



# Central Mongolia

POP 298,500 / AREA 199,000 SQ KM

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## Why Go?

Roll out of Ulaanbaatar in a Russian jeep and you'll only need to put a hill or two between yourself and the city before the vast steppes of central Mongolia begin to unfold before your eyes. Verdant swaths of empty landscapes are sprinkled with tiny gers stretching to the horizon while magical light plays across the valleys. This is the Mongolian heartland, loaded with both historical sites and natural beauty, with plenty of scope to horse trek in the forested mountains, camp by some pretty lakes or soak in hot springs. Because the region is relatively close to Ulaanbaatar (and many sights in this chapter are right beside the city), infrastructure is a little better than other areas, with many sites reachable by paved road. The most scenic sub-region is the Khangai Mountains but you'll find equally stunning scenery in the Khan Khentii region, northeast of Ulaanbaatar.

## Best Places to Eat

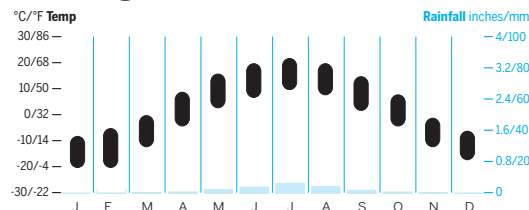
- » Ayanchin (p89)
- » Terelj Hotel (p90)
- » Hotel Mongolia (p91)
- » Fairfield (p104)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Duut Resort (p105)
- » Dreamland Ger Camp (p99)
- » Ecotourism Ger Camp (p89)
- » In a tent near Naiman Nuur (p102)

## When to Go

### Tsetserleg



**Mid-July** Naadam festivals in many *sums* and aimag capitals.

**August** Good for horse treks, hiking and biking.

**February** Experience Tsagaan Sar (Mongolian New Year) with a family of herders.



## Central Mongolia Highlights

- ① Saddle up for a horse trek to the beautiful, remote **Naiman Nuur Nature Reserve** (p102)
- ② Bike or hike over the hills and through the valleys of

- Gorkhi-Terelj National Park** (p82)
- ③ Focus your camera on the magnificent *takhi* (wild horse) at **Khustain National Park** (p91)

- ④ Hike into the forests to **Tövkhön Khiid** (p100), the site of Zanabazar's workshop
- ⑤ Camp by **Terkhiin Tsagaan Nuur** (p107), a