

General comments about the trip as a whole.

Tien Shan

This section of the trip was felt by all to be a great success, the agent provided a great base camp experience and support via the radios and the area provided perfect easy alpine territory mostly on snow. There were also two porters who worked hard to carry our tents and ropes, couldn't have done it without them. The weather also was perfect; cosmetic snowfall up until our arrival proceeded by blue skies and light winds for the duration. The group got on well and paired up easily.

Ascents as follows...

25/07 Group Ascent of peak 4285 N 41'58.142' E076'44.150 GPS 4306m

(from ABC 1 N 41'58.681' E076'43.814' GPS 3729m Afternoon glacial training and rece of glacier on 24/07)

Steve, Kian and Ben climb west snow face of peak, the rest of the group climb wide Snow gully to South which is also descent route for all.

26/07 Myself, John and Hazel made an ascent of peak 4580 N41'58.243' E076'42.667' GPS 4583m Straight forward glacial approach, 30 degree snow face, gullies and upper snow field, returning via a similar route. Approx 4.5hrs from abc.

27/07 Myself , George and Simon do a day climb up peak 4291 N41'58.784' E076'46.868' GPS 4274m Scrambling and exposed sections, two pitches of HS standard climbing. Descent via the North, easy snow and ridge scrambling and scree from col. Approx 5 hrs from BC to summit.

26/7 Steve, Kian, Simon and George made a lengthy detour on the way back to BC via peak 4135 to the North. Rest of group descend to BC

28/07 Kian and Steve are successful in climbing peak 4642 from their ABC, needing to descend via the South side of col due to poor snow conditions encountered on their ascent, so spend a second night at their ABC before returning to BC on the 29/07

29/07 Peak 4422 N41'58.022' E076'47.845' GPS 4446m Approx. 4hrs to the top from abc.

Team of Peter, Hazel, Simon, John, Ben, George and myself in two groups ascend peak 4422 from ABC. Involving a steep moraine walk down to the glacier followed by easy snow slopes and W ridge to the peak, we descended via the E ridge, spectacular views into the sun and other peaks to the south and east.

(From our ABC 2 N41'59.025' E076'47.122' GPS 3591m Good water spring and flat tenting, porters we're able to carry to the ridge, after which we carried the tents and ropes, a short grade 2 section of ridge plus a 25m abseil, from there a boulder field traverse to the abc.)

31/07 Hazel makes ascent of peak 3999 whilst on her two day exped.

Attempts as follows...

26/07 Steve, Kian, Ben and Simon make a bid for Peak 4634, unfortunately poor snow and Ben became nauseous early on so they returned to the ABC.

30/07 Peter, George and myself attempt peak 4395 to the south of BC, probably involving around an 800m high rock climb up to around severe. Our plan is to climb as high as possible the first day, bivi and then continue to the summit the second day and descending via the west face which looks to involve steeper ground near the top but easy scree for the majority of the way. Unfortunately Peter pulled off a large flake after 4 pitches which gave his leg a glancing blow and heavy bruising, we retreated via abseil.

After a slow walk back to BC aided by Kian and Patrick, Peter continued to recover and no longer needed the painkillers by the following evening. Accident report in accident section.

31/07 Ben goes for a few hours run to peak 3995. Steve arrives back into bc at bfast after their team on 4437 call it a day near it's ridge. Tired and encountered icy conditions. John and Simon arrive back around midday after resting at their abc. Hazel arrives back from her exped at around 5pm.

Khan Tengri

This part of the trip went well too although we didn't manage to summit KT. Three of us (Kian and myself) got to camp three and stayed there for two nights and almost three days in an effort to wait for better weather, a deteriorating forecast from John at Camp two sent us back down and the next day it dumped again only improving the following day. John achieved the N summit of Chapaev, Hazel and George both made forays up towards camp two. George actually joined another AP group for a few days, they'd arrived in the valley for training. The Fixed ropes price quoted by Tien Shan on their 'voucher' that was passed to base camp on arrival said 150 euro per person (unpaid) for ropes. I gave them the 50 euro per person and said we would settle up later. The ropes were in good condition, most if not all looking replaced or added to this season, ropes right to the top of Chapaev and wands to camp 3. Other groups who got to 6400m said that the ropes on the summit ridge were okay too, I quote "normal."

Daily activities...

03/08

Flight in to BC, Kian, Steve and myself do an afternoon carry up to camp 1.

04/08

Team attempts to do a carry up to camp 1 but are forced back by weather. It later improves and Kian and Steve continue to camp 1.

05/08

Hazel, John, George and myself set off early and do a single trip to camp 1. Kian and Steve do a carry up to camp 2, returning quite late.

06/08

Kian and Steve take a rest at camp 1. Hazel takes a rest day at camp 1. John, George and myself set off for a carry to camp 2. George unfortunately turns back halfway after giving it a good try. John and I make the carry.

07/08

Kian, Steve, John and myself do our second carry to camp 2 and to stay. George returns to bc. Hazel sets off for a foray towards camp 2 and returns to camp 1. Later returning to BC.

08/08

Acclimatization climb up Chapaev for Steve and myself. John and Kian take a rest day at camp 2.

09/08

George joins Martin's group. Hazel returns to camp 1

10/08

Kian, Steve, John and myself set off for camp 3. John unfortunately struggles with his breathing rate and leaves his sack halfway, making it to Chapaev but returns to camp 2. I go with him to the base of the rocky sections and then return up the ropes and join Kian and Steve at Camp three where it's now a gale. We camp on the exposed col where there are a collection of tents. The lower camp three looks abandoned and half buried in snow, the tents there destroyed.

11/08 Rest day for all. We at camp three obtain a forecast from John at C2 saying a better day the next day followed by heavy snow for the 14th.

12/08 We wake at camp 3 to more bad weather so return with difficulty over Chapaev to C2. John returns to C1. Tent mostly buried by the time we return to C2.

13/08 More heavy snow has fallen overnight, mod to strong wind continues, poor vis but improving through the day. We return to C1, and later in the afternoon return to BC with John and Hazel. We're aided by a Kyrgyz Guide by radio at C1, use our two ropes at C1 to descend initial steep section from C1. We find second fixed rope after traverse and all descend safely.

14/08 Back to Maidadir

We get the second flight out from BC to Maidadir with Martin's group who descend first thing in the morning. BC closing at the weekend.

15/08 Transfer to Karakol and Green yard Hotel

16/08 Transfer to Royal Beach Hotel

17/08 Transfer to Bishkek and final Eve

Highlights of the trip...

5 Summits Reached in the Unclimbed phase, great weather, great base camp staff, set up and area.

Peak Chapaev reached by 3 clients, all returning safe and sound. The helicopter ride in and out. Our last evening meal on which our cook Katia from the unclimbed phase took us to an excellent restaurant and nightclub + karaoke afterwards!

Client feed back during the trip.

Mostly positive for the most part, a few unlucky people in the unclimbed phase with regards to illness or the altitude early on but no grumbles. Everyone enjoyed the format of the trip with the unclimbed and KT. It was felt that it was a tight schedule for summitting KT.

Local agent –were they helpful, available, etc.

Yes, always. Patrick and Katia were excellent hosts, Katia providing brilliant food. Patrick providing radio checks often at three hour intervals. The two porters on the unclimbed phase did pretty much whatever we asked, and friendly too. Margarita was always very helpful too and very professional. Pavel the Russian guide did get in the way at times by insisting on communicating with margarita on our behalf and his presence was felt in general to be abrasive with the group.