

# Classic Western Russia: Moscow, Novgorod & St. Petersburg

AN INSIDER'S VIEW OF RUSSIA'S GREAT CITIES

## SMALL GROUP TOUR



### 10 Days

#### Cultural Series Land Tour

\$4,695 per person, double occupancy

Single supplement \$895

Comprehensive tour inclusions listed on page 103

**Group Size** 4-16 travelers

#### 2012 Land Tour Dates

May 4-13 • July 20-29 • August 17-26 •

September 28-October 7

**Stay a little longer...** Combine this tour with Essential Ukraine, page 85, or with the Essential Baltics program, page 86.

### MIR Signature Experiences

- Discover Stalin's secret underground bunker, built surreptitiously beneath the Moscow subway system
- Enjoy an authentic Russian home-cooked meal
- Drive outside Moscow to Tchaikovsky's estate for a private lecture and a short concert



photo: Mariah Kimmenta

The Resurrection Gate into Red Square

**T**his indispensable introduction to some of Russia's great cities gives an insider's view of the real Russia, spotlighting not only the glittering palaces and dignified official edifices of the Russian Empire, but also a birch bark crafts class in historic Novgorod, Stalin's underground bunker, and the unforgettable warmth of a meal in a Russian home.

**Days 1-3: Moscow** Gather in Moscow, Russia's capital city. Admire Red Square and the Kremlin, visit UNESCO-listed Novodevichy Convent and tour the opulent stations of the Moscow Metro. Learn secrets of the past at Stalin's underground bunker, and soak up the literary atmosphere at Tolstoy's House Museum. Tour the Armory Museum, housing Russian treasures. Wander through Izmailovo Park, and spend an evening dining in a Russian home.

**Day 4: Klin, Tver, Novgorod** Drive out to Klin and the estate where Pyotr Tchaikovsky spent the last year of his life and enjoy a short concert, then continue on to Tver, the city that Catherine the Great redesigned after it burnt to the ground. Next is Veliky Novgorod (Novgorod the Great), one of Russia's most ancient cities. Explore its UNESCO-listed kremlin, the medieval market stalls of Yaroslav's Court and the 11th century St. Sophia Cathedral. Learn from a master craftsman at a hands-on class on traditional Novgorod birch bark crafts.

**Days 5-10: St. Petersburg** Drive to St. Petersburg; designed by the best architects and built by the best artisans of the era, St. Petersburg's architecture displays a rare harmony. Observe the lifestyles of the czars at Catherine's Palace, with its brilliant blue exterior and carved and gilded interior. Admire the golden gravity-fed fountains at Peterhof. Explore the elegant Usupoff Palace with its jewel-box theater and spend a morning at the world-class Hermitage Museum. The museum survived the ravages of World War II, with most of its enormous collection protected in the basement storage vaults or hidden in cellars throughout the city. Take a stroll along broad Nevsky Prospekt, St. Petersburg's main street, and enjoy a romantic evening at one of the city's sophisticated theaters.



photo: Kelly Tissler

St. Petersburg's Church on the Blood

