



## Riding the steppes of Khentii

### MONGOLIA

Mongolia is one of the original **riding holiday** destinations and this **horseback trail** through Khentii includes lush forests and grassy steppes. A great choice for a first horseback holiday in Mongolia, with an itinerary exclusive to Equus Journeys.

Trail Riding	12 days / 7 days riding -	From £0		Open to non-riders
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Be prepared for all sorts of weather on this trail!



Authentic Mongol landscapes and big sky country



Discover the steppes of Khentii on a trail ride

### ITINERARY

## Highlights

- A riding holiday spent well off the beaten track - your route begins approximately 100km east of the busiest area of Tereelj and you ride further east, deep into authentic Mongolia
- Your belongings are transferred by vehicle so that you can ride at a faster pace and cover greater distances through a variety of landscapes
- Some dates coincide with Naadam Festival for an optional extension (normally July, please contact us).

## Day 1 — 1: FLIGHT TO ULAANBAATAR

Flight to Ulaanbaatar. This will likely be an overnight flight and you should arrive the following day (Day 2).

Flights are not included but can be booked upon request.

## Day 2 — 2: ULAANBAATAR - No riding

KHOGNO yurts camp

Arrive in Ulaanbaatar and transfer to your yurt camp.

After a little rest, there will be time to visit the city - perhaps visit the Museum of Fine Arts or Museum of National History which immerses you into the heart of Mongolias rich and glorious past. Lunch and dinner is provided at the yurt camp.

## Day 3 — 3: ULAANBAATAR - MONGON MORIT - No riding

Campsite

Visit the Buddhist monastery at Gandan, one of the largest monasteries in Mongolia. You are then transferred by car to the village of Mongon Morit which is set in T aiga forests on the large open steppes north of Baganuur (c. 4-5 hours journey). Your route is punctuated by yurts surrounded by herds of horses, goats and sometimes yaks. Nomadic life is in full swing here!

On arrival you will meet your horses and guide. Spend your first night camping.

## Day 4 — 4: MONGON MORIT - KHERLEN RIVER - 5-6 hours riding

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### Campsite

Today is the start of your great riding adventure. During the next 11 days you will cover 30-35km each day, meeting your vehicle support team at lunchspots and the evening camp. The trail riding route takes place amongst the mountains, on wide open spaces interspersed with lakes and forests of larch, cedar, fir and birch.

Start riding through a large valley surrounded by barren steppes and the Kherlen river - one of the three great rivers of Mongolia. The landscape is ideal for testing the paces of your horse. Many yurts are strung out along the river you will have the opportunity to meet nomadic families. Camp is set up alongside the river.

## Day 5 — 5: KHERLEN RIVER - KHOKH NUUR LAKE - 5-6 hours riding

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### Campsite

One of the most beautiful days on the trail. The steppes have ridges which stand out against the clear sky, the river flows smoothly and the space is intoxicating. You ride into larch forests which cover the mountains Udeg and Tasagaan Davaa until reaching Khokh Nuur - the Blue Lake. It was here, in 1242 that the tribes gathered to give Temujin the title of Genghis Khan! The meadows around the lake are filled with wild flowers - asters, gentians, potentilla and carnations, attracting swarms of butterflies.

Spend the evening around the campfire hearing tales and legends from your Mongolian guides.

## Day 6 — 6: TAVAN TOLGOI - KHANGAL LAKE - JARGALANT - 5-6 hours riding

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### Campsite

Descend on horseback through the valley of Tavan Tolgoi. The scenery is beautiful, with larch forests overlooking the valley and the wide steppes, bordered by mountains and barren peaks. Eagles and other raptors circle overhead. Continue through the wetlands which are sometimes swampy and home to cranes before reaching your camp near Khangal Lake.

## Day 7 — 7: JARGALANT - BEREEVEN TEMPLE - KHURKH - 5 hours riding

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### Campsite

Ride across the edge of the granite massif until reaching a small secluded valley which houses the Buddhist monastery Bereevan Baldan. The monastery was home to over 1,700 monks until it was destroyed in 1937 after the communist repression. Amid the ruins a smaller monastery has been rebuilt to allow locals to visit to pray once a month. After visiting the ruins, continue riding north-east through the forest to a small lake where you set up camp.

## Day 8 — 8: KHURKH - 5-6 hours riding

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### Campsite

You leave the forest on horseback and follow the Jargalant river through the valley. In the distance you will see small gatherings of yurts with their herds and it's impossible to ignore the requests from nomads who invite you into their yurt to taste cheese and drink milky tea. Night at Camp.

## Day 9 — 9: KHURKH VALLEY - ADUUN CHULUU - Approx. 6 hours riding

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### Campsite

Continue riding in a north-easterly direction through the valley of Khurkh Bayanzurkh towards the river. You may discover remnants from ancient Neolithic inhabitants. Set up camp in wild taiga forests.

## Day 10 — 10: ADUUN CHULUU - KHERLEN RIVER - 5-6 hours riding

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### Campsite


Your ride is about to come to an end: you spend the morning on horseback to reach the shores of the Kherlen river, before saying goodbye to your guides and sturdy horses.

The road is longer to Ulaanbaatar, so instead of driving back to the city you will stop tonight to camp close to a village, before finishing the rest of the

trip in the morning.

## Day 11 — 11: ULAANBAATAR - No riding

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 KHOGNO yurts camp

Early morning departure by vehicle to Ulaanbaatar. You will stop briefly at the "Thieves Market" - a unique experience! You will be dropped off at your hotel and the rest of the day is at your leisure. Lunch is to your own account. You will be given a map of the town and the time to meet for dinner. Perhaps do some last minute shopping for cashmere. In the evening, meet at a traditional show with music and dances followed by a traditional dinner to celebrate the end of your adventure.

Overnight in a comfortable 3 star hotel with private bathrooms.

## Day 12 — 12: DEPARTURE FROM ULAANBAATAR

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You will be transferred to Ulaanbaatar airport for your flight back home. Flights are not included but can be booked for you on request. You may arrive home this evening, or early tomorrow, depending on your flight routing.

### DATES & PRICES

We are currently updating our dates and prices they will be online soon. If you want details of this holiday, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## Price details

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No departure for this destination. Please contact our travel advisers for more information.

- Flights to your destination are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates.

- Rates are per person, based on two riders sharing a twin room in hotels and tents, or communal yurt accommodation.

- Groups are composed of 4-10 international riders plus guides.

- Please note: the ride will also confirm for 3 riders on payment of a supplement of c.€200/£180/\$235 per person (or 2 two riders for €590/£515/\$620 per person) Once the group has reached 4 people, we will remove this supplement from your invoice and refund you if you have already paid it.

- Depending on availability, a ride can be confirmed for groups of 3 or more on the date of your choice from June to September - ask us for more details

- You can arrive on day before in Ulaanbaatar. We can organise for you transfer and accommodation in yurts - please contact us for rates.

- A visa is required for Mongolia and is your responsibility

- There is a rider weight limit of 90kg / 14st11lb.

- Accompanied children 8 years and older are welcome.

Please Note

The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.

The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

## Price includes

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### SUPPORT TEAM

1 English-speaking tour leader

1 Mongol-speaking horse guide and tour leader

### LOGISTIC

1 vehicle and driver

1 cook  
1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider and 1 extra horse for 2

## ACCOMMODATION

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2 person yurt  
3 person tents (for two riders, to allow plenty of comfort and space)

## MEALS

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Full board from lunch on day 2 to breakfast on day 12 (except lunch in UB)

## Price doesn't include

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### MEALS

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Beverages and personal extras  
Lunch in UB on Day 11

### TRANSPORTS

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International flights bookable on request

### EXTRAS

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Tips to local team  
Small group supplement - see above for the details

### INSURANCE

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Cancellation and travel insurance are not included in the above listed price. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend taking out an insurance policy as soon as your trip is booked to cover you in case of cancellation  
Visas and personal purchase

## EQUESTRIAN INFO

## Horses

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The Mongolian horse is legendary. They are small, energetic and tough but gentle and perfect for trail riding on all types of terrain. The horses are sociable and live happily in a herd. They are not difficult to ride but some will be more spirited than others.

## Guide & local team

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You will be accompanied by at least two local horse guides. There will also be a cook to prepare meals and a vehicle driver.

## Minimum riding ability

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### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

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You need to be an experienced rider, capable of riding outdoors over varied terrain for several hours.

There is a rider weight limit of 90kg / 14st1lb.

### PACE

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There are many opportunities for prolonged canters and gallops across the immensity of the Mongolian steppes, although you will not be cantering all the time. There may also be some long spells of walk and trot, but the ride is not slow.

### TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

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The horses are tacked and untacked for you by your Mongolian team. You may be asked to assist around camp - settling up and dismantling tents etc.

### TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

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You must be physically fit. The ride takes place at an altitude between 1,400 and 2,500 metres and you are in a remote location. The climate is similar

to the Alps in summer at equivalent altitudes - temperatures are usually pleasant during the day (18 - 30c) but it can get cold at night with the possibility of frosts. The weather is usually sunny but you need to be prepared for the chance of thunderstorms, heavy rain, hail or even snow! Remember that you are at least half a days vehicle journey from the nearest medical clinic and further from a hospital.

Previous experience of riding a trail for several days is an advantage but is not required. Riders who do not ride regularly are requested to get riding fit before the holiday.

Visiting a new country offers the opportunity to meet other cultures with different mentalities, therefore it is important to accept these differences and respect the local way of life.

## **EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT**

Saddles are Russian style but locally made.

Whilst the stirrup leathers are adjustable, riders who are tall may find that they are short in length and are recommended to take their own pair of leathers.

We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit.

## **TRAVEL INFO**

### **COMFORT**

Whilst on the ride you camp in two-man tents. Mattresses are provided but you need to take your own sleeping bag.

In Ulaanbaatar (first and last night) you stay in a nearby yurt camp which offers comfortable and authentic accommodation.

### **MEALS**

The food is simple, abundant and based on fresh products prepared by a local cook and adapted to western tastes. Meals are served on small camping tables with stools, except for some picnic lunches.

Breakfast is usually hearty.

Lunch is often hot when meeting the logistics truck, but sometimes a picnic.

Dinner is a full hot meal (soup, main course, dessert) and may well include lamb/mutton purchased from local nomads.

Water:

Do not to drink water from unknown sources. The cook will boil water each day for you to fill up your water bottles but you should also bring water-purification tablets such as Micropur.

### **CLIMATE**

Mongolia has over 260 days of sunshine a year! Generally there is very little rain - the annual average in the north is 200-350mm and this decreases in the south. Mongolia is located in the heart of a high pressure system which leads to clear skies and Mongolia is sometimes known as the "Land of Blue Skies".

Winters are long and cold (October - April) and so rides run during the summers months of May - September. There is a short rainy season during mid-July - September but rainfall is usually short and scanty in the late afternoon. Temperatures are mild in the north and hotter in the south. Because of the altitude, nights can be cold even in summer.

Winds can be strong, particularly in spring and autumn and the weather can change quickly, so take layers and be prepared!

### **TIPS**

If you are happy with the service you receive from your local guides and driver then you may wish to leave a tip. In order to remain consistent with their standard of living, we would recommend something in the region of £40 - £50.

### **PACKING LIST**

When packing please remember that the region can be cold and it would be wise to bring layers!

Head

- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit. There are many lightweight options available nowadays
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana
- Warm hat for cold nights when camping

### Upper body

- Thermals (long or short sleeved)
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and are an extra layer
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Warm fleece or jumper (and a spare in case one gets wet)
- Warm and waterproof jacket - it can rain at any time of year and the evenings can be particularly cold

### Legs

- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub
- Thermals
- Casual trousers for the evenings, such as jeans or tracksuit bottoms
- Waterproof over trousers

### Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps as an extra layer against inclement weather. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged
- Waterproof shoes/boots can be useful for abundant dew in the mornings or when it rains
- Trainers or equivalent light shoes for moving around the camp in the evenings
- Several pairs of warm, thick socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun, cold or rain whilst riding. Waterproof gloves can be particularly useful

### Nightwear

- Sleeping bag. You need at least a comfort factor down to minus 5 celsius, but would recommend at least minus 8 or 10 celsius.
- Sleeping bag liner - silk, cotton or fleece - adds an extra layer
- Pyjamas or tracksuits or thermals for sleeping in

### Other useful items

- Water-purification tablets
- Swimsuit - for swimming/bathing in rivers
- Towels - camping ones will both dry and pack more easily
- Small backpack for accessing items required during the day (carried by support crew)
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around camp at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Water bottle (2 litres or 2 x 1 litre)
- Wet Wipes or equivalent (for when washing facilities aren't available)
- Toilet paper and a lighter to burn it with
- Small plastic bags for rubbish
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)
- Micropur tablets

### In your hold luggage

- Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant unless they are less than 100ml and all bottles can fit in a small, clear, plastic ziplock bag. We recommend biodegradable washing products where possible.
- Swiss army knife (or equivalent)

### In your hand luggage

- Any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- Your riding hat

### Medical kit

- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent, preferably containing deet
- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets

- Water purification tablets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel

#### Our Recommendations

- Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided with a capacity of 60-80 litres. We recommend taking a backpack or similar. The luggage limit on the ride is 15kg per person.
- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bum bag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc)
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!
- Tall riders may benefit from taking a pair of long stirrup leathers with them (the local stirrups are adjustable but are sometimes limited in length)
- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals
- Please take your rubbish home with you. There are no recycling facilities in Mongolia, so take your used batteries, aerosols etc back home and dispose of them appropriately. Try to leave excess packaging material at home before travelling
- You may wish to take some photographs or postcards of your home with you to show your hosts. You may also wish to take some crayons, colouring books etc for the children

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please [see this page](#) .