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# MOUNT KHUITEN

4,375M / 14,354FT

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**2020 EXPEDITION TRIP NOTES**





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## 2020 EXPEDITION DETAILS

**Dates:** July 8–23, 2020

**Duration:** 16 days

**Departure:** ex Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

**Price:** US\$7,900 per person

▲ Crossing the glacier towards advance camp. Photo: Lydia Bradey.

Each summer, Adventure Consultants offers this expedition to climb Mount Khuiten (4,375m/14,354ft), situated on the far western edge of Mongolia. Khuiten is the country's highest peak but the climbing is straightforward and there is the opportunity to also ascend other peaks and combine trekking with exploring the region.

Mount Khuiten is part of a mountain chain called Tavan Bogd, meaning 'Five Saints', with each of the peak names representing simple meanings; Nairamdal—friendship; Malchin—herder; Burgd—eagle; Ulgii—cradle and Khuiten—cold. The peaks and associated glaciers are part of a national park that borders Mongolia, China and Russia. It is a wild, remote and beautiful wilderness made up of spectacular flowering fields and vast open mountain tundra, inhabited only by traditional herding families and abundant wildlife. Such a place exists!

This expedition is an opportunity to experience remote mountaineering in a true wilderness landscape. You will meet traditional people living a seasonal lifestyle adapted to the harsh environment, as well as taking in the more modern aspects of Mongolia.

## TEAM SIZE

For the Mount Khuiten climb, we will take a minimum of 4 people with 1 guide and a maximum of 8 people with 2 guides, hence spaces are limited.

## ITINERARY

Following is an ideal itinerary for our 2020 Mount Khuiten Expedition:

Day 1	Arrive in Ulaanbaatar, meet at the airport and transfer to hotel. Gear checks and team briefing.
Day 2	Flight to Bayan-Ölgii in western Mongolia. Transfer to a ger camp just outside Ölgii.
Day 3	Tour Ölgii sights and enjoy the Naadam Festival.
Day 4	Drive to Tsagaan Gol Valley, camp.



On the approach trek to Base Camp. Photo: Lydia Bradey

Day 5	Trek to Base Camp and stay in a Ger Camp.
Day 6–12	Acclimatisation treks and climb Mount Khuiten (7 days).
Day 13	Trek to Tsagaan Gol Valley, camp.
Day 14	Drive to Ölgii, camp outside town, stay in a ger camp.
Day 15	Fly to Ulaanbaatar, overnight in a hotel.
Day 16	Depart for home.

## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Day 1: Ulaanbaatar

Ulaanbaatar is the capital city of Mongolia, a mix of Asian faces and Soviet-Bloc architecture. You will be met at the airport and transfer to your hotel, where your guide will check your equipment and undertake a briefing for the expedition ahead.

Depending upon the time of your arrival, we can visit the Dinosaur Museum, attend a cultural concert (a mix of contemporary theatre and traditional throat singing) or eat *shashlik* kebabs at one of the local restaurants.

### Day 2: Ölgii

Flight out to the far west of Mongolia and the town of Ölgii in the state (*aimag*) of Bayan-Ölgii. The town is a mix of small concrete Soviet apartment blocks, gers, horses and motorbikes with side cars. It lies on a high alpine plateau at 1,700m/5,600ft, surrounded by brown and red hills which look amazing in the evening light. In Ölgii, we will meet our drivers and transfer to a ger camp. From there, we will go out to see the first day of the annual Naadam Festival, involving singing (including throat singing) dancing, traditional Mongolian wrestling and archery competitions.

### Day 3: Ölgii sights & Naadam Festival

The second day of Naadam Festival includes Mongolian horse racing, with the 25km/15.5 mile race for horses over 2 years old being the most important race of the whole day. In a country where children can learn to ride before they walk, the Naadam race carries the ultimate status. In Bayan-Ölgii, it is children who ride the horses in the race, many doing so bareback in the effort to reduce weight. The horses are small and tough, galloping over rocks for much of the race. It is an amazing day to experience in this wild desert landscape.



▲ A team pauses on descent to take in the spectacular view. Photo: Lydia Bradey



▲ A successful team on the summit of Mt Khuiten. Photo: Lydia Bradey



▲ Approaching the summit of Mt Khuiten. Photo: Lydia Bradey

## Day 4: Drive to Tsagaan Gol Valley

We start our journey to the mountains in Russian 4WD vehicles, driving through valleys and over rolling hill terrain, passing ger camps where people live in summer grazing their animals. We do not drive on roads but routes and tracks through grasslands and seemingly desert terrain. The Bayan-Ölgii countryside is inhabited mostly by Kazakh people and the families out grazing their herds run fat-bottomed sheep, goats, yaks and horses. You can watch as the half-wild horses gallop to the crest of a hill, manes flowing, and following the stallion, sweeping across the valley floor with their foals within the bunch.

Towards the road end we begin to see stunning geological formations called “rock glaciers”. In areas of permafrost with low precipitation, glaciers can form composed of more rock than ice. Here in the Tsagaan Valley, we see these unusual formations covered in red rocks, striking against the green and brown landscape.

Once we reach the road end, we will pitch camp for the night by a stream and enjoy the hospitality of a neighbouring ger for some tea before our dinner.

## Day 5: Mount Khuiten Base Camp

Today is a long day trekking to Base Camp and after approximately 5–7 hours of walking, we arrive into the national park. Our loads will be carried either by horses or Bactrian (two-humped) camels. We walk past rock glaciers, across broad grasslands, through wild flowers and alongside a river carved into red rock. We stop briefly to examine and photograph ancient petroglyphs—remarkable rock art drawings that date back some 12,000 years and illustrate the development of culture in Mongolia over time.

Eventually, we climb a small hill and gaze across to the five Kings of the Altai, the five highest peaks in Mongolia, including the beautiful 4,375m/14,354ft Mount Khuiten, which we have come to climb.

Our Base Camp is on grass amongst the wildflowers, right next to the Potani Glacier at 3,100m/10,170ft. We will have a traditional Mongolian ger as our Base Camp tent, inside which the cook will prepare our meals and we can sit and eat.



Two Gers at dawn. Photo: Lydia Bradey

## Day 6–12: Acclimatisation treks & climb of Mount Khuiten

Over the following days we will rest and acclimatise, plus trek/climb Malchin Peak 4,051m/13,290ft from Base Camp, returning along the Russian border and down through a tiny valley full of flowers. After some rest, we will pack up one or two nights of food and move to an advance camp on the glacier beneath Khuiten Peak. From there, we will climb the highest mountain in Mongolia and stand on the borders of China, Russia and Mongolia, a dramatic vista.

If the weather is favourable and the conditions good, we may be able to climb another King of the Altai on our last day, or we may prefer to rest, sunbathe, take photos or go for some gentle walks.

## Day 13: Trek to the Tsagaan Gol Valley

The trek out is relaxed. With a little advance warning, we can arrange for you to hire a horse and ride out to the waiting 4WD vehicles. This can be loads of fun and if you haven't had any experience with horses, we can ask for a "good or quiet horse". Beware of the horses with a bundle of owl feathers tied to their tail—this means good luck and good speed, and shows that they have been racing at Naadam! At the camp, you will find it is common for Mongolians to sit around, play a two-string guitar and sing, and they will be keen for you to join in!

## Day 14: Ölgii Ger Camp

During the return journey, we are happy to sit and take in the stunning scenery. We will stop in a *sum* or village used by people living remotely as winter lodgings.

These settlements look very like a Western town in a cowboy movie, with desert, dust, horses and huts.

Cast your eyes up and far in the distance, you may see the white cap of a glaciated 4,000m/13,000ft peak, enticing you to go on another adventure!

We can visit Ölgii in the evening and check out the night life, or relax by the side of the river near town.

## Day 15: Ulaanbaatar

The flight from Ölgii to Ulaanbaatar departs around lunchtime and we have a little time to go in search of Kazakh ger wall hangings (which are very collectable) and other mementoes of our journey into the Wild West.

We will arrive into Ulaanbaatar and be transferred to our hotel. That evening we can eat out at one of the many good restaurants in Ulaanbaatar, and celebrate our adventure and climb.

## Day 16: Depart for home

If your plane departs later in the afternoon or evening, it will be possible to go shopping in Ulaanbaatar. Mongolia is famous for its cashmere clothing and blankets and has recently begun to make some amazing felt products, diversifying into some wonderful fashion. It is possible to buy evocative paintings depicting wild horses and Mongolian riders on the great plains of this country, by which to remember your visit. Or you may simply choose to visit a café and reflect upon our Mongolian journey.



▲ Experience the local Naadam Festival horse races. Photo: Lydia Bradey



▲ Camels or horses assist in transporting equipment to Base Camp. Photo: Lydia Bradey



▲ Enjoy traditional Mongolian style food and hospitality. Photo: Lydia Bradey

## THE ADVANTAGES OF CLIMBING WITH ADVENTURE CONSULTANTS

Adventure Consultants is renowned for the quality of its service and strategy applied to their expeditions. Our reputation is attributed to meticulous planning and experienced logistics coordination. We have a philosophy of investing in every expedition to offer our trekkers the best possible experience.

We employ strong and specialised Expedition Leaders, who are some of the most pre-eminent in the industry. We pride ourselves on operating with small teams, the best back-up and support available. This includes nutritious and ample quantities of food, comfortable Base Camp facilities, reliable emergency communications systems and the necessary medical back up.

Many of our expedition members come to us because they have seen us in action on a previous trip and decide to opt for our level of service and proven experience. Others return because they know we do our very best to make expeditions safe and successful.

## VISAS

Team members will be required to obtain an entry visa into Mongolia prior to arriving into the country. The trekking and climbing permits are a separate matter dealt with by the expedition agent. A visa support letter can be supplied to submit with your visa application to the Mongolian Embassy nearest to you.

## COMMUNICATIONS

The expedition will be equipped with portable Thuraya satellite phone systems for the duration of the expedition in order to provide reliable email and voice communication for business, media or personal use. Limited satellite phone time can be purchased at the rate of US\$3 per minute.

## EQUIPMENT LIST & REFERENCE NOTES

Expedition members will be sent a list detailing all the necessary clothing and equipment to be individually provided, contained within a set of Expedition Reference Notes with all the details for the trip. These notes provide extensive information



▲ Driving through the Tsagaan Gol Valley. Photo: Lydia Bradey

on everything from suggestions of what type of camera to bring to training advice for your expedition preparation.

On the approach to Base Camp, all gear and equipment is carried by camels or horses. There is only limited porter support on this expedition, so the team and individual equipment will have to be carried to the high camp by the expedition team members, thus it is important that only the correct amount of gear is taken along.

## FOOD

Food will be of the highest standard possible, given the remoteness of the situation. Please inform us if you have any special dietary requirements. In Ölgii and during the approach trek we will be camping and have a mobile kitchen staffed by the expedition cook. At Mount Khuiten Base Camp, we will be eating in a traditional Ger. Our Base Camp equipment and ample, nutritious meals are always the best quality with nothing being overlooked.

## MEDICAL EXAMINATION & INSURANCE

Expedition members will be provided with a medical questionnaire by the expedition doctor and asked to visit their family physician to receive a full medical

examination. This information will be sighted only by the Expedition Leader and treated with full confidentiality. Advice on immunisations will be provided at this time. We also require members to have rescue insurance and we will consult with individual team members as to your insurance needs and solutions for coverage.

## PASSPORT PHOTOGRAPHS

Expedition members will need to provide a digital passport photograph for various climbing and trekking permits and a copy of their passport biodata page.

## THE EXPEDITION FEE

The cost of the expedition, ex Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia is US\$7,900 per person.

This is an inclusive cost and covers the following:

- Mountain guide(s)
- Accommodation: 2 nights in 5-star hotel in Ulaanbaatar, 2 nights in a ger camp in Ölgii and the rest in tents
- All meals and bottled water from dinner on Day 1 through to breakfast on Day 16



▲ Visiting ancient rock art in the Upper Tsagaan Gol. Photo: Lydia Bradey



▲ Rock art dates back some 12,000 years. Photo: Lydia Bradey



▲ A team summits the nearby peak Nairandahl. Photo: Lydia Bradey

- English speaking interpreters in Ulaanbaatar and in Ölgii
- Meals as listed and daily supply of bottled water
- National park permits
- Cook for the camping days
- Transfers in Ulaanbaatar via minivan and 4WD Russian vehicles in Bayan-Ölgii
- Airport-hotel transfers
- Ulaanbaatar to Ölgii return flights + tax (15kg free luggage only)
- Camels for portering in the mountains
- Visa support invitation letter if needed

The expedition fee **does not** include the following:

- International round trip airfare
- Travel insurance and visa costs
- Personal clothing and equipment
- Personal travel/trip cancellation insurance
- Excess baggage charges for the flights to/from Ölgii
- Any rescue costs or costs of early departure from the expedition
- Gratuities
- Other optional activities such as horse/camel riding etc.

## PAYMENT DETAILS

All payments should be made by bank transfer to the following bank and account:

Bank of New Zealand  
Offshore Branch  
42 Willis Street  
Spark Central  
Wellington  
New Zealand

for the account of Adventure Consultants Limited.

**Account Number:** 1000-594771-0000

**Account Type:** US Dollars

**Swift Address:** BKNZ22

**NOTE:** All bank transfer charges are for the remitter's account.

We can also accept your deposit and balance payment by credit card (Visa, Mastercard and Amex) plus a 3% card charge.



▲ Climbers make their way towards steeper terrain. Photo: Lydia Bradey

## DEPOSIT

A non-refundable deposit of US\$500 is payable to secure a place on the expedition.

## BALANCE

The balance of US\$7400 is payable by 9 April 2020

## CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

An expedition member may cancel their participation on the following basis:

- a) Cancellations outside of 90 days will result in the loss of the trip deposit.
- b) For cancellations made within 89-60 days of the trip commencement date, we reserve the right to retain 50% of the balance payment fee. We strongly recommend you take out trip cancellation insurance via your travel agent if you wish to be covered against cancellation due to medical or personal reasons.
- c) For cancellations within 59 days of the departure date a cancellation fee of 100% of the full fee applies.

We strongly recommend you take out trip cancellation insurance via your travel agent.

## HOW TO JOIN THIS EXPEDITION

If you would like to join the 2020 Mount Khuiten Expedition, please complete our online booking form and forward your deposit payment at <https://www.adventureconsultants.com/expeditions/himalayan-climbs/mount-khuiten-mongolia/book-now>.

## CONTACT US

If you require more information, please contact us at:

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▲ Climbers dwarfed by spectacular terrain. Photo: Lydia Bradey



Adventure Consultants is affiliated to the New Zealand Mountain Guides Association (NZMGA), New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC) and a corporate member of the American Alpine Club (AAC). Adventure Consultants is a supporter of the dZi Foundation in Nepal for their 'Revitalise a Village' programmes.

Adventure Consultants perform to IFMGA/UIAGM standards and are world leaders in high altitude guiding.

