

The 5 Stan-s - Follow in the footsteps of Genghis Khan

Practical information

Who is this tour suitable for: This tour combines cultural sightseeing and soft adventure. It includes some light hikes (max 2-3 hour walks) and optional horse riding. While experience in trekking or horse riding is not necessary, some parts of this tour are best enjoyed by relatively active people in good physical condition.

Accommodation:

Hotels: The accommodation for the most of this tour is in standard mid-range hotels. We do our best to book hotels with central locations and enough restaurants nearby. However, due to the budget to mid-range category of this trip, it is not always possible and some of the hotels might not be in the center of the city. In such cases, you can count on your tour leader to help with taxi arrangements and recommendations. Most hotels (especially in the big cities) offer laundry services. If you decide to use that, please make sure you do it in a place where you have at least two overnight. Some of the hotels might not have elevators.

Yurt camps (Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan): Single/double/twin room accommodation is possible only in the hotels. During this tour you will stay in yurt camps, where you will share a yurt with up to 4 people. Keep in mind that the bathroom facilities are basic in some of the camps and you need to bring your own towel and toiletries. Some of the yurt camps are located high in the mountains or in some of the most remote parts of the country. That means that they might be lacking some conveniences, like internet connection and/or full time electricity. Be prepared that in the yurts, the electricity might be regulated by your host. Keep in mind that the weather might be much colder in the mountains and might change quickly, so make sure you bring enough warm clothes. Despite some of the minor inconveniences, staying in a yurt camp allows you to experience the unique culture and lifestyle of the locals firsthand, in the most authentic way possible.

Home-stay: There is one overnight in a home-stay in a remote village in the picturesque ChonKemin valley. In the home-stay, you will share a room with up to 6 people. Staying in a local home-stay allows you to immerse yourself in the local culture and get to know more about life in the village.

*Single room supplement is applicable only for the hotel accommodation.

Currency: Bring enough cash in USD for the whole duration of the trip. The USD is the easiest currency to exchange. It is recommended that you have a small amount of both Kazakhstani Tenge and Tajikistani Somoni, and Turkmenistan Manat as it might be difficult to find exchange places soon enough after border crossing. A lot of places in the bigger cities accept payments by card, but that is not always the case in smaller towns. Mastercard is not as widely accepted as Visa and you might have some issues with making payments or withdrawing cash if you use Mastercard (especially in Tajikistan).

Budget: A single meal in a mid-range restaurant in the region may vary between 5-15 USD depending on the country and type of restaurant. Please keep in mind that for most of the

days, you will have only breakfast included when calculating your daily budget. You should allow 120-150 USD for entry fees for the whole duration of the tour. Your tour leader will give you final entry fee costs on the spot. Tips for guides and drivers are not included in the package. You should allow about 5 USD per day for tips for the guide and about 3 USD per day for tips for the driver. You should allow about 30-50 USD for SIM cards if you want to get one in each country.

Food: You can find both international and local restaurants in the bigger cities, however food choices might be limited in the countryside. Breakfast is included in all of the accommodations, but it may vary in options and style in the different places (continental style breakfast is not available in all of them). It is not recommended to drink tap water.

Language: All of the countries on this itinerary are Russian-speaking. English is also widely spoken in the big cities.

What to pack: This itinerary covers a huge territory, varying in climate and elevation. Be prepared for colder weather in the mountains, as well as high temperatures in some places. It's recommended to bring enough warm clothes for 2-3 days as temperatures in the mountain might reach around 0°C. Bring a headscarf to cover your hair and shoulders for the days that include mosque visits. Men need to wear long trousers and T-shirts covering the shoulders on such days. Bring enough sunscreen and umbrella and be prepared for higher temperatures in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, where they might reach up to 35°C. Bring your own towel and toiletries for the yurt camp stays. Please pack luggage that you can carry yourself.

Visa requirements: It is your responsibility to make sure you have all necessary visas for the countries visited. Please check with your local authorities if a visa is necessary and make sure you have your visa well in advance before the start of the trip. Penguin Travel can provide you with information for accommodation, local contacts or letter of invitation if they are required for your visa. Please keep in mind that Penguin Travel has no responsibility for your visa applications being accepted on time or rejected.

Roaming and local SIM cards: Local SIM cards are available in all of the countries with accessibility varying in the different countries. The prices are 5-10 USD. Keep in mind that the process of getting and activating a local SIM card might take up to 20 mins per person. You are advised to arrange it in your free time in the big cities and not during the city tours.

Border crossings: On this tour you visit 5 countries, most of the borders crossing are by land. Please keep in mind that some of the border crossings might take longer than usual, which might affect the duration of the daily travel. You will change buses between most of the countries and you might need to carry your luggage yourself between the border checks.

*Penguin Travel reserves the right to make changes to the itinerary due to bad weather conditions or any other unforeseen circumstances.

We wish you an unforgettable trip,
Penguin Travel Team

