

AMAZING RUNNING TOURS

VIII-th Baikal International Ice Marathon Packages

Clean Waters Conservation Run & Russia's most exotic marathon

OPTION # 1 - 3 DAYS/2 NIGHTS

Day 1, March 02, 2012

Upon arrival in Irkutsk – transfer to Listvyanka (62 km away from Irkutsk) .This day is yours to explore the vicinity of Listvyanka on your own or go on optional snowmobile or Baikal sled-dog tours. After lunch – meeting with the Baikal Ice Marathon representative for registration procedure, listen to the orientation lecture on the upcoming the next day race, have then some running exercise on the ice of Lake Baikal. Overnight at your hotel in Listvyanka.

Day 2- March 03, 2012

VIII-th Baikal International Ice Marathon – “Baikal Clear Waters Conservation Run”

After early breakfast – transfer to the start of the Baikal Ice Marathon course on the opposite eastern shore of Lake Baikal , at the station of Tankhoy.

11:00 – Final Baikal Ice Marathon Course registration.

11:30 – Start of the VIII-th Baikal Ice Marathon Race (full and half marathon distance)

02.30 p.m. – the registered runners who do not reach the half-marathon finish point (21 km) are disqualified and will have to continue the rest of the course to Listvyanka on the Marathon support team vehicle (either a 4_WD van or hovercraft) .

05:00 p.m. – end of the VIII-th Baikal International Ice Marathon.

06:00 – 07.00 p.m. award ceremony, press-conference

07:30 p.m. – Baikal Ice Marathon Reception Dinner.

Overnight at the hotel in Listvyanka.

Meals included: breakfast and reception GALA party of the VIII-th Baikal Ice Marathon.

Day 3 –March 04, 2012

After breakfast check out from the hotel for a transfer to Irkutsk (65 km) to take flight/train # to _____.

The cost of the above 3 days/2 nights Baikal Ice Marathon package :

- **USD 590** (accommodation at the guest house in Listvyanka in twin room; single room supplement – USD 50 p/p)
- **USD 680** (accommodation at the MAYAK Hotel located right at the finish line of the Baikal Ice Marathon, the seat of the Organizing committee and Baikal Ice Marathon Award Ceremony Hall; single room supplement –USD 140 p/p)

The above costs include: registration and start fee, 2 nights accommodation with breakfasts, Reception Gala Dinner on the evening after the Marathon, transfers on arrival in Irkutsk/ departure from Irkutsk.

OPTION # 2 - 4 DAYS/3 NIGHTS

Day 1, March 01, 2012

Upon arrival in Irkutsk – meeting and transfer to Listvyanka settlement located in the outflow of the Angara river from Lake Baikal and 62 km from the city of Irkutsk. Upon arrival in Listvyanka a guided tour of the Baikal Ecology Museum which unique exhibition unfolds in a truly exciting story about the world's deepest and largest fresh water lake. After check in at the hotel of your choice (***-star hotel facilities or guest lodges as per your prior choice and booking). Later, have time to explore the ice covered vicinity of Lake Baikal. Dinner and overnight at your guest house or hotel.

Meals included: dinner

Day 2, March 02, 2012

This day is yours to explore the vicinity of Listvyanka on your own or go on optional snowmobile or Baikal sled-dog tours. After lunch – meeting with the Baikal Ice Marathon representative for registration procedure, listen to the orientation lecture on the upcoming the next day race, have then some running exercise on the ice of Lake Baikal. Dinner and overnight at your hotel in Listvyanka.

Meals included: breakfast and dinner

Day 3, March 03, 2012**VIII-th Baikal International Ice Marathon – “Baikal Clear Waters Conservation Run”**

After early breakfast – transfer to the start of the Baikal Ice Marathon course on the opposite eastern shore of Lake Baikal, at the station of Tankhoy.

11:00 – Final Baikal Ice Marathon Course registration.

11:30 – Start of the VIII-th Baikal Ice Marathon Race (full and half marathon distance)

02.30 p.m. – the registered runners who do not reach the half-marathon finish point (21 km) are disqualified and will have to continue the rest of the course to Listvyanka on the Marathon support team vehicle (either a 4_WD van or hovercraft) .

05:00 p.m. – end of the VIII-th Baikal International Ice Marathon.

06:00 – 07.00 p.m. award ceremony, press-conference

07:30 p.m. – Baikal Ice Marathon Reception Dinner.

Overnight at the hotel in Listvyanka.

Meals included: breakfast and reception GALA party of the VIII-th Baikal Ice Marathon.

Day 4, March 04, 2012

After breakfast check out from the hotel for a transfer to Irkutsk (65 km) to take flight/train # to _____.

The cost of the above 4 days/3 nights Baikal Ice Marathon package :

- **USD 730** (accommodation at the guest house in Listvyanka in twin room; single room supplement – USD 70 p/p)
- **USD 890** (accommodation at the MAYAK Hotel located right at the finish line of the Baikal Ice Marathon, the seat of the Organizing committee and Baikal Ice Marathon Award Ceremony Hall; single room supplement – USD 205 p/p)

The above costs include: registration and start fee, 3 nights accommodation, meals on half board basis, Reception Gala Dinner on the evening after the Marathon, transfers on arrival in Irkutsk/ departure from Irkutsk.

NOTE:

There's an option for a longer extension of the Baikal Ice Marathon package -2012 which is offered as follows:

OPTION # 3 - 6 DAYS/5 NIGHTS/

Days 1-3 – as above.

Day 4**March, 04, 2012**

After breakfast check out from the hotel to depart from Listvyanka to Irkutsk. En route visit Taltsy Open-Air Museum of Wooden Architecture – a living legacy of Siberian history and its traditions. The museum's unique exhibition of original wooden structures complete with home utensils and items dating back to the 18-th -20-th centuries unfolds in a true story about the peoples of Siberia: Buryats, Evenks and Russians . Besides just seeing the unique museum exhibits we will try here the real Siberian pan-cakes with tea from Russian samovar and have a chance together with local Russians to celebrate Russian Maslenitsa Farewell to Winter festival (Shrovetide Holiday) with much amusement and folk games in which you're welcome to take part.

Upon arrival in Irkutsk we check in at the centrally located hotel (3-star).

Meals included: breakfast, lunch

Day 5**March, 05, 2012**

Before lunch enjoy a guided sightseeing tour of Irkutsk. During the tour today we'll visit the city's historical center and its most atmospheric sights, including Znamenskaya Orthodox Cathedral, noted for its original iconostasis, grave of the so-called “Russian Columbus” Grigory Shelekhov and graves of the Decembrists-revolutionaries banned to Siberia after an ill-fated attempt in 1825 to overthrow the Russian tsar; we will also 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.

Then you will have some time free to explore the city on your own before we return back at the hotel for dinner (on your own) and overnight

Day 6

March, 06, 2012

After breakfast check out from the hotel for a transfer to the airport/railway station to take your return flight/train.

Meals included: breakfast

The cost of the above 6 days/ 5 nights Baikal Ice Marathon package:

- **USD 1070** per person in a group of 5 people (accommodation at the guest house in Litsvyanka in twin room and hotel in Irkutsk; single room supplement – USD 305 p/p)
- **USD 1275** per person in a group of 5 people (accommodation at the MAYAK Hotel – right at the finish line of the Baikal Ice Marathon and the seat of the Organizing committee and Baikal Ice Marathon Award Ceremony Hall; single room supplement – USD 355 p/p)

The above indicated costs of the Baikal Ice Marathon runner packages include:

- Baikal Ice Marathon registration and start fee, all kind of transfers as shown in the above schedules, sightseeing tours where indicated, meals on half board basis (2 meals daily), and Reception Gala Dinner of the Baikal Ice Marathon, services of multilingual guides, accommodation at the guest house or hotel in Litsvyanka and down town 3-star hotel in Irkutsk, Russian entrée visa support/invitation.

Longer Post Baikal Ice Marathon Tour Option – 8 days/7 nights (Availability: mid February to March end)



“Sensational Snowmobile Expedition on Baikal Ice Ring”

Availability: mid February to March end 7 (prices available on request)

*Driving onto the ice is amazing; it's such a strange sensation. Jack stopped the van once we'd gone about 50 meters in and we all clambered out, with lots of oohing and aahing. It was so unreal to be walking on ice, yet still being able to see the bottom of the lake quite clearly. The ice, like the water of the lake is very clear, pure and slightly blue in color. It was truly weird to literally be walking on water (now I know how Jesus did it!). **Niamh and Cathal***

Day 1

Welcome to winter time Irkutsk – “Paris of Siberia”, capital of its great Eastern part – Siberia’s Microcosm and the gateway to Siberia’s “Pearl” – Lake Baikal!

Upon arrival in Irkutsk we meet you at the airport gates, and after assisting with the luggage we shall enjoy Absolute Siberia welcome tea-drink.

Transfer to the “Baikal Terema” hotel located 62 km away from Irkutsk in Listvyanka settlement. The hotel nestles in picturesque setting on hill slope with nice views of the village and lake Baikal.

After checking in and some time at leisure we depart for a guided tour of the “Taltsy” Open-Air museum of Wooden Architecture and Ethnography located at the 47th km on the way from Irkutsk to Baikal. The Taltsy Museum is a unique display of original wooden structures scattered all over the huge area and complete with great number of household items dating back to XVII-XIX cent. This one-of-a-kind exhibition, that includes 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 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), icons placed in the so-called “red” corner, etc.





It's fun to wander around this little wooden village, especially when there's so much snow about. Great fun was had. It also gives an idea as to what life may have been like back in those days.- J.

Hood, Salisbury, Great Britain



Here you have a good chance to attend and even participate in Maslenitsa (Shrovetide) celebration – the festival of seeing off winter and welcoming spring, which is celebrated annually. You will taste the “bliny”, Russian pancakes, popularly taken to symbolize the sun. Round and golden, they are made from the rich foods with a number of fillings. Also here we will have an opportunity to undertake a highlight ride down the slide claimed to be Siberia’s longest one. On return back to the hotel - experience Russian steam bath or Banya well-known all over the world.



Day 2



This morning at the active outdoors center next door to the hotel we will be instructed on how to drive a snowmobile, get a short orientation lecture on the upcoming snowmobile safari trip. Our destination today is the town of Baikalsk with its famous ski resort “Sobolinaya Mountain” (Sable Mountain). We cover the distance of about 100 km on the Baikal ice crossing lake Baikal in its southern part. En route we stop to explore tunnels, supporting walls, aqueducts and stockades of the Circum Baikal Loop, the unique monument of the Russian engineering thought, once a section of the Trans Siberian Railway.

The Circum Baikal Railroad is called “the Golden Buckle on the Steel Belt of Russia”. This well-chosen epithet means the Circum Baikal Loop (84 km) connected two railway lines from Moscow and Vladivostok “torn

apart” by the Lake but its construction cost much more than the construction of the Trans Siberian Railway.



The total first cost of the road was 58,625,745 roubles, or an average of about 329,000 roubles per mile. However, repairs and alterations since have increased this to about 60,000,000 roubles, and various improvements, such as retaining walls and masonry galleries, were still being added when we last passed over it in October, 1905. – Captain Sydney A. Cloman, in the Journal of the U. S. Infantry

Association.

Check in at private cottages in Baikalsk. After tasty dinner those who wish may visit the sauna and the swimming pool (for additional fee) of the “Sobolinaya” hotel. Overnight.

Day 3

Enjoy your time before lunch at leisure or go in for mountain skiing and snowboarding. Here you can rent all the necessary equipment and use the services of experienced instructors.

The total length of tracks on the ski resort is 15 km with gradient of more than 500 m. The longest track is 2.5 km long. Both ski and snowboard contests including downhill skiing are held at this resort in Baikalsk.

Lunch in one of the cafes on the slope (on your own).

In the afternoon we continue our snowmobile safari on the ice to Meridian 105, the deepest place of Baikal (1637 m). At this very spot 20 km away from the shore the ice township is built. Here we will have dinner and spend a night (sanitary facilities outside).

Day 4

After breakfast at the “Meridian 105” base camp we get our things packed and loaded and then drive our snowmobiles for a distance of nearly 150 km on the territory of the Baikal Biosphere Nature Preserve (southeastern part of Baikal). We shall take our lunch en route. Tired after eventful day we check in at the “Enkhaluk” base camp in the Buriat village. Dinner, banya, overnight in twin rooms.

Day 5

After early breakfast we depart to Olkhon Island (110 km) and cross the lake in its middle part. It is the last day of our snowmobile safari and hopefully we’ll see the nerpa rookery today.



The Baikal nerpa (Phoca sibirica Gmelin 1788) — is a representative of the order of pinnepeds and the family of real (earless) seals. Nerpa 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. This is an inborn instinct: in an experimental

aquarium one and two month old nerpa pups made holes in foam plastic, scratching them out from beneath with their claws. They then poked their noses through to breathe, despite the fact that open water was not far away.

We cross the Olkhon Gates Strait on the ice road and then continue further on the island of Olkhon to Khuzhir settlement. Upon arrival in Khuzhir we check in at a private guest house. Here we shall have dinner of home made Siberian cuisine prepared by the hostess and followed by the Certificate Award to each participant. During the dinner today we celebrate the Women's day and greet our ladies. Overnight.

Day 6

After breakfast we drive by the 4-WD vehicles to the Khoboy Cape (meaning Fang), the northernmost point of the Olkhon Island, which rocky shape reminds of a female's head with breast. So, it bears the name of the Virgin rock. Here we will be offered to sprinkle some vodka and tie colorful ribbons in respect to Bourhan, the native god. Olkhon is the biggest island on Lake Baikal. 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 huns, turks, and kurykans. One of the legends says "the conqueror of the Universe" Chinggis Khan is buried here. Dinner and overnight at the guest house.



Olkhon Island. *Mid-way on the northern shore of Baikal is an area considered to be the most sacred. It is here, about eight miles from the north shore that we find Olkhon, named by the Buryats for the forests which cover the island. Olkhon is the biggest island on Baikal extending more than 70 km. (60 miles) in length and up to 20 km. (15 miles) in width. Its terrain is varied with sweeping prairies, steep rocks, dry valleys overgrown with berry bushes and small, shallow bays with sandy beaches and warm water. The island's steep sides cut into the aquamarine sea-lake and its capes are like characters out of ancient Siberian folk-tales guarding the island's peace. The most beautiful of these capes, Burchan, bears the name of the Buryats' primary god. The bank closest to Burchan has a cave which cuts through the rock. The entrance is on the eastern side and the exit on the western side. Native people considered the cave a sacred place, a dwelling of shamans. The cave is, however, now inscribed with Buddhist prayers, remnants of seventeenth century arrival of Tibetan Lamaist Buddhism. The new religion partly absorbed the native shamanistic traditions and partially replaced them. The first words of one prayer read, "Ou, Burchan, Tingiri!", invoking the Buryat-Lamaist's god and heaven.*

Day 7

Today it is the last day of our expedition. We get ourselves on the coach and leave for Irkutsk (320 km, 6 hours). En route we stop for lunch of the Buriat cuisine in a roadside cafeteria. In Irkutsk we check in at a hotel (***). Dinner in one of the city restaurants (on your own).

Day 8

After breakfast we get ourselves on the coach for transfer to the local airport for departure to Moscow. Have a good flight back home!

Notes:

1. Each tour participant is required to have the following set of personal belongings: clothes to protect from wind and cold, comfortable pair of warm shoes, several pairs of socks, gloves, warm hat, sun glasses and tan cream
2. In case of unfavorable weather (strong wind, storms) the tour operator resorts the right to alter the program, having notified the group members in advance, but offering a quality- and price-adequate service to that being omitted.
3. Should there be preferences in food or vegetarians in the group, we request to notify in advance in order to arrange an individual menu.

