



# Guided group tour to southwestern Kyrgyzstan



## Visiting the Fruit Forests



# Visiting the Fruit Forests in the southwest of Kyrgyzstan 2019

(guided group tour)

**08 September - 19 September 2019**

(Please note : You will leave Europe on the 08th of September 2019, but because of the time difference you will arrive in Kyrgyzstan on the 09th of September around 05.00 h. AM local time)

Minimal participation: 8 persons

Maximum participation: 16 persons

Trip under the guidance of English/Dutch/Russian/Kyrgyz speaking guide/interpreter Meerim Kabbes and Dutch botanist Brian Kabbes(English/Dutch/German).

**Price: 1.400 Euro p.p., excluding flight.** (the flight is approximately. 450 euro, depending on the time of booking and the chosen airline carrier. This flight you have to book yourself, but we will advice you which flight has the best connection) **The program in Kyrgyzstan starts on September 09th 2019 at 05.00 h. AM** local time after arrival at Manas International Airport, Bishkek.

The price is based on double rooms with separate beds. Unfortunately it is not possible to book single rooms. In case of individual participants you will get a roommate of the same gender.

## **Method of payment**

There is no down payment in advance.

The travel sum (**1400 euro**) 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.

## **INCLUDED:**

**All transportation in Kyrgyzstan**, as described in the program, including the transportation from and to the Manas airport. We will use our own minibuses and skilled drivers.

**Accommodation** in local guesthouses. You will stay in double rooms with separate beds.

**Full board** is provided by us. Underway (by car or foot) we will serve a picnic lunch. During our stay in Bishkek we will eat in restaurants. Save drinking water and tea will be provided. Other bottled and alcoholic drinks are not included. We will have as different cuisines as possible. So we will have among others Kyrgyz, Oigur, Uzbek, Dungan, Chinese and Slavic meals.

**Local guides.**

**Interpreter.**

**Local admissions** to visit National Parks as described in the program.

#### **SUMMARY:**

We will care for you from arrival until your departure in Kyrgyzstan. For expenses of personal nature like souvenirs, alcoholic beverages etc. you will need some extra money (circa 50 to 150 euro).

**In case of unforeseen circumstances it is possible that minor changes in the program will be made.**

#### **Description Botanical Tour**

Kyrgyzstan has a very rich and abundant flora. In this country there are more native species than there are in the whole of Europe! Some of them are only to be found in Kyrgyzstan.

We organize under the guidance of Brian Kabbes, a Dutch botanist, a tour to the country's southwest. Little study is made on the flora of Kyrgyzstan, the trip will have the characteristics of an exploration. Brian has been studying the Kyrgyz flora and is fluent in English and German.

You will visit a series of different landscapes and a huge diversity of vegetation types. Apart from the flora, nature in general as well as geology and culture will be regarded. This trip will give you the opportunity to get acquainted with a wide range of habitats and the corresponding flora and fauna. Kyrgyzstan is next to that also a very photogenic country, (nature)photographers will have ample opportunities to make wonderful pictures.

During this trip we will visit the **fruit forests** and the natural **walnut forests** of southwestern Kyrgyzstan. Also we will explore the many fruit varieties that are virtually unknown in Europe.

The trip is completely provided for. You will spend the nights in guesthouses of local families. Transportation will be by minibus. Except from the Dutch botanist Brian Kabbes, guide/interpreter Meerim Kabbes will take care of the extra information and the communication with the local people.

Are you next to flora also interested in other cultures, do you have an adventurous nature and aren't you looking for luxury and comfort in the first place, then this will be a trip you will remember with pleasure.

Everything is included in the price, except flight, bottled drinks and personal expenses.

The price of the flight from Europe depends on the carrier, place of departure and time of booking. The costs will be somewhere around 400 - 500 euro. Non stop flights are not possible. Stopovers are in

Moscow or in Istanbul, depending on the carrier. It is possible to fly with Aeroflot, Turkish Airlines or Pegasus to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. We will advise the best connecting flights before your booking.

For more information and booking:

**Brian Kabbes**

**Jelke Sjoerdslaan 4**

**9262 SL Suameer (Frl.)**

**tel. 0031(0)512 372521**

**suameer@xs4all.nl**

Or look at our website

<http://www.kabbes.nl/fruitandfelt.html>

Photos you can find on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/brian.kabbes.5>

## **Visiting the Fruit Forests of the southwest of Kyrgyzstan 2019**

**Dates : 08 September - 19 September 2019**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Destination</b>	<b>Distance - Time</b>	<b>Information</b>
1.	08.09	Leaving Europe		Flights through Moscow or Istanbul, depending on the chosen air carrier.
2.	09.09	Manas Airport - Bishkek	31 km – 35 min	<b>Arrival around 05.00 h AM</b> , accommodation in the guesthouse, city tour.
3.	10.09	Bishkek - Ala Archa National Park – Bishkek	35 km – 50 min	Walk in the Ala Archa National Park (here we will see the first wild apples ( <i>Malus sieversii</i> )).
4.	11.09	Bishkek - Chichkan	247 km – 5 hours	To Chichkan, on the way stops at interesting spots, accommodation in a motel.
5.	12.09	Chichkan - Arkit (Sary Chelek)	251 km – 5 hours	To Arkit (Sary Chelek), on the way several interesting stops. Stay in a guesthouse in Arkit.
6.	13.09	Arkit - Sary Chelek - Arkit	15 km – 40 min	Visit of the Sary-Chelek lake, walk through the spectacular fruit forests (wild apples and several other wild fruit trees (pears, walnuts, plums))

				Picknick in nature. Stay in a guesthouse in Arkit.
7.	14.09	Arkit	-	A walk through the sleepy village of Arkit and into the surrounding hills to explore the local fruit trees. In the afternoon a workshop making Manty. Stay in a guesthouse in Arkit.
8.	15.09	Arkit - Ak Tash - Arkit	30 km – 1 hour	Day excursion to find the illustrious Malus niedzwetskyana, the red-fleshed apple, also a visit to the fruit forests of Ak Tash. Stay in a guesthouse in Arslanbob
9.	16.09	Arkit - Chichkan	251 km – 5 hours	Back to Chichkan. On the way we will have several stops and short walks, accommodation in a motel.
10.	17.09	Chichkan - Bishkek	247 km – 5 hours	To Bishkek, on the way stops on (amongst others) the Töö Ashuu Pass (3586 meter), stay in the guesthouse.
11.	18.09	Bishkek	10 km	City tour, Osh bazaar, souvenir shops, Tumar, stay in the guesthouse in Bishkek.
12.	19.09	Bishkek – Manas Airport	31 km – 35 min	Driving to Manas airport, <b>flying around 06.30 h. AM</b>

*(Due to unforeseen events it is possible that we have to make adjustments to the program.)*

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME

### Day 1 08 September 2019

#### Leaving Europe.

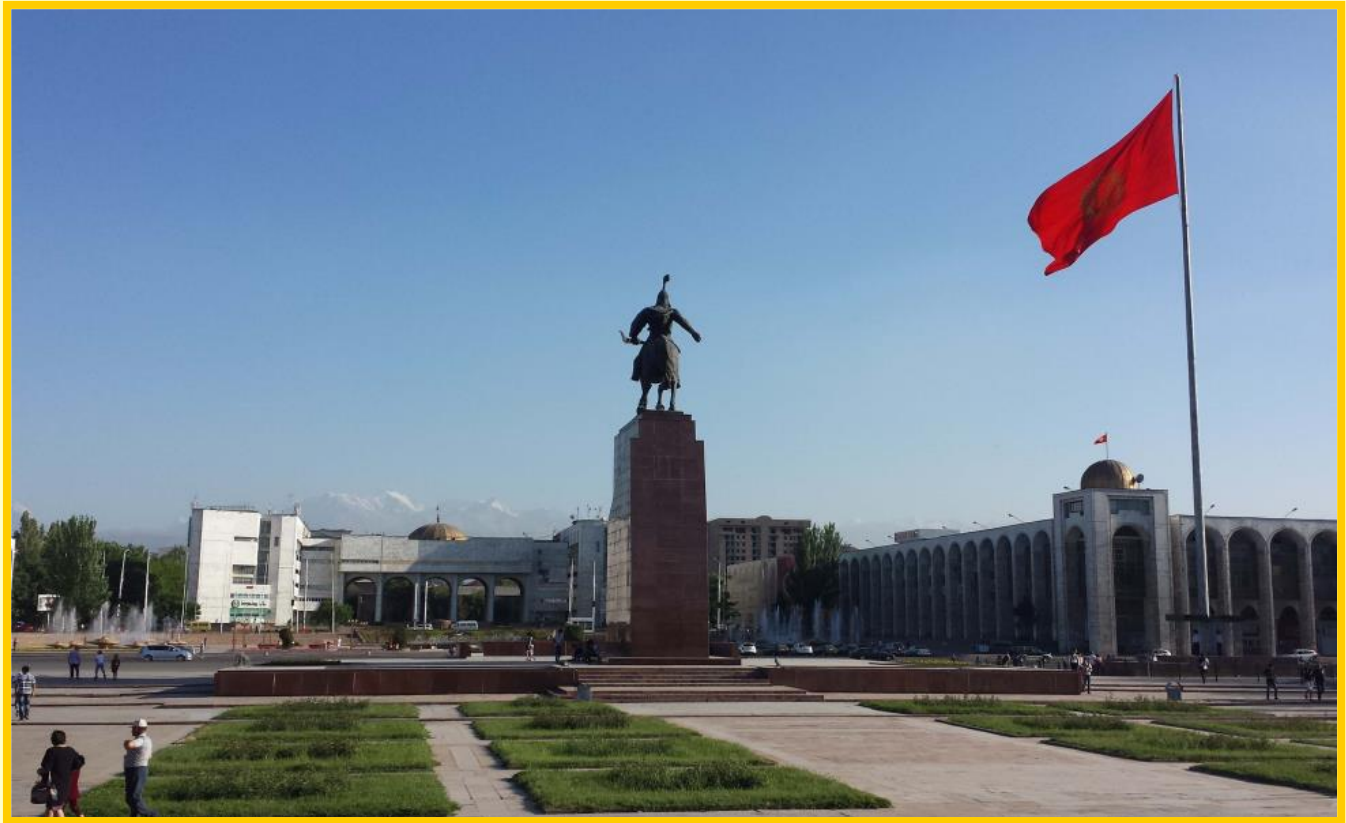
You leave Europe in the afternoon and fly via Moscow or via Istanbul to Manas airport in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

### Day 2 09 September 2019

**Arrival.** 31 km – approximately 35 minutes

We meet you at **05.00 h.** in the morning at Manas Airport and bring you to the guesthouse in Bishkek. After breakfast and some sleep we make a city tour through Bishkek. We will visit the Ala Too Square among others. Dinner in a Kyrgyz restaurant in Bishkek.

*Accommodation: guesthouse*



*Ala Too Square in Bishkek*

### **Day 3 10 September 2019**

**The day trip to Ala Archa National Park.** 35 km - approximately 1 hour

We drive to the Ala-Archa National Park (a juniper canyon), where you can make the botanical walk and enjoy nature.

The Ala Archa National Park is an alpine national park in the Tian Shan mountains of Kyrgyzstan, established in 1976 and located approximately 40 km south of the capital city of Bishkek. The park, which includes the gorge of the Ala-Archa River and the mountains surrounding it, is a popular destination point for weekend picnickers, hikers, horse trekkers, skiers as well as mountain climbers looking for challenging ice, rock and mixed routes. The park covers about 200 square kilometers, and its altitude ranges from about 1,500 meters at the entrance to a maximum of 4,895 meters at Peak Semenova Tian-Shanski, the highest peak in the Kyrgyz Ala-tau range of the Tian Shan. The flora of the park is abundant and there are many characteristic plant species to find, including wild apples (*Malus sieversii*). Dinner in an Oigur restaurant in Bishkek. *Accommodation: guesthouse*

### **Day 4 11 September 2019**



**Bishkek - Chichkan.** 247 km – approximately 5 hours

After breakfast we will follow our route towards Chichkan. Therefore we go over the Too Ashuu Pass (3586 meters) and drive through the valley of Suusamir. To make this traveling day as comfortable as possible, we stop at interesting spots on the way, including a picnic lunch with a beautiful view over the Suusamir Valley. The Chichkan Gorge is spectacularly beautiful place where we will have a short walk. We will have dinner and stay in a motel in the gorge.

*Accommodation: guesthouse*

**Day 5 12 September 2019**

**Chichkan - Arkit.** 251 km – approximately 5 hours

We drive along the Naryn river, and see the beautiful azure blue reservoirs between Toktogul and Tash Komur. In this spectacular landscape there are exclusive plant species such as the Caper tree (*Capparis herbacea*) whose flower buds can be eaten as capers. During our trip, which takes about five hours, we will see many different landscapes and will stop at interesting spots, for instance to see *Crataegus pontica* in fruit. This hawthorn has edible, sweet fruits. Picnic lunch on the way, dinner in Arkit.

*Accommodation: guesthouse of a local family.*



*Wild collected apples (Malus sieversii)*

**Day 6 13 September 2019**

**Arkit - Sary Chelek - Arkit** 15 km – 40 min

In a four wheel drive truck we drive to the impressive National Park in Sary Chelek. And immediately we are in the fruit forest, consisting of wild apples (*Malus sieversii*) in all kinds, shapes, colors and flavors. We will also see wild plums in yellow, orange, red, blue and black. The oldest wild walnut trees here are more than 1000 years old! We have the whole day for walking in the fruit forest and

exploring the Sary Chelek lake. Meanwhile, we will try to taste as much apples, pears and plums as we like. Picnic lunch on the way, dinner with the family in Arkit.

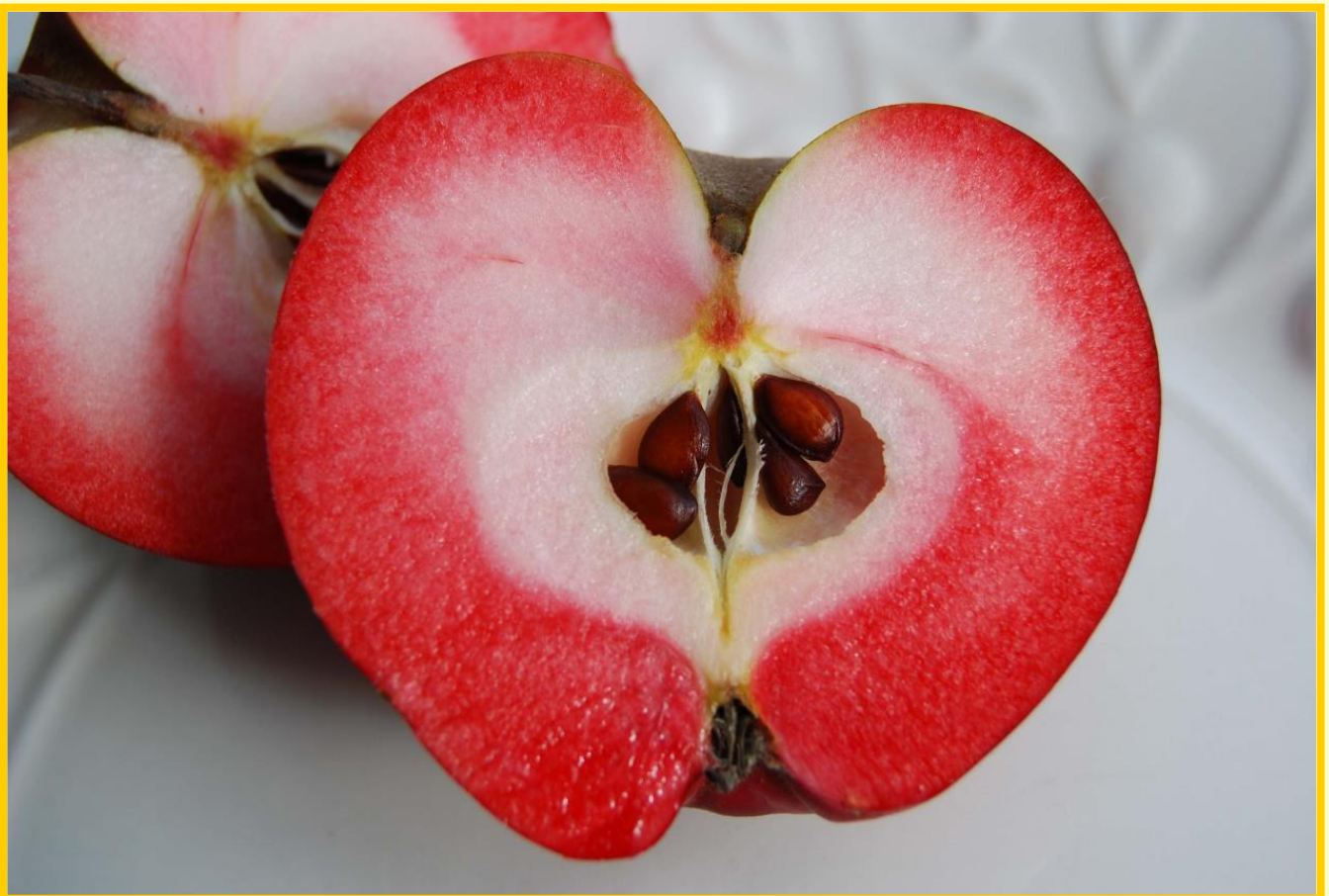
*Accommodation: guesthouse of a local family.*

### **Day 7 14 September 2019**

#### **Arkit -**

This day we will take our time to explore the village of Arkit where time seems to stand still since Soviet times. In the morning we will walk through the sleepy village and see many local fruit trees. Also we will go into the surrounding hills to find *Crataegus pontica* in fruit. After lunch a local chef will give away her family recipes to make Manty, one of the national dishes in Kyrgyzstan. This lady is famous for her Manty and will teach us how we can make them ourselves. In the evening our dinner will be the fruit of our labour, Manty (dough envelopes filled with mutton, onions, pumpkin, potatoes and spices). For vegetarians alternative fillings are possible.

*Accommodation: guesthouse*



*Malus niedzwetskyana, the red fleshed apple*

### **Day 8 15 September 2019**

**Arkit - Ak Tash - Arkit** 30 km – 1 hour



Today we will visit the forests of Ak Tash, guided by a dendrologist and a local ranger. The forests of Ak Tash are normally closed for visitors, but we have special permission to enter and explore the many endemic species of fruit trees growing here, among them the illustrious red fleshed apple, *Malus niedzwetskyana*. We walk up with a guide and have a picnic under the trees. Dinner in the guesthouse.

*Accommodation: guesthouse*

## **Day 9 16 September 2019**

**Arkit - Chichkan** 251 km - approximately 5 hours

We go back to Chichkan next to the enormous Toktogul Suu Saktagichi preserve in Toktogul. This regional town is the birthplace of Toktogul Satylganov, one of Kyrgyzstans most famous singers and poets. On the way several stops at interesting spots. Picnic lunch on the way, dinner and stay in a motel in Chichkan.

*Accommodation: motel*

## **Day 10 17 September 2019**

**Chichkan – Bishkek.** 247 km – approximately 5 hours

Today we go back to Bishkek, but on the way we will pass through spectacular scenery. We stop at the Too Ashuu Pass (3586 meters), where we will have a wonderful view on the serpentine to Bishkek. A little further on we take a short walk through the gorge of the Kara Balta river. Here we see interesting plants and rock formations in beautiful colors and shapes. Picnic on the way, dinner in a Dungan restaurant in Bishkek.

*Accommodation: guesthouse*

## **Day 11 18 September 2019**

City tour. We visit souvenir shops and the colorful and lively Osh bazaar where we make a tour through the most interesting parts. We will have special attention to see the fruits on the market. Lunch we have in a local diner overseeing the Osh bazaar. In the evening we have a last dinner in a Uzbek restaurant.

*Accommodation: guesthouse*

## **Day 12 19 September 2019**

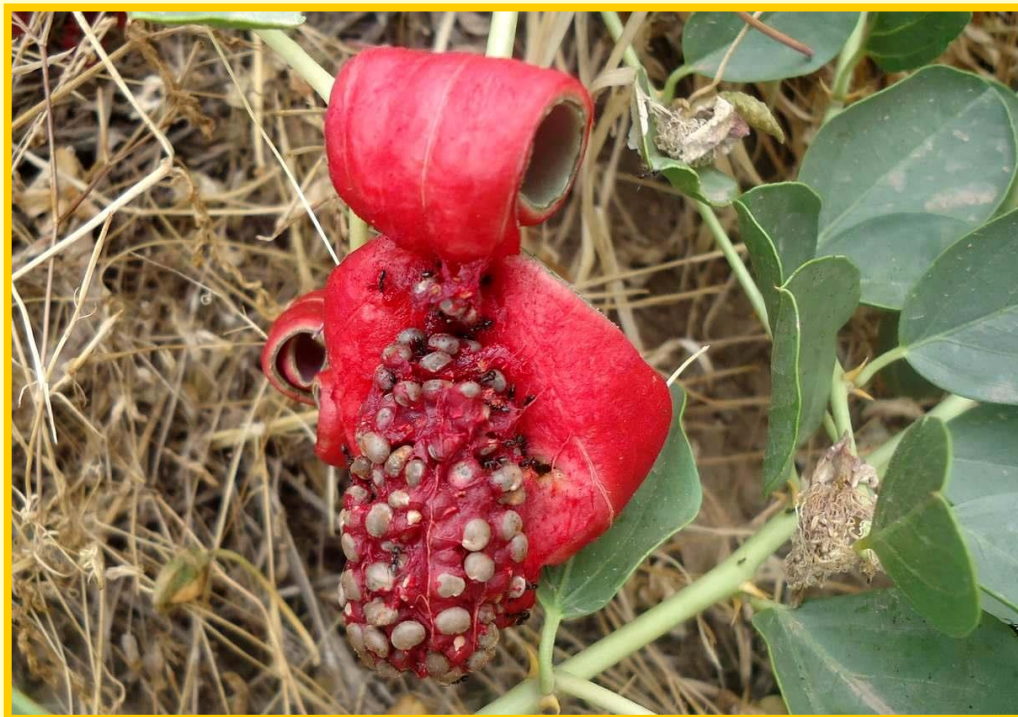
### **Departure.**

After an early breakfast we will bring you to Manas International Airport and say goodbye to breathtaking Kyrgyzstan. **Flying time is around 06.30 h. AM.**

*Due to unforeseen events it is possible that we have to make some adjustments to the program.*



*The Osh bazaar*



*Capparis herbacea , the Asian Caper tree*