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## Culinary Cultural Tour in Kyrgyzstan

Dates: **19 – 26 August 2019**

Do not miss a chance to join our tour!  
Minimum 4 people!

The Kyrgyz Republic is a multinational and multicultural country. Over 80 nations and ethnic groups live here, they differ in number, language, religion, and culture: Uzbeks, Tajiks, Russians, Uighurs, Dungans, Koreans etc.



This multinational and multiethnic environment had an impact on the development of the national, traditional food of the Kyrgyz Republic. Historically Kyrgyz Nomads cooked meat, dairy products, wheat flour and a little spice. It changed fundamentally from the time of new ethnical group's immigration. The cereal food as a main component of nutrition occurred during the process of sedentarization of nomads and transition to agriculture.

Travelling with us on our 8 days tour you will become engrossed in 7 absolutely different cultures. You will get to know not only the culture and traditions of people, but also enjoy cooking and tasting of different traditional dishes of the multinational country, the recipes of which you can take back home and surprise your friends and relatives by the culinary specialties.

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### DETAILED ITINERARY

**Itinerary: Bishkek city – Chon Kemin valley – Cholpon Ata town – Karakol town – Kochkor village - Bishkek**

**DAY 1. (19.08) AIRPORT – BISHKEK CITY. BLD (30km)**

Arrival at the International 'Manas' Airport.



“Ak Sai Travel” representative meets you at arrivals. Transfer by private transport to the hotel. The drive takes approximately 40 min. You are able to check-in early and have the remaining morning to rest.

After breakfast your tourist guide gives a briefing on the tour and Day 1 of your trip. After briefing we go to the city center for sightseeing.

We visit Ala Too Square, the White House, Parliament, “Manas” Monument, Lenin Statue, Oak Park, and Fine Arts Museum.

Lunch at a local café.

In the evening we are going to meet the first culture – representatives of Korean nationality. We meet the chief of Korean cafe in Bishkek city. We have a master class on “Kuksi” making and try it for dinner.

*The Koreans moved to Kyrgyzstan mainly during the Soviet times. There were several reasons, but usually looking for a better life. The first settlers from Korea appeared in 1930's during the Repressions. Nowadays there are about 16 thousand Koreans living in the Kyrgyz Republic. This is only 0.30% of the total population, but the Korean cuisine is very popular among the locals and you can find a Korean café in every town of the country. Some of the dishes became part of the usual menu in each family (for example, carrot salad or “chimchi” cabbage).*



After dinner we return to the hotel. Overnight at Asia Mountains/ Green city/ My Hotel 3\*.

## **DAY 2. (20.08) FULL DAY IN BISHKEK CITY. BLD**



The morning we dedicate to the shopping at the Central Bazar of Bishkek – Osh. We are buying all the ingredients to cook “Pilov” (traditional dish of rice, carrots and meat) together with the members of an Uzbek family.

*The Uzbeks is the second largest nation in Kyrgyzstan who inhabited the Southern - Western part of Fergana Valley. They settled down on the territory bordering with the modern regions – Osh and Jalal Abad. But with the time flow they mixed with the locals, moved further to the North and East and nowadays can be found in almost every village of the mountainous Kyrgyzstan.*

After lunch another very interesting visit – the house of CACSA - Central Asian Crafts Support Association. We meet women members of that association, who are doing handcraft combining in their masterpieces felt, silk, cotton and mixing traditional ornaments with modern designs. These ladies show a cooking master class and tell us about traditional local food, life of women and their activities at the same time. After dinner CACSA, we return to our hotel. Overnight at Asia Mountains/ Green city/ My Hotel 3\*.



**DAY 3. (21.08  
) BISHKEK CITY – CHON KEMIN VALLEY. BLD (150km)**



Drive to Chon Kemin Nature Park. The drive takes about 3 hours. The park is located at 1400-2800m above sea level and covers the territory of 500 hectares.

*En route*, we visit the historical complex “Burana” located 12 km away from Tokmok town. These are the ruins of ancient settlement Balasagyn which existed at Silk Road times

(UNESCO site).

Lunch at a local Kazakh family. Eating the main traditional dish of Kyrgyz – “Besbarmak”. From Turkic languages this word means “five fingers”, as the nomads never used any fork and knife, but ate with their hands. The technology of cooking makes it very special in taste and serving.



*There are about 43,000 Kazakhs living in Chui and Talas regions. Some of them are originally from the area. Others arrived to the territory of modern Kyrgyzstan in 1930’s during the forced Collectivization. It was really hard in Kazakhstan at the times and whole families moved into the mountains looking for help.*

In the afternoon we arrive to the village in the valley and get accommodated in a guest house.



Today, especially for you we organize the demonstration of Kyrgyz traditional lamb cooking. We see all the stages of the cooking of lamb, including cooking of such specialties as – “byzhy”, “zhorogom”, “kuurdak”, etc. “Kuurdak” is cooked on the open fire. It is pieces of fried lamb, potatoes with spices and herbs.

After all that the cooked lamb is served for dinner, continued by tasting of tea with herbs, gathered in the park. During the dinner, we taste national drinks, such as Kymyz, Bozo, etc. Kymyz is the most popular drink at “djailoo” (summer pastures). It is made of fermented mare's milk. The main ingredient of thick Bozo drink is millet; it is fizzy and very refreshing.



*The Kyrgyz are one of the oldest nations belongs to the Turkic family and are the indigenous population of the country. According to the census held by the Russian Empire in 1987 there were only about 600 thousand Kyrgyz people. Kyrgyz live all over the territory of the country, but Naryn region, Western part of Issyk Kul Lake, Eastern parts of Talas and Chui regions as well as foothills of Fergana valley are the most densely inhabited by the nation. Kyrgyz is the state language of the Republic.*

Overnight at the guest house Ashuu.

#### **DAY 4. (22.08) CHON KEMIN VALLEY – CHOLPON ATA TOWN. BLD (160km)**

We drive through narrow Boom gorge along boisterous Chu River and further along the Northern lake shore. In Cholpon Ata town we visit an open air museum of Petroglyphs. It dates back to the 8th century BC.

Lunch at a Russian family in Cholpon Ata town. We taste the Russian cuisine as well as homemade wine and honey.

We participate in a jam cooking master class after buying fresh berries/fruit (depending on the season) at a local bazaar in Cholpon Ata.



*The first Russians arrived to the Northern Kyrgyzstan in the 1860's, and starting from 1893 started spreading to the South. These were the years of colonial policy at the Russian Empire and numerous families were moved to the territory of Kyrgyzstan. The second wave of the mass immigration was in 1941-45 during the Great Patriotic war. The Russians live all over the Republic, but mostly*

in Chui oblast, especially Bishkek city, western part of Talas oblast and eastern part of Issyk Kul region.

Overnight at Karven/ Caprice 4\*. The remainder of the day is at leisure.

## DAY 5. (23.08) CHOLPON ATA TOWN – KARAKOL TOWN. BLD (150km)

Morning departure to Karakol town, the biggest town at the lake located on the Eastern lake shore. On the way we stop at Scythian burial mounds (Kurgans) and



in Grigorievskoe gorge where barbecue lunch is served for us. We try grilled vegetables and meat enjoying wonderful views of Tien Shan landscapes. Before entering Karakol town we visit Przhevalskii museum complex to see his grave and the memorial. Upon arrival in the town we visit Dungan mosque and Russian Orthodox Church, Central bazaar and Victory Park.

Transfer to the house of a local Dungan family to take a master class and have dinner. Master class in cooking Lagman (homemade noodles with vegetables and spicy sauce) and Chuchvara (pelmeni or dumplings with broth) – all are traditional Dungan dishes.

The Dungans arrived to the territory of Kyrgyzstan in the end of 19th century (1877—78) from North-Western China. They were chased because of participating in Qin revolt. As the result they were forced to leave their Motherland. The Dungans settled down in Chui valley, in Issyk kul region, namely in the towns of Tokmok and Karakol, in the villages Yrdyk, Aleksandrovka, Milyanfan, Ken-Bulun, etc. Their language is a dialect of Chinese, their religion is Islam, their activity is agriculture and trade.



Overnight at Green Yard\ Tagaitai\ Altamira Guest house.

## DAY 6. (24.08) KARAKOL TOWN – KOCHKOR VILLAGE. BLD (260km)



After breakfast we leave for Uighur family to take a master class in cooking their national dish - Manty. It symbolizes the dish of Djigits (young horsemen), as they give a lot of energy. There are several varieties of the dish, depending on the way of cooking, dough ingredients and filling. It can be meat, fig, clover, chives, onion, vegetables,

quince, etc. We also make Laza sause and bake a delicious cake!  
After a good lunch with the Uighur family we leave Karakol town for Kochkor village.

On the way we stop at Jety Oguz gorge to see Golden Eagle hunting demonstration and take pictures of famous red rock formations – “Broken Heart” and “Seven Bulls”. The drive goes along the Southern lake shore and passing by Orto Tokoi water reservoir. We will stop on the way to have some snacks and take a swim if you like the temperature.

*The Uighurs arrived to Kyrgyzstan in 1920's from Xinjiang province of China. The second wave of Uighur migration was in the beginning of 1950's, especially during the Chinese “culture revolution”. Unlike the Dungans they belong to Turkic family and are very different from the main population of China. Today there are about 50,000 Uighurs living at the territory of Kyrgyzstan, mainly in Osh and Bishkek city, Jalal Abad town and Karakol town. Their main occupation is trade, Cafes and agriculture.*  
Overnight at local family homestay.



## **DAY 7. (25.08) KOCHKOR VILLAGE – BISHKEK CITY. BLD (230 km)**



In Kochkor village in the morning we visit a women's co-operative. The local ladies produce here different traditional craftworks. We can see their collection of old pieces in the local handicraft museum, the workshops where the whole procedure of woolen carpet Shyrdak production is shown to you. As well as they show us the traditional bread baking. Boorsok, Kattama, Chak Chak, etc. We have our lunch eating

bread we made with jams.

After lunch we drive to Bishkek city passing by Orto Tokoi water reservoir and Boom gorge.

Upon arrival in Bishkek city we get accommodated and after some rest visit Bishkek Champaign Wine Combinat for the degustations of their production. Traditional Kyrgyz dinner in a local restaurant with a brief summary of the tour.

## **DAY 8. (26.08) BISHKEK CITY – AIRPORT. B (30 km)**

In the morning after breakfast transfer to the airport, flight back home.

### **END OF OUR SERVICE**

## The trip cost for 2019 per person in USD

The cost per person on the Double basis – **1550 USD**

The cost per person on the Single basis – **1685 USD**

Location	Accommodation	Nights
Bishkek city	My hotel 3* /Asia Mountains 3* /Baikhan 3*	4
Chon Kemin valley	Ashuu Tor guesthouse	1
Cholpon Ata town	Karven 4*/Ak Maral 4*/ Caprice 4*	1
Karakol town	Green Yard GH/ Tagaitai GH/Altamira GH	1
Kochkor village	Local family homestay	1
<b>Total:</b>		<b>8</b>

<b>Transport</b>	For group of 1-3 Pax jeep Toyota Sequoia. For a group of 4-9 Pax: minibus Mercedes Sprinter (or similar)
<b>Meals</b>	Full board (Breakfast – 8, Lunch – 7, Dinner– 7)
<b>Escort guide</b>	Russian, English, German, Spanish or French speaking guide.

### The price includes:

* Comfortable accommodation on twin share basis – 8 nights	* Entrance fees to museums according to the program
* Breakfasts – 8, Lunches – 7, Dinners– 7	* Drinking water ( 1 liter per person a day)
* Private transport throughout	* Local professional guide
* all shows and master classes according to the program	

### The price does not include:

* All services not indicated in the tour description	* all airfares
* Personal expenses	* photo\video charges in the museums
* Tips for the guide and the driver	* porter fee
* alcohol drinks	

* cooking Kuksi at Korean restaurant in Bishkek city
* Plov cooking at Uzbek family in Bishkek city
* silk scarf production at CACSA
* lunch at CACSA
* lamb on a skewer in Chon Kemin, cooking the delicious dishes and national drinks, traditional bread baking (boorsok, kattama, chakchak, lepushka), herbal tea.

*lunch at Russian family with wine and honey. Jam cooking in Cholpon Ata town
*picnic in Grigorievskoe gorge with grilled meat and vegetables
*master class at Dungan family in Karakol town
*master class Manty at Uighur family in Karakol town
*master class Beshbarmak at Kazakh family in Tokmok town
* visit Shampaign-Wine factory in Bishkek city + wine tasting (if the factory is open)
* visit to Shoro factory in Bishkek city + tasting their drinks (if the factory is open)

## DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Provided we are advised in advance of your departure we are able to cater for vegetarian diets and can assist with medically recommended diets (allergies and intolerances). Please ensure you discuss your requirements with us well in advance (at least 1 month prior to your trip) to determine whether we can cater to such dietary requirements on your chosen adventure. Please note that options are likely to be limited in very remote locations or alternatives may be more expensive or unavailable. There may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own food. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Passengers must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.