



Country: Mongolia

Trip Dates –

Estimated start date: 24th May 2011 – 23rd July 2011

Please note the camping on this expedition is participatory wild without any facilities except small accommodation tents.

HIGHLIGHTS

Altai Mountain Range

Gobi Desert

Mongolian Steppe

Wildlife

Ger visits

Walking past the largest sand dunes in Mongolia, Khongoryn Els

Meeting with local Nomadic families

Camel riding (optional)

Sleeping out under the stars (optional)

Being accompanied by Ripley Davenport

ABOUT YOUR EXPEDITION LEADER



Ripley Davenport is a renowned desert / steppe explorer, expedition leader and best known for his challenging expeditions to the isolated vast steppes and deserts of the world. He avoids the worn tourist paths, and eminent landmarks, favouring instead to position himself in apparent hostile environments where the likelihood of encountering an integral ecosystem or culture is greatest.

Ripley Davenport, 40 years old is a Desert Explorer, and highly sought after expedition leader, originally from the United Kingdom who came to prominence in the late 1990s after his successful crossing of the Namib Desert and Karakum Desert with no GPS or back up. As a record-breaking explorer, Ripley has been a pioneering figure in pushing the envelope of desert adventure for many years. In August 1998, Ripley completed a crossing of the Namib Desert, alone, from Oranjemund to the border of Angola. This feat went unrecognised, without sponsors or major media coverage. It had taken Ripley many years, several set backs and an exceptional degree of commitment to achieve his dream. At the start of his 82 days crossing of the Namib Desert, he lost one of his camels, “Jangles” and was nearly drowned when a freak wave almost swept him out to sea. His two loyal camels, “Fiji”, and “Nelly” kept him company, as he battled his way up and down sand dunes, through dense bush and across remote desert terrain, where the temperatures soared 24-hours a day. Four months later, after crossing Namib, he crossed the Karakum Desert. The endeavour, both comprising a total of 108-day feat of extreme endurance, was noted as a significant step towards

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understanding human endurance in a desert environment.

He spent a considerable amount of time in Niger living with the Tuareg learning about their complex social structures and desert travel. Shortly after, Ripley made a 3-week reconnaissance trip to the Thar Desert in India, the seventh largest in the world, to survey the area for a possible future expedition.

In April 2010, he had faced failure on his first attempt to cross Mongolia, in his all-consuming mission after three years of planning and training, due to a technical failure with the inner wheel components of his trailer. Ripley's second attempt at a solo walk across the vast landmass of Mongolia from east to west, started one month later in May. Again, Ripley covered a staggering 1628km / 1012 miles, in just 52 days, beating the current record. On his walk, he was attacked by

dogs and stalked by wolves. He endured extreme temperature fluctuations, blizzards, sand storms, isolation, unrelenting desert heat and brutal terrain, which involved walking 1700 miles / 2750 km's across the Eastern Mongolian Steppe, Gobi Desert and the Altai Mountain Range, while hauling provisions and equipment weighing in excess of 240kg in a wheeled trailer, specifically designed for the journey.

However, Ripley doesn't always wear desert walking boots. He served in a special forces unit of the British Royal Navy and did a short term of service in the RAF Regiment, completing numerous specialist courses such as Survivalist, Ships Diver and Intelligence Photographer. He left the military in 1997.

He successfully completed other courses such as confined space rescue, EMT Medic, and Advanced Wilderness Survival and was a volunteer lifeboat crew member, for a brief period if time, with the Gorleston & Great Yarmouth Lifeboat and Great Yarmouth Coastwatch.

He has a Masters Degree in Environmental Science and DipEd in Conservation Biology and is currently studying different forms of the desert nomadic lifestyle.

Ripley, a British citizen residing in Denmark, is married to Laura. They have two children, Scott and Stella.

For over a decade Ripley has looked to the world beyond his horizon and endeavoured to engage with it. Having made a sound reputation as a skilled specialist, Ripley will continue to explore the great steppes and deserts of the world and strengthen the cultural divides and document and illustrate the indigenous lives, far removed from our own, who have proudly continued their way of life regardless of the spectra of invading globalisation.

He also helps encourage people to reach beyond their perceived limits, and to use adventure as a medium to educate, inspire and empower each of us to understand the world beyond our borders and make positive change.

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