

	Staying in Moscow, June 2008
June, 15 - 17	<p>The guests are arriving to Moscow. Meeting at the airport, transfer (group or individual as you wish) to the BORODINO HOTEL, accommodation at SGL or TWIN Standard rooms with breakfast buffet.</p>
June, 16-17	<p>For some guests who arrive on June, 15-16 - excursion to Sergiev Posad for 6 hours.</p> <p>The city of Sergiev Posad is famous for one of Russia's biggest and most famous monasteries -the Trinity Monastery of Saint Sergey, a 16th-17th-century monument of fortified architecture. The holy relics of Saint Sergey are buried in the Trinity Cathedral, where you can also see icons painted by Andrei Rublev. His famous Old Testament Trinity was painted especially for this cathedral.</p>
June, 18	<p>Opening of the Conference, sessions. 2 pm - City-tour Moscow with a visit to Novodevichiy Convent (4 hours long excursion).</p> <p>City tour of Moscow Red Square - St. Basil's Cathedral - Lenin's Mausoleum - a panorama of the Kremlin seen from the banks of the River Moskva - the Cathedral of Christ the Savior - Novodevichiy Convent - a panorama of Moscow from Sparrow Hills - the Triumphal Arch - the New Arbat - the Boulevard Ring - Pushkin Square - Tverskaya Street - Manezh Square</p> <p>Excursion to Novodevichiy Convent One of Moscow's most stunningly beautiful and harmonious architectural monuments, the Novodevichiy Convent was founded by Vasily III in 1524. Over the next four centuries, it was the site of major historical events. It was a special convent, where the novices included members of the tsar's family who were in some way undesirable to the rulers. You will see 16th-century frescoes, a golden iconostasis, and a celebratory architectural complex created by Russian architects.</p>

<p>June, 19</p>	<p>Conference sessions. 2 pm - Excursion to Moscow Kremlin with visits to Uspenskiy, Arkhangelskiy Churches, The Armory and The Diamond Fund (5 hours long excursion).</p> <p>The world's biggest architectural complex, with monuments built between the ends of the 15th century to the 20th. Historically, the Moscow Kremlin was a seat of power; today it is a residence of the Russian President. You will see the unique collection of the Armory -ancient state regalia, gold and silverware, works of art, ceremonial royal dress, weaponry, carriages and horse trappings- as well as the Diamond Fund exhibition -the world-famous Imperial Crown of Russia, the largest nuggets of gold and platinum ever found in Russia, huge diamonds and modern jewelry.</p>
<p>June, 20</p>	<p>Conference sessions 2 pm - A visit to the State Tretyakov Gallery (4 hours long)</p> <p>State Tretyakov Gallery is the world's biggest museum of Russian Painting, founded by P.M.Tretyakov in 1856. In the possession of the museum there is the extensive collection of icons created by the painters of the basic Russian Schools of Art, including the works by Theofan Grek and Andrey Rublev. This museum houses the best specimens of Russian art and sculpture of the 18-th and the first half of the 19-th centuries, historical documentary specimens of Russian artistic culture of the 18-th and the 20-th century, private funds of artists and arts critics.</p>
<p>June, 21</p>	<p>Conference sessions, closing of the conference. In the evening Night Moscow Excursion. Well-known places of interest in the lights of Moscow night. 10.20 pm transfer to The Leningradskiy Railway Station. Leaving Moscow for Saint Petersburg.</p>
<p>June, 22-23</p>	<p>Guests (not traveling to Saint Petersburg) leaving Moscow. Transfer to the airport.</p>

Staying in St. Petersburg, June 2008

June, 22

Arrival to the Moskovskiy Railway station.
Professional licensed English speaking guide meets guests near the carriage and accompanies the group during the transfer to □ hotel by coach. Short city orientation tour during the transfer.

10 am - Meeting with a guide at the hotel lobby.

Sightseeing tour by Mercedes Sprinter, max 18 seats

The city sightseeing tour includes all major attractions of St. Petersburg. During the tour guests will see the square of Arts, the Russian Museum, the Cathedral of Our Savior on the Spilt Blood, Griboedov canal, Nevsky prospect, the Palace square, the Winter Palace, the Palace Embankment, the Field of Mars, Peter and Paul Fortress (entrance), the Summer Garden, cruiser Aurora, Smolny Cathedral the spit of the Basil Island, the Menshikov Palace, the Senate square, the Bronze Horseman, St. Isaac's square, St Isaac's cathedral,. There are several photo stops during the tour.

11.30 am - Visit to the Peter and Paul Fortress

St. Peter and Paul's Fortress is the heart of St. Petersburg. It was laid out by the order of Peter the Great in 1703. The Fortress forms an irregular hexagon stretched from West to East with six pentagonal bastions at the corners. Since its first days, Peter and Paul's Fortress has always had more than military functions. The Fortress was never besieged. It was destined instead to become the main political prison of the tsarist Russia. It was the city's foremost architectural ensemble and contained St. Peter and Paul's Cathedral. The Cathedral was erected by Domenico Trezzini between 1712 and 1733 in the Petrine Baroque style. The bell-tower of the Cathedral (122, 5 m high) is crowned with the cross and the statue of an angel. The Cathedral is the pantheon of the Romanov Royal House and all Russian Emperors from Peter the Great to Nicholas II were buried here.

1.30 pm - Visit to the St. Isaac's Cathedral

The dome of this cathedral dominates the skyline of St. Petersburg. On a clear sunny day one can see the gilded cupola of St Isaac's from miles away from its downtown site. You can climb up the stairs to the observation point at the dome and get a breathtaking view of the fascinating St Petersburg. (There were no elevators in the mid-19th century, so you will have to climb up 300 stairs).

The church itself is a real marvel. Built by the French-born architect Auguste Montferrand to be the main church of the Russian Empire, the cathedral was under construction for 40 years (1818-1858), and was decorated in the most elaborate way. When you enter the cathedral you pass through one of the porticos - note that the columns are made of single pieces of red granite and weigh 80 tons (about 177,770 pounds) each. Inside the church many of the icons are the most exquisite mosaics. The iconostasis (the icon wall that separates the altar from the rest of the church) is decorated with 8 malachite and 2 lapis lazuli columns. The cathedral, which can accommodate 14 thousand worshippers, now serves as a museum and services are held only on major occasions.

2.30 pm - End of the excursion

3.00 pm - Back to the hotel

Accommodation in the hotel

Lunch on own

Afternoon at leisure

7.00 pm Evening performance in the Mariinsky theatre. The playbill is TBA

The Mariinsky Theatre was built on the site of the Circus-Theatre, constructed by A. Cavos between 1847 and 1848. He restored the building after it was destroyed by fire in January, 1859. The new theatre, which took the name Mariinsky after Alexander II's wife Maria, was officially opened in October, 1860. It seats 1625 people. The best achievements of the Russian opera and ballet are associated with the Mariinsky Theatre. Splendid actors, directors and conductors lived their artistic life here. For a few decades E. Napravnik was the main orchestra conductor of the theatre and M. Petipa its principal ballet-master. F. Stravinsky, N. Figner, F. Shalyapin, L. Sobinov sang here; A. Pavlova, T. Karsavina, M. Kshesinskaya, V. Nizhinsky and M. Fokin and many others danced on its stage.

Roundtrip transfer to the theatre by Mercedes Sprinter

Overnight in the hotel

June, 23

Breakfast at the hotel

10.00 am - Departure to Pushkin

11.00 am - Visit to Catherine's Palace, visit to the Amber room

The Palace-and-Park ensemble of Tsarskoye Selo - a former country residence of the Russian emperors - is a fascinating monument of the world's architectural and gardening arts of the 18th -19th centuries. Its three parks occupy the area of 600 hectares, on which over 100 architectural constructions rise: from magnificent palaces and grand monuments to intimate pavilions and park sculptures. The compositional center of the Tsarskoselsky ensemble is Catherine's Palace, containing exquisite decorative objects, furniture, Russian and Western-European paintings, unique collections of porcelain, amber, arms, decorative bronze, sculptures etc. Nowadays, the collection of the museum Tsarskoye Selo enumerates about 20,000 items. The Tsarskoselsky Lyceum, an elite school established in Russia in the beginning of the 19th century for noble families' off-springs which the great Russian poet A. Pushkin attended, is situated next to the Palace. At the present time, in Catherine's Palace and in the park, the following exhibitions are open to the public: Alexander II and Tsarskoye Selo, Court carriages in Tsarskoye Selo, and an erotic exhibition "Passions, weaknesses, delights..." (Man and woman in the ancient days) open in the Cold baths pavilion.

1.00 pm - Lunch at the restaurant "Podvorye"

One of the most popular Russian restaurants, situated within 10 minutes drive from Pavlovsk and Tsarskoe Selo. The wooden Russian izba (hut) casts your memory back to the pre-Petrine Russia. Delicious Russian specialties, waiters in national Russian costumes, Cossack show.

Menu: 4 courses, tea, coffee, mineral water, shot of vodka, glass of wine included

3.00 pm - Visit to Pavlovsk

A superb palace and park ensemble, dating from the late 18th to the 19th century, Pavlovsk was a summer residence of the Russian emperor Paul I and his family. The landscape park, one of the largest in Europe, covers an area of 600 hectares. The formation of the Pavlovsk Palace collections was closely connected with the journey by its owners through Europe in 1781-82. They visited workshops of well-known artists, ordering and acquiring paintings, furniture, bronze articles, silk fabrics, china sets, etc. They also brought back to Russia a large number of antique sculptures from Italy, and gifts from European royal courts. Many of these treasures are on view, together with an excellent collection of portraits by Russian artists, and a number of Pavlovsk landscape paintings and drawings. Following a long restoration, the ravishingly beautiful private rooms of Empress Maria Fedorovna, which were decorated Quarenghi and Voronikhin, are again open to the public.

5.00 pm - Back to the hotel

Evening at leisure

Overnight in the hotel

June, 24

Breakfast in the hotel

10.00 am - Meeting with a guide in the hotel lobby

Visit to the State Hermitage museum by Mercedes Sprinter

10.30 am - Visit to the State Hermitage museum

The Hermitage is one of the world's greatest art museums and Russia's largest art repository, totaling about three million exhibits. The State Hermitage occupies six magnificent buildings situated along the embankment of the River Neva, right in the heart of St Petersburg. The leading role in this unique architectural ensemble is played by the Winter Palace, the residence of the Russian tsars formed in the 18th and 19th centuries Palace and the recently constructed Repository. Put together throughout two centuries and a half, the Hermitage collections of art works (over 3,000,000 items) present the development of the world culture and art from the Stone Age to the 20th century.

12.30 pm - End of the Hermitage tour

Lunch in the Hermitage café

2.00 pm - Departure to Peterhoff by hydrofoil, VIP seats are booked in front of the hydrofoil

14:30 - Arrival to Peterhof, visit to the Upper and Lower parks with fountains
Peterhof is a jewel of the Russian art, a town of parks, palaces and fountains. In the past it used to be a luxurious summer residence of the Russian tsars. From the Great Palace of Peterhof three monumental cascading fountains (one of them comprising the famous Samson) lead to the Lower Park, the real masterpiece in itself, with 173 fountains on its grounds. In the winter time, on the territory of the seven reserve working museums (the Grand Palace, Catherine's Block, Marli, Hermitage, the Benois family museum, Cottage and the Bath Block) are open to the public.

The world-famous palace, fountain and park ensemble of Peterhof is an outstanding landmark of Russian artistic culture of the 18-19th centuries. Founded in the very beginning of the eighteenth century by Emperor Peter the Great not far from his new northern capital St Petersburg, Peterhof was intended to become the most splendid official royal summer residence.

Credit for its creation should go to a great number of eminent architects, artists, and anonymous folk craftsmen. Its wonderful parks, 176 fountains of various forms and styles and four cascades, majestic palaces, numerous gilded statues of ancient gods and heroes, remarkable collections of sculpture, painting and works of the minor arts make Peterhof a veritable gem of art, often called "Capital of Fountains", unique in the world.

After 1917 the Peterhof ensemble was taken into state custody and turned into architecture and art museum. Nowadays, due to the unforgettable beauty of its fountains, parks and palaces, Peterhof has become the most attractive for numerous Russian and foreign visitors suburban royal park and palace ensemble of the northern Russia's capital. To feel happy, to make their spirits high, people often come to Peterhof and enjoy its magic charms.

The Lower Gardens of Peter the Great's time, now known as the Lower Park, are a masterpiece of Russian eighteenth-century garden design. Their plan is based on the natural character of the terrain, a flat strip of coast, bounded on

the southern side by a terrace, and on the northern side, by the Gulf of Finland. Amidst this setting of green and blue are arranged palaces, pavilions, fountains, and cascades, all linked into a single pattern by a system of straight avenues. Five rays - four radial alleys and the Marine Canal with its flanking walks - cross the Park from the foot of the terrace to the sea. Three avenues, forming a kind of trident - the Marly Avenue, the Maliebaan Alley, and the Birch Walk - run from the Marly Pool in the west to the eastern end of the Park. The intersection of the five rays and the three avenues results in a typical, and yet highly individual, formal scheme.

5.30 pm - Departure back to St. Petersburg by hydrofoil

6.00 pm - Arrival to the pierce near the St. Isaac's square

Walking back to the hotel (10-15 min)

18:30 - Arrival to the hotel

Time at leisure

Overnight in the hotel

<p>June, 25</p>	<p>Breakfast in the hotel 12.00 Check out. You may store you baggage at the luggage room. 1.00 pm - Meeting with a guide in the hotel lobby. Departure to the Yusupov Palace by Mercedes Sprinter.</p> <p>1.30 - visit to the Yusupov Palace and Rasputin's room The Yusupov Palace was once a residence of one of the wealthiest and most influential families in Russia. Their estates dotted the Russian landscape from the Crimea to Moscow and St. Petersburg, and the splendor of their palaces rivaled even the Tsar's in scale and the sumptuousness of their decoration. When in 1914 Prince Felix Yusupov married the favorite niece of Nicholas I, Irina Alexandrovna, the Yusupovs became related to the Imperial family. In St Petersburg they owned four most beautiful palaces. The Yusupov Palace on the Moika River was erected in the 1760s by Vallin de la Mothe. In the 1830s the architect A. Mikhailov added a new building on the left side and decorated the interiors of the main halls. Some of the interiors were redone in different historical styles by H. Monigetti in the second half of the 19th century. The private palace theatre was decorated a la rococo by A. Stepanov. It was in the Yusupov Palace, that Grigory Rasputin, a peasant who had gained control over the tsar's family through his alleged supernatural powers, was murdered on the night of December 16-17. Among those who participated in this plot were Prince Felix Yusupov and Grand Duke Dmitry Pavlovich Romanov. The Palace today is opened to the public as a museum; the palace theatre is famous for its performances. One can visit the state rooms of the palace and the Rasputin basement, where wax figures of those who participated in the plot take your memory back to December 1916.</p> <p>3.00 pm - End of the excursion</p> <p>Free time in the city - walking, visiting some restaurants, cafes, etc.</p> <p>10.00 pm - Meeting with a guide at the hotel lobby. Departure to the Moskovskiy Railway Station. Leaving Saint Petersburg by a train.</p>
<p>June, 26</p>	<p>Morning arrival to Leningradskiy Railway Station in Moscow. Transfer to the airport.</p>