# Kyrgyzstan up close

14-day cycling and hiking tour through Kyrgyzstan







14 days  10 stages

Land: Kyrgyzstan
Category: Bike & Hike
Complexity: Easy-medium
Group size: 5 - 12
: 6 stages / 400 km
: 4 stages / 52 km
: 4,280 m / 4,050 m

Price per person from:
**From 2290 €**

## Overview

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### Highlights of our Cycling and Hiking Tour in Kyrgyzstan

A journey could hardly be more varied: from the historically interesting Chui Valley with relics from the Silk Road era, we ascend to the forested slopes of the Tian Shan Mountains. On a two-day hike, we cross the Kungej mountain range to Issyk Kul, the second largest mountain lake in the world. The southern shore and its hinterland offer an incredibly diverse environment for the second part of our cycling tour.

- Easy cycling stages through picturesque valleys and enjoyable hikes over remote mountain passes
- Overnight stay in yurts and experiencing the traditions of nomads such as eagle hunting, yurt building, and music
- Diverse and delicious Kyrgyz cuisine - also for vegetarians
- Experience the history of the ancient Silk Road, e.g., Burana Tower

- Swimming in crystal clear mountain lakes and hot springs
- Luggage transport and support vehicle during the cycling tour

## Day by day itinerary

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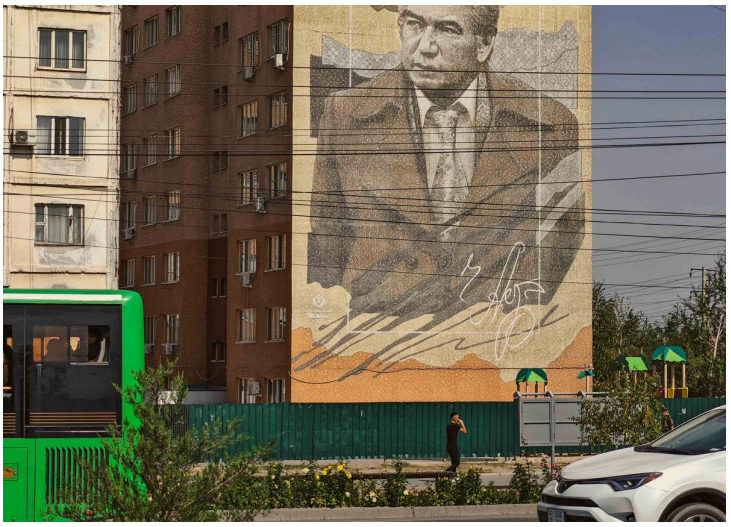
### Day 1 Arrival in Bishkek (800 m)

Arrival in the early morning and shuttle ride to our hotel in the city. First, we will sleep in until noon, enjoy a late breakfast, unpack and set up our bikes. In the afternoon, we will explore the bazaar and the center of Bishkek during a small city tour. Afterwards, we will wind down the day with a joint dinner featuring good traditional cuisine.

Accommodation: Hotel

Bishkek





### Day 2 Stage 1: Bishkek – Issyk Ata (1,800m)

The first part of our journey takes place over 3 stages by bicycle through the Chui Valley from the capital Bishkek along the over 4000-meter high backdrop of the Kyrgyz mountain range into the Chon Kemin Valley. The route partly follows paved, lightly traveled roads and dirt paths. The goal of our first stage is the thermal springs in the Issyk Ata Valley (1,800 m), which is surrounded by beautiful alpine scenery. Here we will sleep in a guesthouse.

: Pension
: F/M/A
: 15 km
: 500 hm

Issyk Ata



## Day 3 Stage 2: Issyk Ata – Orlovka (1,200m)

After a 10-km descent, we reach Rotfront, a settlement founded in 1927 by German immigrants as a mountain valley and still home to the largest German community in Kyrgyzstan. About an hour later stands the Burana Tower, a minaret from the 11th century. After lunch at the Burana Tower, we cycle through various villages to Orlovka, where we will spend the night in a guesthouse.

: Pension
: F/M/A
: 75 km
: 1.360 hm

Burana Tower



## Day 4 Stage 3: Orlovka – Chon Kemin Valley (1,600)

On today's cycling stage, we leave the Chui Valley and turn into the idyllic Chon Kemin Valley. With its alpine mountain landscapes, it hints at why Kyrgyzstan is also called the 'Switzerland of Central Asia.' In the early afternoon, we reach our guesthouse, where we can relax in the garden after lunch and enjoy the mountain backdrop for the rest of the afternoon.

: Guesthouse
: F/M/A
: 65 km
: 800 hm

Chon Kemin valley



## Day 5 Stage 4: Hike from Kemin to Kol Kogur Lake (2,500 m)

After breakfast, we drive about 20 km to the starting point at the forestry operation. There, we load the luggage onto horses and begin our day-long hike. Impressed by the diversity of the plant world and the alpine landscape, we reach Kol Kogur Lake in the afternoon. Upon agreement, a stretch on horseback is also possible.

: Tent
: M/F/A
: 20km / 6 h
: 1,000 hm



## Day 6 Stage 5: Hike from Kol Kogur Lake to Issyk Kul (1,600 m)

After breakfast, we hike to the pass (3,240 m), which we reach after about 3 hours. In clear weather, we see the Issyk Kul for the first time, the second largest mountain lake in the world. After a two-hour descent, we have lunch with a farming family and then continue by Russian-made off-road vehicles to Tamchy, a resort on the Issyk Kul.

: 16 km / approx. 5 h
: F/M/A
: Hotel
: 1,000 hm

Tamchy



## Day 7 Stage 6: Issyk Kul - Ala Bash (2,360 m)

After the hike of the last two days, we are relaxing this morning on the beach of Issyk Kul. After lunch, we will continue by vehicle to the other side of the lake to Kara Talaa, a small village on the shore of the lake (about 1.5 hours). From here, we will start biking into the hinterland of Issyk Kul on a gravel road into the picturesque Tura Suu Valley. We enjoy the view of the magnificent mountain landscape that borders the valley to the south.

: Tent
: F/M/A
: 80 km
: 32 km
: 780 hm

Ala Bash valley



## Day 8 Stage 7: Ala Bash – Wild Issyk Kul Coast (1,600 m)

After breakfast, we drive down the 2,365 m high Ala Bash Pass into the Ala Bash Valley. Time seems to have stood still in this valley. The people there live from livestock farming, and only a few travelers visit this remote side valley at Issyk Kul. By noon, we reach the salt lake Kara Köl, whose salt content allows us to float in the water. After a swimming stop, we drive about 12 kilometers to our yurt camp right by the shores of Issyk Kul.

(Note: In bad weather, the canyons are impassable. In this case, we will use an alternative route).

: Yurt
: F/M/A
: 56 km
: 300 hm



## Day 9 Stage 8: Wild Issyk Kul Coast – Tong (1,650 m)

The stage begins impressively with a ride through the loess-shaped Kyzyl-Eschme Gorge. On a gravel road along the Tong Bay, we reach Bokonbaeva, where we pause in the garden of a guesthouse and also visit an eagle hunter. We continue relaxed along the Issyk-Kul shore to Tong. Optional: Pass crossing (2,540 m), 65 km/1,300 m elevation gain. Optional extension: Pass crossing at Kaji Say (2,540 m) with 65 km/1,300 m elevation gain.

: Yurt
: F/M/A
: 57 km
: 600 hm

Kaji Say



## Day 10 Stage 9: Tong – Chong Kyzyl Suu (2,350 m) + Hike

After breakfast, we use the morning for swimming and a trip to the nearby sandstone gorges. After lunch, we drive about 80 km to Kyzyl Suu, turn into the valley, and hike the last 10 km to the hot springs. There, we are greeted by a small bathing facility with simple rooms in the midst of the mountains.

: Pension
: M/F/A
: 80 km
: 10 km / 2h
: 250 hm

Issyk-Kul Lake



## Day 11 Stage 10: Hike from Chong Kyzyl Suu to Yeti Oguz (1,800 m)

Those who wish can take another bath in the hot springs in the morning. After breakfast, we start our hike to the neighboring valley of Yeti Oguz. Over nearly 20 km through meadows, forests, and past the yurts of the locals, we enjoy the views of Issyk Kul and the mountains. The hike ends at the distinctive red rock formation "Yeti Oguz," which translates to "Seven Bulls." In the afternoon, we reach our cozy lodge. With Kyrgyz cuisine, we wind down the evening.

: Lodge
: F/M/A
: 17 km / 5h
: 500 hm

Chong Kyzyl Suu



## Day 12 Yeti Oguz Lodge

At the end of the journey, there is still much culture to experience. In the morning, we explore Karakol with its bazaar, a Dungan mosque, and a wooden Orthodox church. A highlight is the Uyghur cuisine, especially the famous 'Aschlamfu'. Those who prefer to relax can visit the hot springs in Aksu. In the evening, we will also hear traditional Kyrgyz folklore.

: Lodge
: F/M/A

Yeti Oguz



## Day 13 Yeti Oguz – Bishkek

During the approximately 6-hour drive along the shores of Issyk Kul and through the Chui Valley, we let the travel route of the last two weeks pass by us spatially once again. Along the way, we stop at the workshop of a yurt master. We can also lend a hand and build a yurt together. In the late afternoon, we reach Bishkek and conclude the journey with a shared dinner.

: Hotel
: M/F
: 400 km



## Day 14 Return journey

Return flight home in the early morning hours.

: F



## Inclusions

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+ Included activities

- ✓ 13 overnight stays with breakfast (2 x hotel, 4 x guesthouse, 2 x lodge, 2 x tent, 1 x yurt), on the night of arrival, a hotel room is available regardless of the arrival time.
- ✓ Meals as specified in the travel description (full board during the cycling tour)
- ✓ Drinks (water, tea, coffee) and snacks during the tour (dried fruits, nuts, chocolate bars, fruit)
- ✓ Luggage transport and accompanying vehicle
- ✓ Airport transfers on the arrival and departure day of the group trip
- ✓ comfortable camping equipment (shower tent, camping toilet, comfortable sleeping pads, communal tent)
- ✓ High-quality VAUDE tents for individual use for each participant
- ✓ Professional Epic Trails MTB Guide (English-speaking), second guide for groups of 9 participants or more
- ✓ local accompanying staff during the tour (guide, cook, driver)
- ✓ German-speaking city tour in Bishkek
- ✓ Excursions: Visit to the Burana Tower, city walk in Karakol, visit to a yurt builder's workshop (optional yurt assembly), visit to an eagle hunter (optional hunting trip), live folklore music performance
- ✓ Participant T-Shirt
- ✓ Replacement bicycle and technical support in case of breakdowns
- ✓ well-equipped emergency kit

### Whats not included

- ✗ Arrival and Departure
- ✗ optional excursions
- ✗ Lunch and dinner on the first and last travel day in Bishkek
- ✗ Bicycle
- ✗ Airport transfers on individual arrival and departure days

## Guides






### Dolotbek Omurzakov

Guide

Read more

## Bikes





### 2023er SCOTT Spark 970 (29")

Type All-Mountain-Fully Sizes S, M, L, XL

29" wheels, aluminium frame, 120mm travel (RockShox/X-Fusion) with Twin Lock system, dropper seat post, SRAM NX 1×12 drivetrain, Shimano hydraulic disc brakes



### Raymon HardRay E 3.0

Type Electric-Bike Sizes S, M, L, XL

Motor Yamaha PW-TE 250 W 60 Nm; Battery DT500, 500 Wh, 36V Wheels 27,5" size S, M / 29'' size L, XL, Aluminium Frame, Fork 100mm Suntour, Shimano Altus 9 speed shifting, Tektro brakes, Raymon components

## Any other questions?



### Will I be able to complete the tour?

We have categorized all our trips on a scale from 1 – easy to 5 – difficult. Please check the corresponding rating under the "Requirements" tab.

In most groups, participants have varying levels of fitness and riding skills. This is not a problem—we adapt accordingly. On several days, ambitious riders have the option to extend routes or choose alternative trails.

Our tours are designed so that each stage can be completed comfortably, even at a slower pace. In case of emergency, you can switch to the support vehicle. Our tours are not races—there's plenty of time for photos!

If you have any doubts, just get in touch with us.

### Internet, calling and charging batteries!?

A digital detox with mountain views definitely has its charm! ✨ Still, here are some tips for electricity, internet, and phone use: SIM cards are available at the airport or in the city for €5–10. International roaming packages or providers for global eSIMs (e.g., www.airalo.com) are a good alternative. Need to charge your devices? Fixed accommodations have standard Type C outlets. In yurts

or when camping, it gets tricky—so don't forget a power bank. Network coverage in the mountains is usually nonexistent, but in cities and most villages you get good access to the internet.

### Is there a packing list? What should I bring?

With every booking, we also send a packing list so you don't forget anything. In general, we will be traveling in extreme climate zones. In the capital, we are at under 1,000 meters, during the mountain passes at 3,000m, and sometimes even over 4,000m depending on the trip. So, you need to be prepared for hot, cold, and occasionally wet weather in the high mountains. You should choose your clothing so that you can adjust to the conditions using the "onion principle" (layering).

For all trips with camping nights, you need to bring your own sleeping bag. We'll take care of the rest of the camping equipment.

### Is Kyrgyzstan a safe country to travel to?

Yes. Kyrgyzstan is a safe and pleasant country to travel to. Travelers are welcomed in a very hospitable and polite manner. Fortunately, street crime is very rare in Kyrgyzstan. On our trips, we will make you aware of "critical" situations on the first day. This includes the usual advice: avoid nighttime city walks, do not display valuables openly, and leave expensive watches, valuable jewelry, and other unnecessary valuables at home.

## Important information



### Requirements

**Endurance: Easy – Medium**

This trip is aimed at active touring cyclists. A good level of fitness is required. The daily stages average 50 km by bike. The longest stage is 80 km. On foot, a maximum of 20 km and 1,000 meters of elevation gain per day must be managed. The highest point we reach by bike is at 2,540 m. On foot, we reach a maximum height of 3,540 m.

**Cycling Technique: Easy**

The cycling stages on this trip are oriented towards bike touring. We mostly ride on gravel paths and asphalt roads, and occasionally on sandy tracks. A mountain bike is required for this tour. Trekking bikes are not suitable due to their narrow tires.

### Climate

Kyrgyzstan is characterized by a dry continental climate, which is accompanied by strong temperature fluctuations. In summer, temperatures in the southern part of the country can reach up to 45 °C, while in winter they often drop below -10 °C in the lower regions. The months from June to September are marked by plenty of sunshine – with an average of 250 sunny days a year, Kyrgyzstan is one of the sunniest countries in the region. During this time, daytime temperatures are around 35 °C in Bishkek, 30 °C at Lake Issyk-Kul, and a pleasant 15 °C in the mountains at 2,000 to 3,000 meters. Especially in the high mountains, it cools down significantly at night, and even in summer, temperatures can drop to freezing point. The climate is well-suited for adventure travel, but it requires careful planning, especially regarding the right equipment for hot days and cold nights.

### Overnight stays and single room surcharge

We will stay in fixed accommodations, yurt camps, and camp in the wilderness. The accommodations are lovingly designed, authentic, and we will experience Kyrgyz hospitality. During the camping nights, we ensure a certain level of camping comfort: everyone gets their own tent with a comfortable sleeping pad. There is also a communal tent, shower tent, and toilet tent. You only need to bring your **sleeping bag**. During the camping nights, the single use of a two-person tent is included without a single room surcharge.

The single room surcharge generally applies to overnight stays in hotels, guesthouses, and inns. In the guesthouse in Issyk Ata and the guesthouse in Chong Kyzyl Suu, the single room cannot be guaranteed. In the yurts at Issyk Kul, we are accommodated in groups of a maximum of 2 to 4 people per yurt. The yurts are not available for single use. Alternatively, our tents can be used there.

### Change of route

Depending on weather conditions, it may occur that certain sections of the route are not passable. In such cases, changes to the program and route schedule may occur. In extreme weather conditions, such as heavy rain or snowfall, mountain crossings could become impossible, necessitating longer detours. The described program represents the optimal variant and will be implemented as planned, provided conditions allow.

### Entry / Visa

Citizens from the EU and Switzerland do not need a visa to enter Kyrgyzstan. This regulation applies to many other countries as well.

A valid passport is required for entry, which must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the date of departure.

### Vaccinations and Health Care

There are no mandatory vaccinations for entry into Kyrgyzstan. However, it is important that your standard vaccinations against tetanus, diphtheria, and polio are up to date. Additionally, we recommend considering vaccinations against hepatitis A. For longer stays or certain activities, vaccinations against hepatitis B and rabies may also be advisable. It is best to discuss this with your doctor or a tropical medicine specialist.

- Center for Travel Medicine: crm.de
- Robert Koch Institute: rki.de

Of course, these sites do not replace a visit to the doctor. Allow enough time and ideally contact your doctor several months before the trip to create a vaccination plan.

## Dates & Availability

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|---|---|---|---|
| Starting Sunday **6 Sep** | Ending Saturday **19 Sep** | Bookable | Book now |