



"Djoser... Organized Adventures for Independent Minded Travelers"



Russia tour, 8 days





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Itinerary

- Day 1 Moscow
- Day 2 Moscow - the Kremlin
- Day 3 Moscow - Gorky Park or Bolshoi Theater
- Day 4 Moscow - Night Train to St. Petersburg
- Day 5 Arrival St. Petersburg
- Day 6 Saint Petersburg, the Hermitage and Petrus & Paulus Foress
- Day 7 Saint Petersburg, Peterhof or Marinski Theater
- Day 8 Saint Petersburg



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Day by day

Moscow

Day 1 Moscow

Day 2 Moscow, city walk to the center of power: Kremlin

We begin our tour in Moscow, the center of Russian power . The old part of the Russian capital is reminiscent of a rich past and shows that current Moscow is still very happy to show its wealth. Historic buildings and squares such as the impressive Kremlin and St. Basil's Cathedral with its fairytale colored turrets show this. Next to the Kremlin are the GUM and TSUM department stores where the Versace, Armani and Gucci brands welcome you.

An afternoon of shopping or wandering through the impressive galleries of the GUM department store and gazing at the shoppers is definitely worth it. At the time of the Soviet Union, the GUM was owned by the people and one of the few places where products were always in stock. The Lenin mausoleum with the preserved body of the leader of the Russian Revolution is located on Red Square.

Possession of the people: the metro system and the museums

Day 3 Moscow, Gorky Park or Bolshoy Theater

Day 4 Moscow - night train to Saint Petersburg

Russia Moscow metro system Gorki Park Djoser Another impressive property of the people is the metro system. Moscow is a large and vast city, but through the extensive and excellent metronet well to travel. Traveling by subway itself is already an experience. The first subway station, Sokolniki, was opened in 1935 and takes passengers to Park Kultury. At the end of this line is the Gorki Park . Especially on Sunday this is a wonderful place where you can see how the Russians entertain themselves in their free time. The amusement park with its stately fountains, water organ, carousel and Ferris wheel dates from the Soviet era, but has also been modernized with two roller coasters. Opposite is a garden with statues of fallen Soviet heroes who have had to give up their places on the central squares of Moscow.

In many museums in Moscow there is art from many earlier private collections. The Pushkin Museum has mainly 19th-century Western European impressionists, the Tretjakow Gallery is famous for the old icons and also offers an overview of Russian painting to the present. The elegant Nowodewitsji monastery is also worth a visit. At the cemetery we find the graves of many Russian celebrities, generals, politicians, writers and actors. We find modern art in the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art; Russian and international art is exhibited here. The Winzavod is an old factory hall where now a number of galleries have opened their doors. This is a place where hip concept stores and nice cafes



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have opened their doors. An image that we do not expect from Russia?

Russia Arbat market Djoser Strolling in the free hours you can go on the Arbat, a pedestrian promenade with shops, restaurants and many souvenir stalls. You will find many typical Russian things like icons and wooden matryoshka dolls. Nowadays modern versions of this are also for sale with all rulers of Russia from the twentieth century, from Nikolaj II (the smallest inside) to Putin (the outer one). You will also be surprised in this street by the difference between youngsters dressed in modern clothing and the old babushka's in their pale coats and headscarves.

It is a fun evening to go to a concert, ballet performance or an opera. The decoration of such performances alone is worthwhile. Keep in mind that the theater season is also quiet in Russia during the summer. The famous Russian circus is fun to attend and is also open during the summer months. In the winter months you can go ice skating on the Red Square or in the VDNK park.

St. Petersburg: Window to the Europe

Day 5 St. Petersburg arrival

Day 6 Saint Petersburg, the Hermitage & the Peter Paul fortress

We travel with the typical Russian night train to St. Petersburg, where we will continue our urban voyage of discovery. On the night train we are welcomed by our Provodnika who ensures that the coupe is clean and tidy. In addition, she and sometimes he, there is also a shop next to where bottled water and fresh and small refreshments are offered.

Saint Petersburg is without a doubt the most beautiful city in Russia. The elegant mix of Italian Baroque and Russian styles is reflected in many city palaces. Saint Petersburg was founded in the 18th century by order of Tsar Peter the Great, who wanted to make it his window on Europe. It is not for nothing that many inhabitants of this city think that Russia actually has two capitals.

Russia St. Petersburg city Djoser On the broad boulevard Nevsky Prospekt are large shops and terraces, where you can see the turbulent whole of a metropolis. This part of the city is intersected in Amsterdam by canals, which are bordered by beautiful palaces of the old aristocracy. Peter the Great has made his design of the city according to Amsterdam's model. He spent some time in Zaandam to work at a shipyard and learn the tricks of Dutch construction. On the Neva is the Winter Palace, formerly home of the tsar family. Now it houses, together with the outbuildings, the largest museum in the world, the Hermitage.

On the other side of the mighty Neva you see the Peter and Paul fortress, in 1703 the cradle of the city. In the church, the 18th and 19th-century tsars are buried and since 1998 in a separate chapel Nikolaj II and his family. The fort was also used as a prison during the tsarist period. Further ahead is the wooden house of Tsar Peter and the legendary armored cruiser Aurora.

Old and also New Saint Petersburg



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Day 7 Saint Petersburg, Peterhof or Mariinski theater

Day 8 Saint Petersburg

Besides all the riches and art treasures from a distant past, there is also a lot of new art to admire. Etagi Loft is located in an old factory and young artists have found a place here to showcase their creativity. There is a lovely terrace on the roof of the factory from where you have a nice view over the city. In any case, it is advisable to make a walking tour on the roofs of Saint Petersburg. Almost all houses are equally high and that means you have a wide view of another Russian world from above. The residents sit above a book to read or drink a beer and couples in love seek refuge. Well worth it!

Russia Smolny Cathedral Djoser Other notable points you should not miss are the Smolny Cathedral and the Alexander Newski Monastery with the cemetery for famous writers and composers. The Mariinski theater is the stage for opera and ballet. The Kirov ensemble that dances here is rated higher than the Moscow Bolshoi. On this scene around 1900 Pawlowa and Nijinski, later also Barishnikov and Noerejev, danced. It is possible to take a look behind the scenes of the Mikhailovksy Theater. One of the best ways to get to know Sint Petersburg is by bike. Rent a bike and discover the different neighborhoods around the city's famous canals. In the summer, a nocturnal bike ride is recommended: it is a bit quieter on the road and the atmosphere that arises at dusk when the night is at its darkest is truly magical.

A short distance outside the city are imposing outdoor residences of the 18th century tsars that can be visited on various excursions. In the tsar village Pushkin is the magnificent palace of Catherine the Great with all the splendor of the Russian 18th century. From the Hermitage you can sail to Petrodvorets by a fast boat. Here Peter the Great had a palace built in the style of Versailles, with a large complex of waterfalls and fountains in the garden, which eventually flow into the Gulf of Finland. After a few days of old and new culture, our trip comes to an end.

On the road with Djoser

There is no rigid itinerary for our trips. The travel days are of course fixed, but thr program can be varied according to the group and the tour guide. You are never obliged to participate. Those who prefer to explore on their own may do so. Your guide can give you suggestions. The groups consist of 16 participants. The maximum group size for these trips is 22 people.



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Practical information

Accommodations & Meals

We spend the night in mid-class hotels, where the rooms are always equipped with their own shower and toilet. The Russian hotels were built in the 1970s and 1980s in the typical rectilinear Soviet version. A dying phenomenon in the Russian hotel system is the dezjoernaja, the floor lady, who manages the room key, and provides drinks and hot water for tea.

Our usual hotels (subject to change)

Moscow Hotel Dynamo
St. Petersburg Hotel Obuhoff

Singles

Single travelers are, matched with other single travelers of the same sex. If you prefer to stay in a single room, you may request on your booking form, for an additional charge. (See DATES & PRICE page for cost summary)

Hotel Extension

If you would like to extend your trip at the beginning or end of the tour, please let us know. Extensions are subject to availability. (See DATES & PRICE page for cost summary)

Airport transfer are not included.

Meals

Breakfast is included with this trip. Breakfast consists of bread, a dish with cheese and sausage and a fried or boiled egg. Sometimes there is fruit juice and yogurt, at least tea and coffee. You can make your choice for lunch and dinner. In Moscow and St. Petersburg, a large number of new restaurants have been added in recent years. In the big hotels and restaurants, ordinary European dishes are prepared: soup, meat / fish with rice or potatoes. Yoghurt and salads are widely available. The dessert is usually limited to ice cream.

The national drink is tea. Coffee, always served black, is much less drunk. Tap water is good and clean, but does not always taste good and in Moscow and St. Petersburg drinking tap water is



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therefore not recommended. Here you can use the best bottles of water. In addition, the vodka flows richly in many restaurants, cafes, not to mention in the dining car of the night train. There are many different types of vodka available of different qualities. Of course, a glass of this national drink and pride can not be missed during this trip.

Flights & Transportation

Book your international flights from the States to Russia and back to correspond with the arrival and departure time of the participants arriving from Amsterdam. .

Book your flight to arrive at the same time or prior to their arrival so you will be available for the first group meeting, transfer or activity. Airport transfers are not provided.

If you book your departure at the same time, or shortly after their scheduled departure time, you can join the group on the group transfer to the airport. Otherwise you will need to arrange your own transfer.

The scheduled flights for the majority of the group, arriving from Amsterdam is as follows: Subject to change

KLM

Arrival Moscow 16:00

Depar St. Petersburg - 17:20

Local Transport

We travel with the night train from Moscow to Saint Petersburg. This is the perfect means of transport in this enormous country. Within the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg metro, tram and taxi are convenient means of transport.

Money Matters

The currency in Russia is the Ruble. Look for the current rate on oanda.com .

ATMs: there are ATMs in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Cash: euros accepted in small denominations.

Credit cards: can be used in some places in Russia, even in restaurants.

Out of pocket expenses:



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Budget for additional expenses such as meals, which are not included, entrance fees, optional excursions and personal expenses, See estimated costs on cost summary (Date & Prices page)

Tips

A tip jar is set up at the start of the trip, from which the (joint) tips are paid to the drivers, guides, hotel staff, etc. The guideline for the tip jar for this trip is \$25 per person. This does not include a tip for your guide. Tipping is appreciated and the amount up to your discretion.

Excursions

At Djoser you decide which sights you wish to visit. You may prefer to shop in one of the luxury department stores, while someone else wants to look around at a museum at ease or wander over the Red Square to watch daily life. In most cases you can go out on your own or with fellow travelers, with or without help from our tour guide, on foot or with local transport.

Admission fees are therefore not included in the fare, so you have all the freedom to determine your personal preferences.

During this trip the following excursions and points of interest are included in the itinerary:

- City walk through Moscow, with a visit to Red Square, the St. Basil's Cathedral, the Maria Ascension Cathedral, the GUM Department Store and the Kremlin.
 - Visit Nevsky Prospekt, the Hermitage and the Peter and Paul Fortress.
- White nights in Saint Petersburg: cultural activities during the longest days of the year.

During the trip, other excursions are possible that are certainly worthwhile. Examples of optional excursions are:

- A bike ride through Saint Petersburg or through Moscow
- Visit to Peterhof; a short distance from St. Petersburg are, for example, imposing outdoor residences of the 18th-century tsars that can be visited.
- Visits of a dance or ballet performance in one of the many theaters in Moscow and Saint Petersburg.

Visit to the Russian Vodka museum where not only the process of vodka making is told, but where the role of vodka is explained throughout history and what this tradition means for the Russian.

- Visit one of the theaters during the day and take a look behind the scenes of the Mikhailovsky Theater in Saint Petersburg.
 - The Cosmonautical Museum in Moscow.
- Bunker 42, or Stalin's Bunker, gives an interesting insight into the times of the Cold War.



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Travel Documents

Passport that must be valid for six months after the return journey.

A visa is required for Russia.

About 5 weeks before departure you will receive more information about the visa application. It is important that two blank pages are free for the visa in your passport.

You will receive instructions from us. We will provide you with the necessary Russia Invitation letter (See cost on Date & Prices page).

Health Issues & Insurance

Vaccinations against DTP and hepatitis A are recommended for this trip.

It is wise to pay some attention to what you eat. We also advise you to take a small medical kit with an aspirin and medicines for intestinal disorders. For the countryside, it is recommended to bring mosquito repellent.

Group Composition

Our groups tend to range from 10 to 20 participants. The majority of the travelers will come from the Netherlands and Belgium, with other countries occasionally represented. The international make-up of our groups is the attraction for many regular Djoser travelers and adds another cultural element to the trip. Typically, there are only one to five North Americans per group. You will find that almost all of your fellow travelers have an excellent command of English and most are very willing to socialize. An invitation to fellow travelers for a coffee or beer is a great way to break the ice, and the cozy is an easier setting for them to brush off rusty English skills! Group members tend to warm up to one another in a day or two. As with every tour group, compatibility has most to do with individual personalities.

Djoser trips are suited for active travelers of all ages. We do lots of walking and sometimes, you may find opportunities to rent a bike to explore. You will find our participants welcome opportunities for independent explorations.

The Dutch and Belgian travelers will fly as a group from Amsterdam. You will meet the group and tour leader at the hotel. Your guide will help to get you settled in!



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Tour Leaders & Support Staff

An enthusiastic tour guide escorts the journey. Your guide is Dutch,. He or she will speak Dutch and English to the group. Our travel guides are very experienced and enthusiastic travelers and tell nice facts about the destination along the way. They ensure that the trip runs smoothly and are the point of contact for questions and wishes. The own passion, combined with extensive training and induction procedure, forms the basis for their expertise and professionalism.

Climate & Geography

Russia is a vast country with many climate zones. In the part where we travel, there is a continental climate with warm summers and very cold winters. In the spring and autumn you have to take into account cool days and cold nights. The temperature during the day then fluctuates between 10 ° and 20 ° C. In the summer months the temperature is higher, but then there is an occasional shower. The days are very long in the summer. In St. Petersburg, during the so-called "White nights" in the month of June, the sun is not or barely submerged. In any case, it will not be completely dark.