



TourMagination

discovery+community

Moscow & St. Petersburg

May 9-17, 2021

Leaders: Leonard & Mary Friesen



Peterhof. Photo: sergejf

Discover the history and culture of Russia as you explore Moscow and St. Petersburg during four days in each city. St. Petersburg was the imperial capital for two centuries and is still considered the premier cultural centre of Russia. Moscow became the political capital in 1918 at the dawn of the Soviet era. Learn about Lenin, Stalin, and the tsars. See many famous sights including the Winter Palace—once home to the Russian tsars, Peterhof Palace and Gardens, the Kremlin, Red Square, wartime cemeteries, and stunning cathedrals. Tour storyteller Len Friesen is Professor of History at Wilfrid Laurier University. He teaches Russian history and speaks Russian fluently. Mary and Len lived in Russia during Gorbachev's time and have many stories to share. For an enhanced travel experience, consider combining this tour with the Mennonite History in Ukraine and Istanbul Tour, April 30 – May 9, 2021.

Itinerary

Sunday, May 9 Moscow

Arrive in Moscow from home cities or following the Mennonite History in Ukraine and Istanbul tour. Settle into your hotel and enjoy a meal together with fellow tour members. Optional evening walkabout in the city to get your bearings.

Monday, May 10 Moscow

Take a guided tour of the Kremlin Armoury—which stored weapons and royal treasures beginning in 1508 and became a museum in 1813. Today it is home to many unique collections of Russian, Western, and Eastern European art and cultural objects, including the Imperial Crown of Russia and the ivory throne of Ivan the Terrible. Have lunch at the famous GUM department store, then explore the ancient centre of Moscow, including historic Red Square, on a walking tour. Following dinner, relax on your own or join Len and Mary travelling on the Moscow Metro—with no two stations alike.

Tuesday, May 11 Moscow

Discover the beauty of the Tretyakov Gallery, which houses the greatest collection of fine Soviet-era art in the world. Stop at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour to view their stunning worship space in this, the tallest Orthodox church in the world. At the Novodevichy Cemetery see beautifully sculpted tombstones and visit the graves of famous Russians including Anton Chekov, Raisa Gorbachev, Boris Yeltsin, Stalin's wife Svetlana, and Nikita Khrushchev. This evening, you can choose to attend the circus, go to a musical performance, or take a stroll with Len and Mary.

Wednesday, May 12 Moscow

The last day in Moscow is yours to see the city however you choose. Go back to places of interest, see something new, shop, or whatever your heart desires. Your knowledgeable tour leaders will give you plenty of recommendations.

Thursday, May 13 St. Petersburg

After a restful morning, spend the afternoon on an express train to St. Petersburg. This evening, get oriented to St. Petersburg on an optional guided walk with Len and Mary, who have lived in and travelled to this city many times.

Friday, May 14 St. Petersburg

Begin your day with a tour of the famed Winter Palace and Hermitage Museum, which boasts an impossibly large collection of paintings and artifacts housed in six striking buildings constructed in the 18th and 19th centuries. En route to the museum, see significant landmarks such as the statues of Nicholas I and Peter the Great. Spend the afternoon on a tour of the Peter and Paul Fortress—the original citadel of St. Petersburg and burial place of the Tsars from the time of Peter the Great. Pass by the Summer Gardens and Field of Mars on your return to the hotel. This evening, unwind at the hotel, or opt for an excursion to the ballet at the Imperial Winter Palace Theatre or another venue.

Fare per person:

CAD: Double Occupancy \$4,950; Single supplement \$1,109

USD: Double Occupancy \$3,929; Single Supplement \$887

Fare includes

- Hotel accommodations
- Group airport transfer
- All transportation within tour
- All breakfasts and dinners
- Expert tour leaders and guides
- All entrance fees included in itinerary
- Gratuities for drivers, guides and group meals

Fare excludes

- International airfare
- Airport transfers if separate from group
- Lunches
- Optional activities
- Tourist visa
- Travel medical (out-of-country emergency) and cancellation/interruption insurance

Saturday, May 15 St. Petersburg

An exciting day awaits with a trip to Peterhof by hydrofoil, for a guided tour of the gold-trimmed Grand Palace with its 30 plus rooms, fountains, and gardens. This afternoon, drive to the Piskaryovskoye Cemetery—an enormous memorial cemetery dedicated to those who died during the Siege of Leningrad. Learn about its little-known connection to Russia's current President Vladimir Putin. There will be some optional excursions this evening.

Sunday, May 16 St. Petersburg

Just like in Moscow, you get a day to explore the city on your own. Of course Len and Mary will be able to provide you many suggestions of delightful things to see and do in St. Petersburg. Tonight, gather for dinner with your travelling companions to talk over all your experiences in Russia.

Monday, May 17

Depart for home with stories and insights into Russian and Soviet culture and history.

Insurance

Travel medical (out-of-country emergency) and cancellation/interruption insurance are not mandatory but are highly recommended.

Payments

Rates shown are in effect 10/19. Though every effort is made to maintain established prices, TM reserves the right to adjust prices should it become necessary. The price is guaranteed when paid in full. We accept cheque and credit card payments. Credit card payments are charged a 3% fee.

Important note: Costs could increase if you sign up less than 90 days before a tour begins

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