



## Trans-Siberian Express

Undisputedly the world's greatest railway journey, the Trans-Siberian Railway runs from Moscow over the Urals, across the magnificent Russian steppes and alongside the shores of the world's largest freshwater lake. By the time our train arrives in Vladivostok it will have passed through eight time zones, and travelled over 6,000 miles, one third of the way around the world.



YOUR  
ADVENTURE  
AWAITS

15 days/14 nights

### ITINERARY

#### Day 1: Vladivostok

Arrive at Vladivostok Airport, where you will be met and transferred to the centrally located four-star Hotel Hyundai. We will enjoy a welcome reception dinner at our hotel, whilst you meet your fellow travellers and anticipate the epic 15 day voyage that lies ahead.

#### Day 2: Vladivostok

Vladivostok is a military port, located on the western shores of the Sea of Japan and is home to the Russian Navy's Pacific Fleet. Due to its military importance, the city was closed to foreigners between 1930 and 1992. Vladivostok (literally translated as 'Ruler of the East') offers visitors an interesting opportunity to explore its principal military attractions including a visit to a preserved World War Two submarine. Our city tour will also take us to the iconic suspension bridge over Golden Horn Bay, one of the largest of its kind worldwide, which opened in 2012 for the APEC conference.

Following a champagne reception at Vladivostok Railway Station, and with a military band playing on the platform, we will board the *Golden Eagle* Trans-Siberian Express. After settling into our modern, stylish cabins we enjoy dinner in the restaurant car as our rail adventure westwards begins.

#### Day 3: Khabarovsk

Located 15 miles (25 kilometers) from the border with China, Khabarovsk stretches along the banks of the Amur River. Khabarovsk was founded as a military post in 1858, but the region had been populated by several indigenous peoples of the Far East for many centuries. It is now a busy city with tree-lined streets.

We'll visit the memorial to Yerofey Pavlovich Khabarov, the Far East explorer the city is named after, and the impressive World War Two memorial to the fallen soldiers. We will also have time at the Regional Museum where the local history has been well-preserved with a rich collection of artifacts describing the cultural and natural history of the region.

#### Day 4: On-Board

Today offers the perfect opportunity to practice your improving Russian or watch a DVD as you watch the world pass by. For those who like to socialize, the Bar Lounge Car is the perfect place to enjoy a chat with your fellow passengers as you listen to our resident musician.

#### Day 5: On-Board

Today offers the perfect opportunity to practice your improving Russian or watch a DVD as you watch the world pass by. For those who like to socialise, the Bar Lounge Car is the perfect place to enjoy a chat with your fellow passengers as you listen to our resident musician.



### Day 6: Ulaan Baatar

Our Trans-Siberian adventure takes us into Mongolia and a visit to its capital, Ulaan Baatar. Mongolia, once the very centre of an enormous empire led by Genghis Khan, is a country of beautiful landscapes, nomadic people and rich in culture and history. Mongolia is famous for its endless green Steppes, grazing livestock and white, nomadic Gers (Yurts) dotted all across the countryside.

We start the tour at Gandan Monastery, one of Mongolia's most important Buddhist Monasteries housing a community of over 500 monks. The full name, Gandantegchinlen, translates as 'the great place of complete joy'. At Sukhbaatar Square we can see the central monument to Genghis Khan, undoubtedly the most feared and revered Mongol. We then drive out of the city to Gorkhi-Terelj National Park and enjoy the beautiful scenery of wild Mongolia, having the opportunity to visit a traditional Ger and meet a nomadic family or try our hand at horse-riding, an intrinsic part of Mongolian life.

Alternatively there is an option to stay in the city as part of our *Freedom of Choice* touring. After Gandan Monastery and Sukhbaatar Square we visit the National Museum where we learn about the country's intriguing history. We'll also see Bogd Khan Winter Palace Museum, the winter residences of Bogd Khan, the last Mongolian emperor, built between 1893 and 1903. We can also explore the city and have some free time for shopping for Mongolian souvenirs, and their speciality cashmere.

We will also enjoy a performance of traditional Mongolian throat singing and contortionists.

### Day 7: Ulan Ude

The ethnic and cultural diversity of Ulan Ude, the capital of the Buryat Republic, offers a unique insight into its heritage. As we tour the area you will notice the different faces of these welcoming Buryat people. During our exploration of the Old Believers' Village we have the opportunity to learn about the culture and history of these religious people as we are treated to a concert featuring local traditions and folk singing.

### Day 8: Lake Baikal

Few natural sights can surpass the beauty and grandeur of Lake Baikal and is a major highlight on our Trans-Siberian journey. Lake Baikal is the deepest lake in the world and holds 20 per cent of the world's freshwater. Also known as the 'Pearl of Siberia' it is home to a unique breed of freshwater seal and over 50 species of fish including omul. For five hours we wind our way through tunnels along cliff hugging tracks above the lake with a vista of snow capped peaks along the far shore forming a picture-perfect backdrop.

To add to the grandeur of the day our Golden Eagle train will be hauled by a Soviet era steam locomotive on this beautiful section of the line. There will be plenty of opportunities for photographs as the train winds its way along the lake. This will be an unforgettable part of our journey.

Weather permitting, we stop in an extremely picturesque location by the lake for photographic opportunities and for the brave hearted there is time for a refreshing swim in the crystal clear and ice-cold waters of Baikal. Travelling onwards to the end of the Baikal branch line, we leave the train and travel by boat on the lake to Listvyanka, a small Baikal settlement nestling at the base of the surrounding hills and visit the Lake Baikal Museum and Aquarium where you can learn about the flora and fauna of the lake.

We will enjoy a delicious barbecue, including freshly smoked omul fish, prepared by our own chefs on the shore of Lake Baikal to complete a memorable day. As part of our *Freedom of Choice* excursion programme you can choose a hiking opportunity that offers some spectacular and panoramic hillside views of the lake below.

### Day 9: Irkutsk

Our visit to Irkutsk, the 'Paris of Siberia', takes in the most significant sites and museums in this fascinating city, including an exploration of the classic wooden architecture with its intricately carved lace-like decorations that has given many of this region's buildings such a distinctive and unique appearance. We also visit the Volkonsky House Museum, which is dedicated to the memory of the aristocrats who were exiled to this remote outpost after the failed Decembrists uprising of 1825, and we recreate the atmosphere of that time with a champagne reception and private concert.

You could learn to cook some traditional Russian dishes with a local chef and prepare your own lunch with our *Freedom of Choice* option. Or you might also wish to visit a traditional Russian Dacha (summer house) or an urban apartment to get an insight into the everyday life of an average Russian family.

### Day 10: On-Board

A day to unwind and reflect on the many sights and sounds we have experienced on the journey so far. Chat to your fellow passengers, perhaps learn a few more words of Russian or simply enjoy the ever changing landscape outside your window.



### Day 11: Novosibirsk

A modern 'Soviet' city, we experience the life and character of Novosibirsk's rich culture where the arts and science predominate. The city is located in the heart of Russia and is situated on both banks of the River Ob. Our city tour takes us to Lenin Square where the imposing Opera House is located. An architectural marvel, it houses two permanent ballet and opera companies and is one of the largest opera houses in the world. In front of the Opera House, we visit an impressive statue of Lenin – a marvellous opportunity to have your photograph taken with this iconic political leader.

Alternatively, south of the city you could visit Novosibirsk's excellent Railway Museum on our Freedom of Choice tour. The museum displays locomotives and rolling stock from the late 1800s, including carriages of the Tsars, through to the Soviet era. Or choose to go to the Mineralogical Centre with its fine display of Siberian minerals.

For those interested in art there is also the *Freedom of Choice* option to visit the State Art Museum with an extensive collection including icons, Siberian art and numerous distinctive mountainscapes by celebrated spiritual Russian painter Nicholas Roerich. It also displays temporary art and photography exhibitions by local and international artists.

### Day 12: Yekaterinburg

Founded in 1723 by Peter the Great, Yekaterinburg, is the capital of the Urals. Known as the Great Divide, the Ural Mountains create the natural border between Europe and Asia so that the cultural and architectural influences of European and Asian civilisations come together in this fascinating and cosmopolitan landscape. Our city tour takes us to the poignant site where the Romanov, Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, was executed with his family by the Bolsheviks in 1918 following 78 days of imprisonment. Now a church dedicated to their memory, this site provides us with a powerful insight into the turmoil of the Russian Revolution.

Our *Freedom of Choice* programme will also offer activities such as a walking tour of the city, or explore the intriguing Soviet military past in a visit to Yekaterinburg Military Museum which displays fragments of the U2 American spy-plane flown by Gary Powers that was shot down in this area in 1960 during the Cold War.

### Day 13: Kazan

Situated on the River Volga, the picturesque and historic city of Kazan is the capital of Tatarstan. Here we have the opportunity to see for ourselves its rich tapestry of history and culture. One of the highlights of this city tour is our exploration of the Kremlin Fortress, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Within the walls of this ancient citadel we will explore its stunning mosque and picture-perfect onion-domed cathedral.

As Kazan is the birthplace of one of Russia's most famous opera singers, Feodor Chaliapin (1873-1938), we honour his memory with a private concert of his music.

You will also have time to wander through the main pedestrian area of Kazan and immerse yourself in the atmosphere of the city.

### Day 14: Moscow

Our touring programme of Moscow principally takes us to the grandeur of the Kremlin – the spiritual, historical and political heart of Moscow – and to see the treasures of the Tsars in the Armoury Chamber. We also visit Red Square, an iconic symbol of Russia's former military and political might with its eclectic mix of fascinating architecture, such as the ornate St Basil's Cathedral's magnificent onion-domed spires, the beautiful facade of the world famous GUM department store, constructed in Tsarist times, and the sombre and evocative site of Lenin's tomb.

With our *Freedom of Choice* touring options you may instead wish to travel out of the city centre to Sergiev Posad, home to one of the most beautiful monasteries in Russia and the historical and spiritual centre of the Russian Orthodox Church or visit the famous State Tretyakov Gallery (National Museum of Fine Art).

Included in our time spent in Moscow is one night at the five-star Marriott Royal Aurora, or similar. Located in Moscow city center, and within walking distance of Red Square and the Bolshoi Theatre, this luxury hotel offers spacious accommodation with butler service for each guest room – the only hotel in Moscow to offer this fine service.

Our final evening is spent saying our goodbyes to our fellow travelling companions and friends at the Farewell Dinner.

### Day 15: Moscow

Following breakfast, any free time can be spent exploring this rapidly evolving city. It is possible that we will visit The Kremlin this morning. At the conclusion of your time here, you will be transferred to Moscow Airport to begin your journey home.

Why not extend your stay in Moscow with additional nights to explore more of the city at your leisure or have time to take in a performance at the world-renowned Bolshoi Theatre? *Tickets need to be pre-booked and are subject to schedule and availability.*



## Details

### 2018 Departures:

#### Eastbound:

May 06  
June 09  
July 23  
August 20

#### Westbound:

May 19  
August 05  
September 02

### 2018 Pricing:

#### Silver Class

Twin: US\$ on request  
Single: US\$ on request

#### Gold Class

Twin: US\$ on request  
Single: US\$ on request

#### Imperial Suite

Twin: US\$ on request  
Single: US\$ on request

#### Trip Code:

002297C-20

## INCLUDED

- Accommodation aboard The Golden Eagle
- All meals and drinks
- The services of a tour manager throughout the tour
- Russian Interpreters able to speak English, German, French and Italian
- Porterage services
- Comprehensive off-train sightseeing program as detailed in the itinerary
- Arrival and departure transfers
- Hotels and on-board accommodation
- Welcome and farewell dinners
- Drinks with meals
- Gold Class includes drinks from the standard drinks list in the Bar Lounge Car
- Imperial Suite includes drinks from standard and premium bar lists
- On-board services throughout your journey, 24 hours a day
- Housekeeping and bedding turndown services
- Tea, coffee, bottled water in your cabin 24 hours a day
- Freedom choice touring
- Personal headsets for off-board excursions
- On-board doctor and medical facilities
- All gratuities

## NOT INCLUDED

- Return airfare to Russia
- Travel insurance
- Visa costs
- Drive from the Bar Lounge Car
- Laundry services
- Taxes, fees and airline surcharges

## TOUR NOTES

Eastbound dates operate in the reverse of the above itinerary and inclusions may differ slightly. Please ask us for current eastbound itineraries.

Freedom of Choice Optional Add-ons:



- Siberian Mineralogical Centre
- Walking tour of Yekaterinburg
- Russian monastery in Serviev Posad
- Museum visits such as: Mongolian National Museum; Bogd Khan Winter Palace Museum; Novosibirsk Railway Museum; Yekaterinburg Military Museum; State Tretyakov Picture Gallery (National Museum of Fine Arts)

*Disclaimer: We do our utmost to ensure that information posted on our website is correct at the time of publication, however trip details are subject to change without notice by the suppliers and operators involved. We update the information as soon as possible when changes are advised to us, however, we cannot assume responsibility for such changes made by the suppliers and operators.*

## ROUTE MAP



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