

The Great Trek, Kyrgyzstan

Itinerary

Day 1: Bishkek – Rot Front – Kizil Suu

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

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.

Overnight in a tented camp.

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.

Day 2: Kizil Suu – Keuk Bel

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 2,500m pass to the Keuk Bel valley.

Overnight in tented camp.



Day 3: Keuk Bel – Kerkebess

Ride south through the mountains. On a clear day you can see Issyk Kul Lake more than 100km away in the

distance. Ride over the 3,600m Kerkebess pass. As you descend it will feel warmer.

Overnight in a tented camp.



Day 4: Kerkebess – Agoutchouk

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 in a local house which has a sauna.

Day 5: Agoutchouk – Chong Touz

Ride through a semi-desert like landscape to the Chong Touz salt mines. After a visit to the mines, you ride on to a small lake and set up camp nearby.



Overnight in a tented camp.

Day 6: Chong Touz– Klemche

Continuing along the valley floor as you gradually climb onto the high steppes (called “jailoo” in Kyrgyz). After lunch you ride up and over the Kiz Art pass.



Overnight at your guide’s guesthouse in the Klemche valley (“klemche” means “green grass” in Kyrgyz). The horses will know where they are because this is where they spend the winters.

Overnight in a guesthouse.

Day 7: Klemche – Son Kul lake

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

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 3,016m 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 in yurts.

Day 8: Son Kul lake –Abdel Kader’s yurt

After a short but beautiful ride to Abdel Kader's yurt, 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 together horses, sheep, goats and sometimes yaks and also prepare traditional dishes with mainly meat and milky products.

Overnight in Abdel Kader’s yurt

Day 9: Son-Kul – Kiz-Art

Finding it difficult to leave the hospitality of Abdel Kader’s family, you continue the ride through remote valleys to the Djungal river and Kiz-Art village. You

cover a distance of 25km and are greeted by another friendly family ready to welcome you.



Overnight in a local house with sauna.

Day 10: Kiz-Art – Koum Bel valley

Enjoy the relaxation of the sauna this morning with a leisurely breakfast. This gives both you and the horses a chance to rest.

After lunch, 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 in a tented camp.

Day 11: Koum Bel valley – Ceok valley

Ride through the Koum Bel pass, 3,600m, 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 in a guesthouse.

Day 12: Ceok Valley – Karakol Valley

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 4,500m.



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

Overnight in a tented camp near the river.

Day 13: Karakol valley – Ai Teke

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 in a yurt and tents.

Day 14: Ai Teke – Shamsi

Cross over the Shamshi pass (3,600m) and continue to the Chuy valley. There are some steep ascents and descents today. You climb 600m in two hours and descend 1800m in four hours.



Overnight in tented camp along the riverside.

Day 15: Shamsi – Rot-Front

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 in Rot Front.

Day 16: Rot-Front - Bishkek.

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



Overnight in a local house on the outskirts of Bishkek.



Day 17

Transfer to Bishkek airport for your flight home.