



Trans Manchurian with Lake Baikal and Irkutsk



WEST TO EAST



Welcome to St Petersburg NIGHTS: 3

Arrive St Petersburg. Transfer to accommodation for three nights. Three-hour introductory walking tour. 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.

From St Petersburg to Moscow NIGHTS: 1

Day 4. Self-transfer to train station for late afternoon fast train to Moscow. Arrive Moscow met and transferred to accommodation.

Arrival and sightseeing in Moscow NIGHTS: 3

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

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.

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 5. Three hour introductory walking tour.

Day 6. Moscow. Free time or optional sightseeing.

Don't miss our suggestions for optional sightseeing in and around Moscow at www.russiantravelcentre.com!

Eastbound from Moscow across Siberia to Irkutsk

NIGHTS: 3

Day 7. Transfer to the railway station and board the train to Moscow. See Timetables at 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.

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.

Irkutsk and Lake Baikal

NIGHTS: 3

Day 10. Arrive Irkutsk and transfer to Lake Baikal for 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.

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.

Alternative packages to add if you prefer are detailed at www.russiantravelcentre.com.

Depart Irkutsk, down across the Gobi Desert to Beijing

NIGHTS: 3

Day 13. Transfer to rail station for train #20 to Beijing departing at 0838. See Timetables at www.transsiberian.com.au for any update.

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

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

Arrival at Beijing

NIGHTS: 1

Day 16. Arrive Beijing. End of arrangements.

For more information about touring China, including extra services for Beijing, please visit our China pages at www.russiantravelcentre.com.