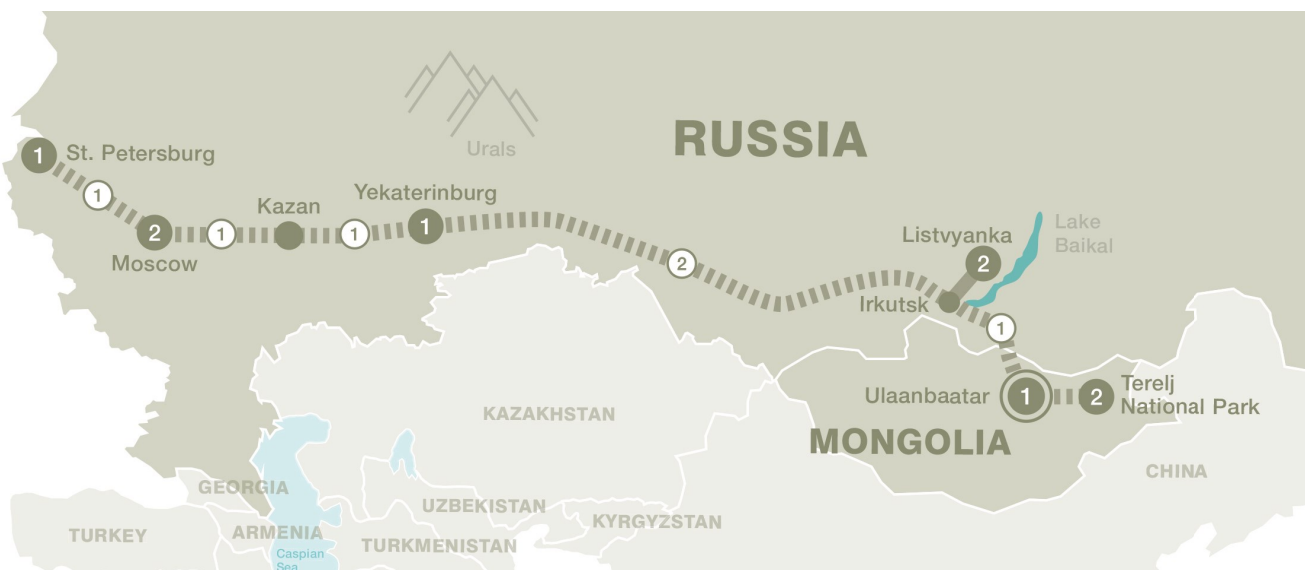




Tsars and Tsarinas - Independent

| Days | Westbound | Countries | Distance | Activity level |
|------|-------------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|
| 16 | Ulaanbaatar to St. Petersburg | Mongolia + Russia | 7,098 km | ●●○○○ |



Wind your way from the endless rolling steppe of Mongolia into Russia – first stop Siberia's Lake Baikal, then on to Yekaterinburg, where Tsarist Russia came to a tragic end. Conclude your journey in the royal, city of St. Petersburg, home of the Tsars and Tsarinas.

Itinerary

Day 1: Ulaanbaatar

You begin your adventure in Ulaanbaatar. Explore the capital and take some time to visit the Zaisan Memorial to admire the panoramic views or gain an insight into the country's past at the National History Museum.

Day 2: Terelj National Park and ger camp

After mingling with monks at one of the country's largest and most significant monasteries, Gandan Khiid, you travel out across the grasslands to Terelj National Park. Here, you spend the night in a Mongolian ger - a traditional felt and wood frame house used by nomadic herdsman for centuries.

Suggested sightseeing - National History Museum, Sukhbaatar Square, Gandan Khiid Monastery, Zaisan Memorial, Bogd Khan Winter Palace, cultural performance

Meals - Breakfast

Day 3: Terelj National Park and ger camp

You awake in your cozy ger, set amongst spectacular rock formations and wild rolling hills. Alongside nomadic families and their grazing livestock you can explore nearby valleys or just relax and enjoy the area.

Suggested sightseeing - Genghis Khan Statue, Turtle Rock and excursion to meet a local Nomadic family, Aryabal Meditation Centre

Meals - Breakfast

Day 4: Return to Ulaanbaatar and Trans Mongolian Railway

Return to Ulaanbaatar to meet your onward train and begin your journey into Russia.

Leaving Mongolia at Sukhbaatar and continuing beyond the Russian border town of Ulan Ude, you will soon find yourself skirting along the shores of breathtaking Lake Baikal before following the well-worn ancient tea and trade route on to Irkutsk.

Meals - Breakfast

Days 5: Lake Baikal

An afternoon arrival into Irkutsk and you transfer to Lake Baikal where you will spend the next two nights and relax in the lakeside guesthouse taking in the local port and picturesque Siberian village of Listvyanka.

Suggested sightseeing - Limnological Museum, Museum of Wooden Architecture, hike along the lake

Day 6: Lake Baikal

Today you have time to explore the village with its traditional houses, and spectacular landscapes.

Meals - Breakfast

Itinerary (cont.)

Day 7: Return to Irkutsk and depart on Trans Siberian

Late afternoon you bid farewell to Siberia as you board the Trans Siberian Railway to Yekaterinburg. There's plenty of time to enjoy the company of Russian travellers on board, as you head towards Europe, crossing the great Ob River at Novosibirsk, passing through Omsk and towards Yekaterinburg.

Sightseeing - Irkutsk Local History Museum, Decembrist Museum, Green Line Walking Tour

Meals - Breakfast

Day 8: Aboard the Trans Siberian Railway

Life on board is a destination in itself! Mingle, learn some new phrases, or practice those you have learned on the locals over the mandatory vodka.

Day 9: Arrive Yekaterinburg

When your train pulls into the many stations along the way hop off and sample the fresh local snacks from the Babushkas selling their homemade goodies and fresh produce from the platform.

This evening we arrive into Yekaterinburg.

Day 10: Yekaterinburg and depart to Kazan

Yekaterinburg, the city founded by Peter the Great in 1723, is situated outside Siberia and some 40 kilometres on the Asian side of the Ural Mountains. By the 20 century Yekaterinburg became one of Russia's largest and most important financial, industrial and cultural centres. The city is infamous as the brutal murder site of the Romanov family, which brought tsarist rule to an end, and ushered in the Communist era in 1918.

We re-board the train this evening, continuing westward.

Suggested sightseeing - Red Line Walking Tour, Romanov's Church & Memorial, Obelisk at Asia/Europe border

Meals - Breakfast

Day 11: Kazan and depart to Moscow

Today you can spend some time in Kazan and can get to know this quirky city. You might take a stroll down Baumann street, also known as Kazansky Arbat.

Later this evening an overnight train will whisk you off to Russia's capital – Moscow.

Suggested sightseeing - Kremlin, Tatar settlement with old mosques, Peter and Paul Cathedral, Muesum Chak Chaka, Bauman Street, Tatar folk show

Itinerary (cont.)

Day 12: Arrive Moscow

Welcome to Moscow! This city will amaze you, its palaces and public buildings restored to their former glory. The echoing vastness of Red Square, the splendid twirled cupolas of St. Basil's across the cobblestones.

Suggested sightseeing - Red Square, St Basils Cathedral, Kremlin and Armoury, Moscow Metro, Arbat Street, State Museum, Lenin's Mausoleum, Zaryadye Park, Tretyakov Gallery, Novodevichy Convent & Cemetery, Cosmonaut Museum, Bolshoi Ballet

Meals - Breakfast

Day 13: Moscow

You'll soon see that Moscow has shed its Soviet veil to become a vibrant and dynamic city. The Christ the Saviour Cathedral, built after the collapse of the Soviet Union, now dominates Moscow's skyline and is sure to take your breath away. Beneath the city lies the palatial metro rail system draped in chandeliers, mosaics and baroque bas-reliefs. Nearby, you'll find the cobblestone streets and discover Red Square surrounded by the State History Museum, as well as the iconic swirled cupolas of St. Basils Cathedral, now a museum.

You can go behind the red-brick walls of the Kremlin where you can visit the Armoury Chamber to admire its astounding treasures including a magnificent collection of Faberge eggs.

Day 14: Moscow and to St. Petersburg

This evening you board your final train to the imperial city of St. Petersburg – home of Tsar's and Tsarina's.

Meals - Breakfast

Day 15: St. Petersburg

St. Petersburg with its beautiful canals, manicured parks, and graceful 18th century architecture is a fitting city to end your Tsars and Tsarinas adventure. Discover the world's largest collection of paintings housed within the gilded halls of the Hermitage Museum, where works by Botticelli and Rembrandt to Van Gogh to Picasso are hung.

Suggested sightseeing - The Hermitage Museum, Summer Palace, St Isaacs Cathedral, Canal boat tour, Peter and Paul Fortress, Winter Palace, Nevsky Prospekt, excursion to Vasilevsky Island, see a ballet at the Mariinsky Theatre

Day 16: St. Petersburg

Today your epic journey across this vast continent comes to an end.

Meals - Breakfast

Itinerary (cont.)

Journey Summary

| | | |
|--------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Day 1 | Ulaanbaatar - journey begins | |
| Day 2 | To Terej National Park | |
| Day 3 | Terej National Park | |
| Day 4 | Return to Ulaanbaatar and depart to Irkutsk | Afternoon departure |
| Day 5 | Arrive Irkutsk and to Listvyanka | Afternoon arrival |
| Day 6 | Listvyanka - Lake Baikal | |
| Day 7 | Return to Irkutsk and depart to Yekaterinburg | Late afternoon departure |
| Day 8 | Onboard train | |
| Day 9 | Arrive Yekaterinburg | Late evening arrival |
| Day 10 | Yekaterinburg and to Kazan | Late evening departure |
| Day 11 | Arrive Kazan and depart to Moscow | Midday arrival and evening departure |
| Day 12 | Arrive Moscow | Morning arrival |
| Day 13 | Moscow | |
| Day 14 | Moscow and depart to St Petersburg | Late evening departure |
| Day 15 | Arrive St Petersburg | Morning arrival |
| Day 16 | St Petersburg - journey concludes | |

What's included



Group size

Completely up to you



Meals

9 breakfasts



Transfers

All arrival transfers once on tour
(excludes airport)



Accommodation

5 hotel (twin share)
2 Mongolian ger (shared)
2 Siberian guesthouse (twin share)
6 train nights (shared 4-berth)



Sightseeing

Organise your sightseeing locally or with us in advance.



Expertise

Our Travel Advisors can help you create the perfect independent journey. If you choose to travel at a Classic service level, City Ambassadors are included at certain cities to enhance your experience with local knowledge.

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