

Classic Western Russia: Moscow & St. Petersburg

AN INSIDER'S VIEW OF RUSSIA'S GREAT CITIES

SMALL GROUP TOUR



9 Days

4 departures in 2010

May 7-15 • July 30-August 7 • August 20-28
• October 1-9

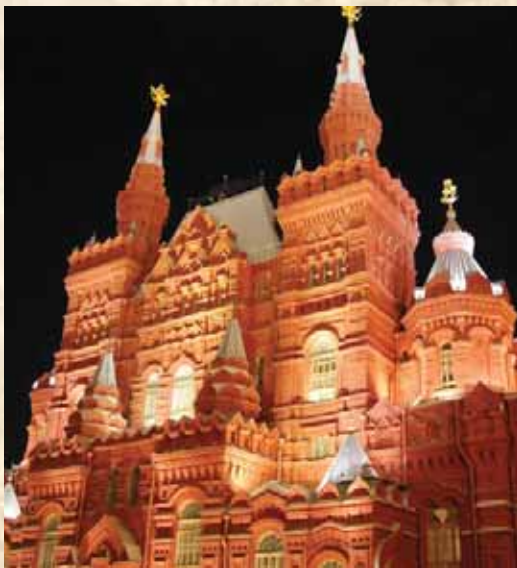
Land Tour Cost

2-16 travelers \$4,795
Single Supplement \$795

Stay a little longer... Combine this tour with Essential Ukraine or with the Essential Baltics program; see page 64.

MIR Signature Features

- Enjoy an authentic Russian home-cooked meal
- Explore the Usupoff Palace, where the plot to assassinate Rasputin came to fruition
- Explore the "second subway," Stalin's secret bunker that burrows beneath the main subway system



Red Square at night



Grand Cascade at Peterhof

This indispensable introduction to Russia's two 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 a *matrioshka* doll factory in Sergiev Posad, Stalin's underground bunker, and the unforgettable warmth of a meal in a Russian home.

Days 1-4: Moscow, Sergiev Posad
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, built in 1841 as a weapons and armor factory, and now housing Russian treasures. Wander through Izmailovo Park, and spend an evening dining in a Russian home.

Days 5-9: 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. Explore the elegant Usupoff Palace with its jewel-box theater. Spend a morning exploring 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.

Take a day trip to Sergiev Posad, a UNESCO World Heritage Site founded in the 1340s by St. Sergius of Radonezh, now the patron saint of Russia.

Board the afternoon train bound for St. Petersburg, the enduring legacy of Peter the Great's vision.

