

DARHAD NOMAD TRAIL



“This route is designed to give an experience of both nomadic life and mountain wilderness while traveling through some of the most impressive landscapes in Mongolia. Traveling on horseback in Mongolia feels like the way it's supposed to be experienced, and I know our wranglers enjoy being out on the trail as much as I do” – Andy Parkinson

Trip Cost: \$3750 per person*

Ride duration: 10 days riding

Total itinerary: 15 days in Mongolia

Next join-in ride: 17th August to 31st August, 2020

Ride starts/ends: Hatgal, Lake Hovsgol

Mongolian Trails

Trailsmith LLC

Trailsmith LLC | Registered Office: 8 The Green, Suite A, Dover, Delaware 19901 | US Mailing Address: c/o
7722 14th Ave NW, Seattle, WA 98117 | Phone/Whatsapp +84707301563 | MongolianTrails.com

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Mongolia's northernmost region, Hovsgol Aimag, is where the rolling steppes give way to Siberian taiga. The region is renowned for the 100 mile long Lake Hovsgol, the cherished Blue Pearl of Mongolia. The lake is overlooked by the Horidal Saridag Mountains, a designated protected area that is habitat to Argali sheep and Ibex, and some of the most impressive alpine scenery in the country. Beyond the Horidal Mountains lies the Darhad Valley, a broad span of grassland, marshes and rivers ringed by mountain wilderness.

Lake Hovsgol, and in particular the village of Hatgal at its southern end, is where I began my Mongolia adventures in 2000. One of the reasons I became so attached to this region is the huge sense of adventure. There's the opportunity just to ride off into the wilderness to explore, but also it's a wilderness with people, the nomads who live here. The trails we ride are used by local herders to migrate between seasonal pastures and in fact many are very ancient routes perhaps even ridden by Chinggis Khan himself.

This route takes us through the best of the region's landscapes, including Lake Hovsgol, the Horidal Mountains and the Darhad Valley. Its a loop ride of some 200km that circumnavigates a large portion of the Horidal protected area through mostly excellent riding country with only a few more rugged sections of trail. The

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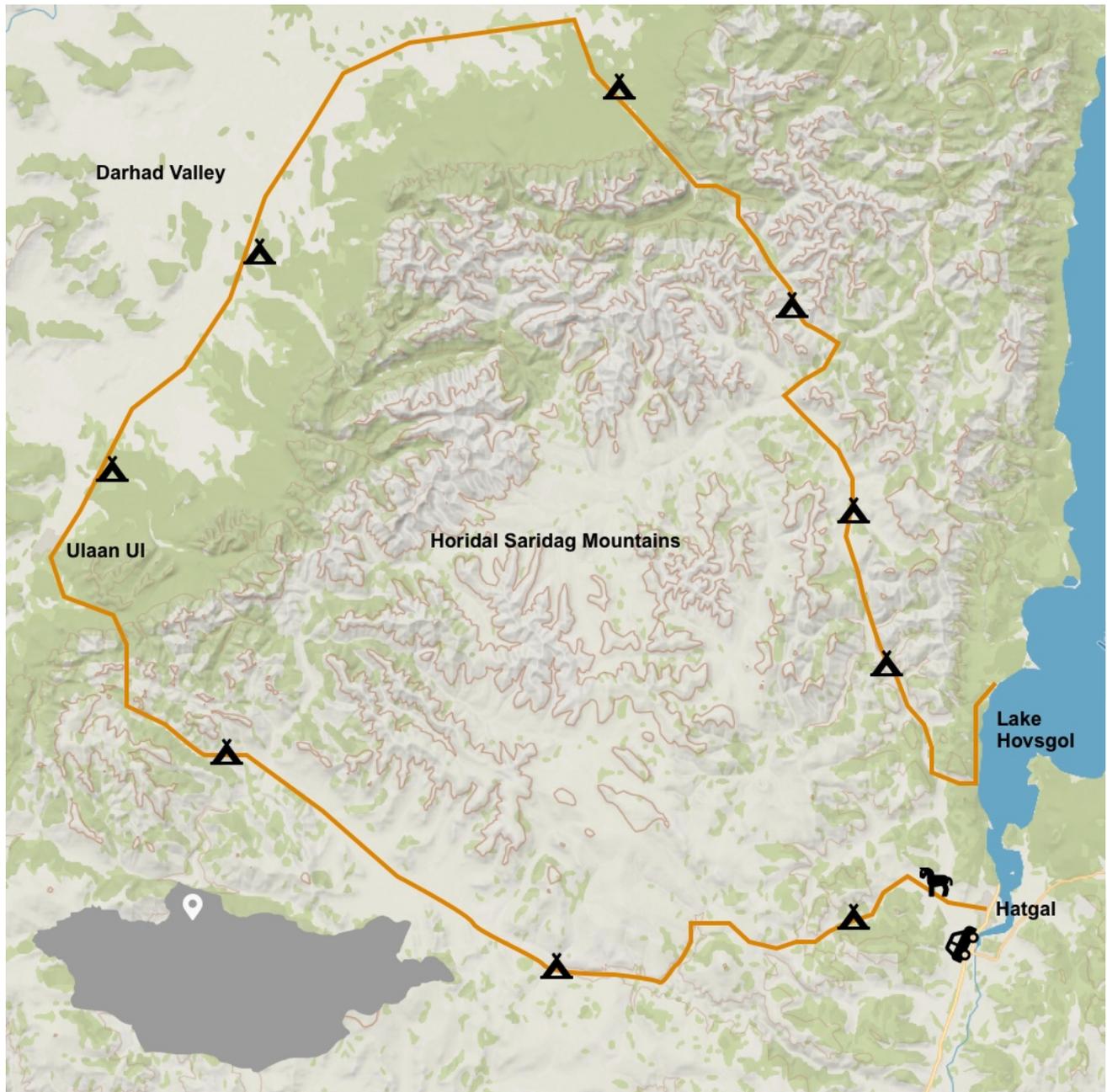
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idea is to get out on horseback, camp in the wild, visit Darhad herders, enjoy the company of our local wranglers, and get a sense of this fascinating region.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel through some of the best scenery of northern Mongolia
- Ride hardy Mongolian horses in the company of local horsemen
- Visit nomadic herders at their gers to experience the Darhad way of life
- Enjoy wild camping with camp fire evenings and starry nights



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OUTLINE ITINERARY

Day 1.

Arrive Ulaanbaatar. Overnight at Hotel (meals: none included).

Day 2.

Fly on a domestic flight to Muron Airport, and then drive to Hatgal at the southern end of Lake Hovsgol (2 hrs drive). Overnight in a tourist ger camp close by the lake. (Meals: B, L, D).

Day 3.

Saddle up and commence the ride, heading west through nomad's summer pastures to the southern boundary of the Horidal Saridag protected area. Camping in tents (Meals: B, L,D).

Day 4 – 11

Riding up to 20-30km per day (generally 5 or 6 hours in the saddle). First crossing to the Darhad Valley on a seldom used trail, then skirting the impressive 'front range' of the Horidal mountains, before heading into the mountains to cross the dramatic Horidal Pass. Camping in tents (Meals: B, L,D).

Day 12.

Ride back to the shores of Lake Hovsgol, overnight at a ger camp by the lake. (Meals: B,L,D)

Day 13.

Drive to Muron. Return flight to Ulaanbaatar from Muron (Meals: B L)

Day 14.

Spare day in Ulaanbaatar for sightseeing (buffer day in case of flight delays or schedule changes). Hotel (Meals: B).

Day 15.

Onward travel. (Meals: B).

B – Breakfast L – Lunch D – Dinner

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DETAILS

This trip is solidly focussed on the riding. We've chosen a route that offers good riding country on trails used by local nomadic herders. Mostly these trails rarely see a non-local, only the route back through the Horidal range is a well established tourist riding trail, and the scenery is simply too good to miss.

Trip Style: We'll need to travel relatively fast and light, but take what camp comforts we can. The wranglers will have a string of packhorses to carry all the gear. We'll sleep in mountain tents, couples can share and individuals will get their own tent. There will be a large tipi tent as a group shelter, this is heated with a stove for fall trips when the nights start getting cold. Food will be a combination of hearty western meals, like dutch oven cooked shepherd's pie, and local dishes such as steamed dumplings.

The Saddles: Saddles we use on these rides are locally made Russian-style saddles, a design originally based on the a Russian cavalry saddle. The saddle tree comprises two wooden boards connected with iron bars at cantle and pommel. This is then strung with raw hide over which is placed a leather cushion stuffed with wool. Over our years of riding in Mongolia we've found our own made-to-order Russian saddles to be comfortable for both rider and horse, and suitable for the riding and terrain we cover.

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PRICE

2020 rates:

15 day itinerary: USD **\$3750 per person***

- based on join-in departure with group size 4-8 participants, please enquire for private trip pricing.

plus Ulaanbaatar Hotels (Hotel 9) from **\$95 per room per night**

- generally one night before and two nights after the ride required as per the itinerary.

Notes :

We'll add the hotel nights that you need to your invoice on a single or shared room basis as required. You are welcome to arrive earlier or depart later than the start/end dates in the itinerary, or change/upgrade Ulaanbaatar hotels.

Includes:

- All in-country ground transportation,
- Domestic flight from Ulaanbaatar to Muron rtn
- Accommodation and meals as per itinerary,

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- Special protected area permits,
- All camping equipment and trip support ,
- All meals indicated as B, L or D;

Excludes:

- International airfare;
- Personal laundry;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Travel insurance; medical evacuation costs;
- Excess baggage charges;
- Visa fees;
- Gratuities;
- Photography and video fees (e.g. at museums);
- Any other item not mentioned as included.



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WHAT IS IN THE PRICE?

- ❖ The price *includes* the domestic flight (or when necessary overland travel) between Ulaanbaatar and Muron (this is a \$225-250 return ticket).
- ❖ The price *excludes* your hotel nights in Ulaanbaatar. We'll book the hotel nights you need (whether sharing or single) and add to your final invoice, this way we don't need to charge single supplements, and its easy to arrive a day early or stay later. Typically room cost for standard tourist hotels is \$95 per night.
- ❖ All trips are accompanied by an experienced English-speaking Mongolian guide. Your guide will be in Ulaanbaatar to meet you the day before departure to the countryside and will accompany you on the domestic flight.
- ❖ Price includes being met at the airport or train station on arrival in Ulaanbaatar, and all airport transfers including final departure.
- ❖ For trips of 4 or more riders we send an additional local horseman to accompany and supervise the riding group. This is in addition to the wranglers required to manage the packhorse team.
- ❖ We use Toyota land cruisers (or equivalent) as the standard vehicle for overland transport, with only 3 passengers per jeep. These jeeps are more comfortable and reliable than the Russian vans (aka forgun or buhanka 'bread loaf') and cover the distances faster.
- ❖ These are horse-packing trips accompanied by a team of local wranglers leading their packhorses. This means more crew and more horses (and more costs) than a vehicle supported trip, but of course allows us to get deep into the wilds.
- ❖ Fully catered trips include a cook and all meals outside of Ulaanbaatar. Hopefully you'll be pleasantly surprised by the standard of meals that we provide in the wilds.
- ❖ Filtered water is provided on the ride, and bottled or filtered water is provided during overland travel. Alcohol is not included (although we might be able to fine some space in the panniers for you to take a few beers or a couple bottles of wine, which we can buy in Muron).
- ❖ It is also worth pointing out that our local partner operating these trips actually pay their taxes in Mongolia diligently, including social security and income tax contributions for all the staff including local herders who work as wranglers.

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BOOKING DETAILS

How to book this trip

Bookings are through Trailsmith LLC, a Delaware US registered company (Registered Office: 8 The Green, Suite A, Dover, Delaware 19901, USA.). Trailsmith LLC is agent for a select group of local tour operators in Mongolia.

Once you are ready to book we will send you the trip application form and invoice you for the deposit. Payments will be by bank wire transfer to our US account.

All reservations are subject to 25% deposit (subject to minimum \$500 per person). Deposits are refundable until 60 days prior to start of the program less a \$250 administrative fee.

Once we receive your trip application form, we will send you a confirmation letter along with information related with visa and international airfare reservations. You will also receive a pre-departure Travel Guide, which will include information on weather, suggested reading list, items to pack, etc.

Payment and Cancellation Policy A deposit is required at the signing-up of the departure. Full payment is due 60 days prior to the start of the trip.

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In case of cancellation the following charges apply:

- Up to 60 days prior to departure, \$250 per person admin fee;
- 60-30 days prior to departure, 50% of the trip cost per person;
- 29 days before the trip starts, no-refund.

Some airfare costs may be nonrefundable. Once an expedition has departed, there will be no refunds for any unused portions of the trip. The above policy also applies to all extensions and independent travel arrangements made in conjunction with this program.



Hello, I'm Andy Parkinson.

I've been guiding and organizing trip in Mongolia since 2000. I'll work with you to recommend or design your ideal trip. When you have decided on a option booking is with my US company, Trailsmith LLC. I work with a select few local tour operators that I've known and worked with almost 20 years. Booking through me doesn't cost more than booking direct.

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