

## A Facts for the Visitor by www.mobiltom.de

Additions to Lonely Planet Guide Mongolia 2001

!! a new lonely Planet Guide Mongolia is planned for release in Summer 2005 !!

### Facts for the Visitor

American Express Traveler Cheques are accepted at the Trade & Development Bank and at the Golomt Bank (at 24 hours!) – either USD or Euro. Both of them employ a lot of security people.

Current exchange rates you can find at [www.americanexpress.de](http://www.americanexpress.de) Travelers Cheques > Welt > Asien > Mongolei. In July 2004 1• = 1440 Tögrög / 1 \$ = 1174 Tögrög.

Import/Export of money is no longer limited or to be declared. We only saw a few ATM. Most foreigners did not succeed in withdrawal of money from their cards at the ATM.

If you pay souvenirs or ger camps or whatever in US Dollar or Tögrög made no difference. Even the exchange rate was fair. Euro cash will not be useful outside Ulaan Bataars Banks.

The publisher Reise Know-How released a paperback "Kauderwelsch Band 68 Mongolisch Wort für Wort". This little book makes absolutely no sense on a trip through Mongolia. The words are not written in Cyrillic, phrases are not really helpful for a trekking tour. Instead this book is useful to learn the language at home and to understand the Mongolian grammar (sic!).

Outside of Ulaan Bataar the most common vehicles are a Russian jeep and a Russian minivan. They are still produced. Details can be found at the manufacturers website: [www.uaz.ru](http://www.uaz.ru). These cars set the standards for the (gravel) roads as

well. If there is a road, these cars can drive on it (most other cars will fail).

#### Petrol supply:

In late summer 2004 at every gas station 76'er gasoline was sold. Only a few stations mainly at the aimag capitals had Diesel or gasoline with higher octane (80, 92) values.

#### Home entertainment:

Video: In the recent years more and more Mongolians bought VideoCD (VCD) or SuperVideoCD (SVCD) players, which are the far more common alternative to DVD-Players in Asia.

#### Getting there:

Visa is required. If you stay less than 4 weeks no further information/Einladung ... is required. Visas are issued quite fast by the embassies of Mongolia. Tickets for MIAT and Aeroflot can be bought through Wildberry Tours in Germany ([www.wildberrytours.com](http://www.wildberrytours.com), +49 228 2421710). They often have cheaper prices through group arrangements.

#### Maps:

Maps of Mongolia are sold at (UK) and (Germany) for instance. You can buy more recent issues in Ulaan Bataar. The MapShop is not easily to find. It is right behind the "Genex" Store. Another Source is the Department Store (6<sup>th</sup> floor Nomin Shop and the Bookshops in the lower floor).

#### GPS navigation:

GPS navigation is recommended as even most drivers and locals don't know the roads for sure. But: The Garmin Woldmap is extremely outdated. We even found some errors, where wrong city names were given. Take care!

#### Power supply:

Most russian cars lacking Zigarettenanzünder. You will need an adapter to connect directly to the cars 12V battery. Solarpowered gers also have 12V batteries for their TV and light. A solarcharger might be a good idea and a superb gift to locals when leaving. Don't rely on batteries sold in Mongolia. They are crap whatever label you choose.

My digicam refused even to start with such batter-

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ies. The GPS unit worked only for a few minutes with fresh batteries. Bring in your own accus with charger! Do not forget!

#### Stove:

When preparing our tour we weren't sure which stove to use. The main concern was the leaded fuel with only 76 octane. But it turned out that our MSR XKG (multifuel) worked perfectly without much cleaning effort. Indeed all mongolians were very much surprised by the unit and everybody asked about the price for this stove.

#### Food:

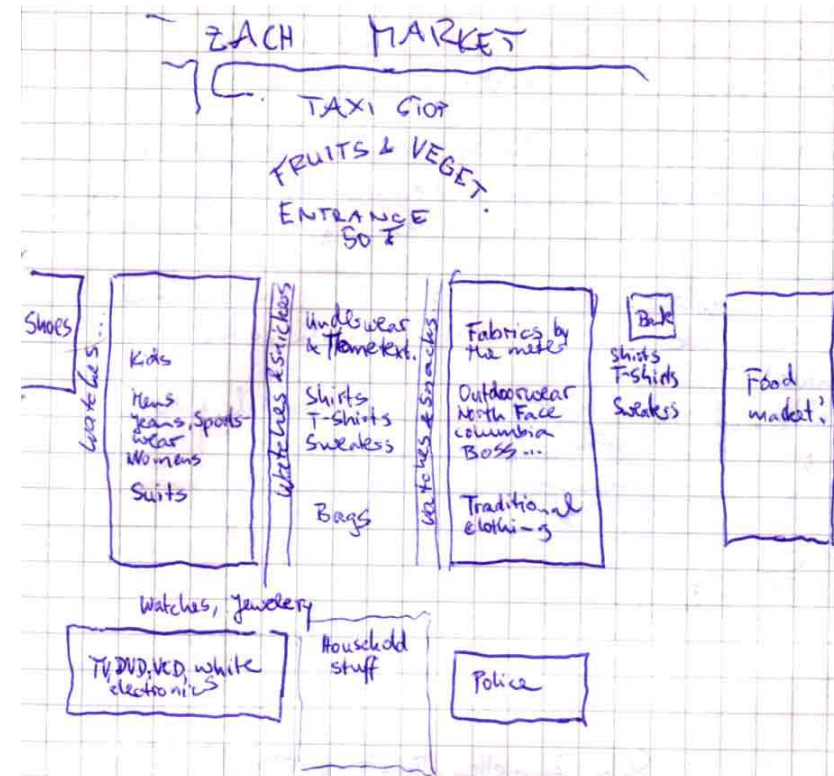
Almost in every shop you can buy bottled mineral water, cola, beer, vodka. As well as russian cookies, mars, snickers, nougat creme, chocolate,

noodles, canned meat, canned tomatoes, sometimes bread or similar things. Even gherkins are quite common in Mongolia. Water is clean in most camps and the wells that still work. 10 liters reserve + some mineral water per person was enough on our tour.

Useful to bring in: multivitamin pills, resealable bags, dust proof sacks, antibacterial soap, wet wipes, multifuel stove plus, herbs, tabasco. Everything else is sold at the supermarket in the department store in UB for instance (even coffee and milk pulver).

#### Presents:

Perfect present seemd to be: soap, cigarettes, lighters, sweets, mongolian-english dictionaries, batteries, fruits and vegetables



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### Ulaan Bataar

#### Shopping

Trekking Equipment/outdoor gear:  
Ayachin Outfitters has moved. Its shop is now located at Seoul street 21, Sukhbarat district, Ulaan Bataar, E-mail: [ayanchin@magicnet.mn](mailto:ayanchin@magicnet.mn); [www.ayanchin.com](http://www.ayanchin.com)

The Department Store has some backpacks, fleece clothes and tents at western prices. Near the train station a small shop offers Chinese tents and trekking equipment. Poor quality meets low prices. Not really worth a visit.

They Sky Shopping Center has a big Supermarket and a well stuffed bakery.

Music-HiFi-World Records offers a great collection of current rock/pop/r&b/hiphop ... CDs (4500 Tögrög) and current DVDs (6000 ... 10000 Tögrög).

The Black Market simply is the most common and in some cases the only place to buy everything special. Replica watches and brand

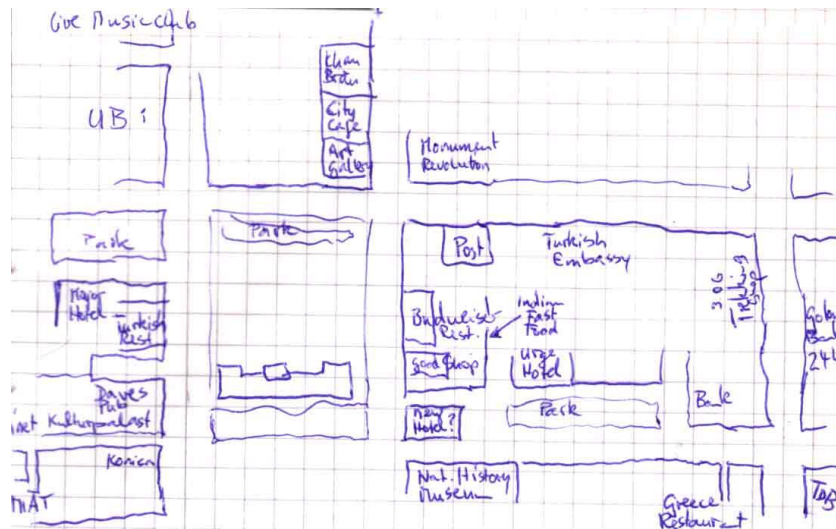
clothes, fleece jackets, jeans, household equipment, suits are sold mainly here. See our plan and mind the strange opening times.

Hand crafted paintings will be offered around the Sukhbarat Square. A great collection at moderate prices can be found at the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Department Store.

There is still the Airport tax of Currently 12500 Tögrög. The Exchange office is only 5 meters to the left of the Tax office.

#### Our tips – Places to Eat/Drink:

Chez Bernard (cookies are a bit dry, meals are okay); Café Sanchez; Mr. Burger (McDonalds style, very clean, very friendly, not so crowded); Meeting Burger (tiny restaurant that serves burgers); Dave's Place (English beer, English food, right at the Sukhbarat Square, [www.davesplace.mn](http://www.davesplace.mn)); Budweiser (Czech & Mongolian Cuisine; quite smoky); Heraklion (upper class stylish greek restaurant with reasonable prices); Live Music Club (a bit smoky, club atmosphere, live music later in the evening); Indian Fast Food/Lounge 5 (clean, near sukhbarat square)



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#### Digital photo:

There are dozens of Digital Photo Services in Ulaan Bataar. You might want to use their terminals to browse through your photos taken. Most of the offer cheap print outs (so you can send photos locally back to families in Mongolia). We were particularly pleased by the helpful hands in the small office below Chez Bernard Café (printouts, Backup to CD-ROM ...). Memory cards are more expensive in Mongolia than in Europe.

#### Travel Agencies:

Happy Camel Tours offers great Tours for different aspects and different Dauer. They will organize individual tours as well and arrange Translators as well as Jeeps w/ driver at reasonable rates. Most likely you meet someone of Happy Camel at Chez Bernard. Or simply see their website [www.happycamel.com](http://www.happycamel.com).

If you plan to start a business in Mongolia. Please offer one of these services:

- Cheap flight school
- Café that opens in the morning
- Italian food
- cooler Pub (Moe's, maybe you even brew Duff beer)
- WLAN access in Ulaan Bataar
- German Restaurant/Club
- Proper laundromat
- Poster Shop

#### Tsetserleg

The correct name of the english Café is "Fairfield Café". It now opens from 9 am to 6 pm but stays closed on Sundays. Meals are delicious. Prices are 1900-2500 Tögrög.

Only a few meters right from the Café is Mongolia's newest and finest Hotel "Naran" with some rooms ranging from 4\$ to 8\$ per person. Some rooms have shower. On the first floor you find a clean Supermarket.

At the post office an Internet Café has opened. The rate is about 600 Tögrög/hour. Equipment is perfect.

#### Uyanga

In Uyanga two old Stehlen are reported. Maybe we found one of them in the local Khid. Close to the market square a clean Guanz surprised us with delicious meals. You cant miss the mint green building.

The road from 8Lakes to the Orchon valley is impassable even to Jeeps.

#### Dalanzagad

Forget about the Devshil Hotel. It is horrible. But there is a 1room 3bed guesthouse in a corner of the Hotel. The room is a mixture of a dormitory and a bar. In fact it is booth but there is hot water in the bathroom. 10000 Tögrög per night ...

We didn't find a club/restaurant appropriate for tourists. Maybe you better check the theater for evening entertainment.

North of Dalanzagad a large military areal is fading away. Some parts are still in use by a small group of Mongolian army but most of it is a ghost town by now.

#### Yolyn Am

This spot is really difficult to find as there are no roadmarks at all up in the hills. Entrance fee is 3000 Tögrög per car and day. We didn't saw any icy lake but thousands of marmots. Even at this location not more than 15 tourists ...

#### Bayanzag

Only a few kilometers before Bayanzag (coming from Yolyn Am) we found a very new camp with excellent facilities including shop, showers and english speaking personnel.

You should really ask for the direction to the oasis (near moltsog els) where another small ger camp will be set up and you can watch all that beautiful green, buy vegetables and fruits ...

#### Jarjuult

It is now bad times for Jarjuult and its hot springs. Only a run-down sanatorium and lots of fairly discontinued business. We found a small but clean room close to the "welcome"-sign attached to a guanz. Seemed that this (and 2 other rooms)

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could be heated by the hot springs. BTW don't drink the water of the river in Jarjuult. It is radioactive.

### Karakorim

Only 1 room is left at Hotel Mongon Mod. This one is expensive, smoky and it seemed to us they don't want people to stay there. The Guesthouse right on the left was full but seemed okay. Bayan Burd Hotel is occupied by german Archeologists during summer period. But you can stay in their ger camp and use the hot shower (by a strict timetable) maybe even the sauna. The hotel has a stylish bar and might provide schmackhafte meals on request.

Not far from the center you can see a large monument for Mongolian history. This one is quite impressive and provides great sight to the nearby valley.

On the road close to the river some bars might provide some evening entertainment.

Near the stone turtle behind the Monastery you can visit the Archeologist work to uncover the ruins of the former city center (and buy some cheap Andenken).

### Tsagan Nuur

There is a quite large camp close to the water-side (the one with the round restaurant) - here we found the most perfect guest care all over Mongolia. Camp staff provided us with firewood, extra warm covers before a cold night ...

We had to pay 5000Tögrög per night and person. If the restaurant is open it is worth a visit. It offers impressive atmosphere and great views over the lake. We were among the only 5 guests. Showers were closed. Maybe this camp has a waterproblem. But there are excellent facilities in the brother camp (the one with the large yurt restaurant).

Down at the lakeside the small houses are shops. The environment is great for trekking as well.

There are a lot of caves around the hill behind the restaurant. Watch out for ovoos or simply take a horse with a guide.

### Terelj:

Gorkhi camp offers poor service. The kids camps seemed to be working until end of August. There is a more luxurious hotel left to the Gorkhi camp. Dozens of dogs will make noise at night. You should better take the Melkhii Khad camp. It is situated more separated. Next best alternative is the Melkhi Khad camp (mind the difference!).

More to follow.

please visit [www.mobiltom.de/mongolia](http://www.mobiltom.de/mongolia)

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