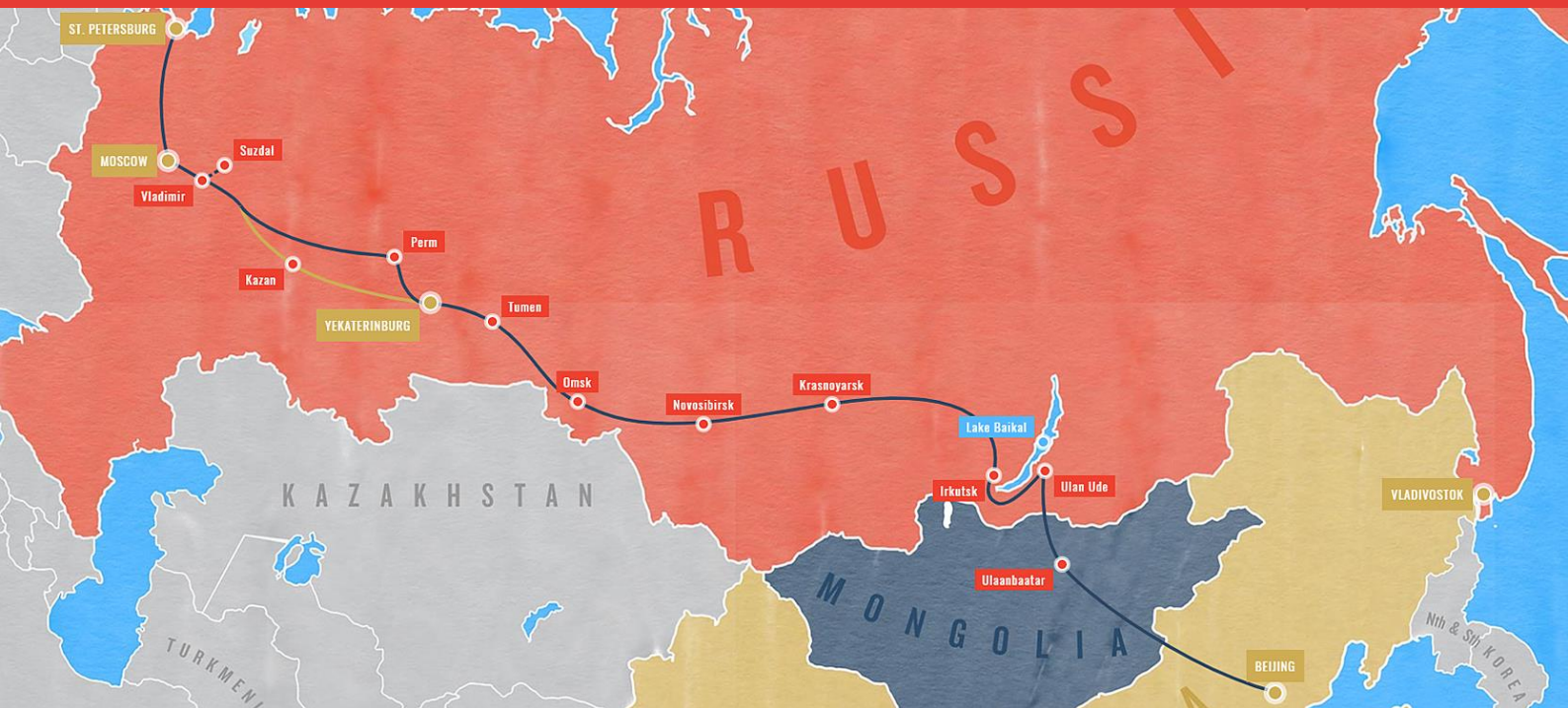




# Grand Trans Mongolian Journey with Romanoffs and Tatarstan



EAST TO WEST



## From Beijing across the Gobi Desert to Ulaanbaatar NIGHTS: 1

Sample the wonders Beijing has to offer as you walk the cobbled pathways of the Forbidden Palace, climb the Great Wall of China and wander where ancient armies marched. For more information about touring China, including extra services for Beijing, please visit our China pages at [www.russiantravelcentre.com](http://www.russiantravelcentre.com).

Independent departures 2 times a week on winter timetable and 3 times per week on summer timetable aboard Mongolian and Chinese Trains No. 23. Chinese International Train No. 3 to Moscow departs once per week all year. Departure times may change each year, or seasonally. We can confirm the time when booking.

Day 1. Make your own way to Beijing Station. Yes, we can get a hotel nearby. For more information about touring China, including extra services for Beijing, please visit our China pages at [www.russiantravelcentre.com](http://www.russiantravelcentre.com)

## Discovering Mongolia NIGHTS: 3

Day 2. Arrive Ulaanbaatar. Met and transferred to accommodation for one night. Balance of day to explore Ulaanbaatar. A range of sights are centrally located with others slightly out of the centre.

Days. 3-4 Transfer to a *ger* (yurt) camp for two nights, within the Gorkhi-Terelj National Park which is approximately 70km outside the city. Time for 'Grassland Pursuits' – locals offer such diversions as archery, camel rides, to be paid for locally.

Day 5. Transfer back to Ulaanbaatar for one night. Balance of day for further sightseeing and last minute shopping. Perhaps a Mongolian woollen shawl, or those leather horseman boots you always lusted after!

We also offer a wider selection of stopover options to help you explore Ulaanbaatar or venture further afield. Please visit the Mongolia page at [www.russiantravelcentre.com](http://www.russiantravelcentre.com).

## Overnight Train to Irkutsk

**NIGHTS: 1**

Day 6. Free for further sightseeing around Ulaanbaatar. Transfer to station for train to Irkutsk. (Four-berth, see Timetables).

Train timetables between Irkutsk and Ulaanbaatar (both directions) have changed significantly from December 2017. There are now no daily departures.

From Ulaanbaatar you now have

#305 MON/TUE/SAT dep at 15:22 local time

#5 THU all year dep at 15:31 local time.

Friday departures (Nov – May, every 2nd week; Jun – Oct, every week).

Therefore, depending upon the start date (=day) of the complete programme we may need to adjust your stopover period for Irkutsk and Lake Baikal.

Russian border procedures are carried out on board train.

## Two nights at Lake Baikal, followed by one in Irkutsk

**NIGHTS: 3**

Day 7. Arrive at Irkutsk and transfer to Lake Baikal for two nights accommodation in the village of Lysvyanka. Other options are available to extend your stay in this region.

Lake Baikal, the largest freshwater lake in the world, will astound you with both its wilderness and immensity. You can enjoy the natural wonder of this gigantic lake and partake in some walking or simple relaxation.

Day 8. Free day for own activities, or additional organised programmes. Lakeside activities can include local hikes, short ferry trips and in the winter ice skating and ice fishing.

Day 9. Transfer back to Irkutsk for one night's accommodation. Irkutsk offers a range of sightseeing options. Perhaps a suburb with its characteristically Siberian wooden houses, or the Decembrist Museum to see how exiled nobility fared in the 19th century! For those with a technical bent there is the museum featuring the old Lake Baikal Ice Breaker.

## By Train from Irkutsk across Siberia to Yekaterinburg

**NIGHTS: 3**

Day 10. Transfer to rail station for train (Odd-numbered dates, four berth) to Yekaterinburg. See Timetables at [www.transsiberian.com.au](http://www.transsiberian.com.au)

The Trans Siberian route opens up great visual swathes of Siberia. You will see and thus feel, the immensity of this geographic region, passing sparsely populated village enclaves, interspersed with an occasional large city.

Day 11. On board the train. Break out that large novel – *War and Peace*, *Dr Zhivago* – or travel chess set! Expect to share a vodka with your Russian fellow travellers, too.

Day 12. Arrive Yekaterinburg on the third day. Meet and transfer to homestay or central hostel – you choose. Optional excursions or free time.

## Sightseeing around Yekaterinburg

**NIGHTS: 3**

Yekaterinburg is a city where one might stay longer and explore the famed natural beauty of the Urals region. The city has undergone some admirable redevelopment and has many modern areas complementing its historical interest. Famed as the location of the brutal July 1918 murder of the last Czar and his family, and the 1960 Soviet-era propaganda event which followed the shooting down of a U.S. spy plane and the subsequent show trial of the hapless pilot, Gary Powers. These two events are immortalised in stunning roof mosaics at the railway station!

For motorbike enthusiasts this is the home of the famed Ural motorbike and, yes, you can get to ride one!

Day 13. Guided vehicle tour of Romanoff history points of interest and to the Asia/Europe monument, both of which are outside the city proper.

## Train from Yekaterinburg to Moscow

**NIGHTS: 1**

Day 14. Check out from accommodation for train departure (or you can extend this stopover). See Timetables at [www.transsiberian.com.au](http://www.transsiberian.com.au)

You now wind your way west through the Ural Mountains, crossing the geographic demarcation between Asia and Europe.

## Arrival and Sightseeing in Moscow

### NIGHTS: 3

Day 15. Arrive Moscow. Met and transferred to your accommodation for three nights. Three-hour introductory walking tour to orientate you to the transport system and central Moscow.

Time to experience the famed centre of Soviet-era Russia. This is where central control was wielded. Moscow is now a changed city, but its many surviving examples of architecture complement its thriving theatre and arts and for those so disposed has museums to satisfy any interest!

Your three-hour introductory walking tour may include the reconstructed Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, Lomonosov University, the New Virgin Monastery and Red Square with its colourful St. Basil's Cathedral. As well there are the notorious former KGB headquarters and the White House.

Days 16-17. Moscow free day – or optional sightseeing in or around the city.

## Overnight Train to St Petersburg

### NIGHTS: 3

Day 18. On your 4th day in Moscow, make your own way to Leningradsky Station. Depart Moscow on late afternoon fast train.

Day 19. On arrival in St Petersburg the following morning, you will be met and transferred to your accommodation for three nights: choice of homestay / hostel / budget hotel.

Today your walking guide will meet you for a three-hour introductory walking tour. This will orientate you with regard to where you are staying, how to get to main sightseeing area and the public transport system.

St Petersburg is where modern Russia was born under the guidance of the Czar known as Peter the Great, and remained capital of the Russian empire up to the Soviet era. The city was established upon a swamp and is now rightly considered one of the

gems of Europe. This is where you can see such grandiose palaces such as the Peterhof (summer palace), The Hermitage (winter palace) and the country estate and parkland of Catherine the Great – Catherine Palace. For history buffs there are many sites associated with the 1917 Revolution.

Day 20. St Petersburg free day. Optional Sightseeing.

Day 21. St Petersburg free day. Optional Sightseeing.

Don't miss our suggestions for optional sightseeing at [www.russiantravelcentre.com](http://www.russiantravelcentre.com)

## Depart St Petersburg

### NIGHTS: 1

Depart St Petersburg on Day 22.

End of arrangements.

Well, we can extend your stay, or perhaps a train to Helsinki or the Baltic States?