



## spotlight

### what you see

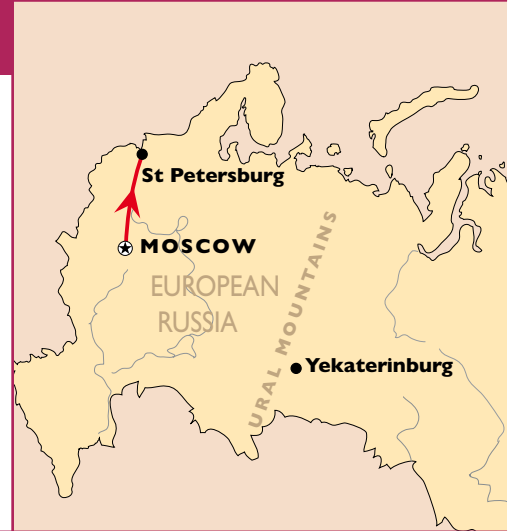
- St Petersburg -
- St Isaacs Cathedral
- Church on Spilled Blood
- Peter and Paul Fortress
- The Winter Palace
- Nevsky Prospekt - St Pete's main thoroughfare

Note: Entrance fees and meals aboard the train are not included.

### what you get

- 1 night train Moscow - St Petersburg (4 berth sleeper cabin)
- 2 nights standard hotel including breakfast
- St Petersburg - guided city coach tour
- St Petersburg arrival & departure transfer to airport (for your onward flight)

(The Baltic Express is available only to clients who are undertaking a Trans-Siberian journey from Beijing to Moscow or vice versa, and is only available as a classic adventure.)



## on location

### Your guide to on the ground...

#### visa requirements

Visas are required by all visitors to Russia and China. If you book at on the go tour we can obtain the letter of invitation for you which is required for Russia visas. If you are a resident of the UK, we'll supply all visa forms & can arrange visa procurement. If you are a resident overseas, please contact a specialist visa company to procure visa forms and to arrange visa issue. It is your responsibility to ensure you procure

your visa in a timely fashion and visa fees are at your own expense. We recommend that you apply for your visas at least 6 weeks prior to departure. Further visa info is available online at onthegotours.com.

#### climate & time

Russia - Continental, with distinct periods of warm & very cold weather. Summer from mid-May - early Sept is warm with long days. Autumn is brief. By end Nov, temps plummet & snow arrives. Spring brings the great thaw in Mar & Apr. Winter visits - wear very warm attire inc. a hat, gloves, long coat & sensible shoes. See A-Z guide (provided upon booking) for further information.

#### money

USD1 = RUB29 USD1 = CNY6.8 (subject to fluctuation). The Russian Rouble (RUB), and Chinese Yuan (CNY) are non-exportable and only available in their respective countries. Exchange USD, GBP or Euro notes in pristine condition. ATMs exist in major cities in Russia and China. See A - Z for more info.

#### health requirements

Recommendations - Hep A, Diphtheria, Polio & Tetanus. Malarial risk - south-west China. Please contact your local health care provider for more information.

## how much?

- Can of coke, 330ml RUB30/CNY3-5
- Mineral water RUB30/CNY2-5
- Meal for 2 RUB1000-1500/CNY120
- Beer (local brew) RUB50-80/CNY4-10
- Chocolate bar RUB40-50/CNY7

## final checklist

- Visa
- Ticket/tour voucher
- Travel Insurance
- Airline ticket/E ticket
- Reconfirm flight
- Passport
- Jabs
- Guide book
- Warm clothes
- USD cash for exchange

## things to bring

- Slippers & comfortable clothes for the train.
- A mug, spoon, instant coffee, tea bags & cup a soup.
- A small daypack for your day-to-day needs.
- Bring USD cash for exchange. Pristine notes only.
- A guidebook especially if on a costsaver adventure
- A phrasebook and practice Mandarin & Russian.
- Books, magazines, cards & a padlock.
- A photocopy of your passport data pages.

## top experiences

- Strolling along Red Square, Moscow and spotting famous St Basil's and the Kremlin.
- Getting steamy in a Russian banya (sauna) with veniki (birch twigs).
- Revelling in the beauty of St Pete's Winter Palace, taking in the stunning decor and prized art.
- Paying your respects to the wax-like Lenin at his mausoleum in Red Square.
- Experiencing St Pete's buzzing nightlife scene.
- Making friends with a Russian person on the train.





# baltic express: itinerary

## day 1 - moscow

Moscow - St Petersburg - Evening departure from Moscow rail station for overnight train to St Petersburg.

## day 2 - sightseeing

St Petersburg - breakfast. Welcome to flamboyant St Petersburg - city of tsars! Bereft of the Soviet breezeblock style architecture that characterises so many of Russia's cities, the city is jam-packed with grandiose palaces and stately buildings.

Founded by Peter the Great in 1703, St Petersburg is designed around an intrinsic network of canals and rivers built in lavish and grandiose style. As with all pioneering founding fathers and wanna-be town-planners, Peter had his work cut out. He probably chose the most desolate and windswept piece of swamp in all of the Imperial Russian Empire and should have known it was a bad idea to found a city here. The first flood, just three months after he started building the Peter and Paul Fortress in 1703, swept away all his building materials. He pushed on relentlessly, though. The water rises dangerously high on average once a year, though four floods, in 1777, 1824, 1924 and 1955, wrought mighty damage. Indeed, in 1824 the whole city was submerged and 462 buildings were destroyed. Fortunately, in 1989 construction of a dam was begun to prevent a future catastrophic flood.

Known as the cradle of Revolution, in the 20th century St Petersburg underwent three name changes, three revolutions and a whopping 900-day siege. Despite a rocky start or 'wet' start, the city celebrated its 300th anniversary in 2003. As a result, the city benefited greatly. 100s of historical buildings and churches have been restored to their former glory, new metro stations and dozens of new shops and boutiques have opened to complement the city's array of museums, theatres, bars and restaurants.

Upon arrival at St Petersburg train station you will be met and transferred to your hotel for check in. Today a guided coach tour gives you a solid orientation of St Petersburg and its key areas. Travelling by vehicle is a really effective way of getting one's bearings in St Petersburg. View highlights such as St Isaac's Cathedral, The Hermitage (or Winter Palace), Church on Spilled Blood, Russian Museum, the battleship Aurora, Peter and Paul Fortress and of course the mighty River Neva on our drive. You're welcome to later

visit and independently tour these attractions. Remains of the day free to explore more of the city or just chill-out.

Nevsky Prospekt is St Petersburg's main thoroughfare. Running from the historic Admiralty to Moscow Railroad Station and after a slight turn, to the Alexander Nevsky Monastery, this avenue is some 4.5km long. The avenue is renowned for its wealth of handsome buildings and is the premier place for shopping, eating and entertainment. A profusion of architectural styles is evident from the Baroque Stroganov Palace to the magnificent and gargantuan neo-classical Kazan Cathedral. Take a stroll along the first stretch of St Petersburg's main artery from Admiralty to the Griboedov Canal. If feeling energetic, continue on to Anichkov Bridge. At Anichkov Bridge, or indeed other bridges, you may want to hop on one of the cruises that ply their route along the waterways in summer. It's a great and relaxing way to experience the city and see it's many bridges and fine buildings from a slightly different angle. Overnight - St Petersburg

## day 3 - free day to explore

St Petersburg - breakfast. Free day to explore the city and surrounds.

**Further independent sightseeing suggestions:** (See our brochure & any guide book for details of entry fees)

- **Hermitage Museum (Winter Palace)** - begs a visit from art buffs and culture vultures. The Hermitage Collections comprise a staggering array of paintings, drawings, silver and porcelain amassed by Catherine the Great. After the Revolution, the nationalisation of both royal and private property enabled more paintings and works of applied art to be collected, making the Hermitage one of the world's leading museums. Today, the Hermitage offers one of the world's greatest collections of art - totalling some 2.9 million exhibits. You'll only scratch the surface!
- **Residences of the tsars** - A visit to one of the palaces will bring to life the history of the tsar ruling class and the luxurious lifestyle they led.
- **Petrodvorets** - known also as Peterhof. Russia's answer to Versailles. Famous for it's magnificent gold fountains, a visit to the palace is a treat in summer.

- **Pushkin** - known also as Tsarskoe Selo, the awesome peacock blue and gilt facade of Catherine Palace is simply stunning.

- **Peter and Paul Fortress** - The Peter and Paul Fortress on Petrogradskaya Side is the city's historic nucleus and most major of landmarks. The fortress was laid down on 16 May 1703 on Zayachiy Island to secure Russia's hold on the Neva Delta. It was called St Petersburg (named after the cathedral built on its territory). Later the name was given to the city that started to grow rapidly around the fortress grounds. The fortress was first built in wood and was later replaced, section by section, in stone. It's history is a gruesome one, since hundreds of forced labourers perished while constructing the fortress and it's bastions were later used to guard and torture many political prisoners. Today, the fortress is preserved as an historical monument.

- **Church on Spilled Blood** - just off Nevskiy Prospekt and a must - see. The exterior of the church rather resembles famous St Basil's Cathedral on Red Square - due to its whimsical, almost Disneyesque onion - bulbed turrets. The church was built on the site of Alexander II's murder on 01 March 1881. In 1883 his successor Alexander III, launched a sort of competition for a lasting memorial. The winning design, which took almost 25 years to complete, is what we see today. Impossibly colourful mosaics and elaborate stone carving are the main features of the church exterior, whilst inside more than 20 types of minerals are lavished on the mosaics of the iconostasis, icon cases, canopy and floor. The interior reopened in 1998 after more than 20 years of restoration.

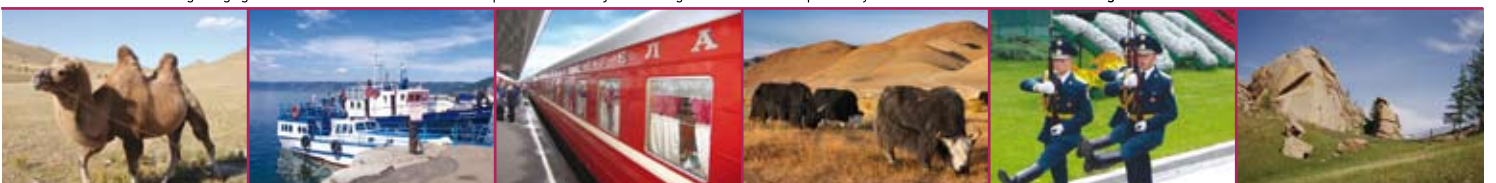
## day 4 - st petersburg

St Petersburg - breakfast. End of arrangements.

## hotels

In Russia on the go use 3 star accommodation as classified by the Russian Ministry of Tourism. However, please be aware that the 3 star standards throughout Russia vary greatly and cannot be compared to hotels of a similar standard in Western Europe or, and in particular, the United States.

\*The go guide & information contained herein has been compiled with care and in good faith. It is as accurate an illustration as can be given with regard to the proposed itinerary. Circumstances beyond our control such as inclement weather or local conditions could force us to amend the proposed itinerary. This document does not form part of a contract between the client and on the go and their affiliates. Any costs shown may be subject to change but are an accurate reflection of costs at the time of writing this go guide. Please also be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and remain the responsibility of the traveller and not that of on the go.



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