



Community based tourism Kochkor
Коомчулукка негизделген туризм Кочкор
Туризм основанный на сообществах Кочкор

Jailoo Hopping to Song-Kol Lake – 3 days

Tour type: trekking/horseback riding/auto

Total duration: 3 days

Best season: mid-May – end of September

Level of difficulty: medium

Maximum altitude on the trip: 3 400 meters ASL

Transport: jeep/minivan/minibus depending on the size of a group

Description:

Song-Kol lake means "the final lake" in Kyrgyz language. Song-Kol gleams like a brilliant sapphire on its lush green mountain plateau. At 3016 m it is inaccessible during winter months, and even in summer weather conditions can change rapidly. "The Final Lake" is considered one of the most beautiful areas for summer pasturing with an area of 270 km sq. In winter, the lake freezes over with ice more than a meter thick.

Nomads have been making the upland trek to this 3016 m asl lake since ancient times with their livestock. Some left mysterious "standing stone" arrangements.

Song-Kol lake is a beautiful place to experience life on a jailoo – summer pasture. Ride horses in the surrounding mountains, or stay in a yurt and experience an old-fashioned Kyrgyz summer.

Day 1: Kochkor — Kilemche jailoo

Transfer from Kochkor to Kyzart pass. Arrival at Kyzart pass, meet your guides team with horses and start the tour. Within sight of the road, cross Kyzyl-Kiya jailoo, an enormous, relatively flat sea of grass. Continue over the Chaar-Archa pass (3 061 m) into the Chaar-Archa valley and eat a tasty lunch by the racing river, with views of holy 4400 m Baba-Ata mountain. Sated, ford the river and follow the trail over verdant hills to Kilemche jailoo. The name means "like a carpet," and this swathe of grass covers whole mountain ranges, with shadings as subtle as any shyrdak (shyrdak is a Kyrgyz felt carpet). Dine and sleep in a yurt, naturally.

Horse time: 5 hours

Trek time: 5-6 hours

Day 2: Kilemche — Batai-Aral (Song-Kol 3016m)

After breakfast at Kilemche, spend the morning climbing to Jalgyz Karagai pass (3400 m), over the Song-Kol mountains and into the lake's basin. The morning climb affords wonderful views of Kilemche jailoo, and the pass itself is rocky and exciting. From the pass, Song-Kol is still distant, but as you traipse down the slopes, it gets larger and larger; the mountains on the other side get higher and higher, until finally the lake fills most of your field of view and the southern mountains tower above it. After lunch at Jaman Echki, walk to the lakeshore east to the yurt at Batai Aral. Upon arrival, meet your host family of Kyrgyz shepherds. Meals and overnight are in a yurt of

shepherds.

Horse time: 4 hours

Trek time: 3 hours

Day 3: Song-Kol — Kochkor

Morning transfer to Kochkor village.

By car: 3 hours

Services included:

- yurt stay;
- meals during tour (2 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners);
- transport services;
- 2 days horseback riding to Song-Kol lake;
- English-speaking guide;
- equipment: helmet, saddlebag, gaiters;
- tour map;
- left-luggage office.

Requirements:

- trekking boots;
- weatherproof warm clothing;
- hat and sunglasses;
- sunscreen;
- torch;
- sleeping bag.

Best group size:

- 2 - 15 persons.

Start and end points:

- Kochkor, 22A Pionerskaya street. Start on Day 1 at 9 am, end on Day 3 at 1pm.