



Ulaanbaatar

Улаанбаатар

☎ 011, 021, 051 / POP 1,112,300 / AREA 1368 SQ KM

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Best Places to Eat

- » Millie's Café (p63)
- » Namaste (p64)
- » Bull (p61)
- » Veranda (p63)

Best Places to Stay

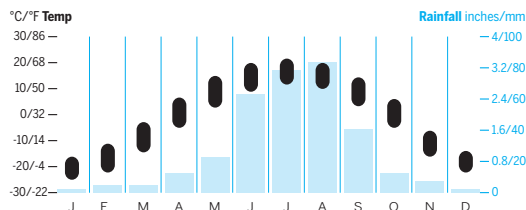
- » Lotus Guesthouse (p56)
- » Zaya's Hostel (p55)
- » Hotel Örgöö (p56)
- » Corporate Hotel (p57)

Why Go?

If Mongolia's yin is its pristine countryside, then Ulaanbaatar (UB) conforms nicely to its yang. An enormous city of pulsating commerce, heavy traffic, sinful nightlife and bohemian counter-culture, the Mongolian capital elicits as much shock as it does excitement. The contrasts within the city can be exasperating too; Armani-suited businessmen rub shoulders with mohawked punks and *del*-clad nomads fresh off the steppes. One minute you're dodging the path of a Hummer H2 and the next you're mystified by groaning Buddhist monks at Gandan Khiid. It's a wild place that bursts into life after slumbering through a long winter. UB is not the easiest city to navigate, as many buildings get lost in a forest of concrete towers, but with a little patience, travellers can take care of all their logistical needs, watch traditional theatre, sample international cuisine and party till three in the morning. This ever-changing city may be the biggest surprise of your Mongolian adventure.

When to Go

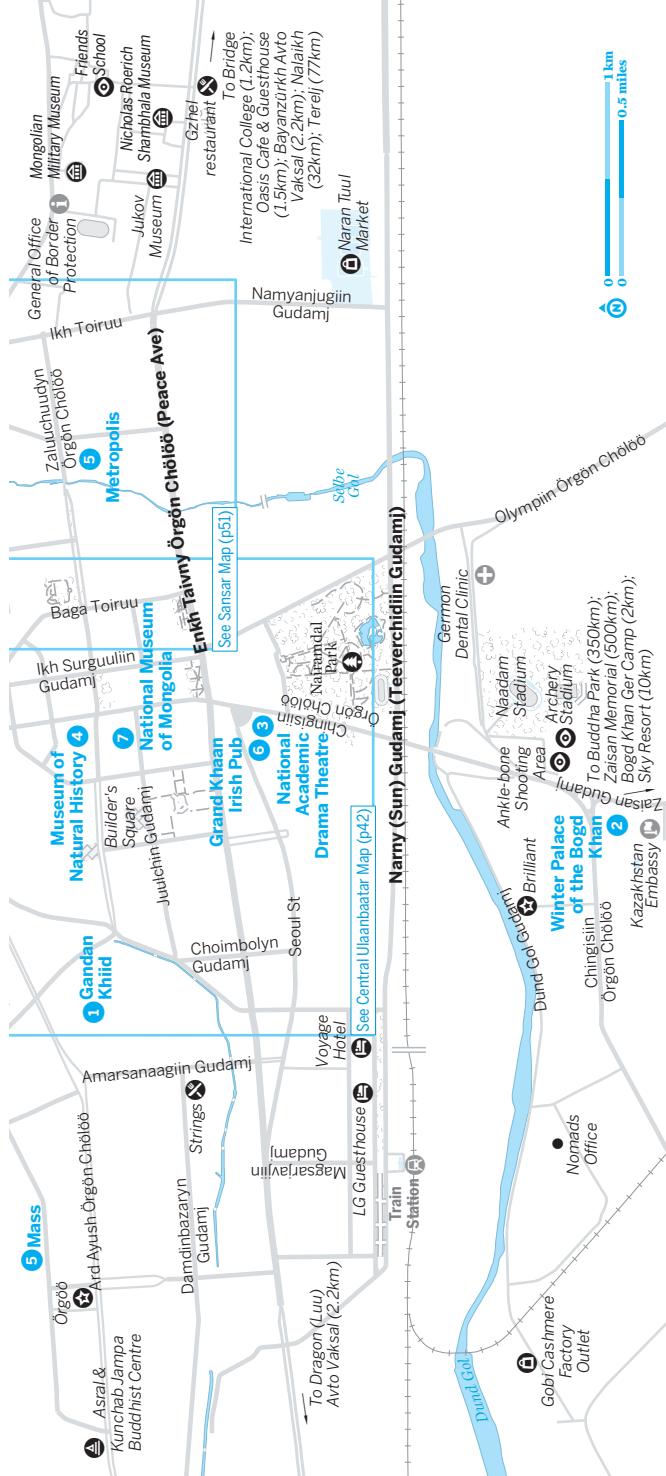
Ulaanbaatar



Mid-July The city to a halt to make way for Naadam and its wrestling, archery and horse racing.

August Lounge at street cafes and swill beer during the last throes of summer.

31 December A New Year's Eve in the world's coldest capital is one you won't soon forget.



Ulaanbaatar Highlights

- 1 Walk the prayer circuit around **Gandan Khaid** (p49), the country's largest monastery
- 2 Wonder at the eccentric collection of animals, curios

and artefacts at the **Winter Palace of the Bogd Khan** (p50)

- 3 Take in a performance of traditional dance and music

at the **National Academic Drama Theatre** (p66)

- 4 Come face to skull with the extraordinary dinosaur collection in the **Museum of Natural History** (p46)

- 5 Party til the wee hours at one of UB's hottest nightclubs, such as **Metropolis** or **Mass** (p66)
- 6 Kick back with a litre of Chinggis on the terrace of the

Grand Khaan Irish Pub (p63), a popular summer social spot

- 7 Weave through Mongolia's ancient past at the **National Museum of Mongolia** (p46)

