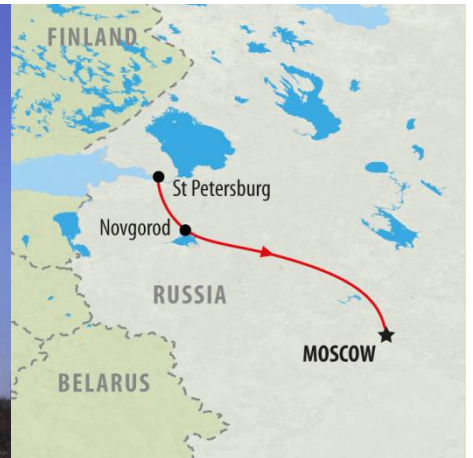


The Big Chill

9 days | St Petersburg to Moscow



Seasons greetings from Russia! Enjoy a relaxed yuletide in St Petersburg - northern city of the tsars, relax and defrost in a traditional banya (sauna) in ancient Novgorod and frost up for New Year in hedonistic Moscow, Russia's mighty capital city.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- St Petersburg - UNESCO-listed city area including: Nevsky Prospekt, Museum and University districts, Church on Spilled Blood, The Bronze Horseman and Admiralty End
- St Petersburg's palaces - the Hermitage Museum at the Winter Palace and St Catherine's Palace
- Novgorod - ancient city by the Volkhov River - kremlin, cathedral and other sights
- Moscow - UNESCO-listed Red Square, Kremlin and Lenin's Mausoleum and St Basil's Cathedral

What's Included

- 8 breakfasts, 1 lunch and 3 dinners (including a Welcome Dinner on day 1)
- 1 overnight train from Novgorod - Moscow in an 4-berth cabin including bed linen
- 7 nights 3 star hotels

- Escorted by an English speaking Russian tour guide
- Specialist Russian guides at local sights
- Guided sightseeing - St Petersburg, Novgorod and Moscow
- Airport arrival transfer on day 1
- All relevant transfers and transportation on tour
- Moscow Metro travel card - 6 journeys
- Russian banya (sauna) experience

What's Not Included

- Entrance Fees: USD\$40-50, paid in local currency
- International flights and visa
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture

ITINERARY

Day 1 : St Petersburg

24 December 2017. Welcome to St Petersburg and the start of your winter holiday! Upon arrival you will be met at St Petersburg Pulkovo Airport and transferred to your hotel for check-in. This evening you'll be treated to dinner with the rest of your group at the hotel, followed by an informative welcome meeting. Remainder of the evening at leisure - your tour guide can recommend some local bars for you to try out.

Overnight - St Petersburg (D)

Day 2 : Christmas Day

Merry Christmas! This morning a driving tour will give us an introduction to St Petersburg. We will make our way along the famed Nevsky Prospekt, past the museum and university districts and a few photo stops will be made along the way at places such as the magnificent St Isaac's Cathedral and The Bronze Horseman. Later, we will enjoy a guided tour of the Hermitage Museum in the Winter Palace - which houses one of the biggest and best art collections on earth. The rest of the day is free for you to further explore. Tonight, head out on the town or enjoy a Christmas drink in local bar, cafe or at our hotel.

During our time in St Petersburg there may be the chance to join one of our optional evening excursions, such as a traditional Cossacks performance or a night at the Russian Ballet.

Overnight - St Petersburg (B)

Day 3 : St Pete's Sightseeing



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updated on 26-06-2017

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We start today's touring with a visit to Peter & Paul Fortress and the Peter & Paul Cathedral, which houses the tombs of the Romanov monarchs. Then we'll head out to city to explore Catherine Palace at Tsarskoe Selo in winter (or Pavlosk Palace if Catherine Palace is closed). At Catherine Palace it's the exterior and the interiors of this lavishly decorated building that really catch the eye - and the spectacular Amber room is a real highlight! After stopping for a hearty traditional lunch at a local restaurant, we'll continue on for a guided tour of the exquisite interior of The Church on Spilled Blood. **Overnight - St Petersburg** (B, L)

Day 4 : Time to Explore

St Petersburg – Novgorod. Today gives you the opportunity to shop for some last minute souvenirs, maybe some traditional nesting dolls or Russian memorabilia found at the canal side market near the striking Church on Spilled Blood. Alternatively a walk along St Petersburg's main street - Nevsky Prospekt. Later we travel on to ancient Novgorod, where we will enjoy a steamy Russian banya (sauna) and hearty dinner. **Overnight - Novgorod** (B, D)

Day 5 : Novgorod



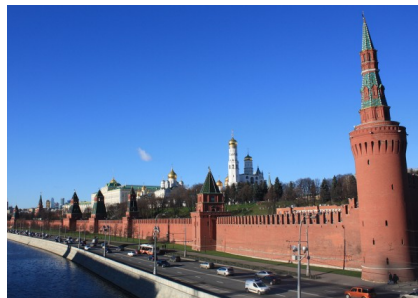
Novgorod – Moscow. Novgorod is one of Russia's oldest cities, located within reach of the Volkhov River and Lake Ilmen that was formed as a town in the middle of the 10th century. A guided tour of Novgorod takes in the riverside fortified Kremlin, cathedral and other sights of interest. The Kremlin fortress was mentioned in chronicles as early as in 1044, whilst today's walls and towers, despite being re-built in 15th century, are impressive all the same. Tonight we have dinner before travelling by overnight sleeper train from Novgorod to Moscow. **Overnight - Overnight Sleeper Train** (B, D)

Day 6 : Moscow City Tour

Early this morning, we arrive into Moscow - the capital that spawned dozens of spy novels! Today we will ride on the capital's efficient Metro to Red Square. From here, we'll take in the jewels of Russia's capital on a guided walking tour, taking in sights such as the epitome of Russian power – the Kremlin, Lenin's Mausoleum and the ritzy GUM department store. At the south end of the square, feast your eyes on the wildly coloured, turban domed St Basil's Cathedral, an enduring Russian symbol commissioned by Ivan IV (also known as Ivan the terrible) in 1555.

Spend the remainder of the day at your own leisure. During our stay in Moscow there will be the chance to join one of our optional evening excursions, such as a traditional Cossack Show or a Moscow by Night coach tour. **Overnight - Moscow** (B)

Day 7 : The Kremlin

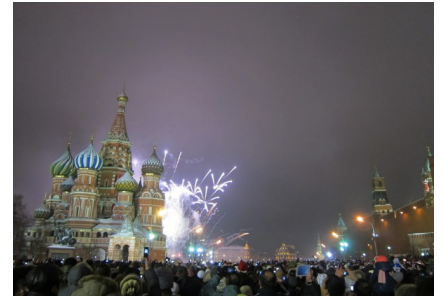


This morning we head back to Red Square to pay our respects to Lenin - the grandfather of Communism, at his eerie mausoleum. It is here that his embalmed body has lain in state since his death in 1924. Later we will continue to the Kremlin - Russia's bastion of political might, where we enjoy a guided walk through the grounds, seeing numerous government buildings, gold-domed cathedrals and the tsar bell.

The rest of the day is free for you to independently explore the city. As well as boasting some of the country's most recognizable landmarks, Moscow is also home to internationally acclaimed museums and art galleries, respectable retail havens in the form of malls, markets and boutique-style shops, and

hundreds of restaurants and cafes serving a wide variety of cuisine. **Overnight - Moscow** (B)

Day 8 : New Year's Eve



Today is free for you to explore Moscow on your own. For souvenirs, Izmailova Market is the place to go. Behind its whimsically decorated walls you'll find one of the best markets in Moscow, whether you want to pick up some tacky souvenirs, genuine fur hats or some traditional handmade crafts.

Alternatively you can book our optional Inside a Soviet Bunker excursion locally and head 65 meters underground to explore a Stalinist-era bunker that up until recently was a top secret symbol of Soviet Power and is now a museum.

This evening we head into the city to ring in the New Year amongst the crowds. While Red Square is certainly one of the most popular places to count down to midnight, it can also get extremely busy making it often difficult to find a place. But fear not, there are plenty of other exciting activities happening around Moscow' capital city, whether it's watching the fireworks as they light up the night sky over Christ the Savior Cathedral from Patriarchy Bridge, heading to one of the concerts on Tverskaya Ulitsa or dancing in the New Year in one of the city's trendy bars or clubs. **Overnight - Moscow** (B)

Day 9 : New Year's Day

01 January 2018. Happy New Year! Our tour comes to an end after breakfast and hotel check-out. (B)

HOTELS

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The hotels listed below are ones which we frequently use on this tour. We reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard when necessary.

Asteria Hotel

Set on the banks of Fontanka River, Asteria Hotel enjoys a prime location in the city centre just a few minutes walk from St Petersburg's famous Nevsky Prospekt. This 3-star hotel features a restaurant and bar, plus free WiFi throughout the property.



Yurievskoe Podvorie

The Yurievskoe Podvorie is a traditional Russian farmstead hotel. All the rooms are comfortable with good amenities. The hotel also has a fantastic restaurant serving traditional Russian cuisine in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.



Izmailovo Gamma Delta

Formerly part of the Olympic Village at the 1980 Moscow Olympics, Divided into two wings, Gamma and Delta - the Izmailovo Gamma Delta is part of one of the biggest hotels in the world. The rooms are comfortable and with modern amenities and there is also a number of excellent restaurants plus a gym and swimming pool. On arrival to the hotel guests are often welcomed with chocolate and still bottled mineral water. Well located with good access to transport links.



PRICES / DATES INFO

Prices shown are per person travelling. 'Twin/Double' prices per person apply when there are 2 people travelling, sharing a room. The 'Single supplement' applies for single travellers who require their own room and needs to be added to the 'Twin/Double' price. If you are happy to be paired up with another single traveller of the same sex on your tour, this can be arranged, thus avoiding the single person supplement. Departure dates noted with a 'G' are guaranteed to operate. All other departure dates are guaranteed with a minimum of 2 persons.

PRICES / DATES 2017

Date	Twin Share	Single
24 Dec	USD 1,895	USD 2,605

PRICES / DATES 2018

Date	Twin Share	Single
24 Dec	USD 1,895	USD 2,605

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