CENTRAL ASIA GUIDE

PRIVATE TOUR · 8 DAYS

# Kyrgyzstan Mountain Lake Tour with Kel suu

Round trip from Bishkek · Kyrgyzstan

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| Duration<br>8 days, 7 nights | Start and end<br>Round trip from Bishkek | Best time to visit<br>Jun–Sep |
| Private tour from<br>$1,173 per person | Group size<br>Max 4 travellers | Tour type<br>Hiking, Horseback riding, Jeep (4x4), Nature |
| Difficulty<br>Moderate | | |

Prices and dates valid for 2026 departures. Issued 16 November 2026.

# Tour highlights

This 8-day tour from Bishkek takes you to three of Kyrgyzstan's most beautiful lakes – Song-Kol, Kel-Suu and Issyk-Kul – and combines them with horse riding, easy trekking and authentic nomadic culture. It is perfect for travelers seeking an active adventure without extreme challenges; the pace is brisk to fit in the main highlights, including some long drives along scenic mountain routes.

Begin with a classic 2-day horseback ride from Kyzart over the Jalgyz-Karagai Pass (3,326 m) to Song-Kol Lake, staying in traditional yurts with local herder families – no riding experience is needed. Via Naryn and the At-Bashy region, scenic off-road routes across Kyndy Pass lead to the hidden gem of Kel-Suu Lake, known for its turquoise water and towering cliffs, where you can take a short boat ride.

On the south shore of Issyk-Kul, the "Pearl of Central Asia", you can watch an eagle hunting demonstration near Bokonbaevo and explore Skazka (Fairy-Tale) Canyon, the Barskoon waterfalls and the red rocks of Jeti-Oguz on the way to Karakol. The tour ends with 2 days of easy trekking in the alpine valley of Altyn-Arashan, famous for its scenery and relaxing natural hot springs.

**Difficulty: Moderate.** Two days of horse riding (21 km and 17 km, over the 3,326 m Jalgyz-Karagai Pass; no riding experience needed), a 14 km walk to Kel-Suu Lake from a guesthouse at 3,200 m and a 2-day trek to Altyn-Arashan (12 km each way, easy to medium). Nights in yurts at 2,700–3,100 m and long drives of up to 390–420 km a day.

Kel Suu Tour

Horseback riding tour in Kyrgyzstan

## Where you'll stay

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Night 1 | **Kilemche** | Yurt camp in Kilemche |
| Night 2 | **Song-Kul Lake** | Yurt camp at Song Kol |
| Night 3 | **Tash Bashat** | Hotel in Tash-Bashat or similar |
| Night 4 | **Kok Kiya Valley** | Guesthouse in Kok-Kiya Valley or similar |
| Night 5 | **Bokonbaevo** | Guesthouse in Bokonbaevo or similar |
| Night 6 | **Karakol** | Hotel in Karakol or similar |
| Night 7 | **Altyn Arashan** | Guesthouse in Altyn-Arashan or similar |

Listed accommodation or similar, same category.

# Day-by-day itinerary

DAY 1

## From Bishkek to Kyzart & Kilemche

Kick off your Kyrgyzstan adventure tour with a scenic drive to Kyzart Village near Song-Kol Lake, one of Kyrgyzstan's most beautiful alpine lakes. Enjoy a homemade lunch at a local guesthouse and receive basic horseback riding instructions, perfect for beginners.

In the afternoon, ride along the Chaar-Archa River through wide valleys and peaceful mountain landscapes to reach Kilemche. The smooth trail allows you to connect with your horse while enjoying the stunning scenery.

By evening, arrive at a yurt camp run by a local herder family, where you can explore the hills, experience daily Kyrgyz nomadic life, and breathe in the fresh mountain air.

The ride is about 21 km (4–5 hours) and no prior horse-riding experience is required. Leave your large bag at the guesthouse and take a small backpack with essentials; the main bag is transported by car.

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| Overnight | **Kilemche** · Yurt camp in Kilemche |
| Meals | Lunch, Dinner |
| Travel | Bishkek – Kyzart (280 km)<br>Kyzart – Kilemche (on horseback, 21 km) |

DAY 2

## Riding to Song Kul

Today's horseback ride is more demanding but incredibly rewarding. After breakfast at the yurt camp, you'll begin the ascent toward Jalgyz-Karagai Pass (3,326 m). While the climb is challenging, the breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding mountains make it well worth the effort. At the top, pause to rest your horses and enjoy your first stunning glimpse of Song-Kol Lake shimmering in the distance.

From there, you'll descend toward the lakeshore, passing traditional nomadic yurts and grazing herds along the way. By midday, you'll arrive at the yurt camp near the lake, where lunch will be served.

The afternoon is free to unwind after the ride: take a stroll along the lakeshore, explore the nearby hills, or simply relax and soak in the tranquil atmosphere of Song-Kol. After dinner, step outside to marvel at the clear night sky, illuminated with countless stars.

Today's ride is about 17 km (about 4 hours). The horses return to Kyzart Village after you reach Song-Kol Lake. Bring warm clothing for the chilly evenings.

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| Overnight | **Song-Kul Lake** · Yurt camp at Song Kol |
| Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner |
| Travel | Kilemche – Song-Kul Lake (on horseback, 17 km) |

DAY 3

## From Son Kul to Kyrgyz heartlands

Today, you'll drive to Tash-Bashat Village, located in the heart of Kyrgyzstan. The journey begins along the scenic Song Kul lakeshore before ascending the famous Terskey-Torpu Pass (3,300 m), featuring dramatic zig-zag roads and stunning mountain views.

You'll stop in Naryn City for a rest and lunch, then continue to Tash-Bashat Village, where you'll stay at a comfortable hotel – an ideal chance to refresh after your nights in a yurt in the mountains.

Once settled, take a leisurely walk through the village streets to experience authentic rural Kyrgyz life, or explore the nearby mountains for an active afternoon. In the evening, enjoy a hearty dinner at the hotel, followed by a warm bonfire under the starry sky – a perfect way to end the day.

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| Overnight | **Tash Bashat** · Hotel in Tash-Bashat or similar |
| Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner |
| Travel | Song-Kul Lake – Naryn (120 km)<br>Naryn – Tash Bashat (50 km) |

DAY 4

## To Kel Suu

Start your day early with a rugged drive through the At-Bashy region, crossing Kyndy Pass (3,405 m), the gateway to the vast Arpa Valley, en route to Kel-Suu Lake.

Upon arrival at a guesthouse in Kok-Kiya Valley, enjoy lunch before setting off on a scenic 4-hour trek along the river. The gentle terrain makes for an easy yet breathtaking hike, with towering mountains framing the distant lake.

At Kel-Suu Lake, admire the spectacular scenery and, if desired, take a short boat ride on the pristine waters. After soaking in the beauty, return to the guesthouse for dinner and a comfortable overnight stay.

The trek is generally easy, with one slightly challenging section near the lake. Horse riding is available as an alternative for an additional fee. Yurt accommodation is possible, but the guesthouse is recommended because of the cold weather.

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| Overnight | **Kok Kiya Valley** · Guesthouse in Kok-Kiya Valley or similar |
| Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner |
| Travel | Tash Bashat – Kok Kiya Valley (180 km)<br>Kok Kiya Valley – Kel-Suu Lake (hike, 7 km)<br>Kel-Suu Lake – Kok Kiya Valley (hike, 7 km) |

DAY 5

## Drive to Issyk Kul

Today is the longest driving day of your journey, so start with an early breakfast before retracing the route back to Naryn. Upon arrival, refuel the car and enjoy lunch before continuing toward Ysyk-Kol Lake, passing over Dolon Pass (3,030 m) and through Kochkor Village.

If time permits, make a short stop at the Ak-Say Canyons to admire the striking rock formations with a lake and mountains in the distance.

In the evening, arrive at your guesthouse in Bokonbaev Village on the southern shore of Ysyk-Kol Lake. Take a brief walk to stretch your legs before enjoying a relaxing dinner.

The guesthouses in Bokonbaev are slightly farther from the lake; if you prefer to stay closer, yurt accommodation is available – please confirm with us.

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| Overnight | **Bokonbaevo** · Guesthouse in Bokonbaevo or similar |
| Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner |
| Travel | Kok Kiya Valley – Bokonbaevo (390 km) |

DAY 6

## South Shore of Issyk Kul

Start your day with a fascinating eagle hunting demonstration by a local Kyrgyz eagle hunter, experiencing this unique tradition up close. Then, drive to the stunning Fairy-Tale Canyons to explore their dramatic rock formations and colorful landscapes. Stop in Tamga Village for lunch at the home of a famous Soviet-era mountaineer.

After lunch, continue to the impressive Barskoon Waterfalls, followed by a visit to the picturesque Jety-Oguz Valley, known for its striking red rock formations.

In the evening, arrive in Karakol, where, time permitting, you can take a short city tour before enjoying dinner at a local restaurant.

The eagle hunting demonstration is staged with animal skins; real hunting on horseback takes place only in winter. The demonstration is optional and can be skipped.

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| Overnight | **Karakol** · Hotel in Karakol or similar |
| Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner |
| Travel | Bokonbaevo – Karakol (150 km) |

DAY 7

## Trekking to Altyn Arashan

Begin your day with a drive to Ak-Suu Village near Karakol, then set off on a scenic trek to Altyn-Arashan Gorge, carrying a small backpack. The trail follows a sparkling river through lush alpine forests, offering breathtaking views of surrounding mountains. Pause along the way for a relaxing picnic by the river, soaking in the fresh mountain air and peaceful sounds of nature.

By early evening, arrive at the Altyn-Arashan guesthouse and enjoy the natural hot springs to relax tired muscles. Conclude the day with a hearty dinner and the opportunity to unwind under the stars in this tranquil alpine setting.

The trek is about 12 km (about 5 hours) and easy to medium. Leave your large bag at the hotel or in the car and take only a backpack with essentials for the 2-day trek. Optional horseback riding or a ride in a classic Soviet 4x4 UAZ is available for an additional fee for those who prefer an easier journey.

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| Overnight | **Altyn Arashan** · Guesthouse in Altyn-Arashan or similar |
| Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner |
| Travel | Karakol – Ak Suu (30 km)<br>Ak Suu – Altyn Arashan (trek, 12 km) |

DAY 8

## Trekking back from Altyn Arashan and drive to Bishkek

After breakfast, begin your trek back to Ak-Suu Village, retracing the scenic trail along the river and through alpine forests. Enjoy the fresh mountain air and take in the landscapes one last time.

Upon arrival at Ak-Suu, drive to Karakol for lunch and a final taste of local cuisine. Continue along the northern shore of Ysyk-Kol Lake, taking in its sparkling waters and the surrounding mountains of this “Pearl of Central Asia.”

Arrive in Bishkek in the evening, marking the conclusion of your 8-day Kyrgyzstan adventure filled with horseback riding, trekking, hidden lakes, and authentic nomadic experiences.

The trek back is about 12 km (about 4 hours). The drive back to Bishkek is long but mostly on asphalt, so the day starts early in Altyn-Arashan. Expected arrival in Bishkek: 8–9 pm.

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| Overnight | Departure day, no overnight |
| Meals | Breakfast, Lunch |
| Travel | Altyn Arashan – Ak Suu (trek, 12 km)<br>Ak Suu – Bishkek (420 km) |

# What's included

## Included

- Transfers in a 4x4 vehicle with air conditioning
- English-speaking guide for the whole tour
- Accommodation as listed in the itinerary (7 nights)
- Full board (set menu), except breakfast on day 1 and dinner on day 8
- Visits and entrance fees as listed in the itinerary
- Horse riding to Song-Kol Lake (2 days)
- Permit for Kel-Suu Lake

## Not included

- International flights
- Airport transfer (25 USD one way per car for 1–4 people)
- Hotel in Bishkek
- Breakfast on day 1 and dinner on day 8
- Single room supplement
- Insurance
- Eagle hunting demonstration (80 USD per group)
- Optional horse riding or 4x4 UAZ ride instead of trekking (Kel-Suu, Altyn-Arashan)
- Water and alcoholic drinks
- Tips for the guide
- Personal expenses
- Services not specifically mentioned as included

# Prices

**Valid for 2026 departures**

## Private tour, per person by group size

| Travellers | Price per person |
|---|---|
| 1 traveller | $2,323 |
| 2 travellers | $1,541 |
| 3 travellers | $1,242 |
| 4 travellers | $1,173 |

Private tours start on any date you choose. Prices per person in a double or twin room.

## Optional extras

- Airport transfer (one way, per car for 1–4 people): $25 per group
- Eagle hunting demonstration (per group): $80 per group

# Book or ask a question

Choose a date or ask us anything about this tour. We usually reply within one working day.

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| Tour page | central-asia.guide/kyrgyzstan/kyrgyzstan-tours/kyrgyzstan-mountain-lake-tour-with-kel-suu |
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