

big ticket

# go guide

don't leave home without it



## spotlight

### what you see

#### costsaver adventure:

- Moscow • Trans-Siberian & Mongolian route
- Yekaterinburg
- Irkutsk - former Cossack garrison & trading centre
- Views of Siberian forest, Gobi Desert and Lake Baikal en route.
- Ulan Ude - indigenous region, Tibetan/Buddhist temples
- Ulaan Baatar - set on banks of the Tuul River
- Beijing

#### classic adventure:

- As above • Guided walk of Moscow's Red Square
- Yekaterinburg - City sights, Europe/Asia borderline, Ganina Yama monastery and taiga forest
- Terelj National Park - unique granite rock formations
- Home and lifestyle of a nomadic family
- Listvyanka and Lake Baikal
- Ulan Ude - Ivolginsky Datsan Temple and Ethnographical museum

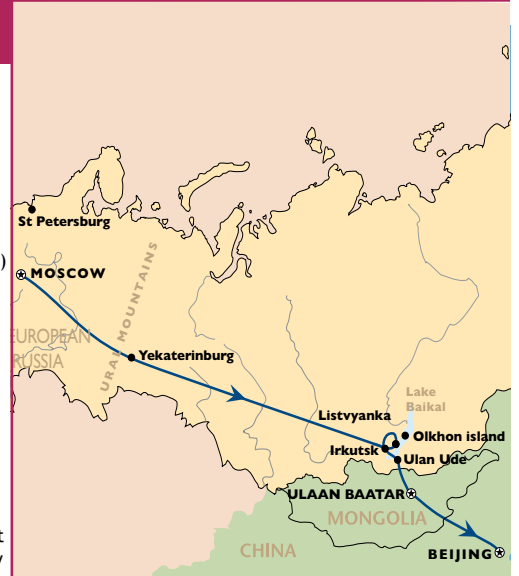
### what you get

#### costsaver:

- 13 breakfasts, 7 dinners
- 2 nights economy hotel Moscow
- Homestay: 2 nights Yekaterinburg, 3 nights Irkutsk, 1 night Ulan Ude, 3 nights economy hotel Ulaan Baatar - all including return rail station transfers
- Train journey: Moscow - Beijing (4 berth sleeper cabin)

#### classic:

- 13 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 10 dinners
- 2 nights standard hotel Moscow • Moscow guided walk, airport arrival transfer & transfer to Moscow rail station (not platform)
- 2 nights homestay in Yekaterinburg including city tour & Europe/Asia border tour
- 2 nights Listvyanka homestay & banya
- 1 night Irkutsk homestay • 1 night Ulan Ude homestay & city tour • 1 night standard hotel Ulaan Baatar
- 2 nights ger camping at Terelj NP incl. nomad family visit
- All transfers & local guide services applicable to itinerary



## on location

Your guide to on the ground...

### visa requirements

Visas are required by all visitors to China, Mongolia & Russia. 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](http://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 China, Mongolia & more info.

### money

USD1 = RUB29 USD1 = MNT1390 USD1 = CNY6.8 (subject to fluctuation). The Russian Rouble (RUB), Mongolian Tugrik (MNT) 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 and Ulaan Bataar. 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/TUG460/CNY3-5
- Mineral water RUB30/TUG350/CNY2-5
- Meal for 2 RUB1000-1500/TUG14000-17500/CNY120
- Beer (local brew) RUB50-80/TUG450-950/CNY4-10
- Chocolate candy bar RUB40-50/TUG250/CNY7

## final checklist

- Visas
- Tour voucher
- Travel Insurance
- Airline ticket/E ticket
- Reconfirm flight
- Passport
- Jobs
- 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 page

## optional activities

Those on the classic adventure can choose one of the optional activities below at each stopover:

### lake baikal

- Summer trek and camp
- Snow mobile
- Summer lake diving
- Cross country ski
- Year round fun

### yekaterinburg

- Summer lake and village
- Siberian country style
- Summer rafting
- Khaski dog sledding
- Skiing
- Falcon hunting

Note: For further details and costs, please refer to the brochure/website or call us. Please specify your preference at time of booking.





## big ticket: itinerary

### day 1 - classic itinerary

Monday - Welcome to Moscow! Arrival transfer from Moscow Sheremetyevo or Domodedovo airport to hotel (no arrival transfer if you have elected to take a costsaver adventure). Overnight - Moscow.

### day 2 - red square

Moscow - breakfast. The capital that spawned dozens of spy novels. Catch the Metro to Red Square, from where you'll enjoy a guided walk (classic adventure only). You'll spot Moscow's bastion of power, the gold onion-domed Kremlin, brightly coloured St Basils Cathedral, the glitzy GUM Department store and more. Rest of day free. Lenin's fascinating granite mausoleum located in Red Square is a Mecca for the curious and worth a look, if open. NOTE: If visiting Lenin's Mausoleum or planning to make an optional visit to the Kremlin, please don't carry gigantic day - packs/rucksacks, as visitors must store them (at their own modest expense) before entry into Red Square or for a visit inside the grounds of the Kremlin. Overnight - Moscow.

### day 3 - moscow

Moscow - Yekaterinburg - breakfast. Free time for you to make the most of your time in Moscow. Perhaps jump aboard the Stalinist era Metro and see the beautifully decorated stations. This afternoon there is an included transfer to rail station. Overnight - train.

### days 4 & 5 - yekaterinburg

Yekaterinburg - breakfast (day 5). On the evening of day 4 the train pulls into Yekaterinburg. Transfer to homestay accommodation. On day 5 after breakfast, enjoy a city tour (classic adventure only). It was in Yekaterinburg that Tsar Nicholas II and his family were executed in 1918, visit the new monastery that marks the murder site and Ganina Yama - a beautiful, rural monastic complex built on the site where the family's remains were dumped and later found. Then travel on to the Europe/Asia border marker - where you can stand with a foot on either side of the boundary marker! Rest of the day free. Breakfast (1), dinner and overnight (2) - Yekaterinburg homestay.

### day 6 - optional activity

Yekaterinburg - breakfast. Spend the day at

leisure exploring Yekaterinburg. Alternatively classic adventure travellers can choose one of the exciting options available (must be booked in advance, see brochure/website for details). This evening enjoy dinner and relaxation at the homestay, before transferring to the train station shortly after midnight. Dinner and overnight - train.

### days 7 & 8 - train

Yekaterinburg - Irkutsk - packed breakfast (1). The train departs in the very early hours of the morning on day 7 for your onward journey to Irkutsk. Relax on board and enjoy the views! Overnight (2) - train.

### days 9 & 10 - lake baikal

Irkutsk - Listvyanka - breakfast (day 10). Arrive in Irkutsk - a town with Asiatic influences of nearby Mongolia and China and curious architecture - a legacy of Siberia's aristocratic exiles. Classic adventure travellers transfer to Listvyanka village, which offers stunning views of Baikal - Siberia's inland sea. Spend the next two at leisure by beautiful Lake Baikal or perhaps choose one of the optional activities available (must be booked in advance, see brochure/website for details). Siberian banya (sauna), lunch (1), dinner and overnight (2) - Listvyanka homestay.

**Please note:** Costsaver travellers spend days 9 - 11 at leisure in Irkutsk (not at Lake Baikal).

### day 11 - irkutsk

Listvyanka - Irkutsk - breakfast. Classic travellers depart Listvyanka shortly after midday, stop for lunch and transfer back to Irkutsk. The remains of the day is free to explore Irkutsk. Lunch, dinner and overnight Irkutsk homestay

### day 12 - train

Irkutsk - Ulan Ude - breakfast. Spend the day at leisure exploring Irkutsk. Evening departure to Ulan Ude, Overnight - train.

### days 13 & 14 - ulan ude

Ulan Ude - breakfast. Very early morning arrival. Transfer to homestay. Later, enjoy a city tour (classic adventure only). Thanks to it's proximity to Mongolia and China, the indigenous people of the region - the Buryats, clung on to their Tibetan-

Buddhist faith through the Communist era. Visit Ivolginsky Datsan - a Buddhist temple and a museum which is dedicated to the lives of local people. Tonight enjoy a tasty traditional Buryat dinner.

On day 14, breakfast, then free time until afternoon transfer to rail station for the train to Ulaan Baatar. Dinner (1) and overnight (1) - Ulan Ude homestay (1) - train

### days 15 & 16 - terelj np

Ulaan Baatar (Outer Mongolia) - Terelj NP - breakfast (day 16). Morning arrival on day 15 (subject to border formalities & inevitable delays) in Outer Mongolia. One of the most elevated countries in the world with endless steppe, nomadic tribes people, stunning Terelj National Park, double-humped (Bactrian) camels that are a cinch to ride in comparison to their single-humped cousins and the vast expanse of the Gobi Desert.

On arrival, transfer to nearby Terelj National Park. Elevated Terelj is cool and the scenic alpine surrounds spectacular. The protected area is host to diverse flora and fauna, and is famous for it's unique granite rock formations. Opportunities for outdoor pursuits abound.

The Mongolian ger is a sturdy wood and felt type tent. Ger means 'home' and it's your home on the steppe (level grassy unforested plains characteristic of Mongolia) for the next two nights.

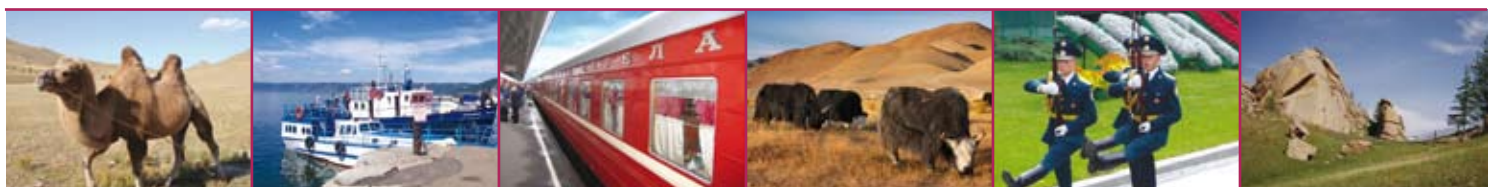
On day 16, breakfast and free day to get in touch with nature. Hike, horse ride (at additional cost), climb some rocks, the choice is yours. Lunch, dinner and overnight (2) - ger camp\*.

\*Due to extreme weather, clients undertaking a classic adventure during the winter can decide upon arrival whether to stay in permanent accommodation or a Mongolian ger.

Please note: Costsaver travellers spend days 15 & 16 at leisure in Ulaan Baatar (not ger camping in Terelj NP).

### day 17 - ulaan baatar

Terelj NP - Ulaan Baatar - breakfast. Transfer back to Ulaan Baatar stopping en route to visit a nomadic family. Enjoy free





## big ticket: itinerary

time exploring the sights on and just off Sükhbaatar Square. Despite the prominence of grim, utilitarian Soviet architecture, Ulaan Baatar (otherwise known as UB to ex-pats) is a laid-back provincial capital set in the rolling foothills of the Bogd mountain range, on the banks of the Tuul River. Due to its high elevation, located 1350 metres above sea level, Ulaan Baatar is the coldest capital in the world, so make sure you wrap up warm! Dinner and overnight - Ulaan Baatar hotel.

### day 18 - train

Ulaan Baatar - Beijing. Morning transfer to rail station for your onward train. Overnight - train.

### day 19 - beijing

Friday. On the final leg of our momentous journey we pass through Shaanxi province as we head to the nations capital. Arrival scheduled for mid-afternoon into Beijing.

See 'what you get' for content of a costsaver adventure.

**train upgrades:** If you are a solo traveller wishing to upgrade to a 1st class 2 berth cabin exclusively (or wanting to share with another member of the public), or a party of 3 wishing to exclusively occupy a 4 berth cabin, please contact us for rates and availability. Upgrades to 1st class cabins are subject to route and availability. Some trains may only be configured with one 1st class 2 berth cabin wagon (containing 9 cabins or 18 seats in total).

On services between Irkutsk and Ulan Ude, there are no 2 berth cabins available, and on the once-weekly service between Beijing and Ulaan Baatar seats are offered on a per person basis, so we cannot provide for a 'buy-out' of a 4 berth cabin to be occupied by 2 passengers, if a 2 berth cabin isn't available on that route. Moreover, from May - October, all routes get particularly busy, and it may prove more difficult to successfully obtain an upgrade to a 2 berth cabin on routes that would normally be easier to second such a cabin under normal circumstances. **on the go** will advise on an individual basis, the status of upgrade possibility.

**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.

**train schedules:** Chinese & Mongolian Railways operate the service from Ulaan Baatar to Beijing in turn. Please understand that different departure dates could alter the advertised journey slightly. Usually, this would entail an additional night or two in Mongolia or in the case of alternate trips, perhaps an additional night somewhere up the line. Please check with us at time of booking.

**time:** One of the most disorienting aspects of the Trans-Siberian trip is working out what time it really is! Having gotten used to Russian Time where everything works to what is known as Moscow Time, when you hit Mongolia or China, the time will change again. Mongolia has 2 time zones, though you'll only pass through one, and China has 3 time zones, though only Beijing Time is used for all Chinese trains). All long-distance Russian trains run on Moskovskaya Vremya or Moscow Time in Russia, the abbreviation for which is MB in Cyrillic or MV in English. Mongolia is 8 hours ahead of GMT. China is 8 hours ahead of GMT and operates in one time zone, so clocks are set according to Beijing time, meaning, given the size of the country, sunset and sunrise can occur at peculiar times! Pack a travel alarm clock.

**luggage:** A frameless backpack/ rucksack in favour of an unwieldy suitcase is recommended for your Trans-Siberian journey, as complimentary portage is not offered anywhere. Suitcase wheels get mired in the snow making it difficult to wheel your luggage, there are also often lots of stairs to climb and rigid cases are also hard to store in the cabin.

**homestays:** Homestays do vary, in that you may be staying with a local family, couple or single person. In some cases the home owner may actually move out so that you have the home to yourself. The local homes we use are generally very simple and basic with shared bathroom facilities. Please note that if you are travelling in a larger group it may be necessary for you to stay in separate houses because most homes are small and only have room for one or two guests.

### accommodation upgrades

We understand that some travellers may prefer their own privacy. As such, we offer accommodation upgrades.

Classic adventure travellers have the opportunity to upgrade from homestays to hotel accommodation (at an additional cost) in Yekaterinburg, Listvyanka, Irkutsk and Ulan Ude.

On our costsaver adventure we offer travellers the option to switch from homestay accommodation to a hostel in Yekaterinburg and upgrade to budget hotels in Irkutsk and Ulan Ude (at an additional cost).

Perhaps consider a combination of homestays and hotels - the choice is yours!

**Please note** - if choosing to upgrade, hotels and hostels are on a bed and breakfast basis and dinner is not provided. If choosing to upgrade to a hotel in Listvyanka, the banya will not be included.

Upgrades are subject to availability. Please visit our website - [www.onthegotours.com](http://www.onthegotours.com) or contact us for details and prices.

\*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.

