



Olympia-Reisen-Sibir tour operator

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Working hrs Mon-Fri: 12:00 - 21:00 (Tokyo time) / 03:00 - 13:00 (London time)

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THE BEST OF SIBERIA: BAIKAL & ALTAI

15 days/14 nights (May-September 2016)



During this extraordinary journey, you will get to know the picturesque Lake Baikal and the mysterious Altai Mountains, historical Irkutsk city and modern Novosibirsk. You will ride by the famous Transsiberian train, you will see Siberian countryside and you will definitely enjoy the hospitality of Siberian people!

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| Day 1 | <p>Irkutsk Arrival in Irkutsk and meet with your guide. Transfer to the hotel Angara***. Tour through Irkutsk to the center with it's wooden houses, churches, the Znamenskij Monastery, the great main street of Irkutsk and other historic sights, as well as famous Decembrists' House. Dinner and overnight.</p> |
| Day 2 | <p>Irkutsk – Ust-Orda (Buryatian village) After breakfast travel to the Buryatian village Ust-Orda (ca. 70 km), visit of the local regional museum, meet with local Buryat people. Lunch (Buryatian cuisine). In the late afternoon return to Irkutsk (ca. 1,5 hours). Dinner and overnight.</p> |
| Day 3 | <p>Lake Baikal – Circum Baikal Scenic Railway Ride After breakfast transfer to the Irkutsk train station and start of an exceptional and fascinating railways trip through the Baikal country (journey in the first class compartment). During the train ride there will be several stops, to explore the countryside and to walk along the banks of Lake Baikal. Lunch will be served in the train. The train will drive along Lake Baikal and you will have the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the Siberian countryside. In the evening, you will arrive at the small village Baikal, also named Port Baikal. Afterwards you will go by ferry to the village Listvjanka (10 minutes). Dinner and overnight stay at hotel Baikalskie Terema***.</p> |
| Day 4 | <p>Lake Baikal Today we explore the surroundings of Baikal near Listvyanka villate: Taltsy Open-Air Museum of Siberian Wooden Architecture, Baikal Museum flora and fauna of Lake Baikal), fish and souvenir market. Lunch in a local restaura on the banks of Lake Baikal with Baikal fish specialties (famous omul fish). In the afternoon, we take a cable car to the Chersky Peak for a panoramic view of the southern part of the lake and Angara river. Then we hike to the Krestovka village and visit the St. Nicholas Church. Return to Irkutsk. Dinner and overnight.</p> |

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| Day 5 | <p>Experience Transsiberian Railways - Novosibirsk Transfer to the station and departure by Transsiberian Railway to Novosibirsk. <i>Trans-Siberian Railway is a pride of Russia. The Great Siberian Way goes through 2 world continents, 12 Russian regions and 87 cities. The final point is Vladivostok city. The fastest superior train "Rossija" covers this huge distance up to the Pacific Ocean in 6 days and 2 hours (with an average speed of 64km/h). The Trans-Siberian Railway is featured in the "Guinness Book of Records" for three categories: total length, number of stations, and construction time.</i></p> <p>Overnight in the train in 2nd class compartments.</p> |
| Day 6 | <p>Novosibirsk A day in train. Evening arrival to the capital of Siberia and transfer to the hotel 4*. Dinner and overnight.</p> |
| Day 7 | <p>Novosibirsk Full day excursion with lunch. Morning tour to the scientific city Akademgorodok (30km outside the city) – the only scientific city in the world, where all the branches of sciences are presented, sometimes called by Western Media "Scientific Vatican". Enter Akademgorodok by Lavrentiev Prospect, marked by the Guinness Book of Records as the "world's most scientific street". Visit of 2 museums of your choice (Geology Museum at Geology Research Institute / Archeological Museum at the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography / Open-Air Train Museum (a collection of the old Trans-Siberian trains)), and see the river Ob reservoir – an artificial Ob sea. Return to Novosibirsk and sightseeing of all the main attractions of the city: Novosibirsk Railway Station – the biggest station of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, Ascension Cathedral, Krasny Prospect street, Lenin Square - city center with the biggest world's Opera House, old wooden houses on Gorkogo Str. - the oldest part of the city, St.Nicolas Chapel – the geographic center of Russia, river Ob' embankment and colorful Siberian farm-market. Visit of 1 Museum of your choice: (Transsib / Historical / USSR / Birch bark / North Siberian food degustation). In the evening transfer to the station and departure to Bijsk in a sleeping carriage at train no. 601 (departure at 20.03 p.m. local time). Overnight stay in the sleeping carriage (second class) at the train.</p> |
| Day 8 | <p>Altai mountains Early in the morning arrival at Bijsk. Meet with your guide and proceed by car to Chemal village in the Altai Mountains with en route breakfast stop at Srostki village. After a Chemal surroundings tour and visit of the village we will drive to our accommodation place Mlechny Put (Milky Way), a homely local guest house. Tasty homey lunch, followed by Patmos Island visit with the monastery. Dinner and overnight.</p> |
| Day 9 | <p>In the heart of Altai Another one day filled with a lot of picturesque places. You will see the extraordinarily rapids of the river Katun, Katun hydropower station, Oroktoy bridge, impressive karst caves, settlement Kuyus and waterfall Beltertuyuk. We will have a picnic at the bank of the mountain river Edigan. Evening return to Chemal village. Banya, dinner and overnight.</p> |
| Day 10 | <p>Altai Mountains After breakfast we will depart for Karakol Valley by the extremely picturesque <u>Chuysky Tract highway</u>, connecting Mongolia with Russia through the Seminsky Pass (1739m). Behind the boring road name M52 the most scenic road in Russia is screened, ranked by National Geographic as the 5th most scenic road of the planet. We will make a side trip to the botanic garden at the settlement Kamlak to see the Altaian flora collection . However, this drive can be called excursion itself, as it can be compared with traveling though all the country: travelers can see both cities and villages, birchwoods and taigas, rapid rivers and rivers' junctions, mountains and steppes. The breathtaking landscapes are uncovered with each road turn. <i>In the ancient times Chuysky Tract route was the path of Tatar-Mongolian forces led by Genghis Khan. Many nations supposedly migrated along this path, and ancient carvings and mysterious tomb stones still remind about that. The road was first mentioned in history 1000 years ago, and before the 20th century existed as a mountain path for the merchants and local pilgrims. The highway we know today dates back to 1935, when numerous detention camps appeared along the Chuysky Tract, so the prisoners, mostly dispossessed by Soviet system farmers, were the main labor force. The beauty of Chuysky tract required awful human losses. Some people, who have died during the construction, were buried right in the roadbed, so that their mates might own their dietary. The most spectacular road of Russia has a fairytale beauty, and as a real fairytale it can be a bit scary...</i> Afternoon arrival to the Karakol valley. Accommodation at the ethnographic complex Karakol in a</p> |

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| | <p>mongolian 4-bed yurt. We will explore the Ethnographical park, featuring remains and burial mounds of many ancient peoples living here.</p> <p>Optional concert of "Altai Kai" ensemble of throat singing. Optional banya.</p> |
| Day 11 | <p>Altai mountains – one day hike at Karakol valley</p> <p>Today we will explore the impressive Karakol valley: its ancient sacred places, temples and tombs of Tuekta, Bashadar, Boochoa and Karakol, where Afanasians, Karakolians, Scyths and Turks buried their leaders and shamans. Dinner and overnight.</p> |
| Day 12 | <p>Altai mountains – petroglyphs (wall paintings 8. century BC)</p> <p>We continue driving up to the Mongolia border by Chuysky Tract with several nice en-route stops (the Chiket-Aman Pass (1295 metres above sea level), so much liked by the photographers, panoramic view points and local markets stops) At the idyllically situated forest settlement Kalbak-Tash we will see the rock paintings – petroglyphs. Here the wall paintings consist of more than 5000 pictures. The oldest are dated by the 8th century BC. Lunch at Tschuj-Oozy Altaian food café . Drive to the Kosh-Agach village almost near Mongolia. Dinner at the river and overnight stay at yurt camp Tydtuyaryk.</p> |
| Day 13 | <p>Altai mountains – Chulyshman creek (UNESCO world cultural heritage)</p> <p>Today we go through the Ulagan area. We visit the two lakes: Chuybekkol (Dead) and Uzunkol (Live), which are extremely rich in fishes. After crossing the Ulagan Pass, we visit the Pazyryk valley with important Pazyryk kurgans - the burial mounds sites of Scythian aristocracy that brought to the world the sensational <u>Altai Princess Mummy</u>. (5. to 3. century BC).</p> <p>Along the zigzag of Katu-Yaryk pass we will arrive to the valley of the Chulyshman river. You'll enjoy a panoramic view over the Chulyshman Valley, the object of the UNESCO heritage. Picnic lunch.</p> <p>Evening arrival to Chibit settlement and check-in to NOMAD eco-camping, the last "civilization" point on Russian territory for those who travel to Mongolia by Chuysky Highway.</p> |
| Day 14 | <p>Altai Mountains – Gorno-Altai - Novosibirsk</p> <p>In the morning transfer to Gorno-Altai with en-route stop at the natural water spring Arzahn-Suu and nearby souvenir market. Depart from Gorno-Altai bus station to Novosibirsk bus station by local regular bus. Upon arrival in Novosibirsk you're met and transferred to the hotel 4* for overnight.</p> |
| Day 15 | <p>Novosibirsk – Novosibirsk airport</p> <p>Transfer to the airport for onward direct flight to Munich, Frankfurt, Istanbul, Prague, Beijing or to Moscow. Or, transfer to the train station for the westward train journey by Transsib to Moscow or southward by Turksib to Almaty (Kazakhstan).</p> |

Package includes:

- Accommodation:

hotel "Angara" 3* (Irkutsk), 2 nights in 1/2 TWN/DBL

hotel "Baikalskie terema" 3* (Baikal), 2 nights in 1/2 TWN/DBL

hotel "Novosibirsk" 4* (Novosibirsk), 1 night in 1/2 TWN/DBL

guesthouse "Mlechniy Put" in the Altai , 2 nights in 1/2 TWN/DBL

camping "Karakol" in Altai (4-places yurts or ails), 2 nights

camping "Tydtuyarik" in Altai (4-places yurt), 1 night

tour complex "NOMAD / Kochevnik" in Altai, 1 night in 1/2 TWN/DBL

hotel "Novosibirsk" 4* in Novosibirsk, 1 night in 1/2 TWN/DBL

- German/English-speaking guide during the excursions + all the time in the Altai Day8-Day14
- Transfers by car/minibus as per program
- Meals as per program
- Entrance tickets and recreational fees as per program
- Train tickets Irkutsk – Novosibirsk 2nd class (1 place in 4-berth compartment) without meals, Novosibirsk – Biysk 2nd class (1 place in 4-berth compartment) without meals.

Not included:

- Flights to Irkutsk and from Novosibirsk / Travel insurance / Tips /Alcoholic beverages, beverages between meals