

Around Baikal Winter Expedition — Detailed description

Trip Length: 12 Group: 4-6 Departure: Fixed Period: December - January

Trip overview

There are so many opportunities that the winter season offers to motorists, like the famous winter roads that replace the hardly passable mud paths and the lake with a depth of 1500 km. BaikalNature invites you to take advantage of these opportunities and would like to present to you a new exclusive tour - off-road expedition around lake Baikal. 10 unforgettable days of adventure, during which you will take a ride around the lake and also pass more than 400 km by ice.

Moreover, you will:

bathe in thermal hot springs where the temperature of water reaches 50 degrees,

spend a night in a true fisherman's yurt on the ice,

travel to the largest peninsula on lake Baikal,

enjoy the unforgettable views of giant ice hummocks (up to 5x meters in height),

visit the village of Old Believers - Tarbagatay and the center of Buddhism in Russia – datsan of Ivolginsk. And if luck is on your side, you will get a chance to see the nerpas – famous lake Baikal endemic seals.

During the tour you will also visit 2 capitals of Baikal region - Irkutsk and Ulan-Ude, and travel along the longest railway lines in the world - the Baikal–Amur Mainline and Trans-Siberian.

The full length of the Trans-Siberian railway is more than 9200 km and we will join this great route for a short but its most picturesque segment - from Ulan-Ude to Irkutsk, part of which runs along the shore of lake Baikal.

As for the trip along the Baikal-Amur Mainline, running for more than 4,200 km, here we will compete in the speed with trains going for 135 km from Ulkan to Severobaikalsk.

Baikal-Amur Mainline runs north of and parallel to the Trans-Siberian railway departing from it at Tayshet. Its construction began in 1938 and was carried out mainly by prisoners of correctional camps and later by volunteers.

N.B. The tour is an expedition. The itinerary can be changed for ensuring security of the group keeping all excursions.

Highlights

- More than 300 km of the way by frozen lake
- Visits of the two Baikal regional capital cities: Irkutsk and Ulan-Ude (Republic of Buryatia)
- Visit of the Old Believers' village
- Visit of the Olkhoen island and Svyatoy Nos peninsula
- Ring road going for more than 2000 km
- Night in fishermen's yurts on the ice
- Bathing in the hot springs
- Feasible itinerary even in case of extreme weather conditions
- Road along of the Trans-Siberian and Baikal-Amur Mainlines
- Observation of ice in all its forms
- Discovery of the wildest and the least "touristy" part of the lake

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Tour type

EXPEDITIONNATURE

Difficulty

Moderate - 3-5 hours of physical activity daily

Comfort

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

Begining / end of the tour

Tour starts: Irkutsk, End of the tour: Irkutsk

Program

Day 1 — Discovery of Irkutsk city

11:00 — Arrival in Irkutsk
13:00 — Lunch (Not included)
15:00 — Meeting with you guide at hotel's reception
19:00 — Dinner in the hotel (Not included)

Overnight in the hotel

Hotels: Accommodation in the hotel Angara, Twin standard room

Comfort: Comfortable accommodation, WC and bath / shower in room

Day 2 — Olkhon island - the heart of Lake Baikal

09:00 — Breakfast in the hotel
10:00 — Departure to the Olkhon island
13:00 — Lunch in the roadside café (Not included)
16:00 — Walking tour of the village
19:00 — Dinner (Not included)

Overnight at the resort

Hotels: Accommodation at the resort "Baikalov ostrog", Twin room

Comfort: Comfortable accommodation, WC and bath / shower in room

Day 3 — Ice caves and the northernmost point of Olkhon

09:00 — Breakfast at the resort
10:00 — Excursion to the Khoboy cape
13:00 — Lunch outside (lunch-boxes)
17:00 — Return to the village
19:00 — Dinner (Not included)

Overnight at the resort

Hotels: Accommodation at the resort "Baikalov ostrog", Twin room

Comfort: Comfortable accommodation, WC and bath / shower in room

Day 4 — Kachug Road

08:00 — Breakfast at the resort

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09:00 — Departure to Zhigalovo
13:00 — Lunch in the outside cafe (Not included)
18:00 — Continuation of the way by Kachug road
19:00 — Dinner in the local café (Not included)
Overnight in the resort
Hotels: Accommodation in the hote LenaTour, Twin room

Day 5 — Road along the BAM. Hot springs

08:30 — Departure for the Goudzhekit's hot springs.
09:00 — En route, breakfast in roadside café
10:00 — Continuation of the way
13:00 — Lunch in roadside café (Not included)
18:00 — Continuation of the way
19:00 — Dinner at the resort
20:00 — Free time
Overnight in the resort
Hotels: Accommodation in the resort Hozyain, Twin room
Comfort: Comfortable accommodation, WC and shower on the floor

Day 6 — Severobaikalsk. Crossing of Baikal on the ice

09:00 — Breakfast at the resort
10:00 — Departure for the Baikal coasts
13:00 — Lunch in roadside cafe
14:00 — Continuation of the way on the ice
19:00 — Dinner at the resort
Overnight in the resort
Hotels: Accommodation at the resort Laskoviy Bereg, Twin room
Comfort: Comfortable accommodation, WC and bath / shower in room

Day 7 — Hot springs Khakusy

09:00 — Breakfast
10:00 — Free day in Khakusi
13:00 — Lunch in the resort
15:00 — Free time for bathing
19:00 — Dinner in the resort
Overnight in the resort
Hotels: Accommodation at the resort Laskoviy Bereg, Twin room
Comfort: Comfortable accommodation, WC and bath / shower in room

Day 8 — To Chivyrkuysky Gulf through the ice

09:00 — Breakfast
10:00 — Departure to the Chivyrkuysky Gulf
13:00 — Pic-nic along the road (Not included)
15:00 — Continuation of the way on the ice
19:00 — Dinner un the yurt
Overnight in fishermen's yurt

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Hotels: Overnight in the yurt, Yurt for 5 persons
Comfort: Simple comfort accommodation, toilet outdoors

Day 9 — Sviatoy Nos peninsula

09:00 — Breakfast
10:00 — Departure to Ust-Barguzin
13:00 — Pic-nic in the open air (Not included)
14:00 — Continuation of the way to Ust-Barguzin
19:00 — Dinner at homestay
Overnight in homestay

Hotels: Accommodation in Ust-Barguzin, Twin room
Comfort: Comfortable accommodation, WC and bath / shower in room

Day 10 — Ulan-Ude - the capital of Buryatia

09:00 — Breakfast
10:00 — Departure to Ulan-Ude
13:00 — Lunch
15:00 — Continuation of the way to Ulan-Ude
19:00 — Dinner in the local restaurant
Overnight in the hotel

Hotels: Accommodation in the hotel Buryatia, Standard Twin room
Comfort: Comfortable accommodation, WC and bath / shower in room

Day 11 — Along "Baikal" highway

09:00 — Departure to Irkutsk
09:00 — Breakfast in the hotel
13:00 — Lunch in the road-side café (Not included)
14:00 — Continuation of the way to Irkutsk
19:00 — Dinner
Overnight in the hotel

Hotels: Accommodation in the hotel Angara, Twin standard room
Comfort: Comfortable accommodation, WC and bath / shower in room

Day 12 — End of the program

09:00 — Breakfast
11:00 — Transfer to the airport

Departures

Start	End	Basic price per person
23.02.2020	05.03.2020	245300.00 RUB

Note

The price is given for a group of 4 persons. If there less persons, the price can be modified. The price given is for a group of 2 people (for one car). Total number of vehicles: 1 to 4. The eals are included in the price of the program: breakfasts for days 2-4, 7-8, 10-12; lunches for days 3,7,10; dinners for days 5-11. The access to the hot springs in Goudzhekit is to pay on the spot (around 200 rubles per person).

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What's included

Price includes

- English-speaking guide
- Accommodation as per itinerary
- Transport as per itinerary
- Excursions and visits as per itinerary
- Letter of invitation
- Sleeping bag rental
- Reserves and national parks entrance permissions
- Transfer from airport / railway station on first day
- Transfer to airport / railway station on last day
- Celebratory dinner with alcoholic beverages
- English-speaking guide services
- Meals according to the program

Price does not include

- Personal expenses and tips
- Visa fees and travel insurance
- Airline tickets
- Medical insurance

Checklist & Equipment

You will need in Russia in winter:

- to protect yourself from the cold weather;
- to protect yourself from the wind;
- to protect your feet from moisture;
- to protect yourself from the sun's reflection from ice and snow.

Allow the system of "three layers":

- The first layer, called "second skin", determines the performance of the other two layers. It will transport sweat to the next layer and dry quickly to avoid cooling after exercise. Therefore forget the cotton retains moisture in the skin and choose underwear in synthetic fabrics.
- The second layer must keep the heat of the body as long as possible. Warm synthetic or mixed (wool or fleece turtleneck sweater) fabrics, that dry quickly, are preferable.
- The third layer should protect you against wind and moisture. Choose a jacket, long enough, 100% waterproof, preferably with hood.

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 TRAVEL BAG or BIG BACKPACK: must contain the rest of your stuff. It will be in the luggage compartment during the flight. It will be transported by vehicles.

Crampons for walking on ice will be provided on the spot.

Recommended checklist

Thermal underwear
POLARTEC or similar pullover
Long sleeve shirts or sweatshirts
T-shirts
Comfortable shoes for city
Flip-flops for banya
Fleece jacket or warm sweater

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Comfortable pants
Mountain boots for walking on ice and snow
Wool gloves and winter cap
Bath towel
Swimsuit
Wipes

Meals

If you are a vegetarian or have any particular preferences, please let us know, so we could adapt the menu.

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.

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.

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.

Medical Form

No particular physical condition is required.

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.

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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 10058/21-49 from October 08, 2021. Amount of coverage: 500 000 RUB. Legal and actual address: BaikalNature LLC 119A Dekabrskikh Sobyti Str., office 13 664007 Irkutsk Russia

Cancellation Options

The cancellation options are:

- more than 30 days before departure - 15% of the tour price,
- 29 - 7 days before departure - 30% of the tour price,
- less than 7 days before departure - 50% of the tour price.

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

The travelers' security is our primary aim and also the long-term reputation of our travel agency. First-aid kit, adapted for this tour, is available at your guide.

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