



# Experience Original Trans-Sib via Irkutsk

**Along the way**  
 St. Petersburg  
 Moscow  
 Irkutsk  
 Vladivostok

## Leaving from St. Petersburg to Vladivostok via Irkutsk

Starting your trip in St. Petersburg gives you the opportunity to see the contrast between the imperial splendour and the soviet simplicity that existed both then and now. The Moscow-Vladivostok route appeals to train fans, completists, historians, and sometimes those heading to Japan too. You don't pass through Mongolia on this route, but you can (and do!) stop at Lake Baikal, with a choice of options (included) ranging from the active to the sedentary, and even the underwater! Other Siberian destinations (Ekaterinburg, Ulan-Uday) could potentially be added – contact us if you would like a sample price and itinerary for doing so.



## What's included

**FULL ON**

**Train**

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

**St. Petersburg**

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

**Moscow**

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

**Irkutsk**

**Siberian Village**

- > all transportation included
- > 3 nights 3★ hotel Listvyanka Village, breakfast
- > 1 night 3★ hotel Irkutsk City, breakfast
- > excursion option

**NO FRILLS**

**Train**

- > 4-berth rail for complete journey
- > option to upgrade to 2-berth

**St. Petersburg**

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

**Moscow**

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

**Irkutsk (city based stay)**

- > transfer on arrival
- > 4 nights home-stay Irkutsk City, breakfast
- > transfer to the station on departure

## In the know...

As well as the famous Moscow Metro, there's a second "Secret Metro" in parallel with the official system. It was built to enable Party leaders to move around the city or go to the airport in secret. Its existence is still officially a secret, and the public are unable to see or visit it. Only some eccentric pedestrian subways and illogical station-locations on the main system hint where the secret one is located.

Vladivostok is the terminus of the Trans-Siberian railway and also Russia's major Pacific sea port.

The Trans-Siberian route to Vladivostok was built between 1891 and 1916.



## 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 Russia require a visa. This must be obtained prior to departure. Visa processing times can be up to:

Russia	25 Working Days
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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! – How are you departing from Vladivostok? There are very few options.

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, lightweight jacket, flip flops, sun cream, warm jacket (Sep-Apr departures), ski clothing. (for those participating), warm waterproof walking boots, universal sink plug, bottle opener.

## Climate and time – Minimum/maximum Temperatures °C

	Jan/Feb	Mar/Apr	May/Jun	Jul/Aug	Sep/Oct	Nov/Dec
St. Petersburg/ Moscow	-20/-10	-5/+12	+15/+22	+15/+30	+8/+24	-6/+10
Irkutsk	-40/-20	-10/+5	+8/+22	+26/+38	+10/+24	-15/+8
Vladivostok	-15/-02	+03/+12	+18/+23	+24/+30	+12/+22	-15/+4

# Experience Original Trans-Sib via Irkutsk

full on itinerary – 17 days

Leaving from St. Petersburg  
to Vladivostok via Irkutsk

## DAY 01

“S Priezdom! Welcome to St. Petersburg!” Our driver will be there to meet you from whichever flight, train or boat you arrive. You’ll then be transferred to your hotel. 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. (Please note your train tickets to Moscow will be delivered to the hotel during your two night stay.)

No meals

## DAY 02

After breakfast 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 lunchtime. If you haven’t pre-booked any of our range of city excursions the rest of the day is your own to explore further.

Breakfast

## DAY 03

You’ll need to check out of your room by 12 noon today but the hotel offers a Left Luggage service for a small fee. Your day is free until your evening departure to Moscow. Reception can book you a taxi to the station. 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 04

Early morning arrival in Moscow. Our driver will meet you at the end of the platform and will be holding 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 around 10am 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 lunchtime. Check-in is 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. (Please note your Trans-Siberian train tickets will be delivered to the hotel during your two night stay.)

No meals

## DAY 05

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 Mosvka 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 06

You’ll need to check out of your room by 12 noon today but the hotel offers a Left Luggage service for a small fee. Your day is free until 9pm when a driver is scheduled to take you to the station. This morning you can continue sightseeing – the Lenin Mausoleum is only open in the mornings, and getting there early (it’s in Red Square) helps beat the queues. Although there’s a restaurant car service on board your train you may want to supplement this with some snacks, treats, and fresh fruit that you could buy today. Your transfer from the hotel to Yaroslavsky station is scheduled for 9pm, so please be at the hotel reception where your driver will meet you and will assist your boarding of the Irkutsk bound train.

Breakfast

## DAY 07–09

On board The Trans-Sib... travelling towards Irkutsk. The dining car is the heart of social life of 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! Along the way you’ll see astonishing Siberian scenery as the deciduous forests of the Ural Mountains slowly give way to Siberian pine forests. The major landmarks are the great rivers you cross, including the River Ob at Novosibirsk (one of the most famous bridges on the route), and the gigantic Enisei River (at Krasnoyarsk).

No meals

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## SIBERIAN VILLAGE

### DAY 10

Early morning arrival in Irkutsk. Our driver will meet you at the end of the platform, holding a meeting-board marked with your name. Transfer to “U Oзера Hotel” (the name translates as “At the Lake Hotel”, although it is not directly at the lake shore) situated in Listvyanka Village (70km) travelling by road through the forest. The facilities available at this hotel include; cafe-bar, Russian “banya” (sauna), safe at the reception. The nearest ATM-machine in the Baikal Hotel (Listvyanka remains a village, and doesn't have the range of banking services you could expect in a city). The official check-in time is 12 noon, the hotel reception will advise you they will need your passport for visa registration formalities. However if your room is available this will - of course - be allocated to you on arrival. (If your room is not available you will be able to leave your luggage with the hotel reception). You will have a chance to have breakfast before setting off on your walking tour around Listvyanka Village. This will include a visit to the Limnological Museum (this is an exhibition about the Lake, its formation, wildlife etc - it includes multimedia presentations, information about the creatures which live in the darkest depths, and also an aquarium with living aquatic species, including the unique freshwater Baikal seals) and also a small wooden village Russian Orthodox Church dating back to the C18th. You return to your hotel at the end of the walk, with time to relax and enjoy your lakeside surroundings, maybe experience real Siberian “banya” (sauna). (small payment locally at the hotel).

Breakfast

### DAY 11

Choose one activity from the list, it's all included in the trip price! You'll need to inform us of your choice before commencing your journey, so that we can have the right staff on hand for when you arrive (please note the Siberian weather puts seasonal limits on some activities – details below). Want to extend your life? Local legend claims that you can get anything from five extra years of life (paddling up to your knees) up to twenty years if you manage to go swimming!

- A. **SIBERIAN TREK** through the Taiga Forest with a local guide who will explain the wildlife, eco system and lore of the Taiga. (May-Oct)
- B. **CIRCUM BAIKAL PICNIC**  
Take the Ferry from Listvyanka to Port Baikal which takes around 15 minutes. Walk around Port Baikal, where you will see the train station of the old Circumbaikal rail line. Then you will walk along the rail line to the nearest tunnel (2-3 km). Stopping for a picnic lunch on the shore of Lake Baikal. Return to Port Baikal, ferry back to Listvyanka. (Jun-Sep)
- C. **SNOW MOBILE TRIP** with a local guide through the forest, or even out over the deep frozen lake! Two hours (Dec-Apr)
- D. **DOG SLEDDING** trip for a distance of 10 km. 1 dog sled for each client. (Dec-Mar)
- E. **DO YOUR OWN THING** maybe take off on a cliff side walk, or mosey around the village, or take a dip in Lake Baikal! (Weather permitting!) Balance of day free time to explore the village at your own pace.

Maybe try a local bar?

Breakfast

### DAY 12

No specific itinerary is planned today. This is a free day at your leisure. Why not take a walk down to the Harbour and enjoy the freshly caught Omlu, the indigenous fish of Lake Baikal.

Breakfast

### DAY 13

After breakfast transfer back to Irkutsk city. Check-in to your 3\* Hotel. You will be given a map and some recommendations of interesting places to visit, balance of day free to explore.

Breakfast

### DAY 14

Early Morning transfer to Irkutsk station where you will board the Vladivostok bound train.

Breakfast

### DAY 15 – 16

On board the Trans-Sib... travelling via Ulan-Uday and Khabarovsk heading towards Vladivostok.

No meals

### DAY 17

Morning arrival in Vladivostok. For additional services in Vladivostok and beyond please see our website.

No meals