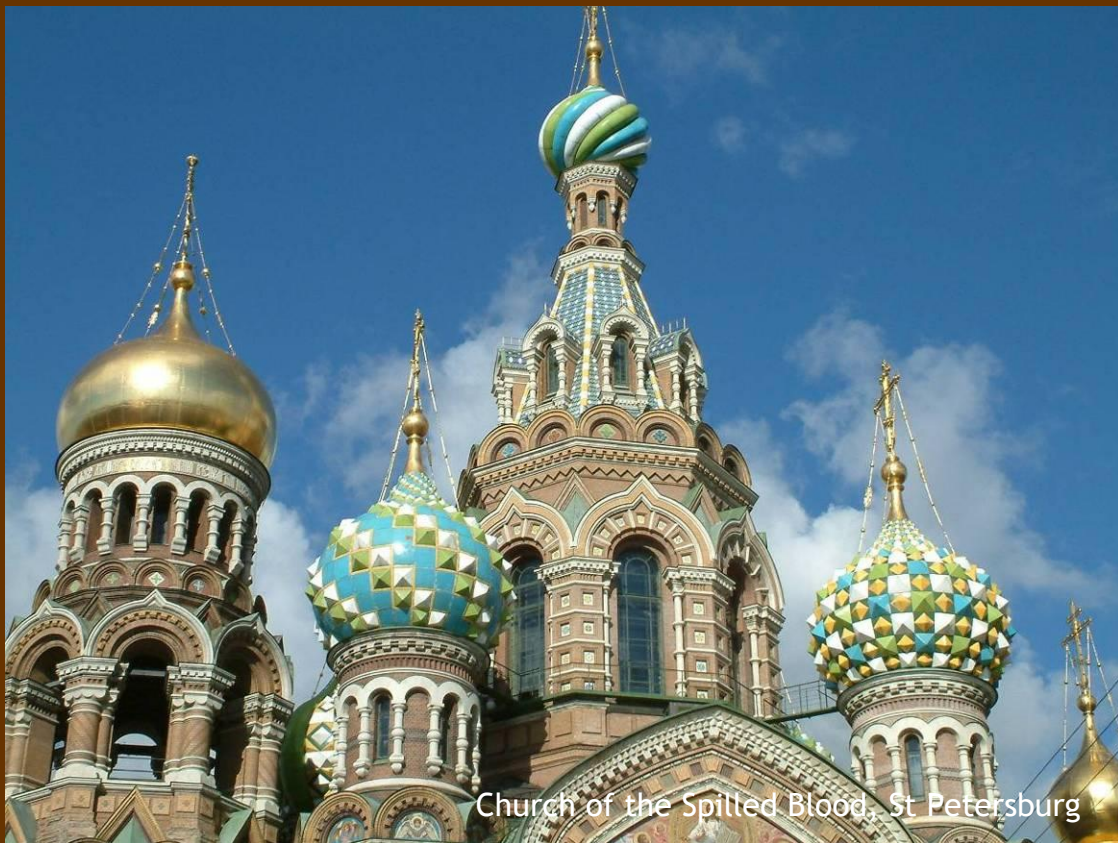


**Journey Idea to
Russia**

'The Golden Ring'

13 Days



**Prepared for
Steppes Travel Clients**

QUICK REFERENCE ITINERARY

Day 1	Fly UK / Moscow
Day 2	Moscow
Day 3	Moscow
Day 4	Moscow/Yaroslavl
Day 5	Yaroslavl/Kostroma
Day 6	Kostroma
Day 7	Kostrama/Suzdal
Day 8	Suzdal
Day 9	Suzdal/Moscow
Day 10	Moscow/St Petersburg
Day 11	St Petersburg
Day 12	St Petersburg
Day 13	Fly St Petersburg/UK

DETAILED TRIP ITINERARY

Day 1

UK/Moscow



Depart the UK on a flight to Moscow, a flight time of approximately 4 hours.

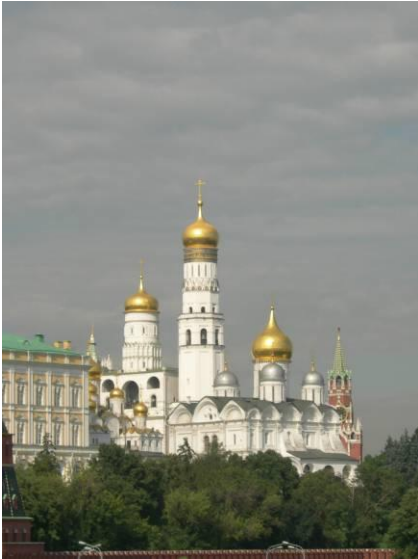
You will be met upon arrival by the Steppes Travel representative at the airport and transferred to your hotel. All transfers are private (unless stated otherwise) and included in your trip, however, it will not detail every transfer on this itinerary.

The rest of the day is at leisure.

Overnight at your chosen hotel in Moscow on a bed and breakfast basis.

Day 2

Moscow



This morning your English-speaking guide will meet you at the hotel and together you will make a full day sightseeing tour, visiting the Kremlin and cathedrals, The Armoury, Red Square, and the Tretyakov Gallery.

The Kremlin is oldest historical and architectural feature of Moscow. *The poet Mayakovsky wrote 'The earth as we know, begins at the Kremlin. It is the central point.'* The grounds within the 60ft high walls cover an area of 70 acres, and contain a variety of buildings, including three cathedrals of which the oldest, The Cathedral of the Assumption, was built in 1475. There is also The Armoury Museum, which built in 1839, is the oldest museum in Russia and has nine exhibition halls, which trace the history of the Kremlin and the Russian state.

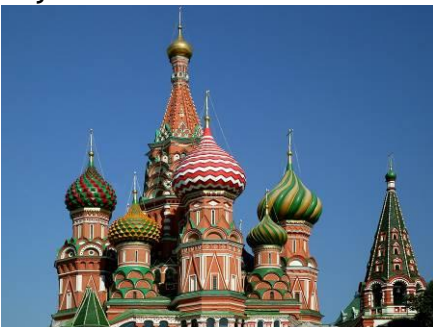
In the afternoon a visit will be made to the Tretyakov Gallery. This gallery, restored in 1996, houses the cream of Russian art and is an opportunity to see a wonderful collection of hitherto little known artists, and their portrayal of Russian landscapes and village life. It is famous for having what is considered to be one of the finest collections of Russian icons in existence including the famous Virgin of Vladimir and the Trinity of Andrei Rublyov

Overnight at your chosen hotel in Moscow on a bed and breakfast basis.



Day 3

Moscow



This morning your English speaking guide will meet you at your hotel for your full day sightseeing tour. This will include St Basils Cathedral which was built by Ivan the Terrible to commemorate his victories in the 1550's, Temple of Christ Saviour and the Novodevichy Convent.

The convent is one of the oldest religious complexes in the city. Grand Prince Vasily III founded the convent in 1514 to commemorate the capture of Smolensk from Lithuania, which the

area had controlled the area for over a century.

Overnight at your chosen hotel in Moscow on a bed and breakfast basis.

Day 4

Moscow/Yaroslavl



Today you will be met at your hotel and driven to Yaroslavl via Rostov. After lunch at restaurant Slavyanskyi, you will continue on to Yaroslavl and to your hotel.

Rostov is one of the oldest and most beautiful towns of Russia and was first chronicled in about 862. (*It was called Rostov the Great in 12th-17th centuries*). In the 13th century the town was one of the main centres of the new Russian state formed in the north west part of ancient Russia and by the end of the 18th century Rostov had become one of the biggest and the richest towns of Russia. Lunch at Slavyanskyi Restaurant in Rostov.

Overnight at your chosen hotel in Yaroslavl on a half board basis.

Day 5

Yaroslavl/Kostroma



Started in 1010 by Yaroslavl the Wise, it is now one of the most important of all the Golden Ring cities. Legend has it that Yaroslavl the Wise, a Kievan prince, was interested in a trading post here; the locals responded by setting a sacred bear on him, which Yaroslavl killed with an axe, and then founded a town on the spot. The symbol of the bear was then included in his coat of arms. In the 16th and 17th centuries the town developed as the Volga's first port, and became Russia's second biggest city of the time. An enjoyable walk is along the river embankments from the Church of Elijah the Prophet back to the Monastery of the Saviour. The highlight is the Monastery of the Transfiguration of the Saviour - founded in the 12th century, and one of Russia's richest and most fortified monasteries by the 1500's.

In Yaroslavl your local English- speaking guide will meet you at your hotel for a city tour, including the Transfiguration monastery, and Museum of Icons. You will also visit The church of Loann the Prosecutor, excursion to Tolgsky Convent. After lunch you will continue on to Kostroma.

Dinner will be in a local restaurant.

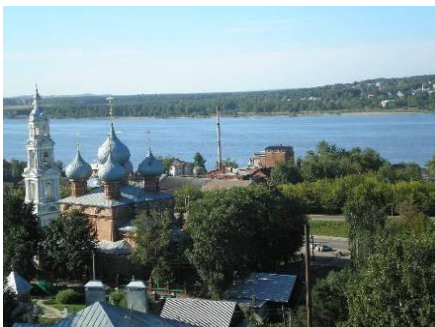
Overnight at your chosen hotel in Kostroma on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 6

Kostroma

Kostroma was founded by Yuri Dolgoruky in the 12th century. Once a bustling trade centre known as the 'Flax Capital of the North', Kostroma supplied Russia and Europe with fine sailcloth.

The emblem of this picturesque town set along the Volga River depicts a small boat on silvery water with sails billowing in the wind.



The real gem of the town is the Ipatyevsky Monastery, founded in the 14th century by the Zernov Boyars, ancestors of the Godunovs. This large structure is enclosed by a white brick kremlin and topped by tent shaped domes. In 1613, Mikhail Romonov left the monastery to be crowned in the Moscow Kremlin.

Sightseeing tour in Kostroma will include a city tour, visiting Ipatiev Monastery, Epiphany Monastery, Trinity Cathedral, and the Museum of Wooden Architecture. After lunch the afternoon will be yours to relax or explore at your leisure.

Dinner will be in a local restaurant.

Overnight at your chosen hotel in Kostroma on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 7

Kostroma/Suzdal



Today you will be driven to Suzdal, a journey of approximately 3½ hours. After lunch at Trapeznaya in the Kremlin you will have a half-day of sightseeing to include The Kremlin, Rozdestvensky cathedral, Icon museum, and Spaso - Ephimievsky Monastery.

The first written mention of Suzdal dates back to the year of 1024 while in the 12th-14th centuries it was one of the most powerful towns of Russia. There are over 100 examples of old Russian architecture to be seen here.

Overnight at your chosen hotel in Suzdal on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 8

Suzdal



Your local guide will meet you at your hotel this morning and together you will visit the Museum of Wooden Architecture, take an excursion to the village of Kideksha and finish the day with a ride on a troika.

Overnight at your chosen hotel in Suzdal on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 9

Suzdal/Moscow via Vladimir



Today you will head back to Moscow, making a stop en-route in Vladimir. Together with a local English-speaking guide you will visit Uspensky Cathedral, Dmitrievsky Cathedral and the Golden Gates.

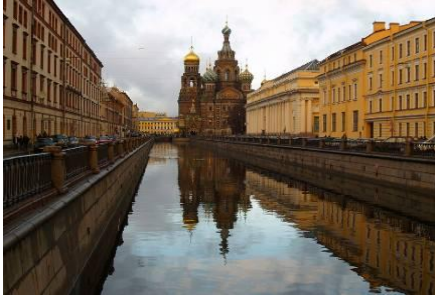
Lunch will be taken in Traktir Restaurant.

The ancient town Vladimir was founded by Prince Vladimir Monomakh in 1108 and in 1157 became the capital of Vladimir-Suzdal Principality when the sacred icon of Our Lady, which had come from Constantinople, was also moved there. The icon was renamed "Our Lady of Vladimir" and in 1299 the town also became the residence of the Russian Metropolitan. By the middle of the 14th century Vladimir had lost its political importance and

Moscow had become the main political centre of the Russian state.

Overnight at your chosen hotel in Moscow on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 10



Moscow/ St Petersburg

Today you will have the morning free to explore or relax at your leisure before taking an express train to St. Petersburg, arriving late evening.

Overnight at your chosen hotel in St Petersburg on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 11



St Petersburg

Your local guide will meet you at your hotel and together you will visit Peter and Paul Fortress, St Isaac's Cathedral and Collonade and The Hermitage.

The Hermitage was originally commissioned by Catherine the Great in the 1760s as a small building to house her growing art collection. Today it occupies four buildings adjacent to the Winter Palace and the extraordinary collection of European art numbers over two million exhibits and annually attracts 3 million visitors. The Imperial Family State Rooms are exquisitely decorated in neo-classical style with the most impressively decorated being the Malachite Hall, the Ambassador's Staircase, Peter 1's Hall, the Armorial Hall, the Large Throne Room and the Ballroom.

Overnight at your chosen hotel in St Petersburg on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 12



St Petersburg

Today you will visit the Russian Museum, and Peterhof (Grand Palace and Low Park).

The Mikhailovsky Palace was built by Carlo Rossi (1819-27) for Grand Duke Mikhail Pavlovich, a brother of both Alexander I and Nicholas I. In 1898 Alexander III ordered the family to sell the palace to the state so that it could become the Museum of Russian art. Today the museum contains a magnificent collection of over 300,000 exhibits ranging from Kievan Rus through to the 1920s.

Overnight at your chosen hotel in St Petersburg on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 13

St Petersburg/UK

Today, depart St Petersburg for your return flight home. Time permitting, it may be possible to organise a morning tour, before you transfer to the airport.

TRIP PRICE

There is a variety of different category of hotels; therefore this is a general price guide only.

Price from £3,800.00 per person

The rates quoted are subject to the availability of all services, currency fluctuations, written confirmation and Steppes Travels terms and conditions.

The price includes return flight from UK, local transport, airport-hotel transfers and tours on a private basis, accommodation and board, entrance charges to sites, parks and museums. Accommodation is on a bed and breakfast basis.

The price excludes travel insurance, visas, single supplements (if applicable) and items of a personal nature, such as laundry, drinks, etc.

All clients travelling to Russia must obtain a tourist visa before departure, full details on how to do this will be provided by Steppes Travel. Please ensure you have six months to run on your passport and allow at least three weeks for visa processing.

Please note that the above is only a suggested journey, allowing in-depth visits to the highlights of the country and the chance to explore the wide range of possibilities this fascinating country has to offer. We have a separate list of escorted tours and specialise in tailoring individual itineraries to your particular interests and requirements.

Why Travel with Steppes?

Steppes Travel was founded in 1989 with the objective of creating a travel company where service and knowledge are of the highest priority. We aim to design itineraries and include the highlights of any country, whilst taking travellers off the beaten track to see lesser known, interesting places not frequented by large numbers of tourists. We offer individuals the ability to travel safely in remote areas, with the knowledge that we have travelled there before.

Financial Protection

Steppes Travel is a fully bonded tour operator that complies with the Civil Aviation Authority bonding conditions of the UK. This fully guarantees your money in the unlikely event of us going out of business before you start your holiday. Our ATOL number is 6945 and we have full insurance to cover the financial failure of an airline. In addition, all accommodation-only bookings (such as hotels, lodges and boats) which are not covered by the ATOL regulations are financially protected with all payments being held in a separate trust account until the date of departure. This is in accordance with the Package Travel Regulations Act 1992.

Specialist Knowledge

We demand and employ only a very high calibre of staff. All of our specialists have a wealth of travel experience and have travelled, and continue to travel, extensively throughout their regions of specialisation. You can therefore rely on their first hand knowledge and expertise. Some have been with us for more than ten years. They will tell you about those intimate, friendly hotels and introduce you to our charismatic guides - those little extra qualities that make your holiday both unique and special.

A Tailor-made Journey

After an initial discussion with you, one of our specialists will create a unique itinerary for your trip, designed around your own interests, preferred style of accommodation and the pace at which you like to travel. This will be fine tuned until you are completely satisfied with it. Throughout this whole process, you will be dealt with by the same specialist and you are welcome to call them at any time.

24 hour Emergency Service

We have an emergency service so that we can be contacted 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Recognition

More than 65% of our business is achieved through recommendations, referrals and repeat bookings. This, for us, is the highest endorsement we could have. In addition, our 20 years of experience in this specialist travel sector confirms our expertise.

Please contact the Steppes East team on 01285 651010 or visit our website www.steppestravel.co.uk for further information.

Steppestravel
travel beyond the ordinary