



2008 TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE MONGOLIA,
GOBI DESERT POST-EXTENSION
5-11 AUG, 2008

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Day 1: 5 Aug, 2008. Flight to Gobi, visit the Flaming Red Cliffs

This morning we take a 1 hour flight to Gobi. On arrival we check into a Gobi visitor camp comprised of Mongolian felt tents. In the afternoon we drive to visit the Flaming Red Cliffs. In 1923 the American expedition led by Roy Chapman Andrews discovered the first ever dinosaur nests and eggs as well as hundreds of specimen including dozens of new dinosaur species. We will walk through the sun baked cliffs of red sand and try to make our own discovery. In the evening we will return to our camp for dinner and overnight. (ger / B,L,D)

Day 2: 6 Aug, 2008. Visit Eagle valley and drive to the Singing Sand Dunes

Early this morning we drive to one of the highlights of Gobi, the "Eagle mouth" canyon. Nestled amidst the beautiful peaks of the Three Beauties Mountains the gorge shelters a small "glacier" which remains frozen even on summer's hottest days. Wild Goats roam the steep cliffs. If very early seeing of the Wild Goats is guaranteed. At the entrance of the gorge is a small museum displaying samples of the area's animal world.

Back to our jeeps we drive along the Altai Mountains to reach the "Singing sand dunes". Do they really sing? Yes, they do sing. On a windy day you clearly hear a distinct sound similar to that of a distant propeller. Tons of sand blown down over the dunes ridge rub against the slope and produce the tremor. These massive sand dunes stretching for more than 100 km and rising to a height of 200m lie parallel to some dramatic mountain ranges and green meadows in the middle of the Gobi. (ger / B,L,D)

Day 3: 7 Aug, 2008. Day of leisure, camel riding in the sand dunes

After a lazy morning we explore this massive dunes from camel back. It is a rare chance to ride a two-humped camel since the specie exists only in a few countries in the world. A local camel herder will teach you some techniques of riding. You may as well hike the dunes or just watch the amazing sunset. (ger / B,L,D)

Day 4: 8 Aug, 2008. Drive to Ongi monastery

Today we leave the Gobi behind. After 7 hours of driving across arid semi-deserts with hundreds of miles of endless bushy plains, camels and mirages we arrive to a visitor camp nestled in a tiny rugged mountain range amidst desert we explore the moonscape of Ongi Monastery ruins. The Ongi monastery once served as a midway point for Buddhist believers on their long pilgrimages to holy places of Tibet. (ger / B,L,D)

Day 5: 9 Aug, 2008. Drive to Karakorum

Today we will drive on to Karakorum, the ancient capital of Mongolia. There is a small local township there now. This is where Genghis Khan built his capital in 1227. An ambassador of the French King came to visit Ugudei Khan, Chinggis' third son in 1240-ies. Then he described Ugudei's majestic palace. Every summer since 1999 extensive archaeological digs have been conducted by Mongolian and German experts revealing a wealth of knowledge about the city. With some luck we will visit the actual excavation site.

Present day town of Karakorum is recognized by the massive walled compound of the Erdene Zuu Monastery. It was built in 1586, by a Mongolian warlord as part of his efforts to re-unite Mongols under the banners of Buddhism. Later in 1930-ies during anti-religion campaign under communists the monastery suffered almost a complete destruction of its temples. Today it is being lovingly restored by believers.

We overnight in a yurt with facilities near by the town. (ger / B,L,D)

Day 6: 10 Aug, 2008. Drive to UB

After visiting the Erdene zuu monastery we head east to Ulaanbaatar. We mostly drive on tarmac road which runs through wide open steppe with rolling hills in the background. It is one of the main transport veins in the country, therefore busy with cars and trucks loaded with wool, cashmere, meat and other items to be sold in Ulaanbaatar. Hundreds of horses, cows, sheep and goats graze on both sides. One third of the way we come along a stretch of sand dunes like a silken scarf laid across vast green steppes.

Evening arrival to Ulaanbaatar and transfer to your hotel. (hotel / B,L)

Day 7: 11 Aug, 2008. Departure transfer

This morning we will transfer you for your international flight home. (B)

The extension price based on group of 6: 705 US\$ per person.

The price includes:

- 1 hotel overnight in Ulaanbaatar (TWN/DBL/BB)
- 5 overnights in traditional felt tents (yurts)
- Services of an English speaking guide
- Meals as indicated
- Airport transfers
- Flight ticket to Gobi
- Russian 4*4 van in the Gobi incl. gas
- Camel riding
- All visits and environmental fees