



Inspired 1984



**Guide to the Central Asian
Turkic Nomadic Trellised Tent**

Red Kite Yurts Scotland

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The Central Asian Turkic Nomadic Trellised Felted Tent

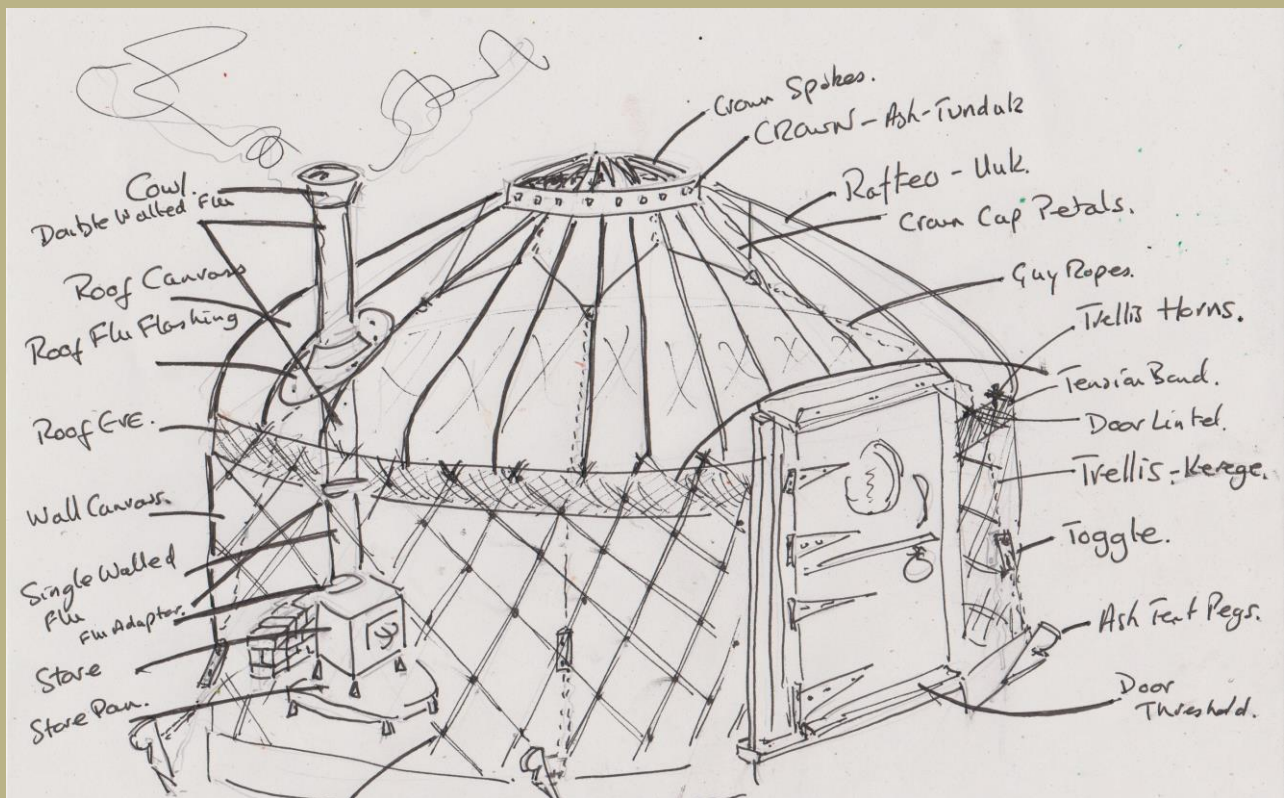
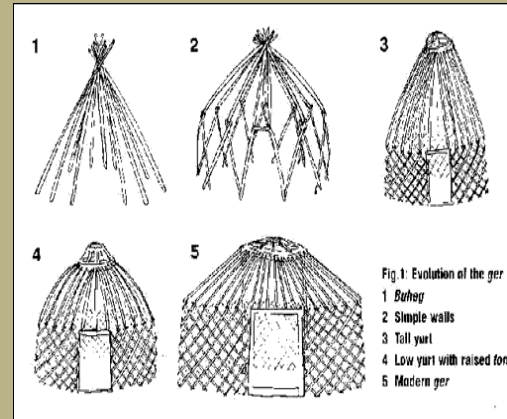
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The Central Asian Turkic Nomadic Trellised Felted Tent



Incidentally there really isn't such a thing as a Yurt. This name comes about from the Russian, when in times of occupation the Russians dismantled the cultures of Kyrgyzstan Kazakhstan Uzbekistan Turkmenistan Tajikistan and others of that area of Central Asia. Yurt was the name given to collective farms where focus was given to agriculture and the disappearance of the traditions of nomadic life. This nomadic lifestyle of living in the Trellised Felted Tent is also rapidly disappearing in Mongolia due to Chinese influence. However, the people of Ulan Batur still prefer to live in their static Ger, simply because it is more practical than cold concrete flats.

Components to the Turkic Trellised Tent



Turkic Style-Boz Oy

Steam bent trellis, rafters and compression wheel or crown with coppiced spokes :

Mongolian Style-Ger

Straight poled rafters and trellis with carpentered wheel, and central wheel supports:



We often get asked questions like...

I live in Shetland where winds can get to 90 - 100 mph winds? Will your yurts cope with these conditions?

Also can they be used in the winter? What upkeep do they require considering Scottish winters?

Any structure like a canvass tent or even a Central Asian Turkic Nomadic Trellised Felted Tent , which is essentially a semi-permanent tent, has limitations, although measures can be taken to cope with adverse conditions. It does depend on how the Yurt is constructed and how it is secured to the ground, and where it is pitched. We do recommend that yurts be taken down in the winter to avoid damage and re assembled in the spring, although yurts can to an extent tolerate Scottish winters.

It may be a good idea to store your yurt in a dry place to extend the life and give you the opportunity to make necessary repairs and maintain your Nomadic Trellised Tent, eg re-oiling and canvass proofing etc.

We have developed a pitching technique to reduce damage caused by wind, involving the use of internal ropes and locating milled posts within the circumference of the tent. It is always a good idea to add an additional cover which will give added strength and support, and will help to maintain warmth and reduce any leakage due to driving and gusting rain .

We have not pitched Tents on Shetland (they are there) but have had experience on the Western Isles, Barra, Uist, Mull, Skye and Eigg.



What is the difference between a straight poled and a bent poled yurt?

Straight poled yurts originate from Mongolia or Kazakh Altai Mountain traditions. The steam bent raftered yurt originates from Kyrgyz traditions. The profile of this tent creates a domed shaped structure. Both styles are equally structural sound.

Is it possible to buy the stove and install it ourselves as we construct the yurt?

Yes. Stoves and flu flashing kits are available from Red Kite Yurts or visit the Windy Smithy web site. Jon and Amalia are very helpful.

What is the difference in strength/durability between Ash/Oak and Larch poles?

We use Ash and Oak hardwood with no knots, and Larch, a softwood, with knots. Ash and Larch is now no longer available due to virus. The longevity of either material depends upon the regular maintenance and re-nourishing of the wood. There is no reason why either material should not last a lifetime. All components are easily replaceable if required. You can expect our poly cotton Fire retardant, rot resistant, Breathable and Waterproof, 12 oz canvass cover, to last about 10 years, dependent upon use and location.

What are the benefits of adding wool felt lining?

To retain warmth in winter and cool in summer, added stability, reduce condensation, naturally fire retardant, reduces outside noise.

Before you consider purchasing a Red Kite Yurt you may wish to consider the following.

Your Stove and flue installation

We recommend you order your own Stoves and flues and accessories and flue flashing to be installed into the canvass.

A Heatas registered engineer must be sought to instal your stove accompanied by their risk assessment, which may vary from Council to Council. There are now Government safety guidelines that must be adhered to. We are not registered to do this.

You should consider the following when purchasing a stove.

1 x 5-6KW stove (18-24 footers)

1 x 4KW stove (12-16 footers)

Twin walled flues

1 x Cowling

Firewall rope, / fire cement for the flu to stove

1 x Back of Stove heat deflector.

An external supporting post for your flue needs to be considered

2 x Fire Extinguishers and a heat/smoke detector

It is worth looking at the Charnwood Eco

Design range of stoves, designed for Yurts

Charnwood Aire 3 Blu 3.6kW

Felt liner, Tyvek breathable membrane, Inner liner.

75mm milled posts in the circumference tethered to the trellis- We can supply

Inner baton within the circumference against the trellis-We can supply

Roof cap strap-We can supply

Inner ropes crossed and tethered together at the crossing point and tethered to the floor-We can supply

Ratchet strap securing the wall canvass to the platform-Supplied

A secure Platform

Secured flue pipe which needs to extend beyond the apex of the yurt- Consult your local Joiner

Additionally

* What is the difference between a straight poled and a bent poled yurt?

Straight poled yurts originate from Mongolia or Kazakh Altai Mountain traditions.

The steam bent raftered yurt originates from Kyrgyz traditions. The profile of this tent creates a domed shaped structure. Both styles are equally structural sound.

* What is the difference in strength/ durability between Ash or Oak and Larch poles?

Ash is a hardwood with no knots and Larch is a softwood with a few knots. The longevity of either material depends upon the regular maintenance and renourishing of the wood. There is no reason why either material should not last a lifetime. All components are easily replaceable if required. You can expect our poly cotton Fire retardant, rot resistant, Breathable and Waterproof, 12 oz canvass cover, to last about 10 years, dependent upon use and location.

* What are the benefits of adding a wool felt lining, breathable Tyvek liner, inner cotton liner ?

To retain warmth in winter and cool in summer, added stability-particularly against extreme weather conditions, reduce condensation, naturally fire retardant, reduces outside noise.

* Is it possible to buy the stove and install it ourselves as we construct the yurt?

Yes. Flu flashing kits are available from Red Kite Yurts

Keeping warm

How to prepare your yurt for All-Year-Round use:

The climatic conditions of Central Asia are very different to those in our wet and damp environment, therefore our materials use to cover our tents need to adapt.

Mongolian Tents will be prepared with a 4 layer system. An inner cloth liner, felt, heavy duty canvass- often NOT waterproof, an outer thin protective cloth layer, also not waterproof. Whereas Kyrgyz Tents may only have a thick 10mm felt cover or a reed matting layer with the felt on top.

It is traditional not to have windows, which reduce heat loss in winter months. A Nomadic herdsman will spend a great deal of his time outside and is more in tune with his natural surroundings than we are in the West. They experience and perceive the starry world in a different way to us.



It is therefore recommended to double cover your yurt with at least an outer canvass layer and felt liner and at most an outer canvas layer, a breathable membrane such as builders Tyvek, and felted liner then an inner white/cream canvas.

If your yurt has a clear PVC crown cap then you will experience substantial heat loss. Likewise with the addition of clear PVC windows. It is therefore advisable to add an additional single or double layer canvass lid or better still a canvas-felted crown cap.

Platform

We do not recommend using ply, and certainly not chipboard. Treated tongue and groove floor boarding or scaffold type boards are ideal. It is preferable to lay a DPC on the ground to protect against rising damp.

If you are constructing a platform, ask for guidelines to help with the construction. It is important to have a radius of the exact diameter of the tent.

An upstand is required around the circumference and round milled upright posts located through the platform into the ground, and internal steamed batons to retain the position of the trellis to the upstand. You will need to allow enough room for the trellis, therefore wait for the trellis to arrive before you do any drilling. Posts will help stabilize tent in high winds. Strongly advised.



You may also consider adding an awning to protect the door and offer cover.



Platform Specs

We use 28mm treated tongue and groove boards or milled larch boards- 30mm x 200mm, on a treated post and rail framework. Exterior plywood does not last! In most cases it is not necessary to use concrete

We construct a framework of treated 3" posts and rails with 40-60cm centres. Stretch a TYvek breathable membrane and staple.

A lathe framework can be added if you wish to incorporate a natural wool insulation <https://www.thermafleece.com/application/floors>

Screw down 28mm tongue and groove flooring with Eurotec 3.2mm x 40mm Tongue Fix Flooring Screws TX10

We supply a steamed wood battened upstand, screwed to the circumference of the deck to retain the trellis and 75mm milled upright posts.

Drill 5-6 holes - depending upon yurt dia-, within the trellis line to take 75mm round milled posts, these are secured to the trellis with ties to prevent gusting winds damaging the yurt structure.

Allow space for the wall canvass, if you are to add an extending platform to go beyond your yurt platform.

Request full diagrams

Cover

We use a poly cotton or 100% cotton Fire Rot Water resistant breathable 12oz weight canvass. We can sew a canvas cover in a variety of colours, however we recommend using a white/cream top cover to optimize light. However, if you pitch your tent close to trees, then a darker canvas is advisable.

For Scottish windy and wet weather conditions a second roof cover or lining is strongly recommended. This will add strength and stability to the tent and eliminate noise created by windy and gusting conditions. A 100% Wool Felt liner with a Permeable Breather Membrane, can be added to wall and roof sections to help retain heat during colder days and nights, and reduce condensation, especially if you intend to keep the yurt up for a long period of time.

More light is achieved by using a 30 Tho PVC see-through material for the crown cap. During winter months, this requires a felted canvass lid. The same if you wish to include windows in the wall section.

Depending on location and use, we would expect the fabric to last 7-10 years.

Extreme all year-round locations may require a replacement canvass sooner.



Protection

You will need to, at least, annually protect your cover inside and out, by applying a waterproofing agent. We recommend Nik-Wax Cotton Proof. British Millerian, Rochdale, also supply their own solution. Should you get the occasional leak along a seam you could try a little Barbour Jacket Thornproof Dressing which sorts it out. Do not use a petroleum-based dressing like Vaseline. This could discolour and damage your canvass.

The framework can be revitalized by applying a 50:50 mix of Boiled Linseed Oil and White Spirits or Turpentine. You don't need to boil the oil yourself. It comes, already, boiled.

DO NOT USE A PRESSURE WASHER TO CLEAN YOUR CANVAS, since this will damage your fabric

Platform Construction







Location

We advise locating your tent away from the vicinity of trees, and from exposure to wind. This is important to eliminate a buildup of Algae and tree sap residue, leading to mould which will be detrimental to the materials of the tent. Do not face door of tent to prevailing winds.

Debris and sap from trees can damage the fabric of the yurt, and can turn the fabric green, making it extremely difficult to clean and reproof.

Do not be tempted to use a pressure washer as this can cause additional damage to the fabric.

The framework of the yurt is expected to last a lifetime with regular maintenance. Our fabric is supplied to us by British Millerain Rochdale, previously Inglis of Dundee.

It is a 12oz FRW breathable poly/cotton fabric, or a 100% Cotton 10 oz FRW. Request to see FRW-Fire Water Rot specification document.

Re- condition the fabric regularly, (clean and re-proof once a year), re oil the framework with boiled linseed oil and white spirit 50:50 once a year, make regular necessary repairs.

Weathering

Prior to supplying your yurt, we undertake to precondition or "weather" the fabric, for the material to develop its own natural water repellence by allowing the fibres to swell and relax back and thus tighten the weave.

This wetting/drying process will not only allow the fabric to condition and gain its full water-resistant properties but will also help close up any stitching holes.

The tent is fully assembled, and the fabric soaked.

The fabric is allowed to dry naturally in the air until it is totally dry. It is during the drying process that the fibres swell and relax. This soaking and drying process is repeated. Generally, two soakings and drying cycles is sufficient to fully weather the fabric, but more may be required if the drying process is too fast as the fabric fibres swell and relax at a slow rate.

To clean the fabrics, allow the dirt to dry and then brush the dirty area gently with a soft brush. The fabric can be rinsed down using water from a bucket or hose. NEVER use any solvents or soap products and do NOT use pressure washers as either of these may wash the proofing product out of the fabric.

With long term use it is advisable to dismantle the tent at the end of the season for maintenance and to protect structure against inclement weather and reassemble in the Spring,

Pay attention to the placement of BBQs in case of flying sparks.

Stoves can be placed centrally or to one side. If the stove is placed to one side, then a deflector or stack of bricks can be placed behind the stove to protect the internal structure of the tent and radiate heat.

Condensation

During colder periods of the year, you may experience condensation.

Condensation is the conversion of a vapour or gas to a liquid. This occurs when water collects as droplets on a cold surface when humid air is in contact with it.

How do I stop condensation?

1. Circulate the Air
2. Open the door and windows.
3. Raise the Temperature
4. Add Weather Stripping, e.g. door seals.
5. Use Storm Windows or double glazing - if applicable
6. Fit felt lining. At best use felt lining with Permeable Breather Membrane (Tyvek) and a second cover
7. Add a cotton liner and / or felt liner.

A felt lining will keep your tent cool in warm weather and warm in cold weather. Very strange I know but that is the unique properties of felt. You will also find that the air will be fresher since there is breathability in felt opposed to the use of silver coated insulation which can condensate.

Moth Infestation of Felt

If felt is still in relatively good condition after an attack by wool moths it can be saved, remove the felt and hang it up outside for a few days and beat the living daylight out of it with a stick to kill the moths and eggs. They do not like daylight and die quickly. Cedar balls and lavender oil are good to worry away moths.

This we have to do with our precious Kyrgyz felt carpets. You may have to do this on an annual basis.

Assembly Instructions of Red Kite Yurts Trellised Tents

Choose a sheltered site, but NOT in the vicinity of trees, this can seriously damage your canvass cover, with the **door** facing south, *towards the river*, against the prevailing windward side, on a slight incline.

Position the **ground sheet. Platform sketches attached.**

Place all the **rafters and the crown** on the ground sheet or platform.

Separate the door rafters and put those outside the tent circumference, these are tied in last of all.

Position the **door frame** by someone to hold upright. Or open the door to stand alone.

Engage the **2 door trellis** units to the door, and then interlock the remaining trellis units-See illustration. Make sure that the trellis units are the right way up. See marks on the outside top of each trellis unit.

Secure the Tension Band, snug but not tight- See illustration.

When tying ALL cords in the tent, use a simple bow as you would in tying shoelaces.

The **first rafter** is tied to the first of the trellis horns to the right of the door from the inside.

This position is marked on the top of the inside of the trellis with a black dot.

The **second rafter** is tied a third of the way round, to the trellis horn, clockwise from the first. This position is marked on the top of the inside of the trellis with a black dot.

The crown is marked on the top rim with black marks signifying the position of the rafters that correspond with the position of rafters over the door frame, 3 in all.

Engage the **first rafter** into the hole in the **crown**, corresponding to the **trellis horn**

Engage the **second rafter** into the corresponding hole of the **crown**.

Take great care in lifting the crown above your head keeping the rim of the **crown** tilted down towards you. This is a tricky operation, and breakages to the tips of the rafter can occur. It is better that one person only lifts the crown and not be helped by others. You must feel the balance yourself.

A second person, standing outside the tent will engage a **third rafter into the crown**, 2 thirds of the way round, clockwise from the **second rafter**. He/she pushes the **crown** up in one motion with the **third rafter** and ties the **third rafter** to the trellis horn. This is a technique which should be done with great **care and confidence**. When too many people get involved, breakages happen. Make sure, at this point, that the 3 rafters are engaged to the trellis horns, corresponding with the holes in the crown 4

Engage the remaining rafters. You do not need a ladder or stool.

The Cover

The **top cover** will be **folded** in the bag in such a way that it makes it easy for you to unfold onto the frame of the tent.

The **folded cover** is placed on the lintel of the door frame and **door rafters-See illustration.**

Using a **hoisting pole** unfold the **roof canvass** up to the crown.

Using the **hoisting pole** flip over the folded edges until the **roof canvas** now lies on the tent in half.

Using the **hoisting pole** flip over the top edge of the **roof canvass**

Pull the **roof canvass** evenly into position lining the canvass door cut out with the door lintel.

Pull tight the **eve cord** and tie off to the inside of the trellis.

Hang the **canvass walls** and wrap the walls ends through inner door upright. Ensure water can deflect off the canvass/vinyl.

Using the **hoisting** pole push up the **crown cap** into position. Make sure crown cap is right way up.

(You may want to peg in the 5 Ash tent pegs before you do this in case it is windy so that the guy ropes can be secured quickly)

Tie the ground sheet ties to the trellis from inside the tent.

The Platform

I have attached photos to help in construction of your base.

NOTE that the platform at the door is cut in a straight line across the width of the door.

This will prevent water creeping in underneath the threshold.

It is advisable to incline your platform marginally down to the threshold to help prevent water ingress.

Dismantling

Care and attention should be taken to fold away and not to step on the canvass.

Choose a dry day to dismantle to avoid storage of damp canvass.

1. Ensure the Crown cap guy ropes are knotted separately to avoid a tangle
2. Remove the walls by untying from the eve cord and therefore keep the eve cord on the roof section
3. Clean off any mud from the pegs
4. Take care to drop the Crown to avoid rafter tip breakage
- 5. Release the tension band only after last rafter is removed**
6. Bundle rafters into about 4 tightly tied bundles
7. You may find a canvass crown label (eg 16-5) hanging on the trellis, right of inside door, to be re-attached back onto the crown
8. Empty stove fire box of ash, to avoid spillage onto yurt components in transit

Step by step guide to assembling the Red Kite Yurts Trellised Tent

1. Canvass folded ready to go. The folding will assist you in unfolding when placed onto the framework.



2. Assemble the trellis and locate the door and tie trellis door ends to the door frame. Ensure that the trellis tops are the same height all the way round before wrapping the tension band.



3. Tie the first two of 3 rafters to the top of the trellis 1/3 of the way round the top of the trellis engaging the crown to the corresponding rafter tips of the rafter.



4. Engage the 3rd rafter crown to raise the hoist the crown with the 3rd rafter and tie off onto the trellis. You now have hands free to engage the remaining rafters. No need to use a ladder or chair.

Engage the remaining rafters, working at opposites to maintain a balanced crown.



5. The folded canvass is placed over the rafters and unfolded using a



over the door spare rafter.

6. Unfurl the canvass the carcass of yurt.



to cover half



7. Flip over the folded half to cover the entire yurt.



8. Tighten the eve cord and tie back inside the yurt. Hang the walls from the eve cord. Take care that the wall hangs the right way. The hem attaching the vinyl mudwall must deflect rain.

9. Crown Cap.

Guy ropes are extended, and using a spare rafter, push crown cap over the crown. In Windy Conditions it is a good idea to tap in the ash tent pegs

beforehand, so that the guys can be attached. Toggle the guys tight. Ensure the crown cap is placed the right way, round to deflect rain.



If need be, it is possible to sit on the crown to haul up the canvass and crown cap into position. Not recommended unless you really know what you are doing. It just makes for a good photo

Extras (Felt, doors, windows)

We are happy to customize your yurt to your specific requirements.

Add a wooden base:

Tongue and groove, Larch boards 230mm x 35mm. Consider an insulating layer beneath the flooring especially if you intend to live in your yurt.

Wool felt lining backed with Tyvek.

An Awning to protect the door and offer cover when entering the tent.

Oak framed and paneled doors.

Pine doors can be scorched.

Our doors are Osmo oiled.

PVC windows: 1m x .75m in walls. Or with roll up and canvass velcroed flap.

Clear PVC crown cap: For summer use only since condensation is an issue over winter.

Felted Tyvek and canvass crown cap lids available.



The Sauna Yurt



We have been perfecting our Sauna yurts over the last several years, incorporating a Finnish log burning stove. Sauna stoves achieve the sauna temperature into the 90 C, even on the coldest of days. We double cover the yurt with fire and rot retardant, waterproof canvas which sandwich a 100% British Wool felt, to ensure the heat stays in and the cold stays out

A 12 foot diameter sauna yurt can comfortably seat 6 people and prices start at £8,000, with the stove. We are happy to deliver and set up for you and supply benches and seat covers. We also supply wooden buckets, ladles, wood storage and thermometers.

It is advisable for the customer to instal their stove, flues and flue flashing by a Hetas registered engineer.

Your stove requires a 30mm plinth / stone slab to extend 500mm beyond the front of the stove.

You will be required to supply a fire extinguisher and a Carbon Monoxide detector
You will find a significant difference in the heat given by a wood fired stove against that of an electric stove. The wood fired stove offers a softer heat. However, you will find that

the circular-domed structure of Red Kite Sauna Yurts offers a unique quality to the sauna experience, regardless of stove preference.

Look after your stones

Stones can create a dust which will burn holes into the steel pan, therefore reducing the heat output. Every 6 months remove your stones, inspect and wash. You may have to replace the stones each year, depending upon use.





We construct our saunas using Scottish Larch steam bent rafters, trellis, and an ash steam bent crown

The sauna is covered with 2 layers of 12 oz Fire, Rot, and breathable poly cotton canvas. Sandwiched between each layer, is a layer of 100% 7mm felt.

An oak wooden latch and handle for the solid wooden door comes as standard

We can also supply the necessary extras:

Semi-circular seat bench and semi-circular foot bench with seat back rests

Wooden buckets and ladle

Seat cloths

Thermometer

Wood supply box

Wooden hooks.



Stoves

We recommend you order your own Stove and flues and accessories and flue flashing to be installed into the canvass.

A Heatas registered engineer must be sought to instal your stove accompanied by their risk assessment, which may vary from Council to Council. There are now Government safety guidelines that must be adhered to. We are not registered to do this.

You should consider the following when purchasing a stove.

1 x 5-6KW stove (18-24 footers)

1 x 4KW stove (12-16 footers)

Twin walled flues

1 x Cowling

Firewall rope, / fire cement for the flu to stove

1 x Back of Stove heat deflector.

Flue flashing, RED with top heat

An external supporting post for your flue needs to be considered

2 x Fire Extinguishers and a heat/smoke detector

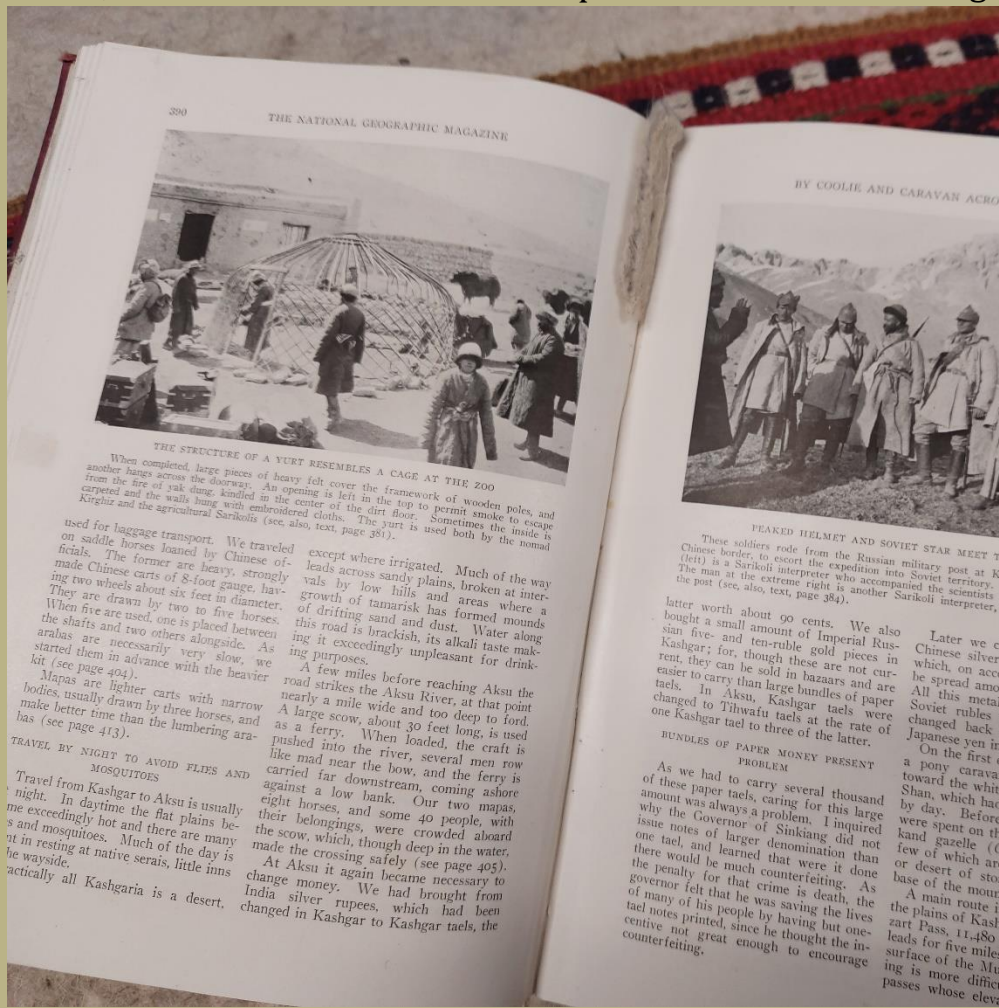
It is worth looking at the Charnwood Eco Design range of stoves, designed for Yurts

Charnwood Aire 3 Blu 3.6kW

Red Kite Yurts – A History - Our Story

In 1927 National Geographic published an article named 'By Coolie and Caravan Across Central Asia' outlining a trek through the region. Then part of the USSR, it highlighted Kyrgyzstan in particular.

Over half a century on, in 1985, I stumbled across the piece and was inspired and guided only by black and white photos to construct my first yurt. Pitched in the field behind the house, I would host curries and campouts for friends and neighbours.



290 THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE



THE STRUCTURE OF A YURT RESEMBLES A CAGE AT THE ZOO

When completed, large pieces of heavy felt cover the framework of wooden poles, and another hangs across the doorway. An opening is left in the top to permit smoke to escape from the fire of yak dung, kindled in the center of the dirt floor. Sometimes the inside is carpeted and the walls hung with embroidered cloths. The yurt is used both by the nomad Kirghiz and the agricultural Sarikolis (see also, text, page 381).

used for baggage transport. We traveled on saddle horses loaned by Chinese officials. The former are heavy, strongly made Chinese carts of 8-foot gauge, having two wheels about six feet in diameter. They are drawn by two to five horses. When five are used, one is placed between the shafts and two others alongside. As aralas are necessarily very slow, we started them in advance with the heavier kit (see page 402).

Maps are lighter carts with narrow bodies, usually drawn by three horses, and make better time than the lumbering aralas (see page 413).

TRAVEL BY NIGHT TO AVOID FLEES AND MOSQUITOES

Travel from Kashgar to Aksu is usually made at night. In daytime the flat plains become exceedingly hot and there are many mosquitoes. Much of the day is spent in resting at native serais, little inns by the wayside.

Actually all Kashgaria is a desert, except where irrigated. Much of the way leads across sandy plains, broken at intervals by low hills and areas where a growth of tamarisk has formed mounds of drifting sand and dust. Water along this road is brackish, its alkali taste making it exceedingly unpleasant for drinking purposes.

A few miles before reaching Aksu the road strikes the Aksu River, at that point nearly a mile wide and too deep to ford. A large scow, about 30 feet long, is used as a ferry. When loaded, the craft is pushed into the river, several men row like mad near the bow, and the ferry is carried far downstream, coming ashore against a low bank. Our two maps, eight horses, and some 40 people, with their belongings, were crowded aboard the scow, which, though deep in the water, made the crossing safely (see page 405).

At Aksu it again became necessary to change money. We had brought from India silver rupees, which had been changed in Kashgar to Kashgar taels, the

BY COOLIE AND CARAVAN ACROSS



PEAKED HELMET AND SOVIET STAR MEET THE

These soldiers rode from the Russian military post at Kiziltau (Kizil) to the Chinese border, to escort the expedition into Soviet territory. The man at the extreme right is another Sarikoli interpreter, and the post (see also, text, page 384).

later worth about 90 cents. We also bought a small amount of Imperial Russian five- and ten-ruble gold pieces in Kashgar; for, though these are not current, they can be sold in bazaars and are easier to carry than large handles of paper taels. In Aksu, Kashgar taels were changed to Tihwatu taels at the rate of one Kashgar tael to three of the latter.

Later we changed Chinese silver into Soviet rubles in which, on account of the spread among all this metal, Soviet rubles in Japanese yen in.

On the first of a pony caravan toward the white Shan, which had by day. Before were spent on the kand gazelle (Gazelle) or desert of stone base of the mountain. A main route in the plains of Kashgar zart Pass, 11,480 feet leads for five miles surface of the Muztagh is more difficult passes whose elevation

BUNDLES OF PAPER MONEY PRESENT PROBLEM

As we had to carry several thousand of these paper taels, caring for this large amount was always a problem. I inquired why the Governor of Sinkiang did not issue notes of larger denomination than one tael, and learned that were it done there would be much counterfeiting. As the penalty for that crime is death, the governor felt that he was saving the lives of many of his people by having but one- tael notes printed, since he thought the incentive not great enough to encourage counterfeiting.



Whilst attending The Tree Festival in Inverleith Park, Edinburgh in the late '90s I encountered the Irish & Scottish Felt Makers in their storytelling yurt reigniting the passion from all those years before and sparking an idea.

In 2000, spurred on by much interest in and requests to borrow the second yurt I built, Red Kite yurts was established from a small workshop on the Hill of Row near Doune, a breeding area for Red Kites, the inspiration for the name.

From a modest lean-to at the house in Row the business moved into larger workshops as it grew. Nathan, my son, helped in the initial set-up of a sew-shop. We now make every part of every yurt we build. Frames, doors, felt linings and all of our covers.

After moving the workshop several times, Red Kite Yurts have, with the help of Birnie and my son Brendan, settled at the Whisky Barrel place, in the Trossachs National Park. One warehouse and show space, a sew-shop and office and adjacent a dedicated workshop for production.



Family in Iskuk Kol

In 2007 I was helped by Stephanie Bunn of Nomadic Felts and the Kyrgyz Embassy in London to establish contact with the Community Based Tourism of Kyrgyzstan. This contact would lead to the first of five trips to Kyrgyzstan (thus far).

In 2010 I spent several weeks there with yurt crafters to make our 40-foot yurt which would be shipped back to Scotland on completion. Though the cover has been upgraded and other parts have been replaced we still use this yurt for hires today.

On my fifth visit to Kyrgyzstan, I met with my daughter and her partner James Birnie who would become a partner in the business just a few years on and invaluable to the team.

We met in a remote village or “yurta”, from the Russian for collective farm. Many traditions associated with the “Boz-Uy”, the trellised tent now commonly the “Yurt”, were dismantled by Russia. Only in recent years since Kyrgyzstan established its independence have these traditions thankfully made a comeback.



Sauna Yurt at Cambusbeg farm

Our yurts have been loved throughout the UK. From Edinburgh Book and Fringe Festivals in Scotland to Aspects festival in Northern Ireland. Private hires in the Outer Hebrides to Music festivals throughout Scotland and to Solfest in Cumbria. We have even exported to Portugal, Norway and Australia.

We are always looking to develop our product, most recently the sauna yurt with a wood fired Finnish Sauna stove. New to our stock is a range of Bedouin tents. Also in the pipeline is a return trip to Kyrgyzstan soon, this time for a 10 day motorbike tour. Follow the adventure on our Instagram page and upcoming blogs.



Uzbek Crowns

Marco the Silk Road Monkey

Intro- with map of Central Asia showing silk routes from Japan to Venice and Vienna

Outlining nomadic trails- Mongolian Gers and Turkmen boy zoy

Origin Iran/Uzbek Kara-kalpak tribes

Herds of sheep, camel, goats and horses.... And reindeer

The making of felt to cover tents

Willow for the framework

Eremus-Foxtail lilies, salvia Turkestanica, rosas, dahlias, cosmos, hollyhock, apples, apricots, walnuts,

Hoopoes, Marco Polo Sheep

More info for teachers- The Yurt Education pack for 5-13 year olds compiled by Prof. Stephanie Bunn.

www.farmgarden.org.uk/publications @£6

Marco the Silk Road Monkey

1

Genghis Khan was advancing on Europe.
He was the Emperor of Central Asia and was amassing great wealth and territory.
His Palaces of Xanadu lay far away in the Peking provinces of Cathay

Genghis Khan had hundreds and thousands of troops
And hundreds and thousands of fine horses
And they all lived in hundreds and thousands of felt trellised tents

Genghis Khan had sent his scouts across the Bosphorus and they had returned with news that there was great wealth within the cities of Europe, from Venice to Paris, Vienna and Rome

That night over looking the great city which divides Persia and Europe, on the eastern bank, the troops were huddled in their tents telling tales of their adventures and their yearning to be again with their flocks of sheep, goat's camels and horses

Suddenly news began to spread about the camp fires that Genghis Khan had taken ill. There was even fear for his life
It was imperative that they should embark on the long journey homeward, to ensure his safety, and to choose a new ruler, should it be necessary.

After day's, weeks and months the mighty army returned GK to his palace, yet within a matter of days, Genghis Khan fell into a deep sleep never to awake again

It was decided that Genghis Khan's son Kublai Khan should be the next ruler and Emperor of Central Asia - inheriting his father's wealth
He was urged by his advisors to pursue his father's dream of invading Europe, to add to his mighty empire, but Kublai Khan refused

His intention was to re-establish the silk routes as a means to encourage trade and to foster the nomadic lifestyle.

2

At that time, there lived a little boy named Giuseppe. Giuseppe lived in Venice. The son of a merchant named Nicolo. Venice was an exciting city for a young boy because it was considered the gateway to the world. Galleons would enter the port each day bringing adventurers from far and wide. There were exciting tales to be heard and precious spices and colourful materials, gold and exotic woods to be unloaded.

News had spread that there were changes in the East. Rumours of a new Emperor, and trade routes were

opening up.

Nicolo had decided that he was to find out for himself. His family and friends tried to warn Nicolo not to go. There were hidden dangers and the journey was long and treacherous. They may never see him again. However Nicolo had made up his mind.

So the day came when Nicolo said farewell to his family and friends and promised Giuseppe a special gift on his return.

Nicolo set sail in his ship arriving in Constantinople to embark on a journey to cross deserts, mountains, lakes and rivers, forests and jungles.

After weeks, months and years he arrived at last, and stood in trepidation at the foot of the steps of the mighty palaces of in Xanadu

To his surprise and delight Nicolo found that Kublai Khan was a hospitable host. The Emperor was intrigued to find out about the West and its cities of wealth and excitement.

They exchanged stories and gifts and spent many months together.

Soon it was time for Nicolo to return. He said goodbye to his host but Kublai Khan had one last gift.

I would like to send you on your way with a special present. One that would entertain you and keep you company on your long journey home.

I would like to give you my favourite monkey, Marco. He comes from the jungles of Cathay and will be a perfect companion.

After much preparation the two travellers embarked on their long journey with a caravan of camels. Marco was full of excitement bobbing to and fro on the humps of the camels. However he was soon to miss his own family and friends and the jungles and its bananas and mangoes and pineapples.

3

Having followed the Great Wall they came to an expansive landscape of desert. The sands stretched into the horizon as far as the eye could see. It was dry and dusty and already Marco began to miss his bananas and mangoes and pineapples. Then as they trudged they saw before them a cloud of dust out of which approached a pack of angry snarling dogs. The vicious dogs encircled them and drew closer and closer. Was this already to be their fate? Their adventure had only just begun and they feared this to be the end. Then over the horizon, out of a billowing dust, approached a group of men on horses. Their teasing beaming faces were a welcome sight. The herdsmen shouted the dogs away and escorted the caravan to a group of dusty domed shaped houses clustered together in the middle of the wilderness. To their surprise inside they were like little palaces. Each supported by a trellis of sticks and rafters through which a chimney passed from a metal stove which stood in the middle of the tent.

This delighted Marco for it reminded him of the jungles back home. He leapt onto the trellis and began to swing from rafter to rafter and dangle from the wheel in the top of the tent.

But when it came to supper time his tail drooped.

All there was to eat was fatty lamb and sour yoghurt from horses' milk no less. When he drank it made his head whirl.

The next day the travellers bid their hosts farewell. However they were warned of more hidden dangers that lay ahead on their journey. They now had to cross a high mountain range. Wild creatures lurked about high in the mountain passes. Woolly creatures with gigantic foot prints....the Abominable Snowman or Yeti.

4

At last they finally arrived in the foot hills. The going was steep and treacherous. In time it began to snow and the further they went the snow became deeper and deeper.

Darkness fell and they still had a long way to reach the top. They had to find shelter or lose their way in the deepening snow. A blizzard howled and they could hardly see before them. The whistling wind and sharp flurries of snow cut their eyes.

At last they approached a great white pillar of rock. Beyond the rock lay a cave. Surely they could seek shelter there. The snow whirled about the great pillar of rock. It seemed to sway to and fro in the wild weather. Suddenly the ground trembled. The great white rock in a flurry whirled around and there standing high above them they saw two great blackened eyes staring down at them.

What could they do? They had come so far up the mountain it was too late to turn back. The fearsome creature stood in their path to the safety of the cave. Suddenly booming sounds grumbled from the creature

...don't be afraid I am a friendly Yeti. Everyone fears me. I am so lonely and welcome you to my cave.

What a surprise. What a relief.

Have you got any Bananas? said Marco.

No but I have a cosy cave with a crackling fire. Come on in and warm yourself.

They ate together and told stories and the Yeti warned them of many more hidden dangers.

Robbers, thieves and bandits, who would find you easy picking in these remote places.

Take great care but tomorrow I will protect you and guide you safely to the other side of the mountain.

True to his word the Yeti escorted Nicolo and Marco. The party arrived at a turn in the pass where the heat of the day increased and Yeti had to turn back. It was getting to hot for him. He had to return to his windswept cave and crevasses of the mountain ranges. They bid farewell and Marco and Nicolo again stood alone waving to the Yeti and watching him disappear.

5

No sooner had rounded the first turn in the stony valley; they were immediately surrounded by a band of thuggish scoundrels...all armed to the teeth. What could they do? Sadly they had no choice, but to hand over all their treasures of silks, spices and exotic sweet smelling woods. The bandits rubbed their grubby hands in glee and took off down the path leaving our friends empty handed.

But no sooner had the bandits turned a large red rock when they too were met by a surprise. There stood before then was our friend the Yeti

AND where do you think you're going

Yeti had not forsaken then.

The ruffians dropped their booty and scattered in all directions stumbling over each other in fear and dread, dislodging rocks and boulders in a cloud of dust.

Phew that was a relief.

Well I don't think you'll have any trouble from them again. Good bye and good luck.

6

Soon the landscape before them widened into a vast plain. It grew hotter and hotter. In the far distance lay a city in the desert. A mighty city shimmering with golden roofs and blue domed mosques and minarets.

As they approached they could hear the wailing from the roof tops and the air was fragrant with spice. A vast flock of white doves flashed into the air as they entered the great Persian city. There was hustle and bustle at every street corner and excitement in the air.

They followed the crowds at last to the great Bazaar

The market was festooned with all kinds of goods.

How exciting, but how hot it was. Marco perked up when something caught his eye. Tables and trestles decorated with brightly coloured carpets and festooned with lanterns of all shapes and sizes

How they glowed. Marco leapt from one lantern to another seeing his face appear and disappear. The lanterns mirrored his face distorting it and making him look very comical.

But one lantern stood out among all the rest. It attracted the monkey more than any of the others. It was quite large but very dull and dusty. Marco approached it and began to rub it with his paw.

No matter how hard he tried Marco could not make the lantern shine. He continued to rub harder and harder and harder and harder until Ouch the lantern burnt his paw.

It began to glow and shimmer, growing hotter and hotter. The lantern glowed, turning blue then red and yellow then white. It shone like a furnace. Marco had to stand back for fear of being burned.

Then in a flash a blue billowing smoke appeared from the spout of the lantern and out of the blue billowing smoke appeared a Genie.

The Genie had a long white beard as white as the sands of Zanzibar.

His blue eyes were as blue as the Mongolian sky

He wore a black turban as black as the inside of a Brown Betty teapot.

Allah be praised for Allah is good. I can offer you three wishes

What is your first wish?

Marco had only one thing in mind

A banana!

Your wish is my command.

Instantly there appeared a bright yellow banana

Allah be praised for Allah is good. What is your second wish?

Now Nicolo was excited and it was his turn to make his wish

But Marco was quickAnother banana.

Your wish is my command

And there appeared a second banana

Allah be praised for Allah is good. What is your third wish?

Choose wisely for Allah will reward you

Nicolo had already thought long and hard and was ready to make his wish

..but Marco was quicker than that he wasted no time and requested athird banana

Your wish is my command and there appeared a third banana

In a flash the genie was enveloped by the blue smoke and the blue smoke disappeared into the lantern. The lantern cooled and became dull and dusty once more.

Nicolo stood over monkey in fury. He scolded him severely saying

How could you waste three wishes on three bananas?

At that Nicolo dragged the monkey from the Bazaar by his ear and sat him down on a carpet.

Nicolo pondered his action and thought

Well perhaps I have been harsh and unfair

Marco after all is missing his bananas, although he now has three, and his mangoes and pineapples, his jungles, his family and friends.

We'll sit here and refresh ourselves.

It was still very hot and our travellers had come a long way. They were weary.

In time they both relaxed, melting into the carpet and drifting off into a deep sleep.

Presently Marco stirred. He rubbed his eyes and a little groggy he got to his feet. The air was cool and refreshing and he walked towards the edge of the carpet.

His was met by a great surprise.

Rushing over to Nicolo he called.

Nicolo, Nicolo wake up, wake up I think we are flying.

Don't be silly you must be dreaming. Go back to sleep.

No, no, Nicolo wake up quickly we ARE flying.

Nicolo rubbed his eyes and got to his unsteady feet.

Sure enough they could both see stretching beyond them in the distance, the city, disappearing into the desert.

The carpet was spiralling higher and higher and speeding them across the desert, over a vast lake, forests and mountains, and following the course of a river

The river opened into a sea. At the sea was a fine city with a mighty harbour.

The carpet began to spiral once more and hovered over a palace.

In the middle of the palace was a courtyard and in the courtyard of the palace was a fountain.

The carpet came to rest on a turquoise marble floor and entering the courtyard stood a richly dressed Sultan.

Welcome to my kingdom. I have brought you here on my magic carpet eager to hear of your adventures for I know you have travelled far and wide.

The Sultan welcomed them in to his palace and there before them was a feast of bananas, mangoes, pineapples, succulent meats on skewers, and the air was filled with perfume.

The Sultan was keen to hear all about their expedition. From the courts of Kublai Khan, the Mongolian herdsmen, the Yeti and their encounter with the thieves. Of course he knew all about the Genie. In fact he strangely bore some resemblance to him. The Sultan was pleased to know that he too would be able to travel the trade route of the Silk Road in safety once more and congratulated our travellers.

In return the Sultan would offer his galleons to help them conclude their journey.

The next day Nicolo and Marco's camels were ushered on to the ships, along with their silks and spices and exotic scented woods. They said farewell and in a matter of days their ships arrived in the port of Venice

There on the quayside, to greet them, was Giuseppe.

He was so pleased to see his father home safely but especially see a new companion in Marco. They were going to have fun together.

Each day Giuseppe and Marco would go down to the port and watch the ships sail in and out.

Marco would clamber the rigging and swing from crow's nest to crow's nest.

However Giuseppe could tell that Marco was not himself. He was becoming sad. Perhaps he was missing his bananas, mangoes and pineapples; his jungles, family and friends.

Giuseppe had an idea.

That very weekend there was to be a wonderful show.

A new kind of transport had been invented to take explorers to new lands much quicker than ever before. It was a hot air balloon festival.

When they arrived on the day, there were balloons of all shapes and sizes. The air was of colour.

Marco thought this was wonderful.

He scurried up and down the ropes that tethered each of the balloons.

He leapt from one basket to the next.

Then a thought came to him.

He had had such a wonderful adventure so far but he really was missing his bananas, mangoes, pineapples, his jungles and friends and family. Perhaps this was his opportunity. He called down to Giuseppe.

Giuseppe we have had such fun together but perhaps this balloon will give me the chance to fly home.

Maybe one day when you grow older you too could take a balloon and we could meet up together once more.

Giuseppe was indeed sad but he could understand his little friend's desire

So they said their farewells and Giuseppe helped to untie the ropes.

Soon the balloons drifted silently into the air.

And perhaps one day our friends did meet up together and begin a new adventure

The End



Paul Millard



James Birnie



Ramin Elham

Visit Us

Our yurt workshop is open for you to come and see us anytime. Just give us a ring or drop us an email to arrange a viewing and a chat.



Keltie Bridge Workshops, Callander,
FK17 8LQ 07708 302 808

www.redkiteyurts.com paul@redkiteyurts.com

Useful Contacts

West Moss-side Farm
Inshriach House

The Wee Tulloch Lodge, Balquidder

Further information:

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Nomad Tents and Court Tents in the Middle East and Central Asia

Felt Tents and Pavilions. – Dr. Peter Alford Andrews

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Paul Millard, Red Kite Yurts