

Exploring of Tian Shan

Trekking in Terskey Alatau

Country: Kyrgyzstan, Central Tian Shan Mountains, Terskey Alatau mountain range
Tour duration: 11 days / 10 nights
Active part duration: 9 days / 8 nights
Itinerary: Bishkek - Karakol - Djhety-Oguz ice wall - Issyk Kul Lake - Bishkek

[View the route map »»](#)

DATES OF THE GROUP TOUR IN: 04.08 - 14.08.2020



The **trekking area** lies between the southern shore of the **Issyk Kul Lake** and the northern slopes of the **Terskey Alatau (Ala Too) mountain range** (central Tian Shan Mountains). The area belongs to the most beautiful and remote parts of Central Asia. This is the region where beautiful high mountains slope down to the very shore of **Issyk Kul**, an enormous freshwater Central Asian lake. Terskey Alatau Range forms a majestic wall that extends for 340km along the lake's southern shore, separating this corner of the paradise from the rest of the mountain area with a severe climate.

The **Terskey Alatau Range** with an average altitude of about 4,500m is incredibly beautiful and diverse, its landscapes including pointed snow-capped peaks 5,000m and more in height, wild coniferous forests on the northern slopes, a ridge of red sandy rocks, the Djhety-Oguz, swift rivers and exceptionally delightful gorges.

As the trek goes in the immediate proximity to the highest part of the range, the trekker has a unique opportunity to continuously enjoy the views of its immense and severe peaks: **Karakol Peak** (5,218m), **Djhety-Oguz Peak** (5,181m), Djhigit Peak (5,172m) and **Aksu Peak** (5,020m). Travellers will immerse in the freshness of fragrant fir forests and experience the healing effects of hot **mineral springs** (Djhialisu, Altin-Arashan). Tourists will get to know the harsh beauty of nature during the round day trips to the foot of great summits. At the end of the tour you will spend a couple of days on the warm sandy shore of famous **Lake Issyk Kul**.

Best time for trekking is from July to September.

Itinerary:	
Day 1.	Arrival in Bishkek. Sightseeing tour around Bishkek. Meeting at "Manas" airport. Transfer to Bishkek (30 km), check-in at hotel. Sightseeing tour around Bishkek: the central Ala-Too Square, Historical Museum, National hero Manas Monument, Kurmanzhan Datka Monument, Old Square with Parliament House, Victory Square. Overnight at the hotel.
Day 2.	Transfer by bus from Bishkek to the Karakol. <i>Distance: 430 km, Travel time: 7-8 h; Altitude difference: + 900 m</i> Gradually gaining altitude, we drive along the fertile oasis of Chu River valley - once part of Great Silk Route travelled by merchants as well as hordes of Mongols of Genghis Khan (13th century AD) and armies of ruthless emperor Tamerlane (14th century AD). On our way we pass major towns Tokmok and ruins of Burana Tower (old minaret). Lunch en route. The road winds into the picturesque narrow Boom gorge ("shoelace" in Kyzgыз) and, halfway to Karakol, reaches Balykchi where Lake Issyk Kul ("warm lake" in Kyrgyz) starts from - a natural wonder of Central Asia.

	<p>provides more warmth and comfort compared to camping at 3200m on the small rocky spot in the windy narrow bottleneck where the stream overflows the lake. Dinner and overnight in "Ala Kol" tent camp at 3200m.</p> <p>Trekking over Ala Kol pass (3800m) passing Ala Kol Lake and descend to Arashan gorge (2600 m). <i>Distance: 18 km, 6-8 h; Altitude difference: +200 m/-1200 m.</i></p> <p>We gain altitude moving along the trail running up and down the scree-rocky slope. We keep the lake on our right. The turquoise-blue lake stretches as far as the eye can see, and peaks and glaciers of the Terskey Alatau range (among which the 4900m-high Ekichat Peak is clearly distinguishing) provide the backdrop for the entire panorama. The climate is much cooler now and warm clothing, hat, gloves and waterproofs are essential items to have with you whilst in this locality through to the other side of Alakul pass. Nonetheless, it makes sense to top up your water bottles as there will be no sources of water till we cross over. It may take us up to 3-4 hours from the lake to top the pass. The views across to the Terskey Alatau span kilometre after kilometre. Looking to the south from the top we can see Djigit Peak (5170m) on the left and Karakol Peak (5281m) in the middle. The view of Alakul Lake is unmatched. After photos we commence our descent to the Arashan Valley. The trail first follows on the scree into alpine meadow zone of Kurgantor River fed by glaciers and down to forest of the main valley of Arashan River. It may take us 2-3 hours to reach to the bottom of the valley. We camp at Altyn Arashan hot springs. This place is very popular with local Kyrgyz visitors looking for opportunity to heal their body/muscle/joint-related illnesses by dipping in hot springs. Possibility to take thermal baths (up to +50C). Dinner and overnight in "Altyn Arashan" tent camp at 2600m.</p>	
Day 8.		✓
	<p>Altyn Arashan gorge - Cholpon Ata town. <i>Distance: 155 km, 4-5 h; Altitude difference: -1000 m.</i></p> <p>Next morning once everyone is loaded on the truck we head downstream alongside of Altyn Arashan river through thicket of fir forest back to Karakol city. We change vehicle, explore local bazaar and lunch there in Karakol. Then we carry on to Cholpon-Ata driving alongside of the northern shore of Issyk Kul Lake enjoying the views of Terskey Alatau Range (south) and Kungey Alatau Range (north). We end up the day in Cholpon-Ata - a 40 000-population big town and unofficial centre of resort area of Issyk Kul Lake where all spectrum of sanatoriums and rest houses is available. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.</p>	
Day 9.		✓
	<p>Transfer Cholpon Ata - Bishkek. <i>Distance: 250 km, 3-4 h; Altitude difference: -800 m.</i></p> <p>Those champions of early morning swimming can have a bath in the lake. And after breakfast we set off to Bishkek. In one hour or so we are in Balykchi, past which we are back on the road we were arriving by here - two weeks ago! We lunch on the way in a sideroad café. We arrive in Bishkek in the afternoon having enough time to explore more of the town, or to do last minute purchase, or simply to take shower and relax before dinner. Overnight at the hotel.</p>	
Day 10.		✓
	<p>Transfer to airport. Departure.</p> <p>Depending on your departure time you will be provided with a vehicle that, after breakfast, will take you to Manas airport or to Bishkek railway station where you will be seen off by our local guide.</p>	
Day 11.		✓

COST OF THE TOUR 2020:

The cost of the tour for 1 person:	1980 USD
Single supplement in hotels of Bishkek and Cholpon Ata:	130 USD
Single supplement in tents:	70 USD

FLIGHTS SEARCH

ORDER TOUR

The cost of the tour includes:

- ✓ Accommodation in hotels in Bishkek - 3 nights;
- ✓ Accommodation in Amir hotel or Green Yard Guest House in Karakol - 1 night ;
- ✓ Accommodation at the Hotel at Issyk-Kul Lake - 1 night ;
- ✓ Accommodation and full board (hot food for breakfast and dinner, lunches as snack boxes) in the permanent tent camps along the trek Djety Oguz gorge - Altyn Arashan gorge - 6 nights. (Please note, you do not need to set up your tents, they will be set in advance + cook will be waiting for your with hot meal when you arrive!);
- ✓ Full board during the whole program;
- ✓ Escorting Guide during the whole program;
- ✓ Porter service during the trek (The packed weight of your trek bag whilst trekking should be no more than 12 kg of personal belongings. 1kg extra - 12 USD per programs);

- ✓ All the transfers according to the program;
- ✓ Entry and ecological fee;

The cost of the tour doesn't include:

- ✗ International air flights;
- ✗ Medical insurance;
- ✗ Registration in local police department (10 USD per pax);
- ✗ Beverages and meals not included in main menu ;
- ✗ Early check in at the hotel;
- ✗ Visa support and visa fee (if necessary);
- ✗ All optional deviations from the main itinerary;

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(CAT – 16/12/2019)