

TSARS, TOLSTOY & RUSSIA'S MIGHTY VOLGA



TRIP OVERVIEW

On your voyage you will discover Russia's magnificent cities and historic towns. Cruise to the lake island of Kizhi, the Monastery of St Cyril and the cities of Yaroslavl and Uglich, with time at leisure to explore Moscow and St Petersburg.

ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable river cruise. Please take the time to read this dossier to familiarise yourself with all the aspects of our river cruise. It includes important information such as flight details, visa requirements and travel insurance.

Your included meal guide:

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner.

Day 1: UK to St Petersburg D

Depart London on your scheduled flight to St Petersburg, via Frankfurt. Upon arrival, you will be met and transferred to your ship. Board your ship and enjoy a bread and salt welcome ceremony — a traditional Russian symbol of hospitality.

Day 2: St Petersburg B/L/D

Enjoy a full day tour of the historic city of St Petersburg, incorporating a visit to some of its most iconic landmarks, including the Peter and Paul Fortress. Signifying the birthplace of St Petersburg, discover the poignant tombs of Romanov Monarchs and the fortress' emblematic Cathedral, concealed within the walls of the city's first structure. Later, housing the largest collection of paintings in the world, weave through the Hermitage Museum's fascinating exhibits, containing everything from Picassos to ancient Scythian gold.

Day 3: St Petersburg B/L/D

Spend a day at leisure exploring the imperial opulence of St Petersburg at your own pace.

Day 4: Mandrogi B/L/D

Cruise along the Volga, arriving into the fairy-tale wonderland of Mandrogi, where charming homes, built in gingerbread-style woodwork, are dotted across a landscape of rural beauty.

Day 5: Kizhi B/L/D

Visiting the second largest lake in Europe, journey to Lake Onega's picturesque island of Kizhi which encompasses a fascinating historical complex of more than 80 wooden constructions, dating from the 15th century. Wander through the island's remarkable Museum of Wooden Architecture, marvelling at its most renowned structure, the Kizhi Pogost.

Day 6: Goritsy B/L/D

Upon the gleaming waters of the White Lake, cruise towards the Monastery of St Cyril, formerly the largest and most influential Monastery in Russia, and disembark for the chance to explore this 14th century walled fortress.

Day 7: Yaroslavl B/L/D

Today, travel by bus to a local market before witnessing the Church of St Elijah's elaborate facade, one of Yaroslavl's most cherished attractions. An impressive architectural treasure, discover the distinctive green dome peaks atop the Church of St Nicholas, before admiring a mesmerising collection of 18th century

Russian paintings, sprawled across the palatial rooms of the Governor's House Art Gallery.

Day 8: Uglich B/L/D

This morning, arrive at the historic riverside city of Uglich. Enjoy a walking tour where you'll visit the territory of Kremlin, Dmitry on the Blood Church and Transfiguration Cathedral. Enjoy your farewell dinner.

Day 9: Moscow B/L/D

Sail along the Moscow Canal into Russia's capital. Embarking on a guided city tour, discover a spellbinding collection of historic monuments and the President's official residence at the imposing Kremlin, marvel at the colourful domes of St Basil's Cathedral, and experience traditional Tsarist architecture at the historic Red Square.

Day 10: Moscow B/L/D

Spend a day at leisure exploring historical gems in the colourful metropolis of Moscow.

Day 11: Moscow to the UK B

Disembark for your airport transfer and flight to the UK, via Frankfurt.

Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner daily are taken onboard the ship. Tables seat 4 and 6 people, so you'll be able to converse and socialise with new friends, whilst never feeling crowded together. Tea and coffee are available with all meals. Soft drinks and alcoholic drinks, including a variety of wines and beer, are available at an extra cost both during meals and at the bar. (Premium brands are available at an extra cost). Any dietary requirements and dislikes should be made known to our reservations staff at the time of booking. On embarking the ship, you will be greeted by the captain, crew and staff and treated to bread and salt welcome ceremony.



Gingerbread-style houses, Mandrogi

SHIP INFORMATION AND ROUTE MAP

Ship information - 4★ MS Nikolay Chernishevsky

Accommodating 228 guests this ship provides both a spacious sun deck and a lounge bar with picture windows.

Length: 125m long
Width 16.7m wide

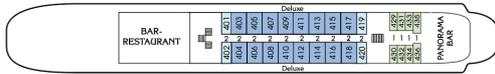
Capacity: 228 passengers
Cabins: 118

Facilities

- Restaurant ■ Restaurant bar ■ Piano Bar ■ Coffee Bar ■ Souvenir shop
- Solarium ■ Sauna ■ On board entertainment to include Russian language lessons, Captain's bridge tour, dancing and live music concerts



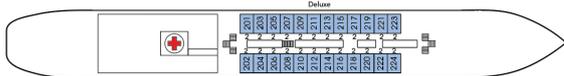
SUN DECK



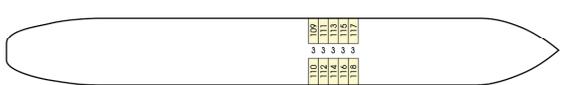
BOAT DECK



MIDDLE DECK



MAIN DECK



LOWER DECK

The Cabins

All cabins are equipped with air-conditioning/heating, shower and toilet, fridge and radio.

Boat deck: 28 cabins - 16 deluxe twins, 4 twins and 8 singles.

Middle deck: 56 cabins - 36 twins, 6 deluxe twins, 10 singles, 2 suites and 2 junior suites.

Main deck: 24 deluxe cabins (all twins).

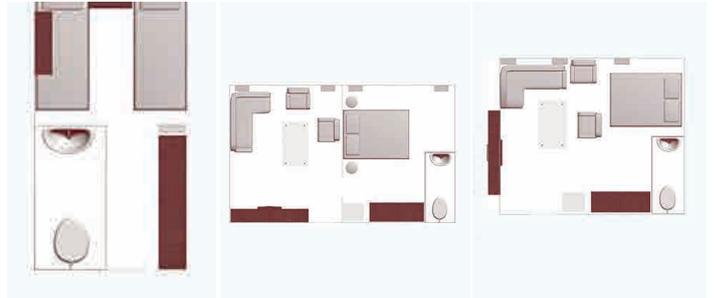
Lower deck: 10 cabins (all triples).

Final confirmation of your deck and cabin will be confirmed at booking. Please contact us if you have any queries.

Twin Cabin

Suite

Junior suite A



SHIP INFORMATION

Ship information - 3★ MS Zosima Shashkov

Accommodating 280 guests, the MS Zosima Shashkov is a comfortable 4 deck vessel, refurbished in 2013.

Length: 129m long
Width 16.7m wide

Capacity: 280 passengers
Cabins: 154

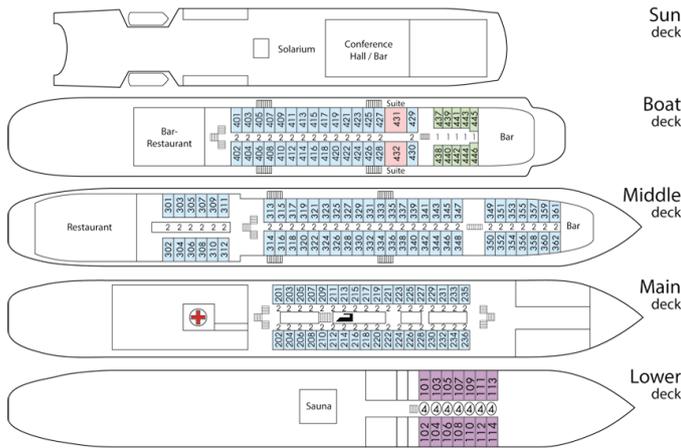
Facilities

- Restaurant ■ Restaurant bar ■ 2 bars ■ Souvenir shop ■ Medical room
- Solarium ■ Sauna ■ On board entertainment programme to include Russian language lessons, live music concerts, music for dancing in the bar, Captain's cocktail party ■ Conference room



Motorship "Zosima Shashkov"

type 302



Figures on the scheme stand for number of places in a cabin. The figure in the circle is the number of places in a cabin where there is one bed above the other.



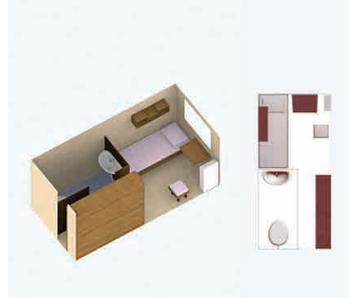
The Cabins

All cabins are equipped with private facilities, air conditioning, refrigerator, radio and wardrobe. All cabins have a large picture window except for lower deck cabins which have a porthole.

- 2 Suites
- 10 Singles
- 128 twins
- 14 quads (2 upper and 2 lower berths)

Final confirmation of your deck and cabin will be confirmed at booking. Please contact us if you have any queries.

Single Cabin

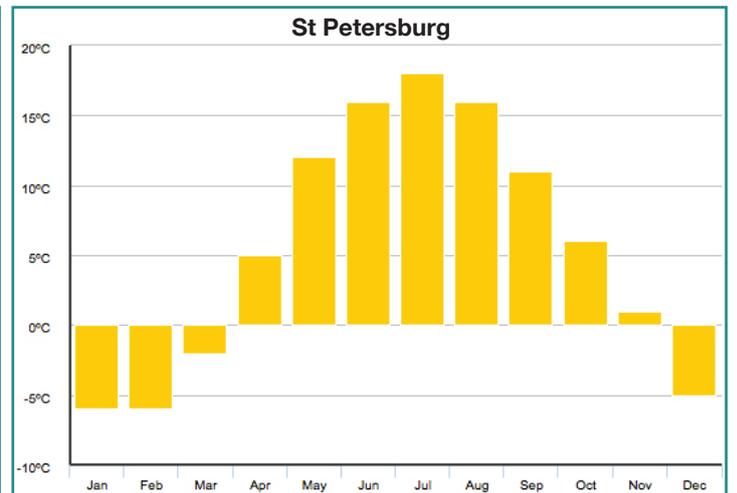
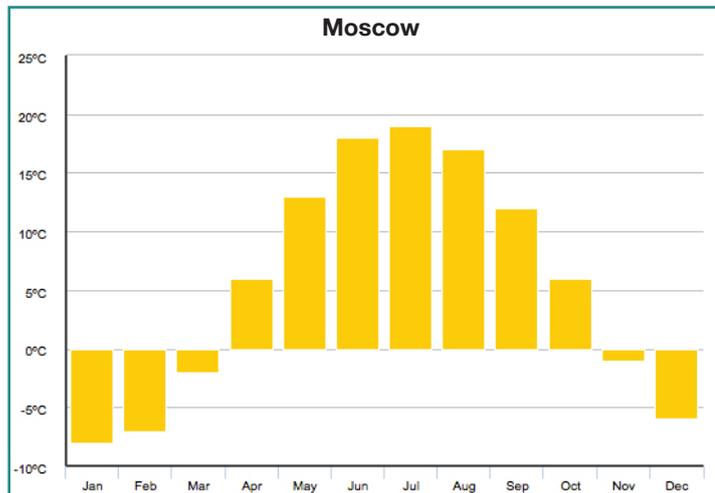


Twin Cabin



WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.



WHAT YOU NEED FOR YOUR TOUR

Visas

To enter Russia you'll need a Tourist Visa before travel. During periods of high demand, you should apply for your visa well in advance. **It is mandatory to visit the Visa application centre in person to apply for a Russian visa**, as biometric data (scanned fingerprints) is collected from all visa applicants above the age of 12. Visa applications for UK residents must be submitted at the Russia Visa Application Centre in London, Manchester or Edinburgh. For further information see the Russian Embassy website and the website of VFS Global who manage Russian visa applications on behalf of the Embassy. Tourist visa applications take 20 working days to be processed and longer during busy periods. A fast track service is available for an extra fee. Please see <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/russia/entry-requirements> for more information.

Please send us all the required passport information using the API form we have sent you. Before you travel we will send you your signed VSL. After receiving an authorised VSL you will need to visit your nearest UK Visa Application centre to apply for your visa. Your passport must be valid for a minimum of 6 months after your exit date from Russia. On receiving your visa you should check the details carefully including your name, date of birth, validity dates and passport number to make sure they are correct. Visa requirements are subject to change and obtaining a visa is the responsibility of the traveller and not Mercury Holidays. We recommend you check with your destinations' Tourist Board or Embassy prior to departure for the most up to date guidelines regarding these.

Tour Guides

Excursions are escorted by an experienced, English speaking guide.

Tipping

Tipping is at your discretion. There is an envelope in your cabin for this purpose that can be handed to reception at the end of your cruise.

Currency Exchange

The currency in Russia is the Rouble (RUB). You can also exchange Euro's or US Dollars locally. We recommend that you exchange your currency before you leave the UK. It is important that you budget carefully and ensure you have the right form of currency before you arrive in the country. Cash machines will also be available throughout the tour in order to withdraw money in your local currency.

Personal Expenses

This cruise is Full Board, so you will only need to take a little extra money with you to cover any drinks on board, souvenirs and snacks purchased when off the ship, as well as any optional excursions you wish to book. Your final on-board bill can be settled by credit card or Russian roubles.

Credit Card Information

Visa and Mastercard credit and debit cards are accepted on board the ship and throughout Russia. AMEX is not widely accepted.

Electricity Supply

The electricity supply is 220V. You will need a European 2 pin plug adapter.

Itinerary Changes

The Captain and ASLA reserve the right to alter/modify an itinerary at any time, should safety or external circumstances make this necessary, changes are also subject to weather conditions which can affect the water level and access to parts of the route. Some of the highlights may only be seen on optional excursions at an additional cost, or by exploring independently.

Health and Vaccinations

It is your responsibility to check any health and vaccination requirements applicable to your booked arrangements. We can only provide general information about this. Health and hygiene facilities and disease risks vary from country to country. You should take health advice about your own needs as early as possible and in good time before your departure. Sources of information include; www.fco.gov.uk, www.travelhealthpro.org.uk, www.hpa.org.uk, your General Practitioner or a specialist clinic.

Physical Accessibility

This river cruise is accessible to most people with an average level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves moderate days of walking on cobble streets and getting on and off the cruise ship. This cruise is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties.

Insurance

We strongly recommend that you and all members of your party are suitably insured as soon as you book your holiday. It is a condition of booking that you must have suitable travel insurance. It is important that you purchase travel insurance that suitably covers your participation in whatever activities you may undertake at the time that you make your booking. To assist you with this, we have arranged travel insurance in partnership with Holiday Extras. To arrange your travel insurance with Holiday Extras, please call **0800 781 4237** and quote **'WK830'** for preferential rates. Please ensure you provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number as soon as possible. Mercury Holidays will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

DRESS CODE & WHAT TO PACK

Dress Code

There is no official dress code on board, however you'll be most comfortable during the day in smart casual clothing. You may wish to bring items that do not wrinkle easily as there is no iron provided on board ship. There is an ironing room and a laundry service on board both ships. Bring a variety of clothing for the weather expected on your cruise, including light clothing and bathing suits for hot weather, a jumper or jacket for cooler weather and of course a raincoat and/or small umbrella.

What to Pack

- Comfortable walking shoes such as trainers for sightseeing excursions
- Sun cream and a hat with a big brim for sunny days
- Sunglasses
- Ruck sack or light bag per person
- Personal toiletries
- Insect repellent
- Personal first aid kit containing travel pills, rehydration powder, plasters, stomach settlers, antiseptic creams, aspirin etc.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Your initial flight is to **St Petersburg Airport** with **Lufthansa (LH)**, via **Frankfurt** departing from **London Heathrow Terminal 2**.

IMPORTANT: Please note that final flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

Baggage Allowance

Each passenger is entitled to 23KG of hold luggage plus 1 item of hand luggage measuring no more than 55 x 40 x 23 cm and up to 8kg in weight. Weight restrictions will be finalized on E-ticket receipt. Should you wish to take additional luggage you will need to pay extra at check-in. Check-in should be at least 3 hours before departure.

Airport Extras

If you wish to arrange airport car parking, lounges or accommodation at preferential rates, we recommend you book this in advance with Holiday Extra Tel. 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

Please Note: In the unlikely event that your cruise does not operate, then you may be asked to change to a different date. A full refund will be made available, should the alternative dates offered be unsuitable.

ON YOUR ARRIVAL

On your arrival into St Petersburg you will be met by a representative from our local agent, ASLA Travel, holding a sign displaying: "Mercury Holidays". The Mercury Holidays/ASLA Travel representative will show you to your transfer vehicle. Your on-board rep will be on hand 24 hours a day should you have any queries, however if you need to contact your representative during your stay the details are:

ASLA Travel Group
 Moscow office 007 495 605 3271
 St. Petersburg office 007 812 334 1650

Emergency contact information

Please find below the emergency contact details for **ASLA Travel Group**
 Moscow office 007 903 187 3281
 St. Petersburg office 007 812 936 38 80

EMBARKING & DISEMBARKING

Embarkation Time: 4pm
Disembarkation Time: 9am-10am

If your arrival is before this time, you will be transferred to the docking area where you will be able to leave your luggage. Cabins must be vacated and keys returned by 9am, however the on board facilities are available until you depart for the airport.

BOARDING DETAILS

Please see below for details of your boarding quay. Your cruise company is **ASLA Travel Group**.

Boarding location: River station, Utkina Zavod, Oktyabrskaya nab., 31, Saint Petersburg, Russia, Tel: 007 (812) 740-58-58

