VOL1 NO.3



# THE JEEP ISSUE



- \* The amazing story of the Russia GAZ69 Jeep and how it came to Mongolia
  - \* We discover Mongolian Whisky!
- \* Mongolia From Space NASAs latest shots
  - \* Mongolian Love Poetry

Getting Out There – Your Guide To Trekking, Travelling & Culture Across Mongolia

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Hi, I'm Chris Devonshire-Ellis and welcome to this
autumn issue of Mongolia Expat! In this edition we tell the story
behind the history of the Russian Jeep – so long a success in Mongolia
– and it's surprising origins in England, have a look - and a taste – of what we
think must be the only "Mongolian" whisky, and have a look at the latest NASA shots of
Mongolia from Space. All this, and a section of romantic Mongolian love poetry too, as the
autumnal days get shorter....

As usual, special thanks are due to Tseren and Rik, of Tseren Travel in Ulaan Baatar, who helped with a lot of the detail – and congratulations are due to them also – the birth last month of their latest addition – a healthy baby boy. Well done to them both.

I trust you'll enjoy this issue – the next will be out in November.

Happy traveling!

Chris





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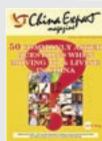


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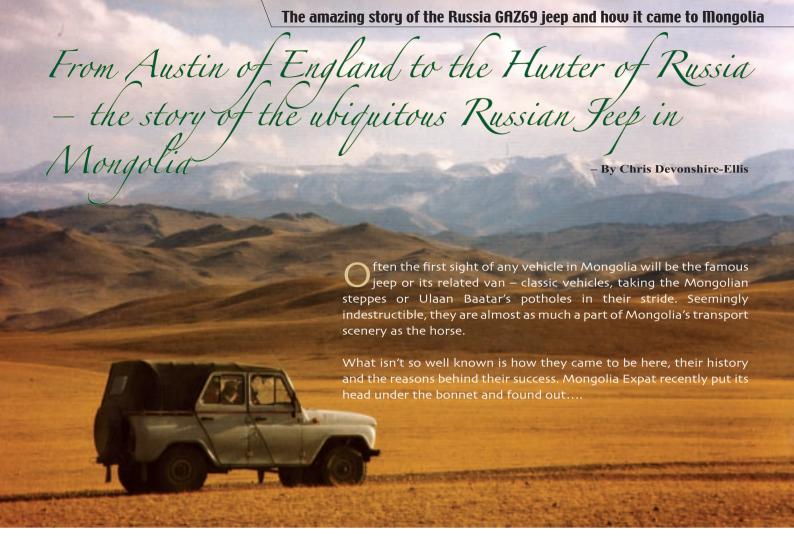
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# • Where Are They Made?

The Russian jeeps are made in Ulyanovsk in the Ulyanovsky Avtomobilny Zavod (Ulyanovsk Automobile Factory). Ulyanovsk is a city with a population of 700,000 and is situated at the river Wolga, about 710 km east of Moscow.

# The Factory History

In 1941 (at the beginning of World War 2 in the East) the government of the Soviet Union decided to evacuate big industrial plants from Moscow eastwards, because of the threat of the invading Germans. This also affected the Moscow Vehicle Works, and so the Ulyanovsky Avtomobilny Zavod was founded as it's eastern cousin. The Russian jeeps had already been made from 1938 in another factory: the Gorkovsky Avtomobilny Zavod (Gorky Automobile Factory) in Gorky. This factory was founded in 1931 and set up with American help. One of their first cars was a clone of a Ford "A". Their first jeeps GAZ "61", "64" and "67" models were made from 1938, based on the American Bantam jeep and were used in the army. In 1953 the production of the GAZ "69" was started. In 1965 the production of this jeep was removed to the Ulynovsky Avtomobilny Zavod and since 1970 the jeeps name became UAZ "469". This jeep has been exported to countries like Vietnam, Afghanistan and Mongolia. The latest version is not called "469" anymore, but has the name

UAZ Hunter and is not anymore partly covered by cloth, but completely by metal. GAZ specialized later in normal passenger cars (the Wolgas), but these cars have been (in Mongolia anyway) replaced by Western, Korean and Japanese cars. UAZ specialized in jeeps and 4x4 minivans and these cars are still very popular in Mongolia.

# So The Model Is Based On What Design?

It's a complicated story! Basically, in 1938 the first Russian jeep (GAZ "61") was actually based on the American Bantam jeep, but its true beginnings go back even further. In 1930 Austin of England founded the American Austin Car Company in the United States. Unfortunately, economical little cars never proved popular there and by 1934 the company was almost bankrupt. It was taken over by its Chairman, Roy Evans, who re-launched it as the American Bantam Car Company. He retained the small car concept based on the original Austin design but made improvements and increased the range of models available.

As early as 1938 Bantam had spotted the potential of a light reconnaissance vehicle for military use and lent the National Guard three of its Austin based Roadsters to evaluate. The company continued to press the case for such a vehicle until a meeting with the Military was finally arranged at the Bantam factory on June 19th 1940.

Worried by the mobility and ease with which the German Army had taken France and intelligence reports that the Germans were about to convert the Volkswagen for military use, they at last showed a real interest in Bantam's proposal.

A series of meetings developed Bantam's original car based proposal into a military specification for a 4 x 4 hybrid car / truck type vehicle weighing not more than 590kg. Aware of Bantam's limited design and production facilities and the fact that the company was not financially sound it was decided to offer other manufacturers the opportunity to tender as well. The overall task was to design and submit 70 finished vehicles for evaluation (including 8 with  $4 \times 4$ ). A prototype had to be delivered within 49 days, the rest within 75 days. The rather unrealistic weight limit resulted in no interest being shown by traditional truck manufacturers like Dodge or GMC and initially only Bantam and Willys responded to be joined later by Ford in submitting designs and prototype vehicles for evaluation. Bantam persuaded Karl Probst, a freelance engineer, to head their project and when the drawings for the tenders were examined by the Military on July 22, Probst's vehicle came closest to matching the specification though Bantam did conceal the fact that their vehicle was likely to be a little over the weight limit. An order was placed and by the end of September Probst had completed the drawings, sourced the parts and the Bantam prototype was delivered. Having tested it to destruction and being satisfied with its performance, the army commissioned 70 more to be built. Despite Willys failing to submit a prototype by the deadline and Ford showing little interest in the project at all at this time, both manufacturers were allowed access to the trials of the Bantam prototype and subsequently to Probst's drawings. Willys and Ford prototype models, the Quad and the Pygmy, were to follow in that order but clearly outside both the time and weight limits.



Trials continued into the Winter of 1940 and should have resulted in an outright winner. The Bantam GPV (General Purpose Vehicle) had been delivered on time and met the specification in most respects. It performed well bearing in mind the nature of prototypes and minor defects were soon corrected. It also had many recognisable features of the later standardised jeep. However, the Military identified strengths and weaknesses in each vehicle. The Bantam was considered too high off the ground and under powered. The Willys Quad had a more powerful engine but was far too heavy. The Ford Pygmy had the best steering (though linkages were easily damaged) but its tractor engine had insufficient power.

There was also concern about Bantam's limited production capability and that even Willys Overland might not cope given the imminent need for a very large number of these vehicles. All of this resulted in a political decision in March 1941 that all three companies would receive an initial order for 1500 vehicles each, provided that they met the original specification though the permitted weight had now been increased.



**Vehicles** that looked remarkably similar during the trials became even more alike as each company adapted their design and copied the better ideas from each other or from Probst's plans ready for the first production runs. However, in July 1941 the military decided standardisation needed, it being impractical to operate and maintain three different designs. All three vehicles now performed well but it was decided that the Willys design represented the best overall value for money at \$739 (compared with \$1166 for a Bantam) and it was adopted as the standard army vehicle. Willys secured the contract to provide the next 16,000 vehicles.

In awarding Willys the contract, the army produced a list of improvements and alterations that were required. Apart from general improvements to the battery, generator, air filter and fuel tank, the standard jeep was now to have blackout lights, sealed beam headlights, pioneer tools (axe and shovel), double bow canvas tilt, trailer socket, centre dash handbrake control and radio suppression. The classic standard jeep design was about to emerge.

The 40 BRC (the production version of the Bantam) was now no longer required by the US Army as it was 'nonstandard'. The Bantams already in service with the army together with the continued output from the factory were passed to the British and Russian armies under the terms of the Lend-Lease Act. Interestingly, having observed the trials, the Russian Purchasing Commission wanted the Bantam by choice.



The photograph shows a typical British marked Bantam 40 BRC in the colours of the 6th Armoured Division complete with .303 Bren gun mount on the passenger side. The vehicle's light weight also made it particularly suited for use by British airborne units in North Africa.

By the end of October 1941 the army were keen to find a second source of supply for two reasons; Willys could no longer keep up with the growing demand for jeeps and there was the need to safequard the supply of jeeps against the Willys plant being bombed or sabotaged.

In early November Ford were awarded their first contract to build 15,000 jeeps to the Willys design specification from Willys drawings. The Willys MB and Ford GPW varied in minor detail only as the military insisted that the parts be interchangeable. With the increased supply it was now possible to supply the standard MB/GPW vehicles under Lend-Lease arrangements and production of the Bantam 40 BRC was phased out. Interestingly, it was Ford who designed the pressed radiator grille to replace the heavier and more costly slat grille of the early Willys MA design. Willys then incorporated this into their definitive MB model.

In all, 2675 Bantam 40 BRC vehicles were built, 62 of which had four-wheel steer as requested by the US Cavalry. Sadly, the company never again produced vehicles. Having been first to suggest and build a 'jeep', Bantam was made to share Probst's plans with competitors, and then lost out in securing any work under contracts for the universal jeep and spent the rest of the war building trailers, aircraft parts and torpedo motors.

Meanwhile, production started in Moscow...

# Why Mongolian drivers like them...

The cars are very simple and easily equipped and repaired. They are also strong and will not break down so easily. Their design and very low centre of gravity makes them very suitable for driving along Mongolias unpaved roads, and there is a national spare parts and distribution

network in place. Coupled to that – they can be mended with basically, bits of string, wire, rope and even nylon stockings! Local drivers are used to these vehicles and can help each other when there are problems.

#### Reasonable price (about US\$7,500)

Disadvantages during summer: no air conditioning and on warm days overheating of the engine is common, so the engine has then to cool down then for 10-15 minutes.

#### Fuel consumption

According official specifications 15,5 L per 100 km, but in practice it is often 20 L per 100 km (5 km per 1 liter). So now with high fuel prices you can't call it an economical

#### How to import into Mongolia?

There is an official distributor in Mongolia ("Hurd" company), but most of the Russian jeeps are picked up from the Russian distributors closest to the Mongolian border in Ulan Ude and Gorno Altaysk.

#### Engine type and other features

From the official UAZ site (www.uaz.ru):

Vehicles & Services / SUV / UAZ Hunter / Specifications /

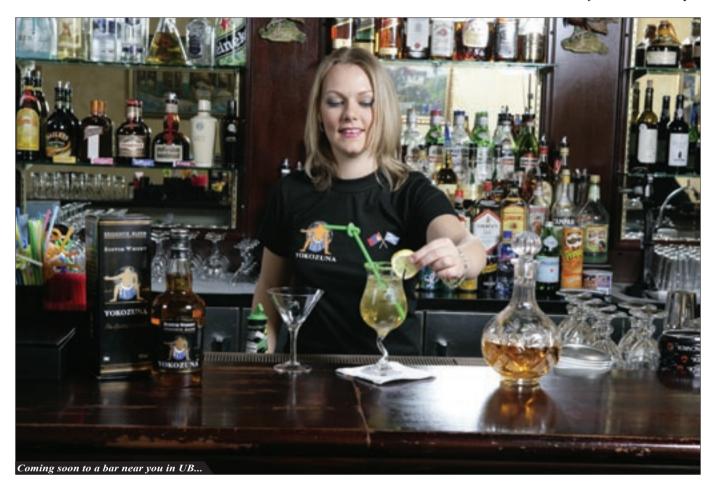


#### Technical specifications

1	Length, mm	4170
2	Width, mm	1785
3	Height, mm	2020
4	Wheel track, mm	1445
5	Ground clearance, mm	210
6	Curb weight, kg	1620
7	Load carrying capacity, kg	750
8	Fuel tank capacity, L	2_39
9	Type of engine	Carburetor
10	Engine	<u>UMZ-4218.10</u>
11	Fuel	Petrol A-76
12	Displacement, L	2,89
13	Max. speed, km/h	120
14	Fuel consumption at 90 km/h, L/100km	15,5
15	Rated output, kW (hp)/rpm	61,8 (84)/4000
16	Max. torque , Nm/rpm	189 (19,3)/2500
17	Tires	225/75 R16

# **SLIANTE TO TOKTOY –** INTRODUCING SCOTCH WHISKY TO MONGOLIA

By Graham Thompson



rinkers in Ulaan Baatar will soon be toktoying with a zuan gram – their word for a dram of whisky from Scotland. The first cases of a unique Speyside blend arrive in the Mongolian capital in September, thanks to the efforts of Ronnie Lamb and Pamela Murray of the Great Scot Company, and with the support of Asashoryu Akinori, one of the country's most famous sportsman. Asashoryu, born Dolgorsuren Dagvadorj, is the first sumo wrestler from Mongolia to reach the highest rank of Yokozuna, and is also currently the only active fighter at this rank.

Great Scot Chairman Ronnie explains, "Mongolia is traditionally a vodka drinking nation, a legacy from their 70 year association with the former Soviet Union – indeed they drink 16m bottles a month, which isn't bad for a population of 2.4m people!" But now, with the growth in the local economy, there is a new elite that wants to taste top quality spirits, such as Scotch whisky.

Pamela, who is the company's Sales and Marketing Director, says, "the major brands you see here are Johnny Walker Red, Johnny Walker Black, Grants and Chivas Regal". But many of these brands are being faked at a price of around US\$1 a bottle. She adds, "we have bought many bottles from reputable sources such us supermarkets, hotels, bars,

restaurants and duty free shops, and then sent these to laboratories in Scotland for testing - all proved to be fake". Indeed, in most cases, this involved not only the whisky but to the bottle, the label, and the boxes - Great Scot estimate that over 75% of the whisky sold in Mongolia is fake. Whisky sales were suffering, as was the appeal of the product itself.

So, Great Scot decided to find a partner who could give their product integrity, and approached Asashoryu because of his achievements but because of the culture behind the sport of sumo wrestling. As Ronnie says, "the Scotch is being marketed under the brand name of Yokozuna, and Asashoryu is its inspiration".

Sumo wrestling has a 1,500 year history and Asashoryu was conferred the title as the 68th Yokozuna in 2003 after achieving greatness within the sport. He has also broken every record in the history of this sport, with 17 career championships. Asashoryu was tended to be relatively lightweight and relies on speed and technique to compete against his, often much heavier, opponents, though lately he has begun confronting those opponents head on with the intention of out-muscling them. He famously dumped a 158 kg opponent with a "lifting body slam" (tsuriotoshi),

a feat of tremendous strength, normally accomplished on much smaller and weaker opponents.

So this distinguished Mongolian is certainly a good partner for a company using Scotch from the Speyside distillery (www. spevsidedistillerv.co.uk), whose malt is marketed as the "Best Whisky in the World". Ronnie who hails from Aberdeen, the coastal city close to the Speyside region – explains, "we specifically chose them as they make very good blended, aged and malt whiskies".

Drawing from the wonderful crystal clear waters of the River Tromie, the Speyside Distillery houses some of the smallest, yet most cleverly proportioned stills in Scotland. These two key factors, allied to their distilling secrets passed from generation to generation, have earned Speyside the reputation of "the best whisky in the world" – "the embodiment of excellence in an imperfect world", as their website puts it. The distillery draws its water from the old mill lade which originally ran the waterwheel that powered the old mill that gives the site its name; the same water source is used for process and cooling in the distillery. The distillery has only four employees, lovingly who watch over the small batch production.

Ronnie says, "one of the main attractions to working with them is their willingness to produce special blends under your own chosen label...we decided that with the name of Yokozuna that we had to produce something quite distinct not only with the product but with the bottle, label, cork, top, and box". The bottles coming to Mongolia are a blended whisky but with a special formula exclusive to Yokozuna.

The master distiller at Speyside describes the whisky as clean, delicate and balanced with a toasted aroma, with lingering hints of vanilla and slightly peaty flavour, giving way to creamy ripples of hazelnuts. The colour is a rich deep golden brown.



But Ulaan Baatar poses some special marketing challenges. "Advertising of spirits outwith licensed premises is strictly forbidden in an attempt to curb some local difficulties with alcoholism", explains Pamela. This has forced Great Scot to be extremely creative in their promotional work whilst still operating within Mongolian law, using point of sale material in pubs, bars, restaurants, hotels and supermarkets, and articles in the local media. The locals do have a desire to drink top quality whisky, and, as she says, "we have campaigned largely on the fact that we are offering an uncontaminated directly product from Scotland". Initial feedback from customers has been very strong, and the company aims to hold tasting sessions in the capital soon. Pamela adds, "we hope to be in the top hotels, bars, restaurants, supermarkets and duty free outlets, and also want to control strictly where we sell to avoid the dangers of substitution".

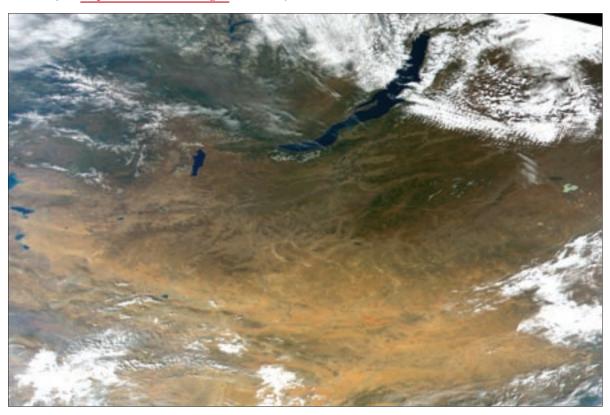
Overall, says Ronnie, "our approach has been one of educating the Mongolian public about Scottish and the culture of drinking Scotch whisky". Looking to the future, they aim to introduce a malt, too, and to sell the brand elsewhere in the world

Ulaan Baatar is a very long way indeed from Speyside, but the Scots are known for their inventiveness, international outlook and love of good company and a good drink. Yokozuna Scotch should fit in very well in the Mongolian capital. Slainte!

For more information, see www.yokozunawhisky.com.

# MONGOLIA FROM SPACE

ith American technology now keeping an eye on the world from high above, NASA now provide downloads of various places in the world from about 300 miles up as their various satellites map the planet. We've been lucky enough to obtain some of these for you, and reproduce them (with kind permission from NASA) for our readers here, with comments (see <a href="http://visiblearth.nasa.gov">http://visiblearth.nasa.gov</a> for more).

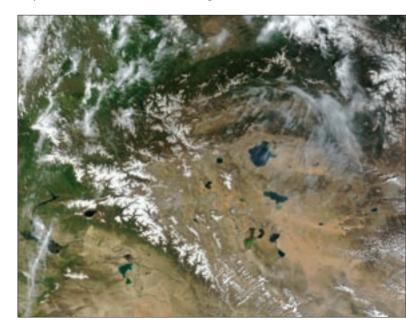


## Mongolia's Terrain

With winds that constantly whip dust across high plains, a nomadic population that mostly lives in felt tents, and a local cuisine that consists of fermented goat milk and stewed meats, Mongolia is not a place for the pampered. This true-color image of Mongolia was acquired by the Moderate-resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS), flying aboard NASA's Terra spacecraft. Most of the 2.3 million Mongolians live on the vast, rolling, semiarid, grass-covered plateaus that stretch across eastern and northern Mongolia. In the image, these areas are a dark reddish-brown. The faint herringbone pattern running through eastern Mongolia is formed by the Kerulen and Orhon Gol rivers and their tributaries.

The lighter reddish-brown areas covering most of southern Mongolia is the Gobi Desert. Vast and largely uncharted, the Gobi has become a favorite of fossil hunters from around the world. Here ideal fossil specimens of Velociraptor and Protoceratops have been unearthed. Moving to the southwest corner of the country, one can see the defined ridges that make up the sparsely vegetated Altai Mountain Range, the highest mountains in Mongolia.

A number of lakes can be spotted to the northwest and the far north. The drumstick-shaped lake at the northern tip of Mongolia is Hovsgol Nuur, which is considered a national treasure in Mongolia with its picturesque alpine surroundings and pristine water. Further north in Russia, the long lake that is half surrounded by snow is the great Lake Baykal. Reaching 1,620 meters (nearly one mile) in depth, Lake Baykal is the deepest freshwater lake in the world and holds as much fresh water as the shallower lakes Superior, Huron, Ontario, Michigan, and Erie combined.



#### Western Mongolia

A MODIS captured image of western Mongolia. Notice how the snow-capped mountains to the north and west seem to be blocking any moisture from the interior, creating the arid landscape dotted with small lakes.

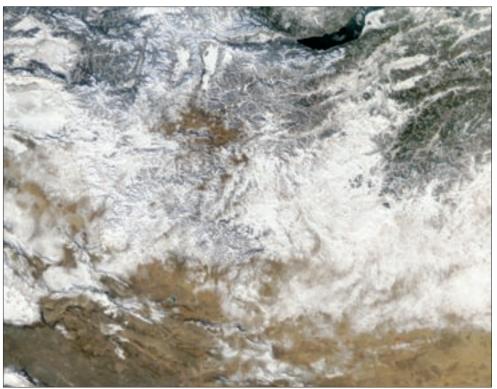


# Forest Fires in Northern Mongolia

This series of true-color Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) images show the development of scores of fires in Mongolia (bottom) and Russia (top) over the month. The active fires are marked with red dots. At upper right is the southern portion of Lake Baikal.

#### Winter Snows

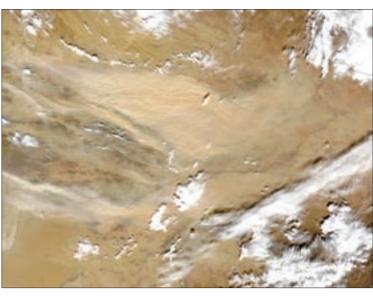
Snow covers Mongolia in patches in this true-color Aqua MODIS image. Mongolia sits at an extremely high altitude; no point is lower than 1,800 feet (550 meters), while the highest point stretches to 15,266 feet (4,653 meters). Snowfall is normally light and blows away quickly during the winter, so to see this much snow on the ground at once is rather unusual.



#### Gobi Desert Dust Storm

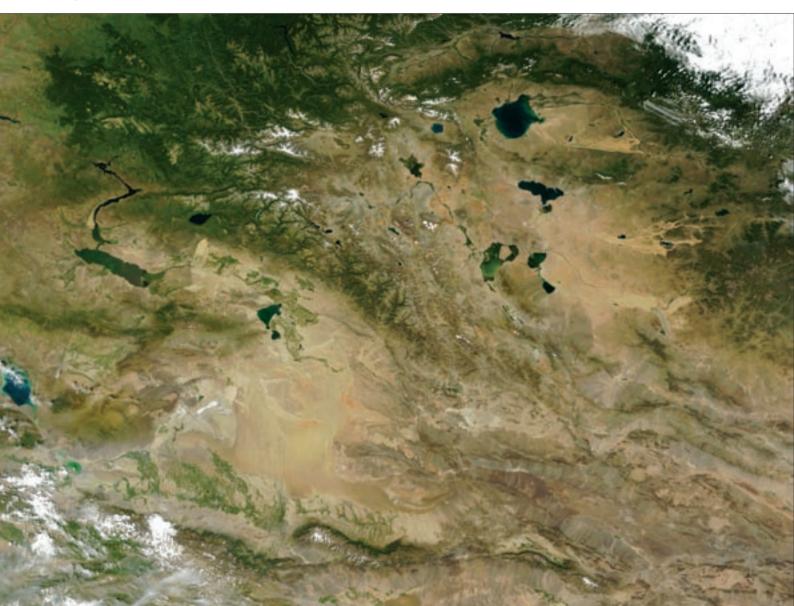
A large dust storm can be seen blowing across the Gobi Desert in Mongolia in this true-color Terra MODIS image. The dust storm appears as a lighter tan with horizontal-running streaks against the darker tan-orange of the desert. The dust storm is mostly in Mongolia (top), but also has a streak running on the other side of the border in the Inner Mongolia region of China.

The Gobi Desert is one of the world's largest deserts, covering almost 1.3 million square kilometers (around 0.5 million square miles). It sits on a high plateau (from 910 to 1,520 meters), and is a region of extreme weather conditions with bitterly cold winters and short hot summers.



#### The Altai Mountains

The rugged and remote Altai Mountains (running diagonally from the upper left to lower right of the image) tower over the surrounding basin of desert, steppe, forest, and taiga ecosystems. The large lake at the top of the image is Uvs Nuur, which is approximately the size of Rhode Island. This part of the country is sparsely populated inhabited mostly by Kazakhs, who are Muslim and speak a Turkic language; the majority of the population of the rest of Mongolia are Buddhists who speak Mongolian and Russian. Most Mongolians that live outside of the few cities are nomadic and live in gers (sometimes called yurtas), or large tents with wooden frames. Western Mongolia is renowned for its endangered and rare species, including lynx, argarli sheep and snow leopards. The region is seismically active, with numerous hot springs and frequent earthquakes. The two red dots in this image signify grassland fires just over the border in Northern China.



# MONGOLIAN LOVE POETRY

ongolia is not a country normally associated internationally with poetry, however, the nation has gone through some quite distinct waves of intellectual inspiration over the centuries. From the glorious epics narrating the exploits of Gengghis Khan, to evocative odes of the beauty of the Mongolian countryside, to Soviet inspired pieces with commentary of the martyrs red flags, Mongolian poetry has long been part of the nomadic life, as stories and yarns are passed down verbally. Only recently has some of this heritage started to have been collected in written form. One aspect of this (possibly to do with the cold winters!) are the quite beautiful love poems that exist – tales of missing loved ones far away, when matched with the beauty of the Mongolian countryside, and the stark contrast in the cruelty of winter, it is no real surprise that Mongolia has such a wealth of romantic tales. Here then are a few poems we especially like – ideal as autumn draws the chilly fingers of Siberia closer, to recite to your loved ones as the evenings grow longer....

### Tsendyn Damdinsuren (1908-1986)

#### "A Hunters Song"

Many coloured flowers growing On Northern mountain slopes Are beautiful; My sweetheart, dear girl, You are more beautiful than they.

Brightly coloured flowers growing On Southern mountain slopes Are beautiful; My own love, my girl, You are more beautiful than they.

Many antlered deer roaming On Khangai slopes Are beautiful; Our sweet girls, loving girls, You are more beautiful than they.



#### "You And I"

Just for today You are in a far distant place Like that halfmoon In the night sky

Just for now I am here far from you Like this halfmoon Reflected on the surface of the water

When we two parted We both went into the distance You and I are The two broken halfmoons

When we are together We are The full and round moon Marvellous and smiling.





## Dashdorjyn Natsagdorj (1906-1937)

#### "Autumn"



The ochre autumn sun Shines on both of us, you and I Happily clad with golden rays Are the blades of grass in the steppe, And deer and antelope Fill nature with their gaiety. While bulls and cows bellow To the herdsmans delight. Rows of light fleecy clouds Float high in a clear sky. There goes the youth To study in regions far. Fluid and tranquil Flow the limpid streams Which reflect at night The bright moon. Now all becomes grey, The frost sparkles like pearls, And the night-tethered horse Shivers with cold. Since early dawn The master has been gone To hunt wild wolves. Watching for him in the ger His love prepares dinner. The light noiseless breeze Gently shakes the grass, At certain moments young and old Feel rather dreamily sad. From the yellowing trees The leaves slowly fall And the soul is penetrated By sweet melancholy.



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