

## Baikal Seal Observation — Detailed description

Trip Length: Group: 1-4 Departure: Fixed Period: December - January

### Trip overview

Lake Baikal is the only place on earth where it is possible to observe nerpa, the lake's freshwater seal. To our time scientists could not solve the riddle of its appearance in the lake. However, many researchers support the hypothesis that the seals went down the Yenisei River from the Arctic Ocean and adapted themselves to the conditions of the freshwater lake.

In late March – early April seals give birth to the young whose fur is white. The nature itself has seen to their safety having made them imperceptible on ice: seal-calves spend all their time on ice in their lairs near the holes waiting for their mothers to feed them.

We will go in motorcycles with sidecars by ice to meet nerpas in the strait of Maloye More (Small Sea) where ice is still solid enough. We will use an old technique of nerpa hunters, the only difference is that you will only be armed with your cameras! During the tour you will also discover rock carvings, ice fishing, sites of shamanic cult and breathtaking scenery!

### Highlights

- Nerpa observation in their natural habitat
- Discovery of rock carvings
- Tasting local cuisine
- Homestay accommodation on Krestovsky Cape and in Uzury

### Tour type

NATURE

### Difficulty

Easy - nothing more than normal walking while sight-seeing

### 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 — -

Day 8 — -


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## Departures

New departures available soon

## Note

Small group supplement (2-3 persons) 19 300 RUB / pers.

## What's included

### Price includes

- English-speaking guide
- Accommodation as per itinerary
- Transport as per itinerary
- Meals
- Medical insurance
- Excursions and visits as per itinerary
- Reserves and national parks entrance permissions
- Banya

### Price does not include

- 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

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

Windproof waterproof pants and jacket (GORE-TEX, EVENT, SIMPA-TEX)

Long sleeve shirts or sweatshirts

Foulard or tagelmust

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Headlamp  
Sunscreen for skin and lips  
Sunglasses with filter  
Toilet roll  
Pocket knife (to put in checked baggage)  
Slippers  
Flip-flops for banya  
Sewing kit  
Down jacket  
Fleece jacket or warm sweater  
Comfortable pants  
Mountain boots for walking on ice and snow  
Wool gloves and winter cap  
Warm gloves or mittens  
Moisturizer  
Lipstick  
Important travel documents: Passport and visa, original or electronic airplane tickets (with a sets of photocopies kept separately), bank card  
Wipes  
Wristwatch or pocket alarm clock  
Binoculars  
Charger and spare battery for camera/phone  
Photo / video camera  
Tour vouchers and programme  
Ice cleats

### **Meals**

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.

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**

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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.

## 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 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

## 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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