



St Volodymyr's Cathedral. Photo credit: jennifer boyer



Mennonite Church in Petershagen. Photo credit: TourMagination

On this tour of Ukraine, which includes a special visit to Istanbul, engage with the Russian Mennonite story past and present. Visit the Stalinist city of Zaporizhye and the former colonies Chortitza and Molotschna, which were settled by Mennonites in the late 1700's. Expert guide Len Friesen will shed light on the Mennonite story within the rich context of Tsarist and Soviet history, as well as present-day realities and challenges. During visits to the colonies, explore villages related to your family roots. This tour includes several optional excursions balanced with times of rest and reflection that will appeal to people of a variety of energy levels. Tour storyteller Len Friesen is the Associate Professor of History and Global Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University and a member of Waterloo North Mennonite Church. For an enhanced travel experience, and a fuller understanding of the Mennonite story in Ukraine, consider combining this tour with the Moscow & St. Petersburg tour, May 9-17, 2021.

Itinerary

Friday, April 30 Istanbul

Tour begins in Istanbul, the famed capital of Turkey. Meet your fellow travellers over dinner.

Saturday, May 1 Istanbul

Learn about the connections in Mennonite history to Istanbul as you explore iconic sights in the city. Walk through the Hippodrome Square, the former sporting and social centre of Constantinople which hosted chariot races during the Roman period. See the Hagia Sophia—once a Greek Orthodox cathedral, then an Ottoman-era mosque, and now a museum. Hagia Sophia is an architectural gem featuring great marble pillars, a main dome, and stunning windows, and is home to some of the world's finest mosaic art. Across the way, the still-functioning Blue Mosque gets its name from the blue tiles that cover the interior walls. Visit Topkapi Palace, former dwelling of the Ottoman Sultans, with its extensive collection of treasures. End the day with a stroll through the Grand Bazaar.

Sunday, May 2 Istanbul

Discover another fabulous market—the Egyptian Spice Bazaar, the city's centre for spice trade since the 17th century. Relax on a cruise down the Bosphorus Strait, enjoying the sights of Istanbul from a different perspective. Visit a historic Greek neighbourhood with old mansions, churches, and synagogues dating back to the Byzantine and Ottoman eras. Stop at the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. George, the foremost Eastern Orthodox cathedral. Learn more about Istanbul's history of inter-religious coexistence in the historic Jewish Quarter. During free time, discover more of Istanbul's wonders on your own.

Monday, May 3 Zaporizhye

Board a group flight this morning to travel to the heart of the region in Ukraine where Mennonites used to live. Tour Zaporizhye, a city built by Stalin in the 1930s on top of Chortitza. Zaporizhye is known for being the epicentre of a revolution that unleashed great terror for Mennonites.

Tuesday, May 4 Chortitza Colony

Chortitza, the mother colony of Mennonites in Russia and Ukraine, once had 19 flourishing villages and 12,000 people. Tour some villages plus a few of the main schools and church buildings built by Mennonites during their Golden Age. See the remains of the old oak tree (believed to be 700 years old) that Mennonites once used as a meeting place.

Wednesday, May 5 Molotschna Colony

Travel to former Mennonite villages of the Molotschna colony. Nothing can describe the special experience of visiting the land where your forefathers and mothers lived and died. Though few original buildings remain, seeing the land and hearing the stories is sure to give you new insights about Mennonites and your family. Enjoy a meal at the Mennonite Centre in Halbstadt to cap off a meaningful day.

Thursday, May 6 Zaporizhye

Today is a flexible day that can be used to arrange individual tours to see villages or sites important to your family. Or you can explore Zaporizhye—

Fare per person:

CAD: Double Occupancy \$3,650 ; Single Supplement \$541

USD: Double Occupancy \$2,898 ; Single Supplement \$395

Fare includes

- Hotel accommodations
- All land transportation within the tour
- Group airport transfers
- All breakfasts, all dinners
- Lunches in Ukraine
- Expert tour leader & local guides
- All entrance fees included in itinerary
- Gratuities for drivers, guides, and group meals

Fare excludes

- International airfare
- In-tour airfare and any associated costs
- Airport transfers if separate from group
- Tourist visa for Turkey
- Lunches in Istanbul
- Drinks with meals
- Travel medical (out-of-country emergency) and cancellation/interruption insurance

possibilities include shopping at the daily market or walking through the Voznesensky Park on the banks of the Dnieper River. We may also connect with MCC representatives in the area.

Friday, May 7 Zaporizhye to Kiev

Relax on a train ride through the countryside to Kiev, Ukraine's capital city. After you arrive, stretch your legs during free time to explore the city.

Saturday, May 8 Kiev

As you learn more about Kiev, see the Pechersk Lavra, a historic but still active orthodox Christian monastery that is also a UNESCO World Heritage site. Visit the impressive 100-metre Rodina Mat' (Motherland) monument, then stop at St. Michael's Golden Domed monastery. You'll also see St. Sophia's nearby. This evening, you may attend an optional ballet performance.

Sunday, May 9

Depart Ukraine with a greater understanding of your ancestors and the land they called home. Return home or continue on the Moscow & St. Petersburg tour.

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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