



Trans Manchurian with Lake Baikal and Irkutsk



EAST TO WEST



Depart Beijing for Irkutsk

NIGHTS: 3

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.

Make your own way to Beijing Station. Yes, we can get a hotel nearby.

Depart Beijing on Saturday at 23:00 on train #19. The route takes you into Russia and joins the main line from Vladivostok at Chita. If you wish to stopover in Harbin you will need to leave earlier and meet the train in Harbin on Sunday. There are regular daily trains from Beijing.

See Timetables at www.transsiberian.com.au.

Irkutsk to Lake Baikal

NIGHTS: 3

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.

Arrive Irkutsk at 18:42 (local time). Meet and transfer to Lake Baikal village, where you are based for the next two nights.

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.

In both Irkutsk and at the lake we often use homestay accommodation. This allows you the chance to experience contemporary Russian life, and by using homestays we gain access to a true village environment.

Lake Baikal and Irkutsk

NIGHTS: 3

Two nights in Lake Baikal village. We have alternative extension packages to add to your trip.

Transfer back to Irkutsk for a final night before boarding the train. 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.

From Irkutsk across Siberia to Moscow NIGHTS: 3

Transfer to the railway station and board the train to Moscow. See Timetables at www.transsiberian.com.au.

Time for the next chapter (or two) of *War and Peace*, or yet another game of chess! Expect to share a vodka with your Russian fellow travellers, too.

Welcome to Moscow NIGHTS: 3

Arrive Moscow. You are met for transfer to accommodation for three nights. A three-hour introductory walking tour helps you orientate yourself and figure out the public transport systems.

Today, Russia's capital, once the heart of global Communism, is one of the world's richest and most dynamic cities.

Your 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.

Moscow is now a city much changed from the Soviet era, but its many surviving examples of architecture complement its thriving theatre and arts and for those so disposed, Moscow has museums to satisfy any interest.

Day two provides for optional Moscow sightseeing, then on day 3, a late afternoon departure by fast train to St Petersburg. Upon arrival you will be met and transferred to accommodation for 3 nights.

NOTE: You can end here in Moscow, but we recommend you only do this if you have already been to St Petersburg.

St Petersburg NIGHTS: 4

A late afternoon / early evening departure by fast train to St Petersburg.

Met upon arrival and transferred to accommodation for 3 nights.

The next morning begins with a three-hour introductory walking tour to help you orientate yourself with the city and public transport systems.

Don't miss our suggestions for optional sightseeing excursions at www.russiantravelcentre.com!