

KYRGYZSTAN - THE GREAT TREK

ITINERARY

Day 1

Transfers are included from Bishkek airport. They are arranged to meet the Turkish Airlines flight TK344 which normally arrives at c. 08.50.

If you prefer a flight arriving in the afternoon, then you will need to arrive the day before and you will need to make your own accommodation arrangements in Bishkek for this night.

Flights can depart at any time on the last day. They tend to depart very early in the morning, which is fine. You will be transferred directly to the airport from your hotel in Bishkek.

From Bishkek you will be transferred by vehicle to Rot Front. This is at 1,100 m at the foot of Ala Too mountain range.

After lunch and a chance to rest after your journey, you continue by vehicle (about one hour) to the valley of Kizil Suu, where you meet the horses who have been resting from previous trips.

You will be matched with the horses for the trip and spares will be brought so you can change if necessary.

Please note that the itinerary may change depending on local weather conditions (mainly the condition of the passes) and the riding ability of your group, but always with your best interests in mind. The planned overnights in yurts may not always happen since the nomadic people are, by definition, nomadic.

Your guides will happily answer all your questions, but you do have to ask.

Overnight Kizil Suu. Tented Camp



Day 2

Explore the Konorchok canyon on horseback, riding deep into the red rock. Here the micro-climate is very dry and they rarely have snow. Then continue up and over a 2,500 m pass to the Keuk Bel valley.



Overnight Keuk Bel. Tented camp. At all camps you are expected to set up your own tent but there is help available from the support crew.

Day 3

Ride south through the mountains. On a clear day you can see Issyk Kul Lake more than 100 km away in the distance. Ride over the 3,600 m Kerkebess pass. As you descend it will feel warmer.



Overnight Kerkebess. Tented camp. At all the camping spots there are very limited washing and toilet facilities.

Day 4

Ride down from the mountains towards the flat, open Kochkor valley and onto the village of Agoutchouk. Ride across the wild flower meadows and on tracks between the arable fields.

Your host greets you with a warm welcome and invites you inside for dinner.



Overnight Agoutchouk. Overnight in a village house.

Day 5

Ride through a semi desertic landscape to the Chong Touz salt mines. After a visit in the deep and amazing mines, continue your ride through a clay and salt

desert before reaching the Tegereksaz valley. A nice canter leads you to the camping spot.



Overnight Tegereksaz.

Day 6

Along the windy Kyzart valley, ride up and through the Tchaar Artcha pass at 3,200 m.

'Klemche' means 'green sward' in Kyrgyz, referring to a lush and grassy area. This is also where the horses stay over winter.



Overnight Klemche. Tented camp.



Day 7

Ride through two magnificent green valleys, fording some rivers, then over the Tiuz Ashuu pass (3,200 m).

Reaching the shore of Son Kul Lake you follow the shoreline until reaching the north side of the lake where the landscape opens up in front of you before reaching the yurt where you will spend the night.

Son Kul Lake, which at 3,017 m is considered the pearl of Kyrgyz summer pastures. The wide, brilliant, steel coloured expanse of the lake appears quiet and transparent, looking like a bowl of pure mountain air surrounded by hills. Water and sky seem to meet here. At night you can imagine that you can touch the stars.



Overnight Son Kul - North Side. Yurt camp near the shores of the lake.



Day 8

A couple of hours riding up the highest peak around the lake is today's goal! Then back to camp for swimming in the lake and relaxing.



Overnight Son Kul - North Side.

Day 9

After a short but beautiful ride to the next host's yurtas, you witness the local horseback game of Ulak Tartish (or Buzkashi) - this game is played with the headless body of a dead goat and is a real cultural experience.

The remainder of the day will seem to pass quickly as you watch the shepherds milking the cows and mares and making kumiss (fermented mare's milk). They gather horses, sheep, goats and sometimes yaks and also prepare traditional dishes with mainly meat and milk products.



Overnight Son Kul.

Day 10

Finding it difficult to leave the hospitality of the family, ride through remote valleys to the Djungal river and Kiz-Art village. You cover 25 km and are greeted by another friendly family ready to welcome you.



Overnight Kizart Yurts.

Day 11

Mount up and ride along the fields above Kizart. Arrive at the entrance of the Koum Bel valley where you will spend the night.



Overnight Koum Bel Valley. Tented camp.



Day 12

Ride through the Koum Bel pass, 3,600 m, then along the Ceok valley, dotted with yurts and herds of horses. Some of your ridden horses have come from this valley; they are good mountain horses, sure and brave.



Overnight Ceok Farm. There are simple washing facilities in the empty farmhouse. There is hot and cold water to bucket over yourself.

Day 13

Continue over the Sandiks Range, crossing the Buchuk pass at 3,400 m. Here you have magnificent views of the Ala Too range with its peaks up to 4,500 m.

Ride along the Karakol river to your camp for the night.



Overnight Karacol Camp. Tented camp alongside the river.



Day 14

Today you cross the Karakol river and ride up to the jailoo of Ai Teke. There are many herding families living here and life seems to have remained the same as it did 100 years ago.



Overnight Ai Teke.

Day 15

Cross over the Shamshi pass (3,600 m) and continue to the Chuy valley. There are some steep ascents and descents today. You climb 600 m in two hours and descend 1,800 m in four hours.



Overnight Shamsi. It is possible to make a fire at this camp as the set up is near a wood.



Day 16

A half day ride this morning and by lunch time you are back at the entrance of the Shamsi valley.



After lunch transfer to Yann's home in Rot Front village.

Overnight Rot-Front. Rot Front is your guides' home and base camp. It is based at the foot of the Ala Too Mountains at an altitude of 1,100 m.



Day 17

Transfer to Bishkek.

Today you can explore Bishkek and see the sites of the city. Visit the bazaars and museums and you can buy some souvenirs and handicrafts.

Overnight Bishkek Guest House.

Day 18

You will be transferred to Bishkek airport.