnight in ger camp.

(approximate driving distance & time: 120 km, 4 hours),

Day 11, Aug 9. Full day around Tsenkher Hot Springs

Today we will take a short drive to the trailhead, where we will have private time with horse breeders of the region. Horses have played a major role in Mongolian culture and lifestyle from the period of domestication to this day. Thus nomads pay utmost respect to their horses.

Using Uurga to catch horse displays Mongolian horsemanship, the pride and glory of the Mongolian nomads. We then take the return drive back to camp, where we enjoy another night of soaking in the hot water pools.

Overnight in the same ger camp for a second night.

Day 12, Aug 10. Tsenkher Hot Springs " Khar Balgas " Ugii Lake

Today we head north to Ugii lake. En route, we stop at Khar Balgas. Built at about 744AD, Ordu Baliq has flourished as the capital of the Uyghur Empire until 840 AD, when it was destroyed by the Yenisei Kyrgys. Though not much is left to date, this city has spread over 25 sq. km, and ruled an area that spread over the majority of today's Mongolia, the Chinese Xingjian Province, and Manchuria, at total of 5,500,000 sq.km.

In the afternoon we arrive at the shores of Ugii Lake, where many nomadic families spend the summer. We will take a walk around the lake shores, and spend the afternoon with a nomadic family, learning about their unique way of life.

Overnight in ger camp



Day 13, Aug 11 Ugi Lke- Ulananbaatar

Leaving the lake shores we drive to Ulaanbaatar to experience a shaman's actual performance. Prior to the 15th century, the ruling religion of Mongolia was known as that of the great blue sky "hoh tender".

This system of traditional beliefs and practices known in the west as Shamanism, is based on the idea that the visible world is full of invisible forces or spirits. The shaman as intermediary between the natural and spiritual world, communicates with the spirits of water, wind, fire, trees, the moon and so on, for assistance in healing, hunting or changing the weather. The healers of the Buu, as it is known in Mongolia today, are still performing these peculiar rituals. We will go into this secret world, to see the healer call the spirits into his body and grant him the power to heal and see the future.

We then enjoy a farewell dinner, followed by a visit to the Zaisan Hill, for a view over the city at night. Overnight in 4-star hotel in Ulaanbaatar.



Day 14, Aug 12. Departure (B)

After breakfast at the hotel transfer to Chinggis Khan airport for the international flight out of Mongolia.

All photographs taken by Scott Trees during the 2019 tour.

Some Additional Thoughts

- ✿ Power plugs and sockets are of type C and E. The standard voltage is 220 V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz. All of the gers will have outlets, but not a lot. Please make certain you bring adaptors and a power strip, or a single multiple port USB charger is helpful.
- ✿ Cell phones work there, just be certain you have an international phone plan
- ✿ In the city hotels you will have wifi. Some of the ger camps have wifi, but it isn't the best.
- ✿ It isn't a bad idea to bring some TP! This is not an area that has numerous rest areas for stops as we are used too in the Western world. Every effort is made to stop at toilet facilities when possible, but sometimes it is a country side stop!
- ✿ I found the food to be great particularly their meat dumplings. If you have special dietary needs please advise. All possible will be done to accommodate.
- ✿ A small flashlight is handy.
- ✿ Most of the gers do not provide shampoo.
- ✿ Bring some sunscreen and bug spray. We didn't have a lot of trouble with the later, so some wipes or something like that would be suitable.
- ✿ Mongolian W/ays provides all the water necessary during our travels, and the ger camps will have water and soft drinks and in some cases wine and spirits!
- ✿ Travel insurance is required. The main advantage is should there be a medical emergency required to get you home, it will cover the cost of an air ambulance. It is well worth the nominal cost.
- ✿ After you confirm your booking more information regarding the trip will follow.

TOUR FEES

ATTENDEES	FEE IN DOLLARS
3	\$6200.00 <i>Per person</i>
4-5	\$5000.00 <i>Per person</i>
6-7	\$4250.00 <i>Per person</i>
8	\$3900.00 <i>Per person</i>
*Single Supplement	\$581.00
Domestic Flights	\$230.00 <i>Per person</i>

*Single room provides a private shower and toilet

All prices and per person based on *twin share*

Notes:

- The above rates are based on cash payment, or wire transfer (bank to bank) or check.
- For credit card payment, a surcharge of 3% shall apply.
- Total luggage allowed on domestic flights in Mongolia is limited to 15 kg (33 lbs) including hand luggage. Should you exceed this limit, you shall be required to
- cover the overweight fee, ranging US \$2-4 per kg or 2.2 lbs (For the Gobi flight we can leave excess luggage at our hotel if needed)

The price includes:

- 3 nights in a 4-star hotel
- 10 nights in ger camp (tourist camp)
- Private A/C 4X4 vehicles
- Domestic flights to/from the Gobi
- Meals as indicated in the program
- Bottled water throughout the trip
- Local English speaking guide
- Entrance fees
- All transfers

The price does not include:

- International airfare
- Travel insurance
- Mongolian Visa
- Excess luggage
- Gratuities
- Expenses of personal nature (food and drinks beyond those provided, laundry, etc)”
- Anything not mentioned in the program

Please note: all travelers should be holding valid medical insurance including med-evac during their tour

LIABILITY

Scott Trees & Scott Trees Photography is doing this tour in conjunction with a local Mongolian Tour Company, Mongolian Ways. The following applies to both parties:

- 1) Mongolian Ways (local Mongolian Tour Company) and Scott Trees gives notice that some services provided in connection with its itineraries, including transportation, hotel accommodations, restaurants, and other services, are purchased from various independent suppliers who are not affiliated with Mongolian Ways in any way. Although it endeavors to choose the best suppliers available, Mongolian Ways does not control their operations and therefore makes these travel arrangements upon the express condition that Mongolian Ways, and its own agents and employees, shall not be liable for any delay, mishap, inconvenience, expense, irregularity, bodily injury or death to person, or damage to property occasioned through the conduct or default of any company or individual engaged in providing any services through this agreement.
- 2) Mongolian Ways and Scott Trees shall not be liable for: (a) expenses such as additional hotel nights and meals not specified in the individual trip itineraries that may be required either en route, prior to or following a trip, when caused by individual clients' travel arrangements, by airline scheduling or airline schedule changes, canceled flights, missed flight connections, or by other factors not under Mongolian Ways, control; (b) expenses incurred in recovering luggage lost, belongings left behind on a trip, or in shipping purchases or other goods home from abroad; (c) bodily injury or property damage for any reason, including but not limited to acts of God, weather, quarantines, strikes, civil disturbance, theft, default, detention, annoyance, changes in government regulations, terrorism, war, or failure of conveyance to arrive or depart as scheduled, etc., over which Mongolian Ways has no control.
- 3) Mongolian Ways and Scott Trees does not undertake the responsibility for accidents caused due to misbehavior of tourist, delays or alterations in the schedule of transport or other incidents. However, Mongolian Ways (local Tour Company) and Scott Trees take all possible measures to eliminate the causes of the conflict.
- 4) Mongolian Ways and Scott Trees reserves the right to decline or to restrain from further participation, any person it judges to be incapable of meeting the rigors and requirements of participating in the activities, or any person whose actions or deportment impede trip operation or the rights, welfare, or enjoyment of other trip members. A refund based on cost of unused land services is the limit of Mongolian Ways, responsibility in such a case.
- 5) Claims from client for unproved services or for the services of inadequate quality are accepted by Mongolian Ways and Scott Trees not later than 30 days after the date of last service and considered within 30 days. Should the claims be recognized as reasonable, reimbursement for these services will be provided.

6) Mongolian Ways and Scott Trees reserves the right to make changes in the itinerary as agreed due to, but not limited to: forces of nature, weather factors, act of god, civil unrest, war, terror acts, and health conditions of any tourists and/or staff member, without any prior notice.

7) Mongolian Ways and Scott Trees reserves the right to change compatible services from the ones indicated in the agreed tour itinerary due the circumstances at the time of trip without any prior notice.