

## Trekking tour "To the Heart of Tien Shan"



*The trip we offer you below is a trekking tour along the mountain trails in Tien Shan. It begins in Bishkek, the capitals city of Kyrgyzstan. By a driven car you are transferred to Karkara base camp and then by helicopter to Inylchek valley, from here the trekking part starts. During the trek you will learn the real beauty of the mountains, the serenity and silence of Tien Shan, the Celestial mountains. Your trip finishes in the Base Camp "South Inylchek" at the foot of magnificent Khan Tengri peak (7010m).*

**If you use our service, your trip will be much easier as:**

- 1) You will be awaited in every Camp, you will be accommodated in comfortable tents and get delicious meals that include National and European cuisine;
- 2) You will have communication in every Camp, and will be able to send the information from there;
- 3) Your itinerary will be marked and described in details in a leaflet, that you will get when your use our service.

**If you use our service, you can save money, as:**

- 1) There is no need for you to bring (or rent) lots of things – like tent, dishes, frying pans, etc;
- 2) You don't need to buy any food;
- 3) No need to hire porters.

**Your itinerary for trekking to South Inylchek BC:** Bishkek – Karakol – Karkara base camp – Inylchek glacier – Putevodniy glacier – Mertzbakher Glade and Lake – Komsomolskiy glacier – Dikiy glacier – South Inylchek base camp – Karkara base camp – Bishkek.

### Tour program:

#### **Day 1 “Manas” international airport - Bishkek – Karakol.**

**Drive 400 km, 8 h, + 800 m.**

Arrival in Bishkek early in the morning. Meeting at the airport. Transfer to the Guest House. After short rest and late breakfast transfer to town of **Karakol**. Lunch on the way. Arrival to Karakol.

Overnight and dinner in hotel (1700 m. a.s.l.).

#### **Day 2 Karakol sightseeing tour. Karakol – Karkara Base Camp**

**Drive: 120 km, 3 hrs, + 500 m.**

After breakfast short sightseeing tour around Karakol.

*Karakol town situated in the east of the lake area, at the foot of the most picturesque mountains of Tien Shan. This sleepy but very interesting Old Russian town was first erected by Cossacks in the middle of 19th century and became an important garrison settlement.*

*Visiting **Dungan mosque**, a unique construction in Chinese style, but serving as a mosque. Also you will see an **Old Russian Orthodox Cathedral** made of wood without any nails.*

Afternoon transfer to Karkara Base Camp, located 120 km. to South-East from Karakol town, the drive will take us about 3 hours. The road passes through Tup village, then continues East towards checkpoint Karkyra. As we are going to enter the border zone, we must leave our border-permits here.

Dinner and overnight in tents (2200 m. a.s.l.).

#### **Day 3 Helicopter flight to Inylchek Valley, trek to Iva Camp.**

**Trek: 10 km, 3-4 h, +100 m.**

Breakfast. Helicopter flight to trek start point in **Inylchek Valley** to a place which called Prijim. Then we trek up along valley to the foot of Inylchek glacier. On the way you can see Nansen peak (5690 m) and Tuz pass (4001 m).

*In 1902, Nansen peak was noticed by the German geographer Gottfried Merzbacher. 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, are visible all the way from West to East. And in his opinion-this is one of the greatest Alpine paintings of the globe. "Among all the proud phalanx, the most magnificent is the peak that rises opposite the Tuz Ashu pass. It is difficult to conjure up a picture of the mighty, extended slopes of this giant, the wildness of its many crests, the splendor of the rapid glaciers, cut into a thousand different shapes and broken into endless fragments. I do not hesitate to extol this wonderful mountain range as the greatest in the Tien Shan mountains. He should certainly be given an appropriate name, " wrote Merzbacher.*

Dinner and overnight in tents (2900 m. a.s.l.).

#### **Day 4 Iva Camp – Glina camp.**

**Trek 8 km, 5-6 h, +200 m.**

*The **Inylchek Glacier** is the largest glacier and centerpiece of the Central Tien Shan. Extending 62 km in length with a width of over 3 km, the Inylchek Glacier is the third longest glacier outside the Polar Regions. It is estimated that the glacier holds enough ice to cover the entire country of Kyrgyzstan in three meters of melt water (Stewart, 2002). The first outside to travel into the area and visit the glacier was the European Pyotr Semenov in 1857. Climbing in the area began in the early 1900's and continued through the 1930's. Under Soviet rule, the permitting system restricted foreign access. It was not until after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 that foreign climbers began to climb in the area (Stewart, 2002).*

Breakfast. We take our lunch boxes and leave at about 9 am. Very steep ascents and descents take exhaust. We will try to go through to the right slope of the terrace. The trail crosses the terrace, later small rivers, washes out mountain slope, Putevodnyi glacier. We go up and down, up and down all the time. Lunch on the glacier at about 1 pm. 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 in blood. Arriving in Glina Camp we will have some tea or coffee and rest. The camp has got its name (which means “clay” in Russian) because of its location on a green clay field. Dinner at 6 pm.

Dinner and overnight in tents (3100 m. a.s.l.).

### **Day 5 Camp Glina – Merzbacher Glade.**

**Trek 9 km, 5-6 h, +300 m.**

Breakfast at 9 am. Again we trek up and down various terraces though have also about 10 km of straight path. Only once we trek across a small glacier, passing a river and have lunch on the shore of a small lake, swim and rest. It will be an hour left to get to the Camp. Upon arrival we have some tea or coffee, then dinner at 6 pm. Wonderful views of Merzbacher lake open to us from the Camp.

*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 working 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.*

Overnight in tents (3400 m. a.s.l.).

### **Day 6 Merzbacher Lake.**

**Trek 10 km, 4-5 h.**

Breakfast at 9 am. We take our lunch boxes and leave at 10 am. Across South Inylchek glacier up to Merzbacher Lake. The glacier terrain is ice covered with rocks and stones, sand and mud. The trekking time both ways is 4-5 hours.

*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. (Actually, the timing varies – for example in 2012 it happened on 10, July.) In reality, only part of the lake drains – the lake, which is 6 kilometres long and one kilometre wide, is in fact divided into two by a bridge of ice and whilst the lower half empties regularly, the upper part is always full of water. Also, 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 the German geographer and mountaineer, Gottfried Merzbacher, first discovered the lake while leading an expedition into the Tian Shan Mountains aiming to reach the summit of Khan Tengri. Forced back by ice, from their originally intended route through the Byankol Pass and along the Semyenov and Mushketov glaciers, they attempted a different approach – along the Enilchek glacier. Once again they failed, but they had shown that Khan Tengri was in fact on a ridge and not in the centre of that particular knot of the Tian Shan Mountains as had been thought. The expedition will be better remembered, however, for the discovery of the mysterious lake that now bears Merzbacher's name.*

Overnight in tents (3400 m. a.s.l.).

### **Day 7 Merzbacher Glade – Komsomolskiy Glacier.**

**Trek 12 km, 4-6 h, +400 m.**

Breakfast at 8 am.

We take our lunch boxes and set off at 9 am. It is 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 over 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, the dinner is as usual at 6 pm.

Overnight in tents (3800 m. a.s.l.).

### **Day 8 Komsomolskiy Glacier – Dikiy Glacier.**

**Trek: 7 km. / 3-5 h,rs. / + 100 m.**

Breakfast at 8 am. Departure at 9 am Lunch boxes. 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 5000m 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 Dikiy glacier. The first part of the way is uneven, we 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, coffee and dinner at 6 pm.

Overnight in tents (3900 m. a.s.l.).

### **Day 9 Dikiy glacier – South Inylchek base camp**

**Trek: 8 km. / 4-6 hrs. / + 200 m.**

**Optionally: Climbing to Pesnya Abaya - 4901 a.s.l.**

Breakfast at 8 or 9 am. Short trek, so we can depart at 10 am. We take our lunch boxes. 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 do without any ropes and crampons. We arrive in the base camp (4000m) at about 2 pm. We have our lunch, tea or coffee. Dinner at 7 pm.

***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.*

Overnight in BC in tents (4100 m. a.s.l.).

### **Day 10 South Inylchek base camp.**

Rest day at South Inylchek BC or Radial hiking to **Khan-Tengri Peak** (7010 m a. s. l.). **trek 15 km, 5-6 h, +/-150 m.**

*“South Inylchek” BC is open from 6 of July till 31 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, most of its ridges and faces have been climbed - all by Soviet teams.*

Overnight in BC in tents (4100 m. a.s.l.).

### **Day 11 Helicopter flight to Karkara helicopter pad – Issyk Kul Lake.**

**Drive 200 km, 3 h, -2500 m.**

Breakfast. Helicopter flight from BC to Karkara helicopter pad. Transfer to Issyk-Kul Lake. In the afternoon three hour drive to the Issyk-Kul Lake, lunch on the way. Issyk-Kul is the second largest alpine lake in the world after Lake Titicaca in South America.

*Measuring 182 km long by 58 km wide, the lake appeared as a result of volcanic activity. It is heated from below by thermal activity and never freezes even in the depths of winter. In the summer the water temperature reaches 25-28 degrees centigrade (warmer than the air) and you can swim in the lake enclosed on all sides by the snowy peaks of the Tien Shan Mountains. Extremely deep and nicely warm over the centuries the lake has been something of an oasis in this inhospitable mountain environment. With diverse flora and fauna Issyk-Kul Lake and the surrounding environments are rightly considered to be one of Central Asia most remarkable locations.*

Arrival to the hotel.

Overnight and dinner in hotel.

### **Day 12 Issyk- Kul – Bishkek.**

**Drive: 250 km, 5-6 h, -800 m.**

Breakfast. Time at leisure. Lunch.

In the afternoon transfer to Bishkek through tight **Boom Gorge** where boisterous **Chu River**, so much loved by rafters (routes up to 6th category difficulty!), cuts its way.

*On the way visit **Burana Tower** (old minaret) near Tokmok town. That minaret was constructed in Balasagyn town; one of the capitals of Karakhanid State existed in 11-12 centuries AD. Explore ruins of that important trading point at the Great Silk Road and visit a little local museum telling about that civilization. Also watch a collection of **Balbals**, Turkic ancient tombs.*

Arrival to Bishkek. Accommodation in guesthouse.

### **Day 13 Sightseeing tour in Bishkek.**

After breakfast a short sightseeing tour in the city.

*The capital and industrial centre of Kyrgyzstan, **Bishkek** is a city of wide avenues, handsome buildings and Soviet heritage. It is the permanently snow capped Kyrgyz Alatau mountain range which towers over Bishkek providing a quite stunning backdrop.*

Visit **Manas Monument**, the main national hero of the Kyrgyz people. Then excursion to the **State History Museum** and walking tour around main **Ala Too Square** to watch ceremony of changing of the Guard of Honor, **Independence Monument**, and finish at the Old Square with **Government House**. Transfer to the **Victory Square** to finish the city tour by short excursion there. After excursion tourists may go shopping in the largest department store in the city – **ZUM** and a colorful **oriental bazaar**.

Farewell dinner in restaurant.

Overnight is in hotel

#### **Day 14 Flight back home.**

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

**The price of program in 2020: 2540 USD per person.**

**SGL accommodation in hotels: 130 USD per person.**

**SGL accommodation in tents: 110 USD per person.**

**Supplement for climbing to Pesnya Abaya Peak: 75 USD per person**, included mountain guide service, and rent of rope and individual equipment (crampons, helmet, harness, carbine, repshnur - 2 m.).

#### **The price included:**

- accommodation in Bishkek in Asia Mountains hotel or similar – 3 nights
- accommodation in Issyk-Kul Lake – 1 night
- accommodation in Karakol town Amir or in Green Yard Guest House – 1 night
- accommodation and full board (hot food for breakfast and dinner, lunches as snack boxes) in the permanent tent camps along the trek At Jailoo – Base Camp “South Inylchek” – 9 nights
- helicopter flight from “Karkara” Base Camp to trek start point in Inylchek valley
- helicopter flight Base Camp “South Inylchek”- Base Camp “Karkara”
- all transfers as per program
- FB during whole program
- frontier zone permit
- mountain guide service
- porter service – not more than **12 kg per person (see below)**
- all ecological and entrance fees as per program

#### **The cost doesn't include:**

- 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)

#### **\*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 1 kg extra you pay **12 \$** per program per 1 kg (the whole trek). It is possible to leave travel clothes or other items not required on trek in our office – we will deliver them to Karkara Camp on your arrival there after BC.

#### **Equipment**

For this trip you will need the following: 4 season sleeping bag, walking boots, waterproof jacket and trousers, fleece jacket or similar, warm hat and gloves, sunglasses, a daypack of around 40 liters, head-torch and batteries, 2 x 1 liter water bottles, sun cream. A down jacket, pair of sandals and walking sticks are recommended.

## Map of route.

