THE TRANS-SIBERIAN TRAVEL COMPANY

TS-SP-08 TRANS-SIBERIAN & BAIKAL

“We regard each and every trip we organise as a trip of a lifetime.”
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ABOUT US

Established as one of the UK’s leading, independent and family owned Trans-Siberian and China tour specialists our focus is on well thought through private and tailor made rail adventures. Our emphasis is very much on creating the right trip for you and we work closely with you in order to achieve this. We regard the Trans-Siberian as a trip of lifetime and use our experience and knowledge to achieve this for you.

ALL TOURS ARE FINANCIALLY PROTECTED

We are members of ABTA (Y1699) and our tours are ATOL protected (license 10287) giving you full peace of mind when booking with us both for monies paid to us as well as the code of conduct and high standards we are both delighted to and required to uphold.
Dear Sir / Madam,

Please find full details of this itinerary in this dossier. If you have any questions at all please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,
The Trans-Siberian Travel Company.

THE TRANS-SIBERIAN TRAVEL COMPANY
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- ATOL License 10287

THIS TOUR IN BRIEF

The original Trans-Siberian route all the way to Vladivostok with a stop at Lake Baikal. Start in ST PETERSBURG, Russia’s beautiful cultural capital before an high speed Sapsan train on to MOSCOW where the Trans-Siberian begins. Your first leg takes you to IRKUTSK passing from European Russia deep into Siberia with time spent on the shore of LAKE BAIKAL. Continue on into Russia’s remote and wild far east reaching the port city of VLADIVOSTOK at the end of the world’s longest train line.

PRICE GUIDANCE*

UK £ 2,175 per person

THE PRICE IS BASED ON 2 PEOPLE TRAVELLING IN SHARED SECOND CLASS CABINS ON ALL OVERNIGHT TRAINS.

UPGRADE TO YOUR OWN CABIN FROM UK £ 515 per person

*Prices vary by date, availability and the number of people in your party. Please contact us for a firm quote.
DAY 1

ARRIVAL ST PETERSBURG

YOUR TRANS-SIBERIAN HOLIDAY STARTS IN BEAUTIFUL ST PETERSBURG

Welcome to St Petersburg, Russia’s cultural centre and arguably one of the world’s most beautiful cities - an architectural wonder often referred to as the “Venice of the North.” An English speaking driver will meet you for a transfer by private car to your hotel. The rest of the day is free to start exploring this stunning city.

MEALS INCLUDED: None today.

Trip Tip: Your ticket as far as Moscow will waiting for you to collect at the hotel reception.

YOUR EXCLUSIVE TRIP GUIDEBOOK

Tap in to our knowledge with a copy of our exclusive guidebook personalised to your trip. These books are packed full of tips about the trains, what to take, currency, train timetables, destination guides and much more. The perfect way to prepare for your Trans-Siberian experience with us!
DAY 2

ST PETERSBURG

AN IDEAL 3 HOUR INTRODUCTORY WALKING TOUR OF THE CITY BEFORE A FREE AFTERNOON

Begin your time in St Petersburg with this superb introduction to this beautiful city with your private guide, learning about the history and architecture as well as life in today’s St Petersburg. The tour focuses on Nevsky Prospect including the Palace Square, St. Isaac’s Cathedral, the Winter Palace and the Admiralty amongst many other points of interest. The tour will usually finish on arrival at the Peter and Paul Fortress where you can visit the burial place of all the Russian Tzars from Peter the Great to Nicholas II.

Free time for the rest of the day, perhaps to explore the Peter & Paul Fortress or some of the many other sights. Alternatively, St Petersburg is an excellent place to walk and admire the architecture stopping at the occasional cafe!

MEALS INCLUDED: Hotel Breakfast.

Trip Tip: Today’s tour is designed to introduce you to St Petersburg and does not include entrance fees. Individual sights need to be visited at a later time.
DAY 3

ST PETERSBURG
A FREE DAY TO EXPLORE THIS MAGNIFICENT CITY

A free day to explore St Petersburg. This city has so much to offer so it is a good idea to plan a little in advance if there are specific places you want to visit. However, this is also a fantastic city to aimlessly wander, exploring side streets, canals and the beautiful parks that feature across the city. Don’t forget there are also excellent sights outside the city including the opulent palaces of Peterhof and Pushkin.

MEALS INCLUDED: Hotel Breakfast.

ASK US ABOUT MORE ST PETERSBURG TOUR OPTIONS
We offer more than a dozen different tours in St Petersburg covering both major sights to family visits and some of the palaces outside the city.

OVERNIGHT

CRONWELL INN ★ ★ ★
We think this is one of the best 3* options in the centre of St Petersburg with friendly staff and good facilities in a well designed historic building.

ADDRESS: 18, Stremyannaya street, Saint-Petersburg, Russia, 191025

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DAY 4

ST PETERSBURG TO MOSCOW

HIGH SPEED “SAPSAN” TRAIN TO MOSCOW IN JUST 4 HOURS

Free time before a late morning transfer by private car with an English speaking driver to the “Sapsan” train to Moscow. The journey takes just 4 hours with an early evening arrival in Moscow, the political and economic centre of this vast country. Moscow has many of Russia’s most famous sights, not least Red Square and St Basil’s Cathedral and with over 800 years of history there is also a wealth of architecture, museums and monuments to its colourful past. Transfer from the station by private car with an English speaking driver to your hotel. Free time for the rest of the day.

MEALS INCLUDED: Hotel Breakfast.

Trip Tip: Your driver will be waiting for you at the front of the train. Your train ticket to Irkutsk will be waiting for you at the hotel. The ticket from Irkutsk to Vladivostok will be given by the guide in Irkutsk.

RUSSIA’S HIGH SPEED SAPSAN TRAINS

Introduced in 2009, the “Sapsan” (Russian for Peregrine Falcon) service between St Petersburg and Moscow reaches speeds of 250 kilometers per hour (155 miles per hour) cutting what was an overnight journey down to just 4 hours.
DAY 5

MOSCOW

A FASCINATING 3 HOUR WALKING TOUR OF CENTRAL MOSCOW WITH A FREE AFTERNOON

The perfect introductory walking tour of central Moscow designed to orientate and open up its hidden treasures. Your guide will take you along the main streets and less visited back roads to see the diversity of architectural styles from the austere and restrained Russian style to richly decorated Moscow Baroque, elegant Empire, fascinating Art Nouveau and even Pseudo-Chinese and Moorish. Hear stories and legends not found in the guidebooks as well as passing the most important sites in the city including the Bolshoi Theatre, Tverskaya street, GUM Department store, Red Square and St Basil's Cathedral.

ASK US ABOUT MORE MOSCOW TOUR OPTIONS

We offer more than a dozen different tours in Moscow including on foot and by car covering the museums and major sights to more specialised options.

The rest of the day is free to further explore Moscow. The exclusive Trip Guidebook we send you before your trip is full of ideas and useful information to ensure you get the most out of your time in this iconic city.

MEALS INCLUDED: Hotel Breakfast.

Trip Tip: Today’s tour is designed to introduce you to Moscow and does not include entrance fees. Individual sights need to be visited at a later time.

OVERNIGHT

BUDAPEST HOTEL ★★

Few 3* options in Moscow have either the historical character or downtown location of the Budapest. Includes a very good buffet breakfast!

Photos for guidance only & not necessarily the room booked
ADDRESS: Petrovskiye Linii St., 2/18, Moscow, 127051
DAY 6

DEPART MOSCOW

FREE DAY TO EXPLORE RUSSIA’S CAPITAL BEFORE DEPARTING ON THE TRAIN TO IRKUTSK

A free day to explore Moscow. The city has much to offer whatever the weather from the famous museums such as Pushkin Fine Arts and Tretyakov Art Gallery to more outdoor areas including the Park of the Fallen Idols and Novodevichy Convent. Of course, if the weather is not so good Moscow is one of the few cities where a day spent on the metro is a tourist attraction with many beautiful stations to visit and all for the price of a single ticket! For relaxing we recommend the bars, galleries and cafes of the Red October district or the fabulous Gorky Park.

Late evening transfer for your departure from Moscow’s iconic Yaroslavsky station on Russia’s best train, the “Rossiya” that runs the route all the way across the country to Vladivostok, 7 timezones and days away.

MEALS INCLUDED: Hotel Breakfast.

TRAIN 2 “ROSSIYA”

MOSCOW – IRKUTSK

This prestigious train has comfortable and well designed modern cabins and high standards are maintained by the crew. The train to take.

DEPARTS: 23:45 pm
ARRIVES: 07:40 am (on day 5)

All times local times and subject to change
DAY 7

ON BOARD THE TRAIN

HEAD EAST REACHING THE EUROPE ASIA BORDER & EKATERINBURG

This section of the journey is through a relatively highly populated region by Russian standards - a landscape of farms and small towns and villages which already feel a long way from Moscow as well as some larger places with longer stops ideal for stretching the legs, taking some photos and stocking up on food and drink. In the evening you cross the Europe-Asia border and reach Ekaterinburg. From this point on you are officially in Siberia!

MEALS INCLUDED: None today - however the train does have a dining car.

EUROPE-ASIA CONTINENTAL BORDER

You pass the Europe-Asia continental border shortly before reaching Ekaterinburg at kilometer marker 1,777 after which you have officially entered both Asia and Siberia.
DAY 8

ON BOARD THE TRAIN

YOUR FIRST DAY IN SIBERIA & THE VASTNESS OF CENTRAL RUSSIA

The scenery today is flat, often swammy or forested and with few large settlements. The major city is Omsk but there are also a few other large stops. This is a day for relaxing, socializing and getting into a good book!

MEALS INCLUDED: None today - however the train does have a dining car.

DAY 9

ON BOARD THE TRAIN

BEAUTIFUL SIBERIAN LANDSCAPES AFTER KRASNOYARSK

The last full day on the train in this section of the trip passing prosperous Krasnoyarsk after which the scenery is particularly pleasant consisting of gently rolling hills and dense forests of larch, pine and, of course, birch trees. There are many rivers and ponds and if it hasn’t happened before now you will start to comprehend just how vast and untouched this part of Russia is as the sun sets on the endless taiga of Siberia.

MEALS INCLUDED: None today - however the train does have a dining car.
DAY 10

ARRIVE IRKUTSK & LAKE BAIKAL

ARRIVAL IN IRKUTSK TRANSFERRING TO BOLSHOE GOLOUSTNOE ON THE SHORES OF BAIKAL

Arrival in Irkutsk, regarded as the modern day cultural capital of Siberia, famed for its traditional wooden architecture, complimented by a vibrant cafe and restaurant culture.

Transfer from the station the 2 hour drive through dense forest to the remote village of Bolshoe Goloustnoe located inside Pribaikalsky National Park. The setting is quintessential Siberia with almost all the village's houses made of wood running up to the lakeshore of beautiful Baikal, among the deepest in the world at 1,642 meters. Many of the 700 residents have lived their entire lives in the village which dates back to 1673.

Your accommodation here is in a Siberian house in the heart of the village. Once settled in take a walk with your guide through the village including a visit to the church. We walk along the lakeshore and can also climb into the forests and hills for views of Lake Baikal (good shoes or walking boots advisable). Return to the house for a pre-dinner Banya - the traditional Russian Sauna. Your guide will explain the procedure and after a hearty Siberian homestyle meal should set you up for a great nights sleep!

MEALS INCLUDED: Hotel Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner at the Guest House.
DAY 11

LAKE BAIKAL
A DAY EXPLORING THE LAKE SHORE VILLAGE OF BOLSHOE GOLOUSTNOE & SURROUNDS

There is no rush to wake this morning. Enjoy a hearty breakfast before heading off for a walk up a nearby mountain ascending 400 meters for panoramic views of Baikal (if this is too strenuous or the weather is bad your guide will make other suggestions). A leisurely return to the house for lunch. Free time in the afternoon to relax back at the house or further explore the village and surrounding forest and hills or enjoy another invigorating Banya.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner at the Guest House.

IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT THIS LAKE BAIKAL STOPOVER

Bolshoe Goloustnoe is a small village on the shores of Baikal and provides a genuine Siberian experience in beautiful surroundings. The village is far enough from the Irkutsk to keep day trippers to a minimum and has retained it charm. However, this does mean accommodation is in the traditional Siberian style of log cabins, separate, outside buildings for drop (not flush) toilets and a Russian banya (sauna) for washing. For many this is all part of the experience and feedback is overwhelmingly positive. If you would prefer more comfort we can arrange a higher level guesthouse in Bolshoe Goloustnoe or a different stopover in the more built up village of Listvyanka. Ask us for more information.

OVERNIGHT

SIBERIAN GUESTHOUSE

Ideal location in the heart of this beautiful, unspoiled village. More unique cultural experience than conventional comfort - quintessential Siberia!

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DAY 12

RETURN TO IRKUTSK

RETURN TO IRKUTSK WITH A CITY TOUR AND FREE TIME

After breakfast drive the 2 hours back to Irkutsk for a 2 hour walking tour of the city centre including the park and War Memorial, some of the beautiful churches along the Angara river, the main city centre streets and the statue of Alexander III - the Tzar responsible for the Trans-Siberian railway. Free time for the rest of the day.

MEALS INCLUDED: Hotel Breakfast.

ASK US ABOUT MORE IRKUTSK & BAIKAL TOUR OPTIONS

We offer a wide range of tours covering different sections of Lake Baikal including Olkhon Island as well as trip on the Circum Baikal Railway.

OVERNIGHT

ABOUT MARUSSIA HOTEL ★ ★ ★

A new and very welcome addition to Irkutsk’s otherwise limited hotel scene. Full of character, clean comfortable rooms and excellent staff.

PHOTOS FOR GUIDANCE ONLY & NOT NECESSARILY THE ROOM BOOKED

ADDRESS: Sedova St, 12, Irkutsk 644001, Russia
DAY 13

DEPART IRKUTSK

DEPART IRKUTSK & LAKE BAIKAL BEFORE REACHING ULAN UDE

Early morning transfer to the station and depart Irkutsk. From here the train rumbles along the Southern shore of Lake Baikal often passing within a matter of meters of the lake before reaching Ulan Ude, the capital of Buryatia with its strong cultural ties to Mongolia.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast

DAY 14

ON BOARD THE TRAIN

ENJOY THE REMOTE SCENERY AS YOU ENTER RUSSIA’S FAR EAST

This is a remote and pretty section of the trip with a hint of earlier Asian culture ever present.

MEALS INCLUDED: None today - however the train does have a dining car.
DAY 15

ON BOARD THE TRAIN
CONTINUE THROUGH THE REMOTE RUSSIAN FAR EAST

A day of many stops as the Trans-Siberian rumbles on towards Vladivostok. Much of the route is close to the Chinese border and you can feel the proximity to China from the faces on the platforms at many of the stops. This evening pass vibrant Khabarovsk with its 2.6km bridge which crosses the Amur river just before the lengthy stop in this pleasant city.

MEALS INCLUDED: None today - however the train does have a dining car.

EATING OPTIONS ON THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

There are three options for eating on the Trans-Siberian trains. Firstly, almost every train has a dining car. You can also buy from the numerous kiosks at larger stations. Lastly, we recommend bringing a few treats on board with from local supermarkets. Most people mix all three.

OVERNIGHT TRAIN 008
IRKUTSK - VLADIVOSTOK

These good standard trains run on alternate days and have first class cabins. It is better value than the more well known Rossiya train.

DEPARTS: 08:57 am
ARRIVES: 14:32 pm (on day 4)

All times local times and subject to change
DAY 16

ARRIVAL VLADIVOSTOK

ARRIVE AT THE VLADIVOSTOK TERMINUS

A final morning on the train before an early afternoon arrival at Vladivostok’s attractive station and the satisfaction of knowing you have completed the longest single train journey in the world - you have finally arrived!

Transfer to your hotel with the rest of the day free to relax or explore the city.

MEALS INCLUDED: None today - however the train does have a dining car.

OVERNIGHT

LOTTE HOTEL ★ ★ ★ ★

Formerly the Hyundai Hotel, it is considered the best in Vladivostok located in the city centre with a good range of facilities including a swimming pool!

ADDRESS: Semyonovskaya St, 29, Vladivostok 690091, Russia

Photos for guidance only & not necessarily the room booked

VLADIVOSTOK STATION IN THE EARLY DAYS!
DAY 17

VLADIVOSTOK

FULL DAY CITY TOUR INCLUDING RUSSKY ISLAND & VOROSHILOVSKAYA BATTERY

A full day tour of Vladivostok today covering the main attractions and more including Vladivostok Railway Station - always worth a pre-look - and the C-56 submarine as well as passing many historic, cultural and architectural landmarks and view points. After lunch (own arrangement) we delve into Vladivostok’s military history visiting its Fortress including two of the old batteries which now serve as museums. We also visit the Voroshilovskaya Battery located inside a real military base on Russky Island. This 80 year old building is a fantastic example of military architecture with its rational organisation and efficient functioning. We also see the Pacific Navy warships stationed in the heart of the city which demonstrate the continuing importance of this port to Russia.

MEALS INCLUDED: Hotel Breakfast.

VLADIVOSTOK - RUSSIA’S COLD WAR CLOSED CITY

During Soviet times Vladivostok was the main naval base of the Soviet Pacific Fleet and the city was closed to foreigners and even most Russians. It re-opened to tourism in 1992.

OVERNIGHT

LOTTE HOTEL ★★★★

Formerly the Hyundai Hotel, it is considered the best in Vladivostok located in the city centre with a good range of facilities including a swimming pool!

Photos for guidance only & not necessarily the room booked
ADDRESS: Semyonovskaya St, 29, Vladivostok 690091, Russia
DAY 18

DEPART VLADIVOSTOK

DEPART RUSSIA'S FAR EASTERN PORT CITY OF VLADIVOSTOK

Free time today until a transfer to the airport, station or ferry terminal for your onward travel from Vladivostok and the end of your trip across Russia!

MEALS INCLUDED: Hotel Breakfast.

Trip Note: From Vladivostok we can arrange the ferry on to South Korea or Japan as well as flights to those destination and many more worldwide. If flying back to Europe it is possible to get back the same day from Vladivostok as the vast time difference works in your favour!

"I want to thank you for my terrific, well organized, seamlessly smooth running Trans Siberian journey!

Your organization was without doubt exceptional. I am working on my trip-diary, which already now brings back very special memories. Thank you so much, Ute."

VIEW MORE FEEDBACK
INTERNATIONAL PLANE TICKETS: Tickets for flights the start and finish of the above trip

✈ International flight tickets are NOT included in this itinerary. We CAN arrange these for you.

TRAIN TICKETS: Click here to learn more about the trains - ask us about possible upgrades

✓ St Petersburg to Moscow second class seat on the “Sapsan” bullet train (4 hours)
✓ Moscow to Irkutsk second class - train 2 Rossiya - 1 berth each in a 4 berth cabin
✓ Irkutsk to Vladivostok second class - train 2 / 8 - 1 berth each in a 4 berth cabin

ACCOMMODATION: Let us know if you have your own hotel preferences or wish to upgrade

✓ 3 nights St Petersburg - Cronwell Inn 3* (comfort room with breakfast)
✓ 2 nights Moscow - Budapest Hotel Hotel 3* (junior suite room with breakfast)
✓ 4 nights on the train Moscow to Irkutsk (shared 4 berth second class sleeper cabin)
✓ 2 nights Bolshoe Goloustnoe - Siberian Guesthouse (twin room - shared Siberian toilet and sauna)
✓ 1 night Irkutsk - Boutique Marussia Hotel 3* (standard room with breakfast)
✓ 3 nights on the train Irkutsk to Vladivostok (shared 4 berth second class sleeper cabin)
✓ 2 nights Vladivostok - Lotte Hotel 4* (standard room with breakfast)

TRANSFERS: Private with driver and an English speaking guide (except where stated)

✓ St Petersburg - Airport to Hotel (English speaking driver only)
✓ St Petersburg - Hotel to Train Station (English speaking driver only)
✓ Moscow - Train Station to Hotel (English speaking driver only)
✓ Moscow - Hotel to Train Station (English speaking driver only)
✓ Irkutsk - Train Station to Bolshoe Goloustnoe
✓ Irkutsk - Bolshoe Goloustnoe to Hotel in Irkutsk
✓ Irkutsk - Hotel to Train Station (driver only)
✓ Vladivostok - Train Station to Hotel (English speaking driver only)
✓ Vladivostok - Hotel to Airport (English speaking driver only)
LIST OF INCLUSIONS & EXCLUSIONS FOR THIS TOUR

TOURS: All our tours include entrance fees and use professional, licensed guides

✓ St Petersburg - 3 hour private walking tour of Central St Petersburg.
✓ Moscow - 3 hour private walking tour of Central Moscow.
✓ Irkutsk - 3 night private tour including the village of Bolshoe Goloustnoe & Irkutsk city tour and 1 night Irkutsk.
✓ Vladivostok - Full day private tour of the city including Russky Island & Voroshilovskaya Battery.

OTHER INCLUSIONS: Also included in this trip

✓ Meals - As indicated in the itinerary.
✓ Visa Paperwork - Confirmation documentation you need in order to get the visas.
✓ Support - Emergency numbers and contacts for each destination.
✓ Guidebook - Our exclusive Trip Guidebook personalised to your trip.
✓ Financial Peace of Mind - All monies paid to us are legally protected under UK law.

NOT INCLUDED IN THIS TOUR

✗ International Airfare to / from the start / finish of your trip - we can book these flights on request.
✗ The Russian visa - we can advise and partner with VisaCentral.
✗ Travel insurance to cover any medical treatment - we recommend Citybond Suretravel.
✗ Discretionary gratuities to drivers and guides.
This calendar shows the possible start dates in red for this trip covering the stopovers in the itinerary. Other dates may also be possible using different trains or longer or shorter stops.

All timetables are subject to change at short notice.
"Just returned from Trans-Siberian tour Moscow-Vladivostok with 7 city stops. Phenomenal! This company exceeded our possible expectations and went above and beyond."
Aleona Kalinovskaya & Family

"I would absolutely recommend the Trans-Siberian Travel Company. You were so helpful in planning my trip through China, Mongolia and Russia. This was a trip of a lifetime for me, and one I will not forget."
Muriel Adamson

"Unbelievably wonderful vacation! Everything organized perfectly and I had the experience of a lifetime. The tours and guides were amazing and this trip will be everything you are hoping for and more!"
Christine Houck

"Excellent service and communication with quick responses. The process of booking was really easy. Their knowledge and understanding of the Trans-Siberian and experiences along the way was clear and appreciated."
Amy Wegerhoff

"The booking process was very easy. Chris was patient, and a fountain of information during the planning stages, as we customised the journey. All in all, an unforgettable journey, which exceeded all of our expectations!"
Mark & Jeannette Adams

"Highly recommended, especially with the visa process and buying of all the different train tickets. The Trans-Siberian Travel Company made our trip easy and very memorable."
E Adam Smith
ST PETERSBURG
RUSSIA’S CULTURAL GEM

If Moscow is Russia’s economic and political centre St Petersburg is certainly the cultural centre. A very different city to Moscow, it is arguably one of the world’s most beautiful - an architectural wonder often referred to as the “Venice of the North.” In addition to the architecture there are world famous museums including the Hermitage and numerous palaces can be visited as day trips from the city. A few days here are very much part of a Trans-Siberian experience.

WE SAY: “The perfect add-on to any Trans-Siberian trip - a must see.”

HIGHLIGHTS OF ST PETERSBURG
★ An afternoon in THE HERMITAGE Museum - Russia’s finest
★ The city’s network of CANALS on foot or with a relaxing cruise
★ The impressive RUSSIAN MUSEUM collection of paintings
★ Venture out of the city to some of the PALACES of the Tsars
★ Enjoy a BALLET OR OPERA performance at the Mariinsky Theatre

"We can't rate our honeymoon trip highly enough - a trip of a lifetime full of adventure and amazing experiences, without the fear factor and anxiety due to the guide book, tour guides and good communication prior to leaving. I felt you took a real interest in us getting the most from our trip and that you went the extra mile!"

Vicki and Chris Howard
MOSSCOW

ICONIC CAPITAL & TRANS-SIBERIAN START

The capital of Russia and the start of the Trans-Siberian makes this vast city an almost certain stop on any trip. It is the political and economic centre of this vast country and has many of Russia’s most famous sights, not least Red Square and St Basil’s Cathedral. With over 800 years of history there is also a wealth of architecture, museums and monuments to a colourful past. Perhaps the most surprising of these is its extraordinary metro system - a tour in itself!

WE SAY: “An essential world city to visit included in all trips.”

HIGHLIGHTS OF MOSCOW

★ Treading the cobbles of RED SQUARE the symbolic heart of Moscow
★ The Cathedrals and Museums of the KREMLIN complex
★ Art and architecture of MOSCOW’S METRO the world’s most beautiful
★ An unforgettable BOLSHOI BALLET performance or theatre tour
★ Disney like ST BASIL’S CATHEDRAL Moscow’s most distinctive building

"Saying excellent does not come close to expressing how amazing this trip was!! It is brilliant, the cities are unique and different at each stop and the scenery along the way is absolutely breathtaking!! I would love to do this trip again as it is the gift that kept on giving!!"

Seanna Keeley
IRKUTSK & LAKE BAIKAL
UNSPOILED SIBERIA AT ITS BEST

Irkutsk is a popular stop and a pleasant and prosperous city that still has plenty of the traditional wooden architecture of Siberia remaining. It is also the gateway to visit stunning Lake Baikal. The lake is among the deepest and clearest in the world. The shoreline is dotted with traditional Siberian villages with the ones closest to Irkutsk such as Listvyanka and Bolshoe Goloustnoe popular with visitors. Further afield remote Olkhon Island makes for an more extended adventure.

WE SAY: “Unmissable Lake Baikal should be included in every trip.”

HIGHLIGHTS OF IRKUTSK & LAKE BAIKAL
★ Exploring beautiful LAKE BAIKAL and its deep and crystal clear waters
★ Overnighing in the Siberian lakeshore village BOLSHOE GOLOUSTNOE
★ A homestay and Banya in LISTVYANKA village close to Irkutsk
★ A camping adventure on spiritual OLKHON ISLAND in Lake Baikal
★ The WOODEN ARCHITECTURE of the city of Irkutsk

“I wanted to write and say thank you for the great service and assistance throughout. I had a fantastic time and would totally recommend the trip and using your company without any hesitation - in fact already have. Particularly loved Siberia and would love to go back there.”

Kevin O'Leary
VLADIVOSTOK
ONCE FORBIDDEN PORT CITY

Vladivostok is the almost legendary end (or beginning) of the true Trans-Siberian line. For years this city was closed to foreigners as it is the home base of the Russian Pacific Fleet. It has a fantastic location on the Amursky Gulf and an air of prosperity that you may not have noticed much since you left Moscow. The city is considerably further East than Beijing, in fact closer to Japan, and is looking good following extensive renovation work on its ornate boulevards a few years back.

WE SAY: “The legendary end of the real Trans-Siberian line.”

HIGHLIGHTS OF VLADIVOSTOK

★ Vast VLADIVOSTOK FORTRESS originally built to repel the Japanese
★ A cruise around Vladivostok’s attractive HARBOUR
★ Vladivostok’s beautiful and symbolic TRAIN STATION Trans-Sib terminal
★ Watch your head walking through the C-56 SUBMARINE museum
★ Sitting in café on Vladivostok’s MAIN SQUARE to people watch in summer!

"All of your arrangements worked perfectly, all the guides were excellent and the hotel locations were really convenient. We had several fellow travellers who had booked with you and all were singing your praises too."

Chris Brion
IT WOULDN’T BE THE TRANS-SIBERIAN WITHOUT THE TRAINS!

We use a large number of trains across our trips aiming to use the best possible option for each leg of the journey taking into account reliability of the timetable and obtaining tickets, the best and most practical departure and arrival times as well as safety and comfort. Between us we have travelled on almost all the trains we offer in all classes whether they be Russian, Mongolian or Chinese services.

Almost every train has a dining car and the trains we use are safe and secure with each carriage staffed by two Provodniki / Provodnitsa (conductors). We book both first class 2 berth and second class 4 berth compartments that are comfortable and have lockable doors and a large window for the fabulous views along the way.

Click here to visit the trains section of our website for much more information.

“We had first class transport for all but one leg of the journey. The trains were clean and easy to sleep on.”

Seanna Keeley
THROUGH SIBERIA BY ACCIDENT
DERVLA MURPHY
Excellent account of Siberia and in particular the remote and rarely traveled Baikal Amur Line (BAM). Well researched and full of character this book brings Siberia alive through the descriptions of the characters she meets along the way.

TRAVELS IN SIBERIA - IAN FRAZIER
Frazier reveals Siberia's role in history, its science, economics, and politics. Traveling by car rather than train from St Petersburg to Vladivostok in five weeks in one of the most humorous, informative and hugely entertaining of Trans-Siberian books.

ASIA OVERLAND - BIJAN OMRANI
Tales of Travel on the Trans-Siberian and Silk Road. This title offers a travel companion and historical travelogue. It is resourced from travel luminaries: George Kennan to Anton Chekhov, Fa Xian to Marco Polo and Matteo Ricci.

THE CITY OF HEAVENLY TRANQUILITY
JASPER BECKER
One of the best books devoted to Beijing and an entertaining historical account of the city that will give some real insight into what makes Beijing tick. The range is almost up to the modern day which gives the reader a good idea of what Beijing has been through.

IN SIBERIA - COLIN THUBRON
One of the books about Siberia as Thubron delves far deeper than the average travel writer trying to understand the essence of the people that live there and the land they live in. Quite a dark read but perhaps essential to understand.

THE LOST COUNTRY: MONGOLIA REVEALED
JASPER BECKER
Another Becker offering covering the history of Mongolia through his travels there in the early 90's. It is full of anecdotes and historical stories of the strange and bizarre and offers a good grounding in Mongolia up until the early years after the fall of the Soviet Union.

THE GREAT RAILWAY BAZAAR
PAUL THEROUX
One of the classic travel books about the Trans-Siberian. If you like this Riding the Iron Rooster and the more recent Ghost Train to the Eastern Star are superb, the latter revisiting the travel of The Great Railway Bazaar some 30 years later.

SILVERLAND: A WINTER JOURNEY BEYOND THE URALS
DERVLA MURPHY
Extraordinary expedition in winter beyond Siberia to the furthest corners of Russia. Here she discovers a strange world of lynx and elks, indigenous tribes and shamanism, reindeer broth and taiga-berry pie.
HOW FAR IN ADVANCE DO I NEED TO BOOK?

The Trans-Siberian can be quite a complex trip with a definite peak season when tickets and good hotel rooms can become scarce so we recommend booking as far in advance as possible if you are travelling from June to the end of September. Outside of this period we still recommend booking at least 2 months in advance to allow plenty of time to obtain the visas.

CAN YOU OBTAIN THE VISAS FOR US?

We have a partnership with the visa agents CIBT Visa Central who will guide you through the visa application process. As you are likely to be obtaining more than one visa for a Trans-Siberian trip it makes sense to make use of a specialised visa agent who will do the leg work running between the various embassies.

IS IT SAFE TO BOOK WITH YOU?

In a word, Yes! We members of ABTA and ATOL Bonded so any payments made to us are fully protected in the unlikely event of our financial failure. Our ABTA membership number is Y1699 and our ATOL license number is 10287.

WHAT IS THE BEST TIME OF YEAR TO TRAVEL?

The summer months from June to the end of August are generally considered the best and are certainly the busiest. However, catching the Autumn colours from early September is probably our favourite time to visit Russia although Mongolia can already be cold. China tends to be best in September and October although do try and avoid the week long National Day holiday during the 1st week of October. Don't forget that Siberia looks stunning in winter!
WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FIRST & SECOND CLASS?

First and second class cabins are the same size and tend to have similar facilities with the only real but big difference being that 2nd class cabins have 4 berths and first class 2 berths. So a couple get privacy and space in first class. A first class carriage will also have less competition for bathroom although this is not usually a big issue or a particular reason to go first class. Second class is arguably more social.

WHAT HAPPENS ONCE WE MAKE A BOOKING?

On taking a booking we will confirm as many of the services as can be at that point and then ask you for a £250 per person deposit with the final balance payment due 60 days before your trip start date with us. On booking we will also offer advice about obtaining the visas if this has not been covered before and about 1 month before your trip with us starts we will send you our comprehensive Trip Guidebook tailored to your specific trip with us.

CAN YOU BOOK INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS?

Yes, as we hold an ATOL license (number 10287) we are permitted by the Civil Aviation Authority in the UK to book flights on behalf of our clients. We are a British Airways preferred operator but also book with other airlines to get the best deals and routes for our clients.

WILL MY PHONE WORK?

Yes and you will find coverage is surprisingly could all the way along the train routes and in cities. If you buy a SIM card make sure you are buying for the right phone system as some mobile companies in Mongolia, for example, operate on GSM (same as UK, Europe) and others CDMA (North America and Japan). You should also check what roaming charges will be with your mobile provider.

WHY SHOULD WE BOOK A TRIP WITH YOU?

We took our first Trans-Siberian trip in 1997 and between us have taken many trips since. We have been to all destinations we offer, often many times, and are passionate about sharing our knowledge and providing you with the best possible travel experience of these destinations which we love to visit ourselves. Add to this the back up we offer from financial protection of your payments to us to the 24 hour emergency numbers we give you before your trip and we think we are the full package for quality, service and reliability.

HOW MUCH MONEY WILL I NEED TO TAKE WITH ME?

The bulk of your costs are taken care of when booking with us so you will only be spending on day to day expenses such as additional meals, drinks, souvenirs and any entrance fees on free days. Russia is expensive and it is easy to go through £50 a day in Moscow although less elsewhere. Mongolia is likely to be cheapest as there isn't that much to spend money on in the countryside. China is between the two with spending from about £30 a day upwards as an approximate guide. On the train it would be difficult to spend more than £20 a day.

DO YOU CATER FOR VEGETARIANS?

As long as we are informed at the time of making your booking we can cater for almost all dietary requirements.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I SHOULD BE ASKING?

Almost certainly! We fully expect you will have many more questions and we are here to answer them so please do not hesitate to contact us - that is what we are here for!