

Trip Details

Highlights of Russia

Experience the history and highlights of Russia over 6 unforgettable days!

Kick off your amazing Highlight of Russia tour with the culture-rich St Petersburg. Roam the displays of Hermitage Museum, the second biggest museum in the world and home to 3 million antiquities! Enjoy the dazzles and delights of this amazing city before traveling to the heart of Russia, Moscow. Explore the capital's churches, charming monuments and museums with countless pieces of incredible art. While you are there, don't forget to try some local delicacies!

Duration	6 Days	Group Size	13-35 People
Destination	Russia	Age Req.	18+
Start/Ends in	S.Petersburg/Moscow	Trip Theme	Classic, Overland
Hotels	4 Star	Departs	March to December

Why You Will Love This Tour

- * Discover Russia's rich history as you explore the cities of St Petersburg and Moscow, accompanied by your local guide and like-minded travellers over 6 days.
 - * It's full steam ahead as you hop on board an overnight sleeper train leaving St Petersburg for
 - * Stay in hand-picked, 4-star hotels located in the heart of Moscow and St Petersburg with all breakfasts included during your stay.
 - * Tick off many of Russia's world-renowned landmarks including the charmingly colourful St Basil's Cathedral and Red Square.
 - * After an overnight stay in the train cabins, wake up well-rested in the charming city of Moscow ready for another full day of exploring.
- Shape your holiday the way you want with optional activities. Whether it be wandering the Tretjakov
- * Gallery, learning of Russia's rich World War II history or enjoy a traditional Folk Show in St Petersburg.... There's something for everyone!

Arrival Details

The group welcome meeting with you guide and other travellers is held around 18:30 at the hotel lobby on Day 1 of your tour, unless otherwise notified.

Meeting Point

The meeting point for this tour is:

Oktiabrskaya Hotel

Address : 10/118, Ligovskiy prospect, Saint Petersburg

Phone : +7 (812) 578 14 76

Emergency Number: +44 (0) 208 099 75 36

Airport Transfers

All tours starting in St.Petersburg include arrival airport transfer if your flight lands in St.Petersburg on the first day of your tour between 5am and 11:59pm or if you have booked pre-accommodation with us

To arrange your airport transfer please email us the following information at least 2 weeks before your departure date. info@traveltalktours.com

- Travel Date
- Flight Number
- Local Arrival Time
- Name/s of the Passengers

Making Your Own Way to the Starting Point

The hotel is located in the historical heart of St. Petersburg, in the center of business, cultural and entertainment life of the Northern Capital. If you are making your way from Pulkova Airport, you can use BUS 39 and BUS 39EX to get to Moskovskaya Metro Station. The bus ticket cost is 55 Ruble. The trip from the Airport to Moskovskaya metro station takes around 30 min. Buses depart from the airport every 30 min. between 05:20 and 00:20. From Moskovskaya metro station, go to the metro station Technologicheskiy Institut (2) blue line and go to the station Technologicheskiy Institut (1) red line – the platform opposite. From station Technologicheskiy Institut go to metro station Ploshchad Vosstaniya/Moskovsky railway station on a direct metro line. (Exit to Vosstaniya street). Exit the metro turn right and cross Ligovsky Avenue. Walk 50 meters to the left on Ligovsky Avenue to the entrance to the hotel under a visor.

You can also use airport taxis, which cost 1050 Ruble from airport to your hotel.

Finishing Point

The finishing point for this tour is:

Izmailovo Delta Hotel

105613, Russia, Moscow, Izmailovskoe shosse, house 71, corps 4 G-D

Phone : +7 495 737-70-70 **Emergency Number:** +44 (0) 208 099 75 36

Highlights

- * **Church of Spilled Blood:** An architectural masterpiece with the combination of baroque, classical and modernist styles. This church was built where Tsar II Alexander was assassinated.
- * **Hermitage:** The spectacular palace built in the 18th century by Catherine the Great became one of the world's largest museum complexes with more than three million art pieces.
- * **Kremlin Palace:** Also one of the largest museums in the world, this breath-taking complex from the 14th century includes 5 palaces, 4 cathedrals, the Kremlin Wall and Towers.
- * **Moscow:** Explore the fascinating history of the Red Square, visit the spectacular Kremlin and let the architecture of the St. Basil's Cathedral leave you speechless.
- * **St. Petersburg:** Get surrounded by the glorious monuments of the cultural capital of Russia; discover the Nevsky Prospect, Church of the Spilled Blood, Hermitage, and many more.
- * **The Red Square:** The Red Square is the heart of Moscow, home to Kremlin, St. Basil's Cathedral and Lenin's Tomb and the number one witness of Russia's history.

Itinerary

Please note that the itinerary may be subject to small changes depending on the conditions during the tour. Alternative accommodation of similar standards may be used depending on the group size and hotel availability.

Day 1: St. Petersburg

Welcome to Russia! Keep your eyes peeled at St. Petersburg airport for the Travel Talk sign for your transfer to the hotel. Freshen up and meet in the lobby around 6:00pm for an informal meeting with your guide and other tour members. Afterwards, join the group for a walk and have an optional group dinner to mingle. Your tour leader can also recommend some local bars to enjoy a drink with your new travel buddies.

- **Accommodation**

Oktiabrskaya Hotel – 4 Star

- **Included Activities**

Welcome Meeting

- **Optional Activities**

Group Dinner

Day 2: St. Petersburg - City tour incl. the Hermitage

The amazing city of Saint Petersburg was founded by Tsar Peter the Great in 1703 and was the capital of Imperial Russia. The city is beautifully built around a series of bridge-connected canals and rivers. Even the underground walls are an artwork! Start off the day with a tour of the breathtaking city. Drive along the main street, Nevsky Prospect, receive a solid introduction on this charming city as you pull up at the Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood. Don't put away your cameras just yet! Next up, a guided visit to the world-famous treasure-filled Hermitage Museum.

- **Accommodation**

Oktiabrskaya Hotel – 4 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfas

- **Included Activities**

Guided St. Petersburg Tour & Hermitage Museum

- **Entrance Fees**

Hermitage Museum – RUB 500

Day 3: St. Petersburg (opt. Tsars Route tour)

Today you have a free day to explore this magnificent city on your own, make the best of it! You can take on some optional activities such as the Tsar's Route tour with lunch. The route visits to Peterhof Garden and Catherine Palace during summer months (May to October) or Pavlosk Palace and Catherine Palace in winter months (October to May). Later this evening, board the overnight sleeper train bound for Moscow and rest up. Overnight train in a sleeping cabin accommodation.

- **Accommodation**

Overnight train in a sleeping cabin

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast

- **Optional Activities**

Tsar's Route : EUR 70

Day 4: Moscow City Tour, Red Square

Time to embark on a city tour of Moscow. Launch a guided walk tour through Moscow's heart, meeting the amazing Red Square and Kremlin Palace. Ask your local guide all your questions on the history, challenges and the culture of Russia. The city offers amazing galleries and museums and plenty of cafes, shops and bars. After the city tour you, if you're still hungry for more, you have the option to join a tour of the World War II Museum. The rest of the afternoon and evening is yours. You can roam the main shopping streets, try out local dishes or explore the fancy nightlife.

- **Accommodation**

Izmailovo Delta Hotel or Moscow Hotel – 4 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast

- **Included Activities**

Sightseeing Red Square

Day 5: Moscow, Kremlin Palace, St. Basil's, Arbat Street

Start off the day with a guided walk throughout the grounds of Kremlin and soak in mighty government buildings, gold-domed cathedrals and the Tsar bell. Stroll down the road to reach the stunning St Basil's cathedral and the Red Square. Capture a mental picture to last forever, the multi-coloured domes create a breath-taking sight for all travellers. Continue down Arbat street; one of the oldest surviving streets of the capital and home to many historical Russian figures.

- **Accommodation**

Izmailovo Delta Hotel or Moscow Hotel – 4 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast

- **Included Activities**

Sightseeing Kremlin Palace

Sightseeing St. Basil Cathedral

Moscow Metro Tour & Old Arbat's Walking

- **Entrance Fees**

Kremlin Palace – RUB 700

Day 6: Moscow

Have your final breakfast on us and start bidding farewells to your travel mates before checking out of the hotel (11:00). Time to start counting days for your next adventure with Travel Talk!

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast

Inclusions & Exclusions

Accommodation: 4 star hotels and sleeper cabin train

Airport Transfer: From St. Petersburg airport to the Travel Talk hotel (on day 1)

Meals: 4 breakfasts

Transportation: A/C, modern coach or mini-bus, Sleeper Cabin Train

Guide: Services of experienced Travel Talk local guides licenced by the Ministry of Tourism

Sightseeing: Hermitage Museum, Nevsky Prospect, Kremlin Palace, Red Square, St. Basil Cathedral
Moscow Metro, Old Arbat Street, Spilled Blood Church

What is NOT included in the tour price?

- Any flights not mentioned above
- Travel insurance
- Meals not stated above
- Items of a personal nature
- Tips & gestures
- Entrance fees to the sights and museums
- Optional activities
- Other services not stated in the itinerary

Hotels & Accommodation

Solo travellers will be roomed with another solo traveller of the same gender in a twin or triple room, or can upgrade to a solo room by paying the single supplement. You may choose the solo room option when booking online or contact us to arrange a private room. Your tour leader will allocate rooms upon arrival at the starting hotel in accordance with the rooming lists, last minute changes may not be guaranteed.

OKTIABRSKAYA HOTEL – ST. PETERSBURG – 4 Star

Located in the center of Athens and 500 m from Panormou Metro Station, President Hotel offers comfortable accommodation and a beautiful rooftop terrace with a swimming pool.

MOSCOW HOTEL – MOSCOW – 4 Star

This hotel is located in the city center near Nevsky Prospekt. The hotel is set a 2-minute walk from the River Neva. Free Wi-Fi is available in the entire hotel.

IZMAILOVO DELTA HOTEL – MOSCOW – 4 Star

This hotel is located near Moscow Izmailovsky Park, The Partizanskaya Metro Station is only 150 m away. Moscow city centre is a 15 min metro ride.

SLEEPER CABIN TRAIN – ST.PETERSBURG to MOSCOW

Sleeper cabin is for 4 travelers with 2 upper and 2 lowers beds. Each compartment has a table, a mirror, lockable doors and panoramic window.

Budgeting

Please note that entrance fees to sights and optional activities are not included in the tour price. Optional activities are not operated by Travel Talk and may require a certain number of attendees to run. Your guide will be happy to inform you further about the available optional activities at the start of your tour. Optional activities are also listed under each day in your tour itinerary.

Optional Activities

Please note that Optional Activities are not operated by Travel Talk.

Group Dinner	EUR 15-20
Tsar's Route	EUR 70

Entrance Fees

Hermitage Museum – RUB 500 (Approx. EUR 6)

Kremlin Palace – RUB 700 (Approx. EUR 8)

Personal Spending

The official currency of Russia is the Ruble (RUB). We recommend carrying a small amount of local currency on you, which can be retrieved from ATMs in the local region. However, in larger tourist regions and major cities both debit and credit cards are widely accepted. While every traveller's spending habits may differ slightly, we have estimated the average daily expenses to help with budgeting for your next trip. Here you will find the average cost for a meal or drink and advice for best practice in tipping.

Meals

Lunch at restaurant	US\$ 6-8
Dinner at restaurant	US\$ 8-13
Pirogi (pastry) at a stall	US\$ 1-2
Pelmeni - Russian Dumpling	US\$ 3-5

Drinks

Bottle of water	US\$ 0.5
Coffee	US\$ 3-4
Tea	US\$ 2-3
Bottle of beer	US\$ 3-5

Tipping

Tipping for good service is commonplace in Russia, but not compulsory. In restaurants and cafes, we suggest tipping 5-10% of your bill, if a service charge has not already been applied. Your Guide and Driver would also appreciate tipping as a sign of gratitude at the end of your tour.

Shopping

The Russian cities of Moscow and St Petersburg are any shopper's dream! Filled with ample markets, souvenir stalls, malls and boutique shops - all shopping lovers will be wishing they had more time here. Haggling is not commonplace in Russia with items in both shops and markets being sold at a fixed price.

Vodka

It's no secret that Russians love their vodka! While the popular spirit can be bought at any supermarket, some brands are sold in exclusive souvenir bottles to make for the perfect gift. The more expensive the bottle, the better the vodka quality. Prices start at 30 USD per litre for a souvenir bottle.

Lacquer Boxes

Lacquer Boxes are among the most beautiful crafts in Russia, made from papier-mâché. The material is lathered in lacquer and intricately painted with miniature landscapes, fairy tales or Russian history. You can expect to pay at least 20 USD for a small lacquer box in the marketplace.

Matryoshka Dolls

The Matryoshka Dolls (Babushka Dolls) are immensely popular and widely available across Russia. Consisting of tiny wooden dolls stored within other dolls and decorated in a traditional form of Russian wood painting, known as Khokhloma. The size, quality and price of these dolls can vary significantly. However, it is possible to buy a souvenir-quality Matryoshka Doll set from 8 USD in markets across Russia. More expensive, ornamental dolls can cost 1,000+ USD.

Essential Information: Russia

Passport & Visas

At present, all foreign passport holders are required to obtain a tourist visa to travel to Russia. The visa cannot be obtained at the Russian border. Therefore, you should apply for your tourist visa prior to travelling. A Russian tourist visa can only be provided to passengers who have booked and confirmed their travel arrangements. Processing times and fees vary per application location, nationality and travelling dates. Visas are typically issued for a maximum of 30 days.

- * Australian residents, please <https://sydney.mid.ru/web/sydney-en>
- * New Zealand residents, please visit <https://newzealand.mid.ru/en/>
- * UK residents, please <https://russia-visacentre.com/en/visa/united-kingdom/russia>
- * American residents, please visit <https://washington.mid.ru/en/>
- * Canadian residents, please visit <https://canada.mid.ru/en/>

To apply for a Russian tourist visa you will need several documents including;

- * Original passport, valid for more than 6 months with at least 2 blank pages for visa
- * Application form
- * One passport-style photograph
- * Other documents such as proof of address
- * Tourist visa support documents (**to be provided by Travel Talk upon full payment**)
- * Applicable fees

Travellers entering Russia must also carry a passport with a minimum of 6 months validity remaining.

This information is provided as a guidance, we strongly advise that you check with the consulate or embassy as this information can change. Please note, visa costs can change at any time and with little notice depending on the political climate of the region. It is your responsibility to make sure that all the required travel documents are ready when travelling.

Travel Advice

We are closely monitoring the latest travel updates to Russia and follow the advice of the UK Foreign Office (FCDO). For the latest travel advice from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/russia>

We recommend all travellers to check their Government National Travel Advisory prior to their departure:

- | | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| Australia | - | https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/ |
| Canada | - | https://travel.gc.ca/ |
| New Zealand | - | https://www.safetravel.govt.nz/ |
| USA | - | https://travel.state.gov/ |

Travel Insurance

All passengers travelling with Travel Talk are required to have personal travel insurance before participating in any of our tours. Your guide will collect your travel insurance details on the first day of your trip. It is your responsibility to make sure you have an adequate and suitable travel insurance for you in place, you may read more at <https://www.traveltalktours.com/travel-insurance>

Health & Safety

The health and safety of our passengers, staff and communities visited is of utmost priority. As we monitor and comply with the official advice from the UK Foreign Office, as well as World Health Organization and government authorities regularly, we have implemented several policies and precautions on our tours for your wellbeing. You may find our Safe Travels Protocols at <https://www.traveltalktours.com/safe-travels>



Travel Talk Adventures has received the Safe Travels stamp by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), which allows travellers to recognise companies around the world that have adopted health and hygiene global standardised protocols – so consumers can experience ‘Safe Travels’.

Please make sure to regularly check your Government’s travel advice before travelling and be well-informed of any requirements. Your tour guide will also notify you of the regulations and protocols to follow throughout your trip with us.

Please note that if any traveller is unable to complete the itinerary or possess a potential risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group, we reserve the right to remove them from all or part of a trip.

Please consult with your doctor for the latest medical travel information and any vaccinations you may need. We recommend that you bring any personal medical requirements and medications with you as these may be difficult to obtain while on tour.

Weather

Russia experiences a dominantly continental climate, the winters are long and cold, and summers are brief. The summer months of June – August are certainly a drawcard for many travellers. Due to Russia’s proximity to the Arctic Circle, the peak of Summer is accompanied by endless hours of warmth and daylight that stretch as late as 11pm. The Autumn months (September – October) are short lived but beautiful, with less crowds of tourists and a golden hue of autumn leaves swathing the nation. From November to February winter sets in and the country is blanketed in crisp white snow with temperatures sitting below zero degrees Celsius. Despite these freezing temperatures, Russia is a magical place to visit in the winter with far fewer tourists’ crowds making for the perfect opportunity to interact with locals and enjoy the breath-taking decorations and festivities of Christmas.

Months	Moscow		St.Petersburg	
	High C°	Low C°	High C°	Low C°
January	-9	-15	-6	-12
February	-5	-13	-5	-11
March	0	-7	0	-7
April	10	2	8	1
May	19	8	15	6
June	21	11	20	11
July	22	13	21	13
August	22	12	20	12
September	16	8	15	9
October	9	3	9	4
November	1	-3	2	-2
December	-4	-9	-3	-7

Money Matters

The official currency of Russia is the Ruble (RUB). We recommend carrying a small amount of local currency on you, which can be retrieved from ATMs in the local region. However, in larger tourist regions and major cities both debit and credit cards are widely accepted. We recommend you do not exchange bulk sums of money at the airport as the exchange rates are usually more favourable in the major cities. Your tour leader will be happy to help if you need any assistance.

Please remember that everyone has different spending habits, some prefer to spend more on souvenirs, some on experiences and others on a night out! Make sure to budget your trip to your spending habits for shopping, drinking, and tipping.

Tipping for good service is commonplace in Russia, but not compulsory. In restaurants and cafes, we suggest tipping 5-10% of your bill if a service charge has not already been applied. Your Guide and Driver would also appreciate tipping as a sign of gratitude at the end of your tour.

Eating & Drinking

Visitors to Russia will be surprised by the variety in flavours of Russian cuisines, influenced by the nation's connections to Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Russian food is typically heavy and hearty with pickling also common due to harsh winters that can result in minimal produce harvests. Major cities such as Moscow and St Petersburg offer a diverse cosmopolitan food scene, showcasing a fusion of new and traditional Russian dishes. Searching for unique and authentic dishes can often be overwhelming if you're not a local, so here's a few must-try meals to get you started.

Borsch: A humble beetroot soup that originated in the Ukraine and quickly adopted as Russian speciality. The soup can include other ingredients such as meat and sautéed vegetables including cabbage, carrots, onions, and potatoes. It can be served hot or cold and is best served with a dollop of fresh cream on top.

Blini: Like a crepe, Blini is a wheat pancake rolled with a variety of fillings including jam, cheese, sour cream, caviar, onions or chocolate syrup.

Beef Stroganoff: Consisting of strips of beef in a creamy sauce with mushrooms or tomatoes. Stroganoff is served with rice, noodles or potato and is a hearty meal perfect for Russian winters.

Pirogi: Baked sourdough dumpling stuff with anything from minced meat to onion, eggs, and potatoes. This Russian dumpling can be found at street stalls for less than 1 USD!

Pirozhki: Pirozhki is a Russian fast food of sorts involved a bread-like bun stuffed with fillings such as cabbage, potato, meat, liver and mushroom. The bun is either fried or baked and best served warm or hot.

Pelmeni: Dumplings made from unleavened dough and filled with a combination of potatoes, mushrooms or meat and served with sour cream.

Okroshka: A cold soup made from chopped, raw cucumbers, radishes, spring onions, potatoes, egg and cooked meat. The ingredients are mixed with a fermented drink called Kvass and can come with ice cubes to keep the soup chilled.

Alcohol consumption in Russia is amongst the highest in the world and vodka is undeniably as much a cultural experience as much as it is an alcoholic spirit for tourists and locals alike. Usually served straight from the freezer and accompanied by a toast and cheers, vodka is an easy way to bond with the locals at any restaurant or bar across the nation. Kvass is another traditional drink worth trying while visiting Russia. This low-alcohol beverage is made by fermenting rye bread and has a low alcohol concentrate. If beer is your drink of choice, you have come to the right place! While vodka may be Russia's national libation, beer comes in at a close second. The most popular beers include Soviet Stalwart, Zhigulevskoe, or Baltika.

Internet Access

Free Wi-Fi is common in hotels, cafes, and restaurants across Russia. Many internet cafes can be found in the cities as well. Alternatively, purchasing a Russian SIM card for the duration of your tour may be a cost-effective option. Your tour leader will be happy to advise on this.

Essentials to Bring

- * Face mask/cover and hand sanitiser enough for your personal use throughout the trip – See more at <https://www.traveltalktours.com/safe-travels>
- * Travel Documents: Passport, Visa (if required), flight or transport ticket (and photocopies)
- * Travel Talk Tour Voucher (printed or digital)
- * Travel Insurance Policy (and photocopy)
- * Personal medical kit and medicine
- * Money (cash, credit card, travellers' cheques)
- * Power Adapter
- * Reusable water bottle
- * Ear plugs and eye mask
- * Sun protection – hat, sunglasses, sunscreen
- * Comfortable, closed walking shoes
- * Wind/water proof jacket
- * Warm clothes, hat, and gloves for cold weather

Culture & Religion

Russia is the largest country in the world by area, spanning Europe and Asia from west to east and populated by over 160 various ethnic groups with a vast and diverse history. Russians have a reputation for being cold, but most locals are engrained to value camaraderie and hospitality. The nation has a rich cultural heritage and history, which its people are openly proud about. Due to the country's multi-ethnic make up, Russia is home to many religions. 75% of Russia's population follow Christianity through Russian Orthodox Church, Islam is followed by 5%, then Buddhism, Judaism and Protestantism. As travellers become acquainted with Russian culture and acquire stories and knowledge from their local guide, it becomes far easier to understand the large role that religion plays within everyday Russian society.

Etiquette and How to Dress

Russians have a tendency to dress quite conservatively, however a more relaxed dress code can be seen in metropolitan cities. Women are recommended to avoid low cut tops and short skirts while men should not wear shorts except in an informal setting.

Please also keep in mind that when visiting religious sites, appropriate attire is required. It is recommended to pack at least one set of modest clothing that covers both shoulders and knees, to be worn when visiting churches and other religious complexes. A headscarf for women is also necessary when visiting religious

Solo Travellers

We have many solo travellers joining our tours. Solo travellers will be roomed with another traveller of the same gender. If you would like a private solo room, please contact us.

Rules to Follow

We are committed to ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone. We do not tolerate any form of violence (physical or verbal), bullying or harassment involving customers, partners, Travel Talk staff or locals. Sexual relationships between a tour leader and a passenger are forbidden.

We will not tolerate any illegal activity, including but not limited to: use and possession of illegal drugs, trespassing, and disrupting public order. If you consume alcohol, please ensure that you drink responsibly and follow the local laws and regulations.

You must follow the advice of your tour leader and local officials regarding health and safety measures. We operate all tours under Safe Travels protocols for the wellbeing of our passengers, staff and communities visited. Please ensure that you have read the <https://www.traveltalktours.com/safe-travels/> and are fully prepared for your trip.

If someone is acting inappropriately regarding these matters, please notify your tour leader immediately or contact us on the emergency contact number provided below.

Your tour leader has the right to remove from the group anyone not abiding by these rules, with no right of compensation or refund. See more at <https://www.traveltalktours.com/booking-terms/>

Please remember that our travellers come from different parts of the world and will have various needs and preferences. Be understanding and patient with your fellow travellers, and always strive to be on time.

Responsible Travel

We believe that travel is a force for good and show our support through various initiatives and charity organizations, as well as keeping the principals of responsible and sustainable travel at the core of our ethos. These values are engrained in our business culture and the design of our trips just the same. Together with you, we strive to make a positive impact on local people and economies, respecting the local culture, environment, social fabric and customs; encouraging respectful and meaningful cross-cultural exchange.

Read more at <https://www.traveltalktours.com/responsible-travel/>