

SEPTEMBER 5 - 8 (2026)



The First Mongolian Instruments Building Retreat

Winkelsett, Germany



Be among the first outside Mongolia to craft traditional instruments such as the Tsuur, Tovshuur, and Ikel Khuur, guided by master instrument maker and throat singer Baatarsuren.

An unforgettable Craft and Music Retreat. Build Traditional Mongolian Instruments.

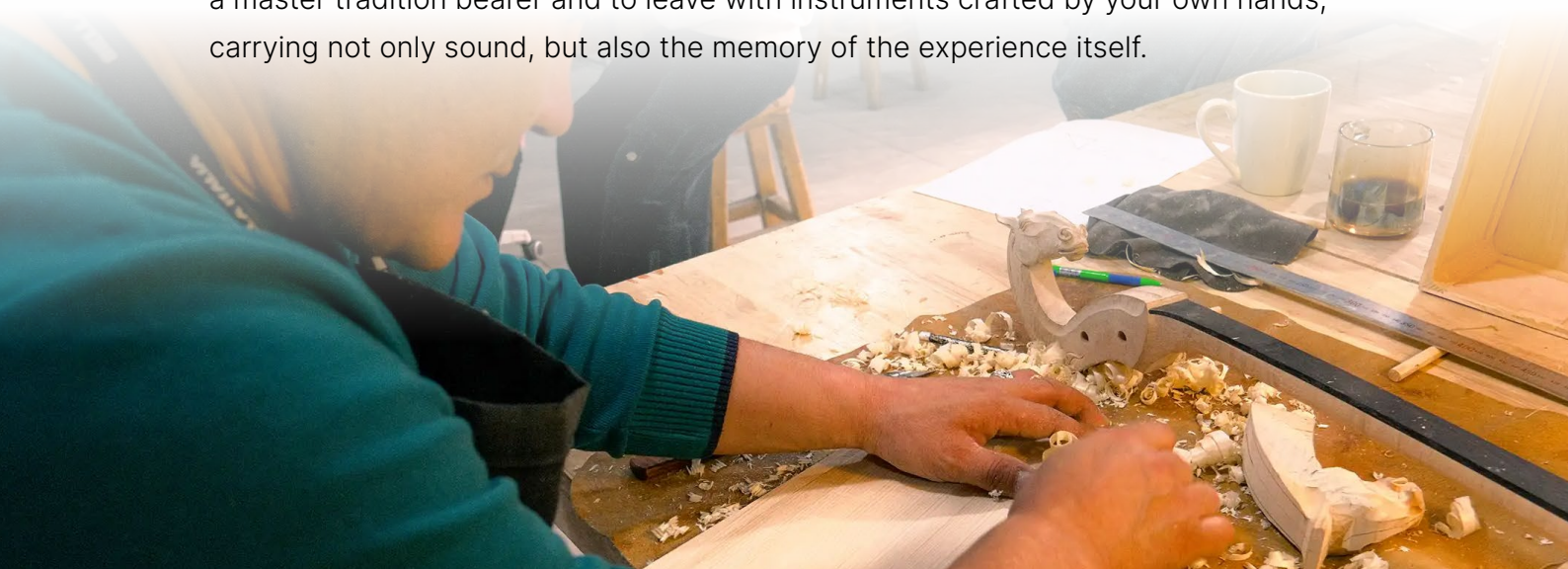
Step into a unique cultural journey at Rolandshof, an inspiring artist-run retreat space surrounded by forests, hills, and the peaceful countryside of Germany. A place dedicated to creativity, craftsmanship, and slowing down from everyday life: the perfect setting to immerse yourself in the traditional instrument-making traditions of Western Mongolia.

For 4 days, Altai invites you into the world of the Tsuur, Tovshuur, and Ikel Khuur: three rare musical treasures deeply connected to the nomadic culture of Mongolia. Under the guidance of master throat singer and instrument maker Baatarsuren, participants will not only discover the stories and traditions behind these instruments, but also learn to craft them by hand using traditional methods and materials.

Throughout the retreat, workshops flow naturally between focused craftsmanship, shared meals, music, and moments of rest. As the instruments gradually take shape, participants gain insight into the deep relationship between Mongolian music, nature, and craftsmanship. Alongside the building process, there is space for demonstrations, informal music sessions, and evenings filled with conversation and inspiration.

The retreat takes place in the warm and creative atmosphere of Rolandshof: a space known for sculpture, art, and immersive workshops. Surrounded by nature and creative energy, it offers the ideal environment to fully focus on the slow and meditative process of instrument making.

This retreat is more than a workshop: it is a rare opportunity to learn directly from a master tradition bearer and to leave with instruments crafted by your own hands, carrying not only sound, but also the memory of the experience itself.



**Meet
the team**

Please meet the team.



Rowan Hartsuiker

Musician, teacher, and co-founder of Altai. For over twenty years, Rowan has immersed himself in Mongolian throat singing (“Khuumei”), overtone singing, and traditional instruments such as the Morin Khuur, Tovshuur, Altai Harp, and jaw harp. His music bridges tradition and experience, touching people at their core.

Together with his wife Saran, he shares a passion for cultural exchange through their concept “Altai.” During retreats and workshops, Rowan brings these musical traditions to life in an accessible and personal way.

Saran Myagmarsuren-Hartsuiker

Co-founder of Altai and born in Mongolia, where she grew up in a traditional yurt on the countryside. Saran embodies her culture – and you feel it in the hospitality, the atmosphere, and the care with which she embraces every retreat and workshop. Her love for cooking and culture makes each experience truly special.

Together with Rowan, she is the heart of Altai: warm, connected, and genuine. She invites you to taste the Mongolian tradition – in every sense of the word.





Baatarsuren Chadraabal

Baatarsuren Chadraabal is a master throat singer, traditional musician, and instrument maker from Khovd, Western Mongolia: a region deeply connected to Mongolian throat singing and nomadic musical traditions.

Alongside his mastery of khöömii (throat singing), he specializes in crafting traditional instruments such as the Tsuur, Tovshuur, Ikel Khuur, Morin Khuur, and traditional drums. His work combines deep musical knowledge with generations of craftsmanship, making him one of the rare artists who both performs and handcrafts the instruments of Mongolia's nomadic culture. Through concerts, workshops, and cultural collaborations, Baatarsuren shares the rich musical heritage of Western Mongolia with audiences around the world.

Khulan Navaandemberel

Khulan supports Saran in preparing the meals and helps create a warm, welcoming atmosphere – true to the Mongolian tradition where guests are received as family.

In addition, Khulan is a talented Morin Khuur player and harpist. She performs with various ensembles, often alongside her husband Yesun, and brings an extra layer of depth and beauty to the retreats through her music.



**Location
of the retreat**

The location of the retreat



Rolandshof

Our retreat takes place at Rolandshof – Skulptur-Graphik: an artist-run creative space in Winkelsett, Germany.

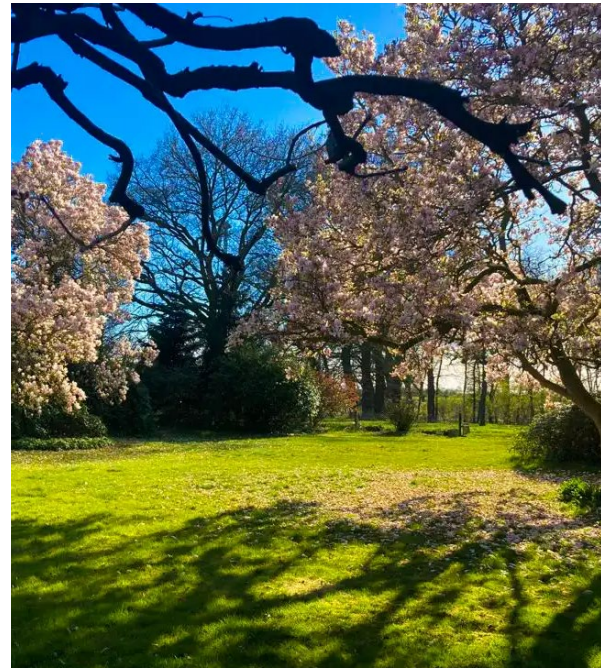
Surrounded by forest and open land, Rolandshof offers an immersive and inspiring environment to learn, create, and focus. The property includes a sculpture garden and studio spaces, where hands-on artistic work is central to the philosophy of the space.

Here, you'll experience a rare combination of craft, art, and personal development, perfectly aligned with the retreat's goals: making your own Mongolian instruments while being guided into a state of creative flow.

Garden / surroundings

The expansive grounds of Rolandshof provide a peaceful and inspiring setting for relaxation, creativity, and connection. Meander through the sculpture garden, find a quiet spot among the trees, or gather at one of the outdoor seating areas or large tables for conversation and reflection.

For those who want to move, play, or simply enjoy the outdoors, there is plenty of open space to stretch, practice music, or explore the surrounding paths.



Feel the Vibe



**Day to day
program**

Day-to-day Program.

Day 1 - Saturday, September 5

Participants are expected to arrive around 12:00 and before 14:00

After settling in and meeting the group, the workshops begin at 14:00 with an introduction to the Tsur, Tovshuur, and Ikel Khuur. During the first afternoon, participants begin cutting, carving, gluing, and binding the first wooden parts of the instruments while learning about the traditional materials and techniques behind them.

18:00 – Shared dinner

19:00 – Evening workshop

The evening session focuses on hollowing out the Tsur flute, shaping the necks of the Tovshuur and Ikel Khuur, and preparing and soaking the animal skins that will later give the instruments their distinctive sound.

Day 2 - Sunday, September 6

08:00 – Breakfast

09:30 – Workshop begins

The second day continues with shaping and refining the instruments by hand. Participants work on carving necks, stretching and applying skins, refining the wooden bodies, and gradually bringing the instruments into form.

13:00 – Lunch

14:00 – Afternoon workshop

The Tovshuur receives its skin covering while tuning pegs are carved and the necks and soundboxes are carefully sanded and polished.

18:00 – Shared dinner

19:00 – Evening workshop

The Tsur flute is further shaped, sanded, polished, and prepared for creating the holes. The evening continues with detailed finishing work on the Tovshuur and Ikel Khuur.

Day 3 - Monday, September 7

08:00 – Breakfast

09:30 – Workshop begins

This day focuses on the finer details of the instruments. Participants carve bridges and tuning pegs, refine surfaces, and continue shaping and finishing the Ikel Khuur.

13:00 – Lunch

14:00 – Afternoon workshop

The Tovshuur receives fine sanding and coloring, while the Ikel Khuur body and neck are carefully fitted together. The Tsuur flute is polished and finished.

18:00 – Shared dinner

19:00 – Evening workshop

The Tsuur is prepared for its first sounds, while the Tovshuur receives strings and bridge adjustments. The Ikel Khuur is colored, polished, and refined further by hand.

Day 4 - Tuesday, September 8

08:00 – Breakfast

09:30 – Workshop begins

On the final day, all instruments are brought into their playable form. Participants finish tuning the Tsuur, stringing the Tovshuur, and preparing the Ikel Khuur with its strings, bridge, and final adjustments.

14:00 – Final adjustments & shared music session

Together, participants explore the first sounds and melodies on their newly crafted Tsuur, Tovshuur, and Ikel Khuur: celebrating the instruments, the process, and the shared experience of creating them by hand.

Note on program: This schedule serves as a general guideline and may naturally evolve depending on group dynamics, individual working pace, creative flow, and the instrument-making process itself. No previous woodworking experience is required. Some participants may work faster than others, and that is completely natural. We will guide and support everyone individually throughout the retreat to help each participant complete and enjoy the process as much as possible.

Note on materials: The wood used during the retreat is carefully selected and dried in Mongolia and imported specifically for this workshop. To accommodate international transport and our limited four-day schedule, some components are roughly prepared beforehand. Participants will nevertheless perform all major stages of the building process themselves, including carving, hollowing, shaping, sanding, assembling, and finishing the instruments.

Pricing and Information

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Single Room (Private Room): Small bedroom with a single bed: €1,300 per person

Double Room: Each with a double bed, can be booked for one or two persons: €1,300 for one person in a double bed. 50% off for the second person if sharing (ideal for couples!)

Room with 2 Double Beds: Can accommodate up to 4 participants: €1,100 per person. 50% off for the second person if sharing a bed (ideal for couples!).

Smith Wagon: Unique “forge on wheels,” equipped with a bed and heater: €1000 per person (single occupancy only)

Camping Option: Bring your own camper, rooftop tent, or regular tent and stay on-site during the retreat. Campers and rooftop tents can use the parking area next to the garden, while tent campers are welcome to choose a spot in the spacious garden. Shared toilet and shower facilities are available on-site for campers: €1000 per person (50% off for the second person)

Note: Discounts for shared beds are designed to encourage couples booking together and make the best use of our double-bed rooms.

The above price includes:

- 4 days (3 nights) accommodation at Rolandshof
- 3 meals per day (freshly prepared, vegetarian)
- Fruit, snacks, coffee, tea, and drinks
- Daily hands-on workshops in instrument building
- All materials and tools needed to build your instruments
- Personal guidance throughout the full building process
- Lesson materials and instructions
- Time to explore the sculpture garden and surrounding nature
- Evening gatherings, music sessions, and shared experiences

Interested and ready to sign up?

You can easily purchase your ticket via our website: www.altairetreats.com

Practical info and Terms

Registration: To register, simply purchase your ticket through our website: altairetreats.com

Cancellation: You may cancel your participation free of charge up to 8 weeks before the retreat. If you cancel within 8 weeks before the retreat starts, we can only refund your payment if we are able to fill your spot with another participant.

Cancellation by Altai: We reserve the right to cancel the retreat if there are insufficient participants or in unforeseen circumstances. In such cases, all payments made to Altai will be fully refunded.

In the case of force majeure (such as natural disasters, travel restrictions, illness, political situations, or other circumstances beyond our control), we are not obliged to issue refunds. However, we will always do our best to find a fair and reasonable solution together, such as rescheduling or offering credit for a future retreat.

Altai is not responsible for additional costs such as flights, travel arrangements, insurance, or other external bookings.

Included in the Price:

- 4 days / 3 nights accommodation
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner throughout the retreat
- Coffee, tea, fruit, snacks, and drinks
- All instrument-building workshops and guidance
- Materials for building the Tsuur, Tovshuur, and Ikel Khuur
- Use of tools and workshop equipment
- Shared music sessions and cultural activities

Participants:

- The retreat will proceed with a minimum number of participants
- Maximum group size is intentionally kept small to maintain a personal and supportive atmosphere

Experience Level: No previous woodworking or musical experience is required. Participants of all levels are welcome. Some people may work faster than others, which is completely natural. We will guide and support everyone individually throughout the retreat process.

Language: The retreat will mainly be conducted in Mongolian and English, with translation support where needed of course!

Accommodation: Please note that accommodation is simple and shared in nature. Bathrooms and toilets are shared between participants. Together, we create a respectful, warm, and supportive environment throughout the retreat.

Insurance & Safety: Because this retreat includes practical instrument-building activities involving woodworking tools and workshop equipment, participants are required to have valid health insurance covering their stay in Germany. We also strongly recommend travel and cancellation insurance. [Please see the next page for important safety and insurance information.](#)

Flexibility: The schedule and workshop flow may slightly change depending on group dynamics, individual working pace, weather conditions, creative flow, and the instrument-making process itself.

Are the instruments completely made from scratch during the retreat?: To ensure authenticity and the best possible sound quality, we bring carefully selected and properly dried wood directly from Mongolia. The wood species and materials used reflect traditional instrument-making practices from Western Mongolia.

Because these materials must be transported internationally and the retreat takes place within just four days, certain components are roughly prepared in advance. Some pieces are roughly cut to size, and parts such as the soundboxes are partially hollowed out to reduce transport weight and allow us to focus our limited time on the most meaningful stages of the craft.

These preparations are intentionally minimal and do not reduce the hands-on nature of the retreat. Our goal is to show you as much of the traditional building process as possible within four days, while ensuring that every participant can successfully complete three instruments.

You will still carry out the vast majority of the craftsmanship yourself: cutting, sawing, carving, chiseling, shaping, sanding, assembling, finishing, stringing, and tuning each instrument by hand. Every instrument remains a unique, personal creation, completed by its owner under the guidance of master instrument maker Baatarsuren.

Think of the prepared materials as traditional luthier blanks rather than finished parts: the essential craftsmanship and creative process remain entirely in your hands.

Insurance and Safety

Instrument making involves the use of woodworking tools, including chisels, carving knives, saws, drills, sanding equipment, and other workshop tools. Some larger machines may be used during the retreat under the direct supervision of experienced instructors only.

The safety of participants is very important to us. We do not expect accidents to occur, but as with any hands-on woodworking activity, there is always a degree of risk involved.

For this reason, all participants are required to have valid health insurance covering medical treatment in Germany. We also strongly recommend personal accident insurance and travel insurance.

Upon arrival, participants will be asked to sign a workshop participation and safety agreement confirming that they understand the nature of the activities, will follow all safety instructions, and participate at their own risk. See example of that agreement below.

Participants who choose not to arrange appropriate insurance remain fully responsible for any medical costs, losses, or claims arising from their participation.

Participant Safety Declaration

(to be signed upon arrival at the location)

I acknowledge that this retreat involves practical woodworking activities using hand tools and workshop equipment.

I confirm that:

- I understand the nature of the activities offered during this retreat and choose to participate in them
- I will follow all safety instructions given by the organizers and instructors
- I understand that woodworking activities involve inherent risks, including the risk of injury
- I confirm that I have valid health insurance covering medical treatment during my stay in Germany
- I understand that participation is at my own risk.
- I accept responsibility for any injury, loss, or damage resulting from my failure to follow safety instructions or from risks inherent to the activities.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____