



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

travelling in mongolia

We wish you to embark on this tour with a level of tolerance, patience and understanding that the areas to which you are travelling are remote and not as developed as those that you may be used to. You will encounter traffic jams, terrible road conditions, unclean public areas and at times experience poor English and irregular levels of service in regional hotels. You will however be richly rewarded by means of experiencing abundant culture, historic landmarks and a journey filled with legend, magic and wonders of the ancient world.

money

The local currency in Mongolia is the Tughrik. The exchange rate is approximately USD\$1 = 1,692Tg. It is recommended that tour members take cash in USD, which can be exchanged at banks or your hotel in Ulaanbaatar. You may be able to spend US cash in Ulaanbaatar, but in the rest of the country the accepted currency is Tughrik only. When changing money ensure that all notes appear new, without marks or tears. Any note that looks worn or aged will be treated with suspicion and you may be unable to spend or exchange this money. It is recommended that you take a combination of cash and a credit card for larger purchases.

Credit Cards and ATMs - You may be able to use your credit card for purchases at upmarket shops but otherwise they are not widely accepted. There are several ATM's in Ulaanbaatar that work just fine. We strongly recommend that you do not solely rely on credit or debit cards to access your money while in Mongolia.

When departing - It is highly recommended that any unused Tughrik be changed back into US Dollars at your hotel or international airport before you leave Mongolia, as once you return you will be unable to do so. Please ensure that you retain all original exchange receipts from your trip, as an exchange will not be possible without these.

optional extras

Several optional extra programmes may be offered by your National Escort whilst on tour, time permitting. Some examples include experiences such as riding horses (USD \$10/hour) camels (USD \$15/hour) and a ride on a boat at Lake Khovsgol (USD \$80/hour for 6 people to a boat). The rental of fishing equipment is also offered at the Tsagaan (Great White) Lake and Lake Khovsgol.

transport

While in Ulaanbaatar we use a modern, air-conditioned coach. Outside of the capital city, the road conditions demand a hardier vehicle so we use 4WDs, with 3 passengers plus a driver in each vehicle. The road network throughout Mongolia is rough and remote; travellers here may face occasional delays due to poor road conditions or vehicle maintenance.

insurance and health

It is a condition of travel that all customers have adequate travel insurance for the duration of their travel arrangements. If you wish to take out an insurance policy through Wendy Wu Tours, please contact our office for a quote. Please inform our office of relevant policy numbers. If you are taking out travel insurance with your credit card company, you need to investigate the policy's inclusions and conditions fully. You should receive a policy number, an international access phone number to contact them in an emergency and a full copy of conditions.

You are obliged to inform your insurance company of all pre-existing medical conditions.

All travel insurance providers require **you** to contact them ASAP to inform them of your situation in the unlikely event that you need medical treatment, hospitalisation or change travel plans (evacuate). They will then decide the best course of action in regards to further treatment and/or repatriation and make appropriate booking arrangements. Our staff in Mongolia will be able to assist you in contacting your travel insurance company. You must check your policy for exact inclusions and procedures.

A health certificate is not required for travel to Mongolia. We strongly advise you consult your doctor or contact the Travellers Medical and Vaccination Centre in your capital city for advice on appropriate inoculations at least 8 weeks prior to your trip. We suggest taking your Tour Dossier to your appointment.

pharmaceutical goods

It is recommended that you take all pharmaceutical products that you may require on your tour. This could include items such as sleeping pills, tablets to relieve stomach upsets, headaches and motion sickness. A basic supply of medications from Australia will mean that in the uncommon event that you do feel unwell; you will be able to use your own stock of trusted brands. For any prescribed medication we strongly recommend that you have a letter from your doctor and medication is in the original packaging.

hotels and ger camps

All accommodation for this trip has been specially selected to meet the needs of our customers and this itinerary. Your hotel in Ulaanbaatar will have private Western facilities, air-conditioning, television, telephone, laundry and foreign exchange facilities.

Outside Ulaanbaatar you will stay at Ger Camps, where accommodation will be in traditional Mongolian Ger tents – an enduring way of life for the nomadic population. Each Ger tent consists of single wooden beds, linen, a stove for heating purposes, and thick blankets. Shared shower and toilet facilities are separate from the tent, hence a flashlight is needed. Simple cafés and sitting areas are also located within the camp grounds. *Please refer to the Tour Dossier for further information.*

electricity

Mongolia has an electricity supply of 220 Volts and uses a pin with two round prongs. The European pin is similar and will fit most sockets, so if you already have one of these take it with you. If not, it is recommended you purchase one in Ulaanbaatar. Whenever you are outside Ulaanbaatar the supply of electricity is not as reliable; daily outages can be experienced. The Ger Camps and local guesthouses are either connected to the main power supply or rely on diesel generators. Those camps connected to the main power supply usually have a power point for recharging batteries. Alternatively, the restaurant area has power points. Shops and markets in this region will not stock reliable or genuine batteries.



European Plug

water

We strongly recommend that you do not drink the tap water, nor take ice in your drinks. Make sure you do not clean your teeth with tap water. You will be able to purchase bottled drinking water at various small shops. Please always ensure that the seal is unbroken.



mongolia

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meals

The cuisine in Mongolia is quite basic and consists mostly of traditional dishes of mutton in various forms with vegetables and sheep milk products. While in Ulaanbaatar, the cuisine will be slightly more varied with a choice of Korean and Chinese food. In remote areas the choice of food will be limited and simple. There is a very good supermarket in Ulaanbaatar where you can purchase a good supply of Western comforts such as coffee, spreads for your toast, chocolate etc. Alternatively you may like to bring snacks from home. *Please refer to the Tour Dossier.*

climate

Known as the 'Land of Blue Sky', Mongolia is renowned for having over 260 sunny days a year. However long winters mean snow is evident in the desert until April and some lakes can remain frozen till June. Our Mongolia and the Naadam Festival group tour has been scheduled to coincide with the best weather conditions and the annual festivals at this time of year. As it is located so far inland, temperatures are not moderated by the sea and this leads to cold nights and mornings, contrasted with hot days and clear skies. June and July see temperatures between 10°C (overnight) to 30°C (daytime) – this is an estimate only. Due to unpredictable climate changes we strongly recommend you check the current weather prior to your departure.

shopping

Shopping can be fun and entertaining, especially in local markets in Mongolia where local handicrafts and reproductions can be purchased for next to nothing. However, Wendy Wu Tours, and its staff are not qualified nor permitted to ensure or guarantee the quality or value of any goods purchased or the suitability of any retail outlets visited and the security of using a credit card to purchase such goods. In all cases the purchasing of goods and the use of a credit card for those transactions is entirely at the passenger's own risk and at all times you must use your own discretion. In keeping with most people's interest whilst on holiday, your tour will include a reasonable number of opportunities to shop for local goods and souvenirs but this may vary depending on local conditions.

luggage and incidental items

We urge you to consider your luggage carefully. While staying at the Ger Camps there may be a need to carry your own luggage if they don't have porter staff. **The domestic flight allowance is a mere 15kgs per person; this means checked luggage (10 kilos per person) and hand luggage (5 kilos per person) together.** As you will be travelling in 4WDs, consider practical and durable luggage. There is limited space in the vehicles; therefore the size of your luggage will directly impact on how much leg room and comfort you and your fellow passengers will have. Ensure that your luggage is secure and do not take unnecessary valuables with you to Mongolia.

duty free allowance

You are permitted to bring 1L of spirits, 2L of wine, 3L of beer and a carton of cigarettes per person into Mongolia. You are unable to carry alcohol on board any Mongolian domestic flight and any bottles should be wrapped up (in a towel or clothing) and well packed within your suitcase. There are no restrictions on foreign currency, however if you have USD\$5000 (or equivalent) in cash, it will need to be declared.

customs

Cultural relics, handicrafts, gold and silver ornaments and any jewellery purchased in Mongolia must be declared upon leaving the country. All bags are x-rayed at the airport and if not declared, customs agents may seize these items. Please note that any type of food – from chewing gum to biscuits or muesli bars will also need to be declared if they are placed in your suitcase.

what to wear

The dress code throughout the tour is casual and comfortable. You will need clothes to keep warm at night, and keep you cool and protected from the

strong sun during the day. As we will travel over such a wide area and varied landscape, the temperature can vary. Please note that overly revealing clothing is considered offensive in rural areas and temples. For example, singlet tops are not acceptable when visiting temples and monasteries. Shorts are acceptable as long as they cover the knee.

Please refer to your 'Suggested Packing List' for further information.

safety and security

You are recommended to maintain a high level of personal security, especially in crowded places. Although Mongolia is considered generally safe for travellers; please ensure you keep belongings on you at all times and that your suitcase has a lock on it. For international flights going via China – it is also important to travel with all valuables and prescribed medication in your carry-on luggage as bag searches are becoming more common. Alcohol is not permitted in carry-on luggage and will be confiscated when found.

keeping in touch

Your hotel in Ulaanbaatar will be equipped with telephones that can be used to call internationally. Call costs are from approximately USD\$1 per minute. To call Australia, the international access code is 00, followed by the country code, 61, then the local area code, then the number. For example to call Wendy Wu Tours the number would be 00 61 2 9224 8888.

Outside Ulaanbaatar it is rare to find a local phone with international access, and can be alarmingly expensive. You should be prepared to be out of phone contact during this section of the trip.

Mobile phones - Ulaanbaatar has good coverage for mobile phones. Both CDMA and GSM are able to be used, however the latter is more popular with the 3G Network recently being introduced, although it is unlikely that you will have reception in the more remote areas. Contact your service provider for further details.

Fax, postage and internet - Faxes, postage and internet may be accessed from Ulaanbaatar. There is a business centre in your hotel that provides these services at an additional cost. You will also find local internet cafes in Ulaanbaatar. Expect to pay approximately USD \$1-2 per minute.

Mail can be sent from the capital and takes approximately 7-14 days to reach Australia.

time difference

While on holidays, most people like to contact their family members or friends, but it is often difficult to work out the time back home. Mongolia's time zone is +8 GMT meaning they are 2 hours behind Australian Eastern Standard Time.

our ground operator

If you have any concerns prior to your departure please do not hesitate to contact our office on 1300 727 998 or your local travel agent during office hours. If it is outside of office hours and your query is urgent please email: afterhrsassistance@wendywutours.com.au

Wendy Wu Tours wish to ensure that your holiday runs as smoothly as possible. If during your trip you are dissatisfied with any element of your arrangements please notify your National Escort/Local Guide who will endeavour to resolve the issue at the time. Should the outcome not be satisfactory, please contact our ground operator partner as per the contact details below;

Juulchin Tourism Corporation
Olympic Street 8, Ulaanbaatar 14-253
Tel: 976-11-328428 Fax: 976-11-320246

Upon your return, should you wish to contact us, please email our Customer Relations department:

customerrelations@wendywutours.com.au or by calling **1300 727 998**

The content of this fact sheet was correct at the time of printing and may be subject to change.