

Itinerary & Inclusions

19 days Vladivostok to St Petersburg *Inclusive*



Destination	Vladivostok to St. Petersburg (Year-Round)
Travel Dates	19 Days - Starts Wed, Fri, Sun from Vladivostok



Vladivostok ("Ruler-Of-The-East") was historically Russia's principle Pacific-Coast port. Before the days of the Trans-Sib, there was almost no communication between the European and Asian ends of Russia, and the only transportation was by ship through the Arctic in summer. Vladivostok is a small but charming city with a slightly non-Russian atmosphere – the "sea-side" location, pleasant climate, and proximity to Japan and Korea lend it a cheerfully cosmopolitan character. It is, however, a small town, and sightseeing is fairly limited. Nightlife and eating-out is not, though – the city prefers its pleasures in large portions!

Airport to Hotel

Arrive Vladivostok

On arrival at Vladivostok Airport a local representative will be waiting for you on the platform. Private car transfer to your accommodation.

Primorye Hotel



1 x Standard Room with breakfast, includes late check out

Check In: Day 1
Check Out: Day 2

Day 2

Vladivostok City Tour

Walking - 3 hours

Start: 10:00am



You will be met in the hotel reception by your English speaking guide. Enjoy a 3 hour guided city tour. Highlights include Vladivostok Railway Station, Central Square, Svetlanskaya Street, Eagles Nest Mount lookout and entrance to the c-56 Submarine Museum.

**Please make your own way to Vladivostok Station for your departure train.
Walking directions enclosed.**



Vladivostok to Irkutsk - Rossiya Train, 2 or 4 berth

Departure: Day 2 @ 7:10pm

Arrival: Day 5 @ 3:51pm

Day 5

Listvyanka

Irkutsk Station to Listvyanka

Irkutsk Station to Listvyanka

On arrival at Irkutsk Railway Station a local representative will be waiting for you on the platform. Shared vehicle transfer to your accommodation in Listvyanka village on the shores of Lake Baikal.



Baikal is the world's largest stretch of fresh water, and the largest lake on the planet. Formed by plate tectonic movements of the earth's molten crust, it's a unique environment where species long extinct elsewhere have their strange existence. Baikal has the only freshwater seals in the world – nerpa nerpa – stranded here thousands of miles from the sea. Still odder is the strange golomka, which lives at such depths – Baikal is the world's deepest lake, over a mile to the bottom – that it explodes due to pressure-change if netted and dragged to the surface. Some of the animals, fish, algae and plants found in Lake Baikal are unique – and as you gaze over this vast expanse of water you sense it may contain much more than has so far been discovered. Lake Baikal was the biggest problem that faced the Trans-Siberian Railway builders – its huge size (40 miles across) lay directly in the path of the railroad. Their first solution was a steamer accommodating the entire train, and ferrying it safely to the other side – but winter temperatures forced them to lay tracks directly over the pack-ice when the Lake wasn't navigable. Having lost several locos through holes in the ice (there are a few warm springs down there..) the Circum-Baikal Line was built.

Baikal Chalet

1 x Twin with breakfast



Check In: Day 5

Check Out: Day 7

Listvyanka & Lake Baikal

By Car - 8 Hours



You will be met at your accommodation by an English-speaking guide. Transfer by private car to Listvyanka. Enjoy a guided visit of the village including tour of Limnological (Lake Baikal) Museum. Listvyanka is a small village about 1 hours drive from Irkutsk on the edge of Lake Baikal. The town is composed of wooden cabins, churches, hotels and market stalls. The Baikal Limnological Museum is ideal for those wishing to explore the wonders of Lake Baikal. All exhibits are dedicated to the origin and the history of the lake, its flora and fauna, geological structure, climate and tectonics of Pribaikalye. Stuffed birds and animals. Collection of minerals. Models of the lake bed showing its history, the peculiarities of its shoreline and bottom. Since 2004 a living exhibition started at the museum in 11 aquariums. St. Nikolay Church is both longstanding and gorgeous, making it a must-see for any visitor. When it's time to eat, visitors can try the local and deliciously prepared fish called omul.

Listvyanka to Irkutsk

via Wooden Architecture Museum



Private car transfer to Irkutsk, via Wooden Architecture Museum. You will be met in the hotel reception, pick up time will be reconfirmed locally. Private car transfer from Listvyanka to Irkutsk with a visit to the Taltsy Wooden Museum en route. Guide services & entrance fee included. Open air Wooden Architecture Museum in Taltsy is located in a picturesque forest on the bank of the river Angara. This museum is an open-air museum that has a large collection of original wooden houses equipped with old-style furniture and domestic utensils, and “wooden tents” belonging to the various ethnic groups which inhabited this region. They were brought from several local villages. The museum conveys the lifestyle of 16th – 19th century Russia. Here you can learn about the various aspects of village life, see the interiors of a Russian fort and a 15th century watchtower, as well as glimpse at the lifestyle of the Buryat and Evenk people and see a Shaman yurt and other interesting objects.



The ‘Paris of Siberia’, For most visitors, Irkutsk is principally the gateway to nearby Lake Baikal. However, its charming streets with old wooden houses suggest an era when the journey here was not cosy nights in the starched sheets of a sleeper-wagon – but over a month of frost-bitten misery, desperate conditions, and nights in flea-bitten roadside taverns... and Irkutsk the welcoming comfort of a substantial city after the hideous journey.

Victoria Hotel



1 x Standard Room with breakfast

Check In: Day 7
Check Out: Day 8

Day 8

City Tour by Car



Irkutsk - 3 Hours

Start: 12:00pm

You will be met in the hotel reception by your English speaking guide. Enjoy a 3 hour guided city tour by car. Highlights include the Orthodox church, Polish Cathedral, some Siberian wooden houses, the Yuri Garagin Memorial, the Lenin Memorial, the Znamensky Monastery and entrance with guided tour of the Decembrists Museum. Entries included. At the conclusion of your tour transfer to station for departure.



Irkutsk to Ekaterinburg - Train, 4 berth share or buy out

Departure: Day 8 @ 5:00pm

Arrival: Day 10 @ 10:05pm

Day 10

Ekaterinburg



Including Ekaterinburg in a holiday itinerary would have been an impossibility in the not too distant past – hidden away in the heart of the Urals, it has been the backdrop for things which Russia wanted to keep quiet – including some very dark moments in Russia's history. Now of course you can travel there by train, and discover this fascinating city on your great Russian adventure.

Station to Hotel

Arrive Ekaterinburg

On arrival at Ekaterinburg Railway Station a local representative will be waiting for you on the platform. Private car transfer to your centrally located hotel.

Chekhov Hotel



1 x Standard room with breakfast, Double

Check In: Day 10

Check Out: Day 13

Day 11

Ekaterinburg

City Tour of Ekaterinburg

Walking - 3 hours



You will be met in the hotel reception by an English-speaking guide. Enjoy a guided walking tour of Ekaterinburg. On this tour your guide will lead you through the historical center of the city. You will see statues of Ekaterinburg's founders and communist leaders, and the guide will tell you some local stories, legends and jokes, related to them. On the 1905 Revolution square you will view all the history of the city on the ancient pictures shown by our guide. There will be an opportunity to visit splendid Church of Spilled Blood at the Romanovs' Death Site and the Chapel of St. Elizabeth. You will observe beautiful views of Ekaterinburg and the City Pond from an embankment and from the Hill of Ascension. The sorrowful Afghanistan memorial at the Square of Red Army, gorgeous villas of Urals "gold merchants" of 19th century and monumental buildings in "Stalin's neoclassicism" style are to survey, too.

Day 12

Ekaterinburg

Europe / Asia border & Museum of Arms

By Car - 4 hours



You will be met in the hotel reception. Travel by private car with English speaking guide, duration 4 hours. The Ural Mountains are regarded as the border between Europe and Asia. To the west of the Urals lies European Russia, the cradle of the Russian culture. To the east lies the vast land of Siberia. On the way to the border-line you will see "The Memorial of Victims of GULAG" and make a short stop there. Just a few minutes drive and you reach The Main Obelisk "Between Europe & Asia". You cross the borderline... and get a special certificate with glass of sparkling wine! Then, after 30 min drive you will visit the biggest in Russia private collection of Arms in town V. Pyshma (Soviet and Russian tanks, cannons, aircrafts, helicopters and other vehicles). Return to your Ekaterinburg hotel.

Day 13

Hotel to Station

Depart Ekaterinburg

You will be met in the hotel reception by a local representative and transferred by private car to Ekaterinburg Railway Station for your departing train.



Ekaterinburg to Moscow - Overnight Train, 2 or 4 berth

Departure: Day 13 @ 10:12am

Arrival: Day 14 @ 9:23am

Day 14

Moscow



Moscow took over the role of Russia's capital when the Mongols razed Kiev to the ground in the Middle Ages... its famous gold onion-domes have the image of Russia you'll barely find in St Petersburg. Much of Moscow still bears witness to those early days. The Kremlin is a huge 15th-century citadel built when marauding Mongolian troops were still a real menace. Its enormous fortified walls guard the ancient Kremlin Cathedrals within, once the centrepiece of the Russian Orthodox Church – and now once again restored to religious use. The colossal Treasure of the Russian Tsars is now on view within the Kremlin too, securely displayed in the former Armoury Chamber. Muscovites are addicted to pleasure, and the city overflows with stupendous restaurants, bars, clubs, & coffee-shops. Winter was always the holiday-time in Russia (too cold to work outdoors on building or farming) and with that came theatres – Russians love a show, and the Bolshoi Theatre is world famous (opera & ballet, on their "No 2" stage whilst the main theatre's being rebuilt). Come in winter to see Russians at play (theatres shut in summer here!), or in summer take a stroll in the Botanical Gardens? Muscovites love to party, and the wild nightclubs or chic bars open until very late, year-round.

Station to Hotel

Arrive Moscow

On arrival at Moscow Railway Station a local representative will be waiting for you on the platform. Private car transfer to your centrally located hotel.

Walking Tour

Moscow - 3 hours

Start: 11:00am



You will be met in the hotel reception by your English-speaking guide. Enjoy a 3-hour guided walk around the city centre. Highlights include Red Square, Gum Department Store and the Bolshoi Theatre. Entrance fees payable direct.

Assambleya Nikitskaya Hotel

1 x Standard with breakfast



Check In: Day 14

Check Out: Day 16

Day 15

Moscow

Kremlin and Armoury

Kremlin and Armoury Tour

Start: 10:00am



You will be met in the hotel reception by your guide. Enjoy a 3-hour guided walking excursion to the Moscow Kremlin and Armoury. The Moscow Kremlin is a self-contained city with a multitude of palaces, armouries, and churches. Though its name instantly sparks images of formidable walls, glistening onion domes, and cloistered rulers of eras past, the word "Kremlin" simply means "fortified town". State regalia, invaluable icons, and treasures of Russian tsars are all stored in the Kremlin chambers and cathedrals. During the guided walking tour, you will have an opportunity to enjoy the historical monuments, such as the Great Kremlin Palace and the Arsenal building, see the trophy weapons of the war of 1812 and admire the cathedrals on the territory of the Kremlin. You will also enjoy the Tsar Bell that never rang and the Tsar Cannon that was never fired. You will also visit the Armoury Museum. Its collections represent wealth of Russian tsars accumulated throughout the centuries. It contains such exhibits as the chalice of Yuri Dolgorukiy, the helm and armour of Boris Godunov, collection of over fifty Faberge eggs, golden and silver works of applied art by Russian, European and Oriental masters, invaluable weapons and other works made of precious metals and stones.

Hotel to Station

Depart Moscow

You will be met in the hotel reception by a local representative and transferred by private car to Moscow Railway Station for your departing train.



Moscow to St Petersburg - Sapsan Train, Economy Seat

Departure: Day 16 @ 9:40am

Arrival: Day 16 @ 1:32pm



Capital of Russia at the height of its Imperial era (1723-1918), St Petersburg is a dazzling mixture of baroque, rococo, classical and belle-epoque buildings created by Europe's leading architects of the day. Nevsky Prospekt is the city's main Parisian-style avenue, and radiating from it are grand boulevards and canal embankments lined with the former palaces of Russia's aristocracy. These days Nevsky is lined with world-name shops, alongside eateries priced from serf through to Grand-Duke... plus java-joints, internet cafes, museums, churches, theatres and more.

Station to Hotel

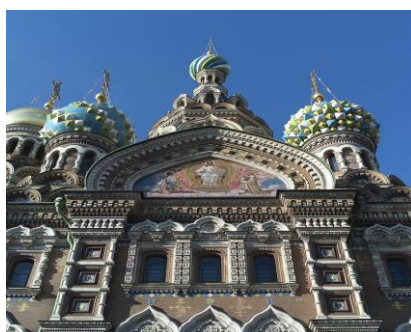
Arrive St Petersburg

On arrival at St Petersburg Railway Station a local representative will be waiting for you on the platform. Private car transfer to your centrally located hotel.

Walking tour

St Petersburg - 3 Hours

Start: 3:00pm



You will be met in the hotel reception by your English-speaking guide. Enjoy a 3-hour guided walk around the city centre. Highlights include Palace Square, Savior of the Spilled Blood, Mikhailovsky Gardens, Nevsky Prospekt, St Isaac's Cathedral and Kazan Cathedral.

Comfort Hotel



1 x Superior room with breakfast

Check In: Day 16

Check Out: Day 19

Day 17

St. Petersburg

Excursion to Hermitage Museum

Walking - 4 hours

Start: 10:00am



Meet your English-speaking guide at the base of Alexander Column in the heart of Palace Square. Your guide will have the Hermitage Museum tickets already purchased. Enjoy a 4-hour guided tour of the Hermitage Museum complex. The largest museum collection in the world is spread throughout four buildings. The overwhelming richness of the museum is all the more enhanced by the incredible splendor of the buildings, inside and out: ornate and regal facades, huge frescoed halls; marble, wood and mosaic floors; and statuettes, figurines, and antique furniture all on such a grand scale that it fascinates the mind. The Hermitage houses a tremendous collection of Western European art, including such masters as Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael. Its collection of Spanish art may be compared only with that in Prado Museum in Madrid; the collection of French art is the largest outside France, displaying works by Degas, Renoir, Cezanne, Monet, Van Gogh, Goguen and Matisse. Open 10:30 - 17:30, closed Mondays

Day 18

St. Petersburg

Excursion to Peterhof Palace

By Hydrofoil - 4 hours

Start: 10:00am



Enjoy a 4 hour guided walking excursion to Peterhof, the Bolshoi Palace and the park by hydrofoil. Entrance fees included. You will be met in the hotel reception by your English speaking guide. Take a short stroll to the hydrofoil terminal where you guide will purchase the tickets for the 30 minute journey to the Palace complex. Arrive and walk along the canal to view the spectacular fountains and palace facade. Early entrance for your tour has been pre-booked. Enjoy a guided tour of the palace then some time to explore the gardens before your return hydrofoil to the city. Peterhof is the most famous summer residence of Russian emperors. It is located 25 km west on the Gulf of Finland. Its history begins in 1704 when Peter I built a wooden house on the Gulf. In 1723 the enlarged palace became official summer residence, later it was expanded by Empress Elizabeth and called Grand Summer Palace. The architectural ensemble of Peterhof includes Upper and Lower Parks with more than 170 fountains and 4 cascades as well as

several smaller palaces. These are Monplaisir palace with adjoining Catherine's Wing, Assembly Building with Imperial Bathrooms and Kitchen, the Hermitage Pavilion and Chateau de Marly, on the western edge of the park. The system of fountains was built in 1722. The intricate system of pipes stretches for nearly 22 km. The water flows downhill by force of gravity while the fountains operate according to the principle of communicating vessels. In both artistry and engineering the fountains of Peterhof are truly unique. Open 10:30 - 18:00. Grand Summer Palace is closed on Mondays and last Tuesday of the month.

Day 19

Please make your own way to airport for departure flight.