

## MONGOLIA



Capital:	Ulaanbaatar (928.500)
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Area	
Total:	1.565.000 sq. km
% water:	0,6 %
Population	
Total:	2.7 millions

Mongolia is located in East Central Asia and covers 1,564,100 sq km, between 87 47' and 119 57' of the east longitude and 41 35' and 52 06' of the north latitude. It shares a 3,485km-long border with Russia to the north and a 4,677km-long border with China to the south. From west to east, the country is stretched for 2,392km; from north to south it is 1,259km. The average altitude is 1,580 meters above sea level, and is one of 27 countries with no outlet to the sea. From among many countries, travellers have admired Mongolia for its clear sunny skies and contrasting natural features ranging from high mountains, valleys and wide open steppes to the Gobi desert

### TOURISM SECTOR PROFILE

The attractions and activities for tourists in Mongolia relate to the natural environment, historic features and cultural heritage. Mongolia has diverse and distinctive vegetation and fauna including some rare species such as the Argali Sheep, Przewalski Horse, Asiatic wild ass, wild Bactrian camels, snow leopard and ibex. The remains of dinosaurs have been found in the Gobi desert. The historic heritage of Mongolia is mainly related to Chinggis Khaan, the warrior-statesman, who in the 13th century, united the Mongolian people into a strong nation that controlled much of Asia. The traditional nomadic way of life, based on livestock raising and living in traditional gers, is of great interest to overseas visitors. The two major public holidays are Naadam, a traditional festival celebrated

each summer and displays three types of traditional games: horse racing, wrestling and archery, and the Tsagaan Sar, the Mongolian Lunar New Year, which marks the end of winter and the beginning of spring.

The Government of Mongolia has recognized tourism as a priority sector with a great potential to contribute to socio-economic development of the country. One of the such steps was the approval of the “Basic Guidelines for the Development of Tourism in Mongolia for the period of 1995-2005” and the “Implementation plan for Tourism,” both adopted by the Government Resolution No.167 with the aim of development of tourism sector based on state planning and regulation. The Government Action Plan for 2004-2008 and Basic Guidelines for Socio-economic Development have included a specific set of measures to promote tourism and to implement the Tourism Law. In the 2000-2005 period, foreign investment flows into the tourism sector increased to US \$ 5.6 million. Today, foreign investment in the tourism sector comprises around 1.1 percent of total foreign investment and 10 percent of the country’s GDP. Currently over 250 travel companies invested by 32 countries.



## MAIN DESTINATION IN MONGOLIA

- **Ulaanbaatar**



Ulaanbaatar, the capital city, is on the Tuul River, surrounded by majestic mountains. The combination of these pine-clad mountains, wide boulevards, vast public squares and many parks give the city a spacious feeling, while the ger districts and bustling marketplaces give it a rustic charm.

The traditional nomadic way of life, based on livestock, always seems to interest tourists. The most visited city sites are Sukhbaatar Square, Gandan monastery and the Zaisan Hill War Memorial. The main museums are of National History, Fine Arts, Chojin Lama temple, and the Palace of Bogd Khaan. Other cultural sites are the National Art Gallery, the Opera and Ballet and the Drama theaters, and cashmere factories.

- **Karakorum**



The site of Chinggis Khaan's fabled city, administrative center of an enormous empire, Karakorum was founded in 1220 in the Orkhon valley, at the crossroads of the Silk Road. It was the seat of power of the Mongol Empire until Khubilai Khaan transferred it to what has nowadays become Beijing. The city was destroyed and its materials used to build the monumental 400m walls and 108 stupas that surrounded Mongolia's first Buddhist monastery of Erdene Zuu, built in 1586. Inside the walls by 1792 there were 62 temples and 10,000 lamas, and

stone turtles marked the boundaries, two of which can still be found.

- **Gobi**



The Gobi desert, in the south, is a vast zone of desert and desert steppe covering almost 30 percent of the country. The area is often believed to be a lifeless desert, but is actually mostly steppe, inhabited by camel herders, rich in wildlife. Mongolians count 33 different sorts of gobi, and sandy desert makes up only three per cent. The temperature climbs to plus 40C in summer and as much below freezing in winters. It is home to the bactrian (two-humped) camel, and Gobi people hold a camel festival and camel polo every year.

- **Khuvsigul Lake**



Known as the Dark Blue Pearl Lake Khuvsigul is Mongolian deepest lake. In the northernmost aimag, its outlet is the largest tributary to Siberia's Lake Baikal. At 1,645m above sea level, it is frozen from January until April or May, after which a ferry runs between Khatgal and Khankh, the northern and southern towns within the boundaries of the National Park.