

Checklist Botanical Trip to Kyrgyzstan

Payment of the travel sum

We ask you to pay in **cash euros** (for American guests it is possible to pay in cash US\$, British guests can pay in cash £) to the tour operator upon arrival in the guesthouse (and after some rest) in Bishkek. The tour operator will give you a specified invoice in euro's and in the local currency (Som). Because giro payment through banks in Kyrgyzstan is **very unreliable**, it is **not** possible to use this service.

As **unpaid volunteers** (to promote Community Based Tourism (tourism that benefits the local communities, not the tour operator) we are connected to the Kyrgyz tour operator and take care of all the communication between the guests and all the local parties. For all your questions, wishes or remarks you can come to us. The program was compiled by us.

Health

* Inoculations

For Kyrgyzstan no inoculations are required.

It is anyway wise to protect yourself against DTP as it is to have Hepatitis A protection.

We don't have much chance to come in to contact with these diseases, but they are so serious that it is wise to ban even the slightest of chances.

* You are advised to ask your local health organisation or doctor for information on specific inoculations.

* We like to hear from our guests any health problem that is **of consequence to the trip**. Like diabetes, heart problems, (food)allergies etc.

* During the trip we will take care of tea and safe bottled water.

* Upon arrival in Kyrgyzstan we will give some tips and instructions to prevent health problems.

Money

* For personal use (souvenirs, bottled en alcoholic drinks etc.) it is wise to exchange some money. In most cases 50 - 150 euro is sufficient. The bank notes shouldn't be smaller than 20 euro, preferably 50 euro.

* It is permitted to bring up to 10.000 euro's in cash to Kyrgyzstan without notification.

Paying the cash travel sum is possible upon arrival in the guesthouse. You will get a bilingual invoice from the local tour operator.

Documents

* Residents of Europe can stay in Kyrgyzstan **without a visa** for up to **60 days**.

* Your passport has to be **valid** for at least **3 months** at the moment of departure from Kyrgyzstan.

* It is wise to bring a photocopy of the datasheet of your passport and to keep it separately.

* It is also wise to keep your passport in a folder you can wear around your neck, or in a so-called fanny pack.

* We ask our guests to have a good **travel insurance**, that will cover all medical costs, repatriation and accidents. The tour operator is **not responsible** for any problems outside of the normal safety responsibilities.

Good to know

* In summertime it is 4 hours earlier in Kyrgyzstan, than in mainland Europe.

* In Kyrgyzstan it is not easy to have a strictly vegetarian diet. We will try to arrange such a cooking process, but can not in every case avoid that some broth is used to spice up the dishes.

* In the guesthouses we have electric power. Sockets are of the European type (comparable to NL, D, BE, FR etc.) (220 V). In the yurt camps there is no electricity.

* We prefer that you pack your luggage in a **soft bag or backpack** (if possible avoid hard plastic suitcases). This is more convenient to pack in the minibuses.

Accommodation and meals

In the guesthouses we sleep in double rooms (rooms with single beds and rooms with twin beds). Unfortunately it is **not** possible to book single rooms. In case of **individual** participants you will get a roommate of the **same gender**.

All meals are included.

During your whole stay you will be accompanied by Dutch, English, German, Kyrgyz and Russian speaking interpreter Meerim Kabbes.

Literature

In more specialised bookstores you might find the following books:

*Kyrgystan by Rowan Stewart; published Odyssey. 2e edition

*Central Asia, the practical handbook; publ. Cadogon guides

*Siberien und Zentralasien; publ. Kohlhammer

*Turaj Atabaki & Joris Versteeg: Centraal-Azië, publ. KIT

*Peter Hopkirk: Foreign Devils on the Silkroad

*Frederic Prokosch: De Aziaten

*Central Asia: Lonely Planet

*Trekking in Russia & Central Asia: Frith Maier

*Kirgistan entdecken door Thomas Scholl, Trescher-Reihe Reisen. ISBN 3-89794-028-0

Good to bring

- Instant coffee (Not easy to obtain in Kyrgyzstan, expensive, old and often of poor quality) In Kyrgyzstan tea is the national drink.

- Sunglasses and/or spare glasses.

- A hat or a sun cap. The sun can be very bright.

- Small backpack to use during the walks.

- A light rain/wind coat.

- Good walking shoes (In Kyrgyzstan hard to come by) (Real mountaineering shoes are not necessary)

- Slippers or sandals (In the guest houses and yurts we are asked to take off our shoes. Easy footwear can be handy)
- A heavy plastic bag to protect your photo equipment during a rain shower.
- Battery chargers and spare batteries for your phone and photo/video equipment. The voltage in KG is 220 V, the sockets are European. Bring adaptors if necessary.
- A headlight (mining lamp) or flashlight is very handy in the yurt camps.
 - If necessary you should bring enough medicines. It is wise to bring a list of the important medicines, containing the brand name, the chemical composition and the dosage. In case of an emergency we can try to find these medicines in a local pharmacy.
- In the yurt camps it can be cold at night, so bring a warm sweater or jacket.
- Sun lotion
- A towel for personal use. In the guesthouses these will be provided.