

Ultimate Tien Shan



TREK OVERVIEW

Director Dave Pritt has probably travelled to this region of the Tien Shan (Celestial Mountains) more than any other British mountaineer and it remains his favourite destination; he has climbed numerous previously unclimbed peaks here. It is a spectacularly unspoilt region, remote and Himalayan in stature, with the highest peak Pobeda reaching 7443m and Khan Tengri 6995m - one of the most beautiful mountains in the world. Our trek takes us to the base of both, giving you the opportunity to take home some spectacular photographs!

The trek initially winds through pine forest and alpine meadows before crossing the Tyuz Pass (4020m) to reach the Inylchek valley and glacier, the third longest in the world. We spend six days walking up the glacier, past the ice-bound Merzbacher Lake to Pobeda Base Camp and one of the most spectacular cirques in the world with a vista of snowy pyramidal peaks. A further day's trek takes us to the base of the mighty Khan Tengri, before we fly back by helicopter through this panorama of classical glaciated and jagged peaks. A must for those who like remote boundless landscapes.

Participation Statement

Adventure Peaks recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

Adventure Travel – Accuracy of Itinerary

Although it is our intention to operate this itinerary as printed, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops and the duration of the day may vary from those outlined. You should be aware that some events are beyond our control and we would ask for your patience.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE/FITNESS

If you are used to regular multi day hill walking you will have the right level of fitness to fully enjoy your time on this trek. Previous walking experience is not essential but will help you get the most out of this trip. Non hill walkers must come with a reasonable degree of fitness. Most days involve 5 - 7 hours walking plus plenty of rest stops.

GROUP AND LEADERS

A fully qualified UK leader will accompany all groups of six or more passengers. He/she will be assisted by an experienced Kyrgyz leader. Smaller or private groups will be led by an English speaking Kyrgyz guide. This trip is exclusive to Adventure Peaks.



WEATHER

The weather should be pleasant during the day with cooler evenings and nights. The higher you are the cooler it will be. Walkers should realize however that weather in the high mountains is unpredictable and should be prepared for this.

WHAT TO CARRY

This trek is fully supported by a team of porters who will transport your main baggage. You will only need to carry a light daypack at the very most. A 35l rucksack is a useful size to comfortably fit in essential items such as water bottle, camera, wet-weather gear and extra layers etc.

CATERING ARRANGEMENTS

Our cooks pride themselves on their cooking, and ensure all food on the trek is freshly prepared using local ingredients and there is plenty for everyone. A typical menu on this trip would be:

Breakfast: Porridge or cereal, fresh bread with cheese, sausages, jam, margarine, fried eggs, omelettes, tea, coffee, hot chocolate and hot milk.

Lunch: A light lunch consisting of fresh salad, tinned fish or meat, bread, cheese, followed by dried local fruit, chocolate, nuts.

Dinner: A hot meal is served every night consisting of a traditional or westernised main course, followed by dried fruit, biscuits, sweets, and drinks.

ACCOMMODATION

In the towns and at Issyk Kul Lake you will stay in a 3* hotels. Twin, double or single rooms are available. On trek you will be in two-person tents. Toilet tents are provided at camps. Warm washing water will be supplied.

LANGUAGE AND TIME

Language: Kyrgyz & Russian are the official languages of Kyrgyzstan although most people also have a smattering of English.

Time: GMT+6. No daylight saving time at present.

HEALTH

All our UK leaders hold first aid certificates and carry a fully equipped first aid kit for medical emergencies. However you should bring your own supplies of plasters, blister prevention pads (Compeed), Paracetamol etc. and any medication you are taking. There are no compulsory vaccinations for Kyrgyzstan but the following are recommended: TB, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Polio, Typhoid and possibly Rabies. Consult your GP or a vaccine specialist for professional advice or refer to this website: www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk. Tap or stream water should never be drunk without first sterilizing with chlorine dioxide tablets or by boiling.

INSURANCE

Insurance which covers mountain rescue, evacuation and medical expenses is **essential**. You should note there are no official mountain rescue services in Kyrgyzstan and that any evacuation in the event of a serious medical emergency to the nearest hospital will be by land or by military helicopter. We will require a copy of your insurance prior to departure. Please also ensure your insurance covers you for walking above 4000m (some will exclude this option).

ALTITUDE

If you are new to altitude you may have concerns about the effects. Don't worry because our itineraries allow sufficient time to acclimatise, and altitude rarely causes anyone any problems on this trip. The best way to avoid such symptoms is to walk at a gentle steady pace and drink plenty of fluid.



USEFUL TIPS

Just in case your main luggage goes missing en route, it is a good idea to wear your boots on the plane. Most other things can be replaced but comfortable, well worn-in boots cannot. Pack important items in strong plastic bags.

EQUIPMENT

A detailed equipment list is provided on booking but normal winter walking equipment is all that is required, together with a three season sleeping bag which can be

hired from us. For equipment purchases Adventure Peaks offers a 15% discount off the RRP from their shop in Ambleside or online.

BAGGAGE

For your own comfort travel light. Normally airlines restrict baggage to 20kg and on trek the weight for porters **must be kept to maximum 15kg**. (You will be wearing boots and one set of trekking clothes). Some items can be left at the hotel in Bishkek for your return.



VISAS AND PERMITS

Visas are easily obtained at www.kyrgyz-embassy.org.uk. Currently the turnaround time is approximately 1 week. However we have recently been informed that soon visas will no longer be required by UK passport holders (a saving of £60!)

LOCAL COSTS

All accommodation and most meals are included; please see the itinerary page for full details. Additional costs would include any drinks or snacks outside of mealtimes, tips for local staff and showers when charged for.

CURRENCY

The local currency is the Som (KGS). The most useful way to carry your money is in US dollars although Euros are becoming more widely accepted. Please ensure any notes are in pristine condition and were printed post 1995 to prevent any problems. ATM's will be found in Bishkek and at the airport, but unlikely to be found anywhere else.

TIPPING

Since the withdrawal of the Russians, the Kyrgyz people have faced financial difficulties. Tipping is not expected but it is greatly appreciated.



ADVENTURE PEAKS KITBAG

All Adventure Peaks clients who reside in the UK will receive a **FREE** kitbag for any treks outside the UK. The bag will be posted to you approx. 3 weeks prior to your departure. If you have travelled with us before and already have an Adventure Peaks kitbag, or reside outside the UK, we will send an alternative gift.

FLIGHTS AND JOINING ARRANGEMENTS

Flights are NOT included as part of this holiday. Adventure Peaks would be delighted to arrange your flights for you. The earlier you book, the better price we can obtain for flights. The cost of flights will be quoted to you separately and will vary with departure and booking date. The most convenient flights are currently from Heathrow with BMI. Whatever flight you take, you will be met at the airport and transferred to the hotel in Bishkek.

The rendezvous for this trip is the ARRIVALS HALL AT BISHKEK AIRPORT when your flight comes in on Day 2.

PLEASE ENSURE YOU DO NOT PURCHASE YOUR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL (FLIGHTS OR OTHER) UNTIL WE HAVE GUARANTEED YOUR TRIP IS RUNNING.



ULTIMATE TIEN SHAN ITINERARY

No	Day, date	Today we...	We stay at...	Accommodation is...	Meals...
1	Sat	Fly	Plane	Plane	
2	Sun	Arrive Bishkek	Bishkek	Alpinist Hotel	
3	Mon	Transfer to Karakol	Karakol	Green Yard Hotel	B
4	Tue	Transfer to trek start	At-Djailoo (2500m)	Camp	BLD
5	Wed	Trek 1	Inylchek Glacier (2900m)	Camp	BLD
6	Thu	Trek 2	Inylchek Glacier (3100m)	Camp	BLD
7	Fri	Trek 3	Merzbacher Glade (3380m)	Camp	BLD
8	Sat	Trek 4	Merzbacher Lake (3300m)	Camp	BLD
9	Sun	Trek 5	Komsomolsky Glacier (4100m)	Camp	BLD
10	Mon	Trek 6	Diky Glacier (3900m)	Camp	BLD
11	Tue	Trek 7	Khan Tengri BC (4000m)	Camp	BLD
12	Wed	Rest / spare day	Khan Tengri BC (4000m)	Camp	BLD
13	Thu	Helicopter flight	Karakol	Green Yard Hotel	BL
14	Fri	Transfer to Issyk Kul lake	Issyk Kul Lake	Rohat Hotel	B
15	Sat	Transfer to Bishkek	Bishkek	Alpinist Hotel	B
16	Sun	Fly home	Home	Own bed!	B

Days 1 and 2 Depart UK, arriving Bishkek the following day. You will be collected from the airport and transferred to your hotel. In the afternoon there will be a city sightseeing tour including the Philharmonic Society, Ala-Too square, Victory square, and handicraft shops, Osh Bazaar, Fine Arts Museum and the State History Museum.

Day 3 A full day's transfer from Bishkek to Karakol. En route we will visit the Burana Tower (X-XI century AD). *Transfer 400 km, 7 hours.*

Day 4 Early morning departure. Another drive today (6 hours on rough roads) to At-Djailoo, the start point of our trek (2500m). In the afternoon we will start to explore the area with a circular walk from camp.

Day 5 The path goes along the left bank of Inylchek River. The North slopes of the gorge up to the glacier are covered with spruce forest. The place where Inylchek River emerges from under the glacier often changes and the precise route to the campground, set either at the end of the glacier, or on its lateral moraines, can vary. *5 hours walking.*

Day 6 Today our route follows along the lateral moraine of the glacier on the way to Merzbacher Glade. On the way it is necessary to cross the confluence of lateral part of Putevodny Glacier and the Inylchek Glacier. Right up to Merzbacher Glade the glacier is covered with surface moraine and sections of bare ice are rare. Close to the glade there are more bare ice sections. The camp is set up on the lateral moraines. *6 to 7 hours walking.*

Day 7 We continue trekking along the lateral moraines of the Inylchek Glacier to Merzbacher Glade. *5 to 6 hours walking.*

Day 8 A day trip out to go and visit the Merzbacher lake which is situated across on the north side of the glacier. At the point the South Inylchek glacier is about 3 km wide. While crossing the glacier look out for crystals in the rocks such as rauhtopaz (or smoky quartz), amethyst, black and pink tourmaline (elbaite), amazon-stone (green feldspar), fluorite, topaz, and others. Merzbacher Lake is located in the mouth of North Inylchek canyon where South Inylchek Glacier blocks the gorge of North Inylchek River, damming the water and

thus forming this amazing seasonal lake. In August, when the lake is full to bursting, the water rushes through the cracks and subglacial channels of North Inylchek Glacier into the valley. *4 to 6 hours walking.*

Day 9 From Merzbacher Glade we continue along the same lateral moraine of the glacier to the first right tributary of Shokalski Glacier. At the confluence of the glaciers it is necessary to get to one of the medial moraines of the South Inylchek Glacier, and to follow this up to Diky (=wild) Glacier. The so called red moraine (composed of red jasper) provides a natural highway in the centre of the glacier. *7 to 8 hours walking.*

Day 10 From Komsomolsky Glacier the South Inylchek Glacier becomes wider and quieter - crevasses and ruptures are getting smaller. Today we get our first views of the highest peaks of the Tien-Shan Mountains. *7 hours walking.*

Day 11 A final half day's trekking up the glacier takes us to the Khan Tengri Base camp area, where the glacier is now 3.5 kilometres wide. *4 to 5 hours walking.*

Day 12 Today you are free to explore the area around the base camp and to get closer to the spectacular peaks looming above you. Great views of the panorama of the highest mountains in Tien-Shan Mountains are visible if you walk 2-3 hours up to Semenov Glacier. *4 to 5 hours walking. Reserve day for helicopter flight.*

Day 13 A short but exciting helicopter flight takes us to the mountains to Maida-Adyr Camp or Karkara. *Transfer to Karakol (180 km, 5 hours).*

Day 14 Transfer to the northern shore of Issyk-Kul Lake. On the way we will visit the Ethnographical Museum and the Petroglyphs Museum on open air in Cholpon-Ata. *Transfer (140 km, 2 hours). Reserve day for helicopter flight.*

Day 15 A final drive back to Bishkek for our last night in Kyrgyzstan. *Transfer to Bishkek (260 km, 4 hours).*

Day 16 An early transfer to the airport for the flight back to the UK, arriving the same day.