



## Biking adventures in the Celestial Mountains.

### Cycling tour in Kyrgyzstan

#### Specially for *Kirsten Koza*



The Inner Tien Shan Mountains is an interesting part of Kyrgyz nature. There are hidden many unique places, such as the Arabel Valley, Naryn valley and the mountainous pearl of Son-Kul Lake. The Arabel Valley is situated at 3,600-4,000 m above sea level, and is a place of permafrost; it is a high mountain tundra zone with plenty of bogs and lakes. There are approximately 50 lakes there. Naryn is situated on the high mountain valley, the largest valley in Kyrgyzstan. It is narrow and long, its width being 5-15 km and length 470 km. A river of the same name flows through

the Naryn valley. There are 5 hydroelectric power stations on the Naryn River that is considered to be the longest one in Kyrgyzstan with the length of 600 km. Lake Son Kul (length 29 km, width 18 km) is the second biggest lake after Issyk Kul, situated in the inner Tien Shan at 3,016m above sea level. There are no trees in the Son Kul Valley, being far above the tree line, and the slopes of the ridges which surround it are covered by grasses. From ancient times, this valley was used as a pasture and even nowadays you can see real nomads there! Also in the valley you can see plenty of burial mounds. This tour is a great opportunity for experienced riders and beginners alike to experience the breathtaking beauty of the Inner Tien Shan and traditional lifestyle of the Kyrgyz people!



#### **Program:**

##### **Day 1: Arrival in Bishkek.**

Your guide will pick you up at Manas International Airport and accompany you to Bishkek City (30 min. drive), where you will start the day with a breakfast. After accommodation in a hotel\*\*\* that is situated in a clam part of the city you will have a rest. Afterwards you will have an excursion to Natural Park Ala-Archa. It is situated in the Ala-Arch gorge, on the Kyrgyz ridge (a spur of Tien-Shan), in 45 km from Bishkek – capital of Kyrgyzstan. You will go to the top of a mountain to have a nice view of this famous gorge. Returing to Bishkek. Traditional dinner will be served at 7 p.m. Night in a Hotel\*\*\*.



### **Day 2: Bishkek – Chon Kemin valley – Kayindi village**

Transfer by car from Bishkek to Chon Kemin valley (200 km). First part of the road is along the Kyrgyz range. Kyrgyz range is situated just 40 km from the capital of Kyrgyzstan. It has many amazing gorges that attract a lot of people. We will have wonderful views of snowy peaks from the road. On our way, we will visit the Burana Tower (minaret from the 11th century) and an open air museum of Balbans (stone warriors). Afterwards we will arrive to the Kayindi village. Then we will ride about 50 km. Overnight in tents near the Keuk-Ayrik river. (2290 alt.).



### **Day 3: Ride, Keuk-Ayrik pass 3889m – Chon Sary Oi village – transfer Tamchi village.**

Today we ride in direction of Issyk Kul lake, via Keuk Ayrik pass. Our car doesn't drive with us. Lunch on the Keuk Ayrik pass. Then, down. Our driver will meet us in the Sary Oi village. Transfer to Tamchi village. Tamchi is situated on the northern shore of the Issyk Kul Lake. This lake is the second largest alpine lake in the world (1608m. above sea level). The Lake is also called "the pearl of Central Asia". Thanks to the salty water, Lake Issyk Kul possesses curative qualities. Night in a guesthouse.



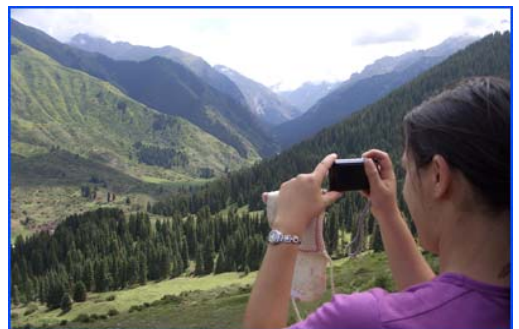
### **Day 4: Transfer Tamchi – Kochkor – Sarybulak.**

In the morning we start our trip to Kochkor village by car via Orto Tokoi water reservoir. At the Kochkor village you will meet a family that shows you the way our national felt carpets are produced. You even can create your own carpet together with them! Also you will visit Kyrgyz Handicraft museum in Kochkor village. Then ride on an asphalt road to Sary Bulak village (2310 m. alt., 38 km). Transfer (7 km, 2390m. alt.) by bike on dirt road to confluence of Kara-Kudjur and Biulioomiu rivers. Overnight in tents.



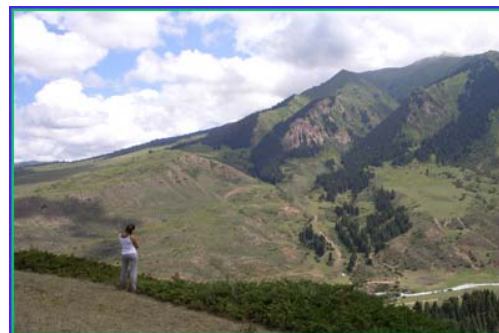
### **Day 5: Ride by bike to the foot of Jalpak pass (58 km, 3345 m)**

Today we are going to ride to the foot of Jalpak pass. It is an amazing place that will take you away. You will see many amazing mountain views along the whole way. This place is quite far from the civilization and you can enjoy its beauty to the full. The ride is of moderate difficulty on dirt road in satisfactory condition. Landscape in the gorge is similar to tundra. You will be surprised by the variety of mountains views on the way. Overnight in tents.



### **Day 6: Ride to the Jalpak pass (3345m. alt.) - Dzhylangach river**

In the morning you will ride to the high Jalpak pass and then descent (25 km) to Korumdu valley, then to Kara Saz region till the the Dzhylangach river (confluence of the Balgart and Dzhylangach rivers that forms the Kichi-Naryn river). After lunch, free time. At this place you can see Peaks Kara-Kaman, Archaly and Burkan that have old glacial forms - smooth tops and flat slopes. Lower parts, especially along left bank of the Balgart river are hilly, covered with loose rock. Landscape in gorge is similar to tundra. Overnight in tents (2648 m. alt.)



### **Day 7: Ride (58 km) Dzhylangach – Kichi-Naryn**

Today you will ride along the Balgart river and Kichi-Naryn river. Easy day. Riding on dirt road. Overnight in tents in the forest near the Kichi-Naryn river. This place is popular among nomads since ancient time. Shepherds were coming to this area with all their relatives. Some big tribes could have about 1000 yurts! All of them were going from one place to another as a big family with a great amount of cattle. Kyrgyz nomads are very hospitable and like to meet travelers.



### **Day 8: Ride (63 km) Kichi-Naryn – Naryn town**

After breakfast we will ride down to the Kichi-Naryn village (2351m. alt.) that is situated 4 km from the confluence of the Kichi-Naryn and Naryn rivers. You will ride along Naryn river to the town of Naryn (2050 m. alt.). It is a long narrow town that was built right along the gorge near the longest river Naryn. The town is situated 2800 meters above the sea level and it has mountains very close to the town. The road to Naryn will surprise you by its beauty and amazing mountains. The whole way will be along incredible gorges and you will have many photo stops! Easy day. Lunch on the road. Riding on the main road. This night you spend as nomads in yurts! Yurts are collapsible nomadic dwellings that are made of felt and wood without using a single nail.



### **Day 9: Transfer or Ride Naryn –Tash Rabat caravanserai (130 km)**

Today if you want you can ride or drive from Naryn to the Tash Rabat Caravanserai on the Great Silk Road (Stone Castle from the 14th century). The building is a unique one. Tash Rabat is located at the very heart of Tian Shan Mountains. And it has no analogue in the whole world, because it was made of stones and furthermore it was built inside a mountain at a height 3200 m above sea level. In total there are 31 rooms in the mountain. The thickness of walls is 1 m. There are also underground prison cells for ancient thieves. You will spend the night in yurts near by the Tash Rabat.



### **Day 10: Ride (86 km) Tash Rabat – Moldo village**

In the morning after packing your backpacks you will ride from Tash Rabat to Moldo village. This is moderate difficulty ride along the Naryn Valley. Asphalt road. This way was used by ancient traders at the time of Great Silk Road. Thousand of traders were passing there with their goods from China on camels and horses. It is a nice chance to feel that you ride along the same way! Overnight in tents (1670m. alt.).



### **Day 11: Moldo village – Son Kul Lake**

Today you can ride or to be transferred (60 km) from Moldo village to the second largest lake in Kyrgyzstan Son Kul Lake over the Kurtka Pass (3243m. alt.). First part of ride to the beginning of the gorge is easy with a slight descent. There is a narrow spot where we will enter a narrow gorge with high sharp rock walls, in some places up to 200 meters. From here begins a steep ascent to the pass. Descent is shorter and easier. Son Kul Lake is surrounded by mountains and it is the highest alpine lake in Kyrgyzstan, situated at an altitude of 3016 meters above sea level. Kyrgyz nomads started to come to this wonderful area with their families for rest and relaxation. Herders of the Naryn region come to the lake to use it as a pastureland. After our arrival, you will be free to explore and enjoy the virgin nature of the lake and its surroundings. Dinner and overnight in nomadic collapsible dwellings - yurts. It is made of a wooden skeleton, covered with felt coverings. Overnight in yurts (3016 m. alt.).



### **Day 12: Son Kul Lake**

After a long bicycle journey free time at Kyrgyz paradise. We will walk among the Tian-Shan Mountains where every nomad invites you to his yurt to taste a piece of bread and kumyz (national holy drink made of mare's milk). You will have an excellent opportunity to explore Kyrgyz nature and lifestyle on your own. You can ride along the lake on a horse, or just relaxing in the atmosphere of the wild, but calm nature. It is a great chance to get acquainted with nomadic traditions and culture. This night you will spend in tents.



### **Day 13: Ride Son Kul lake – Kyzyl Korgon canyon (80km).**

After the breakfast we will ride in direction of the holy stones with ancient stone inscriptions (dating back to 800 B.C.). Afterwards we will leave Son Kul and will ride to the Djumgal valley through Kara Keche pass (3381m). It is a region of high mountains, snow peaks, rocks, red canyons. Local walking in the red canyons. Night in tents.

**Day 14: Ride Kyzyl-Korgon –Kyrk-Kyz pass 3223m**

Today we will see different color rocks, pastures, panoramas. We pass near the Kizil Oi (red canyon) village. It is a small poor village in the mountains and you will have time to walk there to see the country side life of Kyrgyz people. On the way to the village you will see our famous red canyons that are completely different from other mountains in Kyrgyzstan. This place always impresses travelers and all of them want to come back there one more time. Night in the tents.



**Day 15: Ride Kyrk-Kyz pass – Ter-Jailak pass 2446m – Toluk village (50km).**

Here, the rout is difficult, but we will meet many Kyrgyz shepherds on the summer pastures summer. Even nowadays they come to this place and you can see their way of life. Nomads are very hospitable and they are always glad to communicate with foreigners. You can ask them about their life and to see their felt dwellings. Also it is possible to try national drink kumis that has a real unusual taste. It is made of mare's milk and it is fermented. Night in tents.



**Day 16: Ride and transfer to the Toktogul village**

After breakfast we will ride, and our driver will drive behind us. The road has a plenty of incredible views and you will never forget them. When you are there it is become clear that the best architecture in the world is Mother Nature! Lunch and transfer to the village where we can take a shower or drive to the artificial lake. Overnight in a home stay. Free time.



**Day 17: Transfer to Bishkek city.**

In the morning we will drive to Bishkek city. You will be carried away by the amazing scenery offered through views of the untouched nature. In the city you will have free time to go shopping and to walk in the capital. In the evening you will have a dinner in a restaurant and this night you will spend in a hotel\*\*\*.



### **Day 18: Bishkek**

In the morning we will visit our famous Osh bazaar. You will walk there and bargain for different goods and you will have a feeling as if you are 1000 years ago! Then we will drive to the Chon-Kurchak canyon. This place is not far from the capital and it is a nice chance to have a rest in our celestial mountains! After walking to the waterfall you will have a picnic there. Back to Bishkek. A farewell dinner will be served at 7 o'clock. Night in a hotel\*\*\*.



### **Day 19: Transfer to airport.**

Your guide will meet you at your hotel at the pick up time arranged previously according to your flight details and accompany you to Manas International Airport.

**Dates: From July till the end of August**

#### **Price:**

<b>1 pax</b>	<b>2530 euro</b>
<b>2 pax</b>	<b>1570 euro/per</b>
<b>3 pax.</b>	<b>1215 euro/per</b>
<b>4 – 6 pax</b>	<b>1040 euro/per</b>

#### **Price includes:**

- Meeting at the airport
- Transport and driver
- Guide service (velo-guide, excursion guide)
- Coordinator (if 4-6 people)
- Cook (if 4-6 people)
- Full board
- Accommodation
- Rent of tents and special equipment
- Admission to museums

#### **Price does not include:**

- Travel insurance
- Airtickets and taxes
- Visa support
- Rent of bicycle
- Alchogol and mineral water

**Notes:**

- Kyrgyz visa can be obtained in the permanent representation of Kyrgyzstan in Europe or at Manas International Airport in Bishkek (2 passport's photos and 70\$ per person, passport with a validity of minimum 6 months.)
- This is a draft program. It can be changed in cases of changes in schedule of flights, weather conditions and other unforeseen conditions.

**Preparations before tour:**

Kyrgyzstan is a young developing country and Infrastructure of villages is not at a very high level. Refusing hospitality is often becomes annoying. In order to avoid misunderstandings, read some guidebooks and other nooks about Kyrgyzstan before you get prepared to your visit.

**We hope to see you soon in our Celestial Kyrgyzstan!**

**Nomad's Dream team**