



Experience Eurasian

Along the way
 Beijing
 Ulaanbaatar
 Ekaterinburg
 Moscow
 St. Petersburg

Leaving from Beijing to St. Petersburg

This is a routing with two en-route stops that pan out very well in terms of breaking up the intervening rail journey more evenly. Our super range of Urals-related stops in Ekaterinburg caters for a year round selection of side-trip options, whatever time of year you're travelling – while we have our winning formula of some time in soviet era capital Ulaanbaatar plus two days out in the Mongolian countryside at the Elstei Ger Lodge.



What's included

FULL ON

Train

- > 4-berth rail for complete journey (pre-assigned berths)
- > option to upgrade to 2-berth

Beijing

- > 1 night 3★ hotel

Ulaanbaatar

- > all transportation
- > 1 nights Elstei Ger Lodge, all meals
- > 1 night 4★ hotel, breakfast
- > City tour of Ulaanbaatar

Moscow

- > transfer on arrival to your hotel
- > 2 nights 3★ hotel, breakfast
- > 3 hour personalised walking tour with local expert

St. Petersburg

- > transfer on arrival to your hotel
- > 2 nights 1★ or 2★ or 3★ hotel, breakfast
- > 3 hour personalised walking tour with local expert

NO FRILLS

Train

- > 4-berth rail for complete journey (pre-assigned berths)
- > option to upgrade to 2-berth

Beijing

- > 1 night 1★ hotel

Ulaanbaatar – (city based stay)

- > transfer on arrival to your hotel
- > 2 nights 1★ hotel, breakfast
- > transfer to the station on departure

Moscow

- > transfer on arrival to your hotel
- > 2 nights 1★ hotel, breakfast

St. Petersburg

- > transfer on arrival to your hotel
- > 2 nights 1★ hotel, breakfast

In the know...

Chinese cuisine varies enormously from region to region, and it's really truer to say that there are many different cuisines in China.

Despite what Fox Motion Pictures might tell you (in "Anastasia") the real-life Anastasia didn't escape the order for the Royal Family to be killed. The final missing bodies were located and DNA-verified in September 2007.

Tsarina Catherine The Great was Russia's most famous female ruler. But her title was "Tsaritsa", not "tsarina" (a long-running mistake in English) and she wasn't Russian, she was German and her name wasn't Catherine, but Sophie. Apart from that it's right.

"The truth is good, but happiness is better"
Russian proverb.



No ordinary trip

At The Russia Experience we like to ditch the clichés, discard the puff and concentrate on what we do best – bringing to life the world's longest train route: the places visited, the encounters made and the realisation of a journey that is both engaging and rewarding.

We continually look at ways of enhancing the Trans Siberian experience, incorporating seasonal considerations (such as the Harbin Ice Festival), providing the historical context (pay a visit to the only remaining Soviet Gulag) or inviting you to savour the diverse cultural influences of indigenous people (sit down with a shaman, or enjoy the Siberian art of throat singing!).

We have no group departures, our advertised dates always operate (barring anything completely out of our control) and, above all, we will tell you it like it is – allowing you to make the right choice from a portfolio of journeys rich in variety and full of memorable experiences. Sorry! We couldn't resist at least one cliché!



Visa Requirements

Visitors to China, Russia and Mongolia require visas. These must be obtained prior to departure. Visa processing times for these countries can be up to;

China	10 Working Days
Mongolia	10 Working Days
Russia	25 Working Days

However fast track processing is possible.

Due to the support documents required by the Embassy of Russia (which we obtain), you will need to book your trip before starting to obtain visas.

For full information regarding visas, please refer to our web site.

Hints and Tips

TOP TIP! – The Nomads have rarely seen a picture of themselves. Don't forget to show them one on your digital camera!

Photocopy your passport including the visas issued pages, airline tickets and insurance policies.

Your passport must be valid for at least six months past the end of your travel dates.

Travellers Checklist

Day pack, back pack, money belt, first aid kit, heat proof mug, instant coffee, tea bags, sun hat, mosquito repellent, lightweight jacket, flip flops, sun cream, warm jacket (Sep-Apr departures), warm waterproof walking boots, photographs of home to show the Nomads, Mongolian children love bubbles!, universal sink plug, bottle opener.

Climate and time – Minimum/maximum Temperatures °C

	Jan/Feb	Mar/Apr	May/Jun	Jul/Aug	Sep/Oct	Nov/Dec
Beijing	-20/-10	-6/+14	+15/+22	+24/+30	+ 8/+22	-10/+6
Ulaanbaatar	-35/-22	-10/+12	+15/+24	+26/+42	+10/+25	-15/+8
Moscow/ St. Petersburg	-20/-10	-5/+12	+15/+22	+15/+30	+ 8/+24	-6/+10

Experience Eurasian

full on itinerary – 16 days

Leaving from Beijing to St. Petersburg

DAY 01

On arrival in Beijing you're free to make your own way to the hotel – any taxi driver will quickly find the address. The convenient location positions you to get the most of your own exploration of this legendary Imperial city, where the rich traditions of Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism meet with the opulence of the Chinese Emperors and the vibrant realism of contemporary China. Chinese hotels cope badly with the idea of foreigners who haven't yet arrived so we'll have your onward rail tickets delivered once you have checked in, although with user hints, directions to the station, and Chinese language directions that will help you catch a taxi successfully and smoothly. During your stay in Beijing you'll certainly want to visit both the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square. These are within walking distance of the Red Wall Hotel, and adjacent to each other, so this couldn't be more convenient! (Please note your Trans-Siberian train tickets will be delivered to the hotel during your stay.)

No meals

DAY 02

Your time is free until your train departs. Hotel Reception can preorder you a taxi – it's wise to allow one hour to get through Beijing's traffic and a second hour to complete security (metal-detectors are now in force and there can be queues to use them) and find your train and platform. And then you're heading off, along the most famous railway in the world!

No meals

DAY 03

Afternoon arrival in Ulaanbaatar. Our driver will meet you at the end of the platform and will be holding a meeting-board with your name on. Transfer from the station to hotel Bayangol. This is a great centrally located property and facilities include 5 restaurants, fitness centre, sauna and a supermarket. You will have a chance to freshen up before departing for your city tour. The balance of today is free to explore more of the city. You can choose to visit the heady atmosphere surrounding the Gandan Monastery or visit the Chojin Monastery Museum, or the Bazaar... log on and pick up your email in one of the numerous internet cafes on Peace Avenue, have a latte and French pastries in the new generation of new-age coffee stores, go souvenir shopping in the peculiar grandeur of the Central Department Store, or pick up some snack food for the train in the Store's food department... in the evening a wide range of traditional and new style Mongolian eateries are vying with European style places, Irish pubs and German beer halls to enjoy, usually with live music later on.

No meals

DAY 04

After breakfast depart for Elstei Ger Lodge. With no specific activities planned you can choose to chill out, read, or go walking, or (for a small payment made directly to them locally) you can go horse riding with local nomad horsemen.

Breakfast, Lunch, Supper

DAY 05

After breakfast transfer back to Ulaanbaatar. Transfer to the station where you will board the Ekaterinburg bound train.

Breakfast

DAY 06–07

On board... The Trans-Sib travelling towards Ekaterinburg. The dining car is the heart of social life on the train. It functions as bar, lounge, and take-out snack store, as well as a café serving reasonably priced meals. It is a great place to meet fellow travellers and locals alike, sharing your experiences of your journey so far with a few drinks, which no doubt will include some Vodka – and maybe smoked salmon and caviar too!

No meals

DAY 08

Afternoon arrive in Ekaterinburg where our driver will meet you at the end of the platform and will be holding a meeting-board with your name on. Transfer to the Hotel Suite, which is centrally located. There is a walking tour around the well known and less obvious attractions of Ekaterinburg, with a local expert guide. You'll visit the historical centre of the city, including the scene of the assassination of the Romanov Royal Family, on which a Cathedral now stands to mark the event. You'll also see something of Ekaterinburg's involvement in Russia's military history. The last half-hour will be spent at The Museum of Gems. The tour ends in the downtown area (we make sure you know the way back!)

No meals

DAY 09

Please make a choice of one of the day trip options. They're included in the trip price!

Breakfast, Lunch

(Geographical note: Ekaterinburg has borders on both the Western and Eastern sides of town... to the West is the official border between Europe & Asia, and to the East of Ekaterinburg is where Siberia officially begins.) The Siberian border was more than symbolic in the C19th – it delineated an area where a more rough and ready system of justice operated, where escaped serfs who had run away from their masters could legally claim sanctuary. For oppressed religious minorities, escaped serfs and others, the one way trip to Siberia was, ironically, the "highway of hope".

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full on itinerary – 16 days

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- A. ROMANOV GRAVES** (Europe/Asia Border Monument en-route). Car excursion to site where the Romanov bodies were hidden. Duration; 5-6 hours. No physical exertion involved. Light lunch provided. Year round.
- B. SIBERIAN COUNTRYSIDE & HISTORIC VILLAGE** Visit to an old village (145 km each way) now under a Preservation Order. Includes home-cooked lunch, exhibitions of local craft, horse cart riding. Duration; 8–9 hours. No physical exertion involved. Year round.
- C. HIKING TRIP IN THE URALS** Outdoor adventure in an area which is a designated nature park. Car transfer, then 18km walk where you will see a variety of flora and fauna and learn about the indigenous species of wildlife. No special equipment needed. Duration; 8 hours. Lunch provided. 15 June–15 September. Weather permitting.
- D. SIBERIAN WILDERNESS ADVENTURE** Combined soft raft (6km) and Forest Hike (12km) – optional cave visit. Good fitness required. Duration; 9–10 hours. Lunch provided. 15 June–15 September. Weather permitting.
- E. MOUNTAIN BIKING IN THE URALS** Trip to start West of the city. After a short drive you start your bike trip on a professional bike for 2–3 hrs. Lunch. Duration; 5 hrs. 15 May–30 Sep. Weather permitting.
- F. SKIING** At Ezhovaya Slopes Ski Resort. Skis/Poles/Lift-Pass package purchasable locally approx £35 payable in roubles. No instruction is included – this program is for those who can already ski. Duration; 6–7 hours. Lunch provided. 01 December–28 February. Weather permitting.
- G. ICE-FISHING** Yes, you saw the cartoons, now you can try it yourself. Tackle, angler's hints & fur coat provided. We don't guarantee you'll catch anything! Duration; 8 hours. Lunch provided. 15 November–15 December. 01 February–15 March. Weather permitting.
- H. SIBERIAN HUSKY DOG SLEDDING** Exactly what it says! 3–4 hours sledding following a made track through the forest. No special fitness required, but be ready to fall-off in the soft snow a few times, they're pretty fast! At the end of your trip you will visit the famous Europe-Asia border. Duration; 7–8 hours. Lunch provided. 15 November–28 December. 16 January–28 February. Weather permitting.

DAY 10

Early morning transfer to the station where you will board the Moscow bound train.

Breakfast

DAY 11

“S Priezdom! Welcome to Moscow!” early morning arrival. Our driver will be there to meet you at the end of the platform, and will hold a meeting-board with your name on. You'll then be transferred to the Irbis 3★ Hotel. The facilities available at this hotel include a Restaurant, Lobby Bar, Lobby Wi-Fi access, Luggage Room, Safety deposit boxes and an ATM machine. One of our local expert staff will meet you at the hotel to take you on a three hour walking tour round the highlights – you'll use public transport around the centre to avoid the traffic jams and get the hang of the system for when you come to use it independently. Our staffers are full of ideas for this walk but are flexible about other ideas if you have your own. Your walk ends in the city centre around lunch time. At check-in, (after 2pm) the hotel reception will advise you they will need your passport for visa registration. This process takes 1 – 2 hours. Your complimentary InfoPack is full of ideas for getting the most out of your free time.

No meals

DAY 12

If you haven't pre-booked any of our range of city excursions the rest of the day is your own to explore further. Some of our top suggestions (please check opening times/days before setting off) would include visiting the Moscow Kremlin, the Tretyakov Gallery, the Pushkin Fine Arts Museum, or a boat trip along the Moskva River... perhaps locate some tickets for ballet, opera, circus or a concert this evening? As well as famous classical music traditions Moscow features on the touring schedules of world names in jazz, rock, pop and world music.

Breakfast

DAY 13

You'll need to check out of your room by 12 noon today. A full day for you to pack in the rest! Own transfer this evening to Leningradsky Station where you will board the St. Petersburg bound train.

Breakfast

DAY 14

Early morning arrival in St. Petersburg. Our driver will be there to meet you at the end of the platform, and will hold a meeting-board with your name on. You'll then be transferred to the hotel. Your guide will meet you at the hotel and introduce you to the city's highlights – a good basis for starting your own explorations. Although the public transport (used on today's excursion) is similar to Moscow's, there are a few quirks that your guide will show you. After lunchtime you're on your own to explore further.

No meals

DAY 15

Free day for you to pack in the best of the rest! Perhaps you have pre-booked one of our city based excursions for today. Some of our top suggestions (please check opening times/days before setting off) The Hermitage Collection – Winter Palace. The canals and waterways of the “Northern Venice”. The Russian Museum of Fine Art. The Peter & Paul Fortress and the Tombs of the Tsars inside the Fortress Cathedral. The Church on the Spilt Blood, nearby the Souvenir Bazaar.

Breakfast

DAY 16

Check out of your room by 12 noon. Own transfer on departure.

Breakfast