Trans-Siberian by «Imperial Russia» Train

Russia is a mysterious country many, tried to understand it, but even Lev Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoyevsky wrote about the Russian restless soul, torn between Oriental traditions and Western civilization. To understand Russia, one should get on a train and cross it from the West to the East. For this purpose the Trans-Siberian Railway will be perfect — the most famous railway in the World — the path to the heart of Russia.

Thousands of kilometers from the shores of the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean — you will hear the beating of the iron heart, what it is silent about, what it is inspired by. Just trust in the road and the country will reveal its unexpected sides.

You will see Russia in all its historical greatness, in the mixture of cultures and fortunes, in the architectural splendor and extravagance, diverse and united, unifying different people and religions.

You can choose where to start your journey: with the famous Saint-Petersburg-northern capital, fabulous in its splendor or with the ancient and mysterious Moscovia. The journey continues, next stop is Kazan — the capital of the ancient Tatar Khanate, the place which connected Christianity and Islam. Yekaterinburg, Novosibirsk, Irkutsk — each city conceals many secrets. It was here where the History of Russian State was made, History full of contradictions.

Lake Baikal is the entry point to Russian Asia. Locals call it the «Sea of Baikal». It is located in the center of the Asian continent, on the border of Irkutsk region and Republic of Buryatia. It’s the deepest Lake on the planet, the largest natural reservoir of fresh water.

Ulan-Ude — last Russian city on this journey. Next stop is the exotic Asia: Mongolia - Ulan-Bator, Chinese Beijing. From the East — the sun rises and moves back to the West.

You will return home enriched with new knowledge. When you will tell about your impressions, you will be listened to, open-mouthed with surprise. Transsib will turn your whole idea of Eurasia upside-down, the crossroad of two different parts of the World, Europe and Asia.

This is Russia: to solve its mystery — one has to cross it from the West to the East.....
**Saint-Petersburg — Irkutsk**

*Welcome to Saint-Petersburg. Your guide accompanies you from airport to your Hotel*

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**Irkutsk — Saint-Petersburg**

*Welcome to Irkutsk. Your guide accompanies you from airport to your Hotel*

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Day 9  Ulan Ude
Day 10  Ulan Baatar
Day 11  Camping
Day 12  Erlian (Change trains)
Day 13  Beijing
Day 14  Beijing
Day 15  Beijing, end of the Trip

Day 1  Beijing. Welcome to Beijing. Your guide accompanies you from airport to your Hotel
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Day 10  Ulaan Baatar
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Day 12  Erlian (Change trains)
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Day 14  Moscow
Day 15  End of the Trip
Visit to Emperor’s Residence – Peterhof.

Grand City Tour including a visit to wonderful churches; and/or the shimmering mosaics and marble floor patterns at the Church of the Savior on Blood; and/or the icons of golden mosaics and the columns of malachite and lapis lazuli in the grand St. Isaac’s Cathedral.

And/or visit to State Hermitage. The collection of the State Hermitage includes more than three million works of art and artifacts of the World culture.

City of Emperors and Revolutionaries

Saint-Petersburg was founded by Peter I – the first Emperor of the Russian Empire – in 1703. The city has been a showcase of Russia in its own way for already three centuries. The museum city, justly called Northern Venice, is situated on 42 islands formed by Neva and its tributaries.

Streets and houses that you will see have witnessed an uncountable number of outstanding events. It is here that the Russian Empire was born, and it is here that it fell at the sound of salvos from the revolutionary cruiser Aurora.

You will visit the Hermitage, located at the Winter Palace, that holds a collection of works of art included into the list of top-ten museums of the World. Bronze Horseman, St. Isaac Cathedral – these are monuments of culture without which Petersburg would have been like Rome without Coliseum or Paris without the Eiffel Tower. The city suburbs attract millions of tourists as well: Pavlovsk, Schlusselburg, Tsarskoe Selo... You will also visit the best creation of craftsmen of the past, summer residence of the Russian Emperors, Peterhof, where the brilliant interior of the palace and the stunning beauty of fountains with the famous Samson tearing apart the jaws of a lion will charm your heart forever.
MOSCOW

Grand City Tour.

Visit to the Moscow Kremlin which is a symbol of Russia, one of the greatest architectural complexes in the World, a treasure house of magnificent relics and monuments of art.

Walk along the Arbat Street. The Cathedral of Christ the Savior.

Sightseeing tour of Moscow metro stations.

Welcome to the «Imperial Russia» Train.

The Capital of Five States

For its centuries-long history ancient Moscovia became the capital of five states – Grand Duchy of Moscow, the Tsardom of Russia, Russian Empire, USSR and, finally, modern Russia.

The symbol of the city, the Red Square, will meet you with unique architecture of the Pokrovsky Cathedral, and, if you are lucky, with the Kremlin clock chime which the whole country uses to measure time. Moscow Kremlin is like Fairy World hidden behind castellation walls. And inside of it are Kremlin Churches! Dormition Cathedral is the most ancient one in Moscow, where all Tsars and Emperors of Russia were coronated. Cathedral of the Archangel is the tomb of Tsars who ruled before Peter I. Yet another wide known site is the Ivan the Great Bell Tower. You won’t be able to walk past Tsar Cannon and Tsar Bell, monuments of Russian casting skill. And afterwards do not forget to visit Moscow subway, the most beautiful subway in the world! We are sure that everything you will see in Moscow, will stay with you forever.
KAZAN

Grand City Tour «Old Kazan».
The Tartar capital is situated on the picturesque banks of the Volga. Within folklore program «Tugan Avalim» you will enjoy Tartar ethos.

Sightseeing in Kazan (Kremlin).

Lunch including a master class revealing the secrets of Tartar Cuisine.

Conquest of the Khanate of Kazan

The ancient city, capital of the great Khanate of Kazan, was merged into the State of Russia in XVII century as a result of a series of wars that lasted for more than a hundred years. After a days long siege the conqueror of Kazan, Ivan IV the Terrible, ordered to raze the stubborn city to the ground. And to lay a White Stone Kremlin in the center as a symbol of might of the Duchy of Moscow.

Today the central part of Kazan is justly included in to the UNESCO World Heritage List. The travelers are met by dozens of monuments of history and architecture: medieval caravansary, the pearl of Kremlin – Soyembiko leaning tower, the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross with the icon of Our Lady of Kazan, Peter and Paul Cathedral built in commemoration of Peter I stay in Kazan, Qolsarif Mosque...
YEKATERINBURG

City Tour dedicated to the last days of the last Russian Emperor. As part of the excursion you will see the Church on Blood raised in memory of the tragic historical event, the orthodox monastery with temples that are considered to be pearls of Russian construction.

You will visit the memorial built at the boundary of Europe and Asia.

Between Europe and Asia

Yekaterinburg was named in 1723 after the spouse of Peter the Great, the future Empress Ekaterina I. In this unique city you will be able to stand with one foot in Europe and another foot in Asia! The Great Siberian Route that once connected the two continents, crosses Yekaterinburg as well. It is here that the bloody drama that put an end to the history of the Russian monarchy in July, 1918 took place: Emperor Nicholas II and his family were shot in the house of merchant Ipatieff. Nowadays the Church on Blood in Honor of All Saints Resplendent in the Russian Land stands in that place. Besides the church you will visit the Ganina-Yama, a church constructed at the place of secret burial site of the executed.

Today Yekaterinburg is the city of steelworkers: iron produced here was once used to cover the roof the British Parliament, and Yekaterinburg metal was used for construction of the frame of the Statue of Liberty, the symbol of USA.
TOBOLSK

Arriving in Tobolsk, a part of Russian heartland. Tobolsk history is closely related to the destiny of Romanov’s Royal Family. In August, 1917 the family of the resigned Russian Emperor was sent to Tobolsk.

City Tour includes a visit to the obelisk to the conqueror of Siberia.

Visit to Tobolsk Kremlin, a 17th century fortress, the Chamber Museum of Nicolas II.

Visit to Svyato-Znamensky friary, originally a Tartar town was situated here, afterwards it was transformed into a Russian village.

Pearl of Siberia

In the old days Tobolsk, which became the symbol of Siberia, was even bearing the name of Siberia City. In 1587 the last Siberian tsar, Uraz Mohammed, was captured here by the Cossacks. And in 1708 the city became the capital of a vast territory stretching from Ural to the Russian America. The famous «Siberian exile» once started at Tobolsk, and the first exiled was a bell from Uglich, that called people for a riot. In the XIX and XX centuries Tobolsk transit prison acquire sad notoriety. Fyodor Dostoevsky and Alexander Solzhenitsyn were among its «lodgers» Grigory Rasputin was born near Tobolsk, the mysterious «staret» who became both a talisman and a curse of the last Russian Emperor’s family.
OMSK

You arrive in Omsk where you will be welcomed in the traditional Russian manner with bread and salt.

Guided City Tour. Omsk is the city of Cossacks. At the same time it is the headquarters of foreign capital assets.

In the course of the tour you will visit «Siberian Chicago» museums of Dostoevsky, Vrubel.

Tour to the first Siberian Fruit Garden and Achair monastery.

Residence of the White Admiral

When the Civil war was raging in Russia at large, there were a lot of «governments» at war with each other. But there was a person whose supremacy was recognized by each one of those supporting the «white idea». It was Alexander Kolchak, Admiral, traveller, talented researcher who by a twist of fate stood at the head of the White army. He was nicknamed the «ruler of Siberia».

And he ruled it from Omsk.

The first Omsk fortress was established in 1716 by a Cossack detachment sent by Peter I to guard the borders of the Empire. In the XVIII century Omsk served as a shield from nomads, and at the same time a prison where convicts were kept. Omsk was the city of convicts in the XIX century as well; Fyodor Dostoevsky spent three years here, his story titled «The House of the Dead» is devoted to that.
You will reach a region with great history and unique Siberian architectural monuments and nature.

Sightseeing tour: Railway museum, Ballet and Opera House, ancient streets, Ob river esplanade.

City of Science

In 1903, issuing a decree, assigning the status of a city to Novonikolayevsk (this was the name of the future Novosibirsk at that time), Nicholas II was thinking of transferring the capital of Russia here. But it didn’t work out. And the city didn’t receive the status of a capital. In the soviet period Novosibirsk acquired dark reputation of a symbol of Stalin’s terror. On the average 74 death sentences were passed in the local prison a day.

Today Novosibirsk is a city of academic science. It hasn’t lost the charm of its past, that is kept with care by employees of Birch Bark, Sun and Trains museums. By all means advise to visit the Novosibirsk Reservoir as a must. It is also known as the Ob Sea.
IRKUTSK

Tour to the historical city center including a visit to the Decembrist House, the «wooden lace» house, also called the «House of Europe», the most beautiful and amazing streets of the city – Bolshaya Prospektknaya, today – Karl Marx street.

Free time at the «130 quarter» – «Irkutskaya Sloboda», a quarter with reconstructed city buildings of the 19-20 c.

Visit to the ethnographic museum Taltsy located in a picturesque place on the right bank of the Angara river.

Siberian Saint-Petersburg

Irkutsk was founded in 1661 as a fortress on the distant Russian border. But already 50 years later it became a large merchant city, a gold mining center trading with China. At the end of the XVIII century Russian-American trade company was established with participation of the Irkutsk merchant G. Shelikhov; it operated not only in the eastern part of Russia, but also in the Russian America – today it is the territory of the USA, the state of Alaska...

Before the revolution Irkutsk was often called the Siberian Saint-Petersburg, and in 1918 it was made capital of the White Russia – Admiral Kolchak’s Government moved here. And it is here that the Admiral was shot in February of 1919.

A lot antique monuments have preserved in Irkutsk: railway station and the only surviving construction of the Irkutsk prison, Church of Our Savior, Epiphany Cathedral and Church of the Transfiguration, reconstructed Alexander Nevsky Cathedral and more than 700 wooden constructions among which are the house of merchant Shubin and the so-called Lace House.
LAKE BAIKAL

Ferry trip to the Listvyanka village, the closest settlement to Irkutsk on the shores of Lake Baikal.
Lunch in the form of a picnic.
Platform observation, Chersky Stone observation point with a beautiful view of the southern part of the Lake and the source of the Angara River is one of the most favorite places for tourists and photographers.
Visit to Baikal Museum which displays the flora and fauna of the Lake.
Listvyanka sightseeing.
Visit to the local fish and souvenir market.

Wonder of Nature

Standing on the shores of Lake Baikal, you can’t help being awestruck with admiration by the Wonder created by Nature itself. The deepest Lake in the world, it contains the fifth part of the Earth’s fresh water.

Sailing on a motor ship in the waters of the Baikal, imagine, that a bit more than a hundred years ago the last Russian Emperor, the then heir to the throne, Crown Prince Nicholas sailed here as well.

Like you, he came ashore in small villages, met the people, tasted the local cuisine. But the future Emperor did not confine himself to entertainment only. According to his Imperial Edict, regular shipping traffic was established at the Baikal. At the same time, Nicholas II ordered to start building the Circum-Baikal Railway, along which you can travel admiring unique landscapes from the windows of the train.
ULAN UDE

Sightseeing tour of this unique city on the cross-roads of Russia with China and Mongolia.

Ethnic and cultural diversity of this area offers a unique understanding of its heritage of the World's religions. Visiting churches: datsan «Khambyn Khure» at Verkhnaya Berezovka, women datsan «Zungun Darzhaling», Odigitria Cathedral, Holy Trinity Church.

Excursion program, reception in a traditional Buryat Yurt and a folklore program. Hospitable Buryats will teach you how to cook the traditional Buryat dish pozy, how to play dice, use a bow, wear a traditional Buryat costume, assemble and disassemble a felt yurt.

The Cossacks Fortress

Ulan Ude — founded by the Russian Cossacks as a winter hut, but received a status of a city by Ekaterina the Great’s decree, Ulan Ude with its unique historical and cultural heritage, was included into the list of Cities of Historical Heritage of Russia. Museums and theaters, scientific centers and laboratories — the city which combined two opposites — pragmatic science and spiritual culture, which carried its traditions through the centuries and even the coat of arms of Ulan Ude presents soyombu—a traditional Mongolian symbol of eternal life (the sun, the moon, family hearth).
ULAAN BAATAR

Visiting the well-known Buddhist Monastery Gandan, where the famous 26.5-meter-high golden statue of Migjid Janraisig is located.

Visiting the Zaisan Memorial and have an excursion to the Park of Buddha.

You will see the Sukhbaatar Square and the Museum of Natural History, and see different kinds of minerals, precious stones, flora and fauna of Hangai and Gobi, stuffed rare animals, etc.

Or visit the State Museum of History of Mongolia, where archaeological materials, photographs and schemes of paleontological and excavation sites are presented. Coins, weapons, national clothes, household items. Religious cult objects, bronze statues, watch a Folklore show.

Camping in yurts. Yurt is a traditional Mongolian family communal tent. They have been used for generations by nomadic herdsman not only in Mongolia but across other parts of Central Asia as well. Herdsmen had to move their flocks around, often great distances, due to the poor quality of the grazing areas. As a result, people of these regions had never settled in traditional cities or towns until only the last century.

Red Hero

Ulaan Baatar — the capital of Mongolia, the city which changed not only its name numerous times, but also its location. Two societies are living in Ulaan Baatar: the nomads and modern people. The streets of this city are crowded with so different but yet unite people, one wear traditional costumes others business suits from the best designers. Only in Ulaan Baatar you can see a carriage on the main street close to a Mercedes or a market selling livestock and fashionable clothes. To put it simple, you can see everything in Ulaan Baatar.
BEIJING

Visiting the Great Chinese Wall and Tian’anmen Square — where the national Museum of China, House of People’s Meetings, monument of National Heroes and Mausoleum of Mao Zedong are located.

And/or visiting the Imperial Palace Gugun (The Forbidden City), the main Palace complex of the Chinese Emperors from the XV to the beginning of XX century.

And/or visiting the Temple of Heaven, Park of Nationalities of China, or/and National Stadium the «Bird’s Nest», or/and the Beijing Zoo.

Farewell this is the end of your Trip.

The Celestial Empire

Beijing — one of the ancient Capitals of China, which bears the name of the official Capital of the Celestial Empire. Tiananmen Gate, Forbidden City, the Great Chinese Wall, Summer Palace and the Temple of Heaven are a MUST to see when visiting Beijing. If you like museums, then Gugun — the former Emperor’s Palace is the place for you — the largest state Museum of China welcomes you to see the wonder of the Celestial Empire.
«IMPERIAL RUSSIA» TRAIN’S DESCRIPTION

VIP CARS
1 to 2 passengers per compartment

Consists of 5 passenger compartments, 2 seats in each. Berths: one upper, one lower one. A table with an armchair. An LCD TV set. An in-built cabinet for clothes and luggage. An individual water closet with a shower booth and a washbowl. An individual air conditioner for heating and cooling the cabin.

VIP cars have two-seat compartments with an area larger than two ordinary ones. A compartment has a comfortable transformable sofa and a foldaway upper berth, also en-suite there is a shower cabin and an environmentally friendly toilet.

FIRST CLASS PLUS SLEEPING CARS
1 to 2 passengers per compartment.

Consists of 8 passenger compartments, 2 seats in each. Berths: one upper, one lower one. A table with an armchair. An LCD TV set. An inbuilt clothes cabinet. Between compartments there are four rooms with washbowls and shower cans. In compartment 9 there is an auxiliary room for storing luggage. Two water closets: in the beginning and in the end of the car. The air conditioning system is general, with an option of additional temperature control in each compartment («± 3°C»).
FIRST CLASS SLEEPING CARS
1 to 2 passengers per compartment.

Consists of 8 passenger compartments, 2 seats in each. Berths all lower ones. A table. An LCD TV set. In compartment 9 there is a shower booth with a washbowl. Two water closets: in the beginning and the end of the car. The air conditioning system is general, with an option of additional temperature control in each compartment (± 3°C).

STANDARD CAR
1 to 4 passengers per compartment.

The structure of the car fully complies with the requirements of sanitary standards for illumination, ergonomics, microclimate, noise, and vibration, as well as all the safety requirements. For a comfortable travel the train contains a car-shower especially for passengers of standard car.

RESTAURANTS & BAR

Two Restaurant cars are designed for providing passengers with guaranteed hot food on compartment seats and by orders in the restaurant hall.

The bar carriage is separated by a decorative partition to make two comfortable zones allowing the passengers to eat, dance, relax with a drink and enjoy the scenery passing in the window.
FOR YOUR INFORMATION

SERVICES INCLUDED

**Accommodation**
- 1 night at St. Petersburg hotel (depends on the Tour choice);
- 1 night at Moscow hotel (depends on the Tour choice);
- 1 night at Irkutsk hotel (depends on the Tour choice);
- 2 nights at Beijing hotel (depends on the Tour choice);
- Onboard the «Imperial Russia» Train accommodation;
- Bathrobe and slippers.

**Excursions & Guides**
- Excursions with local guides according to the program;
- Guides speaking English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese (other languages on request for language groups from 10 persons travelling on board the «Imperial Russia» Train).

**Meals**
- Tea/coffee throughout the day;
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner daily.

**Services**
- Transfers: airport — hotel — airport, hotel — railway station — hotel;
- Brief informative lectures on the Trans-Siberian Railroad, geography and history of the countries visited;
- Doctor onboard;
- Porterage is included between the hotels and stations;
- English Speaking Tour Director throughout the Tour;
- Experienced Tour Managers.

SERVICES NOT INCLUDED

- Flights;
- Visa services fees (we do not take any responsibility for any passengers in possession of incorrect or invalid visas);
- Tips and own expenses;
- All beverages in bar car;
- Meals the days of arrival, departure;
- «Tailor made» excursions: you have possibility to extend your Tour. We can propose additional excursions in every city, St-Petersburg, Moscow, Lake Baikal, Beijing, Golden Ring and etc.;
- Insurance (every passenger is obliged to have a medical insurance for the whole duration of the Tour);
- Vaccination: consult your doctor or medical center for specific health advice, due to visit of different countries in terms of this Tour.

**PLEASE NOTE!** Accommodation and Tour itineraries can change at any time due to circumstances beyond our control. All our Rail Tours require a minimum number of passengers. Should this not be reached, RZD Tours will run a modified service of carriages attached to regular service trains to accommodate a smaller group or offer an alternative Tour. If no alternative is suitable a full refund will be offered.