

# Siberian Odyssey: Legends of Buryatia, Lake Baikal & Tuva

FROM OLKHON ISLAND TO THE VALLEY OF THE CZARS

## SMALL GROUP TOUR



### 16 Days

#### Explorer Series Land Tour

\$7,095 per person, double occupancy

Plus internal air \$1,200

(economy class, subject to change)

Partial single supplement \$1,095 (see page 103)

Comprehensive tour inclusions and special accommodation note on page 103

**Group Size** 5-12 travelers

#### 2012 Land Tour Dates

August 3-18

**Stay a little longer...** Extend your stay with a visit to Mongolia or come early to explore more of Moscow. Contact us for details.

## MIR Signature Experiences

- Explore sacred Olkhon Island, sampling local *schi* – Baikal fish soup
- Experience a traditional shaman ceremony in remote Tuva
- Discover the other-worldly sounds of throat-singing at a traditional performance

photo: Michele Rice



Siberian color

Explore South Siberia, a remote and atmospheric land where mounted Scythians thundered across the steppe long ago. Meet the Buryats of UNESCO-listed Lake Baikal and the Tuvan and Khakass people, whose Mongolian neighbors imbued them with Buddhism, shamanism and *khoomei*, or throat-singing.

**Days 1-4: Moscow, Ulan Ude** Assemble in Moscow, then fly to Ulan Ude, the capital of Siberia's Buryat Republic. Visit Russia's most important Buddhist monastery, and enjoy a home-cooked meal and concert with modern-day Old Believers.

**Days 5-7: Listvyanka, Lake Baikal, Olkhon Island** Board a boat crossing UNESCO-listed Lake Baikal to Listvyanka on the western shore. Ferry to forested Olkhon Island, where indigenous Buryats believed the lake's gods to have lived. Search for elusive fresh-water seals and meet an Olkhon shaman.

**Days 8-9: Irkutsk, Trans-Siberian, Krasnoyarsk** Attend a private concert in the Decembrist Museum in Irkutsk, then take an overnight ride on the fabled Trans-Siberian Railway to Krasnoyarsk. Fly to Kyzyl, capital of the Republic of Tuva.

**Days 10-13: Tuva** Explore remote and beautiful Tuva, whose people have adopted many of the cultural traditions of Mongolia. Attend a shamanist ceremony and discover Tuvan throat-singing, an eerie-sounding musical form in which one person produces several sounds simultaneously. Visit the village of Samagalтай, Tuva's former capital, to visit with a nomadic steppe family. Here, learn the art of making Tuvan cheese and get a private throat-singing lesson. Venture to the famous Arzhan II excavations in Turan, in a place known as the "Valley of the Czars," where ancient Scythian horsemen buried their royalty in rich *kurgan*, and continue to the village of Ergaki for a night.

**Days 14-16: Ergaki, Shushenskoye, Abakan, Moscow** Travel overland through the foothills of the rolling Sayan Mountains stopping in Shushenskoye, an obscure Siberian village where Lenin was exiled. Continue to Abakan, capital of Khakassia, a small South Siberia republic established by Turkic-speaking tribes in the 8th century. Enjoy a Khakassian folk performance before flying back to Moscow for one last night.

photo: Martin Klimenta



Buryat music

