

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

GOLDEN EAGLE TRANS-SIBERIAN EXPRESS, TRANS-MONGOLIAN & THE SILK ROAD JOURNEYS: RUSSIA, KAZAKHSTAN, UZBEKISTAN, TURKMENISTAN, MONGOLIA & CHINA

PASSPORT AND VISA INFORMATION

Your passport needs to be valid for at least six (6) months after your journey. You should have at least one (1) blank visa page in your passport for each country that requires a visa on your journey and a minimum of two (2) blank visa pages for entry and exit stamps.

Please ensure that you allow enough time for visa processing and submit your visa applications so that you receive your passport and visas in time for your trip. It may take up to three (3) months to process the all the visas required for your journey.

Journeys that include Russia and Uzbekistan: Check your train itinerary as some train journeys require you to obtain a double-entry or multiple-entry visa. Please consult your A&K Journey Itinerary and your A&K Travel Consultant for the number of entries required for your tour. Do not start the visa process until you receive the Golden Eagle visa letter from your A&K Travel Consultant, approximately 90 days prior to departure. We recommend that you submit a photo-copy of your day-by-day itinerary with your visa application. When your visa is returned to you, check to ensure your visa reflects valid entry and exit days for your itinerary before departing the United States.

Russia

A tourist visa is required for U.S. and Canadian passport holders for entry into Russia. A visa can be obtained either by applying directly to a Russian consulate or through a visa processing service. We strongly advise processing your Russian visa through VisaCentral as we have made arrangements with our visa service provider to obtain the Russia Tourist Visa Support Letter necessary to process your visa.

Kazakhstan

Holders of U.S. and Canadian passports are not required to obtain a tourist visa for entry into Kazakhstan for stays of up to 30 days.

Turkmenistan

A tourist visa is required for U.S. and Canadian passport holders for entry into Turkmenistan and must be obtained prior to departure. A visa stamp in your passport can be obtained either by applying directly to a Turkmenistan consulate or through a visa processing service. While there are additional costs involved in using a visa service, this option is available for guests who prefer additional assistance in the visa process.

A letter of invitation from the Turkmenistan State Migration Service (SMS) must be submitted with your visa application. A&K will assist you in obtaining this invitation letter. In order to begin this process, please email a clear, full-color photograph or scan of your passport showing the full page including the two digital lines at the bottom of the page to A&K at: operations@abercrombiekent.com. The SMS requires at least 15 working days to process the certified letter of invitation which will then be forwarded to you by A&K so that you may apply for your tourist visa.

Turkmenistan Immigration Card: In addition to a tourist visa, visitors are also required to purchase an immigration card on arrival. The current fee is USD \$14 (subject to change without notice.) The fee must be paid in cash and can be paid in U.S. dollars. Two (2) passport-size

photos and photocopy of your passport are also required. You must carry this card with you for the duration of your stay in Turkmenistan, and then return it to customs authorities on departure.

Uzbekistan

A tourist visa is required for U.S. and passport holders for entry into Uzbekistan and must be obtained prior to departure. There are currently two options available as outlined below. A&K recommends an electronic visa.

Electronic Visa (eVisa): To apply for an eVisa visit <https://e-visa.gov.uz/main>. The current fee for a single-entry visa is USD \$20 (subject to change without notice.) Read and follow all instructions carefully to ensure a smooth arrival in Uzbekistan.

Visa Stamp: A visa stamp in your passport can be obtained either by applying directly to an Uzbek consulate or through a visa processing service. While there are additional costs involved in using a visa service, this option is available for guests who prefer assistance in the visa process.

Holders of Canadian passports are not required to obtain a tourist visa for entry into Uzbekistan for stays of up to 30 days.

Mongolia

Holders of U.S. and Canadian passports are not required to obtain a tourist visa for entry into Mongolia for stays of up to 90 days.

China

A tourist visa is required for U.S. and Canadian passport holders for entry into China and must be obtained prior to departure. A visa stamp in your passport can be obtained either by applying directly to a Chinese consulate or through a visa processing service. While there are additional costs involved in using a visa service, this option is available for guests who prefer additional assistance in the visa process.

U.S. citizens who have a passport with a remaining validity of one year or more will be issued a multi-entry China visa that will be valid for 10 years. *Note: If you renew your passport after being issued a 10 year China visa, the visa will still remain valid for the full ten years. If you visit China again during this time, you will need to carry both your current, valid passport and the old passport with the 10 year China visa stamp.*

Those with passports that have less than one year remaining validity will be issued a visa that is valid for 6 months.

Chinese consulates are jurisdictional and you must submit your application to the specific consulate that covers the region of your home address. Application specifics and requirements may differ between consulates. You may be required to appear in person to apply for your visa (though this is a rare requirement). When applying for your China visa, you may be asked to provide copies of any or all of the following:

- Your round-trip international air ticket, including any connecting flights within the US to your gateway city, or letter noting you will be driving from your home city to the gateway airport if located in another state.
- Your day-by-day itinerary (including specific details for internal air flights or high-speed train journeys within China). If you are visiting any other country/countries prior to arriving into and/or after leaving China, you may be asked to provide a copy of your day-by-day itinerary for those portions of your overall journey as well. *However, do NOT mention any planned travel to Tibet, which may result in your visa application being denied.*

- Letter of Invitation: Submitting copies of your day-by-day itinerary and round-trip international air ticket as noted above will fulfill the Letter of Invitation requirement.
- Hotel Confirmations: Submitting a copy of the contact list of accommodations and local A&K offices for your journey will fulfill the Hotel Confirmations requirement.
- Your paid in full invoice.
- Your current employment resume.
- If you are self-employed, you may be asked to include a brief letter containing the company profile and your job description.
- Your current, valid passport as well as your previous, expired/non-valid passport.
- If you have ever travelled to Turkey, you may be asked to provide a personal statement letter that includes specific dates and details about all visits. Your statement letter must include details for every Turkish immigration stamp in your current passport.
- Carefully follow all instructions for photograph submissions. Make certain your photograph matches the size requirements, was taken in front of a solid white background and has no shadows and was taken within the last six months. Also remove eye glasses before taking your photo. Other specifics may also apply and are subject to change without notice.

All of these documents should display your full name on them as it appears on your passport. All of these documents should also be TYPED not hand written.

Of Special Note for Canadian Passport Holders

Effective January 1, 2019, the government of China requires all visa applicants in Canada to submit fingerprints. Applicants may submit fingerprints at Visa Application Centers located in Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Calgary, and Vancouver. These application centers are jurisdictional and you must submit your application to the specific center that covers the region of your home address. For more information, please visit our partner VisaCentral's Canadian offices at visacentral.ca/abercrombiekent or the Government of Canada's Travel Advice and Advisories page at travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories.

Our partner VisaCentral offers easy, efficient U.S. passport and visa processing. Visit them online at visacentral.com/abercrombiekent or call 844 823 1224 and reference A&K's account number 73001. Service fees apply.

Citizens of other countries should contact the appropriate consular office for entry requirements pertaining to their journey.

REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO COVID-19

Visit the U.S. Department of State at travel.state.gov or the Government of Canada at travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories for comprehensive and up-to-date country entry requirements as well as information for onward travel. A&K will facilitate in-country testing required for returning home or onward travel at the end of your A&K journey. Costs are paid locally and vary depending on the type and location of testing. All details specific to your journey will be included in with your **Final Documents**.

Requirements for Returning Home or Onward Travel

Guests returning to the United States

All travellers, including U.S. passport holders, must provide printed or electronic proof of a negative COVID-19 viral test taken within three (3) days of boarding their flight to the United States or written documentation verifying they have recovered from COVID-19 within 90 days

preceding travel. Additional details can be found at [U.S. COVID-19 Entry Requirements | CDC](#). State COVID-19 entry requirements may vary and can be found at [COVID-19 Travel Planner | CDC](#).

Guests returning to Canada

All travellers, including Canadian passport holders, must provide printed or electronic proof of a negative COVID-19 molecular test taken within 72 hours of boarding their flight to Canada. Additional information can be found at travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories.

Note all guests with flights connecting through and/or continuing to other countries should check the specific COVID-19 entry requirements.

VACCINATIONS

There are no vaccinations currently required to enter these countries except for Kazakhstan and China.

A yellow fever vaccination is only required to enter Kazakhstan and China if you are arriving from, or have transited through, a yellow fever-endemic area in South America or Africa. The CDC and WHO each provide a current list of all affected countries. If vaccination for yellow fever is necessary, you must carry an International Certificate of Vaccination provided by your physician; you may be denied entry without it.

If your physician advises against receiving the vaccination because of your personal medical history, he or she can provide you with the necessary documentation for the country/countries you are visiting.

STAY HEALTHY ON THE ROAD

Mongolia is very mountainous and much of the country lies at high altitudes with the average elevation being 5,184 feet above sea level. The Altai Mountain Range averages 14,863 feet above sea level. As a result, you may experience altitude sickness. Please consult your healthcare provider for suggestions on prevention and treatment.

CASH & CREDIT CARDS

In Russia, Visa and MasterCard are the preferred brands; American Express is not as widely accepted. Travellers should note that for no apparent reason Russian credit card readers sometimes decline a valid credit card. For this reason, travellers intending to pay for goods and services by credit card should carry a back-up credit card(s) in case their card is not accepted. Credit cards are not accepted for payments on board the train. ATMs are plentiful in Moscow and to a lesser extent in other large cities. Travellers should use only machines that are physically attached to an established banking institution and avoid "stand-alone" machines found on street corners and in metro stations.

Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan are still by and large cash economies. Travellers checks and credit cards are not widely accepted except at large hotels and restaurants catering to international visitors. When travelling in Central Asia, it is suggested that you use U.S. dollars in excellent condition and small denominations (\$20 or less) to pay for your purchases. Banknotes with a serial date prior to 1990 will not be accepted. Exchange only a small amount of currency for small, same-day purchases such as souvenirs (many souvenirs can be purchased with U.S. dollars). ATMs exist in larger cities.

In Mongolia, U.S. dollars are widely accepted in hotels, restaurants and larger shops that are frequented by tourists (Major credit cards are accepted at some hotels and retail shops in Ulaanbaatar, but not outside the city. It is also possible to obtain cash advances on your credit card at banks in the capital.

In China, major credit cards are accepted at most larger stores, museums, duty-free shops, hotels and some restaurants. ATM access is extremely limited in China, being available only at a few international banks in Beijing and Shanghai.

OF SPECIAL NOTE

Many churches and museums in Russia charge a fee (in rubles) for photography or video. Your local guide will advise when a fee is required. Restrictions on bringing large professional cameras into the Kremlin in Moscow apply:

- Diameter - no larger than 70 mm (2.75 inches)
- Height - no more than 140 mm (5.51 inches)
- Camera lens - no larger than 250 mm
- Cameras that are larger than these restrictions will not be allowed on the Kremlin grounds. There may be issues elsewhere in Moscow with professional photography equipment, such as tripods and large lens cameras, and Russian authorities may become suspicious of anyone carrying this equipment.

PACKING LIST

Please use the provided A&K luggage tags, even if your bags already have ID tags. This makes it easier for A&K staff to find and manage your luggage for you.

Safe Travel Essentials

Be sure to bring personal protective equipment (PPE), including face masks, travel-sized hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, facial tissues and disinfecting wipes or spray.

Clothing

Choose versatile, casual clothing that can be layered if the weather (or level of air-conditioning) requires. Cotton and other light fabrics are comfortable choices for summertime. Spring and autumn dictate medium-weight clothing selections. During the day, dress is casual both on and off the train. Pack a coat, hat, gloves, boots, warm socks and sleepwear, if you are visiting between October and April. Smart casual attire is appropriate for evenings. Formal clothing is not necessary.

Mosques, cathedrals, churches, and other religious sites require conservative dress. Arms, shoulders should be covered – no shorts. This applies to both men and women. For women, barebacked, low-necked dresses or tops or short skirts, are not considered appropriate attire.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Casual slacks | <input type="checkbox"/> Walking shorts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Polo shirts, casual short-sleeve shirts or blouses | <input type="checkbox"/> Long sleeve shirts or blouses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable walking shoes with low or no heels | <input type="checkbox"/> Lightweight raincoat and umbrella |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sweater or fleece jacket | <input type="checkbox"/> Brimmed hat or visor for sun protection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sleepwear | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal garments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Socks | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimwear/cover-up |

Other Recommended Items

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses | <input type="checkbox"/> Sun block and lip balm |
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- Simple first-aid kit
- Extra eyeglasses/contact lenses
- Charging cables for electronics
- Prescriptions and medications (in their original bottles and/or packaging)
- Smartphone
- Global travel adapter

Laundry is available at various stops throughout the tour and you will find a price list within your cabin. Laundry is done off the train and your Tour Manager will inform you of when laundry is available. Most items (except heavy materials such as jeans) are delivered to your cabin within 24 hours. For Imperial Class passengers, laundry is included at no extra cost.

TIPPING GUIDELINES

While decisions regarding tipping rest entirely with you, we suggest the following gratuities (noted in U.S. dollars) depending on the type of journey:

	Tailor Made Journeys
Resident Tour Director or Group Extension Guide	Not applicable
Local Guides	\$25 per person, per day (full day)
Drivers	\$15 per person, per day (full day)
Airport Transfer Drivers	\$5 per person, per transfer
Trains	Included
Hotel Porters	\$2 per bag
Housekeepers	\$2 per person, per night
Included Meals	Included
Restaurants or Room Service on Own	10-15% unless already added

Gratuities on board the train: All gratuities are included. Passengers are encouraged to inform the train's management of any exceptional service received, and the staff will be rewarded accordingly.

LIFE ON BOARD THE GOLDEN EAGLE LUXURY TRAIN

The Golden Eagle is a private train comprised of 21 cars (5 cabins per carriage). The train has a bar car and two restaurant cars. The total number of carriages varies by departure and passenger numbers. Depending on the journey, the train may travel with only one restaurant car which seats 54 guests. The bar car accommodates between 25-45 passengers and features a piano and also hosts activities such as language lessons and talks on local history or culture during the day. All sleeping compartments feature remote controlled air-conditioning and heating, recessed lighting and wardrobe, personal safe private en-suite bathroom with full power shower and under-floor heating (not available in Silver Class), DVD/CD player with LCD screens, bathrobes, slippers, hair dryer, shampoo and shower gel, complimentary tea, coffee and bottled water in cabin. Towels and linens are changed every second day (or daily on request in Imperial Suites).

There is limited storage space inside the cabin for luggage storage. Soft-topped luggage is easier to store.

The train has one Tour Manager and one Tour Assistant on each departure with a number of destination guides for off-train excursions. (The number of Tour Assistants is dependent on passengers on board.) There are two attendants in each carriage. One of the attendants is always on duty (24 hours) in your rail car and remains on the train during the city tours; however, all passengers should take their passport with them whenever they disembark for sightseeing and leave their valuables in the safe deposit box.

There is a doctor on board who can provide basic care if needed. In order to travel aboard the Golden Eagle, you must carry proof of valid travel insurance stating company, policy number and 24-hour medical emergency telephone number. You will be asked to provide proof of coverage prior to departure.

Three meals are included daily - breakfast, lunch and dinner on the train journey. (Continental breakfast can be served in your compartment.) Afternoon tea is also served on board. Wine, beer, soft drinks and tea and coffee are included with all lunches and dinners both on and off the train (except where stated otherwise). Breakfast is normally served between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. On days when an off-train tour departs before 10:00 a.m., the Tour Manager will make an announcement so that you have time to eat before the off-train excursion. Lunch is scheduled around the off-train excursion schedule; however it is normally served between 12:30 and 2:00 p.m. There is one seating for dinner each evening, usually at 7:00 p.m. Set meals are offered with a choice of main course. Both international and local Russian food is served. The menu is decided by the head chef.

On board the train passengers will not need much currency, but you may incur charges for laundry, bar bills, other incidentals and optional off-train excursions. It is possible to run a "tab" on board and make one payment at the end of the tour. Payments must be made in cash (US dollars or euros). Credit cards are not accepted on board the train. You will need cash for souvenirs and any shopping you may choose to do off the train. Russian rubles are taken off the train but many places also accept US dollars. Please refer to the section on currency for information on exchanging money. The Tour Manager on board and local guides can also provide information on how, and if necessary, where to change money.

For off-train excursions, the buses carry up to 35 passengers and tours may be divided into groups to visit specific sights, museums, hiking excursions, etc. Tours are led by English-speaking guides.

Cell phone service can be unreliable and unpredictable, and in some locations it is not possible at all. Due to government regulations, please be aware that access to some social media sites may not be available in China. Cell phone coverage can be found virtually along the entire Trans-Siberian Express route, however it is not continuous. The Tour Manager can be contacted in emergencies on the 24-hour emergency number included in your final pre-tour materials. (There is no satellite phone on board the trains.)

While travelling on board, if you bring your own devices, Wi-Fi may be accessible where a signal is available (usually when passing through larger towns and cities). This is not guaranteed. When the train stops in larger cities, free Wi-Fi service is generally available in local cafes or restaurants and some locations visited on scheduled daytime excursions.

Smoking in the cabins is strictly prohibited. You can smoke in specific designated areas at the ends of the train.

LIFE ON BOARD THE SHANGRI-LA EXPRESS (SILK ROAD)

If your train journey includes China, you will change trains at the Chinese border to embark/disembark Shangri-La Express to/from The Golden Eagle in order to continue your journey. Please refer to your train itinerary for information specific to your journey.

The Shangri-La Express is a private train and the number of carriages is dependent on the number of passengers on the journey. Maximum capacity is 96 passengers. Fully en-suite cabins are not available on this train. The first-class sleeping cars feature cabins (approximately 38 sq. ft. in size) with bunk-style beds, bedside table and clothes storage. The train has centrally-controlled heating but does not have air-conditioning. All cabins share a wash basin facility between each cabin which is lockable from the inside. A toilet is located at each end of every sleeping car. Passengers on board the Shangri-La Express have use of a shower carriage accessible around the clock so you can shower whenever it is convenient. It features 8 private shower cabins which include a large walk-in shower, changing vestibule area, hairdryers, shaving plug sockets and large mirrors. Towels, robes and slippers are provided. Each car has its own attendant who cleans the cabins, makes the bed and is on call to serve tea and coffee 24 hours a day. Laundry service is available for a fee. There is a doctor on board who can provide basic care if needed.

There is limited storage space inside the cabin for luggage storage. Soft-topped luggage is easier to store.

The train has a bar car and a restaurant car. There is a pianist on board who provides evening entertainment in the bar car. Wine, beer, soft drinks and tea and coffee are included with all lunches and dinners both on and off the train (alcoholic drinks are served at an extra cost outside of meals). There is one seating for dinner each evening. The restaurant car serves Western-style breakfasts while lunch and dinner feature Chinese cuisine. Breakfast is usually served from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., lunch is usually between 12:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. and dinner around 8:00 p.m. Actual meal times are scheduled around excursion arrangements. Fresh fruit and snacks, tea, coffee and bottled water are available from the cabin attendant throughout the day.

The currency policy on board is the same as the Golden Eagle train.

Smoking in the cabins is strictly prohibited. You can smoke in specific designated areas at the ends of the train.