One of the most sparsely populated countries in the world, Mongolia still retains its natural beauty of diverse landscapes and habitats relatively intact along with its well-preserved unique nomadic culture. The open countryside of Mongolia is awe-inspiring, and all sense of urgency seems to dissipate into the famous Mongolian blue sky.

Featuring one of Mongolia's magnificent natural wonders, the Gobi Desert, and the historical highlight Kharakhorum, this trip offers a special opportunity to travel back in time to the untouched land of Genghis Khan and hospitable nomads. Discover the incredible scenery, diverse wildlife, ancient history, and traditional culture of Mongolia on this adventure-packed journey.

GROUP SIZE: Up to 15 guests

PRICING: $7,995 per person double occupancy / $9,550 single occupancy

STUDY LEADERS: Andrew Berry. Lecturer on Organismic and Evolutionary Biology. Born in London, Andrew Berry has a degree in zoology from Oxford University and a PhD in evolutionary genetics from Princeton University. Combining the techniques of field biology with those of molecular biology, Berry’s work has been a search for evidence at the DNA level of Darwinian natural selection.

He has published on topics as diverse as giant rats in New Guinea, mice on Atlantic islands, aphids from the Far East, and the humble fruit fly. At Harvard, he currently co-teaches courses on evolutionary biology, on the development of evolutionary thinking, and on the physical basis of biological systems.

& Naomi Pierce. Hessel Professor of Biology and Curator of Lepidoptera in the Museum of Comparative Zoology. Research in her laboratory focuses on the ecology and evolution of species interactions. This has ranged from field studies measuring the costs and benefits of symbioses between ants and other organisms, to genetic analyses of biochemical signaling pathways underlying interactions between plants, pathogens and insects.

Pierce came to Harvard in 1990 after appointments as a Research Lecturer in Christ Church and the Department of Zoology, Oxford University, and Assistant and Associate Professor, Princeton University. She has received prizes such as a Fulbright Fellowship and a MacArthur award, and is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a Senior Fellow of the Harvard Society of Fellows. The author of numerous scientific papers and an edited book, she lives in Cambridge with her husband and their two daughters.
SCHEDULE BY DAY

B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

MONDAY, JUNE 3
ARRIVE ULAANBAATAR
Arrive in Ulaanbaatar and transfer to your hotel.
Overnight: Shangri-La Hotel (meals aloft)

TUESDAY, JUNE 4
ULAANBAATAR
Begin the day with a visit to Gandan Monastery, the seat of Buddhism in Mongolia and home of the Arts School of the Mongolian Buddhist University.
Next, visit the National History Museum for an excellent overview of Mongolia’s history and culture, and peruse the Zanabazar Fine Arts Museum, named in honor of the Mongolian leader and artist from the 17th century.
After lunch, meet with a senior U.S Embassy official for a brief introduction to Mongolia’s current political affairs and the U.S-Mongolia relations.
Enjoy your welcome dinner at a fine local restaurant.
Overnight: Shangri-La Hotel (B, L, D)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5
HUSTAIN NURUU / KHARAKHORUM
This morning, drive to Hustain Nuruu National Park (2 hours), home to the last remaining species of wild horse, the takhi—commonly known as Przewalski’s horse. Twenty-five years after becoming extinct in the wild, the takhi was reintroduced to the Mongolian steppe in the 1990s.
Learn about current conservation efforts and the status of the herds found within the reserve at the visitor’s center, before trying to spot the horses in their natural habitat. You will have an opportunity to ride the horses if you desire.
Continue driving to Kharakhorum (4 hours), a site of the 13th-century capital of the Mongol Empire. Chinggis Khan’s son, Ogodei, created the city of Kharakhorum to serve as the empire’s capital, but abandoned it 40 years later and moved the capital to Khanbalik, in what is now Beijing.
Overnight: Munkhtenger Ger Camp (B, L, D)

THURSDAY, JUNE 6
KHARAKHORUM
Begin the morning with a visit to Kharakhorum museum. Founded to showcase the research findings from the ancient capital of Mongolia by the Mongolian and German joint archaeological expedition, the newly established museum offers insight into what was once the center of arts, politics, trades, and religions of the world.
Next, visit the Erdene Zuu Monastery. Kharakhorum was destroyed in 1388, but traces of this once-magnificent city still exist at Erdene Zuu, Mongolia’s largest monastery, which was reputedly built from its ruins in the 16th century. Surrounded by 108 stupas, Erdene Zuu has been a place of Buddhist activity for centuries. Explore the monastery grounds and observe the monks as they perform their daily prayers and rituals in temples decorated with spectacular Buddhist art.
In the late afternoon, there will an opportunity to hike or ride horses.
Overnight: Local Ger Camp (B, L, D)

FRIDAY, JUNE 7
SHANKH, KULTEGEN, KHAR BALGAS
Begin the day with a visit to Shankh Hiid, a monastery that was once frequented by Zanabazar, the influential Buddhist artist. After lunch, visit Khosshoo Tsaidam to see the
monuments of Turkik King Bilge and his brother General Kultegen (AD 685–731). Then drive across the Orkhon River towards the Khar Balgas ruins, a part of the Orkhon Valley Cultural Landscape UNESCO World Heritage site.

Overnight: Local Ger Camp (B, L, D)

SATURDAY, JUNE 8
ONGIIN MONASTERY

Drive to Ongiin Hiid and explore the ruins of this 17th-century temple. En route pay a visit to a local nomadic family and photograph their daily life including making of dairy products, daily chores of tending animals and work around the ger.

Continue your drive to Ongiin Hiid. Still known as the “Pearl of the Great Desert,” Ongiin Hiid was one of the largest monasteries in Mongolia until its destruction during the communist purges in 1939.

Overnight: Local Ger Camp (B, L, D)

SUNDAY, JUNE 9
HONGORYN ELS SAND DUNES

Today continue the drive to South Gobi (approximately 6 – 7 hours). For the next three days, explore the stunning landscape of the Gobi, habitat for Bactrian camels, Argali mountain sheep, goitered gazelle, golden eagles, saker falcons, jerboas—similar to kangaroo rats—and many endemic reptiles. Continue to the towering dunes of Hongoryn Els, which run 60 miles alongside the Gobi Altai Mountain range. Reaching upwards of 600 feet, these are the most magnificent sand dunes in the Gobi.

Overnight: Ger Camp (B, L, D)

MONDAY, JUNE 10
HONGORYN ELS / THREE CAMEL LODGE

In the morning explore the dunes known as the “Singing Sands” for the remarkable low-pitched groan that is emitted when the surface is disturbed by wind. Those who are interested will have the opportunity to visit a camel-herding family and explore the area on the back of a Bactrian camel. On the way to the Three Camel Lodge, stop at the local Bulgan temple.

Overnight: Three Camel Lodge (B, L, D)

TUESDAY, JUNE 11
YOL VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

Explore Yol Valley National Park. A hike through the valley allows you to discover the habitat of indigenous vulture-like lammergeiers, Altai snowcocks, ibex, yaks, and Argali mountain sheep.

Overnight: Three Camel Lodge (B, L, D)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12
HAVTSGAIT VALLEY / FLAMING CLIFFS

In the morning drive to the Havtsgait Valley, site of ancient rock drawings left by early Gobi settlers. Visit the legendary Flaming Cliffs where in 1922, Roy Chapman Andrews found the first nest of dinosaur eggs the world had ever seen.

Overnight: Maribela Hotel (B, L, D)

THURSDAY, JUNE 13
ULAANBAATAR

Fly to Ulaanbaatar this morning. Upon arrival, meet with a well-known Mongolian politician for an insight into Mongolia’s current economic situation.

In the afternoon meet with a representative of the Oyu Tolgoi mining project. The project manages the world’s largest untapped reserves of gold and copper and is expected to help make Mongolia one of the fastest-growing nations in the world.
In the evening enjoy a performance featuring traditional Mongolian dancers and khoomi throat singers.

Overnight: *Shangri-La Hotel* (B, L, D)

**FRIDAY, JUNE 14**
**DEPARTURE**

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for return flights (B).