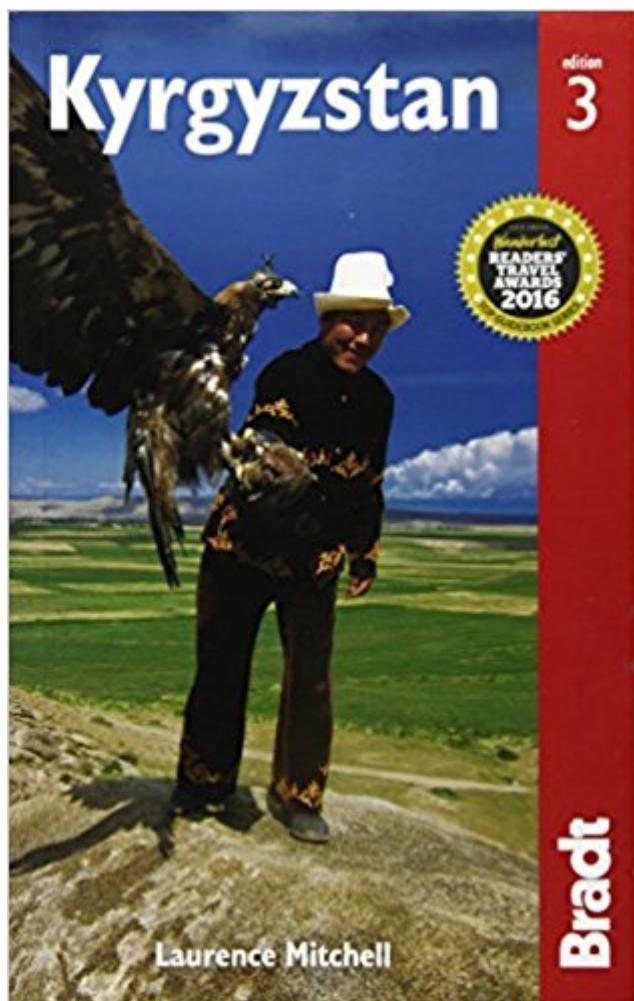


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# Kyrgyzstan (Bradt Travel Guide)



## Synopsis

One of the most beautiful countries in the world, Kyrgyzstan has it all: glorious mountain scenery, a rich nomadic tradition, Silk Road monuments and thrilling wildlife. Author and seasoned traveler Laurence Mitchell is an expert in the country and in this fully updated edition details all the services and experiences on offer, including trekking, mountaineering, horse riding, historical sites, festivals and Kyrgyz culture. Of all the Central Asian ex-Soviet states, Kyrgyzstan is widely considered to be the least expensive and offer the best value for money. It is also by far the easiest to enter as visas are no longer required for most passport holders.

## Book Information

Series: Bradt Travel Guide

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Bradt Travel Guides; 3rd Edition edition (April 7, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1841628565

ISBN-13: 978-1841628561

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 8.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.1 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #407,582 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #165 in Books > Travel > Asia > India > General #346 in Books > Travel > Asia > General

## Customer Reviews

'Bradt Guides are expertly written and longer on local detail than any others.' Michael Palin 'Utterly essential...particularly the dos and don'ts and basic phrases.' James Willsher, Times of Central Asia  
--This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Laurence Mitchell is a freelance travel writer and photographer who has travelled widely in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus region, Central Asia and the ex-Soviet world. He has been interested in Kyrgyzstan and Kyrgyz culture since his first contact with Kyrgyz nomads at a yurt in northwestern China whilst en route to Pakistan.

The reader should be aware that this review is premature since the writer has not yet made his own journey to Kyrgyzstan. But the guide strikes me as having an extra large dose of information about a

small country. The Index is excellent. Any topic that popped into my head was easily located. For example, there is a nice discussion on the availability of ATMs and credit card acceptance (Take a lot of cash in \$50s and \$100s to be on the safe side and make sure they are crisp--money exchangers do not appreciate worn and floppy bills. I ran into that situation in Ukraine--there too they like the currency "right off the drying line.") The first chapter "Background Information" begins with geography and continues with thorough discussions of natural history, history of the peoples, the wars, the politics, and concludes with an extensive section of the various cultures. The second chapter deals with information you will need as a traveler in Kyrgyzstan. Most of guide's remainder uses an geographic area approach with detailed descriptions of where to stay and eat, and what to do. The author points out that the country is poor and in transition as it deals with economic problems and poverty. But he clearly believes that such does not justify avoiding traveling there. Evidently, the environment is spectacular and people friendly. I may change my mind about this guide during my trip but I definitely will start it clutching this book on my way.

Well this book covers everything I wanted to know and then some. I am going to Kyrgyzstan in Sept. and was wondering what to expect. Wow, I learned a lot from this book. Guess some things I didn't want to know also., Don't think I can eat their favorite food "horsemeat sausages" though. Otherwise, will be a super medical mission.

We're planning a trip to Kyrgyzstan next July, and I've found this guide the single best book for trip planning. The Lonely Planet combines Kyrgyzstan with the other Stans into a "Central Asia" volume, and thus dilutes its coverage of Kyrgyzstan. The Cadogan guide is severely dated, all the way back to the immediate post Communist period. Mitchell's guide, on the other hand, has useful, no nonsense advice. We've found this guide useful in building our itinerary, because there's enough detail to help you decide where you want to go and what you want to see, without having to flip past lists of every last youth hostel that you never intend to stay in anyway.

Also the only one.I spent 7 months living and working in Bishkek and the information in the guide was accurate and helpful. The section of UFO's was also interested.

For someone wanting an up to date travel guide to Kyrgyzstan in English, there are not too many choices. It basically comes down to theÂ ª Lonely Planet Central AsiaÂ ª or this Bradt travel guide written by Laurence Mitchell. I did a journey through Kyrgyzstan last summer with the LP, but I

recently checked out the Bradt guide to see how it might compare. I found that it can indeed be useful, but it seems directed at a specific demographic. In his travel guidance, Mitchell writes for an older crowd, who might be willing to spend money on tours and taxis instead of immersing themselves in local poverty. While the guide portion itself is less than ideal for the type of traveler that I am--as well as everyone else I know who goes to Kyrgyzstan--the historical and cultural background of the Bradt is quite informative. However, I prefer LP's maps to here. The advertisements sprinkled in the Bradt guide also irked me. I wasn't happy with Bradt's typesetting. Somehow too much space on the page is wasted, producing a book much larger than it ought to be and thus less convenient to travel with. If you are a budget traveler who needs basic info and hitchhiking tips, but are willing to discover the details of each place as you travel through them, AND you speak Russian, probably the most economical resource to get is the SREDNAJA ASIJA guide by Anton Krotov and the Academy of Free Travel (Akademija Volnyx Puteshestvij). You can get that through Krotov and the AVP themselves or in select Moscow and Kyiv bookstores. Otherwise, if you don't speak Russian, then get the LP. But if you are an older person desiring comfort and traveling with loads of cash, the Bradt might be just what you need.

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