

# Mongolia

## Biking with Reindeers

Asia | 2,500m



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# Mongolia

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A biking trip like no other. Cycling on the frozen Hovsgol Lake and in the Taiga forest.

This incredible adventure takes you to far **Northern Mongolia**, behind the Khoridol Saridag mountain range – a mystical land of prairie, boreal forest and hundreds of lakes scattered over the wide plains of the Darkhad lowland.

This is a true **winter wonderland adventure** and you'll travel through some of the most pristine and unpopulated lands in the whole of Mongolia. Deer, wild boar, squirrel, beaver, otter, ermine, marten, sable and wolf inhabit this remote region, which forms part of Siberia. You'll also get to witness the authentic culture of reindeer herders – of whom there are a just a few hundred – who live in tepees and graze their reindeer in taiga forest and

on the alpine valley.

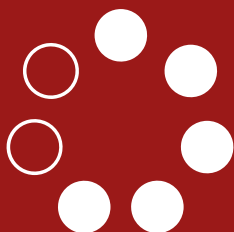
Cycling on the open expanse of Lake Hovsgol is a liberating and amazing experience. Combined with visiting the remote Reindeer herders makes this an unforgettable experience.



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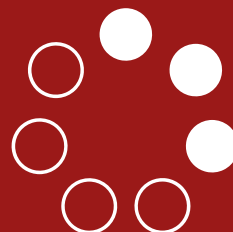
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### Physical – P4 , P5

Superlative fitness is called for. Regular, long and intense physical training is required for preparation. Expect long days on the hill of 10-15 hours in testing weather conditions (especially summit day) carrying up to 15-20kg in weight, and/or pulling a pulk with exceptional weight.



### Technical – T3

May involve harder scrambling or some trekking and climbing with ropes. If snow is encountered then glacier travel with ropes, ice axes and crampons will be necessary. Basic climbing skills are ideal, but these will also be taught (and certainly practiced) during the expedition and pre-summit phase.

Please note that the grading system used is a rough guide only.





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### ITINERARY

#### DAY 1 : Arrive Ulaanbaatar

On arrival in Mongolia's capital city, Ulaanbaatar (often written Ulan Bator), you'll be met and transferred to a centrally located 4-star hotel.

(D)

#### DAY 2 : Ulaanbaatar to Erdenet

We'll spend the morning enjoying a guided walking tour through Ulaanbaatar, to introduce us to the highlights of the city. These include the central city square with Genghis Khan and Sukhbaatar statues and the Museum of National History introducing Mongolia's history from early humans to modern era. We then have a choice of a couple of museums to visit depending on our timings, the Choijin Lama or State Oracle Residence museum displaying best samples of Buddhist artwork and religious masks, or the Fine Arts Zanabazar Museum, which displays old arts including Buddhist arts, painting, folk arts and crafts, sculptures, carvings and embroideries. In the evening we will be treated to a show of traditional music, throat singing and contortion, which will be followed by a welcome dinner. After that, we transfer to the train station to take the overnight train to Erdenet.

(BLD)

#### DAY 3 : Erdenet to Khuvsgul Lake

We'll meet our team of support crew upon arrival. Erdenet city is the third largest city in Mongolia, and lies in a valley between the Selenge and Orkhon rivers, about 150 miles (240 km) northwest of Ulaanbaatar. The city was established in the mid 1970s by a joint Soviet-Mongolian venture in order to exploit the area's huge deposits of copper and molybdenum ore. Other industries include a carpet factory, a food-processing plant, and timber-processing. We continue our drive on paved road to the Khatgal village near Khuvsgul Lake. We'll stay overnight in traditional Mongolian accommodation, a nomadic felt dwelling called a Ger.

(BLD)

#### DAY 4 : Khuvsgul Ice Festival

After breakfast we'll drive a little further towards the south shore of Khuvsgul Lake to visit the Festival of Ice. Local residents alongside the crystal clear lake have traditionally celebrated this festival which has now become an annual event, attracting Mongolians and foreigners alike in recent years. There are some interesting highlights: competitions include ice sumo, building with ice, ice skating and sleigh rides which take place on the frozen lake. After this fascinating experience we take to our bikes, riding spike tires on the crystal clear ice of Khuvsgul Lake, surrounded by beautiful wooded mountains. Later, we'll head for the western shores to set up tents and camp for the night.

(BLD)

#### DAY 5 : Forest Cycling

After breakfast we start our cycle on flat ground before we start heading up and down undulating hills through the forest, with breathtaking views throughout. We'll approach the frozen Arsaï River, with its fascinating valley, sided by magnificent gorges. We'll camp again, and enjoy starlit skies by this frozen river.

(BLD)

#### DAY 6 : Bike to Darkhad Depression

Today we cycle to Darkhad Depression, a land of prairie, forest and several hundred lakes, reachable only by foot, bike or horseback. The winter nature of this area is phenomenal. We'll pass the white felt-covered tents (also known as ger or yurts) of local herders and their large herds of horses, sheep and yaks, getting a glimpse of life which seemingly has not changed for hundreds of years. In the evening we establish a tented camp alongside the road and spend the night in the wilderness.

(BLD)

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### ITINERARY

#### DAY 7 : Visit the Tsaatan community

We travel for another half a day before arriving at Tsagaan Nuur town, located in the Depression's northern corner. This is the gateway to Taiga, dense boreal forest, where the Tsaatan community lives and herds reindeer. If necessary, we stock up on some additional food and drink before moving out to camp at the edge of Taiga.

(BLD)

#### DAY 8 : Horse Riding with the Tsaatan people

The next adventure, horse riding, lays in store for us today. After breakfast we saddle those for riding and the journey starts, with local guides to accompany us throughout the way. We will ride through woods, almost entirely at a walking pace, to allow us to experience the spectacular scenery around us. While riding you can easily notice the shift from grasslands into taiga, and visit local Tsaatan communities. We'll stay overnight in a teepee.

(BLD)

#### DAY 9 : Rest & Cultural day with the Tsaatan (reindeer herders)

Today will be a leisurely day among the Tsaatan reindeer herders to allow you to feel their authentic and unique way of life. Overnight will be in the teepees.

(BLD)

#### DAY 10 : Ulaan Uul

Today we say farewell to our Tsaatan friends and horse ride back to the Tsagaan nuur, where we'll then continue our drive to Ulaan Uul village which is surrounded by a scenic mountain range. The Khoridol Saridag mountains stretch along the west of Lake Khuvsgul Lake and rocky peaks and forests are the main natural wonders of this mountain range. The area is protected as vertical in that region, with tundra, taiga, forested steppe and mountainous areas. The highest peak of the mountain range is Delgerkhan, at 3,087m above sea level. The western edge of the lake has high cliffs while the east side is covered with trees and there are a lot of rare and endangered species of animals and plants in the area we'll be able to keep our eyes peeled for – including deer, elk, bear, leopard, ibex and vulture. We're camping in tents again tonight, close to the lake shore.

(BLD)

#### DAY 11 : Drive to Moron

We'll drive today to Murun, the provincial centre of Khuvsgul aimag – which is a perfect place to take some rest after adventuring in such a remote part of country. We'll check in to a local hotel, have time for a hot shower and be able to connect to the internet to update friends and family on our adventures, and enjoy time with these little luxuries.

(BLD)

#### DAY 12 : Drive to Erdenet, back to Ulaanbaatar

We'll be driven back to Erdenet town today, and return to Ulaanbaatar on the overnight train.

(BLD)

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## ITINERARY

### DAY 13 : Arrival at Ulaanbaatar

In the morning, upon arrival in Ulaanbaatar, we will be met at the railway station and transferred to our hotel. We'll have a free day at our disposal to further explore the city.

(BD)

### DAY 14 : Departure Transfer

We'll be driven to the airport for our flight home.

(B)



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## KIT LIST

### Bags & Packs

#### Kit bag

A 110L duffel bag. A duffel bag is a strong, soft, weather resistant bag without wheels but with functional straps for carrying. Suitcases and wheeled bags are not suitable

#### Drybags

Nylon rolltop bags that keep fresh clothing and other important items like passports and iPods dry in the event of a total downpour that seeps into your kitbag. Good for quarantining old socks. Please note that many countries are now banning plastic bags. We would always advise buying re-usable nylon rolltop bags for keeping your kit dry (and sustainability).

#### Daysack

Approx. 30L capacity. Your day to day pack that you carry with your daily essentials, fitted with shoulder straps and importantly a waist belt

#### Waterproof rucksack cover

To protect rucksack from rain

#### Padlocks x 2

For use on your kit bag for travel and on the expedition plus your hotel bag

### Sleeping Gear

#### 4 Season sleeping bag

You should get a sleeping bag rated to -10C and choose a sleeping bag that functions within the comfort rating of this temperature. A silk sleeping bag liner will enhance this rating on the colder nights

#### Sleeping bag liner

Silk is best for keeping the bag clean and you a little warmer

#### Sleeping mat

A full length self-inflating rather than  $\frac{3}{4}$  length Thermarest

### Headwear

#### Warm headgear

This can be a warm hat, beanie, balaclava, anything to reduce the heat loss from your head

#### Wide brimmed hat

Keeps the sun off exposed areas like ears and the nape of the neck

#### Buff/Scarf

Essential for protection from the sun and dust

#### Sunglasses

Worth spending money on good UV filters. Julbo is our preferred supplier



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## KIT LIST

### Sunblock

Buy the highest SPF you can find as UV intensifies with altitude

### Lip salve

Sun cream will not work on your lips and they are very susceptible to burn without proper protection

## Upper Body

### Base layer x 2

This is the layer closest to the skin and its principal function is to draw (wick) moisture and sweat away from the skin. You can also get thermal base layers for use at higher altitudes that provide an additional insulative layer while still drawing sweat during times of high exertion

### Mid layer

These are typically lightweight microfleece or similar technology that provide varying degrees of warmth and insulation without being overly bulky or heavy to pack

### Gilet (optional)

Optional - A great low volume additional layer to keep your core warm, whether down, Primaloft or fleece

### Light insulated jacket

A lighter jacket such as a Primaloft or lightweight down which can be worn at lower to mid altitudes is a great addition to your kit offering greater flexibility with layering

### Soft Shell (optional)

Optional - These should be windproof (not all are) and insulative. They are mostly made of soft polyester and sometimes resemble a neoprene finish which makes them very mobile and comfortable to wear. While offering a degree of weather repellence, they are not waterproof

### Hard Shell

These jackets are thin, highly waterproof and windproof and worn over all other items of clothing. You'll find these made of Gore-Tex or other proprietary waterproof yet breathable technology. Inexpensive hard shells that aren't breathable will prevent evaporation, making you sweat intensely and are not recommended

### Down jacket

Generally made using feathers, these are the ultra-warm and insulated layer that are used when at camp or in extremely cold environments. Those with a windproof outer fabric will provide the best insulation. Ask advice in the shop (or from us) when buying the jacket and mention you want it rated to -10C and the assistant will recommend the correct fill for you

### Warm gloves

Consider a Polartec pair for higher altitudes and evenings



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## KIT LIST

### Lower Body

#### Trekking trousers

These tend to be polyester so they dry quickly after a shower and weigh little in your pack. Consider perhaps a pair with detachable lower legs as an alternative to shorts

#### Softshell trousers

Windproof or thermal lined trekking trousers for higher altitudes and the summit phase. Thermal leggings can still be worn underneath if necessary

#### Shorts

#### Waterproof trousers

Like the jacket, an essential piece of kit to stay dry and should also be Goretex

#### Underwear

Merino or wicking material, not cotton. How many pairs you take is entirely up to you

### Feet

#### 3-4 season walking boots

3 season walking boots that are well broken in with mid – high ankle support

#### Trekking socks x 3

Start with lighter socks lower down, working up to thicker pairs for higher up as it gets colder. Some people like a clean pair every day, others are happy to change every other day – that's a personal choice

#### Spare laces

Just in case

#### Comfortable trainers

Trainers for camp and town, saves stomping around in heavy boots for the entire day

#### Sandals

Walking River Sandals for possible river crossings

### Hydration

#### Water bottles / bladder

2L capacity either in a combination of bladder and Nalgene bottle or just Nalgene bottles

#### Water purification

Although generally all water is boiled some prefer to double up and add purification tabs as well. Always good to have in your bag

### Toiletries

#### Wash kit

Keep it simple on the mountain. Essentials are toothbrush, toothpaste and deodorant. Moisturiser is advisable, everything else is a luxury!

#### Travel towel

Travel towels from the likes of Lifesystems are perfect



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## KIT LIST

### Wet wipes

Preferably biodegradable, these are great for washing when modern shower facilities become a thing of the past

### Alcohol gel

A must have for good camp hygiene

### Mosquito/Insect repellent

### Ear plugs

For protection against the inevitable snorers!

### Toilet paper

Provided on the mountain but a spare in your daysack may be useful if you need to hide behind a rock between camps

### Nappy sacks or dog poo bags

Only needed to bag your toilet paper if you are caught short in between camps and for keeping your rubbish tidy in your tent

## Medications

### Personal first aid kit

The 360 med kits are designed to be used in emergencies and akin to an A&E rather than a pharmacy on Expeditions so please come prepared with useful meds for yourself such as painkillers (Ibuprofen if you can take it and a Paracetamol) plus blister plasters, plasters, antiseptic, rehydration sachets and any muscle rubs you wish to use.

### Personal medication

Keep this in your daysack

## Miscellaneous

### Head torch

We recommend Petzl head torches. Bring spare batteries.

### Trekking poles

These tend to be a personal preference but help with your stability and can dampen the pressure on the knees coming down hill

### Camera

Bring plenty of spare batteries and memory cards

### Penknife (optional)

### Snacks

You will be fed very well and given snacks each day however we advise bringing a small selection as a little bit of comfort. Extra snacks can be bought en-route if needed. Energy gels and protein bars are not suitable

### Entertainment

Of course optional, but most trekkers like to bring an iPod, book, Kindle, cards etc for evening entertainment.



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## KIT LIST

### Documentation

#### Passport

Don't forget this! Your passport should have at least 6 months validity. With your passport expiry date at least six months after the final day of travel.

#### Copy of passport

Just in case

#### Passport photos x 4

For Border Permit

#### Dental check up

We recommend you have a dental check-up before your trip. New fillings can be an issue at altitude if there is an air pocket left in the gap

#### Money

We recommend you take around \$350 with you in small denominations. This will allow for tip money plus any extras such as satellite phone calls and emergency funds. Small denominations are recommended as it may be difficult to obtain change and it will be easier to divide tip money

### Travel insurance

Copy of own travel insurance details. And relevant contact numbers. We have a partnership with True Traveller and would recommend that you contact them when looking for travel insurance for your trip with 360. However, it is vital that you ensure that the insurance cover they offer is suitable for you, taking your personal circumstances (items to be insured, cancellation cover, medical history) into account. Many other insurance providers are available and we do recommend that you shop around to get the best cover for you on the expedition you are undertaking. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

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## FAQ'S

### Food and Water

#### What is the food like on the trek?

All meals on the mountain are fresh, nutritious and varied. We try to ensure that dietary preferences are met and that local ingredients are used. You'll be amazed what can be produced on a kerosene stove!

The underlying aim is to provide balanced, nutritional meals packed with carbohydrates to refuel hungry bodies and to replenish stores for the next day of activity. On top of well balanced meals you are provided with coffee, tea and snacks upon arrival into camp. The morning wake-up call is usually accompanied with a cup of tea or coffee in your tent. Do bring along any of your favourite snacks and goodie bags from home if you want. Concentrate on high energy food-stuff to give you that little boost on an arduous day.

#### I have food allergies, can these be catered for?

Absolutely, please inform the office of any allergies or intolerances and we will ensure that these are taken into account on the trek.

#### Where does the drinking water come from?

Drinking water on the trek will come from local streams and rivers. We treat the water with purification tablets and boil it to be on the safe side. We always ensure that our drinking water is 100% bug free.

#### How often is fresh water available for replenishing during the day?

Before leaving camp in the morning you will fill your water bottles or camel bladder. If this runs low you will have ample more water to replace it with. For most walking days water can be replenished at the lunchtime site.

### Accommodation

#### What will the accommodation be like?

Most altitude related symptoms manifest themselves at night. We therefore recommend tent sharing from the onset of all our expeditions. Tent share is always organised according to sex and where possible age groups. Obviously if trekking with a friend or partner then you will be able to share tents.

If you have joined the team by yourself then it is highly likely that you will be sharing a tent with your pre-assigned room buddy unless prior arrangements have been made. We use high quality 3 man tents to be shared between 2 people to provide extra space for your comfort. In Ulaanbaatar we are in 3 star hotels with close proximity to the City Square.

In Uglui we are in the best option either a local hostel or Ger (Yurt) Camp.

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### **Will the camp be set up or will we be staying at fixed camps at set sites on the way?**

Our local camp crew will set up the tents for you each night. We send them ahead of the group to secure the best site and to get the site prepared before you arrive. Bear in mind that these guys are also porters and when our walking days are shorter we might get to camp before them. If this occurs then have a cup of tea in the dining tent and wait for your tents to be ready.

### **Will the toileting facilities will be "Au naturel", or pit latrines?**

We bring along our own toilet tents with a pit toilet dug in the tent. This allows us to maintain the best possible levels of hygiene without contributing to the toilet and subsequent health problems that can happen at some camps.

## Health and Safety

### **Am I likely to suffer from altitude sickness on this expedition?**

On this trek we do not think Altitude Sickness will be a problem. The general trekking days are around 2500m to 3500m. Our trekking peak is at 4051m, but we will be well acclimatised by the time we attempt the peak.

For your information.

There are different types of altitude sickness. Although our acclimatisation regime ensures that everybody enjoys the best possible chance of getting high on the mountain, altitude related problems can happen. The most common of these is acute mountain sickness (AMS).

Symptoms for this generally include:

- Headaches
- Nausea
- Vomiting

In all this sounds quite dramatic but generally this is just the process your body naturally goes through to adjust to the higher altitudes and the reduced partial pressure of the atmosphere. For some people the acclimatisation process is a little longer and harder than others.

For our leaders this is all part and parcel of ascending high into the mountains.



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### What should I do if I start suffering from AMS?

There are some basic measures you can take to help yourself should you start suffering from AMS. As headache is the most common symptom of AMS try taking a simple painkiller such as paracetamol or ibuprofen to relieve the headache. If the headache disappears all well and good.

Please remember to inform your 360 Leader of any altitude symptom you may have and any medication you have taken as a result so they can keep an eye on you and advise accordingly.

Should someone develop severe AMS then the only cure is descent and as safety is our priority you will be taken down appropriately.

### What can I do to help prevent AMS?

AMS might sound frightening but our leaders are fully trained (and experienced) in helping to relieve your personal symptoms and provide advice on how to best proceed. Reducing the chances of AMS can be helped by following some simple yet effective guidelines:

- Drink lots of water
- Walk slowly
- Stay warm
- Eat well

Please don't fear AMS, it is part and parcel of climbing mountains of this nature. Learn to respect it and to know how to deal with it but importantly tell your 360 Leader how you feel.

### What happens if there is a problem in the mountain?

All our guides are in communication with each other by Satellite phone. In the vast majority of cases of emergency rescue the problems can be attributed to altitude and if so the solution is immediate descent to lower altitudes. Our local trekking crew are all experienced in dealing with problems that could arise. Our guides are qualified with the highest standard of wilderness first aid qualifications and can handle an emergency to the highest level of competency, in the vast majority of cases without national park assistance.

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### **You advocate taking a small first aid kit, what should it contain?**

We advocate a little bit of self-help on the trek. If you have a blister developing for instance then please stop, take off your boot and treat it before it becomes a problem.

Your own first aid kit should contain: a basic blister kit, plasters, antiseptic, high factor sun-protection, your own personal medication (sometimes the mules might get to camp after you and if one is carrying your medication you may not be able to take it according to the regime you are used to), basic pain relief (aspirin and Ibuprofen), a personal course of antibiotics if prone to illness. Foot powder in your socks every morning is great for preventing blisters.

Generally the best approach to take when packing your first aid kit is to include such basic medications as if you would on a family or personal holiday.

Your 360 expedition leader carries a very comprehensive first aid kit which contains a wide range of supplies and medications. He is fully trained to use whatever is needed for any emergency that may arise. We advocate keeping this in mind when packing your own first aid supplies and keeping your own FA kit as compact and light as possible.

### **Do I need to take Malarial drugs?**

The Malaria protozoa generally does not survive over an altitude of 1,500m so Malaria should pose no threat. We recommend that you visit your doctor or travel clinic before departure to get the latest advice.

### **What vaccinations do I need?**

The following vaccinations are recommended:

- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid
- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Polio

This list is not absolute and it is important you should see your GP Surgery or travel clinic for latest recommendations and to ensure you are up to date on necessary vaccinations.

## Kit

### **Is it possible to rent equipment before I go?**

It is possible to rent kit in the UK. While we recommend the use of personal equipment whenever possible if you will be doing many more expeditions, the cost of equipping yourself can be a big deterrent and hiring (or borrowing) is a worthwhile economy. Should you wish to rent any equipment, please take a look at [www.outdoorhire.co.uk](http://www.outdoorhire.co.uk) and then the 360 kit lists



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## FAQ'S

### What clothing should I wear on this trek?

Think about the time of year, and how high you are going. While you may swelter at the bottom of the mountains, it can get surprisingly nippy at altitude.

Both long sleeve tops and trekking trousers are recommended rather than shorts. Long sleeves and trousers are recommended as a deterrent to insects, scratches from bushes and to act as sun protection. Equally, if you wish to bring short sleeve tops or shorts, that's fine, just be careful. Keep an eye on sunburn. The prevailing conditions of the day will dictate what you feel like wearing. And the layering system never fails. If you're cold, put a layer on, if you're hot, take one off.

### Are down jackets necessary?

They are highly recommended, our guides wear them every evening. A layer system comprising of several layer of base layers, fleeces, jumpers and a jacket will suffice on most nights but nothing beats the efficiency of a good down jacket (especially when topped with a water proof layer).

### Will I need to bring waterproofs?

As much as we'd like to guarantee eternal sunshine, we can't fix the weather for you. You should bring waterproofs and they should be accessible. It is quite possible to be caught out in an afternoon rainstorm low down on the mountain. Once you get wet and your core temperature drops slightly, it becomes very hard to warm up and dry out your clothing. Waterproofs should be breathable Goretex material or similar to save you drowning in your own sweat. Additionally they can be used as an invaluable wind shield to protect you against the effect of wind-chill when a strong wind blows.

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### What is the best type of footwear to use?

Because of the huge variety of terrain encountered when ascending these mountains it is very important to wear the right footwear. Boots should be sturdy, waterproof, insulated against cold temperatures and offer adequate ankle support.

In addition it is highly recommended that your boots are well worn in to prevent the formation of blisters. A wide range of suitable boots are on the market and further advice as to which brand names are available can be found online or at your local outdoor store. The leather / Goretex combinations are endless and each with their merits.

When in-store try lots of boots on, use the ramps in the shops to test their traction, make sure they are comfortable as you will be almost living in them for days on end and they are very important. Once you've found a pair you like, you think they're comfortable, and will be for several hours a day, buy them. It is not necessary to buy technical boots with crampon clips as crampons are not used for climbing this mountain. But you may enjoy wearing lighter trekking shoes on more gentle days.

Also for this trip bring sandals for river crossing. Teva, Keen, Crocs are good examples.

### What sort of bag should I have for this trip?

Duffel bags are ideal for this sort of trip. North Face are among the toughest, but Mountain Equipment make one similar that is often very good value in Cotswold Outdoor. Whatever bag you go for make sure they are robust and have a large capacity. As one goes higher in altitude it becomes harder to pack the bag and some people struggle closing their bags due to bulky sleeping bags and other pieces of kit. It will be far better having a large capacity bag with extra room (after all air doesn't weigh much) than having a bag too small and finding problems packing your kit. A 100 litre plus duffel bag is not too large.

Pack no more than you would want to carry yourself: 15kg is the limit for the trek and the muleteers (and mules) will not take kindly to heavy bags. Any extra weight such as spare clothes etc can be left at the hotel before you head for trek.

### What should I carry inside my daysack?

A daysack is worn at all times during the trek. The content of this is mandatory and should include: a fleece (if we take a break later in the day when it has cooled down or weather changes), lightweight waterproofs (primarily to act as wind protection), sufficient water for the day, snacks, camera equipment, personal medication and a head torch.



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### How much should my daysack weigh? What size does that equate to?

Your daysack should weigh no more than 3 – 4 kg and a pack of around 30L capacity will more than suffice. This rucksack can be filled to brim with extra stuff when you check in at the airport. It is important that this bag has an adjustable waist belt to transfer the weight of your daily load onto your hips and from here onto your legs so that your strongest muscles do most of the carrying. It's important to go as light as possible as weight makes a huge difference at altitude. You will be carrying your daysack so think twice before putting too many hipflasks in.

### How warm does my sleeping bag need to be?

It should be rated within the -10 C comfort zone. From the first camp upwards it is not unusual to experience frosty nights and a good night's sleep is important to giving you the best chance to complete this trek. Ensure you get a sleeping bag that has this temperature rating as its comfort zone, not extreme zone. Our guides take sleeping bags rated to well below -10C to ensure that they are warm at night. 3 season sleeping bags can be enhanced by using an inner silk sheet (or similar).

The idea is to be as comfortable and warm as possible for the night and henceforth to ensure plenty of sleep for the arduous days ahead. It is important to remember that down sleeping bags work by your own body heating the down that's inside the bag. Once you have warmed up the bag the down will retain the heat and ensure that you sleep at a temperature that's your own body temperature.

For best results it is best to wear as little as possible when inside your sleeping bag. Our guides will often only wear a set of thermals in their bag. It is important for the bag to trap the heat. By wearing multiple layers of clothing your clothing will trap this heat and your bag will not function properly.

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### **What clothing is suitable for when we come back from the trek?**

Shorts and T-shirts are fine to wear during the course of the day. Evening wear generally tends to be casual with long trousers and casual shirt being appropriate for all hotels and restaurants.

Mongolians are generally quite conservative in their dress code and are generally well dressed. Your town and party clothes can be left in a safe lock up at the hotel and will not have to be taken on the trek.

### **The Trek**

#### **How out of my comfort zone will I be?**

On a day to day level remember that you will be camping at altitude. You are likely to be cold, washing and toilet facilities will be limited, your appetite may be affected by the altitude and as you get higher on the trek you are likely to suffer shortness of breath and many people experience difficulty sleeping.

Remember that everyone on the trek is likely to be experiencing exactly the same symptoms: physical and mental.

### **The Weather**

#### **How hot or cold can it get?**

During the day temperatures can be warm and can even reach the mid 20C's. In the evening higher up, it could drop to below freezing and have a distinct chill in the air. As you will be trekking in a mountain environment, the weather can change rapidly for the worse so you need to be prepared for all conditions. Even in good weather it is not uncommon to have short heavy downpours.

### **Travel**

#### **What if I arrive early or depart late? Is there a single room option on this trip?**

If you would like to arrive early before the trek or stay out for a few days then let us know and we can make arrangements for you. There is a single room option when we are city-based, again, please contact the 360 office team for more details.

#### **What happens if I need to leave the expedition early?**

If a trekker needs to leave early arrangements can be made with the assistance of our 360 Guide. Additional Costs (transport, hotels flights etc.) will be incurred by you but our guides will be able to assist in every detail of your departure.



# Mongolia

Biking with Reindeers | Asia | 2,500m

## FAQ'S

### Insurance

#### Do I need special travel insurance for the trek?

Copy of own travel insurance details. And relevant contact numbers.

We have a partnership with [True Traveller](#) and would recommend that you contact them when looking for travel insurance for your trip with 360. However, it is vital that you ensure that the insurance cover they offer is suitable for you, taking your personal circumstances (items to be insured, cancellation cover, medical history) into account. Many other insurance providers are available and we do recommend that you shop around to get the best cover for you on the expedition you are undertaking.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

### Entry into Country

#### Do I need a visa to get into Mongolia?

The current cost of a visa for British Citizens is £40 and further information can be found at <http://www.embassyofmongolia.co.uk/>

American passport holders are offered 30-days visa-free entry to Mongolia on presentation of a valid passport at the time of entry.

Visa regulations can and do change without notice and if you are not a British passport holder please check the current regulations in good time to obtain a visa if one is required.

# Mongolia

Biking with Reindeers | Asia | 2,500m

## FAQ'S

### Training

#### How can I best train / prepare for this trek?

Obviously the best way to train for any expedition is to recreate the conditions of the climb as closely as possible. This is going to be difficult depending on where you are based geographically and we appreciate people have busy lives with work and family commitments.

Personal fitness is important for this trek, if you are struggling from day one then you will not enjoy the rest of the trip. Physical preparation does not have to be Herculean: concentrate on cardio-vascular exercise during the week by taking short runs when time allows and try to spend at least 2 weekends a month going on long walks (a decent six hours or 12 miles) carrying a rucksack of around 5kg in a reasonably hilly environment. Not sure what 5kg is? Put 5 one litre bottles of water into it.

This kind of regime will not only prepare your body for carrying minor loads but will harden your body against the big days on the trek itself. In addition it will help break in your boots and get you used to your equipment.

### Finance

#### When is the money due for this expedition?

Generally speaking deposits (which are non-refundable) are due upon booking, particularly if we are handling your flight bookings. The full amount should be paid 4 months prior to departure. However having said this our aim is to get you into the mountains and we understand that personal financial situations can vary. Please contact our friendly office crew to discuss a suitable payment plan. We have after all been in your shoes and go by the motto of where there's a will there's a way.

If you are doing this for charity, your chosen charity will have particular requirements that they will communicate with you.

#### What currency is used in Mongolia?

Mongolia uses the Mongolian Tughriks (MNT) (around 1.00 GBP = 3700 MNT and 1.00 USD = 2800 MNT). However, you should keep an eye on the changing exchange rates. ATM's are widespread in Ulaanbaatar but not in more urban areas.



# Mongolia

Biking with Reindeers | Asia | 2,500m

## FAQ'S

### What additional spending money will we need?

The amount of money you will need depends on how many presents you wish to buy or how much you wish to drink when you come off the hill. As a basic rule of thumb \$200 USD should be more than adequate for any post expedition spending.

Mongolia is a relatively cheap place and when indulging in the local custom of haggling then goods can be very good value for money. Your 360 leader will be happy to point out the relative bargains and the suitable prices plus where to get the best value for money.

### How much do we tip our local crew?

Our local crew work extremely hard to ensure that your expedition runs well. While tipping is not compulsory, it is very much ingrained in the Mongolian culture. Once someone sees the hard work the crew provides and realises the small amount of money they get paid relative to your own income, tipping will seem the least you can do to say thank you. As a guide we suggest around \$150-\$200 per trekker for the entire local crew to be shared amongst them.

Tipping the 360 Leader is entirely at your discretion, although it is their skill, effort and dedication that can make an expedition a success.

### What is your cancellation policy? What is your refund policy?

Please read our terms and conditions carefully before you depart for details on this. 360 Expeditions highly recommends trip cancellation insurance for all expeditions as we must adhere to a stringent cancellation policy.

## Electronics

### Do we need a travel adaptor for the plug sockets in the hotel or are they the same as UK?

Electricity in Mongolia is 220V, alternating at 60 Hertz which is similar to the UK. However, you will need either a flat blade or a two round pin plug adaptor or both as Mongolia generally accepts these two types of plug. You can buy these adaptors quite easily in the UK or at the airport.

### Is there mobile phone reception in the trek?

Mobiles will work sporadically.

### Will I be able to charge my phone or camera out in the trek?

Opportunities to charge your batteries may be limited. If you can get hold of a lightweight solar battery charger this is probably the best option – we recommend [PowerTraveller](#).

# Mongolia

Biking with Reindeers | Asia | 2,500m

## FAQ'S

### General

#### Will my valuables be safe?

While we will do everything we can to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions, the general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Your passport and money should be kept on you at all times. As with travel in any foreign country, you need to look after yourself and your possessions, and this is no different.

#### Who will I be talking to before departure?

We're all here to answer any questions you may have, but you will mostly likely be talking to Marni about the trek, and Helen about any flight, invoice or financial queries. If you do have any queries, whether it's about medical concerns, you're unsure about certain things on the kit list, or you want to add a few days onto the expedition at the end to relax a bit, we encourage you to get in touch with us and Marni really loves to talk! The better informed you are, the more likely you are to take on your expedition with confidence, and thus reach your objective.

### Bike Information

#### Can I bring my own Bike

Please contact the office to discuss this option.

#### What Specific Winter Bike clothing do I need

A comprehensive additional gear list will be provided at time of booking

#### Do I need to be a strong experienced cyclist

Some experience is required, but more importantly as sense of adventure.

# Mongolia

Biking with Reindeers | Asia | 2,500m





# Mongolia

Biking with Reindeers | Asia | 2,500m

## TRAINING PROGRAM

To begin 6 months prior to the expedition where possible.

1. CVS: Cardiovascular exercise which is low impact such as swimming, cycling, cross trainer, rowing.

2. Weekend walk should be done over undulating terrain. Only a light rucksack needs to be carried.

3. For specific exercises it is worth doing static squats and heel raises on a regular basis to improve leg muscles prior to the trip. Static squats are especially useful to help protect the knees. Please remember that it is still important to have a well balanced workout using a variety of muscle groups.

4. It is worth winding down and resting in the week leading up to the trip, doing several light walks to keep things going.

5. When walking going at a pace of a brisk walk with a light sweat and enough to feel breathless is recommended

6. During the program, rather than step up suddenly each month (example, going for 3 one hour walks each week during the weekdays in April to 3 one and half hour walks suddenly in May) it is better to build up gradually each week so there isn't a large transition (example, going for 3 one hour walks during week 1 in April, going for 3 one hour and ten minute walks during week 2 in April, going for 3 one hour and fifteen minute walks during week 3 in April, going for 3 one hour and twenty minute walks during week 4 in April)

6. It is important you seek medical advice prior to starting any training program, especially if you are not used to regular physical exertion

All the best with your training!

### MONTH 1

#### OPT 1

2 x 30 mins weekday walk  
1 x 1 hour weekend walk  
1 x 10 mins CVS

#### OPT 2

1 x 30 mins weekday walk  
2 x 1 hour weekend walk  
1 x 10 mins CVS

### MONTH 2

#### OPT 1

2 x 45 mins weekday walk  
1 x 2 hours weekend walk  
2 x 10 mins CVS

#### OPT 2

1 x 45 mins weekday walk  
2 x 2 hours weekend walk  
2 x 10 mins CVS

### MONTH 3

#### OPT 1

2 x 45 mins weekday walk  
1 x 2 hours weekend walk  
2 x 10 mins CVS

#### OPT 2

1 x 45 mins weekday walk  
2 x 2 hours weekend walk  
2 x 10 mins CVS

### MONTH 4

#### OPT 1

3 x 1 hour weekday walk  
1 x 4 hours weekend walk  
3 x 15 mins CVS

#### OPT 2

2 x 1 hour weekday walk  
2 x 4 hours weekend walk  
3 x 15 mins CVS

### MONTH 5

#### OPT 1

3 x 1.5 hours weekday walk  
1 x 5 hours weekend walk  
3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS

#### OPT 2

2 x 1.5 hours weekday walk  
2 x 5 hours weekend walk  
3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS

### MONTH 6

#### OPT 1

3 x 2 hours weekday walk  
1 x 6 hours weekend walk  
3 x 30 mins CVS

#### OPT 2

2 x 3 hours weekday walk  
2 x 6 hours weekend walk  
3 x 30 mins CVS

# 360<sup>°</sup>

EXPEDITIONS



*"Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty & well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out & loudly proclaiming 'Wow! What a Ride!' "*

**Dream it. Plan it. Live it.**