Naryn region

The Naryn region is ideal for long trips, including trekking, cycling and car trips. The large area and small population of the region can provide many impressions for tourists. The region is famous for its large lakes at an altitude of more than 3000 meters and beautiful and complex mountain gorges connecting the valleys and gorges of Naryn Region.The Naryn region is a great place to get an insight into the nomadic life of the Kyrgyz people, which has not changed much in the last 300 years. If you are interested in cultural monuments, it is worth visiting Tash Rabat, one of the oldest Silk Road caravan huts in Central Asia. Naryn region is the largest and paradoxically the least populated region of Kyrgyzstan. It is a region of vast landscapes and high mountains, where the nomadic lifestyle of the Kyrgyz people has been preserved to this day. The Naryn Region is the largest alpine region in the country. It includes the Kokshaal- Too Range, the largest in the Tien Shan, the At Bashi Range, the Moldo-Too Range, the Naryn-Too Range and the Susamyr Too Range. The average altitude is 3000-4000 meters. The ridge is broken by wide mountain valleys, the most famous of which are the Aksai, Alpa and Kochkor valleys. The southern part of Naryn Region is the coldest region in Kyrgyzstan. As a result, the aforementioned Aksai valley recorded a Kyrgyz temperature record of -53°C. The mountain lakes of Son-kul, Kelsu and Chatyr-lkul and the largest river in the Tien Shan, the Naryn, are very popular.

Historically, the region has always been inhabited by nomadic Kyrgyz in the 11th-13th centuries, to this day 99% of the population is Kyrgyz. The nomadic way of life has remained unchanged over the centuries and has been preserved because the land is relatively remote from war and trade routes. For this reason, there are relatively few historical monuments in the region. It was not until the Soviet era that towns, villages and roads began to be built.

During the Soviet era, tourism was banned in most of Naryn Region in order to preserve the pristine nature of the region. This makes Naryn region an ideal place for ecotourism.

* Son-Kul Lake

Son-Kul Lake (e.g. Son-Kul, Sonkul) is the second largest lake in Kyrgyzstan and is located in the Naryn region, about 280 km from Bishkek.

Son-Kul is located in a mountain valley at an altitude of 3000 m and is bordered by the Son-Kul-ridge to the north and the Moldo-To ridge to the south. The lake is cold and quite deep with a maximum depth of 14 meters. Son-kul freezes approximately in mid-November and thaws in mid-April. The area around the lake is very beautiful, especially in summer. Sonkul is surrounded by the hills and snowy peaks of the Central Tien Shan Mountains. Due to the high altitude there are no trees, only low, hard grasses and edelweiss.The lakes are not very large, but their shores are quite different from each other. The southern and eastern shores are quite flat and flooded in some places, while the northern and western shores are quite steep. The road along the lake winds through the hills. Cycling is particularly enjoyable. The best views of the lake are on the western shore. Sonkul is inaccessible and human impact is minimal. Only in summer do nomads come from the neighboring villages of the Jumgal valley and Naryn. The rest of the year the Son-kul valley is completely deserted. On the northern shore of the lake is the mausoleum of Tailak Batyr, the only stone building in the valley, built in the late 19th century.

Son Kul Lake is very popular with tourists and many tourist routes pass through it. Due to the geographically favorable location of Son-kul Lake, it is possible to combine tourism in Son-kul with a trip from one part of the country to another. The most popular and accessible is Kalmak-Ashu (northeastern part of the lake) on the Bishkek-Torugard road, 3 km from the village of Sari Bulak. It is also possible to reach the lake by car via Terskey Torpok (also known as 33 Parrots and located in the southeastern part of the lake), Moldo Ashuu (on the southern shore of the lake) and Kara Keche (on the southwestern shore) passes. In addition to vehicular crossings, a number of pedestrian crossings also lead to the lake, which can also be accessed by bicycle or horse. These include Tuz-ashu Pass, Chilber Pass and Uzbek Pass.

* Kel-suu

Kel Suu is a glacial lake at an altitude of 3500 meters and is located in the south-east of the Narin region, close to the border between Kyrgyzstan and China. The water of the lake is bright blue and contrasts beautifully with the surrounding rocks. It is one of the most beautiful places in Kyrgyzstan and at the same time difficult to reach. Kehl Suu is a landslide lake formed in a large cleft between rocks. The lake is 9 km long and 500 meters to 2 km wide at its widest point. There is only one shoreline, so it is not possible to see the entire lake from the shoreline.

The lake has an interesting feature, which is why it got the name Kel-Suu, which means 'leaving water' in Kyrgyz. And indeed, the lake sometimes disappears, seeping into underground caves and caverns. That is why it is necessary to check if there is water in the lake before going there.

Access to the lake is very difficult. It is located on a ridge that is difficult to reach by Kokjar Too and the road to the lake crosses the wide Aksay valley with many marshy areas and shallow water. Only an off-road vehicle with an experienced driver can reach the lake. The lake is in the border area and a border area permit is required for entry.

* Tash Rabat

Tash Rabat (also Tash-Rabat) is an ancient caravanserai in the Narin region, not far from the Chinese border. In ancient times it was one of the key points on the Great Silk Road.The caravanserai is located in the southern part of the Atbashi Mountains, 3100 meters above sea level. Numerous caravans carrying eastern goods from China were accommodated here for centuries. The history of Stone Rabat dates back to ancient times. From the 2nd to the 1st century BC. In the 1st and 2nd centuries BC, merchant caravans visited the area. From the 2nd century BC to the 1st century AD and from the 1st century AD to the 2nd century AD, merchant caravans traveled to and from the area. Although the main routes of the Silk Road have changed since then, the region has continued to be used by trade caravans: Between the 10th and 11th centuries, a monastery was built here. According to various theories, Buddhist or Christian, the monastery fell into decay; in the 14th-15th centuries one of the four most important caravanserais in Central Asia was built on this site. It is a unique, perfectly preserved cultural and historical monument in Kyrgyzstan and one of the most important remains of the Great Silk Road.

* Kekemeren gorge

One of the most beautiful roads in Kyrgyzstan is located in a small area between the Suuzamir and Jumgal valleys, where the powerful and beautiful Kekemeren River flows. This place is called Kekemeren Gorge.The Kekemeren Gorge is located in the northwestern part of Naryn, about 200 km from Bishkek. The gorge is about 30 km long. The gorge consists of red and yellow rocks, which contrast beautifully with the green and striking blue river. The large boulders are prone to erosion and form huge vertical boulders up to 200 meters high, as well as amazing forms of sand and clay. The rivers flowing through the gorge are formed by the confluence of the West Karakol and Suusamir rivers, which flow from the southern slopes of the Kyrgyz ridge and carry their waters to the Naryn River.The canyon's dirt roads are suitable for vehicles and bicycles, and the river banks offer excellent places for relaxation and picnics. The area is also popular with rafting enthusiasts. Rafting in Kekemeren is a dangerous and unforgettable adventure.

* Lake Chatir Kul.

This glacial lake is located at an altitude of 3,500 meters. The lake is located in the southernmost part of the Naryn region, near the border with China, between the At Bashi and Torugart Too mountain ranges and occupies a large area in the hollow between the mountains. The lake is the third largest lake in Kyrgyzstan after Issyk-Kul and Son Kul. The climate near Chatir Kul is extremely harsh. Winter temperatures can reach minus 50°C and the lake freezes for most of the year. The shores of the lake are marshy and have only low, hardy vegetation. The lake is not very deep, reaching a depth of 20 meters.Near the lake is the Torugart Pass to China. In Chatir-Kul, there is the Karalat Zhipirk National Reserve.

* Kara-Keche gorge

The Kara-Keche Gorge is a long gorge in the western part of Naryn Region, known for the Kara-Keche Pass and Kyrgyzstan's largest coal field. The gorge separates the Jumgal and Sonkul valleys.The pass is located in the Moldo-Too mountains and is 50 km long. The nature and topography of the gorge is quite remarkable. The slopes of the valley consist of red-colored rocks, which contrast wonderfully with the fir trees and other green vegetation that grow on the slopes of this mountain. At a depth of 2,800 meters below sea level lies the Kara Keçhe coal field. The highest point of the valley is the Kara Keche Pass at 3348 meters. From here, both Son-kul and the gorge can be seen.

* Jayloo in Naryn

For generations, the Kyrgyz have lived nomadically and traveled across the mountains with herds of cattle. Seasonal pastures were divided into winter (kyshtoo), spring (jayloo), summer (jailoo) and autumn (kyshtoo). Winter pastures were located in sheltered valleys, while spring and autumn pastures were slightly further away from winter pastures, but still close. Summer pastures were located in high steppes and wide gorges with dense vegetation and abundant water.

Today, most Kyrgyz people are sedentary, but some are semi-nomadic. Winters are usually spent in villages (sometimes called kishlaks (village), the generic term for the countryside today). In summer, shepherds take their flocks (usually sheep, cattle, horses and goats) to Jailu. Yurts are the most common dwellings and are scattered across the vast green meadows of the mountains. Some of the most famous jayloo are located around Sonkul in Naryn and in the Suusamir valley on the road between Osh and Bishkek. In Talas region.These places are known for their pure nature and delicious dairy products (including kumis, fermented mare's milk). Many tourists travel to Jayloo to stay in traditional Kyrgyz yurts, explore the region on horseback and experience a bit of the traditional nomadic lifestyle.