

back in the USSR

# go guide

don't leave home without it



## tour spotlight

### what you see

- Moscow - UNESCO-listed Red Square & Kremlin, Lenin's Mausoleum, St Basil's Cathedral
- Pskov - ancient town near Estonian border
- Pechory - ancient monastery
- St Petersburg - UNESCO-listed city area - Nevsky Prospekt, Museum and University districts, Church on Spilled Blood (viewed from outside), Peter & Paul Fortress, The Hermitage at the Winter Palace, The Bronze Horseman and Admiralty End • Other sites of St. Petersburg included on the optional pukka pass

**Please Note:** Entrance fees are payable by you, locally. Budget approximately USD\$50-60 for your entire tour. This amount will include entrance fees for the Moscow Kremlin, St Petersburg Hermitage and other sites visited on your tour.

### what you get

- 6 breakfasts, 1 lunch
- 5 nights 3 ★ hotels
- 1 overnight train Moscow - Pskov (open sleeper cabin including bed linen)
- Airport arrival transfer on day one
- Guided sightseeing - Moscow city - Kremlin and Red Square, Pechory monastery, St Petersburg city tour and Hermitage at Winter Palace
- Guided tour of Vodka Museum with taste testing
- Russian banya (sauna) experience
- Moscow Metro travelcard - 6 journeys
- English speaking Russian tour leader and specialist Russian guides at local sights
- Relevant transfers and transportation on tour



## on location

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

#### visa requirements

Visas are required by all visitors to Russia. Booking through on the go will allow us in the first instance to procure your invitation to enter Russia, a copy of which will be forwarded to the Embassy in your country and held on record until your visa application, passport and fees are received. If a resident of the UK, we'll provide visa forms and can arrange visa procurement. If resident overseas, please contact a specialist visa company to procure visa forms and to arrange visa issue. Further

information is also available online at onthegotours.com. It is your responsibility to ensure you procure your visa in a timely fashion. Visa fees are at your own expense.

#### climate

Continental, with distinct periods of warm and very cold weather. Summer days from mid-May - early Sept are warm and very long. Autumn is brief, and by end Nov, temps plummet and the snow arrives. Spring arrives bringing with it the great thaw in March and April. If visiting in winter, wear extremely warm attire inc. a hat, gloves, long coat, thermals and sensible shoes.

#### time

Western Russia is 3 hours ahead of GMT.

#### money

GBP 1=RUB 48 USD 1=RUB 30 AUD 1=RUB 30 EUR 1=RUB 40 (subject to fluctuation). The Rouble is exchangeable only in Russia. Bureau de Change and ATMs exist in Moscow and St Pete's and currency can be withdrawn in either Euros or Roubles in most machines. Changing traveller cheques is cumbersome. Credit cards are not always accepted. Note: All optional tours purchased locally are payable in USD/EURO cash or Russian Roubles.

#### health requirements

Diphtheria, Polio and Tetanus. If visiting Yekaterinburg and doing outdoor activities between May-August, a vaccination for tick-borne Encephalitis is recommended. Please check with your local health provider.

## how much?

- **ENTRANCE FEES**  
Entrance fees are not included in your tour. Please budget approximately USD \$50-60
- **TIPPING**  
In better restaurants tip 10% if you are pleased with the food/service. If you would like to express your thanks to your driver, local guide or tour leader, we would suggest approx USD\$25 - 30 per person. Though naturally tipping is an entirely personal gesture.
- Mineral water ( 500ml or 1L) RUB 30
- Can of coke RUB 30
- Beer (local brew Stella - 500ml approx) RUB 50-80
- Meal for 2 (entree, main, local beer) RUB 150-2000

## things to bring

- Cottons for summer; coat, hat, gloves, scarf and thermals for winter!
- Pristine notes for exchange, bring US Dollars and Euros.
- Comfortable walking shoes for exploring the fantastic art filled Winter Palace.
- A Russian phrasebook.
- A photocopy of your passport and credit card.
- A small daypack for your day-to-day needs.

## 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 exhibits.
- Paying your respects to the wax-like Lenin at his mausoleum in Red Square.
- Sampling a shot of the world's finest vodka!





## back in the USSR: itinerary

### day 1 - moscow

Saturday. Welcome to Russia and the start of your holiday! Arrival transfer from the airport to hotel and check in. Tonight, around 8pm, our tip-filled Welcome Meeting takes place. Rest of evening free. Your trip leader will recommend some local bars and restaurants for you to try out. Overnight - Moscow.

An arrival transfer is included for all those arriving on day 1 or those arriving earlier who have booked pre tour accommodation through on the go. Our transfer representatives wait 90 minutes from the time your flight has landed and they will be holding a visible on the go sign. If you are delayed please contact our Moscow or St Petersburg office (as detailed on your tour voucher) to advise that you have been delayed for whatever reason. If your luggage has been misplaced, head to 'Information' or your airline's desk prior to exiting Customs to find out how you may lodge a 'lost luggage' report.

### day 2 - red square & kremlin

Moscow - breakfast. Moscow lies in the centre of what is known as European Russia. The border between Europe and Asia runs down the West Side of the Ural Mountains just 1300 km (805 miles) east of Moscow. Also to the east of Moscow is the mighty Volga River. The Kremlin, a north-pointing triangle with 750 metre sides, is at Moscow's heart in every way. Red Square lies along its eastern side, the Moskva River flows to the south. From here, Moscow is best described as spreading out in four distinctive rings of development, each area having its own cluster of museums, elegant buildings, shops and monasteries. Most of Moscow's sights are within the first circle, an area that is easily covered on foot.

Today, we'll ride the capital's efficient Metro to Red Square. From here, we'll take in the jewels of Russia's capital on a guided walk in the Kitay-Gorod and Lubyanka area. In Red Square, feast your eyes on the wildly coloured turban domed St Basil's Cathedral - an enduring Russian symbol, and the elegant facade of the illustrious GUM department

store, once the only choice for shopping in the Communist era. If open, we can visit the eerie Lenin Mausoleum where the grandfather of Russian Communism - Vladimir Lenin still lies in state.

The rest of the day is free for you to explore more of Moscow. Cultured out? Moscow's restaurants and clubs are open 'til very late! Overnight - Moscow.

NOTE: Please don't carry big day - packs/ rucksacks for our visit to Red Square (Lenin's Mausoleum - if open) and the Moscow Kremlin today, as you'll need to store them before entry into the Kremlin and Lenin's Mausoleum on Red Square (which is closed during the opening times of the Mausoleum).

### day 3 - explore moscow

Moscow - Pskov - breakfast. Today we explore the mighty Kremlin, taking a guided walk through the grounds to see numerous government buildings, gold-domed cathedrals and the tsar bell. Citadel of the tsars, headquarters of the since defunct Soviet Union and now the residence of the Russian president, for centuries the Kremlin has been symbol of the power of the state. Joseph Stalin orchestrated his special blend of terror from within these walls. Below the glistening gold domes of the Kremlin are a series of breathtaking cathedrals and churches within the Kremlin complex.

The afternoon is free, alternatively join us for a tour of the Underground Cold War Museum, on our Inside a Soviet Bunker bolt-on. Head 65 meters underground to explore a Stalinist-era bunker that up until recently was a top secret symbol of Soviet Power. Cleverly hidden beneath an ordinary apartment building, on a busy street in the heart of Moscow, 18 floors below ground level, this mighty 75,000-square-foot facility was constructed in secret in the 1950's, to protect a select few against a US nuclear attack. To read more about the bolt-on see our website or brochure.

Later this evening, we travel by comfortable overnight train (open sleeper cabin) to Pskov. Overnight - train

### day 4 - pskov & pechory

Pskov - St Petersburg - breakfast. As our train bounds into Pskov, we are just 30km away from the Estonian border. Pskov is historically rich, having played host to a stream of Baltic invaders for 700 years. A short drive brings us to the beautiful 14th century Pechory Monastery, where we explore the peaceful grounds and if monastic law permits, an exploration of the burial caves of this fascinating and still-working cloister. Steaming up at a local Russian banya (sauna) will work our appetites up for a vodka and lunch. Later this afternoon we travel by road to St Petersburg arriving late evening. Overnight - St Petersburg

### day 5 - st petersburg

St Petersburg - breakfast. Founded by Peter the Great, grandiose St Petersburg is designed around an intrinsic network of canals and rivers. Known as the cradle of Revolution, in the 20th century the city underwent three revolutions and a 900-day siege.

St Petersburg, or 'Piter', as the residents of the city affectionately refer to their home, has been known by many monikers during the course of its often-turbulent existence. Russia's 'Venice or Amsterdam of the North', 'Window to the West', Petrograd and Leningrad are but a few of the names the city has been called. All of these names embody in some way what St Petersburg has represented to the Russian people.

St Petersburg celebrated its tercentenary in 2003 and as a result of the important anniversary, the city benefited greatly. Hundreds of historical buildings and churches have been restored to their former glory, new metro stations have opened, dozens of new shops and boutiques have appeared, and new museums, theatres, bars and restaurants have enlivened the cultural scene.





## back in the USSR: itinerary

This morning, we embark on a city tour driving along Nevsky Prospekt, through the museum and university district and Admiralty End, with stops at the Church on Spilled Blood (viewed from outside from the Nevsky prospect side for photo opportunities), The Bronze Horseman and Peter and Paul Fortress.

Peter and Paul Fortress was built in 1703, on the orders of Peter the Great and is considered to mark the founding of St Petersburg. It has a gruesome history. Hundreds of forced labourers died while building the fortress and its bastions were used to hold political prisoners. The magnificent cathedral here houses the remains of the Romanov dynasty.

After our city tour we enjoy a guided tour of the magnificent Hermitage Collection at the Winter Palace. Housing some 2.8 million pieces of art, with collections ranging from Egyptian mummies to Greek vases and a vast and dazzling array of Old Masters, we'll view the highlights followed by a visit to 'The Vodka Museum' with a tour explaining the history of vodka which would not be complete without some tasting. The rest of the day is free to do St Pete's your way. The city has a thriving restaurant, bar and club scene if you're keen! Overnight - St Petersburg.

### day 6 - optional pukka pass

St Petersburg - breakfast. Enjoy a day at leisure in beautiful St Petes. With more than 90 museums, many of which are housed in imperial palaces, plus flamboyant galleries and churches, there is plenty to see and do.

Alternatively, if you have purchased our Pukka Pass, day 6 will include additional guided sightseeing inclusive of transport. Touring will include, dependent upon opening hours and availability, either a visit

to the gardens of Peter the Great's palatial Peterhof which overlooks the Gulf of Finland (in summer) or a visit to Catherine Palace at Tsarskoe Selo in winter (or Pavlosk Palace if Catherine Palace is closed). We then stop for lunch at Tinkoff Beer Restaurant where we can enjoy a hearty meal, some beer tasting and a tour of the Tinkoff brewery. After lunch we continue with a guided tour of the interior of The Church on Spilled Blood with time to shop in the souvenir market located alongside the church. To read more about this bolt-on see our website or brochure.

The spectacular imperial palace at Tsarskoe Selo was designed for Tsarina Elizabeth, who named it Catherine Palace in honour of her mum, Catherine I. The exterior and interior of the palace are lavishly ornate and the Amber Room is a real highlight!

Peterhof on the Gulf of Finland was designed and built by Peter the Great to be a summer residence. Often referred to as Russia's 'Versailles', the gardens of Peterhof are a wonderland of greenery and flowers, sweeping vistas and ornate architectural decorations. The real highlight are the spectacular gold fountains. Overnight - St Petersburg.

### day 7 - st petersburg

St Petersburg - breakfast. Hotel checkout at 12 noon.

### optional activities

Ballet - St Pete's or Moscow	from USD\$80
Cossacks/Folk Show - St Pete's	from USD\$60
Boat Cruise - St Pete's (summer)	from USD\$25
Circus - Moscow	from USD\$30
Moscow by night	from USD\$40
Russian National Show - Moscow	from USD\$50

All optional excursions above are subject to availability and may only be offered at specific times of the year. Tours purchased locally are payable in USD/ EURO cash, or Russian Roubles. All optional excursions will need to be booked/paid in full on the evening of day one or morning of day two of your tour. NOTE: 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 through-out Russia vary greatly and cannot be compared to hotels of a similar standard in Western Europe or, and in particular the United States.

Russia is suffering from a severe shortage of quality 3 star hotels. Tourism is relatively new to the land, resulting in demand for hotels far outweighing the supply. With demand being high, hoteliers have unified with massive price increase. On the go in Russia have taken great lengths to locate the best quality hotels at realistic prices in each of the cities we travel to. All the hotels we provide are clean, comfortable and functional, as well as being within close proximity to public transport, amenities and local sights.

\*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.



68 north end road, west kensington, london, W14 9EP • 020 7371 1113 • info@onthegotours.com  
3/690 brunswick street, new farm, brisbane, QLD, australia 4005 • 1300 855 684 • aus-info@onthegotours.com

updated January 2011