

Explore Russia: A 9-Day Journey Through History and Culture

Welcome to an unforgettable 9-day expedition through Russia's most iconic cities and historical landmarks. From the grand metropolis of Moscow to the elegant canals of St. Petersburg and the charming ancient towns of the Golden Ring, this carefully crafted journey offers a perfect blend of architectural marvels, cultural experiences, and authentic Russian hospitality.

Prepare to be captivated by magnificent cathedrals, world-class museums, and picturesque landscapes as we explore the heart and soul of this fascinating country. With comfortable accommodations, guided tours, and authentic dining experiences included, this tour promises to be an enriching adventure through Russia's past and present.



Tour Itinerary Overview

Day 1: Arrival in Moscow

Arrive at Domodedovo Airport, meet your representative, and transfer to Hotel Vega 4*. Enjoy a welcome dinner and city introduction.

Days 4-6: St. Petersburg

Travel by high-speed train to explore the "Venice of the North" with its palaces, museums, and waterways.

Day 9: Departure

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Transfer to Domodedovo Airport for your departure flight.

Days 2-3: Moscow Exploration

Discover Red Square, Kremlin, Christ the Saviour Cathedral, Zaryadye Park, Moscow Metro, and Arbat Street.

Days 7-8: Golden Ring & Sergiev Posad

Visit the ancient cities of Vladimir, Suzdal, and the spiritual center of Sergiev Posad.



Day 1: Welcome to Moscow

Arrival

Arrive at Moscow Domodedovo Airport (DME) at 13:30 via Airarabia flight 805. After immigration and baggage collection, meet your representative for a warm welcome to Russia.

Hotel Check-In

Transfer to Hotel Vega 4* or alternative accommodation. Enjoy a brief introduction to the city during your transfer. Settle into your comfortable room and take some time to relax.

Evening Plans

Enjoy an included buffet dinner at the Vega Hotel restaurant, sampling your first taste of Russian cuisine. Overnight stay at the hotel, preparing for the adventures ahead.

Day 2: Moscow's Red Square & Kremlin



Morning Start

Begin your day with breakfast at the hotel at 09:00, followed by meeting your guide in the lobby at 09:30 for a full day of exploration.



Red Square Tour

Visit the iconic Red Square, the 4th largest square in the world, featuring St. Basil's Cathedral, Our Lady of Kazan Cathedral, the History Museum, and GUM State Universal Store.



Historical Sites

Explore Lenin's tomb and necropolis, along with the beautiful Aleksandrovsky Garden adjacent to the Kremlin walls.



Kremlin Territory

Discover the heart of Russia with a visit to the Kremlin complex, including Cathedral Square, Tsar's Bell, Tsar Cannon, and the Grand Kremlin Palace.



Day 2: Evening in Moscow

Zaryadye Park

After lunch, visit the innovative Zaryadye Park, a modern urban space blending nature and technology in the heart of Moscow. Experience the immersive "Russia. Virtual Journey" show, taking you on a spectacular multimedia tour across the vast landscapes of Russia.

Authentic Dinner

At 19:30, enjoy an included dinner at an Indian restaurant, offering familiar flavors with a Russian twist. This culinary experience provides comfort while introducing you to local dining customs.

Return to Hotel

After a full day of sightseeing, return to Hotel Vega for a restful overnight stay. Reflect on your first full day in Moscow and prepare for tomorrow's continued exploration of this magnificent city.



Day 3: Moscow City Highlights









Day 3 takes you on a comprehensive tour of Moscow's most significant landmarks. After breakfast at 09:00, meet your guide at 10:00 to explore St. Sofia's Embankment, the magnificent Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, New Maiden Convent, Moscow State University campus, the White House of the Russian Federation, Moscow's cultural boulevards, and the world-famous Bolshoi Theatre.

The tour continues with a thrilling cable car ride from Sparrow Hills, offering panoramic views of the city and the Moscow River below. This day provides a perfect blend of religious, academic, political, and cultural highlights of Russia's capital.

Day 3: Underground Art & Arbat Street



Moscow Metro Tour

Experience Moscow's underground art museums as you tour the city's most beautiful metro stations. Marvel at the chandeliers, sculptures, mosaics, and stained glass that transform these transit hubs into palatial halls, each telling stories of Soviet achievements and Russian history.



Arbat Street

Arbat Street, one of
Moscow's oldest
thoroughfares now
transformed into a vibrant
pedestrian zone. Browse
souvenir shops, watch street
performers, and soak in the
artistic atmosphere of this
historic area before enjoying
an included Indian dinner at
21:00.

These experiences offer a glimpse into both the grandeur of Soviet design and the charming cultural heart of modern Moscow, providing perfect opportunities for photography and people-watching.

Day 4: Journey to St. Petersburg



Early Morning Departure

Start with an early breakfast or breakfast box at your hotel before meeting your guide in the lobby at 06:00 for transfer to Leningradsky railway station.



High-Speed Train Experience

Board the Sapsan high-speed train departing at 07:20, reaching speeds of up to 250 km/h while enjoying comfortable seating and scenic views of the Russian countryside.



Arrival in St. Petersburg

Arrive in St. Petersburg at 11:35, where you'll be greeted by a representative and transferred to the 4-star Hotel St. Petersburg for check-in.

Day 4: St. Petersburg City Tour

Nevsky Prospect

"Great Perspective"
lined with marble
palaces, boutiques, and
cathedrals spanning 4.5
km from the Admiralty
to the Alexander
Nevsky Monastery.



Panoramic Views

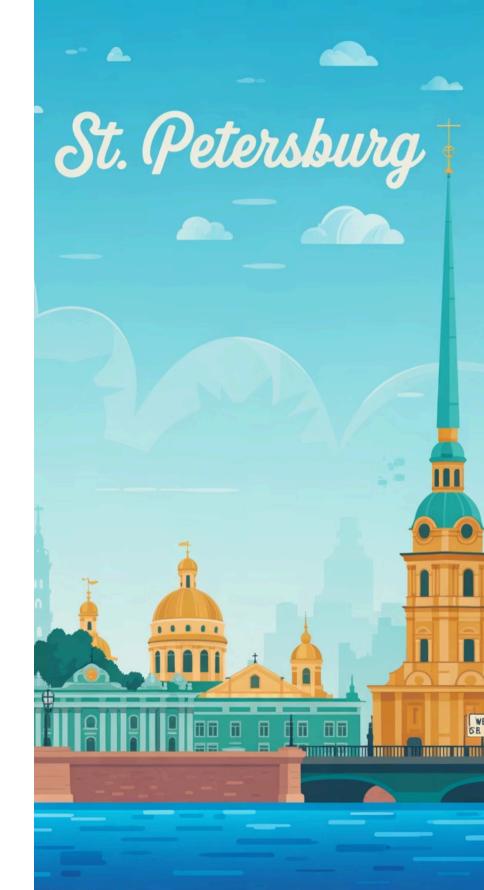
Stop for stunning photo opportunities along the Neva's embankments, capturing the Rostral Columns, Hermitage Museum, and St. Isaac Cathedral with "The Bronze Horseman" monument.

Historic Gardens

Drive by the Summer
Garden with its royal
palace and Italian
statues, and stop at the
Field of Mars with its
eternal flame honoring
victims of revolutions
and wars.

Peter & Paul Fortress

Visit Rabbit Island to explore the Peter & Paul Fortress, the birthplace of St. Petersburg and final resting place of Russian tsars.



Day 4: Evening on the Neva

1703

42

Founding Year

St. Petersburg was founded by
Peter the Great as Russia's
"Window to Europe"

Islands

The city is built across dozens of islands connected by bridges

93

Rivers & Canals

Waterways crisscross the city, earning it the nickname "Venice of the North"

Cap off your first day in St. Petersburg with a magical river cruise along the Neva from 16:00-17:00. Glide under ornate bridges and past palatial facades, gaining a unique perspective of the city from the water. As evening approaches, enjoy an included dinner at an Indian restaurant at 19:30 before returning to your hotel for the night.



Day 5: Peterhof - The Russian Versailles

After breakfast at 09:00, meet your guide in the hotel lobby at 10:00 for a 22-mile drive to Peterhof. This UNESCO World Heritage site showcases the opulence of imperial Russia. Don't miss the iconic "Samson killing a lion" fountain, symbolizing Russia's victory over Sweden at the Battle of Poltava in 1709.









Royal Vision

Designed by Peter the Great to rival Versailles, the Peterhof complex represents the tsar's ambitious vision to establish Russia as a European power.

Grand Palace

The magnificent royal residence crowns the hill, featuring lavishly decorated halls that showcase the wealth and artistic tastes of Russia's imperial rulers.

Spectacular Fountains

Over 150 fountains and 4 cascades operate without pumps, using a natural gravity-fed system designed in the 18th century that continues to function perfectly today.

Lower Gardens

300 acres of meticulously manicured grounds stretch along the Finnish Gulf, featuring hidden fountains, marble statues, and pavilions designed for royal entertainment.

Day 5: Soviet History & Russian Traditions





Soviet Submarine Museum

After returning from Peterhof and having lunch, visit a Soviet submarine at 16:00. Step inside this authentic Cold War vessel to experience the cramped quarters and technological innovations of Soviet naval power.

Explore the command center, torpedo compartments, and living quarters while learning about submarine warfare and the sailors' daily life underwater.

Vodka Museum Experience

At 18:30, discover the history and cultural significance of Russia's national drink at the Vodka Museum. Learn about the 500-year evolution of vodka production and its role in Russian traditions.

The museum showcases historic distillation equipment and explains vodka's journey from medicinal tonic to celebrated beverage, including the proper way to enjoy this iconic spirit.

The day concludes with dinner at an Indian restaurant at 19:30 before returning to your hotel for the night. These unique experiences offer fascinating insights into both Soviet military history and traditional Russian culture.

Day 6: The Magnificent Hermitage



Five Historic Buildings

The Hermitage Museum complex includes the Winter Palace, Small Hermitage, Old Hermitage, New Hermitage, and Hermitage Theatre, spanning centuries of architectural development.



Over 3 Million Exhibits

Housing one of the world's largest art collections, the Hermitage displays masterpieces by Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Rembrandt, and countless other renowned artists across diverse periods and styles.



Imperial Splendor

The Winter Palace served as the official residence of Russian emperors, with its opulent rooms decorated with marble, gold, and precious materials creating a stunning backdrop for the artistic treasures.



Day 6: Return to Moscow

After your morning visit to the Hermitage Museum, transfer to the railway station for your return journey to Moscow on the high-speed Aurora train. This transition day balances cultural exploration with comfortable travel, preparing you for the next phase of your Russian adventure.



Hermitage Museum Visit

Spend your morning exploring the magnificent art collection at the Hermitage Museum before departing St. Petersburg.



Aurora Train Journey

Departing at 13:50, enjoy a 4.5-hour high-speed train journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow, arriving at 19:40.



Hotel Check-in

Upon arrival in Moscow, a representative will meet you and transfer you to the Safmar Tverskaya 4* hotel for check-in.



Evening Dinner

After some free time to relax, enjoy dinner at 20:30 in the hotel's restaurant before resting for tomorrow's adventures.

Day 7: The Golden Ring - Vladimir







Ancient Heritage

Founded in 1108, Vladimir served as Russia's capital before Moscow and remains one of the most historically significant cities in the Golden Ring circuit.

Golden Gate

This 12th-century white stone fortress tower once served as the grand entrance to the city and now stands as Vladimir's most recognizable symbol and central landmark.

UNESCO Cathedrals

The Uspensky (Assumption) Cathedral houses medieval frescoes by master Andrei Rublev, while the Dmitrievsky Cathedral features intricate stone carvings on its exterior.

After breakfast at 09:00, meet your guide in the lobby for a 2.5-hour journey to Vladimir, the first stop on your Golden Ring tour. This ancient city on the Klyazma River showcases Russia's medieval architectural heritage with its magnificent golden-domed churches and historic buildings.

Day 7: Inside Uspensky Cathedral



Medieval Masterpieces

Step inside the Uspensky Cathedral to witness walls covered with priceless frescoes created by Russia's greatest icon painters. These vibrant religious artworks date back to the 12th century and depict biblical scenes and saints with remarkable detail and spiritual expression.



Architectural Wonder

Marvel at the cathedral's impressive white stone architecture, golden domes, and historical significance as the place where Russian princes were crowned before Moscow rose to prominence. This UNESCO World Heritage site represents the height of pre-Mongol Russian architecture.



Spiritual Center

Experience the spiritual atmosphere of this active Orthodox church where services have been held for centuries. The cathedral's acoustics and ornate iconostasis (wall of icons) create an environment of reverence that connects visitors to Russia's deep religious traditions.

Day 7: Suzdal - Russia's Open-Air Museum



Journey to Suzdal

After exploring Vladimir, travel just 30 minutes to reach Suzdal, a remarkably preserved medieval town that appears much larger than its actual size due to its concentration of historical monuments.



City-Museum Experience

Discover why Suzdal is known as a "city-museum" with nearly 70 architectural monuments concentrated in just 2 square kilometers, creating an immersive journey into Russia's past.



Suzdal Kremlin Visit

Explore the ancient Suzdal Kremlin, the historical and architectural center of the town dating back to the 10th century, featuring earthen ramparts, wooden walls, and the magnificent Cathedral of the Nativity.



Oldest Temple

Visit Suzdal's oldest surviving church, witnessing the evolution of Russian ecclesiastical architecture and the spiritual heritage that has shaped the region for centuries.



Day 7: Evening Return to Moscow

Traditional Dinner

At 19:00, enjoy an included dinner at a local restaurant in Suzdal, sampling authentic Russian cuisine that reflects the culinary traditions of the region. This meal provides a perfect conclusion to your Golden Ring exploration.

Scenic Evening Drive

Following dinner, begin your return journey to Moscow, traveling through the picturesque Russian countryside as day transitions to evening. The drive offers time for reflection on the day's historical and cultural discoveries

Late Arrival

Arrive back at your Moscow hotel in the late evening. Despite the full day of travel and exploration, the unique experiences and insights gained from these preserved medieval towns make the journey worthwhile.

Day 8: Sergiev Posad - Russia's Spiritual Heart









Trinity Monastery

Founded in 1337 by St.
Sergius of Radonezh, this spectacular fortress monastery became the spiritual center of Russian Orthodoxy and remains an active religious community today.

Artistic Heritage

Famous icon painters Andrey Rublev and Daniel Chorny created magnificent frescoes in the Trinity Cathedral, representing the pinnacle of medieval Russian art.

Religious Significance

As one of only four Russian lavras (highest-ranking monasteries), this site attracts pilgrims from across the Orthodox world seeking spiritual connection and blessings.

Architectural Ensemble

The monastery complex features stunning examples of Russian architecture spanning centuries, including cathedrals, bell towers, and fortifications.

Day 8: Monastery Exploration









After breakfast, meet your guide at 10:00 for the 1.5-hour journey to Sergiev Posad, located 73 km from Moscow. This colorful, quintessentially Russian town is home to the Trinity Monastery of Saint Sergius, an important center of Orthodox Christianity and a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Your visit includes exploration of the monastery grounds, its multiple churches, museums, and religious artifacts. Witness the daily life of monks and pilgrims while learning about the monastery's crucial role in Russian history, spirituality, and cultural development. The site's religious significance is matched only by its architectural beauty and artistic treasures.

Day 8: Moscow Circus Experience







Historic Venue

After returning to Moscow and having lunch, experience the famous Nikulin Circus from 18:00 to 20:15. This historic circus on Tsvetnoy Boulevard continues the rich Russian circus tradition dating back to 1880 and is named after legendary Soviet clown Yuri Nikulin.

World-Class Performance

Marvel at the spectacular show featuring acrobats, jugglers, trained animals, and clowns performing incredible feats of skill and artistry. Russian circus arts are renowned worldwide for their technical excellence, creativity, and theatrical presentation.

Family Entertainment

Enjoy this quintessential Russian cultural experience that delights audiences of all ages. The circus combines traditional elements with modern production techniques for an unforgettable evening of entertainment on your final night in Moscow.

Day 8: Farewell Dinner

9

Days

Your comprehensive Russian journey

3

Cities

Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Golden Ring towns

15+

UNESCO Sites

World Heritage landmarks visited

1000+

Years

Of Russian history experienced

After the circus performance, enjoy a special farewell dinner at 20:30 included in your tour package. This final meal provides an opportunity to reflect on your Russian journey, sharing favorite moments and impressions with fellow travelers. The dinner features traditional Russian dishes, offering one last taste of authentic local cuisine before your departure.



Day 9: Departure Day

Final Breakfast

Enjoy your last breakfast at the hotel, savoring the flavors and atmosphere of Russian hospitality one more time. Take this opportunity to gather any belongings and prepare for departure.

Guide Meeting

Meet your guide in the hotel lobby for assistance with check-out procedures and any last-minute questions about your stay or future visits to Russia. Your guide will ensure a smooth transition to your departure transportation.

Airport Transfer

At 10:00, depart for Domodedovo Airport with plenty of time for check-in and security procedures before your Airarabia flight 806 to Sharjah departing at 14:20. Your representative will assist with any final arrangements.



Accommodation: Hotel Vega 4* Moscow







Convenient Location

Hotel Vega 4* is strategically located in Moscow's Izmailovo district, offering easy access to the city center via nearby metro stations. The hotel is situated within the massive Izmailovo complex, originally built for the 1980 Olympic Games.

Comfortable Accommodations

The hotel features well-appointed rooms with modern amenities including air conditioning, satellite TV, refrigerator, and private bathrooms. The contemporary design combines functionality with comfort for a pleasant stay.

Dining Options

Enjoy buffet breakfasts and dinners at the hotel's main restaurant, offering a selection of international and Russian cuisine. Additional on-site facilities include a fitness center, beauty salon, and several shops for convenience.

Accommodation: Hotel St. Petersburg 4*

Enjoy comfortable accommodations in this ideally located hotel during your stay in St. Petersburg.









Prime Waterfront Setting

Hotel St. Petersburg enjoys a privileged location on the banks of the Neva River, offering spectacular views of the water and historic landmarks including the cruiser Aurora and Peter and Paul Fortress.

Comfortable Rooms

The 4-star property features comfortable rooms with classic decor, each equipped with modern conveniences including air conditioning, satellite TV, safe, and minibar.

Rooftop Dining

From the rooftop restaurant, guests can admire stunning city views while enjoying meals, with the Hermitage and other landmarks visible from this vantage point.

Hotel Amenities

Additional facilities include a fitness center, business center, currency exchange, and concierge services with professional staff trained to assist international guests with various needs and inquiries.



Accommodation: Safmar Tverskaya 4* Moscow

Central Moscow Location

Safmar Tverskaya 4* hotel is ideally situated on Tverskaya Street,
Moscow's main thoroughfare. This central location puts you within walking distance of Red Square, the Kremlin, and Bolshoi Theatre, making it perfect for your final nights in the Russian capital.

Modern Facilities

The hotel offers contemporary rooms with stylish decor, featuring amenities such as flat-screen TVs, air conditioning, safes, and complimentary Wi-Fi. The elegant bathrooms include rainfall showers and premium toiletries for a luxurious experience.

Dining & Services

Enjoy meals at the hotel's restaurant serving Russian and international cuisine. Additional services include 24-hour reception, concierge assistance, room service, and business facilities to ensure a comfortable and convenient stay.

Moscow: Red Square & Kremlin

Red Square stands as the historic heart of Moscow and the entire Russian nation. This UNESCO World Heritage site spans 330 meters by 70 meters, making it one of the world's largest squares. Surrounded by architectural marvels, the square has witnessed coronations, parades, protests, and celebrations throughout Russian history.









Red Square

The iconic central square of Moscow attracts over 20 million visitors annually, serving as the historic and cultural heart of Russia.

St. Basil's Cathedral

With its distinctive colorful onion domes, this architectural marvel welcomes 3.5 million visitors yearly and symbolizes Russian architecture worldwide.

The Kremlin

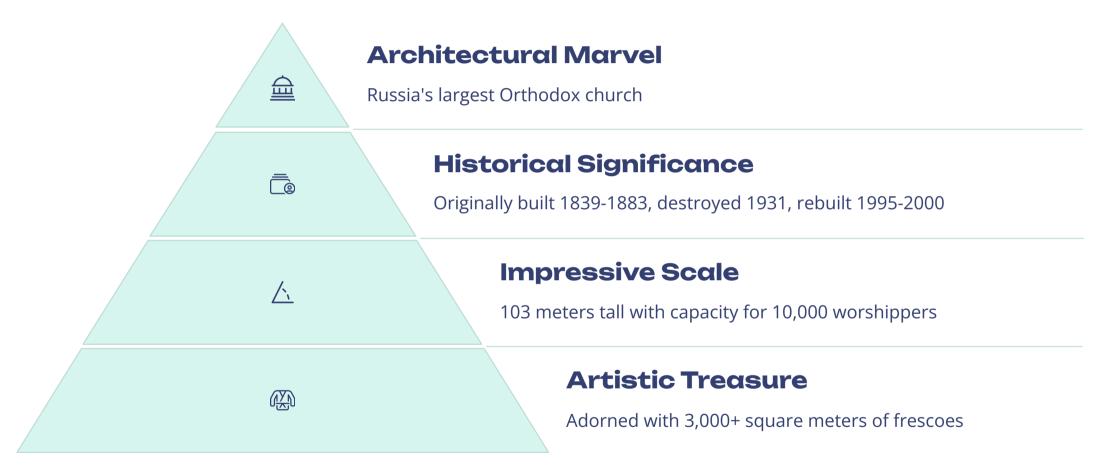
Serving as the official residence of the Russian President, the Kremlin complex houses numerous cathedrals, palaces, and museums with its Cathedral Square featuring the Assumption, Annunciation, and Archangel cathedrals.

GUM Department Store

This elegant 19th-century shopping arcade along the eastern side of Red Square combines historical architecture with luxury shopping, attracting 5 million visitors annually.

Each of these remarkable sites plays a specific role in the rich tapestry of Russian history, offering visitors a glimpse into the country's imperial past, religious traditions, and cultural heritage.

Moscow: Christ the Saviour Cathedral



The Cathedral of Christ the Saviour stands as a powerful symbol of Russia's spiritual revival. Originally constructed to commemorate Russia's victory over Napoleon, the cathedral was demolished during the Soviet era to make way for a never-completed Palace of Soviets. Its reconstruction in the 1990s represented Russia's return to its Orthodox roots following the fall of communism.

Moscow: Zaryadye Park



Floating Bridge

Experience the park's most iconic feature - a boomerang-shaped bridge that extends over the Moscow River without support columns, creating the illusion of floating above the water. This engineering marvel offers spectacular panoramic views of the Kremlin, St. Basil's Cathedral, and the city skyline.



Four Russian Landscapes

Explore the park's unique design featuring four distinct Russian landscape zones: forest, steppe, wetland, and tundra. Each area showcases native plants and topography, creating a natural oasis in the heart of the city and demonstrating Russia's ecological diversity.



"Russia. Virtual Journey"

Immerse yourself in the park's spectacular multimedia show that takes visitors on a virtual flight across Russia's vast landscapes. Using cuttingedge projection technology, the experience showcases the country's natural wonders from Kaliningrad to Kamchatka.

St. Petersburg: The Hermitage Museum



Architectural Complex

Five interconnected historic buildings including the Winter Palace, Small Hermitage, Old Hermitage, New Hermitage, and Hermitage Theatre form this vast museum complex.



Art Collection

Over 3 million items spanning from prehistoric artifacts to contemporary art, with only a small fraction on public display at any given time.



Feline Guardians

A colony of cats has lived in the museum since the 18th century, originally brought in by Empress Elizabeth to control rodents and now considered unofficial staff.



Visitor **Experience**

Walking the entire museum would cover nearly 24 kilometers, with estimates suggesting it would take 11 years to view each exhibit for just one minute.

St. Petersburg: Peterhof Fountains

Gravity-Powered System

The fountains operate without pumps, using a natural water supply system designed in the 18th century.

Grand Cascade

The central fountain ensemble features 64 fountains, 37 gilded statues, and multiple waterfalls.

Samson Fountain

The park's centerpiece depicts Samson tearing open a lion's jaws, symbolizing Russia's victory over Sweden.

Trick Fountains

Hidden fountains surprise visitors with unexpected water jets, continuing a playful tradition from Peter the Great's time.

Peterhof's fountain system represents one of the most remarkable engineering achievements of the 18th century. Water flows from natural springs in the Ropsha Hills 22 kilometers away through a system of pipes, canals, and reservoirs to power the 150+ fountains without any mechanical pumps. This sustainable design has functioned for nearly 300 years and continues to operate using the original principles.

The Golden Ring: Vladimir & Suzdal



Vladimir's Golden Gate

Founded in 1108, Vladimir served as Russia's capital before Moscow. This magnificent 12th-century gate once marked the grand entrance to this powerful medieval center and remains an iconic symbol of the city's historical significance.



Assumption Cathedral

Vladimir preserves its
historical significance through
UNESCO-protected white
stone architecture,
particularly this magnificent
cathedral with its priceless
frescoes by Andrei Rublev,
representing the political and
religious power of preMongol Rus.



Suzdal Kremlin

Just 30 minutes from Vladimir lies Suzdal, a remarkably preserved medieval town that escaped Soviet industrialization. The town's Kremlin forms the historical heart of this living museum, which features nearly 70 architectural monuments within just 2 square kilometers



Museum of Wooden Architecture

Suzdal's open-air museum showcases traditional wooden buildings from across the region, creating an immersive experience of traditional Russian rural life spanning several centuries, all within a picturesque landscape dotted with oniondomed churches.

Sergiev Posad: Trinity Lavra Monastery



Spiritual Foundation

Founded in 1337 by St. Sergius of Radonezh, who lived as a hermit in the forest before attracting followers



Historical Significance

Became the spiritual center of Russian Orthodoxy and played crucial roles in Russian history and national identity



Artistic Heritage

Home to masterpieces by Andrei Rublev, including his famous Trinity icon, representing the pinnacle of Russian medieval art



Living Monastery

Continues as an active religious community with monks, theological seminary, and regular services attended by pilgrims



Russian Cultural Experiences











Beyond the architectural wonders and historical sites, this tour offers authentic cultural experiences that provide deeper insights into Russian life, traditions, and artistic achievements. From the palatial Moscow Metro stations showcasing Soviet grandeur to the spectacular acrobatics of the Moscow Circus, these experiences highlight Russia's unique cultural contributions.

Culinary experiences include traditional Russian cuisine and Indian dining options throughout the journey. The Vodka Museum visit reveals the history and traditions surrounding Russia's national drink, while river cruises in St. Petersburg offer unique perspectives of the city's magnificent architecture from the water.

Practical Information & Tour Highlights



Tour Dates

May 25 - June 2, 2025, covering 9 days and 8 nights across Moscow, St. Petersburg, and the Golden Ring cities. The carefully planned itinerary balances major attractions with unique experiences.



Meals

Daily breakfast at hotels, plus included dinners as specified in the itinerary. Most lunches are at your own expense, offering flexibility to explore local cuisine according to your preferences.



Transportati on

Comfortable coach transportation for city tours and excursions, plus high-speed train journeys between Moscow and St. Petersburg. All transfers between airports, hotels, and railway stations are included.



Guided Experiences

Professional Englishspeaking guides
throughout the tour
provide historical
context, cultural
insights, and practical
assistance. Their
expertise enhances
your understanding of
Russia's complex
heritage.