

Bear Observation — Detailed description

Trip Length: Group: 2-3 Departure: Fixed Period: December - January

Trip overview

This tour is an ideal opportunity to discover some hiding places of the Baikal wild nature. Our journey will take us to the Baikalo-Lensky nature reserve where, in total isolation, we are going to observe brown bear of taiga in the only company of forestry officers. Among others, we will pay a visit to Yura, the weather station worker on Ushkany Islands, who will take us to endemic freshwater seals of Lake Baikal.

Animal observation is organized in taiga where the forestry officers set up huts raised above the ground and put some bait by side: drilled iron barrels full of seal fat and skin. The smell of fat attract bears, and in the morning and evening they approach the bait to look for some food. As they do not manage to take it out of the barrel, they stay near bait for hours which makes it possible to take pictures of them nearby. Hunting is forbidden in the reserve, and animals are not afraid of people, that is why nothing can draw their attention from food. Quiet conversation and clicking of cameras do not make them run away and do not cause their aggression. However, to guarantee safety of our travellers, forestry officers are always armed and have smoke bombs.

We will also trek in taiga where it is likely to meet other wild animals: stag, roe deer, elk, hare, and marten. Along with Pokoyniki Cape and its surroundings, we will visit other picturesque places of the reserve - Bolshoy and Maly Solontsovy Capes, Zavorotnaya Bay. During a boat tour we will be able to see brown bears which, starving after winter, come out on pebble beaches to enjoy insects.

Highlights

- Wild animals observation in their natural habitat
- Total change of scenery
- Discovery of wild places of Lake Baikal

Tour type

NATURE

Difficulty

Moderately Easy - 1-3 hours of physical activity daily

Comfort

Standard — most of nights in comfortable rooms, some nights in tents or rooms with shared WC.

Program

Day 1 — -

Day 2 — -

Day 3 — -

Day 4 — -

Day 5 — -

Day 6 — -

Day 7 — -

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Day 8 — -

Day 9 — -

Day 10 — -

Day 11 — -

Departures

New departures available soon

Note

Supplement for the group of 2 persons 20070 RUB / person (approx. 480 EUR). The price does not include the entrance fee to Ushkany Islands to see seal colonies (1000-2000 RUB / person) Breakfast on Day 1 and lunch / dinner on Day 10 are not included.

What's included

Price includes

- English-speaking guide
- Russian-speaking guide services
- Accommodation as per itinerary
- Transport as per itinerary
- Meals
- Excursions and visits as per itinerary
- Reserves and national parks entrance permissions
- Banya
- Letter of invitation

Price does not include

- Medical insurance
- Administrative registration
- Personal expenses and tips
- Visa fees and travel insurance
- Transfer from airport / railway station on first day
- Transfer to airport / railway station on last day

Checklist & Equipment

We recommend you to pack all your stuff in two bags: a small backpack and a large travelling bag.

SMALL BACKPACK: will be useful for carrying your personal belongings during the day (camera, film, personal medication, bottled water, etc.) You will also use it as hand luggage during air travel for all your heavy (to lighten the travel bag in the luggage compartment), fragile (camera, etc.) and necessary (toilet bag, etc.) things.

BIG BACKPACK: must contain the rest of your stuff. It will be in the luggage compartment during the flight. You will bring it during some days of the trekking.

Recommended checklist

Raincoat or wind and waterproof shell jacket (with hood !)
Large 60 litres backpack
POLARTEC or similar pullover
Sleeping bag rated from -10° C to +15° C
Windproof waterproof pants and jacket (GORE-TEX, EVENT, SIMPA-TEX)
Trekking socks
Trekking pants
Long sleeve shirts or sweatshirts
Shorts
T-shirts

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Socks
Cap or hat to protect against sun
Foulard or tagelmust
Comfortable walking shoes (like Vibram or similar)
Comfortable shoes for city
Headlamp
Sunscreen for skin and lips
Sunglasses with filter
Mosquito net for face
Toilet roll
Pocket knife (to put in checked baggage)
Flask
Slippers
Flip-flops for banya
Sewing kit
Fleece jacket or warm sweater
Comfortable pants
Wool gloves and winter cap
Moisturizer
Lipstick
Bath towel
Swimsuit
Important travel documents: Passport and visa, original or electronic airplane tickets (with a sets of photocopies kept separately), bank card
Tick and mosquitoes repellent spray
Forceps for extracting ticks
Wipes
Antibacterial hand gel
Wristwatch or pocket alarm clock
Binoculars
Charger and spare battery for camera/phone
Photo / video camera
Tour vouchers and programme
Ice cleats
Laundry detergent to wash your clothes

Meals

At restaurants and homestays in cities, traditional cuisine consists of local specialties.
In the canteen at the inns, fresh local products.
Homestay cuisine based on fresh products.
If you are a vegetarian or have any particular preferences, please let us know, so we could adapt the menu.

Laundry

Some hotels and inns offer laundry services for a variable sum of money. It is sometimes possible to use laundry services at homestay (when there is running water) for a fee.

Visa

You need a tourist visa to travel to Russia. It can be issued for a maximum period of 30 days. Your passport has to be valid for at least six months after the expiry date of your visa and to have at least two blank pages.

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BaikalNature offers visa support and has created "BaikalNature letter of invitation" package. If you buy a BaikalNature tour, this package is absolutely free; when you buy any other BaikalNature service, you will have to pay for this package.

For more information please contact your nearest Russian Embassy or Visa Application Center.

Money

The Russian currency is ruble. In all cities and many large villages of Russia, you can easily withdraw rubles, using a Visa or MasterCard, from ATMs, located in banks, department stores or hotel lobbies, some of them are open 24 hours a day. If you have euros or dollars with you, exchange offices will allow you to change them easily in the cities, seldom in the countryside. However, it can be difficult to exchange traveler's checks, even in cities.

Tipping

All persons who compose the BaikalNature travel team (guides, drivers, cooks, etc.) are paid a decent wage for their services and do not expect any tips from you. So you have no obligation to leave anything. If you really want to express your satisfaction by leaving a gratuity, and if it is in foreign currency, be aware that torn or glued coins and banknotes cannot be exchanged. Anyway, thank you for your tips, left at your discretion in envelopes.

Health

No compulsory vaccination.

You need to get a health examination before a great trip. Consult your doctor. Get a dental checkup. If you have health problems that could worsen during the trip, make sure you have taken all your medications with you.

It is advisable to keep the following vaccines valid:

- diphtheria,
- tetanus,
- Polio.

Tick-borne encephalitis is present in areas of forest, taiga where ticks are the carriers of encephalitis between May and July. As of August, they are no longer carrying the virus. If you do not get vaccinated, you should follow the basic precautions, including:

- protective clothes
- use of repellents
- daily check of the skin.

It is also possible to take out special insurance covering the analysis of the insect and vaccines.

Provide a first aid kit that includes among other items:

- aspirin or paracetamol,
- anti-diarrheal pills,
- antiseptic,
- adhesive plaster,
- sterile pads.

If you have individual diseases, make sure you have taken your medications.

Emergency Contact

You can contact BaikalNature by phone: +73952 26 56 94.

In addition, your call will be forwarded to your manager, reachable 7/7.

Legal Mentions

Professional Guarantees: BaikalNature LLC (ООО "БайкалНейче"), United Federal Register of Tour Operators number: RTO 009402.

Financial Guarantee: "Gaide insurance company" JSC (АО "Страховая компания Гайде"). Insurance contract N 7890/22-49 from September 19, 2022. Amount of coverage: 500 000 RUB. Legal and actual address: BaikalNature LLC, 55 Dekabrskikh Sobytiy Str., office 405.2 664007 Irkutsk Russia

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Travel Insurance

In addition to your personal insurance, you have an opportunity to purchase local insurance. Please, do not hesitate to ask us about our services.

Security

First-aid kit, satellite phone, walkie-talkie are available at your guide.


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