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## To the heart of Tien – Shan

### Trekking tour

During the tour, we work with local communities and the resources available to them. Many of our local service providers are working towards a more sustainable future of local tourism through efforts to reduce/recycle plastic waste, compost in yurts and homes, and use locally produced materials. You have the opportunity to contribute to a more sustainable future by bringing a reusable water bottle with you, reducing waste when possible, and properly disposing of items when they run out.

Dates of the tour: 05.07.2025 – 18.07.2025  
19.07.2025 – 01.08.2025  
02.08.2025 – 15.08.2025

Route: Bishkek Karkara At Jailoo Iva Camp Glina camp Merzbacher glade Komsomolskiy glacier Dikiy glacier South Enylshek BC Karkara Issyk-Kul Lake Bishkek

### Highlights of the tour

- Experience with nomads
- Amazing nature and beautiful mountain views
- Experience nomadic life sleeping in a yurt
- Breathtaking mountains
- Trekking along the glacier
- Enjoy the quiet charms and warm hospitality of Kyrgyzstan



## Itinerary

### **Day 1 Airport – Bishkek city – Karkara Base camp (2200m a.s.l.). Drive 400 km, 8 h, +900 m.**

Upon arrival to the international airport “Manas” meet local guide and driver, transfer to Bishkek city. Upon arrival accommodation at the hotel (early check-in is included). After rest and breakfast, we start drive to Karkara valley. The road is going through Boom gorge and further along the north shore of Issyk-Kul Lake. Lunch en route at a local cafe. The drive from lunch place will take us about 4 hours. The road passes through Tup village, then continues East towards checkpoint Karkara. As we are going to enter the border zone, we must show our border-permits and passports to the soldier on duty. Dinner and overnight in tents.

### **Day 2 Full day in Karkara Base camp (2900m a.s.l.). Hike 10 km, 3-4 h, +400m/-400**

Easy walk through the alpine area to Chamyn Sai pass. You will walk along the border between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, then start ascent to the pass 2700 m, from the pass you will see the entire Karkara valley, whole Char-Kuduk area and Tup gorge. The hike is not difficult and allows hikers to prepare for higher altitudes, also it requires a clear knowledge of the route from the guide. The trail goes along a wide gorge settled by yurts of nomads, and presenting a good chance to see the the life way of disappearing culture. Dinner and overnight at the base camp.

### **Day 3 Helicopter flight to Inylchek Valley, trek to Iva Camp (2900m a.s.l.). Trek 10 km, 3-4 h, +700 m**

After breakfast we take a helicopter flight to starting point of the trek in Inylchek Valley to a place which called Prijim. Then we trek up along the valley to the foot of Inylchek glacier. On the way you can see Nansen peak (5690 m) and Tuz pass (4001 m). In 1902, German geographer Gottfried Merzbacher noticed Nansen peak. Even he, who had seen the panorama of many mountains on the globe, such as the Alps, the Caucasus, the Himalayas and Karkorum, had a feeling of surprise and delight at the sight of the giant ridge that bounded the valley of Inylchek from the South. Its mighty snow-capped peaks of the most varied sculptural forms (of which the creative forces of nature are capable for) are visible all the way from West to East. In his opinion this is the one of the greatest Alpine paintings of the globe. Arrival to the tent camp called Iva. Meet by local staff and get accommodated. Dinner and overnight in tents.

### **Day 4 Iva Camp – Glina camp (3100 m a.s.l.). Trek 8 km, 5-6 h, +200 m.**

After breakfast we take our lunch boxes and leave the tent camp. Today's trekking is going to continue along the lateral moraine of the Inylchek glacier to the confluence with Putevodnyi glacier. Very steep ascents and descents pretty much exhausting that will add some challenge to the day. We will try to go through the right slope of the terrace. Please note: there are lots of rockfalls along the trail, it's better to be very careful. The way goes up and down all the time. The lunch will be on the glacier. Then we ascent another steep terrace along a narrow trail. The variety of terrains and the steepness of the slope trails will add some more adrenaline into the blood. Arriving to the next camp – Glina, we will have some tea/coffee and rest. The camp has got its name (which means “clay” in Russian) because of its location on a green clay field. Dinner and overnight in tents.

### **Day 5 Camp Glina – Merzbacher Glade (3400m a.s.l.). Trek 9 km, 5-6 h, +300 m.**

Today, we trek up and down various terraces, though we have about 9-10 km of a straight way for today. Only once we trek across a small glacier, passing a river and have lunch on the shore of a small lake, where you can have some rest. There will be about one hour left to get to the Camp. Upon arrival we get some tea or coffee along with wonderful views of Merzbacher lake from that spot. Merzbacher glade is the last grassy place in the area located just across the unique Merzbacher Lake. There is a scientific research station on the glacier. Scientists from all over the world come to work here every summer. They study glaciers moving, meteorological situation of the region and the lake Merzbacher itself. There is a large green area around which is flat enough for camping. Dinner and overnight at the tent camp.

### **Day 6 Merzbacher Lake. Trek 7 km, 4-5 h. -50m/+50 m**

In the morning we start radial hiking, cross South Inylchek glacier up to Mertzbacher Lake. The glacier terrain is ice covered with rocks and stones, sand and mud. Sandwiched between the Northern and Southern branches of the glacier lies the mysterious Merzbacher Lake, which form every summer and then, sometime in August, burst through the ice banks and the waters flow into the Inylchek river. The lakes empty twice a year – once in the summer and once in the winter – but most people only know about the summer event. In 1903, German geographer

and mountaineer, Gottfried Merzbacher, first discovered the lake while leading an expedition into Tian Shan Mountains aiming to reach the summit of Khan Tengri. Dinner and overnight at the tent camp.

**Day 7 Merzbacher Glade – Komsomolskiy Glacier (3800m a.s.l.). Trek 12 km, 4-6 h, +400 m.**

After breakfast we take lunch boxes and start a long day of trekking surrounded with beautiful landscapes – snow, rocks and multi-colored ice – black, white and sometimes even striped. The first part of our trek goes along the right side of the terraces and, right before we reach Shokalskiy glacier it smoothly goes down. The trail reaches the glacier and the black moraine which flows out of Komsomolez glacier. We follow it up to the glacier itself. The terrain is very diverse: rivers, crevices, ascents and descents, the hikes around those take much time and energy. It will be our first night at the glacier. Strong wind usually starts here after 4 pm. It might be much colder than before. Hot drinks are very helpful here. Dinner and overnight at the tent camp.

**Day 8 Komsomolskiy Glacier – Dikiy Glacier (3900m a.s.l.). Trek 10 km, 4-6 h, +100 m.**

Breakfast at the tent camp and departure. Trekking in this part of Tien-Shan is absolutely fabulous. The distinctive characteristic of the region is a great number of nameless peaks, unclimbed yet, about 5000 m above sea level high. Straight from the camp we cross Proletarskiy glacier moraine, get to the middle of Dikiy glacier moraine and walk along it up to the Dykiy glacier. The first part of the way is uneven - walk up and down. Closer to the glacier the moraine becomes more even, without so many crevices, creeks and, no needs of working around to escape crossing small streams. Lunch break. In front of Proletarskiy glacier we go up straight. Dikiy camp is located behind Pesnya Abaya peak (in 30 minutes). From Dikiy camp you have beautiful view of Khan Tengri, Pobeda, Gorky, Chapaev, Trehglavaya peaks. Tea and coffee are available at the camp. Dinner and overnight.

**Day 9 Dikiy glacier – South Inylchek base camp (4100m a.s.l.). Trek 8 km, 4-6 h, +200 m.**

Today, we have quite short trekking day. After breakfast we cross the whole glacier till the central moraine where the base camp is situated. The path is covered with rocks, ice, creeks, lakes and cracks. But it is possible to pass without any ropes and crampons. We arrive in the base camp (4000m) and have our lunch, tea/coffee. Inylchek Base Camp is ideally situated in the heart of North Tien-Shan at the South Inylchek glacier approximately at 4000 m. above the sea level. It has a picturesque view of Khan-Tengri (7010 m) and Pobeda (7439 m) peaks. The climbers from all around the world making attempts to climb to the magnificent peaks. Dinner and overnight in BC in tents.

**Day 10 South Inylchek base camp (4100m a.s.l.). Trek 5-6 km, 4-5 h, +100/-100 m.**

South Inylchek BC is open from 3-rd of July till 30-th of August every year and might be interesting not only for alpinists, but also for usual travelers, who would like to enjoy the views of beautiful mountains on the flight by helicopter. The beautiful pyramid of Khan Tengri is without doubt the Jewel of the Tien Shan. It is the second highest mountain in this most northerly and remote of the great Asian mountain ranges. Among the local people, the white peaks are known as 'The Mountains of Heaven'. Khan Tengri peak was first climbed by a Soviet expedition in 1931, via the West Col and West Ridge. Since then, all Soviet teams have climbed most of its ridges and faces. Optionally radial hiking to the foot of Khan Tengri peak. Dinner and overnight in tents.

**Day 11 Helicopter flight to Karkara – Issyk Kul Lake (1600m a.s.l.). Drive 200 km, 3 h, -2500 m.**

Breakfast at the Base Camp, then we take a helicopter flight to Karkara base camp. On arrival to the Base Camp, we start drive to the hotel located on the shore of Issyk-Kul Lake. Lunch en route at a local cafe. Also, on the way we visit so called "Stone Garden" or Cholpon Ata Petroglyphs site, the temple in the open air of Scythians and Hunguns civilizations dated back to 9-8 centuries BC till 3-4 centuries AD. The area of those stone drawing lies at the foot of Kungei Ala-Too Range with a beautiful view of the whole lake. After excursion short transfer to the hotel, accommodation. Dinner at the restaurant on the area of the hotel. Overnight.

**Day 12 Issyk- Kul – Bishkek (800m a.s.l.). Drive 270 km, 5-6 h, -800 m.**

After breakfast we start drive to the city of Bishkek and en route visit to Burana Tower (old minaret) near Tokmok city. That minaret was constructed in Balasagun town, one of the capitals of Karakhanid State existed in 12 centuries AD. Also, watch a collection of Balbals, Turkic ancient stone statues. Lunch en route. Continue drive to the capital. Upon arrival accommodation at the hotel. Dinner and overnight.

### Day 13 Sightseeing tour in Bishkek.

After breakfast we have sightseeing tour that is starting from the famous Osh bazaar, located at the west part of Bishkek. This is the brightest example of trading and boiling life. It is a good chance to buy handmade souvenirs, dried fruits, spices etc. After visit the market we head back to the city center to start walking tour around the main Ala Too square to see the legacy of the Soviet Union. There are several objects on our way: Manas Monument, the main national hero of Kyrgyz people; the State Flag and the ceremony of changing the Guards of Honor; the monument of the Revolution of 2010 and the White House, Lenin statue and the old Ala Too Square with number of interesting buildings of the past; Oak park and museum under the clear sky; unique fine art gallery and Kurmanjan Datka monument, finishing walk back at the main Ala Too square and transfer to the Victory Square dedicated to the WWII to finish the city tour by short excursion there. Lunch and dinner at a local café/restaurant. Overnight at the hotel.

### Day 14 Flight back home.

Early in the morning transfer to the airport. Departure back home.

*\*To get detailed day-by-day itinerary, please contact us by mail: [novinomad@elcat.kg](mailto:novinomad@elcat.kg)*

**The price of the tour** is 3680 USD per person (minimum size of the group is 4 pax, maximum is 12 pax)

#### Services included:

- Entrance fees
- Accommodation in hotels and camps
- Meal based on full board
- Helicopter flights
- All transfers as per program
- Border zone permit
- Mountain guide service
- Porter service
- All ecological and entrance fees as per program

#### Services not included:

- Visa support and visa fee (if necessary)
- All optional deviations from the main itinerary
- Beverages and meals not included in main menu
- Personal expenses (extra luggage, room service, medical expenses/insurance, etc)
- Sleeping bags
- Insurance
- Single room and tents

#### Supplements:

- Single accommodation in hotels – 160 USD per person.
- Single accommodation in tents – 200 USD per person.

#### Accommodation during the tour:

Place	Hotel / Guesthouse / Yurt Camp	Conditions:
Bishkek	B Hotel or similar	Twin room accommodation, private facilities in each room
Karkara	Base camp	Yurt or double tents. Shared outside European style toilet and shower cabins
Trekking days	Tents	Double tents for accommodation, Kitchen, Dining and Toilet tents
Issyk Kul	Karven Issyk-Kul Hotel or similar	Twin room accommodation, private facilities in each room

\*For additional payment, we can make upgrade where it is possible.

#### Additional information:

**Level of difficulty:** This tour is recommended for people with good trekking experience (trekking time approximately 5-6 hours per day).

**Luggage allowance on trek:** Your baggage on the trek will be carried by porters. The packed weight of your trek bag whilst trekking should be no more than 12 kg of personal belongings. For 1kg extra you pay 12 USD per program (the whole trek).

#### Equipment:

##### Necessary personal equipment – OBLIGATORY TO HAVE DURING THE TREK

- Waterproof trekking boots with ankle support
- Waterproof jacket or rain cape Sunhat or Cap with Ear and Neck Flap Cover Daypack 30 to 40 liters with rain cover
- Warm hat
- Sleeping bag (comfort rated -5°C, please ask about temperature)
- Trekking poles (highly recommended during stream crossings, steep incline or decline)
- Basic First Aid Kit including: antiseptic and antihistamine cream, throat lozenges, diarrhea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, insect repellent, and re-hydration salts
- Sun protection (including total bloc for ears, nose etc.)

- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Good quality sunglasses
- Warm gloves
- Trekking trousers
- Water bottles 1 liter (x2) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets
- Selection of dry bags (to keep trek bag contents, laptops, phones dry during trek Lipsticks Headtorch and spare batteries Thermal underwear

**Suggested personal equipment – OPTIONALLY TO HAVE DURING THE TREK**

- 1 pair of tennis shoes or shoes for city walking
- Trainers / sandals for river crossings
- Socks (1 pair for 2 -3 days of trekking)
- 1 waterproof over trousers
- 1 scarf to cover your hair (during the visits of mosques and churches)
- Shorts and/or swimwear (camps near lakes, hot springs or rivers)
- Buff/scarf (to protect against dust and cold)
- Washbag and toiletries
- Antibacterial handwash
- Small towel (fast dry material)
- Thermarest or similar sleeping mat
- Pen-knife (remember to pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
- Repair kit – (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
- Ear plugs against river noises, neighbor snoring

**Health:** If you have some specific sicknesses you need to bring own first aid kit with necessary medicaments. Together with the booking of the program please send us the copy of the tourists INSURANCE and your passport copy

**General map of the tour**



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