

Mongolian Wilderness Trek, Mongolia

A two-week magical, mountain adventure in the remote northwest corner of Mongolia.



Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

Holiday overview

Style	Trek
Accommodation	Hotels, Camping
Grade	Moderate
Duration	14 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	On trek: 7 days
Min/Max group size	4 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 4
Trip Leader	Local Leader Mongolia
Land only	Joining in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
Max altitude	2,944m/9,656ft, Yamaatiin Pass, Day 9

Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available



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Managing Director: Steven Berry. Registered in England No. 2118433. VAT No. 496 6511 08

Departures

Group departures

2022 Dates:

Mon 01 Aug - Sun 14 Aug

2023 Dates:

Mon 31 Jul - Sun 13 Aug

Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 4 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday. If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

Your guide



We use English speaking local leaders - they are certified/registered guides, and in their company you will certainly gain an insight into the way of life, traditions and culture of Mongolia.

Your trip highlights

- Truly off-the-beaten-track route
- One of the world's great adventure treks that crosses two high passes
- Wild, unspoilt terrain populated by nomads
- Enjoy the hospitality of the local people visiting a local family 'ger'
- Full service camping on trek and good quality hotels elsewhere

At a glance itinerary

Days 1-2	Arrive Ulaanbaatar.
Day 3	Fly to Ulaangom.
Days 4-5	Trek to Blue Lake. Trek over four low passes to the Kharkhiraa River.
Days 6-7	Trek to the base of the Kharkhiraa Pass. Rest day.
Day 8	Cross Kharkhiraa Pass, 2,930m /9,610ft, to lake camp.
Day 9	Cross the Yamaatiin Pass, 2,944m/9,656ft and trek to the Yamaatiin River.
Day 10	Trek through the Yamaatiin Valley.
Days 11-12	Drive to Uureg lake. Morning at lake, afternoon jeep to Ulaangom. Fly to Ulaanbaatar. City tour if time permits.
Days 13-14	Day at leisure in Ulaanbaatar. Fly to London.

Trip summary

This fantastic trek between the twin peaks of Mount Kharkiraa and Mount Turgen, begins in the Uliastai Valley in the remote Uvs Province. Within only a day from the start of the trek, you will reach the jewel-like waters of the Blue Lake and from there progress over low passes, through steep-sided valleys and along the banks of the Kharkiraa River. As you continue across two high passes of around 3,000m/10,000ft, the scenery becomes increasingly dramatic and varied with wild open plateaus, glacial lakes, high peaks and remarkable rock formations that create the captivating backdrop to your trek.

This is a truly wild, untamed region where local people live a continuous nomadic existence and you will undoubtedly encounter their 'open house' hospitality. At the end of the trek you have time to relax by the tranquil waters of Uureg Lake before returning to Ulaanbaatar to take in the sights.

Mongolia

Outer Mongolia, one of the most sparsely populated places on earth, is a vast country more than six times the size of Great Britain. In fact it is 604,000 sq. miles and that is bigger than France, Germany, Spain, England, Scotland, Wales and Belgium added together. Yet its population is a little over 2 million compared with 220 million! Historically the people have lived a nomadic existence, and even now nearly half of the two and a half million people live in the traditional round white tent or "ger", many moving frequently with their animal herds throughout the year. There are regions of steppe (grass land), desert, mountain and forest, each of which provides its own unspoiled habitat for unique species of plants and animals. The summer months of July and August are the best times to visit as the weather is at its best (though still unpredictable!), wild flowers are abundant and everyone is in holiday mood.

Special notes

Ulaangom flights

The domestic flight schedule to Ulaangom is subject to change. If the schedule changes and there is no longer a flight from Ulaanbaatar to Ulaangom on Day 3, you will fly to Khovd town and drive 200km to Ulaangom. If this happened then you would start trekking around noon on Day 4 rather than early in the morning. There is a contingency 'rest' day on Day 7 which may be necessary to use at the beginning or end of the itinerary in case of a change in the domestic flight schedule.

Your trip itinerary

Day 1: Fly London to Ulaanbaatar.

Fly from London to Ulaanbaatar.

Overnight: In flight.

Day 2: Arrive Ulaanbaatar. Group transfer to hotel.

You will arrive in Ulaanbaatar in the afternoon when you will be met and transferred to your hotel.

Ulaanbaatar is the capital of Mongolia and has a population of about one million people which means that it is home to over a third of the total population of Mongolia. Not surprisingly then, it is also the country's economic, cultural and political centre. You will quite likely witness traditional horsemen with their cattle, escorting them down the wide streets with parked cars either side. The city is located on the banks of the Tuul River and is surrounded by mountains, dense forests and of course the grassy steppes to the south.



Overnight: Bayangol Hotel, Ulaanbaatar

Day 3: Fly to Ulaangom - 2 hour 45 minute flight.

Today you will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Ulaangom. Whilst this is a short flight of just under three hours, it is worth noting that if you had driven, it can take approximately five days by 'bus to make the trip. The roads are best described as tracks. Ulaangom a quiet, linear, tree lined town that may well have horses tied to shops fronts while their owners gather supplies.

On arrival you will be met at the airport and taken by jeep to the Uliastai Valley, 30 kms - 2-3hrs. You will meet your trek staff and camels at the road head and camp in the Uliasti Valley.

Please note that if your flight from Ulaanbaatar leaves before midday you will receive lunch either as a boxed lunch on the plane or when you arrive in Ulaangom. If you are not due to fly till the afternoon, lunch will not be included.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: B D)

Day 4: Trek to Blue Lake, 600m ascent/400m descent - 5-6 hours.

Trek up to the pass at 2,215 metres from where there is a magnificent view of the valley below and the Kharkhiraa mountain range. Then today's route takes you steeply down the mountainside to the Blue Lake. There are often nomadic families living in the valley during the summer, with evidence of their winter shelters in the more sheltered places. Today you have your first experience of vast open spaces, nomadic flocks, and ancient burial mounds. You may see black kites circling ahead and Demoiselle cranes.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 5: Trek over four low passes to the Kharkhiraa River - 6-7 hours.

Today you will trek over four low passes to reach the Kharkhiraa River and pass by some ancient (7th and 8th century) warriors' graves and standing stones. You then continue along the valley and cross the river by horse at the junction of the Tarlian and Kharkhiraa rivers. You will walk through stunning carpets of edelweiss and gentian. You will continue trekking until you reach the campsite at Ovoljoonii denj. "The adventurer will find many trekking options here, although arguably the finest is a through trek along the Kharkhiraa and Yamaatiin rivers" - The World's Great Adventure Treks (sadly now out of print).

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 6: Trek to the base of the Kharkhiraa Pass, 2,530m/8,300ft - 7 hours.

You trek along the valley of the Kharkhiraa River, past a dramatic wall of red cliffs, with occasional views of Mount Turgen, climbing gradually, to reach the base of Kharkhiraa Pass. You will camp in a dramatic valley surrounded by high snow-capped mountains. Camp altitude - 2,530m/8,300ft approx.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 7: Rest day.

A chance to rest and explore the stunning area. Your guide will suggest a suitable short walk on this day.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 8: Cross Kharkhiraa Pass, 2,930m /9,610ft, to lake camp at 2,475m/8,120ft, 500m ascent/500m descent - 5 hours.

You will climb steeply up 400m/1,300ft to the pass then cross the high open plateau, where you will be rewarded by views of several glaciers and high peaks. There will be a couple of river crossings by horse today. The ground may be quite boggy and the going tough. It is extremely remote and wild up here. You enjoy lunch beside a beautiful turquoise lake beneath the glacier of Deglee Tsagaan Mountain before continuing trekking to reach Turgen Mountain National Protected Area. The altitude at the camp site is 2,475m.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 9: Cross the Yamaatiin Pass, 2,944m/9,656ft and trek to Yamaatiin River at 2,160m/7,103ft, 500m ascent/800m descent - 7 ½ hours.

Today, you will take a lift on horses to cross the icy river, then climb up and across another expanse of wilderness to reach the base of Yamaatiin Pass. There is a good track up to the pass which is used by nomadic families moving from one valley to the next. From the top of the pass, you take the steep and dramatic track down into the Yamaatiin Valley. You camp beside the Yamaatiin River near the snow-capped Yamaatiin Mountain. You may well see marmots, pika and vultures here. Altitude at camp - 2,160m.



Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 10: Trek through the Yamaatiin Valley, 1,865m/6,118ft - 7 ½ hours.

You will cross the river and trek down the beautiful valley which is enclosed on both sides by high cliffs with amazing and unusual rock formations. "Yamaa" means "goat" and there may be sightings of herds of wild goats (ibex) in the rocks. Highlights of today's include larch woods and a profusion of Edelweiss. The camp will be set up further down the valley beside the pinewoods. This valley is a protected reserve, so the flora grows undisturbed by domesticated animals. You camp at 1,865m/6,118ft.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 11: Drive to Uureg lake - 2 hours. Morning at lake, afternoon jeep to Ulaangom - 2 ½ hours.

You meet your driver again today and travel by jeep to Uureg Lake. The lake's setting is spectacular with the mountains to the north marking the border with Russia. The lake is fresh water, crystal clear and very cold, but good for a brief swim. Birdlife includes black kites, terns, geese, cormorants and gulls. From highpoints you can see for many kilometres in every direction and there is extensive nomadic activity in this region.

In the afternoon you are driven by jeep to Ulaangom over the Ulaan Davaa Pass, 1,238m/ 4,061ft. The drive to Ulaangom takes 2½ hours.

Overnight: Hotel In Ulaangom (Meals: BLD)

Day 12: Fly from Ulaangom to Ulaanbaatar. City tour if time permits.

Today you will fly to Ulaanbaatar, where you will be met on arrival and transferred to your hotel. If the flight schedule allows you will have a tour of the city taking in either the Museum of National History or Natural History Museum with its excellent display of dinosaur remains.

Overnight: Bayangol Hotel, Ulaanbaatar (Meals: B)

Day 13: Day at leisure in Ulaanbaatar.

Today is free for you to do some further exploration of Ulaanbaatar or simply relax at your hotel.

Overnight: Bayangol Hotel, Ulaanbaatar (Meals: B)

Day 14: Transfer to airport. Fly to London.

After breakfast there will be a group transfer to the airport for the flight back to London. **(Meals:B)**

Our grading system

Mongolian Wilderness Trek is graded as a Moderate trekking holiday, as described below.

Moderate

Holidays in this grade typically involve 5 to 10 days of walking or trekking. They will often venture into more remote country and can cross mountain passes. Altitudes though are still relatively low, going no higher than around 4,300m/14,000ft. Accommodation can include simple hotels, tea houses, lodges and camping.

Trip altitude

Important - please be aware that this trip involves travel at altitude. Whilst all our itineraries are carefully designed to optimise acclimatisation to high altitudes, participants on this trip are likely to experience some symptoms of being at altitude. The Dossier pack we provide when you book your holiday includes comprehensive advice on safe travel at altitude. If you require further information or advice on travel at altitude prior to booking please contact the office to speak to an experienced member of our team. Alternatively we recommend www.medex.org.uk as a good source of information.

What the price includes

Mountain Kingdoms aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

What's included:

- ✓ A local English-speaking leader
- ✓ International flights (flight inclusive option only)
- ✓ All internal flights
- ✓ A single, timed group airport transfer for international flights on arrival and departure
- ✓ Good standard hotel in Ulaanbaatar (4 star) on bed and breakfast, twin share basis
- ✓ Best available hotels elsewhere
- ✓ Camp accommodation on full board basis
- ✓ Porterage on trek
- ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
- ✓ Sightseeing where specified
- ✓ A free high-quality Mountain Kingdoms kit bag
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ Option to join one of our pre-trip meets in the Cotswolds

Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

What's not included:

- × Travel insurance
- × Visa fees
- × Lunch and evening meals in Ulaanbaatar
- × Lunch in Ulaangom (Day 3)
- × Tips

Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Our clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate.

For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>.

Your accommodation

We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



Bayangol Hotel, Ulaanbaatar

We use the Bayangol Hotel, a good standard, 4 star hotel, with all the amenities. It is modern and smart with good service and is one of the best hotels in town.



Camp

On this camping trek, the following are provided: a sleeping tent, a dining tent, and a toilet tent exclusively for your group to use. The trek staff put up and take down tents, make the tea, cook the food, wash the dishes, and load the pack animals. Your kit bag is carried for you by pack animals and you just trek with a light day sack.



Hotel In Ulaangom

We use a hotel which will be simple and basic.

Meal arrangements

Bed and Breakfast in Ulaanbaatar, all meals elsewhere in Mongolia. On day 3 lunch will be included if you leave Ulaanbaatar before midday.

Flight arrangements

Flight inclusive from price

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

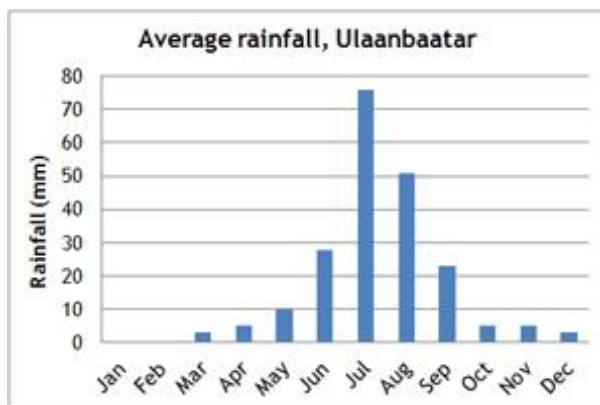
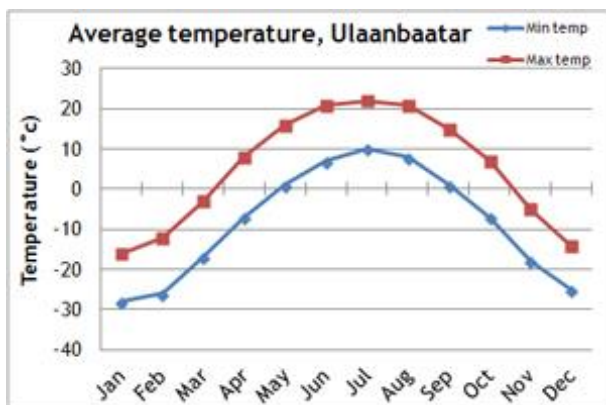
Further information

When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

The nature of adventure travel

Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

Climate information



Extensions

Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at www.mountainkingdoms.com.



There are many ways you can extend your holiday with Mountain Kingdoms: you could book extra nights at a hotel at the start or end of your trip or arrange a personal sightseeing tour. We can also assist with flight and hotel upgrades. Just call us or email info@mountainkingdoms.com to make your holiday dreams come true.

Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

- We use a reputable, experienced, quality operator in Mongolia, with excellent standards of service
- We use one of the best hotels in Ulaanbaatar
- It is a unique and truly off-the-beaten track in a wild and remote area of Outer Mongolia
- We use the best camping equipment available and include many small touches that add greatly to the level of comfort you will experience on this trek.
- This moderate graded trek can be achieved in just 14 days, London to London
- Our maximum group size is 12 for this trip. This provides for a genuine small group travel experience and helps reduce the negative aspects often associated with larger trekking groups.
- We have a wealth of travel experience at Mountain Kingdoms. If you have any questions about this holiday, contact Niki on 01543 844400 who has travelled to Mongolia and would be very happy to help.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- We are an IATA accredited agent and work directly with some of the world's major airlines. If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: www.mountainkingdoms.com or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

What our clients say



We thoroughly enjoyed the trip overall, especially the trek, and would heartily recommend it to others. We particularly appreciated the feeling of remoteness and space in Mongolia.

-Mr & Mrs B, Leek

This was an amazing trek and we thoroughly enjoyed it, particularly the opportunity to meet nomads in the remote areas and partake in their hospitality. The guide in Ulaanbaatar was excellent.

-Miss B, Derbyshire



Transport worked well, leader was knowledgeable and food was good. Route was good with a feeling of remoteness.

- Mr H, South Humberside

Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

Truly independent

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

Complete financial security

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

No Surcharge Guarantee

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

Award winning Responsible Tourism

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at www.mountainkingdoms.com.

Genuine small group travel

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

Loyalty Discount

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

Comprehensive information

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit www.tourismdeclares.com

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

Carbon Offsetting

Already doing:

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

Will do:

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

Reducing Carbon Emissions

Already doing:

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

Will do:

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.

