

Baikal Ice Marathon-2016

Russia's most exotic marathon in the superb environs!



XII edition of Baikal Ice Marathon

Special "Spirit to Preserve" Courtyard by Marriott Package



Dear guests,

Marriott continues to grow, and expanding globally has reached across another cultural border of this unique part of Russia, and the area of the world heritage site of Lake Baikal in Siberia.

The opening of the first International hotel in Siberia - Courtyard by Marriott Irkutsk City Center -added a mosaic stone to the rich 350 year history of Irkutsk. And I believe this will take its great share in attracting more travelers to this beautiful area as well as enhance meetings and convention industry of entire Siberia.

The vicinity of the Sacred Lake Baikal and Marriott's Spirit to Preserve ties very well into Marriott's® Strategy for Contributing to Environmental Conservation:

"With an increase in global travel comes corporate responsibility for mitigating our business impact on the natural environment. Both in our hotels and beyond, we seek to understand and act on the direct and indirect environmental impacts of our business operations." For more information visit www.marriott.com/spirittopreserve

Wolfgang Koller,
General Manager, CY by Marriott Irkutsk City Center



Baikal Ice Marathon & Spirit to Preserve Tour Package Program

Day 1, March 04, 2016

Welcome to Irkutsk – Siberia’s Microcosm and the gateway to Lake Baikal!

Upon arrival in Irkutsk – we shall be there at the airport to meet you for a further transfer to the **Courtyard by Marriott Irkutsk City Center Hotel** – the -1st International hotel of world-famous chain in Siberia.

Note: On the eve of its opening in 2011 this Marriott hotel in Irkutsk supported Baikal Ice Marathon “For preservation of clean water” and having covered some costs of the Russian participating runners, became the partner of this one-of-a-kind foot race in the world on Lake Baikal...

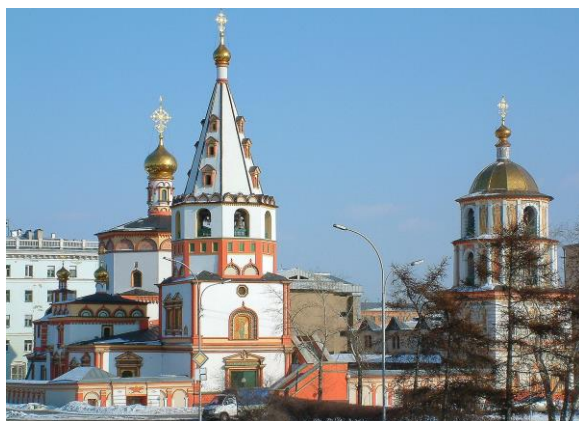
When checking in at deluxe rooms of the Irkutsk Courtyard by Marriott located in the historical and present downtown part of the city, enjoy welcome-drink, and after some time at leisure meet your professional bilingual guide at the lobby for a sightseeing tour of the city of Irkutsk often referred to as the Paris of Siberia, in the past.

During the city tour you shall visit the most atmospheric sites of Irkutsk including Znamenskaya Orthodox Cathedral famous for a rich collection of icons; graves of the Decembrists’ revolutionaries who were exiled by the tsar to Siberia for the ill-fated attempt to overthrow the tsar in December, 1825; and grave of so-called Russian Columbus –Gregory Shelekhov – an early Russian explorer of Alaska. We will also then have opportunities to take pictures of richly carved old-style wooden houses, see the Monument to Russian Pioneers of Siberia topped by the bronze figure of Alexander-the-3rd, the White House of Siberian Province as well as visit the local bazaar.

After dinner served at the hotel we welcome you to one of the cozy meeting rooms of the hotel for the slides presentation of winter Lake Baikal and overview of Baikal Ice Marathon followed by an orientation lecture on the upcoming conditions of the marathon ice course. During this lecture – a special briefing for the guests of Courtyard by Marriott done about the Baikal ice Marathon features and peculiarities of winter ice on Baikal. You will learn the difference between ridge ice and hummocks, pancake and brash ice, as well as you will become the first this year to get pre-start registered for your distance at the XII Baikal Ice Marathon.

Note: The “Baikal Ice Marathon- Marriott “Spirit to Preserve package” being an exclusive offer provides you more opportunities to run on the Baikal ice having a 3 distances choice: full marathon distance of 42 km 195 m, half marathon distance of 21 km, and 15-kilometer distance.

Overnight at the Courtyard by Marriott Irkutsk City Center.



Day 2, March 05, 2016



After breakfast we check out from the Marriott for a transfer to Listvyanka settlement located in the outflow of the Angara river from Lake Baikal and 62 km from the city of Irkutsk.

Approaching Baikal we stop in the source of the Angara River from Lake Baikal near the Shaman rock associated with many popular legends. After taking pictures here and learning about some ancient customs of local people, we proceed a short distance further to have lunch of tasty Siberian-Baikal cuisine to be served at a very popular "Proshly Vek" (meaning "Past Century") water front restaurant. After lunch we will have a guided tour of Baikal Ecology Museum which has a nice display of unique exhibits of the lake's flora and fauna, see an interesting video about Lake Baikal and also visit the Baikal fresh water seal aquarium. After the tour of this interesting museum we shall drive to check in at the Legend of Baikal Hotel located on the shore of Baikal right opposite the Shaman Rock in the source of the Angara river.



After check in and accompanied by a guide we shall undertake the checking the ice/training walk on the ice of Lake Baikal near the course of the 9-th Baikal Ice Marathon. Perhaps, some of you will already try to run on the lake preparing for the upcoming the next day great foot race on glorious Baikal.

In the evening – last briefing and issue of starting bibs. Then enjoy special Marathon Pasta-Dinner .

Day 3, March 06, 2016 – XII Baikal International Ice Marathon

After early breakfast – transfer of the registered runners to the start of the Baikal Ice Marathon course on the opposite eastern shore of Lake Baikal , at the station of Tankhoy. Your special "Marriot's Spirit to Preserve" package allows you to take up to 2 accompanying persons with you on to the marathon ice course, and they can join you as observers and encourage you during the whole time you run your individual distance at the Baikal Ice Marathon.

10:30 – Final Baikal Ice Marathon Course registration at the start line.

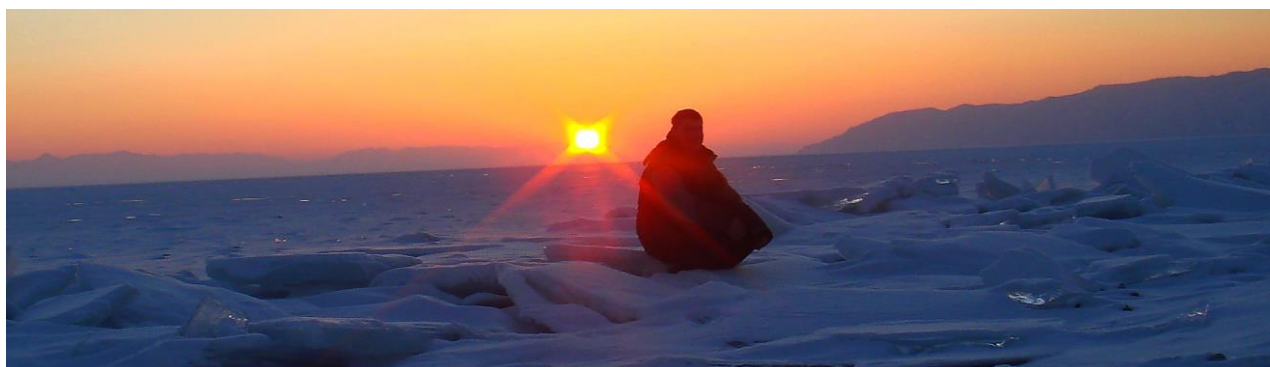
11:00 – Start of the IX-th Baikal Ice Marathon event (6 feed & drink station shall be operating , support team and hovercrafts available) .

As the participant of the "Spirit to Preserve" package you will have more control time to qualify yourself as the finisher of the Baikal Ice Marathon (control time will depend on the distance you choose) .

17:00 – 17:30 – after the completion of the foot race – transfer to your hotel. 18:30 - award ceremony, press-conference followed by Gala Dinner.



Pole of Baikal Enchanted in Ice -2016



“ When my friends in Moscow heard I was going to Siberia in February, they said:” It’s going to be cold.” Actually it was not that cold. Awaiting an arctic blast as I stepped off the plane into the Siberian snow, I found myself feeling no more chilled than I would on a ski vacation. Instead of the dark, frozen place of exile that I had expected - home of the Gulag and the salt mine - I found streets of Irkutsk filled with shoppers and vendors and fur-hatted peasants carrying purchases home. Shops were stocked with fresh fruit and stylish clothing and crowded restaurants served hearty traditional food like Siberian dumplings and stews...Siberia is unexpectedly mild in winter and surprisingly sunny in the winter months, when the deep colors of the forest shine against the snow.” - Andrew Rosenbaum, “Siberia Belies Its Somber Image”

The ice and landscape of the “enchanted” Lake Baikal in winter is so unreal: like the water of the lake the ice is very clear, pure and slightly blue in colour. There are literally waves frozen into bizarre shapes, and the blues and turquoise colours are amazing, set off by the orange lichens and grey rocks. The sense of peace and the obvious power of nature prevail over here. Once visiting Baikal in winter you’ll go crazy snapping pictures of the ice cover of Baikal that still continues to live under and one can feel its Great breath... And walking onto the ice is a strange sensation - one can still be able to see the bottom of the lake quite clearly.

The Pole of Baikal Enchanted in Ice-2013 Tour Itinerary highlights the best of winter Baikal in March – best time to visit this gorgeous area during the season. It allows to explore the natural taiga-woods of Baikal by snow-mobiles and unique sled-dogs, meet the local people during the “Maslenitsa” -Shrovetide Festival, go fast down the Siberia’s longest slide or take a horse-sleigh ride, enjoy the Siberian winter folk entertainments, meet with the real shamans, learn the culture and ways of life of the native Buryats, taste native Siberian and Russian cuisines, learn and compete in the ice-fishing on the world’s deepest and largest freshwater lake, and more...

Exclusive event of the tour below is a chance to partake in the special ceremony to be held above the deepest point of Lake Baikal that we at “Absolute Siberia” once called “The Baikal Pole” ...

So Day 4 of this package will be an Explorations of the Baikal Taiga-woods by snowmobile and husky sleds

Today we explore the nearby premises of the Pribaikalsky National Park, one of the largest in Russia, covering an area of some 417,000 hectares and encompassing much of the western shoreline of Lake Baikal. It presents a landscape of mountains and sub-alpine meadows, coniferous forests and steppes. Today we aim to explore by snowmobile and husky sleds something of the taiga-woods that cover the wild backcountry. The forested shoreline around Baikal is home to the brown bear, the “Lords of the Taiga”, as well as elk, deer and moose. Departing after breakfast we will journey towards the Chelpanov Meadows, getting the feel of our snowmobiles and practising riding them across this pristine landscape, before taking the opportunity to enjoy a ride through the area on Siberian husky sleds.

We will have an exciting trail and thrilling ride in the great outdoors with spectacular views of the taiga-woods enchanted in snow, led by professional dog sledding musher and the owner of the Baikal Sled-Dogs Center- Oleg Tyuryumin, and with 2 dog-champions of Russia – Bell and Jazz. We will ride true and unique breed of the Kamchatka huskies developed by nature with no an intrusion. These riding dogs have in the ancient past inherited their ancestors’ – wolfs’ - exceptional quick-wittedness...And after few generations that were spent on the shores of Lake Baikal these great outdoor dogs ,surely, acquired another specific feature in their character: this is greatness of that Energy that Baikal grants any being living in harmony with Mother Nature.





Under the expert guidance of the mushers – Oleg Turumin and his wife Natasha who're hooked on winter wilderness -you'll gain some understanding of the basic commands, techniques and sled control.

Returning to the meadows we then partake in a picnic lunch, enjoying some delicious smoked omul –endemic fish of Baikal (a distant relative of the salmon) or an al fresco barbeque.

This afternoon gives us the opportunity to continue our exploration of this stunning area, before returning to our hotel.

We will have some time at leisure before taking a walk to visit the local Saint Nicolas Orthodox wooden church built without use of nails in the end of the 19-th century, and that has a very nice iconostasis.

To have dinner we will walk to one of the popular restaurant serving local and Russian cuisine where we can order the meals up to one's taste or preference.

Day 5- March, 08, 2016

Celebration of Maslenitsa – Russian Shrovetide Festival

Today we will discover and experience the way how Russians celebrate their “Maslenitsa” or Pancake week, a Russian folk holiday dating back to the pagan times commonly regarded as the “sun festival” at the imminent end of the winter. From Orthodox Christian ancestry Maslenitsa is the last week before the Great Lent that is the seventh week before the Easter. And since during Lent, meat, fish, dairy products and eggs are forbidden as well as parties, secular music, dancing and other distractions are excluded from the spiritual life, the Maslenitsa represents the last chance to meet with the worldly delights.

After breakfast we'll depart for a guided tour of the Taltsy Open-Air Museum of Wooden Architecture—the place for all people to experience the history and traditions of the peoples of Siberia-Buryats, Evenks and Russians.

The Taltsy Museum is a unique display of original wooden structures scattered all over the large area and complete with great number of household items dating back to XVII-XIX cent. This one-of-a-kind exhibition including both native Siberians' and Russian sections, unfolds in a truly exciting story about Siberia's past: farmsteads of well-to-do peasant families, huts, log cabins and houses built of pine and larch-tree, broad back yards, storehouses, utensils, and even dog houses – all of them are genuine. In this museum you can take pictures of an authentic distaff, Russian fire stove with “palati” (sleeping boards), and icons placed in the so-called “red” corner and many more. Wandering around this wooden museum-village, especially when there's so much snow about an during the Pan Cake week, will be real fun as well as give an idea as to what life may have been like back in those days

After the tour of Museum one can enjoy horse sleigh ride (optional if available) which in the museum surroundings will make you feel like taking a special tour into the past Russian history, and also you'll be involved in a number of traditional Russian folk games.

For those who like a quick ride, the employees of the museum "Taltsy" usually build a traditional Russian slide and a snow carousel. To ride down here the Russian slide claimed to be the longest one in Siberia people use cow and sheep hides that were previously soaked in warm water and then left to freeze. People queue up to experience sliding down the track as fast as the wind – the insiders of this one-of-a-kind “slide sports” confirm that it is possible to reach a speed of 50 km per hour going down from the top of the slide to the Angara river bank. For the lovers of another old tradition, the employees of the museum also erect an old fashioned Russian snow carousel, on which you can prove your sporting spirit not only by trying to turn the carousel as fast as you can, but simply by your ability to stay on the toboggan...

After much fun in the museums great environment and historical outdoors we then will have tea-party with pan-cakes –the “bliny” - essential element of Maslenitsa celebration popularly taken to symbolize the sun. Round and golden, they are made from the rich foods still allowed by the Orthodox traditions: butter, eggs, and milk. We will eat the “blynis” in the village pub of the Museum the way Russian people in Siberia usually do (with honey, sour cream, moss berries etc.)



After having enjoyed our time spent at the “Taltsy” Wooden Architecture & Ethnographic museum in the open-air we shall drive to Irkutsk for dinner and overnight at the Courtyard by Marriott Irkutsk City Center hotel.

Day 6- March 09, 2016

Exploring and learning the culture of the native Buryat people in Ust-Orda.

After breakfast we check out from the hotel and depart to the Ust-Orda settlement – the central town of the Buryat national district located about 70 km away from the city of Irkutsk. Counting the remaining of 45 km to Irkutsk from the Taltsy museum total distance to drive shall be 115 km. En route our way we shall stop at the holy «obo»- sight of worship by local shamanist believers where following the ancient local customs you'll be invited to “sprinkle some vodka or milk “ and tie ribbons on the bushes as if to do offering to the local master-spirits and win them over.

Upon arrival in Ust-Orda we shall drive to the Metelitsa (meaning “snow storm”) guest center to check in at this cozy lodge (rooms with modern amenities) . Then enjoy a tasty dinner and have an overnight at this cozy Metelitsa guest lodge.

This full day we will be exploring the town of Ust-Orda populated mostly by the Buryats, a native Siberian people whose history and culture closely relate to that of their southern Mongolian neighbors. The largest of the indigenous Asian tribes in the region, the Buryats are spread across Siberia, stretching from the Mongolian border to the western fringes of Lake Baikal. The area around Ust Orda is the heart of the shamanism religion, believed to have been the oldest practiced form of this ancient worship.



We shall have a guided tour of the local Buryat National Ethnography Museum which excellent exhibition has on display a great number of interesting items relating to ancient archeological and old shamanistic past. A visit to the museum today will enlighten us on the traditions, lives and cultural mores of these fascinating people.

After having lunch we will proceed to meet famous Buryat artist – a celebrity, handicraftswoman and designer Angelica Alsatkina- at her workshop premises. We'll see Angelica or her apprentices at arts work, watch the working hands of masters in process, and hear their explanations about why and how they do it, what moves them... They will, certainly, be open to you and very much honest and eager then try.

Then and back to our “Snowstorm” Guest Lodge we shall have before dinner an enjoyable visit to the Sauna which is a modern and quite a spacious facility here, and besides sweat-room and washing facilities has a nice pool for bathing. Today this “sauna” facility will be a kind of training for you to get well prepared for the upcoming in 2 days

visit to a real, authentic Siberian “Banya” – steam-bath on the Olkhon Island...Your guide will explain to you some of the basic and important things about the Russian sauna called locally “banya”.

After the sauna we will have dinner of authentic and very natural Buryat national cuisine featuring such entrees as some Buryat specialties –“salamat” – fried flour with Sauer cream, home made noodle and “bukhler” – soup with mutton, “pozy” – big meat dumplings cooked on steam, mutton ribs, and some more tasty entrees. Besides, the Buryat hosts will offer us to try their “tarasun”- milk moonshine/ low proof Buryat “vodka”. At dinner also enjoy the Buryat folklore performance. The local folk ensemble will perform several Buryat folk songs about life of the Buryats, their love for natural world and respect for the ancestral spirits and local deities, about Glorious Sea- Holy Baikal. We will have a nice opportunity to learn about the culture and ways of life of the western Buryats. Finally, the Buryats will invite you to dance with them their national “youhor” circle dance. After a briefing and short training exercise, you will definitely like dancing the “youhor” together with these charming Buryat people. This will be a great entertainment, trust us!

Well entertained and with new interesting knowledge and experience we'll spend a night at the “Metelitsa” – Snowstorm guest lodge.

Day 7- March 10, 2016

On the way to Olkhon Island – the Heart of Baikal

After breakfast this morning we will drive overland by vans to the ‘Small Seas’ area of Baikal and the stunning setting of Olkhon Island. 50 km north of Ust-Orda and 200 km north of Irkutsk, our van turns east, towards Baikal, and heads up into the highlands and mountains which surround the Lake. Shortly before the paved road ends and at the high point which marks the border between regions, is a special place where offerings with vodka sprinkling are made and colorful ribbons tied on the bushes in respect to Bourhan, the native god.





Our next stop before the Small Sea shall be then at Elantsy settlement to meet famous local shaman Valentin Khagdaev (9th-generation hereditary shaman) who besides just being our hospitable host will tell us about the culture of Buryats and their shamanistic practices. Following his clan's traditions Valentin preserves the ancestors' knowledge, culture, as well as he is well familiar with healing secrets. During meeting, the shaman will tell you about shamanism, good and evil spirits of Baikal, local customs and everyday life, probably even sing shaman's songs, read a poem or two about legendary hero of the Buryat epos Gesser, finally he will kindly answer your questions. After homemade lunch to be served in the roadside restaurant we continue further.

Very soon we get to the MRS settlement to find ourselves right before the biggest island on Lake Baikal – Olkhon. It stretches for 72 km from the North to the South and separates the strait which is called Maloye More or

The Small Sea. The island's comparatively small territory is a combination of taiga, steppe and even a small desert. Its flora and fauna are unusual too. It is believed Olkhon is the home of many tribes and peoples of Central Asia such as hunns, turks, and kurykans. One of the legends says "the conqueror of the Universe" Chinggis Khan is buried here.

Amidst this landscape of superlatives, Olkhon is without doubt one of the jewels in Baikal's glittering crown. The island is considered by the Buryat people to be one of the most important centres in the region for Shamanism, and is believed to be one of the 5 global poles of shamanic energy, and one of the most sacred places in Asia.

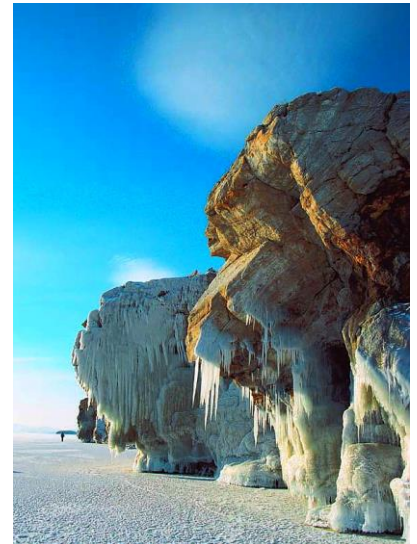
Split almost diagonally by a glorious natural barrier of steppes and taiga forest it is a superb spot to enjoy the visual spectacle of the lake and appreciate something of its awesome grandeur.

At MRS- Sakhurta settlement we cross to the island via the ice, travelling along a prepared stretch of 'ice-highway' towards our homestead accommodation at the islanders' central settlement of Khuzhir.

Upon arrival at the "Sunny" guest lodge and check in cosy and comfortable rooms we shall venture out again, exploring the fishermen's settlement of Khuzir. Here we will visit one of Asia's Holly-of-hollies both for shamanist believers and Buddhists alike - the Shaman Rock often referred to as the Altar of Rock at Burhan Cape. This cape is associated with many legends and is the place where shamans of the whole Baikal area and even Mongolia held their tailagans (gatherings) and carried on shamanic rituals. The locals believe the spirit of Baikal lives inside the Cliff, and the Buryat custom prohibits young ladies to approach the Cliff. Here your guide will show you some mysterious inscriptions in Sanskrit and the Shaman mask depicted on the Cliff.

The largest island on the lake, Olkhon can certainly boast some of its finest landscapes and the views from the north of the island offer unrestricted views across the lake. The geographical and spiritual heart of Lake Baikal, the island is steeped in legend and myth. It is believed to be the home of ancient spirits and one local legend also has it that Genghis Khan, the 'conqueror of the universe' is buried here.

From here we can contemplate a serene landscape of empty beaches, the pristine ice frozen waters of the Maloye More (Little Sea). Visiting a local museum we will learn a little more of the island and its community, before returning for dinner and overnight at the "Sunny" lodge. After dinner meet the local practicing shaman who will tell you about the shamanism of Buryat people and do a special "spirits pacifying" cult.



Day 8- March, 11, 2016 - Khoboy Cape and the Pole of Baikal

Today we set out for an exciting excursion around the island, first driving to the northernmost point, the Cape of Khoboy (translation: "fang"). The Cape is located at the widest point of Lake Baikal and offers the best views of the Eastern and Western shores. For the local shamanist believers, the site is a sacred spot.

We drive by 4-WD van to the northern extremes of the island today and the beautiful Cape Khoboy (meaning "Fang") which rocky shape reminds of a female's head with breast. Alexander Aristarkhov, a Russian traveler, was very impressed by his visit to the Khoboy Cape, and later wrote: "Once when we went to Khoboy, the northernmost point of Olkhon Island...I was offered to visit the Virgin Cave. I followed the advice and was awarded with a unique sight. The entrance was adorned with an ornament of ice crystals and icicles, inside there were "crystal chandeliers", fantastically congealing in the blue twilight. Pristine silence reigned in the mysterious cave. It was a bit harder to get into smaller caves. Ice

outgrowth entirely covering all the cliffs hid a number of grottoes. To get inside one should lie down on the ice and crawl under the hanging icicles and hemlocks. If succeeding in doing so, you will find yourself in the other world filled with ghostly blue light and crystal pearls. It is an enchanting sight, indeed! Sitting with our back to the rock (it was not always possible to be to our full height) we enjoyed light tinges on the ice crystals being perfectly aware that no film could convey it....”

Driving on ice to the Khoboy Cape will take us less than an hour. When we arrive at the islands northernmost point you will see across Maloye and Bolshoye More (Big and Small Seas of Baikal) and, on a good day, as far as the Ushkani Islands and Svyatoy Nos on the eastern shore of the lake can also be seen.

After exploring the fantastic Khoboy and its ice caves and taking nice pictures we board our van again and accompanied by the local Shaman we'll drive on the ice, this time in search of the famed freshwater seals of Baikal, the nerpa, the only freshwater seals in the world. The Baikal nerpa-seal spends most of its life in water, surfacing periodically to breathe. Thanks to the capacity of its blood to hold oxygen nerpa can remain under water for up to 45-60 minutes, although it usually stays there for 20-25 minutes, this is sufficient for it to catch food or escape danger. In water it can reach speeds of up to 25 kilometres an hour, but in normal circumstances it will swim at half the speed. In winter, when Baikal is frozen over, nerpa makes escape holes in the ice. With luck, we can find them in their natural habitat. How the freshwater seal came to be in Lake Baikal is still a mystery; the lake is hundreds of miles from the nearest ocean.



Now for the day's highlight: a visit on the ice to the "Baikal Polar Spot" or to the Pole of Baikal located above the deepest point of the lake (at 5435 feet or 1642 m). Within the next 40 minutes we shall be arriving at the deepest point of Lake Baikal. There while the shaman is preparing for a special ritual, your guide will drill an ice hole right above the deepest point of Baikal. Then the shaman will request us to assist him in doing the ritual (simple and easy, still very symbolic things to do which will remain a little secret until the moment we are there on the Pole of Baikal spot). After that the shaman will demonstrate a ritualistic ceremony devoted to the deities of Lake Baikal, honouring 98 mountain and ancestral spirits of Lake Baikal area. In the end the shaman will also pray for the health of the earth, and luck to the travellers on Lake Baikal.

Shamanism is one of the most ancient of all human religious practices and for the local Buryats its rituals and rites are important parts of their tribal culture still. They will regularly consult the shamans on matters regarding health, family and life and their faith is borne from thousands of years of cultural heritage. We will also have an opportunity to talk to the shaman and ask questions after the visit to the Pole of Baikal and when we are back at the "Sunny" guest lodge for dinner.

Day 9 - March, 12, 2016

Baikal Kamchatka the "Junior" Ice Fishing Tournament.

This day we shall spend trying some ice fishing on the lake and compete in the ice-fishing catch.

The local people generally have two preferred methods for obtaining the catch of the day. The first is by cutting holes in the ice and using a traditional line and hook to tempt the omul, perch or sig to bite. The other involves the participation of a number of villagers, the use of some long thin nets and some honest sweat, as they drag the shallower waters of the lake for shoals of fish, which are then transported back to their homes by horse-drawn carts.

We will certainly hold our group tournament versus local people team with special fishing rods and bites(to be provided) through the ice holes. We set up near our "kamchatka", or traditional omul group fishing area, where tents and huts perch on the ice over long-established fishing spots. We learn about the local methods of attracting fish by the use of shrimp bait called "burmash". Fishermen drop large amounts of the burmash- shrimp lure in order to entice the omul to feed under their ice-holes. Watch—and participate if you choose—in the ice-hole drilling with promises of local rewards for the fastest driller. Our fishing ground will be not far from the shore and a bit less accessible to the less-dedicated fishermen. The entire fishing shall be a kind of "Cool Fisherman" competition (the more fish you have caught regardless of its size and weight the better).

Lake Baikal ice fishing is a distinctive art, and instruction and some practice are needed to hook and land a fish. The line is lowered into the ice hole approximately 12 meters - that is, to the depth at which the omul are biting, and jigged up and down constantly while trying to adjust the depth to find the fish. When an omul-fish tugs at a lure, the fisherman begins a sharp and rapid retrieval of line and fish from the depths. When done by an expert in the "kamchatka" this is a rapid, effective, and graceful procedure. Before lunch the fishing shall be stopped and the result of the competition summed up, and winners will be rewarded. Later today, and after the picnic-lunch on the ice there will be offered the chance to try a Baikal-Siberian Banya, a bathhouse and



steam room that is believed to revive the spirit since inside a fire heats up stones and water causing the temperature sometimes rise as much as 115 degrees Celsius. During your stay in the Banya you will be offered our special tea and home made soft drinks and freshen-ups

After the Banya this evening and at Gala-dinner time (Baikal Farewell Party) we will be entertained with traditional stories of the local taiga dwellers, affording us the chance to learn a little more first hand knowledge of life amongst these icy climes. Also we shall learn today a famous Russian song “Glorious Sea-Holy Baikal” .

Day 10- March, 13, 2016

Turning Silver into Gold – Omul-Fish smoking “classes”

After breakfast we will have a kind of master-class to learn and experience how the omul fish is delicately smoked by the local fishermen. With no doubt the fish we smoke together today will be a tasty and special entrée for our lunch featuring also Siberia meat-dumplings soup and locally popular appetizers and salads.

After lunch we check out from our hospitable guest lodge and depart to Irkutsk leaving the shores of Lake Baikal behind.

In 4 hours including a couple of stops on the way to stretch your legs we shall be arriving in Irkutsk. Upon arrival – check in at the “MARRIOTT” Hotel, have dinner and overnight.

Day 11- March, 14, 2016

This day is yours to explore the city of Irkutsk on your own. Free time today affords you more opportunities to explore something of the city that was once known as ‘The Paris of Siberia’, perhaps taking a stroll past some of its sumptuous 18th and 19th century churches and merchants houses, do some souvenirs shopping etc.

In the evening – meet your local guide at the hotel to walk to the nearby popular restaurant for a Farewell Gala Party. Enjoy your time!

Day 12- March,15, 2016

After breakfast check out from the hotel for a transfer to the airport to board your flight back to home.



Have an enjoyable flight!

