



From  
**\$12,704** USD

Single Room  
 \$14,413 USD

Twin Room  
 \$12,704 USD

Prices valid until  
 30th December 2023

**30 days**  
 Duration

**Mongolia, Russia**  
 Destination

**Level 3 - Moderate to Challenging**  
 Activity

# Journey through Mongolia and Russia small group tour

Jul 10 2023 to Aug 08 2023

## Journey through Mongolia and Russia: Small Group Tour by Train

Odyssey offers easy, convenient, and relaxed escorted small group tours across Western Europe and beyond. We explore Mongolia and Russia's natural beauty, and heritage by rail, its World Heritage Sites, and world famous cities, all with some truly spectacular scenery along the way. This and more is all waiting to be explored on one of Odyssey's popular small group tours of Mongolia and Russia, designed



for the senior traveller, and led by experienced, and enthusiastic like minded people.

This is a journey through Mongolia and Russia, a fully escorted program that takes the active senior or mature-aged couple or solo traveller with an interest in experiencing something different on two of the greatest train journeys in the world: the Trans-Siberian rail and Trans-Mongolian train.

On this 30-day Mongolia and Russia tour and train journey, you will be able to enjoy the experience, varied destinations, and overnight train rides secure in the knowledge that you always have a Program Leader with you. We will also have local guides who will join us on our walking tour and city tour, armed with expert knowledge of the destinations visited on a journey through Mongolia and then Russia. Your journey takes in stunning scenery, witnesses a nomadic culture of herders, horseback riders, a ger camp all in a modern world and provides great photographic journey to be recorded.

## Highlights of our Mongolia, Russia small group tour

Join the tour in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia, and spend the first seven days in Mongolia with a side trip to Russia's Lake Baikal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1996. During your time in Ulaanbaatar you will have the chance to experience Mongolia's famous Naadam Festival. This centuries-old festival, once used for training warriors, involves competitions in horse riding, archery and Mongolian wrestling. We sleep in a traditional Mongolian ger in Hustai National Park, and visit the nearby Temple Ger Camp, some 60km to the east of Ulaanbaatar.

The ger camp is a unique opportunity to experience how modern technology and practices have influenced traditional Mongolian nomadic lifestyle, ger today are generally made out of felt and heated with wood burning stoves, these can house families across a number of generations. Larger communal tents can be found closer to the centre of the camp and are generally used for cooking and entertainment,

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<https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au>

while other amenities like showers and bathrooms are housed in their own block. A typical evening at camp will generally feature a meal of mutton, potatoes or dumplings, and if you're lucky you might even catch a performance of traditional Mongolian throat singing.

The tour then traverses the world's largest landmass, the Euro-Asian Continental Plate, taking the traveller from Ulaanbaatar to St Petersburg via some of the world's most remote areas. The small group travels across Western Mongolia to the Mongolian steppe and then to the vast expanse of the Siberian taiga and tundra; over the Ural Mountains (the divide between Asia and Europe) to Moscow and the waterways of Russia's medieval Golden Ring. We also make a side trip to Lake Baikal, the world's deepest lake. Discover the Russian capital on a train ride on the Moscow Metro and experience Siberia's traditions and culture while in Irkutsk.

Our tour uses two of the great railways of the world: the Trans Mongolian and the Trans Siberian trains. The Trans Siberian railway is regarded as an iconic rite of passage journey with a long history. Though the Trans Mongolian is of similar era and history.

The tour concludes with an 11-night cruise on the waterways between Moscow and St Petersburg. While travelling along the mighty Volga river, view the splendid architecture of Russia's Orthodox domed churches. We also visit the highlights of Moscow and St Petersburg, including St Basil's Cathedral and the Hermitage Museum.

Our guided tour also recognises that sampling the local cuisine is fundamental to an authentic travel experience. Each day, we eat breakfast, lunch, or dinner at a local restaurant (though, of course, some of our meals will be eaten when staying on the train).

This fully escorted tour offers the opportunity to travel with a small group of like-minded adventurers through Mongolia and Russia. You can learn more about Mongolia and Russia with our country profiles where all the other tour departures are listed as well. For more details about this tour, please click the 'Top 5' or 'Itinerary' buttons above! If you're keen to experience this tour, please call or send an email. Or, to

book, simply fill in the form on the right hand side of this page.

## Odyssey Traveller Tours by Railway

Each year, Odyssey Traveller offers other small group tours by rail:

- French History by Rail tour which goes through Paris and the other cities of France; we have a 21-day tour and a shorter 11-day tour
- You can explore Paris, Bordeaux and Provence by Train in 22 days
- Learn about Japan's History by Rail in 10 days
- Travel from Helsinki to Irkutsk on the Trans-Siberian Rail or do the reverse tour (Irkutsk to Helsinki)
- Take the Trans-Siberian Rail from Vladivostok to Krasnoyarsk

If you want to learn more about the Trans-Siberian Railway and the train journey, click through to read the following articles prepared by Odyssey Traveller:

- Overview, which includes tips on booking your ticket and preparing for the long train ride.
- History of the Trans-Siberian Railway
- Trans-Siberian Landscapes and Wildlife

*Refreshed December 2020.*

## Tour Notes

- Singles are NOT available during our nights in Mongolian yurts/gers or onboard any of the rail journeys

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- Singles are available in hotels in Ulaanbaatar, Irkutsk/Lake Baikal, Moscow and on the Russian cruise only
- Meals are not provided on the Trans-Mongolian Train but chance is given in Ulaanbaatar to purchase suitable provisions
- Meals are not included on the Trans-Siberian Train but can be purchased on board the train
- Travellers should note that facilities on these public trains may be of a basic standard
- Group size is limited to a maximum of 15 participants.
- The itinerary for 2019 is subject to be reviewed and amended once the current tour is completed and dates for the cruise as well as trains have been released.

## Highlights

1. Travel on The Mongolian Express and The Trans-Siberian Express.
2. Cruise the waterways of the Tsars between Moscow and St Petersburg to see the quintessential towns and villages of Russia's Golden Ring.
3. Experience Mongolia's Naadam festival in the capital Ulaanbaatar and its countryside in traditional gers.
4. Learn about Lake Baikal, the world's deepest lake and experience the traditions and culture of Siberia in Irkutsk.
5. Visit Moscow and St Petersburg, including the Hermitage Museum.

## Itinerary

## Day 1

**Locations:** Ulaanbaatar

**Overview:**

Arrive in [Ulaanbaatar](#) and make your own way to the accommodation. Welcome dinner tonight will be at a local restaurant.

Ulaan Baatar is the world's coldest capital situated in a basin surrounded by four mountains on the southernmost border of the great Siberian taiga and steppe. When Mongolia achieved independence from China in 1911, the city had become an important trading centre on the route between China and Russia, populated by Chinese, Russians and Mongolians. In Ulaan Baatar we are introduced to [Mongolia](#) and will observe the Mongolian people during the colourful Naadam festival. We visit the nearby Temple Ger Camp in the beautiful valley of Ar Bulagtai, some 60km to the east of Ulaan Baatar where we stay in traditional gers. We will learn about the nomadic lifestyle of a 13th century Mongolian at the Chinggis Khaan Statue complex.

(D)

**Accommodation:**

3 nights at Ulaan Baatar Hotel or similar

## Day 2

**Locations:** Ulaanbaatar

**Overview:**

In the morning we'll visit the traditional Buddhist Gandan Monastery. The Mongolians are active followers of the Buddhist faith; one of the three incarnations of the living "Buddah" or "Dalai Lama" resided in [Ulaanbaatar](#). Our sightseeing continues with a visit the Central Museum of Mongolian Dinosaurs where we get a chance to see some of the best dinosaur fossil collections in the world. The museum is housed inside the former Lenin Museum. It was constructed in 1974, with plans to be expanded. After lunch we visit Winter Palace, residence of Mongolia's

eighth re-incarnation of the Living Buddha and last king.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

Ulaan Baatar Hotel or similar

**Day 3**

**Locations:** Ulaanbaatar - Naadam Festival

**Overview:**

After an introductory talk by a local guide, today is all about Mongolia's Naadam Festival. Our full day's worth of experiences includes the festival's opening ceremonies, held in the main square. At the city's central stadium we view dressage and traditional Mongolian wrestling and archery.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

Hotel Ulaanbaatar or similar

**Day 4**

**Locations:** Ulan Baatar - Hustai

**Overview:**

Today we enjoy a second day of games for the Nadaam Festival. Later in the afternoon, we drive to a Wild Horse Reserve Centre in the Hustai National Park, where we will spend the night. The park is home to the last remaining species of wild horse, the Takhi, commonly known as the Przewalski's Horse. We'll learn about the current conservation efforts and the status of herds found within the park.

Our accommodation tonight will be here, in the National Park in traditional ger style. Dinner will be served at our camp, under the stars.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

Ger CampNote: no single accommodation is available at Ger camps

## Day 5

**Locations:** Hustai National Park - Gun Galuut Nature Reserve

**Overview:**

Today we further explore the park by visiting some ancient stone monuments of Ongot and local herder families for a nomadic lifestyle experience. We then drive east past [Ulaanbaatar](#) to Gun Galuut reserve, located approx 120 km from of the capital city. On the way we stop at the biggest equestrian statue to Chinggis Khaan and visit the 13<sup>th</sup> century village.

We enjoy dinner and sleep overnight at the Gun Galuut ger camp. This will be home for a total of two nights.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

2 nights at Gun Galuut ger camp Note: no single accommodation is available at Ger camps.

## Day 6

**Locations:** Gun Galuut Nature Reserve

**Overview:**

We have a full day to explore the park, where some 200 big horn argali sheep find refuge. The park is also home to many rare birds including the White Naped and Siberian Cranes. Today we will also visit a local herder family.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

Gun Galuut ger camp

## Day 7

**Locations:** Ulaanbaatar

**Overview:**

After breakfast we transfer back to [Ulaanbaatar](#). After lunch at a local restaurant, we'll visit the Fine Arts Museum. In the evening we are



treated to a concert of Mongolian Music and Dance, which includes a performance of the haunting Mongolian throat singing followed by dinner at a nearby restaurant.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

1 night at Hotel Ulaanbaatar, or similar

**Day 8**

**Locations:** Trans Mongolian train to Irkutsk

**Overview:**

The morning is free to explore the city on your own and then we get together for lunch. As there's limited catering on the train, we plan a quick stop to shop for supplies before the next phase of our journey: this afternoon we board the Trans Mongolian train bound for Irkutsk, Russia. The train crosses the extensive Mongolian countryside. Pending local timetables, the proposed train is scheduled to depart at 3:22 pm.

(B,L)

**Accommodation:**

1 night on board [Trans Mongolian Express](#) train in 4 berth compartments with exclusive use for 2 or 3 people (depending on group's final numbers) Single compartments are not available on train journeys and participants will be required to share 4 berth cabins with other participants of either sex.

**Day 9**

**Locations:** Irkutsk

**Overview:**

Irkutsk is now the regional and administrative capital of Siberia. It came to prominence in 1651 as a Cossack garrison and come the 18th century, was an important trade centre for furs and ivory. Later it became the administrative, industrial and scientific centre during the Soviet era. With the coming of the railway in 1898, Irkutsk was linked

with the rest of Russia and became an important strategic outpost. It is an ideal base to explore the world's deepest Lake, [Baikal](#).

We arrive in Irkutsk at 9:30 am and commence with a city orientation tour and a visit to the Decembrist Museum. Lunch will be at a local restaurant, and dinner at our hotel.

(L,D)

**Accommodation:**

3 nights at Ibis Irkutsk or similar

**Day 10**

**Locations:** Irkutsk - Lake Baikal

**Overview:**

After breakfast we travel southeast to visit Talsty Museum of Architecture and Ethnography. We then continue to the town of Listvyanka, on the shores of of [Lake Baikal](#), for lunch. We also visit Baikal Lake Museum and panoramic platform on top of the "Stone Tcherskogo" mountain. We head to the pier, to enjoy a boat ride on Lake Baikal, the world's deepest lake. We return to Irkutsk and dinner this evening will be at a local restaurant.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

Ibis Irkutsk or similar

**Day 11**

**Locations:** Irkutsk

**Overview:**

Free morning in Irkutsk. Afternoon activity TBC. Dinner at a local restaurant.

(B,D)

**Accommodation:**

Ibis Irkutsk or similar

**Day 12 - 13 - 14 - 15****Locations:** Irkutsk - Moscow**Overview:**

In the morning we'll visit Ust Orda settlement and the Ethnography Museum "Gold Orda", we'll learn about the traditions and culture of the Buryats. In the afternoon we return to Irkutsk and enjoy an early dinner at a local café before going to the Rail station.

This evening we board the [Trans-Siberian train](#) for our epic rail journey through the Siberian forests and across the rural mountains to [Moscow](#).

Meals and snacks on board of the train can be purchased at the dining/restaurant car or at some of the stations where the train stops along the journey.

**Accommodation:**

3 nights on board Train to Moscow in 4 berth compartments with exclusive use for 2 or 3 people (depending on group's final numbers) Single compartments are not available on train journeys and participants will be required to share 4 berth cabins with other participant of either sex.

**Day 16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26****Locations:** Moscow - St Petersburg: Russian Golden Ring Cruise**Overview:**

We arrive early in the morning (around 4:45 am) and transfer to a hotel for some rest and to freshen up before our half day tour of [Moscow](#). In the afternoon we transfer to the port to board our cruise.

Moscow regarded as Europe's most "eastern" capital boasting Saint Basil's Cathedral, Red Square and the mysterious Kremlin. It contains some of Russia's most outstanding architectural monuments from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, as well as great constructions from the Stalinist period including one of Europe's most outstanding metro systems. The first 3 nights the boat will be moored in port in Moscow and then sail to Uglich, Yaroslavl, Goritzky, Khizi Island, Mandrogi-Ladoga and finish with 3 nights moored in [St Petersburg](#)

We will visit the heritage mediaeval cities of the Golden Ring including Uglich, Kizhi, Yaroslavl and Goritsy. [The history, heritage and culture of Russia](#) are epitomised in the glorious, quintessential Russian cities and countryside visited during our Golden Ring cruise.

In St Petersburg, one of the grandest cities in the world. We experience Palace Square, the Nevski Prospect, St Isaak's Cathedral, the imposing Peter and Paul Fortress and the Hermitage Museum.

The cruise is full-board – Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner are served on board.

**Accommodation:**

11 nights on board of MS Chernychevsky or similar (single or twin share cabins available)

**Day 27-28-29**

**Locations:** St Petersburg

**Overview:**

Today we have a tour to Peterhof lower park after which your time is free. There is an opportunity to take an optional excursion on the canals of [St Petersburg](#) (part of the cruise shore offering).

We then transfer to our hotel in St Petersburg for our final days of free time in St Petersburg, which can be planned at your own choice. Some of you might want to re-visit the Hermitage Museum at your own pace, or perhaps spend some time exploring the beautiful gardens around St Petersburg. There are many other landmarks, museums and tours that Odyssey or the program leader will be able to plan for you, for these final days in St Petersburg either with the group, or by yourself.

(B) daily and (D) on evening of Day 29

**Accommodation:**

3 nights at Hotel Moscow or similar

## Day 30

**Locations:** St Petersburg

### Overview:

Tour concludes in St Petersburg hotel after breakfast.

(B)

## Inclusions / Exclusions

### What's included in our Tour

- 10 nights hotel accommodation.
- 3 nights in traditional Mongolian gers (felt tents) – twin share.
- 1 nights aboard the Trans Mongolian from Ulaanbaatar to Irkutsk in 4 berth compartments, with exclusive use for 2 people or 3 people (depending on final group size).
- 3 nights travel aboard the Trans Siberian in 4 berth compartments, with exclusive use for 2 or 3 people (depending on final group size).
- 11 nights accommodation onboard river cruise vessel in en-suite twin share cabins (singles available).
- 25 breakfasts, 20 lunches and 23 dinners.
- Transport and field trips as indicated.
- Applicable entry fees and services of local guides.
- Gratuities and necessary tips.
- Invitation letter for Russian Visa.
- Services of an Odyssey program leader.
- Detailed Tour Information Booklet.

### What's not included in our Tour

- International airfares and departure taxes

- Comprehensive Travel Insurance.
- Cost for Mongolian & Russian Visas. Odyssey will assist in obtaining the invitation letters for both visas.
- Meals not specified in the itinerary.
- Items of a personal nature, such as telephone calls and laundry.

### **Level 3 - Moderate to Challenging**

Participants must be in excellent health, extremely mobile and live an active lifestyle. Program activities may include up to 6 hours of continuous strenuous, moderate to fast paced activity per day over varied terrain.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.