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Tour Notes

Kamchatka Discovery

Tour Duration – 11 Days



Tour Rating

Fitness ●●●●○ | Off the Beaten Track ●●●●● | Culture ●●○○○ | History ●●●○○ | Wildlife ●●●●○

Tour Pace

Busy

Tour Essentials

Accommodation: Mix of comfortable hotels and camping

Included Meals: Daily Breakfast (B), plus Lunches (L) and Dinners (D) as shown in the itinerary.

Group Size: Maximum of 18 (you may be joined by travellers from companies other than Undiscovered Destinations). Please see notes below.

Start Point: Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky

End Point: Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky

Transport: Specially designed 6-wheel trucks or caterpillar type / motorboat / internal flights

Country Visited: Russia

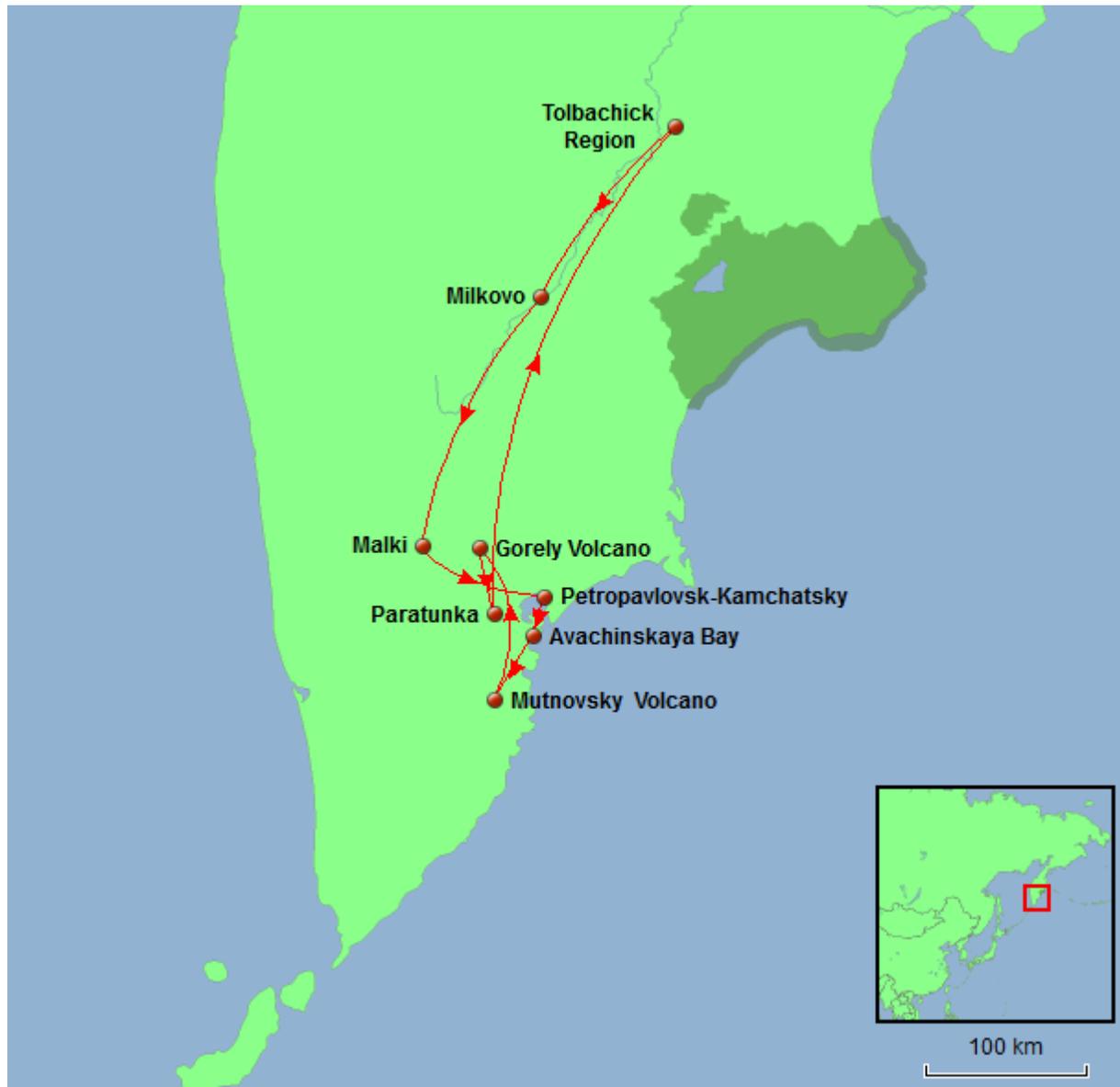
Group Size – Important Information

The maximum group size for this tour is 18. The group will be led by an experienced local guide and dedicated transport will be provided. The tour will include an English-speaking guide, but may also be guided in other languages. In the event there are 6 or more English-speaking travellers in the group, the tour will be exclusively English-speaking guided.



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Tour Map Kamchatka Discovery



Tour Highlights

- ✓ Take an optional helicopter ride over the splendid Valley of the Geysers or to the Kuril Lake
- ✓ Climb active volcanoes
- ✓ Share the opportunity of fishing on the Bystraya River with Brown Bears
- ✓ Meet the Even, some of Kamchatka's original inhabitants
- ✓ Enjoy the solitude and grandeur of this magnificent unspoilt area





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Kamchatka Discovery

Kamchatka is a vast wilderness perched on Russia's far eastern frontier, jutting out into the Pacific Ocean. Renowned for its unspoilt landscapes, its fantastic wildlife and its spectacular natural phenomena, it represents one of the most untouched, and certainly least visited, places on our planet. On this trip we take in the very best of the region, with opportunities to visit the breathtaking Valley of the Geysers, climb up active volcanoes, and meet some of Kamchatka's original inhabitants, the Even. Kamchatka is one of the last frontiers of travel. Explore it now.

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested and on occasions alternative accommodation, of a similar standard to that named below, will be used.

Please note that the order of the itinerary may change locally. Changes often occur en route due to the nature of travel in these remote areas and this itinerary is only a guideline of the activities possible on each day.

Tour Guide

Our guides are a key strength, chosen for their knowledge of and passion for the areas in which they work. All of our guides are carefully hand-picked, and are not just passing through these countries, but are usually locally born. Unlike some companies it should be noted we do not send a guide or tour leader from Undiscovered Destinations in the UK as we have every confidence in our locally appointed representative who is responsible for operating the tour on our behalf. Where possible you will have the same guide throughout your trip but on occasions it may be necessary to change the guide at one or more points during the tour.

The tour will include an English-speaking guide, but may also be guided in other languages. In the event there are 6 or more English-speaking travellers in the group, the tour will be exclusively English-speaking guided.

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky

Arrive in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky and transfer to your hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure to relax after your long flight. No guided arrangements are included today. Overnight at Geyser Hotel or similar. (D)

Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky

The improbably named Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky is the main settlement of the Kamchatka region, and was founded in 1741 by the Russian explorer Vitus Bering. The name 'Petropavlovsk' means 'Peter and Paul', as the city is named after Bering's two ships, the St Peter and the St Paul. The architecture of the city itself is typical of the Soviet style, and is surrounded by mountains and volcanoes, which periodically erupt. During the Crimean War, this far-flung outpost of the Russian Empire was attacked by Anglo-French forces, but never fell. Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky is the second largest city in the world that cannot be reached by road, after Iquitos, Peru. Today its source of wealth comes mainly from the fishing industry.



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Day 2: Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky - Avachinskaya Bay - Mutnovsky Volcano (Overall driving distance: 2.5 hours; 90 km)

We take boats into Avachinskaya Bay with excellent opportunities for spotting sea mammals including whales, dolphins and seals. During the excursion which will be about 5 hours in duration, there will be an opportunity for you to fish. Your captain's mate will prepare fresh crabs and he will offer to use your catch to prepare a fish soup for lunch. Later we drive to Mutnovsky Volcano, considered the most impressive in the area, and permanently active. Camping overnight. (BLD)

Note: A sleeping bag and camping mat will be needed. These can be hired locally for RUB 200 per person per day.

Day 3: Mutnovsky Volcano

Approximate hiking distance: 12km / Difference in height is about 800m

Approximate hiking time: 6 hours + 2 hours for the observation of the crater

We ascend the crater of Mutnovsky volcano (2322 m), which is one of the most outstanding volcanic phenomena in Kamchatka, with its powerful gas and steam spurts and boiling mud cauldrons. Today our trek will be about 12km and is anticipated to take around 6 hours. Camping overnight. (BLD)

Day 4: Gorely Volcano

Approximate hiking distance: 10km / Difference in height is about 900m

Approximate hiking time: 6 hours + 1-1.5 hours for the observation of the crater

Ascend Gorely volcano (1829 m) and view its acid and freshwater crater lakes, before heading to Paratunka to spend the night. Today our trek will be about 10km and is anticipated to take around 6 hours. Overnight at a local hotel in Paratunka. (BLD)

Day 5: Paratunka at leisure – Milkovo (Overall driving distance: 3-4 hours; 280 km)

Today is a day at leisure to relax or take an optional helicopter excursion over the jaw-droppingly impressive Valley of the Geysers or to the Kuril Lake. In the evening we transfer to the village of Milkovo. Overnight at Hotel Geolog or similar. (BD)

Note: The accommodation tonight is basic, with shared facilities. There is a toilet and a was basin in the room, however shower is in a separate room on the ground floor. On arrival at the hotel, a light dinner with tea will be offered.

Valley of the Geysers

The helicopter excursion to the Valley of Geysers includes a flight around Karymsky (1486m) and Maly Semyachik (1560m) volcanoes, as well as a walking excursion through the valley itself. This valley cannot be compared with anywhere else as it has more than twenty large geysers in the vicinity. Some gush forth every 10-12 minutes, while others may erupt once in 4-5 hours. The plumes of steam, fountains of boiling water, incredible colours of the slopes with hot water streaming along them and profuse vegetation create an enchanting spectacle. Lunch is served in the valley.

Kuril Lake

Kuril Lake was formed about 8,000 years ago as a result of a series of enormous volcanic explosions which shook southern Kamchatka. Today, the largest population of sockeye salmon in Eurasia spawns in Kuril Lake. To feed on the abundance, over 200 bears usually come here from mid-July to mid-September. This definitely is the best place for observing these beautiful animals, along with foxes and otters which also come here to feed on salmon.



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Helicopter Excursions – Valley of Geysers or Kuril Lake: RUB 48,000 – prices subject to change and payable locally in cash.

The helicopter excursions can only be booked and paid for locally. It is subject to the weather conditions on the day and the minimum numbers of passengers. We are aware that this is a lot of money to carry around with you and that it is not very practical. However, despite our best efforts, we have been unable to come to an alternative arrangement. Bears usually arrive by the lake as from mid-July, so kindly take this into consideration to avoid disappointment.

If you choose not to go to the Kuril Lake or to the Valley of Geysers (or if it is unavailable) you may take an optional half-day trip (to be booked on the eve of the day and paid in RUB cash only on the spot) by car along the shores of Avacha Bay to the Pacific Ocean, or a guided city tour and/or a visit to the Local Lore Museum which is home to an interesting ethnography exhibition.

Day 6: Milkovo - Great Tolbachik Fissure – Lunokhodchik (Overall driving distance: 6-7 hours; 460 km)

Today is a long drive by 4WD bus towards the Klyuchevskaya volcano group, stopping for lunch in Milkovo settlement (payable locally). We cross the Kamchatka River by ferry and continue off-road to the foothills of one of the most beautiful and majestic volcano ranges – Ploski Tolbachik and Ostry Tolbachik. Camping overnight in tents at Lunokhodchik camp, so called because the first Soviet lunar vehicles were tested here. (BD)

Day 7: Ploski Tolbachik Volcano

Approximate hiking distance: 25km / Flat itinerary

Approximate hiking time: 10 hours with stops

As a result of the 2013 eruption, the lava flowed underground through caves and tunnels, creating stone sculptures from the hardened lava. Today our trek will be about 25km and is anticipated to take around 10 hours. We walk along the lava flows, climb the volcanic cones and go down to the lava ducts, where the temperature in still reaches + 60°C. Camping overnight. (BLD)

Day 8: Tolbachik region

Approximate hiking distance: 15km / Difference in height is about 100-200m

Approximate hiking time: 4 hours

After breakfast, travel in an off-road vehicle to the Northern Breakthrough cones, which are a collection of miniature smoking volcanoes boasting incredible colours. Climb the Tolbachinsky cones which are 100-200 m high. In some places, holes still exist on the surface of the cones, from where hot gas comes out with a temperature of up to + 600 ° C. Return to the camp for the evening. Camping overnight. (BLD)

Day 9: Milkovo (Overall driving distance: 6-7 hours; 240 km)

Take a walk to the 'dead forest', which was destroyed by slag and ash eruptions in 1975. Transfer to the village of Milkovo, situated on the bank of the River Kamchatka. Take a walking excursion to one of the oldest Kamchatka settlements, founded by the Even people in the 18th century. Visit the national crafts workshop and enjoy the panoramic outlook from the viewing platform. Overnight at Geolog Hotel or similar. (BLD)

Even people

The Even people, closely related to the similarly named Evenki, are the original inhabitants of this land. Their traditional way of living was centred largely on reindeer and their religion is based upon shamanism. Numbering around 17,000 only, they lived largely nomadic lives, following the reindeer which were their source of meat, clothes and many other day to day items. Like other smaller ethnic groups their customs and culture are being gradually eroded in today's Russia.



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Day 10: Milkovo – Malki - Rafting along the Bystraya River – Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky (Overall driving distance: 5 hours; 300 km)

After breakfast, visit the ethnographic museum of the peoples inhabiting the Kamchatka River valley. Later, transfer to the area of the village of Malki for a traditional lunch and depart for a short rafting tour along the Bystraya River (2 to 3 hours in duration) with the option to do fishing (every raft will have 1 fishing rod). The raft is in fact a rubber boat and the river Bystraya is rather quiet and has a few gentle rapids, which are safe for total beginners. It is likely that you will spot brown bears on the banks of the river when sailing down, however this can never be a guarantee. In the late afternoon, we drive back to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky. Overnight at Geysir Hotel or similar (BLD).

Note: *If you do not wish to embark on the rafting tour, it is possible to enjoy the Malkinsky hot springs instead.*

Day 11: Departure from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky

After breakfast, check-out and transfer to the airport. If there is time on the way we will visit the local fish market. (B)

Tour Inclusions/Exclusions

Inclusions:

Arrival and departure transfers
Transport throughout
All accommodation
Services of English-speaking guide / tour leader
Meals as listed (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner)
Entrance fees for sites listed as part of the itinerary

Excluded:

International flights
Any airport taxes
Travel Insurance
Visas
Camping mat and sleeping bag
Optional activities, eg. helicopter excursions
Items of personal nature
Drinks
Tipping (at discretionary)

Important Information

Foreign Office Travel Warnings

We constantly monitor the advice posted by the British Foreign, Development and Commonwealth Office (FCDO). In particular we will always advise clients of any travel warnings. At present there are no warnings against travel to the regions of Russia that we visit. Please feel free to contact us should you have any specific concerns or would like to know in detail what measures are being taken to ensure visits remain trouble free and without incident.





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It should be noted that this information applies to British citizens. Other nationals are asked to check the current position of their respective government.

Accommodation and Meals

Hotel Check-in Times

As a general rule most hotels will allow guests to check-in from 2pm. Please note that the price of your tour does not include guaranteed early check-in. Therefore, please advise us if you would like to ensure that your room is available for an earlier arrival. This is particularly relevant on the first day of the tour and for early morning arrivals. One option is to pre-book and pay for an extra night at the beginning of your tour which will guarantee your accommodation is available irrespective of what time you arrive. Please contact us for information and costs.

It should also be noted that on many of our tours we have set-aside Day 1 of the itinerary as an 'arrival day'. For this reason and because tour participants are likely to be arriving at different times, and often from different countries, guided sightseeing or other activities are not included. If you are arriving early or before the start date of the tour and would like to organise some extra arrangements on a private basis please contact us.

Accommodation Rating

On this tour you can expect to stay some nights in simple but comfortable and clean small-scale accommodation when in town. With a few exceptions you can expect rooms to be en-suite, with private bathroom and when necessary, air-conditioning will be provided. However, most of the nights will be spent wild camping with facilities being shared.

We welcome solo travellers and single rooms will be allocated subject to the applicable tour supplement. Please note that on occasions you may not always be allocated a double or twin room, as some hotels have designated single rooms. These may be smaller in size. However, the supplement payable takes this into consideration.

Food & Drink

The daily meal basis is shown in the tour itinerary; Breakfast (B), Lunch and Dinner (D). Please note that lunch may be a picnic. Drinks are not included and will be payable locally in cash.

Dietary Requirements

If you have any special dietary requirements, you must notify us at the time of booking. While we will make every effort to cater for you, we cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch £5 / Dinner £10



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Drinks

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general, you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Bottle of Beer £1 / Water £0.50

Tipping – Guide and Drivers

Tips are the accepted way of saying 'thank you' to your local guides and other local staff. We make sure that they are paid appropriately, and they are aware that any tips are a bonus, and entirely dependent on the service that they provide. As a guide we suggest you allow a total of £50 for this.

Foreign Exchange

ATM Availability: ATMs are widely available.

Credit and Debit Card Acceptance: The use of cards is limited to the top hotels and restaurants in major towns and cities

Local Currency: Rouble

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Dollars or Euros

Where to Exchange: Your guide will advise you

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

Our advertised prices do not include the cost of international flights. Please contact us if you would like a quotation to book a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Joining Your Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a free airport transfer, both on arrival and departure. In order that the transfer can be arranged please ensure that you advise us of your flight information once available. Please advise the date, time and flight number for your arrival/departure. If we have not been advised of this information at least 2 weeks before travel, then you will be required to make your own way to the hotel on Day 1 of your tour.

Travel Insurance and Altitude

It is a condition of booking with Undiscovered Destinations that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country and be valid for the entire duration of your holiday.

Please note that your tour involves some walking/trekking at altitude. Some travel insurance policies may exclude walking and trekking above a certain altitude. Please ensure that your travel insurance is valid for walking at altitude and if you have any doubts please contact your insurance provider.

Visa Information

Most nationals will require a visa to visit Russia. To obtain a visa you will need a stamped tourist confirmation document and tourist/service voucher – we will provide these for you. In order to do this we will require your full passport information and details of arrival and exit into and from Russia as well as details of the city in which you intend to lodge your Russian visa application, no later than 30 days before departure.



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Everyone in the UK applying for a Russian visa will have to do so in person in order to submit their finger prints. This does not apply to Diplomats, Officials and children under the age of twelve.

You can now apply for your appointment for your selected Embassy using the following link: <https://ru.vfsglobal.co.uk/tourist.html> . Currently there are 3 processing centres in the UK: London, Edinburgh and Manchester. Regulations do frequently change, so we advise that you check the current requirements with your nearest embassy.

Passports

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, valid for at least six months after the date of return to your country.

We strongly advise that your passport contains a minimum of two blank pages, as this may be a requirement of the local immigration authorities. In addition, certain countries will stipulate that the two blank pages are opposite each other. If you are unable to meet these requirements you may be refused boarding by your airline or denied entry by the immigration authorities.

For specific information about the requirements for your destination please check with the country's embassy or consulate. Alternatively, UK citizens can visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

Vaccinations & Protection

As with travel to most parts of Asia, we strongly recommend that you contact your doctor's surgery or a specialist travel clinic for up-to-date information, advice and the necessary vaccinations. For a visit of less than one month, almost certainly you will be advised to have immunisations against the following: Diphtheria and Tetanus, Hepatitis A and B, Polio and Typhoid.

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or purchased in your home country can be different in other countries. If you're travelling with prescription or over-the-counter medicine, read this guidance from NaTHNaC on [best practice when travelling with medicines](#). For further information on the legal status of a specific medicine, you'll need to contact the embassy, high commission or consulate of the country or territory you're travelling to.

Preparing for your tour

Climate

Our tours in Kamchatka only operate in the high summer months of June to August – outside of these times it is simply too cold. Even in summer the temperature can fall.

Clothing

It can be quite cold even in the summer. You will need to bring at least one fleece or jumper, along with a waterproof/ windproof jacket with a hood, comfortable waterproof trousers, woollen or thermal socks, and a swimming suit for bathing in the hot springs. A warm hat and gloves are also recommended.

Equipment

The first thing on your list should be a first aid kit. Whilst there is no undue cause for alarm, travellers are best advised to travel well-prepared: adequately immunized, with sufficient supplies of prescription drugs, along with a medical kit. Suncream / sunblock are a must.



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When out on tour, it is important to have suncream with you, as there will not be anywhere nearby to buy it. Sunglasses will also be invaluable. A strong insect repellent, including a bite spray is strongly recommended. As for the hikes, trekking poles are strongly recommended as well as a water bottle/flask or thermos for hot tea, and a waterproof cover for your backpack and camera.

Concerning camp equipment, tents, tables, plastic chairs, dishes, cooking pots and gas balloons, glasses and cutlery are provided however, you need to bring your own camping mat and sleeping bag (comfort temperature: +5C, -0C). Please kindly note that these can be rented locally for RUB 200 per person per day. You should also bring a headlamp / flashlight.

Footwear

Footwear is a main priority on this tour. Comfortable and sturdy waterproof walking shoes/boots are recommended, as well as an additional pair of shoes to change into should your boots get wet.

Luggage on tour

Your luggage should not exceed 20kgs (44lbs). One large rucksack, and one small hand luggage rucksack is acceptable. We advise you to travel with a rucksack or soft bag rather than a suitcase.

Electric Supply & Plugs

Generally electrical supply is 220-240V AC (50 Hz) and uses European two circular pin style plugs.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes. These tour notes were updated on 12th July 2021.

