

EXPLORE!

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DISCOUNTED

Russia's Golden Ring

RUSSIA - TRIP CODE GR

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

This trip is designed to be an introduction to Moscow and St. Petersburg, but also to experience the Golden Ring. Away from the bustling cities, there is rolling countryside and examples of classic Russian architecture including some of its most beautiful churches and oldest towns.

- **Moscow** - See the city's main sights including the Red Square, Kremlin and Saint Basil's Cathedral
- **Golden Ring** - Explore the fascinating Trinity Monastery of Saint Sergius, Sergiev Posad, Vladimir, Suzdal and more
- **St. Petersburg** - Discover the attractive architecture, peaceful canals and the world famous Hermitage Museum

**INCLUDED MEALS**

Breakfast: 8

**TRIP STAFF**Explore Tour
Leader
Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)**TRANSPORT**Bus
Boat
Train**ACCOMMODATION**8 nights
comfortable hotel
1 nights simple
overnight train**TRIP PACE:**

Full on

**GROUP SIZE:**

12 - 18

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in Moscow

Arrive in Moscow. It is one of the largest cities in the world, yet the historic centre is relatively compact and easily navigable on foot or by using the famed Moscow metro, with its ornate decorative statues and crystal chandeliers at a number of stations. Within the historic centre, there is grand and captivating architecture around every corner.

For those arriving on time our Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 7pm for the welcome meeting and for those that wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner. There are no other activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Moscow at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into either Moscow Domodedovo International Airport (DME) or Sheremetyevo International Airport (SVO), which are both around one and a half hours' drive from our hotel, depending on the traffic conditions, which can be busy. Should you miss the welcome meeting, your Leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, perhaps you might choose to explore some of Russia's capital independently. Our hotel is situated a few minutes' walk from the Partizanskaya Metro Station making it easy to travel in to the historic centre, reaching Red Square in approximately 15 minutes. Next door to our hotel are a flea market and the Vernissage, where folk crafts and antiques are on sale.

If you have extended your stay for a night, then you might like to visit Lenin's Mausoleum. It's open between 10am and 1pm, entry is free, but it can be closed at times for restoration work and it is always closed on public holidays, Mondays and Fridays and there is often a bit of a queue.

If you would like to visit the opera or the ballet during one of your evenings in Moscow then we'd strongly recommend booking tickets before your arrival, as the shows are very popular and sell out quickly.

If you're booking your own flights then please ensure that you let us know whether you're arriving into Domodedovo International or Sheremetyevo International Airport so we can arrange your transfer accordingly.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Izmailovo Gamma (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Orientation tour of Moscow including the Red Square

Moscow is the pivotal centre of Russia and there is much to see and do here. We start our journey today with a metro orientation tour which ends at the Red Square, still paved in its original stones. The metro itself is an experience being elaborately decorated with chandeliers and mosaics and we'll get to see the most iconic stations during our metro tour. Here you will have an option to visit Lenin's Mausoleum and St Basils or visit one of the many fine art galleries before setting out on a bus to visit outlining areas of Moscow including Lenin Hills and get to see Novodevichy Convent and Cemetery from the outside, with red and white crenelated walls and golden dome, it is one of Moscow's most attractive monasteries. We end our day today at the city centre.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Izmailovo Gamma (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE





SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Excursion to the Kremlin with the chance to visit the Armoury

On our second day we visit the famous Moscow Kremlin on Red Square - a city within a city. The triangular walls of this incredible complex of buildings enclose three fine palaces, cathedrals, belfries and towers, representing Russia throughout its glorious past. Later we recommend an optional visit to the Kremlin Armoury, which contains a stunning collection of imperial jewels and regalia, including the 16th century English silver sent to Ivan the Terrible by Queen Elizabeth I, with an eye to matrimony.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Izmailovo Gamma (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - See St. Sergius Trinity Monastery and Vladimir; arrive in Dvoriki

Today we begin our visit by road to the famous cities known as the Zolotoye Koltso or the 'Golden Ring'. Each of these ancient towns in its own way represents the historic soul of the Russian people.

We make a slight detour en route to Vladimir to visit Sergiev Posad. Here we will marvel at the golden domes and great bell-tower of the Trinity Monastery of Saint Sergius, which is a main centre for the Russian Orthodox Church. Founded in the 1340's by the crusading monk, Sergei Radonezhsky, who lies buried here under the Trinity Cathedral, the church buildings copy the style of a Byzantine Cruciform. Peter the Great regularly used this monastery. Today, the town is famed for the craftsmanship of its wooden toys, particularly the Matrioshka; nests of wooden dolls which fit one inside the other.

This afternoon we continue to Vladimir, which is situated on a semi-circular hill on the Klyazma riverside. Founded in 1108 by Prince Vladimir Monomakh, the Grand Prince of Kiev, many of its striking

12th century monuments still remain intact. Among the splendid sights here are the Cathedrals of the Assumption and Saint Demetrius. The latter is a Medieval gem and one of the finest in the whole country. Its high reliefs, carved on the front of the cathedral, depict strangely mixed characters from classical history, such as King Solomon and Alexander the Great. Also of note are Vladimir's Golden Gates, which were ambitiously modelled on the gates of Kiev and acted as important fortifications to defend the city.

After our guided tour of Vladimir we'll drive to the nearby village of Dvoriki and to our unique woodland hotel. Our accommodation for tonight is in splendid isolation within a picturesque forest and the buildings are log built. The hotel has its own restaurant, bar, indoor pool, spa and horses on site. It a great spot to relax in for the evening and enjoy the Russian wilderness.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Veles (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Visit the historic town of Suzdal en route to Rostov Veliky

This morning our first stop is in Suzdal, which is perhaps the most beautiful of all the old cities in the Golden Ring. It was already a settlement in the 10th century, but began to flower architecturally in the 12th century under Yury Dolgoruky. We will be able to see the exterior of the Kremlin, which was rebuilt after being pillaged and burnt by the Mongols in 1238. We'll also visit to the north of the town, the great Spaso-Evfimiyevsky Monastery, which was founded 14th century and was once one of the five largest monasteries in all of Russia. However, from 1767 to 1907 the monastery took on a darker purpose as a prison, for those classed as being lunatics, which includes disgraced nobles, free-thinkers and opposition politicians. The most outstanding building within its walls is the Cathedral of the Transfiguration, with five domes and several superb murals. On the far side of the river we see the Convent of the Intercession, which was also long used as a prison for the unwanted wives of nobles (Ivan the Terrible, his father, and Peter the Great, all exiled their wives here for various reasons). Further down the river we visit the remarkable Field Museum of Wooden Architecture, which has a distinctive collection of ancient wooden churches, manor houses and windmills that were all dismantled and re-erected here from across northern Russia.

Continuing our journey we head to Rostov Veliky. Located on the shores of Lake Nero, Rostov Veliky (Rostov the Great), is one of Russia's oldest cities. We visit the Kremlin, considered by many locals to be the finest outside Moscow. Its strategic position on top of a hill and the impressive kilometre long white walls, make the Kremlin the main landmark in this picturesque town in the Golden Ring. Also included in our sightseeing is the Enamel Museum inside the Kremlin. The art of enamel work was developed in this town at the end of the 18th century. We'll get to appreciate both ancient and modern examples of this beautiful technique.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Moskovsky Trakt (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Tour of Yaroslavl; overnight train to St. Petersburg

This morning we drive to Yaroslavl which stands proudly at the meeting point of the two rivers, Volga and Kotorosl, and is rich in ancient monuments. It takes its name from Prince Yaroslavl of Rostov who captured the settlement here. The town can also claim to have founded Russian dramas: Fyodor Volkov established the first professional theatre company here in 1748. On arrival we'll have an orientation tour of the main attractions, visit one of Yaroslavl's famed churches and the Transfiguration Monastery. We'll then enjoy a short boat trip on the River Volga followed by free time to relax and have dinner before we take the overnight train to St. Petersburg. Our accommodation is in four-berth compartments with bedding provided. The overnight train we plan to use for this holiday departs at 22.25 and arrives to St Petersburg at 11.22 the following day.



ACCOMMODATION:
Sleeper Train to St Petersburg



Grade: Simple Overnight Train



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Orientation tour of St. Petersburg

St. Petersburg is famous for its romantic 'White Nights', the period from May until July when the sun practically never sets. The city (formerly known as Leningrad) was founded by Peter the Great as his 'Window on the West', and built on the hundred islets that form the delta of the Neva river. It must surely be acclaimed as one of the most beautiful cities in Europe - some would say the most beautiful. Peter's original idea for its location as a naval base on the Baltic Coast was certainly a huge mistake as the port is ice-bound for one third of the year. Nevertheless, it became the city of great writers like Pushkin and Dostoyevski and it still retains much of the romantic spirit of those bygone days. On arrival this morning

we will conduct a sightseeing tour of the city by bus, before going to our hotel to check in. Please note breakfast is not included on the train.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Golden Age (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 8 - Visit to the Winter Palace and Hermitage Museum

This morning we visit the magnificent Hermitage Museum, which was augmented by Catherine the Great. The Hermitage is unquestionably one of the finest art galleries in the world, containing the works of masters like Leonardo da Vinci, Titian, Raphael, Velazquez, Rubens and Rembrandt, as well as contemporary pieces by Matisse and Picasso. This afternoon you have the option to visit St. Peter and Paul's fortress, the final resting place of many of Russia's tsars and their families.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Golden Age (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 9 - Excursion to the Peterhof Palace and Gardens

This morning we travel by bus to the Peterhof Palace and Gardens, which is often referred to as the Russian Versailles. The opulent palace is set within gardens filled with golden statues and elaborate

fountains including the centre-piece of the Grande Cascade. The palace was originally built by Peter the Great, as his Grand Palace, and it was also much loved by his daughter Empress Elizabeth who expanded it and added the famed fountains. The Palace like most in Russia was unfortunately badly damaged by the invading Nazi soldiers during World War II, but it was one of the first to be restored and was reopened to the public fully by 1952. This afternoon is free for you to further explore St. Petersburg or you have the option to visit the Yusupov Palace where the 'mad monk' Rasputin was famously murdered.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Golden Age (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 10 - Trip ends in St. Petersburg

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in St. Petersburg.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from St. Petersburg at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from Pulkovo Airport (LED), which is around one hours' drive.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and country information

Russia

Climate

In European Russia snows usually start in November and stay till late March/early April, when a great thaw occurs with temperatures ranging from about 5°C in October and April to -15°C in January.

Time difference to GMT

+3

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Orthodox Christianit, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism

Language

Russian

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

On day three you could visit the Kremlin Armoury Museum. It is 2,750 RUB (Russian Rubles) per person for 11 or more people or 4,000 RUB per person for groups of under 10 people for a guided tour. Entrance only with audio guides available in English is 1,000 RUB per person, plus a refundable deposit of 1,500 RUB.

Opera or ballet £45-£135 depending on the show and seats you choose. If you would like to visit the opera or the ballet during the evenings of days one, two or three then we strongly recommend booking tickets before your arrival, as the shows are very popular and sell out quickly. You can book your tickets online directly with the theatre production company before leaving the UK. As we have limited time in Moscow, you may wish to extend your trip to see the opera or ballet if this a must for you. To get to the Bolshoi Theatre, you will need to take the metro from Partizanskaya Metro Station, travelling west on the dark blue line for five stops to Ploshchad Revolyutsii. From here it is a short walk to the theatre (less than 10 minutes) and is very clearly signposted.

Concert of Maestro Borodiansky which usually held at Glazunov Museum on day three 1780-2140 RUB per person. Please note this optional is subject to availability and your Explore Leader will advise of this on arrival. The cost shown here is just for the ticket to the concert and museum/gallery entrance fee, transport will be paid for separately and locally.

St. Petersburg:

On day eight you could choose to visit Saint Peter and Paul Fortress, entrance is 8150 RUB one person or 1815 RUB per person for groups of 4-15

On day nine you could choose to visit Yusupov Palace entrance is 8050 RUB one person or 3215 RUB per person for groups of 4-15

Prices for the above optional trips include a guide, entrance fee to the site and necessary transport.

Opera or ballet £35-£160 depending on the show and seats you choose. If you would like to visit the opera or the ballet during the evenings of days seven, eight or nine then we'd strongly recommend booking tickets before your arrival, as the shows are very popular and sell out quickly. You can book your tickets online directly with the theatre production company before leaving the UK. As we have limited time in St. Petersburg, you may wish to extend your trip to see the opera or ballet if this a must for you.

Other entrance fees in St. Petersburg for attraction you may like to visit on days seven, eight or nine:

Saint Isaacs Cathedral entrance is 350 RUB person.

Church of the Saviour of the Spilled Blood entrance is 350 RUB person.

Cruiser Aurora Museum entrance is 600 RUB person.

Alexander Nevsky Lavra Monastery entrance is 400 RUB per person.

Clothing

July and August are the hottest months and lightweight cotton clothing is best. During spring and autumn temperatures can be lower or drop during the evenings and there is also a stronger possibility of rain, although light rainwear may be needed at any time of year. A warm fleece/jacket is recommended for cooler evenings.

Ladies should take a headscarf and ensure their shoulders are covered when entering churches.

Footwear

We recommend taking comfortable walking shoes for exploring and trainers or sandals for relaxing.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and a daysac for personal items. Remember that you'll have to carry your own luggage, so don't overload yourself.

Equipment

Take some insect repellent for the Golden Ring and St. Petersburg. A money belt is essential, especially in Russia. A swimsuit for saunas may also be taken. We advise taking a water bottle for day to day use.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. You may however, want to recognise a leader that has done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It is a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we would recommend £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.

Local crew

Although voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow approximately £30 of local currency for tipping.

In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the trip.

Russia

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£12.00 - 16.00	£2.00 - 4.00	£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Rouble.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Russian Roubles can be obtained in advance from all the usual UK currency exchange providers but it may need to be pre-ordered and the rate might be better in Russia. If you do not wish to use ATMs, we recommend you take your money in Euros or US Dollars cash which are easily exchangeable into Roubles. US Dollar notes should be issued after 1990 and in good condition (not torn or marked).

Where To Exchange

Most major towns and cities – your tour leader will advise.

ATM Availability

Widely available in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in most restaurants, museums and larger shops in Moscow and St. Petersburg. A few smaller shops and restaurants may accept cash only. In other parts of Russia credit and debit cards may not always be accepted.

Travellers Cheques

Travellers cheques are accepted in Moscow and St Petersburg but are very time-consuming to change and attract unfavourable exchange rates

Transport Information

Bus, Boat, Train

Accommodation notes

For the overnight train journey we will use sleeper carriages with four bunk beds with bedding provided (two beds on floor level and two above) per compartment and with a shared toilet and washbasin in each carriage. There are no shower facilities on board. Luggage is stored under the bottom bunk beds and above the cabin door for the top bunks. There is the possibility that you will be sharing a cabin with non-Explore passengers and they cabins are mixed gender. You can experience authentic rail travel with the local people and it's a great way of getting from place to place during the night, so you maximise on the amount of time you have in each city during the day to explore. Take snacks, drinks, toilet roll, hand sanitiser and an open mind with you for maximum enjoyment.

In Russia the majority of buildings including the hotels still use the old Soviet District Heating System. Large power plants supply both electricity and hot water and from autumn to spring the central heating provided is at a set temperature, which can't be individually adjusted. So this means that it can be hotter inside the hotel bedrooms than you'd expect, but this can't be turned down, so it's best to open a window if you are too warm.

Most of the hotels in the main cities were constructed during Soviet times and so tend to be large and can have ostentatious decor. The hotel we use in Moscow is in this style.

In Moscow our hotel is by Partizanskaya Metro Station and is approximately 15 minutes metro journey from the Red Square. Within walking distance of our hotel is the Kremlin in Izmailovo where you can visit a number of museums and see different Russian architectural styles. Here you'll find the Russian Toys Museum, Russian Fleet Museum and the Russian Vodka History Museum. Next door to here is a flea market and the Vernissage where folk crafts and antiques are on sale. Nearby there's also Izmailovsky Island surrounded by the Serebryano-Vinogradnye ponds. The island contains 18-19th centuries architectural monuments and was created by the second Tsar of the Romanov family. One of the largest city parks in Europe, Izmailovo Park, is also close by.

In St. Petersburg, our hotel is a short walk from Kazan Cathedral. It's around 20 minutes' walk from the city centre or 5 minutes' walk from Tekhnologicheskyy Institut Metro Station. Our hotel is in the Admiralteyskiy District where you'll find the Mariinsky Theatre and a number of restaurants, bars and cafes nearby.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Russia:

All nationalities require a single entry visa in order to enter Russia. As part of the visa requirements, you will need to obtain a Russian Travel Invitation/Voucher from the local Russian authorities. Explore will request this on your behalf approximately eight weeks prior to departure. Please allow a minimum of five working days for the invitation letter to be processed. Due to the visa processing times, Explore are unable to accept bookings within one month of travel.

For British passport holders:

All applicants must fill out the online visa application form for a tourist visa, which is found at: <https://visa.kdmid.ru/PetitionChoice.aspx>

Before your application can be completed, you must then go in person to the Russia Visa Processing Centre in London, Manchester or Edinburgh to provide biometric information (fingerprints). There is currently no appointment system in place, so you will be seen on a first come, first serve basis. The biometric process is not optional, and any applicant who refuses to provide their fingerprints will automatically be refused a visa. This information is not stored and applicants will therefore need to travel to the Processing Centre each time a visa is required. In the event that an application is rejected due to inaccurate or incomplete information, fingerprints must be resubmitted as part of the revised application. For more information regarding this process, we recommend contacting the Russian Embassy directly. Their website is: <http://rusemb.org.uk/visa/>

Our local agent is the Russian National Tourist Office and if you are able to travel to their London office then you can take advantage of a special visa rate of £160 per visa, which includes the Consulate Fee, Visa Centre Fee and VAT. The service includes their pre-check service, assistance with the visa form, biometric submission at their office and submission to the Russian Embassy. You can visit them on any weekday (except bank holidays) between 9am to 1pm to submit your application. If you would like to use this service then please quote 'Explore' at the time of making your application to receive this special rate.

Russian National Tourist Office address is:

202 Kensington Church Street

Kensington

London

W8 4DP

For further information regarding this service, please visit their website: www.visitrussia.org.uk/tourist-

Once your application is made and your visa is being processed, your passport will be held by the Russian Embassy for around 20 days. If you need your passport returning more urgently than this, then this is a possibility, but further express visa charges will apply.

It is essential that you provide Explore with the correct passport information at the time of booking, as this will be required in order to request the Russian Travel Invitation/Voucher, as well as pre-book your train tickets. Corrections and amendments will incur additional charges, so please double check that the information we have for you is up-to-date and correct; this includes your passport number, full name as per passport (including middle names), date of birth and place of birth. If you renew or reissue your passport after submitting the details to us then train tickets must be cancelled and purchased again, which involves extra costs and may result in you being in a different train carriage to the rest of the group. If you intend to renew your passport, please let Explore know at the point of booking and please ensure that we have your new passport information no later than eight weeks prior to travel.

You will be required to enter a reference number and a confirmation number on your visa application. These can be found at the top of your Russian Travel Invitation/Voucher under the heading 'Voucher Number'. The six-digit long number is the reference and the four-digit number is the confirmation number.

In order for Explore to provide the necessary documentation to support your visa application, all pre and post tour accommodation must be booked through Explore and not booked independently.

Please ensure that your passport has a minimum of six months validity from the date of return to your home country and that you have at least two adjacent blank pages. You will also need one recent colour passport-size photograph taken against a white background.

All other nationalities not holding a British passport should check with the Russian Embassy.

All visa information is subject to change regularly, so please check with your local consulate for the most up-to-date advice for the countries you are visiting.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them [here](#).

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Included activities

Please note that at many attractions and sites you visit during the tour, you will not be allowed to take coats or bags inside. These will have to be checked into the cloakrooms and so you are advised to carry a small bag for wallets and purses, mobile phones, personal docs etc. for whilst you are inside the venue.

Ability to swim

No

Russia

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A, polio and diphtheria. Tick-borne encephalitis is recommended by some medical sources if travelling in certain areas of Eastern Europe, at specific times of the year. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling. The Russian government advises that certain medications must be declared upon entry into the country, and you may also be required to carry a prescription with you. You should consult your local consulate for up to date information prior to travel.

Additional Information



Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**