

Mongolia to Moscow: A Trans-Siberian Railway Adventure

LANDSCAPES AND CULTURES OF MONGOLIA, SIBERIA AND WESTERN RUSSIA



photo: Martin Klimenta

Masked Tsam dancers in Ulaanbaatar

Travel on regularly scheduled Trans-Siberian trains over a dramatic and variegated route that offers limitless opportunities to meet the diverse local people — Mongol, Buryat and Russian. Experience the rolling green hills and nomadic traditions of Mongolia, Siberia’s UNESCO-listed Lake Baikal and endless taiga forest on your way to the booming capital, Moscow. The July departure features Mongolia’s Naadam Festival.

Days 1-4: Ulaanbaatar, Gorkhi-Terelj Arriving in the capital of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, visit the Gandan Monastery and explore the National History Museum. Drive to nearby Gorkhi-Terelj National Park, meet a nomadic family living on the steppe, and overnight in an authentic ger, with the option of an afternoon horseback ride. The July trip includes time at Mongolia’s distinctive **Naadam Festival** back in Ulaanbaatar. The September trip includes a visit outside the capital to Mandshir Monastery, built in 1749 and partially restored since its destruction in the 1930s. Board the overnight train heading for Siberia.

Days 5-6: Ulan Ude Arriving in Russia, disembark near the border and drive to Ulan Ude, capital of the Buryat Republic. En route stop at Hargana, a lovely little Buryat village, to visit the flourishing local school and meet the teachers and students.

Tour the most interesting sites in and around Ulan Ude, including the Ivolginsk Datsan, the center of Buddhism in Russia. Pay a visit to a village of Old Believers — members of an Orthodox sect who refused changes to their rituals in the 17th century and were sent to Siberia — and share dinner with a local family.

Days 7-10: Irkutsk, Lake Baikal Take the day train from Ulan Ude to Irkutsk, and enjoy a tour of the city, including the old wooden houses, many with the intricate carved fretwork typical of local Siberian architecture. Explore the outdoor Wooden Architecture Museum, a collection of authentic Russian and native houses and community buildings from the 17th century on, and visit the exiled Decembrist House Museum. Ride the old Circumbaikal Railway to Port Baikal, and board a



photo: Heige Pedersen

Warming up for the race

photo: Helge Pedersen



The reconstructed Resurrection Gate to Red Square, razed during Soviet times to allow tanks to pass

boat crossing the Angara River to Listvyanka, a little village along the shores of UNESCO-listed Lake Baikal, the oldest and deepest lake on earth.

Days 11-13: Aboard the Trans-Siberian Continue for three days along the legendary rails, traveling through Siberia's vast taiga forest to Moscow, the political and economic center of Russia.

Days 14-15: Moscow Explore Moscow's classic sites, including Red Square, the Armory Museum and the Kremlin. Take a tour of the Moscow Metro: the stations in the city center are showpieces of Socialist art, furnished with statues, frescoes and mosaics. Commemorate the journey from Mongolia to Moscow with a farewell dinner and celebratory toast.

SMALL GROUP TOUR



15 Days

Cultural Series Land Tour

\$6,895 (September) and \$7,295 (July) per person, double occupancy
Partial Single Supplement \$850 (September) and \$995 (July) (see page 103)

Comprehensive tour inclusions and special accommodation note on page 103

Group Size 5-16 travelers

2012 Land Tour Dates

July 10-24 (with Naadam Festival) •
September 4-18

Stay a little longer... Extensions to Beijing, Vladivostok, the Gobi, Kara Korum, St. Petersburg or Seoul are available. Call for details.

photo: Helge Pedersen



Siberian Old Believers often dress in traditional costumes

