



RUSSIA

COUNTRY NOTES

THE TRANS-SIBERIAN TRAVEL COMPANY

RUSSIA COUNTRY NOTES



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RUSSIA - INTRODUCTION

Russia is the world's largest country spanning nine time zones and the continents of Europe and Asia. This is very lucky for us as it also provides the intrepid traveller and rail enthusiast with the longest single train ride in the world - the original Trans-Siberian route from Moscow to the port city of Vladivostok in Russia's Far East.

A large proportion of any Trans-Siberian tour is going to be spent in Russia and despite many trips also visiting Mongolia and China the spirit and character of this epic rail journey is very Russian in nature. From the cultural and economic powerhouses of Western Russia to a small village on the shore of Lake Baikal the traveller is never left in any doubt that they are in Mother Russia.

Russia offers a wide variety of travel experiences from world class opera and ballet in Moscow and St Petersburg to the pristine wilderness found outside Krasnoyarsk and Irkutsk. The distinctive architecture of Russia is perhaps best seen in a few days along the Golden Ring Route whilst for the adventurous there is trekking in the Ural mountains outside of Ekaterinburg or along the shores of Lake Baikal.

It is the Trans-Siberian railway that links all these experiences together. With the longest route being 9,258 km much of the Russia you will see is from a train window and train travel is the only real way to fully appreciate the vastness of the country.

Despite Russia often being in the western news for the wrong reasons you are likely to come away from the trip with far more positive experiences than negatives and hopefully a greater understanding of this giant of countries.

RUSSIA - MAP



RUSSIA - QUICK FACTS

AT A GLANCE

Land area: 17,098,242 sq km

Coastline: 37,653 km

Lowest point: Caspian Sea -28 m

Highest point: Gora El'brus 5,633 m (highest point in Europe)

Arable land: 13.1%

Time Zone: GMT plus 3-11

Population: 143,400,000 (2021 est.)

Life expectancy male: 71.3 years (2018)

Life expectancy female: 77.8 years (2018)

Literacy rate: 99.7%

President: Vladimir Putin (since 2012 - second presidency)

GDP purchasing power parity: \$3.939 trillion (2022)

GDP official exchange rate: \$1.779 trillion (2021)

Real growth rate: -2.7% (2022)

GDP per capita (PPP): \$27,550 (2022 est.)

Mobile phones: 246 million (2021)

Internet users: 112 million (2021)

Airports: 329 (2022)

Railways: 85,494 km

Roadways: 1,283,387 km

Ethnic groups: Russian 77.7%, Tatar 3.7%, Ukrainian 1.4%, Bashkir 1.1%, Chuvash 1%, Chechen 1%, other 10.2%, unspecified 3.9% (more than 190 ethnic groups)

Religions: Russian Orthodox 15-20%, Muslim 10-15%, other Christian 2%

RUSSIA - CURRENCY



RUSSIAN RUBLE

Russia's currency is called the "Ruble" or "Rouble" which comes in 5000, 1000, 500, 100, 50 and 10 notes. An individual Roubles is divided into 100 Kopeks. The symbol for Roubles is руб

OBTAINING RUSSIAN RUBLE

There are plenty of ATMs in Russia's main cities and most Russian towns and cities have exchange booths displaying rates in neon where you can change cash notes of most major currencies to Roubles. Note that cash notes need to be in excellent condition or exchange may be refused. Some booths will ask to see your passport. If heading to more remote parts of Russia away from towns and cities make sure you stock up on Roubles in advance. You can also obtain Roubles in advance in your home country but there is no real need for this unless you are entering Russia overland. If coming from Mongolia Roubles are easy to obtain in Ulaanbaatar.

RUSSIA - CURRENCY

MAKE SURE YOU INFORM YOUR BANK WHAT DATES YOU WILL BE IN RUSSIA OR THEY ARE LIKELY TO PUT A STOP ON YOUR CREDIT OR DEBIT CARD AS SOON AS YOU TRY AND USE IT.

CARDS OR CASH ?

We would suggest a mixture of credit / debit cards and a small amount of cash is best to take with cash being a backup to exchange in case you can't find an ATM or lose your card. Make sure you let your card provider know you will be in Russia or your card may be stopped!

On the trains payment is now possible by card although not guaranteed as it depends on the data connection available at the time.

HOW MUCH WILL I SPEND ?

Russia is an expensive country to visit although it has been cheaper since 2015 (except for imported goods) due to currency devaluation. Big cities like Moscow and St Petersburg are as expensive if not more so than their western counterparts. We recommend at least £ 50 per day per person but much less on the trains or pre-booked stopovers.

RUSSIA - CURRENCY



Banknotes: 500, 100, 50, 10, 5 Roubles



Coins: 1, 5, 10, 50 Copecks; 1, 2, 5 Roubles

RUSSIA - CURRENCY

PRICES* OF BASIC ITEMS IN RUSSIAN ROUBLES

**note this is rough guide and prices can, and will, vary.*

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant	600
Meal for 2, Mid-range Restaurant, Three-course	2,800
Fast Food (or Equivalent Combo Meal)	400
Cappuccino (regular)	160
Coke/Pepsi (0.33 liter bottle)	73
Water (0.33 liter bottle)	38
Water (1.5 liter bottle in market)	47
Domestic Beer (0.5 liter draught)	70
Imported Beer (0.33 liter bottle)	140
Taxi Start (Normal Tariff)	140
Taxi 1km (Normal Tariff)	30
Mobile Phone Monthly Plan with Calls and 10GB+ Data	990
1 Pair of Jeans (genuine western brand)	5,800
1 Summer Dress in a Chain Store (Zara, H&M, ...)	3,440
1 Pair of Nike Running Shoes (Mid-Range & genuine)	7,290
1 Pair of Men Leather Business Shoes	8,019

RUSSIA - CLIMATE

Russia, because of its enormous size is a country that experiences all sorts of weather types with record high temperatures in Russia having reached 45.4C and record lows having reached a bone chilling -71.2C.

Due to the moderating influence of the Atlantic or Pacific European Russia and the south of the Russian Far East, including the cities of Moscow, Saint Petersburg and Vladivostok, experience a humid continental climate. Most of Northern European Russia and Siberia between the Scandinavian Peninsula and the Pacific Ocean has a subarctic climate, with extremely severe winters.

The strip of land along the shore of the Arctic Ocean, as well as the Arctic islands, have a polar climate. A small portion of the Black Sea coast, most notably in Sochi, possesses a humid subtropical climate with unusually wet winters. Winter is dry compared to summer in many regions of East Siberia and the Far East while other parts of the country experience more even precipitation across seasons. The region along the Lower Volga and Caspian Sea coast, as well as some areas of southernmost Siberia, possess a semi-arid climate.



RUSSIA - CLIMATE

ST PETERSBURG

Averages	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Max temp °C	-2	-2	3	10	16	20	23	21	15	9	2	-1
Min temp °C	-8	-10	-6	0	5	10	13	11	7	2	-3	-7
Rainfall mm	50	45	51	35	52	92	92	100	54	149	72	63

MOSCOW

Averages	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Max temp °C	-4	-4	3	11	17	22	24	22	15	8	0	-3
Min temp °C	-9	-11	-6	1	6	11	13	11	6	2	-5	-8
Rainfall mm	45	45	32	31	58	73	79	75	62	77	45	40

EKATERINBURG

Averages	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Max temp °C	-9	-7	1	9	17	22	24	20	14	7	-3	-8
Min temp °C	-18	-17	-10	-2	4	10	12	10	4	-1	-10	-16
Rainfall mm	15	14	12	17	30	46	79	53	30	28	22	20

RUSSIA - CLIMATE

KRASNOYARSK

Averages	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Max temp °C	-9	-7	0	6	16	22	25	21	13	8	-4	-9
Min temp °C	-17	-16	-10	-4	4	9	13	10	3	-1	-11	-17
Rainfall mm	13	15	15	40	71	66	78	117	48	61	30	26

IRKUTSK & BAIKAL

Averages	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Max temp °C	-14	-8	0	8	17	22	24	22	15	7	-4	-12
Min temp °C	-25	-22	-15	-5	2	8	12	9	2	-5	-16	-22
Rainfall mm	2	2	1	4	4	9	21	37	20	3	6	5

VLADIVOSTOK

Averages	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Max temp °C	-7	-3	4	13	18	22	25	25	21	14	3	-5
Min temp °C	-17	-13	-7	1	6	11	16	16	9	2	-7	-14
Rainfall mm	7	7	16	18	50	52	95	89	82	32	20	13

RUSSIA - HISTORY

ANCIENT RUSSIA : AD 800-1200

Early Russian history, like that of many countries, is one of migrating peoples and ancient kingdoms. Early Russia was not so much a country but a collection of cities that grew into an Empire. In the early ninth century, as part of the same great movement that brought the Danes to England and the Norsemen to Western Europe, the Varangians or essentially Vikings, a Scandinavian people, crossed the Baltic Sea and landed in Eastern Europe. Their leader was the semilegendary warrior Rurik, who, in 862 led his people to the city of Novgorod. Rurik's successor, Oleg extended the power of the city southwards eventually taking control of Kiev, a Slavic city that had arisen along the Dnepr River around the 5th century. Oleg's rule over Kiev created the first dynastic, unified state in the region. Kiev became the center of a trade route between Scandinavia and Constantinople, and Kievan Rus', as the empire came to be known, continued to grow for the next three hundred years.

Oleg's great-grandson Vladimir was ruler of a kingdom that extended to as far south as the Black Sea, the Caucasus Mountains, and the lower reaches of the Volga River by 989. Vladimir carefully considered a number of available faiths after deciding to set up a state religion and decided upon Greek Orthodoxy, allying himself with Constantinople and the West. Rumour has it that Vladimir decided against Islam partly because of his belief that his people could not live under a religion that prohibits hard liquor. By Yaroslav the Wise's reign, Kievan Rus' displayed an economy, arts and architecture that surpassed that of the west of Europe. Unfortunately, he divided his kingdom among his children hoping they'd cooperate and flourish. Of course, that was never going to happen and infighting reduced the state to near collapse.

RUSSIA - HISTORY

MONGOL INVASION & THE RISE OF MOSCOW : 1237-1613

Kievan Rus' continued on into the 13th century until it was decisively destroyed by the arrival of the Mongols. In 1237 a grandson of Genghiz Khan, Batu Khan, launched an invasion into Kievan Rus' from his capital situated on the lower Volga at present-day Kazan. Over the coming years the Mongols, or Tatars as they are also known, destroyed all of the major cities of Kievan Rus' except Novgorod and Pskov. However, instead of deposing the regional princes, they were instead forced to send regular tribute to the Tatar state, which became known as the Empire of the Golden Horde. There were invasions from the West as well at this time, first by the Swedes in 1240 and then by the Livonian Brothers of the Sword (1242), a regional branch of the fearsome Teutonic Knights. Both were decisively defeated by the great warrior Alexander Nevsky, a prince of Novgorod who earned his surname from his victory over the Swedes on the Neva River.



RUSSIA - HISTORY

The Mongols allowed the Russian princes to rule pretty much as they pleased as long as the exorbitant taxes were paid, while still offering them protection. Even the Russian Orthodox Church experienced a spiritual revival. With the Tatars off to the southwest, the northeastern cities gradually gained more influence - first Tver, and then, around the turn of the 14th century, Moscow. As a sign of the city's importance, the patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church was transferred to the city, making it the spiritual capital of Russia. By the end of the century, Moscow had become strong enough to challenge the Tatars directly, and in 1380 a Muscovite prince named Dmitri Donskoy had the audacity to attack them. His decisive victory at Kulikovo Field immediately made him a popular hero, though the Tatar retaliation two years later maintained their rule over the city. It wasn't until a century later in 1480, that Moscow was strong enough to throw off Tatar rule for good. Its ruler at that time was Grand Duke Ivan III, better known as Ivan the Great. Ivan began by subjugating most of Moscow's rival cities, and by the time he rid the city of Tatar tribute he was effectively in control of the entire country. However, it wasn't until the reign of his grandson, Ivan IV (the Terrible), that Russia became a unified state.

Ivan the Terrible succeeded his father Vasily III as Grand Duke of Moscow in 1533 at the age of three. His mother served as regent until she too died, when Ivan was eight. For the next eight years, the young Grand Duke endured a series of regents chosen from among the boyars (the nobility). In 1547, he took the title of tsar, reorganized the military, crushed the power of the boyars and prepared to take Russia back from the Tatars. In 1552 he conquered and sacked Kazan (the famous St. Basil's Cathedral was built to commemorate this victory), and in 1556 Astrakhan, this destroyed the lingering power of the ...

RUSSIA - HISTORY

... Golden Horde. Ivan's Tatar campaigns opened vast new areas for Russian expansion, and it was during his reign that the conquest and colonization of Siberia began.

Ivan was not supposed to have been very terrible during the early years of his reign. This was not to last and as he grew older his temper worsened, and by the 1560s he carried out a pretty horrific campaign against the boyars, confiscating their land and executing or exiling those who displeased him. In 1581, in a rage, he struck his son and heir Ivan with an iron rod, killing him.

After his death in 1584, his son Fyodor took control. He left most of the management of the kingdom to his brother-in-law, Boris Godunov, and it was not long before Godunov began to work to secure the succession for himself. When childless Fyodor died in 1598, Godunov was made tsar, but his rule was never accepted as entirely legitimate. Within a few years a pretender arose in Poland, claiming to be Dmitri, Fyodor's dead brother, and in 1604 he invaded Russia. Godunov died suddenly the next year, and the "Time of Troubles" began.

For the next eight years both the first and a second false Dmitri laid claims to the throne, both supported by invading Polish armies. Finally, in 1613, the Poles were ousted from Moscow, and the boyars unanimously elected Michael Romanov as Tsar. The Romanov dynasty was to rule Russia for the next 304 years, until the Russian Revolution brought an end to the Tsarist state.

RUSSIA - HISTORY

THE ROMANOVS : 1613-1825

For a few generations, the Romanovs maintained the status quo in Russia. They continued to centralize power, but they did very little to bring Russia up to speed with the rapid changes in economic and political life that were taking place elsewhere in Europe. Peter the Great decided to change all of that.

Peter the Great - Peter was his father's youngest son and the child of his second wife. When his father, Tsar Alexis, died in 1676 Peter's brother Feodor became Tsar, but poor health brought about his demise in 1682. Peter's mother's family had him chosen over his mentally retarded brother Ivan to be Tsar, but Ivan's family immediately struck back. Gaining the support of the Kremlin Guard, they launched a coup d'etat, which resulted in a joint Tsar-ship, with both Peter and Ivan placed under the regency of Ivan's elder sister Sophia.



RUSSIA - HISTORY

In 1689 Sophia attempted another coup. This time she was to be defeated and confined to Novodevichiy Convent. Six years later Ivan died, leaving Peter as Tsar. Rather than taking up residence and rule in Moscow, he instead set out on a Grand Tour of Europe. He spent about two years there meeting monarchs and conducting diplomacy but also travelling incognito and even worked as a ship's carpenter in Holland. He gained much knowledge of western European industrial techniques and state administration, and became determined to modernize Russia and to westernize its society.

In 1698, still on tour, Peter received news of yet another rebellion by the Kremlin Guard, instigated by Sophia despite her confinement. He returned, defeated the coup attempt and hung all of the rebels. The following day he began his program to recreate Russia in the image of Western Europe by personally clipping off the beards of the nobles.

Peter's return to Russia brought about great change, banning traditional Muscovite dress for all men, introducing military conscription, establishing technical schools, replacing the church patriarchy with a holy synod answerable to him. He also simplified the alphabet, tried to improve the manners of the court, changed the calendar, changed his title from Tsar to Emperor, and introduced a hundred other reforms and restrictions.

In 1703 he transferred the capital from Moscow to a new city to be built from scratch on the Gulf of Finland. Over the next nine years, at tremendous human and material cost, St. Petersburg was created.

RUSSIA - HISTORY

Catherine the Great - Catherine the Great was born a German princess in one of the tiny German states. In 1745 she was married to prince Carl Peter Ulrich, the heir to the Russian throne (the future Emperor Peter III). Well educated and a bright personality with a strong sense of determination she embraced Russia joining the Russian Orthodox Church, and learning the language. In June 1762 she took an active part in a coup against her husband Emperor Peter III. He was overthrown and soon killed "in an accident", while Catherine became Russia's ruler.

Catherine went on to become the most powerful sovereign in Europe. She continued Peter the Great's reforms of the Russian state, further increasing central control over the provinces. Russia's influence in European affairs increased as did its territory in Eastern and Central Europe. Catherine was also an enthusiastic patron of the arts. She built and founded the Hermitage Museum, commissioned buildings all over Russia, founded academies, journals, and libraries, and corresponded with the French Encyclopedists, including Voltaire, Diderot, and d'Alembert.

With the onset of the French Revolution, Catherine became strikingly conservative and increasingly hostile to criticism of her policies. From 1789 until her death, she reversed many of the liberal reforms of her early reign.

When Catherine the Great died in 1796, she was succeeded by her son Paul I. Paul's reign lasted only five years and was by all accounts a complete disaster. Paul was succeeded by his son Alexander I, who is remembered mostly for having been the ruler of Russia during Napoleon Bonaparte's epic Russian Campaign.

RUSSIA - HISTORY

NAPOLEON : 1812

In June 1812, Napoleon began his fatal Russian campaign, a landmark in the history of the destructive potential of warfare. Virtually all of continental Europe was under his control, and the invasion of Russia was an attempt to force Tsar Alexander I to submit once again to the terms of a treaty that Napoleon had imposed upon him four years earlier. Having gathered nearly half a million soldiers, Napoleon entered Russia at the head of the largest army ever seen. The Russians, under Marshal Kutuzov, could not realistically hope to defeat him in a direct confrontation. Instead, they began a defensive campaign of strategic retreat, devastating the land as they fell back and attacking the flanks of the French. As the summer wore on, Napoleon's massive supply lines were stretched ever thinner, and his force began to decline. By September, without having engaged in a single pitched battle, the French Army had been reduced by more than two thirds from fatigue, hunger, desertion, and raids by Russian forces.

Nonetheless, it was clear that unless the Russians engaged the French Army in a major battle, Moscow would be Napoleon's in a matter of weeks. The Tsar insisted upon an engagement, and on September 7, the two armies met at Borodino Field. By the end of the day, 108,000 men had died, but neither side had gained a decisive victory. Kutuzov realized that any further defense of the city would be senseless, and he withdrew his forces, prompting the citizens of Moscow to begin an exodus.

When Napoleon's army arrived on September 14, they found a city depopulated and bereft of supplies. To make matters much, much worse, fires broke out in the city that night, and by the next day the French were lacking shelter as well.

RUSSIA - HISTORY

After waiting in vain for Alexander to offer to negotiate, Napoleon ordered his troops to begin the march home. Because the route south was blocked by Kutuzov's forces (and the French were in no shape for a battle) the retreat retraced the long, devastated route of the invasion. Having waited until mid-October to depart, the exhausted French army soon found itself in the midst of winter--in fact, in the midst of an unusually early and especially cold winter. Temperatures soon dropped well below freezing, Cossacks attacked stragglers and isolated units, food was almost non-existent, and the march was five hundred miles. Ten thousand men survived. The campaign ensured Napoleon's downfall and Russia's status as a leading power in post-Napoleonic Europe. Yet even as Russia emerged more powerful than ever from the Napoleonic era, its internal tensions began to increase.



RUSSIA - HISTORY

THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION

Since Ivan the Terrible, Russian Tsars had drawn power away from the nobility towards themselves. They'd done this by giving the nobles increasing power over the serfs and this had ended up with the serfs being reduce to a state closer to slavery than to peasantry.

By the nineteenth century, these situations were under attack. In the Decembrist revolt reformists attempted to stop the accession of Nicholas I, this however failed. In 1861 Alexander II abolished serfdom, though this didn't in fact bring on any significant change in the condition of the peasants. As Russia became more industrialised, larger, and far more complicated, the inadequacies of autocratic Tsarist rule became increasingly apparent.

Russia had expanded its territory and its power considerably over the nineteenth century. Its borders extended to Afghanistan and China, and it had acquired extensive territory on the Pacific coast. The foundation of the port cities of Vladivostok and Port Arthur there had opened up profitable avenues for commerce, and the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway (constructed from 1891-1905) linked the European Russia with its new eastern territories.

In January of 1905, the Japanese, provoked by increasing Russian presence in the East, attacked, and Russia experienced a series of defeats that dissolved the tenuous support held by Nicholas II's already unpopular government. Nicholas was forced to grant concessions to the reformers, including most notably a constitution and a parliament, or Duma. Industrialisation had brought together large concentrations of Russian workers, and they soon began to

RUSSIA - HISTORY

... organise into local political councils, or soviets (“soviet” means council or advice). These soviets united under the Social Democratic party.

In 1912, the Social Democrats split into two camps - the radical Bolsheviks (“bolshe” means bigger) and the comparatively moderate Mensheviks (“menshe” means smaller). In 1914, another disastrous war once again brought on a crisis. If the Russo-Japanese war had been costly and unpopular, it was at least remote. The First World War, however, took place right on Russia's western doorstep. Unprepared militarily or industrially, the country suffered demoralising defeats, suffered severe food shortages, and soon suffered an economic collapse. By February of 1917, the workers and soldiers had had enough. Riots broke out in St. Petersburg, then called Petrograd, and the garrison there mutinied. Workers' soviets were set up, and the Duma approved the establishment of a Provisional Government to attempt to restore order in the capital. Nicholas abdicated the throne in favour of his brother Michael who duly renounced his claim the next day.

The Provisional Government were unwilling to endorse the most pressing demand of the soviets--an immediate end to the war. In the meanwhile, the Bolsheviks gained increasing support from them. On October 25, led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, they stormed the Winter Palace and deposed the government. Although the Bolsheviks enjoyed substantial support in St. Petersburg and Moscow, they were by no means in control of the country as a whole. They succeeded in taking Russia out of the war (though on very unfavourable terms), but within months civil war broke out throughout Russia. For the next three years the country was devastated by civil strife, until by 1920 the Bolsheviks had finally emerged victorious.

RUSSIA - HISTORY

THE SOVIET UNION

During the Civil War the Bolsheviks maintained complete control of the economy but after it finished Lenin decided that a partial return to a market economy would help the country recover from the destruction of the previous three years. His New Economic Policy, or NEP, brought about a period of relative prosperity, allowing the young Soviet government to consolidate its political position and rebuild the country's infrastructure.

Following Lenin's death there was a bitter power struggle in the party but by the end of the decade Joseph Stalin had emerged victorious and everything would change. Out went the NEP and in came strict economic policy dictated from the top. Farms were collectivised, Industrial output pushed to the maximum, producing capital equipment instead of consumer products. The Arts were placed under strict control, religion repressed and Stalin purged all that opposed him both in the country and the part itself. The strict controls that had brought about the end of the Tsars were now stricter than ever before.



RUSSIA - HISTORY

With the outbreak of the Second World War, the Soviet Union found itself unprepared for the conflict. The Soviets were caught by surprise by the invasion of June 1941. By the end of the year, the Germans had seized most of the Soviet territory in the west, surrounded St. Petersburg (Leningrad), and advanced to within a few hundred miles of Moscow. In the summer of 1942 the Germans launched a new invasion against the southern front in an attempt to gain control of the rail center of Stalingrad on the Volga and the vital Caucasus oil fields. Despite an overwhelming disadvantage in numbers and inferior weaponry, the Russian army held out. In November, a relieving force managed to encircle the attackers and compel the surrender of the entire force, marking a decisive turning point in the war. From that point onward, the Russian army remained on the attack. By 1944 they had driven the Germans back to Poland, and on May 2, 1945, Berlin fell.

The Soviet Union emerged from World War II considerably stronger than it had been before the war. Although the country suffered enormous devastation and lost more than twenty million lives, it had gained considerable territory and now ranked as one of the two great world powers along with the United States. However agricultural failures led to famine, more purges were carried out and as the Cold War got underway, an increasing proportion of the Soviet Union's resources were funnelled into military projects, further exacerbating the quality of life. Stalin remained in power until 1953, when he died of a cerebral haemorrhage.

Almost immediately after the death of Stalin, many of the repressive policies that he had instituted were dismantled. Under the leadership of Nikita Khrushchev, political controls were to some degree relaxed, and cultural life experienced a ...

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... brief period of revival. However, this led to him being ousted and by the 1970s, Leonid Brezhnev had become the next prominent Soviet leader. The country entered a decade-long period of stagnation, its rigid economy slowly deteriorating and its political climate becoming increasingly pessimistic. When Brezhnev died in 1982 he was succeeded as general secretary first by Yuri Andropov, head of the KGB, and then by Konstantin Chernenko, neither of whom managed to survive long enough to effect significant changes. In March of 1985, when Mikhail Gorbachev became general secretary, the need for reforms was pressing.

Gorbachev's platform for a new Soviet Union was founded on two now-famous terms - glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring). Glasnost, however, lost some credibility right at the outset when it was discovered in April 1986 that the government had waited several days before admitting to the infamous nuclear disaster at Chernobyl.



RUSSIA - HISTORY

Backed into a corner on Chernobyl, Gorbachev countered with the dramatic removal of all controls on reporting - and for the first time in decades, the problems of the country became subjects for open public discussion. Poverty, corruption, the enormous mismanagement of the country's resources, the unpopularity of the Afghan war, and a host of other problems and grievances were raised. Radical reform leaders emerged, including the new Moscow Party chief Boris Yeltsin, and prominent dissidents like Andrei Sakharov were able to voice their views for the first time.

Early in 1989, Soviet troops were withdrawn from Afghanistan. In the spring of 1989, the first open elections since 1917 were held. The governments of the Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe, subjected to the same rising tide of public criticism, fell one after the other in a rapid series of revolutions culminating in the fall of the Berlin wall.

In 1990, the Soviet Union itself began to unravel. Large scale strikes shensued and demonstrations against the government and the party intensified. The economy worsened, food shortages became a problem, and the crime rate began to skyrocket. The following summer, the radical reform movements became strong enough to openly defy the government. In the press, criticism of Gorbachev intensified. Yeltsin, on the other hand, was the overwhelming victor in June elections for the Russian presidency. On August 18, party conservatives made a desparate bid for power. Coup leaders issued the announcement that Gorbachev had resigned and that a state of emergency had been declared. Military units were dispatched to enforce the authority of the new government, but they were met with overwhelming popular protest led by Yeltsin and the other presidents of the republics.

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After three days the attempted coup had collapsed. By the end of the year the Soviet Union had been voted out of existence, to be replaced by a Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). On December 25, Gorbachev resigned, and on midnight of December 31, the Soviet flag atop the Kremlin was replaced by the Russian tricolor.

POST-SOVIET RUSSIA

There was a prolonged period of suffering post communism within Russia as industries simply hadn't been geared towards operating in a free market system. A quarter of all Soviet output had been military and one in five people had been employed in this industry (as opposed to one in sixteen in the US). Social welfare had been dealt with through the factories and also the finding of jobs for people where they really didn't exist.

Yeltsin became increasingly unwell and eventually bowed out placing a relative unknown and former FSB (replacement of the KGB) leader Vladimir Putin in power. Putin swept the next elections and started to build the Russia we now know today. This epic story continues...



RUSSIA - GEOGRAPHY

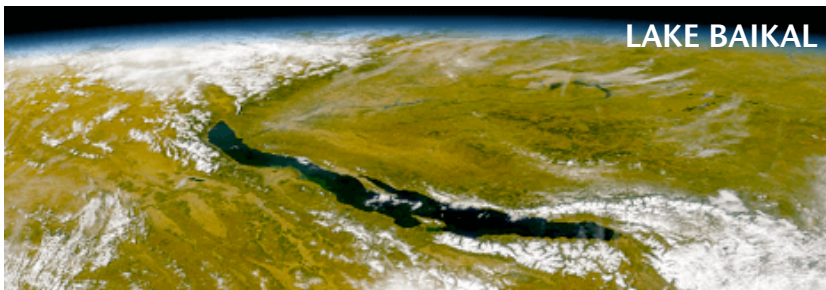
Russia is the world's largest country covering a total area of 17,098,242 km², with over 79,000 km² of that being water, making it almost 2 times the size of the next biggest country Canada.

It contains Europe's largest river, the Volga, at 3,692 km as well as the world's deepest and most capacious freshwater lake, Lake Baikal. Baikal alone holds 85% of the freshwater resources of the lakes in Russia and 20% of the world's total. It extends 632 kilometers in length and 59 kilometers across at its widest point. Its maximum depth is 1,713 meters.

The largest natural area of Russia is known as Taiga and contains the world's largest reserves of coniferous wood.

Russia holds the greatest reserves of mineral resources of any country in the world but they are in remote areas with extreme climates, making them expensive to mine. The country is the most abundant in mineral fuels with up to half of the world's coal reserves and even larger reserves of petroleum.

The highest point in the country is Mount Elbrus at 5,642m and the lowest point is the Caspian Sea at -28m. It has borders 14 different countries.



RUSSIA - CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Russia has been a leader in the arts, literature, classical music, science, philosophy and sports for many generations and these attractions are a large part of what draws visitors to the country - particularly for Moscow and St Petersburg. The country itself has been the primary influence of Russian culture historically. Influence from the West is a more recent development.

LITERATURE

Russian literature is considered to be among the most influential and developed in the world dating back to the 10th Century. In the 18th century its development was boosted by the works of Mikhail Lomonosov and Denis Fonvizin, and by the early 19th century a modern native tradition had emerged, producing some of the greatest writers of all time. This period and the Golden Age of Russian Poetry began with Alexander Pushkin, considered to be the founder of modern Russian literature and often described as the "Russian Shakespeare" or the "Russian Goethe". It continued in the 19th century with the poetry of Mikhail Lermontov and Nikolay Nekrasov, dramas of Aleksandr Ostrovsky and Anton Chekhov, and the prose of Nikolai Gogol, Ivan Turgenev, Leo Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin, Ivan Goncharov, Aleksey Pisemsky and Nikolai Leskov. Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky in particular were titanic figures, to the point that many literary critics have described one or the other as the greatest novelist ever.

ARCHITECTURE

Russian architecture began with the woodcraft buildings of ancient Slavs. Apart from fortifications (kremlins), the main stone buildings of ancient Rus' were Orthodox churches, with their many domes, often gilded or brightly painted.

RUSSIA - CULTURE

Aristotle Fioravanti and other Italian architects brought Renaissance trends into Russia. The 16th century saw the development of unique tent-like churches culminating in Saint Basil's Cathedral. After Peter the Great reforms had made Russia much closer to Western culture, the change of the architectural styles in the country generally followed that of Western Europe. In the Soviet era the architecture of the country was dominated by plain functionalism. This helped somewhat to resolve the housing problem, but created many buildings of low architectural quality, much in contrast with the previous bright architecture. Since the end of the Soviet Union the situation has improved with many churches demolished in the Soviet times rebuilt.



RUSSIA - CULTURE

PAINTING

Russia has a rich painting heritage from the ancient Icons to Russian avant-garde or more recent times. Icons were displayed in peoples homes and churches. Icon paintings in Russia attempted to help people with their prayers without idolizing the figure in the painting. The most comprehensive collection of Icon art is found at the Tretyakov Gallery.

The Russian Academy of Arts was created in 1757, aimed to give Russian artists an international role and status. Notable portrait painters from the Academy include Ivan Argunov, Fyodor Rokotov, Dmitry Levitzky, and Vladimir Borovikovsky. In the early 19th century, when neoclassicism and romantism flourished, famous academic artists focused on mythological and Biblical themes, like Karl Briullov and Alexander Ivanov.

Realism came into dominance in the 19th century. The realists captured Russian identity in landscapes of wide rivers, forests, and birch clearings, as well as vigorous genre scenes and robust portraits of their contemporaries. Other artists focused on social criticism, showing the conditions of the poor and caricaturing authority; critical realism flourished under the reign of Alexander II, with some artists making the circle of human suffering their main theme. Others focused on depicting dramatic moments in Russian history. Leading realists include Ivan Shishkin, Arkhip Kuindzhi, Ivan Kramskoi, Vasily Polenov, Isaac Levitan, Vasily Surikov, Viktor Vasnetsov and Ilya Repin.

By the turn of the 20th century and on, many Russian artists developed their own unique styles, neither realist nor avante-garde. These include Boris Kustodiev, Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, Mikhail Vrubel and Nicholas Roerich.

RUSSIA - CULTURE

The Russian avant-garde is an umbrella term used to define the large, influential wave of modernist art that flourished in Russia from approximately 1890 to 1930. The term covers many separate, but inextricably related, art movements that occurred at the time. The Russian avant-garde reached its creative and popular height in the period between the Russian Revolution of 1917 and 1932, at which point the revolutionary ideas of the avant-garde clashed with the newly emerged conservative direction of socialist realism. In the 20th century many Russian artists made their careers in Western Europe, forced to emigrate by the Revolution.

Soviet artists produced works that were furiously patriotic and anti-fascist in the 1940s. After the Great Patriotic War Soviet sculptors made multiple monuments to the war dead, marked by a great restrained solemnity.



RUSSIA - CULTURE

MUSIC

Music in 19th century Russia was defined by the tension between classical composer Mikhail Glinka who embraced Russian national identity and added religious and folk elements to their compositions, and the Russian Musical Society led by composers Anton and Nikolay Rubinstein, which was musically conservative. The later Romantic tradition of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, one of the greatest composers of the Romantic era, whose music has come to be known and loved for its distinctly Russian character as well as its rich harmonies and stirring melodies, was brought into the 20th century by Sergei Rachmaninoff, one of the last great champions of the Romantic style of European classical music.

World-renowned composers of the 20th century included Alexander Scriabin, Igor Stravinsky, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Dmitri Shostakovich and Georgy Sviridov. During most of the Soviet Era, music was highly scrutinized and kept within a conservative, accessible idiom in conformity with the policy of socialist realism. Soviet and Russian conservatories have turned out generations of world-renowned soloists.

BALLET

The original purpose of the ballet in Russia was to entertain the imperial court. During the early 20th century, Russian ballet dancers Anna Pavlova and Vaslav Nijinsky rose to fame. Soviet ballet preserved the perfected 19th century traditions, and the Soviet Union's choreography schools produced one internationally famous star after another, including Maya Plisetskaya, Rudolf Nureyev, and Mikhail Baryshnikov. The Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow and the Mariinsky in Saint Petersburg remain famous throughout the world.

RUSSIA - CULTURE

CUISINE

Russian cuisine widely uses fish, poultry, mushrooms, berries, and honey. Crops of rye, wheat, barley, and millet provide the ingredients for a plethora of breads, pancakes, cereals, kvass, beer, and vodka. Flavourful soups and stews include shchi, borsch, ukha, solyanka and okroshka. Smetana (a heavy sour cream) is often added to soups and salads. Pirozhki, blini and syrniki are native types of pancakes. Cutlets (like Chicken Kiev), pelmeni and shashlyk are popular meat dishes, the last two being of Tatar and Caucasus origin respectively. Popular salads include Russian Salad, vinaigrette and Dressed Herring.

RELIGION

Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism are Russia's traditional religions, deemed part of Russia's "historical heritage" protected by law. Estimates of believers widely fluctuate among sources, and some reports put the number of non-believers in Russia as high as 16–48%. Russian Orthodoxy is the dominant religion. However, the vast majority of Orthodox believers do not attend church on a regular basis. Nonetheless, the church is widely respected by both believers and nonbelievers.

SPORT

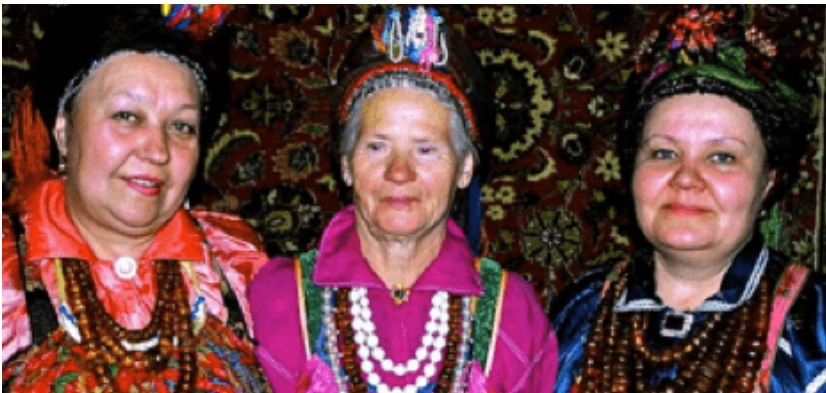
Russians have been successful at a number of sports and consistently finish in the top rankings at the Olympic Games and in other international competitions. Soviet gymnasts, track-and-field athletes, weight lifters, wrestlers, boxers, fencers, shooters, chess players, cross country skiers, biathletes, speed skaters and figure skaters were consistently among the best in the world, along with Soviet basketball, handball, volleyball and ice hockey players.

RUSSIA - PEOPLE

Russia has a population of roughly 143 million and the Russians, an East Slavic ethnic group native to Russia, make up the vast majority of the people living there at over 80%. They are also the largest group of people living in Europe.

The Russia has around 160 different ethnic groups, many of which have less than 20 living members left and some as low as 1. Russia is also home of a particular category of minority peoples, i.e. small indigenous peoples of the North and Far East, who maintain very traditional lifestyles, often in a hazardous climatic environment. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia passed legislation to protect rights of small northern indigenous peoples.

The largest group, aside from the Russians, are the Tartars with just under 4% of the population. The Ukrainians, Bashkirs, Chuvashs, Chechens & Armenians are the only other groups to have a population over 1 million and between them they make up roughly 5.5% of the population. One must remember however that 4% of the population did not declare their ethnicity in the last census.



FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY & VITAL STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE TRANS-SIBERIAN IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED IN ORDER TO APPRECIATE THE SHEER EPIC NATURE OF YOUR TRIP - READ ON!

INTRODUCTION

The Trans-Siberian Railway is the name commonly used for the three lines - Trans-Mongolian, Trans-Manchurian and the actual Trans-Siberian from Moscow to Vladivostok. Only the last of these is the true Trans-Siberian connecting Moscow with the Russian Far East and the Sea of Japan. With a length of 9,289 km (5,772 mi), it is the longest railway line in the world.

The railway was built from 1891 to 1916 under the supervision of Russian government ministers who were personally appointed by Tsar Alexander III and his son, Tsar Nicholas II. Even before it had been completed, it attracted adventurous travellers and continues to do so today.



FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

THE MAIN ROUTES

The Trans-Siberian Railway connects hundreds of large and small cities of the European and Asian parts of Russia. It spans a record seven time zones and it takes eight days to complete the journey. The main route of the Trans-Siberian Railway begins in Moscow at Yaroslavsky Vokzal, runs through Yaroslavl, Chelyabinsk, Omsk, Novosibirsk, Irkutsk, Ulan-Ude, Chita and Khabarovsk to Vladivostok via southern Siberia.

A second route is the Trans-Manchurian, which coincides with the Trans-Siberian east of Chita as far as Tarskaya (a stop 12 km (7 mi) east of Karymskoye, in Chita Oblast), about 1,000 km (621 mi) east of Lake Baikal. From Tarskaya the Trans-Manchurian heads southeast, via Harbin (from where a connection to Beijing is used by one of the Moscow–Beijing trains), joining with the main route in Ussuriysk just north of Vladivostok. This is the shortest and the oldest railway route to Vladivostok.

The primary route is the Trans-Mongolian Railway, which coincides with the Trans-Siberian as far as Ulan-Ude on Lake Baikal's eastern shore. From Ulan-Ude the Trans-Mongolian heads to Ulaanbaatar before making its way to Beijing.

In 1991, a fourth route running further to the north was finally completed, after more than five decades of sporadic work. Known as the Baikal Amur Mainline (BAM), this recent extension departs from the Trans-Siberian line at Taishet several hundred miles west of Lake Baikal and passes the lake at its northernmost extremity. It crosses the Amur River at Komsomolsk-na-Amure (north of Khabarovsk) and reaches the Tatar Strait of the Sea of Japan at Sovetskaya Gavan.

FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

THE CONCEPT

In the late 1800s, the development of Siberia was hampered by poor transport links within the region, as well as with the rest of the country. Aside from the Great Siberian Route, good roads suitable for wheeled transport were rare. For about five months of the year, rivers were the main means of transport. During the cold half of the year, cargo and passengers travelled by horse-drawn sledges over the winter roads, many of which were the same rivers, but ice-covered.

The first railway projects in Siberia emerged after the completion of the Moscow to St Petersburg Railway in 1851. One of the first was the Irkutsk–Chita project, proposed by the American entrepreneur Perry Collins and supported by Transport Minister Constantine Possiet with a view toward connecting Moscow to the Amur River, and consequently, to the Pacific Ocean. Siberia's governor, Nikolay Muravyov-Amursky, was anxious to advance the colonisation of the Russian Far East, but his plans could not materialise as long as the colonists had to import grain and other food from China and Korea. It was on Muravyov's initiative that surveys for a railway in the Khabarovsk region were conducted.



FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

Before 1880, the central government had virtually ignored these projects, because of the weakness of Siberian enterprises, a clumsy bureaucracy, and fear of financial risk. By 1880, there were a large number of rejected and upcoming applications for permission to construct railways to connect Siberia with the Pacific, but not Eastern Russia. This worried the government and made connecting Siberia with Central Russia a pressing concern. The design process lasted 10 years. Along with the route actually constructed, alternative projects were proposed:

The line was divided into seven sections, on all or most of which work proceeded simultaneously, using the labour of 62,000 men. The total cost was estimated at £35 million sterling; the first section (Chelyabinsk to the River Ob) was finished at a cost £900,000 less than the estimate. Railwaymen fought against suggestions to save funds, for example, by installing ferryboats instead of bridges over the rivers until traffic increased. The designers insisted and secured the decision to construct an uninterrupted railway.

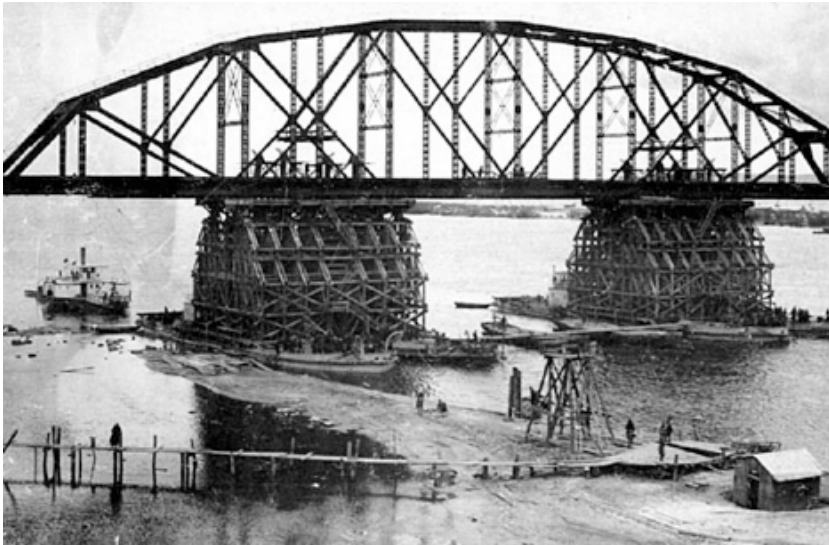
Unlike the rejected private projects that intended to connect the existing cities demanding transport, the Trans-Siberian did not have such a priority. Thus, to save money and avoid clashes with land owners, it was decided to lay the railway outside the existing cities. Tomsk was the largest city, and the most unfortunate, because the swampy banks of the Ob River near it were considered inappropriate for a bridge. The railway was laid 70 km (43 mi) to the south (instead crossing the Ob at Novonikolaevsk, later renamed Novosibirsk); just a dead-end branch line connected with Tomsk, depriving the city of the prospective transit railway traffic and trade and the city has since fallen in prominence.

FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

HISTORY OF CONSTRUCTION

In March 1890, the future Tsar Nicholas II personally inaugurated the construction of the Far East segment of the Trans-Siberian Railway during his stop at Vladivostok, after visiting Japan at the end of his journey around the world. Nicholas II made notes in his diary about his anticipation of travelling in the comfort of "the tsar's train" across the unspoiled wilderness of Siberia. The tsar's train was designed and built in St. Petersburg to serve as the main mobile office of the tsar and his staff for travelling across Russia.

On 9 March 1891, the Russian government issued an imperial rescript in which it announced its intention to construct a railway across Siberia. Full-time construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway began the same year and was put into execution and overseen by Sergei Witte, who was then finance minister.



FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

Similar to the First Trans-continental Railroad in the US, Russian engineers started construction at both ends and worked towards the centre. From Vladivostok the railway was laid north along the right bank of the Ussuri River to Khabarovsk at the Amur River, becoming the Ussuri Railway.

In 1890, a bridge across the Ural River was built and the new railway entered Asia. The bridge across the Ob River was built in 1898 and the small city of Novonikolaevsk, founded in 1883, grew into the large Siberian city of Novosibirsk. In 1898 the first train reached Irkutsk and the shores of Lake Baikal about 60 kilometres (37 miles) east of the city. The railway ran on to the east, across the Shilka and Amur rivers and soon reached Khabarovsk. The Vladivostok to Khabarovsk section was built slightly earlier, in 1897. Russian soldiers, as well as convict labourers from Sakhalin and other places were used for building the railway.

Lake Baikal is more than 640 kilometres (400 miles) long and more than 1,600 metres (5,200 feet) deep. Until the Circum-Baikal Railway was built the line ended on either side of the lake. The ice-breaking train ferry SS Baikal built in 1897 and smaller ferry SS Angara built in about 1900, made the four-hour crossing to link the two railheads. The Russian admiral and explorer Stepan Makarov (1849–1904) designed Baikal and Angara but they were built in Newcastle upon Tyne, England, by Armstrong Whitworth. They were "knock down" vessels; that is, each ship was bolted together in England, every part of the ship was marked with a number, the ship was disassembled into many hundreds of parts and transported in kit form to Listvyanka where a shipyard was built especially to reassemble them. Their boilers, engines and some other components were built in St Petersburg and transported to Listvyanka to be

FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

... installed. Baikal had 15 boilers, four funnels, and was 64 metres (210 ft) long. it could carry 24 railway coaches and one locomotive on the middle deck. Angara was smaller.

Completion of the Circum-Baikal Railway in 1904 bypassed the ferries, but from time to time the Circum-Baikal Railway suffered from derailments or rockfalls so both ships were held in reserve until 1916. Baikal was burnt out and destroyed in the Russian Civil War but Angara survives. It has been restored and is permanently moored at Irkutsk where it serves as an office and a museum.

In winter, sleighs were used to move passengers and cargo from one side of the lake to the other until the completion of the Lake Baikal spur along the southern edge of the lake.

With the Amur River Line north of the Chinese border being completed in 1916, there was a continuous railway from Petrograd to Vladivostok that remains to this day the world's longest railway line. Electrification of the line, began in 1929 and was completed in 2002, allowed a doubling of train weights to 6,000 tonnes.



FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

The additional Chinese Eastern Railway was constructed as the Russo-Chinese part of the Trans-Siberian Railway, connecting Russia with China and providing a shorter route to Vladivostok. A Russian staff and administration based in Harbin operated it.

EFFECTS OF THE RAILWAY

As Siberian agriculture began, from around 1869, to send cheap grain westwards,[citation needed] agriculture in Central Russia was still under economic pressure after the end of serfdom, which was formally abolished in 1861. Thus, to defend the central territory and to prevent possible social destabilisation, in 1896 the Tsarist government introduced the Chelyabinsk tariff-break, a tariff barrier for grain passing through Chelyabinsk, and a similar barrier in Manchuria. This measure changed the nature of export: mills emerged to produce bread from grain in Altai Krai, Novosibirsk and Tomsk, and many farms switched to corn (maize) production. From 1896 until 1913 Siberia exported on average 501,932 tonnes (30,643,000 pood) of bread (grain, flour) annually.

The Trans-Siberian Railway also brought with it millions of peasant-migrants from the Western regions of Russia and Ukraine. Between 1906 and 1914, the peak migration years, about 4 million peasants arrived in Siberia.

The railway immediately filled to capacity with local traffic, mostly wheat. Despite the low speed and low possible weights of trains, the railway fulfilled its promised role as a transit route between Europe and East Asia. During the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, military traffic to the east almost disrupted the flow of civil freight.

FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

WAR & REVOLUTION

In the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), the Trans-Siberian Railway was seen as one of the reasons Russia lost the war. The track was a single track and as such could only allow train travel in one direction. This caused significant strategic and supply difficulties for the Russians. Thus the Japanese were quickly able to advance whilst the Russians were awaiting necessary troops and supplies. After the Russian Revolution of 1917, the railway served as the vital line of communication for the Czechoslovak Legion and the allied armies that landed troops at Vladivostok during the Siberian Intervention of the Russian Civil War. These forces supported the White Russian government of Admiral Alexander Kolchak, based in Omsk, and White Russian soldiers fighting the Bolsheviks on the Ural front. The intervention was weakened, and ultimately defeated, by partisan fighters who blew up bridges and sections of track, particularly in the volatile region between Krasnoyarsk and Chita.

The Trans-Siberian Railway also played a very direct role during parts of Russia's history, with the Czechoslovak Legion using heavily armed and armoured trains to control large amounts of the railway (and of Russia itself) during the Russian Civil War at the end of World War I. As one of the few organised fighting forces left in the aftermath of the imperial collapse, and before the Red Army took control, the Czechs and Slovaks were able to use their organisation and the resources of the railway to establish a temporary zone of control before eventually continuing onwards towards Vladivostok, from where they emigrated back to Czechoslovakia.

FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

WORLD WAR II

During World War II, the Trans-Siberian Railway played an important role in the supply of the powers fighting in Europe. During the first two years of the war the USSR was a neutral power. While Germany's merchant shipping was interdicted by the Western allies, the Trans-Siberian Railway (along with its Trans-Manchurian branch) served as the essential link between Germany and Japan. One commodity particularly essential for the German war effort was natural rubber, which Japan was able to source from the South-East Asia (in particular, French Indochina). As of March 1941, 300 tonnes of this material would, on average, traverse the Trans-siberian Railway every day on its way to Germany. According to one analysis of natural rubber supply chain, as of March 22, 1941, 5800 tonnes of this essential material were transiting on the Soviet railway network between the borders of Manchukuo and the Third Reich, 2000 tonnes were transiting Manchukuo, 4000 tonnes were sitting in Dairen, 3800 tonnes were in Japan, and 5700 tonnes, on the way from South-East Asia to Japan.



FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

At this time, a number of Jews and anti-Nazis used the Trans-Siberian Railway to escape Europe. Several thousand Jewish refugees were able to make this trip thanks to the Japanese visas issued by the Japanese consul, Chiune Sugihara, in Kaunas, Lithuania. Typically they would travel east on the Trans-Siberian Railway to the Pacific Ocean where they would board a ship bound for the USA.

The situation reversed after 22 June 1941. By invading the Soviet Union, Germany cut off its only reliable trade route to Japan. Instead, it had to use fast merchant ships (blockade runners) and later large oceanic submarines in an attempt to evade the allied maritime patrols. On the other hand, the USSR became the recipient of lend lease supplies from the USA. Even though Japan went to war with the USA, it was anxious to preserve good relations with the USSR and, despite German complaints, usually allowed Soviet ships to sail between the USA and Russia's Pacific ports unmolested. This contrasted with Germany and Britain's behaviour, whose navies would destroy or capture neutrals' ships sailing to their respective adversaries. As a result, the Pacific Route – involving crossing the northern Pacific Ocean and the Trans-Siberian Railway – became the safest connection between the USA and the USSR. Accordingly, it accounted for as much freight as the two other routes (North Atlantic–Arctic and Iranian) combined.

From 1941 to 1942 the railway also played an important role in relocating Soviet industries from European Russia to Siberia in the face of the German invasion. The railway also transported Soviet troops east from Germany to the Japanese front in preparation for the Soviet–Japanese War of August 1945.

FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

THE RAILWAY TODAY

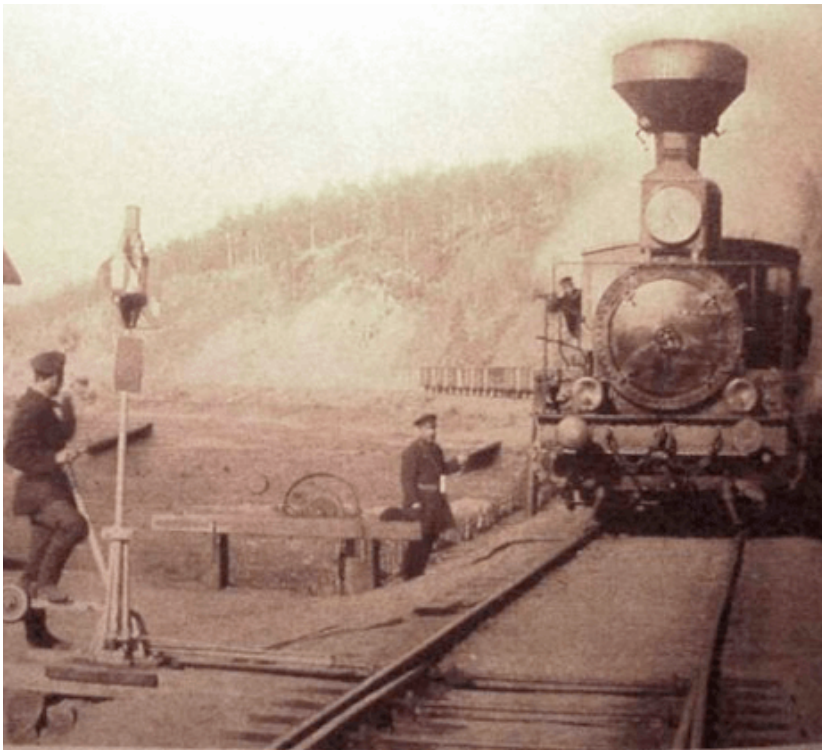
The Trans-Siberian line remains the most important transport link within Russia; around 30% of Russian exports travel on the line. While it attracts foreign tourists, it gets most of its use from domestic passengers. The Trans-Siberian is a vital link to the Russian Far East.

Today the Trans-Siberian Railway carries about 200,000 containers per year to Europe. With perfect coordination of the participating countries' railway authorities, a trainload of containers can be taken from Beijing to Hamburg, via the Trans-Mongolian and Trans-Siberian lines in as little as 15 days, but typical cargo transit times are usually significantly longer and typical cargo transit time from Japan to major destinations in European Russia was reported as around 25 days.

According to a 2009 report, the best travel times for cargo block trains from Russia's Pacific ports to the western border (of Russia, or perhaps of Belarus) were around 12 days, with trains making around 900 km (559 mi) per day, at a maximum operating speed of 80 km/h (50 mph). However, in early 2009 Russian Railways announced an ambitious "Trans-Siberian in Seven Days" programme; according to this plan, \$11 billion will be invested over the next five years to make it possible for goods traffic to cover the same 9,000 km (5,592 mi) distance in just seven days. The plan will involve increasing the cargo trains' speed to 90 km/h (56 mph) in 2010–12, and, at least on some sections, to 100 km/h (62 mph) by 2015. At these speeds, goods trains will be able to cover 1,500 km (932 mi) per day. To date this has yet to be happen.

FEATURE - THE TRANS-SIBERIAN

On 11 January 2008, China, Mongolia, Russia, Belarus, Poland and Germany agreed to collaborate on a cargo train service between Beijing and Hamburg. One of the complicating factors related to such ventures is the fact that the CIS states' broad railway gauge is incompatible with China and Western and Central Europe's standard gauge. Therefore, a train travelling from China to Western Europe would encounter gauge breaks twice: at the Chinese–Mongolian or the Chinese–Russian frontier and at the Ukrainian or the Belorussian border with Central European countries.



RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

THE FIRST THING WE RECOMMEND DOING IS TO LEARN THE TRANSLITERATION OF THE CYRILLIC ALPHABET WHICH DOESN'T TAKE LONG AND WILL BE SOMETHING YOU CAN USE RIGHT AWAY IN RUSSIA.

THE CYRILLIC ALPHABET

The simple chart below sums it up nicely. You will find quite a lot of written words are direct transliterations - like supermarket, bar and restaurant.

Russian letter - English analog		Russian letter - English analog	
А а	A	Р р	R
Б б	B	С с	S
В в	V	Т т	T
Г г	G	У у	U
Д д	D	Ф ф	F
Е е	E	Х х	H
Ж ж	ZH	Ц ц	TS
З з	Z	Ч ч	CH
И и	I	Ш ш	SH
Й й	I-short	Щ щ	SCH
К к	K	Ъ ъ	- hard
Л л	L	Ы ы	-(maybe y)
М м	M	Ь ь	- soft
Н н	N	Э э	E
О о	O	Ю ю	IU
П п	P	Я я	IA

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

THE BASICS

- Hello = ZDRAHST-vooy-tyeh (Здравствуйтe)

- **Hello (informal)** = pree-VYEHT (Привет)

- How are you? = kahg dee-LAH? (Как дела?)

- **Fine, thank you** = khah-rah-SHOH spah-SEE-buh (Хорошо, спасибо)

- What is your name? = kahk vahs zah-VOOT? (Как Вас зовут?)

- **My name is _____ .** = mee-NYAH zah-VOOT ____ (Меня зовут _____ .)

- Nice to meet you. = OH-cheen' pree-YAHT-nuh (Очень приятно.)

- Please. = pah-ZHAN-luh-stuh (Пожалуйста).

- Thank you. = spuh-SEE-buh (Спасибо.)

- You're welcome. = NYEH-zuh-shtoh (Не за что.)

- Yes. = dah (Да.)

- No. = nyeht (Нет.)

- **Excuse me. (getting attention or begging pardon) = eez-vee-NEET-yeh (Извините.)**

- Excuse me. (begging pardon) = prah-STEET-yeh (Простите.)

- I'm sorry. = prah-STEET-yeh (Простите.)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

- Goodbye = duh svee-DAH-nyah. (До свидания.)
-
- Goodbye (informal) = pah-KAH (Пока.)
-
- **I can't speak Russian [well]. = yah nee guh-vah-RYOO pah ROO-skee [khah-rah-SHOH] (Я не говорю по-русски (хорошо))**
-
- Do you speak English? = vyh guh-vah-REE-tyeh pah ahn-GLEES-kee? (Вы говорите по-английски?)
-
- **Is there someone here who speaks English? = КТОH-nee-bood' zdyehs guh-vah-REET pah an-GLEES-kee? (Кто-нибудь здесь говорит по-английски?)**
-
- Help! = puh-mah-GEE-tyeh! (Помогите!)
-
- Look out! = uhs-tah-ROH-zhnuh! (Осторожно!!)
-
- Good morning. = DOH-bruh-yeh OO-truh (Доброе утро.)
-
- Good evening. = DOH-bryh VYEH-chuhr (Добрый вечер.)
-
- Good night (to sleep) = spah-KOY-nuy NOH-chee (Спокойной ночи!)
-
- I don't understand. = ya nee puh-nee-MIGH-yoo (Я не понимаю.)
-
- I don't know. = ya nee ZNAH-yoo (Я не знаю.)
-
- Where is the toilet? = gdyeh too-ah-LYENT? (Где туалет?)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

PROBLEMS - not normally required we might add!

- Leave me alone. = aht-STAHN'! (Отстань.)

- **Don't touch me!** = nee-TROH-guy mee-NYAH! (Не трогай меня!)

- I'll call the police! = yah VYH-zah-voo poh-LEE-tsyh-yoo! (Я вызову полицию!)

- **Police!** = poh-LEE-tsyh-yah! (Полиция!)

- Stop! Thief! = deer-ZHEE-tyeh VOH-rah! (Держите вора!)

- **I need your help.** = mnyeh nozh-NAH VAH-shah POH-muhsh (Мне нужна ваша помощь.)

- It's an emergency. = EH-tuh SROHCH-nuh (Это срочно!.)

- **I'm lost.** = yah zah-bloo-DEEL-suh / zah-bloo-DEE-luhs' (Я заблудился/заблудилась - (m/f).)

- I haven't done anything wrong = yah nee-chee-VOH plah-KHOH-vuh nee DYEH-luhl/luh-luh) (Я ничего плохого не делал(а).)

- **It was a misunderstanding.** = myh droog DROO-guh nee POHN-yuh-lee (Мы друг друга не поняли.)

- Am I under arrest? = yah ah-ryehs-TOH-vuhn/vuh-nah? (Я арестован(а)?)

- **I am an American/Australian/British/Canadian citizen.** = yah grazh-dah-NEEN/grazh-DAHN-kah ah-MYEH-ree-kee / ahf-STRAH-lee-yeh / vee-lee-kuh-bree-TAH-nee-yeh / kah-NAH-dyh

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

(Я гражданин/гражданка Америки/Австралии/
Великобритании/Канады.)

- I want to talk to the American/Australian/British/Canadian
embassy/consulate. = yah khah-CHOO puh-guh-vah-REET s
pah-SOL'ST-vuhm / s KOHN-sool'-stvuhm ah-MEH-ree-kee / ahf-
STRAH-lee-yeh/ vee-lee-kuh-bree-TAH-nee-yeh / kah-NAH-dyh
(Я хочу поговорить с посольством/консульством Америки/
Австралии/Великобритании/Канады.)

- I want to talk to a lawyer. = yah hah-CHOO puh-guh-vah-REET
s ahd-vuh-KAH-tuhm (Я хочу поговорить с адвокатом.)

- Can I just pay a fine now? = yah mah-GOO zah-plah-TEET'
shtraf say-CHAHS? (Я могу заплатить штраф сейчас?) (This
phrase indicates that you want to pay a bribe to get out of
trouble.)

- I lost my bag. = yah puh-teer-YAHL(-ah) svah-YOOH SOOM-kooh
(Я потерял(а) свою сумку.)

- I lost my wallet. = yah puh-teer-YAHL(-ah) svoiy boo-
MAZH-neek (Я потерял(а) свой бумажник.)

- I'm sick. = yah-BOH-leen (masculine) / yah-bahl'-NAH
(feminine) (Я болен (м.) / Я больна (ф.))

- I've been injured. = yah RAH-neen(-ah) (Я ранен(а))

- I need a doctor. = mnyeh NOO-zhyhn vrahch) (Мне нужен
врач.)

- Can I use your phone? = MOH-zhnuh aht vahs puhz-vah-
NEET'? (Можно от вас позвонить?)

-

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

NUMBERS

- 1 = ah-DEEN (один)
2 = dvah (два)
3 = tree (три)
4 = chee-TYH-ree (четыре)
5 = pyaht' (пять)
6 = shehst' (шесть)
7 = syeem' (семь)
8 = VOH-seem' (восемь)
9 = DYEH-veet' (девять')
10 = DYEH-suht' (десять)
11 = ah-DEEN-nuhd-zuht' (одиннадцать)
12 = dvee-NAHD-zuht' (двенадцать)
13 = tree-NAHD-zuht' (тринадцать)
14 = chee-TYHR-nuhd-zuht' (четырнадцать)
15 = peet-NAHD-zuht' (пятнадцать)
16 = shyhst-NAHD-zuht' (шестнадцать')
17 = seem-NAHD-zuht' (семнадцать')
18 = vuh-seem-NAHD-zuht' (восемнадцать)
19 = dee-veet-NAHD-zuht' (девятнадцать)
20 = DVAHD-zuht' (двадцать')
21 = DVAHD-zuht'ah-DEEN (двадцать один)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

22	= DVAHD-zuht'dvah (двадцать два)
23	= DVAHD-zuht' tree (двадцать три)
30	= TREED-zuht' (тридцать')
40	= SOH-ruhk (сорок)
50	= pee-dee-SYANT (пятьдесят)
60	= shyhs-SYANT (шестьдесят)
70	= SYEM'-ee-seet (семьдесят)
80	= VOH-seem-deeh-seet' (восемьдесят)
90	= dee-vee-NOH-stuh (девяносто)
100	= stoh (сто)
150	= puhl-tuh-RAHS-tuh (полтора)
200	= DVYEH-stee (двести)
300	= TREE-stuh (триста)
400	= chee-TYHR-ee-stuh (четыреста)
500	= peet-SOHT (пятсот)
1000	= TYH-see-chuh (тысяча)
2000	= dvyeh TYH-see-chee (две тысячи)
5000	= pyaht' TYH-seech (пять тысяч)

.....
 - Number _____ (train, bus, etc.) = NOH-meer _____ (номер _____)

- half = puh-lah-VEE-nuh (половина)

- less = MYEHN'-sheh (меньше)

- more = BOHL'-sheh (больше)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

TIME

- now = see-CHAHS (сейчас)
 - later = POH-zhuh (позже)
 - earlier = RANH'-shyeh (раньше)
 - morning = OOH-truh (утро)
 - afternoon = dyehn' (день)
 - evening = VYEH-chuhr (вечер)
 - night = nohch (ночь)
-
- one o'clock = chahs (час)
 - two o'clock = dvah chuh-SAH (два часа)
 - three o'clock = TREE chuh-SAH (три часа)
 - four o'clock = chee-TYHR-ree chuh-SA (четыре часа)
 - five o'clock = pyaht' chuh-SOHV (пять часов)
 - six o'clock = shest' chuh-SOHV (шесть часов)
 - seven o'clock = syem' chuh-SOHV (семь часов)
 - eight o'clock = VOH-seem' chuh-SOHV (восемь часов)
 - nine o'clock = DYEH-veet' chuh-SOHV (девять часов)
 - ten o'clock = DYEH-syuht' chuh-SOV (десять часов)
 - eleven o'clock = ah-DEEN-nad-zut' chuh-SOV (одиннадцать часов)
 - twelve o'clock = dvee-NAHD-zut' chuh-SOV (двенадцать часов)
-
- noon = POHL-dyehn' (полдень)
 - midnight = POHL-nohch (полночь)
 - half an hour = pohl-chuh-SAH (полчаса)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

Russians do not use A.M. and P.M. Instead they divide the day up roughly as follows:

- morning (5 a.m. to noon) = OOH-truh (утро)
- afternoon (noon to 5 p.m.) = dyehn' (день)
- evening (5 p.m. to midnight) = VYEH-chuhr (вечер)
- night (midnight to 5 a.m.) = nohch (ночь)

COLOURS

- black = CHOHR-nyh (чёрный)
- white = BYEH-lyh (белый)
- gray = SYEH-ryh (серый)
- red = KRAHS-nyh (красный)
- blue (dark-blue or navy) = SEE-nyh (синий)
- blue (light-blue or cyan) = guh-loo-BOY (голубой) - use carefully; in Russian slang, this also means "homosexual"!
- yellow = ZHOL-tyh (жёлтый)
- green = zee-LYOH-nyh (зелёный)
- orange = ah-RAHN-zhee-vy (оранжевый)
- purple = fee-ah-LYET-uh-vyh (фиолетовый)
- brown = kah-REECH-nee-vyh (коричневый)
- pink = ROH-zuh-vyh (розовый)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

DAYS & MONTHS

- today = see-VOHD-nyuh (сегодня)
 - yesterday = fcheeh-RAH (вчера)
 - tomorrow = ZAHF-truh (завтра)
 - this week = nah EH-tuy nee-DYEHl-yee (на этой неделе)
 - last week = nah PROSH-luy nee-DYEHl-yee (на прошлой неделе)
 - next week = nah SLYED-oo-yoo-shee nee-DYEHl-yeh (на следующей неделе)
-
- Sunday = vuhs-kree-SYEHn'-yuh (воскресенье)
 - Monday = puh-nee-DYEHl'-neek (понедельник)
 - Tuesday = VTOHR-neek (вторник)
 - Wednesday = sree-DAN (среда)
 - Thursday = cheet-VYEHrk (четверг)
 - Friday = PYANT-nee-tsuH (пятница)
 - Saturday = soo-BOHT-uh (суббота)
-
- January = yeep-VAHR' (январь)
 - February = feev-RAHL' (февраль)
 - March = mahrt (март)
 - April = ahp-RYEHl' (апрель)
 - May = migh (май)
 - June = ee-YOON' (июнь)
 - July = ee-YOOL' (июль)
 - August = AHV-goost (август)
 - September = seen-TYABR' (сентябрь)
 - October = ahk-TYABR' (октябрь)
 - November = nah-YABR' (ноябрь)
 - December = dee-KAHBR' (декабрь)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

TRANSPORT & DIRECTIONS

- How much is a ticket to _____? = SKOL'-kuh STOИ-eet bee-LYEHT v _____? (Сколько стоит билет в _____?)

- **One ticket to _____, please.** = ah-DEEN bee-LYEHT v _____ puh-ZHАH-luh-stuh (Один билет в _____, пожалуйста.)

- Where does this train/bus go? = koo-DAH ee-DYOИT EH-tuht POИ-eest / ahf-TOИ-boos? (Куда идёт этот поезд/автобус?)

- **Where is the train/bus to _____?** = gdyeh POИ-eest / ahf-TOИ-boos duh _____? (Где поезд/автобус до _____?)

- Does this train/bus stop in _____? = EH-tuht POИ-eest / ahf-TOИ-boos uhs-tuh-NAHV-lee-vuh-eet-suh v _____? (Этот поезд/автобус останавливается в _____?)

- **When does the train/bus for _____ leave?** = kahg-DAH аht-KHOИ-deet POИ-eest / ahf-TOИ-boos v _____? (Когда отходит поезд/автобус в _____?)

- When will this train/bus arrive in _____? = vah SKOИL'-kuh EH-tuht POИ-eest / ahf-TOИ-boos pree-KHOИ-deet v _____? (Во сколько этот поезд/автобус приходит в _____?)

- How do I get to _____? = kahk dah-BRAH-tsuх duh _____? (Как добраться до _____?)

-...the train station? =...vah-GZAH-luh (...вокзала?)

-...the bus station? =...ahf-tuh-vah-GZAH-luh (...автовокзала?)

-...the airport? =...ah-ehr-ah-POИR-tuh (...аэропорта?)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

- ...downtown? =...TSEHN-trah (...центра?)
-
- ...the youth hostel? =...muh-lah-DYOH-zhnuh-vuh ahp-shee-ZHYH-tee-ya (...молодёжного общежития?)
-
- ...the _____ hotel? =...gahs-TEE-nee-tsyh (...гостиницы _____?)
-
- ...the American/Canadian/Australian/British consulate? =...uh-mee-ree-KAHNS-kuh-vuh / kuh-NAHTS-kuh-vuh / uhfs-truh-LEES-kuh-vuh / ahng-LEES-kuh-vuh KOHN-sool'-stvuh (...американского/ канадского/австралийского/английского консульства?)
-
- Where are there a lot of... = gdyeh yehst' MNOH-ghh... (Где есть много...)
-
- ...hotels? =...gahs-TEE-neets? (...гостиниц?)
-
- ...restaurants? =...rees-tah-RAHN-uhf? (...ресторанов?)
-
- ...bars? =...BAHR-uhf? (...баров?)
-
- ...sites to see? =...duhs-tuh-pree-mee-CHAH-teel'-nuhs-tyay (...достопримечательностей?)
-
- Please can you show me on the map? = puh-ZHAH-luh-stuh vyh MOH-zhyh-tee puh-kuh-ZAHТ' nuh KAHN-tyeh (Пожалуйста Вы можете показать на карте?)
-
- street = OO-lee-tsuh (улица)
-
- Turn left. = puh-veer-NEE-tyeh nuh-LYEH-vuh (Поверните налево.)
-
- Turn right. = puh-veer-NEE-tyeh nuh-PRAH-vuh (Поверните направо.)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

- left = nuh-LYEH-vuh (налево)
 - right = nuh-PRAH-vuh (направо)
 - straight ahead = PRYAH-muh (прямо)
 - towards the _____ = k _____ (к _____)
 - past the _____ = MEEH-mah (мимо)
 - before the _____ = PYEH-reet _____ (перед _____)
 - Watch for the _____. = ee-SHEE-tyeh _____. (Ищите _____.)
 - intersection = pee-ree-KRYOH-stuhk (перекрёсток)
-
- north = SYEH-veer (север)
 - south = yook (юг)
 - east = vahs-TOHK (восток)
 - west = ZAH-puht (запад)
-
- uphill = VVYEHK-kh (вверх)
 - downhill = vnees (вниз)
-
- Taxi! = Tahk-SEE! (Такси!)
-
- Take me to _____, please. = duh-vee-ZEE-tyeh mee-NYAH duh _____, puh-ZHAN-luh-stuh.' (Довезите меня до _____, пожалуйста.)
-
- **How much does it cost to get to _____? = SKOHL'-kuh STOH-eet dah-YEH-khut' duh _____? (Сколько стоит доехать до _____?)**
-
- Take me there, please. = duh-vee-ZEE-tyeh meenyah too-DAN, puh-ZHAN-luh-stuh. (Довезите меня туда, пожалуйста.)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

ACCOMMODATION

- Do you have any rooms available? = oo vash YEHS'T' svah-BOD-nuh-yeh KOHM-nuh-tyh (У вас есть свободные комнаты?)

- How much is a room for one person/two people? = SKOHL'-kuh STOИ-eet KOM-nuh-tuh nah uhd-nah-VOH chee-lah-VYEH-kuh / dvookh chee-lah-VYENK (Сколько стоит комната на одного человека/двух человек?)

- Does the room come with... = VEH-tuy KOHM-nuh-tyeh yest'... (В этой комнате есть...)

-...bedsheets? =...PROHS-tee-nee (...простыни?)

-...a bathroom? =...VAHN-nah-yuh (...ванная?)

-...a telephone? =...tee-lee-FOHN (...телефон?)

-...a TV? =...tee-lee-VEE-zuhr (...телевизор?)

- May I see the room first? = mah-GOOH yah znuh-CHAH-luh puhs-mah-TRYENT' KOHM-nah-too (Можу я сначала посмотреть комнату?)

- Do you have anything quieter? = oo vah yehst' SHTOH-nee-boot' pah-TEE-shyh? (У вас есть что-нибудь потише?)

-...bigger? =...pah-BOHL'-shyh (...побольше?)

-...cleaner? =...pah-CHEE-sheh (...почище?)

-...cheaper? =...puh-dee-SHEHV-lyeh (...подешевле?)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

- OK, I'll take it. = khah-rah-SHOH yah bee-ROO (Хорошо, я беру.)

- I will stay for _____ night(s). = yah ahs-TAH-noos' nah _____
nohch' (NOH-chee/nah-CHYAY (Я останусь на _____ ночь
(ночи/ночей))

- Can you suggest another hotel? = vy MOH-zhee-te pred-la-ZHYHT'
doo-GOO-yoo gahs-TEE-nee-tsoo? (Вы можете предложить
другую гостиницу?)

- Do you have a safe? = oo vahs yest' syayf (У вас есть сейф?)

-...lockers? =...een-dee-vee-doo-AHL'-nyh-yeh SYAY-fee
(...индивидуальные сейфы?)

- Is breakfast/supper included? = ZAHF-truhk / OO-zhyhn fklyoo-
CHON? (Завтрак/ужин включен?)

- What time is breakfast/supper? = vuh SKOHL'-kuh ZAH-ftruhk / OO-
zhyhn? (Во сколько завтрак/ужин?)

- Please clean my room. = oo-bee-REE-tyeh vmah-YAY
KOHM-nuh-tyeh, puh-ZHAN-luh-stuh (Уберите в моей комнате,
пожалуйста)

- Can you wake me at _____? = nee mah-GLEE byh vyh rahz-boo-
DEET' mee-NYAH v _____? (Не могли бы вы разбудить меня в
_____?)

- I want to check out. = DIGH-tyeh shyoht (Дайте счёт)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

MONEY

- Do you accept American/Australian/Canadian dollars? = vyh pree-nee-MAH-ee-tyeh uh-mee-ree-KAHN-skee-yeh / uhv-struh-LEE-skee-yeh / kuh-NAHD-skee-yeh ДОН-luhr-yh (Вы принимаете американские/австралийские/канадские доллары?)

- Do you accept British pounds? = vyh pree-nee-MAH-ee-tyeh ahn-GLLEE-skee-yeh FOON-tyh (Вы принимаете английские фунты?)

- Do you accept credit cards? = vyh pree-nee-MAH-ee-tyeh kree-DEET-nyh-yeh KAHN-tyh (Вы принимаете кредитные карты?)

- Can you change money for me? = nyeh mah-GLLEE byh vyh uhb-meen-YAHN' mnyeh DYEHN'-gee (Не могли бы вы обменять мне деньги?)

- Where can I get money changed? = gdyeh yah mah-GOO uhb-meen-YAHN' DYEHN'-gee (Где я могу обменять деньги?)

- Can you change a traveler's check for me? vyh MOH-zhyh-tyeh uhb-meen-YAHN' mnyeh dah-ROHZN-nyh chyehk (Вы можете обменять мне дорожный чек?)

- Where can I get a traveler's check changed? = gdyeh yah mah-GOO uhb-meen-YAHN' dah-ROHZN-nyh chyehk (Где я могу обменять дорожный чек?)

- What is the exchange rate? = kah-KOY koors ahb-MYEHN-uh (Какой курс обмена?)

- Where is an automatic teller machine (ATM)? = gdyeh zdyes' bahn-kuh-MAHT (Где здесь банкомат?)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

FOOD & DRINK

- A table for one person/two people, please. = STOИ-leek nah uhd-nah-VOH chee-lah-VYEH-kah/dvookh chee-lah-VYEHK (Столик на одного человека/двух человек, пожалуйста.)

- Can I look at the menu, please? = mah-GOO yah puhs-mah-TRYEHТ' meen-YOO" (Можу я посмотреть меню?)

- Is there a house specialty? = kah-KOY-yeh oo vahs feer-MYEHN-noy-yeh BLYOO-duh (Какое у вас фирменное блюдо?)

- Is there a local specialty? = kah-KOY-yeh oo vahs myehst-NOY-yeh feer-MYEHN-noy-yeh BLYOO-duh (Какое у вас местное фирменное блюдо?)

- I'm a vegetarian. = yah vee-gee-tuh-ree-YAHN-eets/vee-gee-tuh-ree-YAHN-kah Я вегетарианец/вегетарианка.)

- I don't eat pork. = yah nee yehm svee-NEEN-oo (Я не ем свинину.)

- I don't eat beef. = yah nee yehm gahv-YAH-deen-oo (Я не ем говядину.)

- I only eat kosher food= yah pree-nee-MAH-yoo TOHL'-kuh kah-SHERH-noo-yoo PEE-shoo. (Я принимаю только кошерную пищу.)

- fixed-price meal = KOHM-plyehks-nyh ah-BYEHT (комплексный обед)

- à la carte = KAHР-tah veen (карта вин)

- breakfast = ZAHF-truhk (завтрак)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

- lunch = ah-BYEHT (обед)

- tea (meal) = POHLD-neek (полдник)

- supper = OO-zhyhn (ужин)

- I want _____. = yah khah-CHOO (Я хочу _____.)(use first form below)

- I want a dish containing _____. yah khah-CHOO BLYOO-duh s _____ (Я хочу блюдо с _____.) (use second form)

- chicken = KOO-reet-soo / KOO-reet-suy курицу/ой

- beef = gahv-YAH-dee-noo / gahv-YAH-dee-nuy (говядину/ой)

- fish = RYH-boo / RYH-boy (рыбу/ой)

- ham = svee-NEE-noo / svee-NEE-nuy (свинину/ой)

- sausage = kuhl-bah-SOO / kuhl-bah-SOY (колбасу/ой)

- cheese = syhr / SYH-ruhm (сыр/ом)

- eggs = YIGH-tsah / YIGH-tsah-mee (яйца/ами)

- salad = sah-LAHT / sah-LAHT-ohm (салат/ом)

- (fresh) vegetables = (SVYEH-zhyh-yeh / SVYEH-zhyh-mee OH-vuh-shee/ uh-vuh-SHAH-mee ((свежие/ими) овощи/ами)

- (fresh) fruit = SVYEH-zhyh-yeh / SVYEH-zhyh-mee FROOK-tyh / FROOK-tuh-mee ((свежие/ими) фрукты/ами)

- bread = khlyep / KHLYEh-buhm (хлеб/ом)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

- toast = tohst / TOHST-uhhm (тост/ом)
-
- noodles = LAHP-shuh / lahP-SHOY (лапша/ой)
-
- pasta = mah-kah-ROH-nyh / mah-kah-ROH-nah-mee (макароны/онами)
-
- rice = rees / REE-suhm (рис/ом)
-
- beans = fah-SOHL' / fah-SOHL-yoo (фасоль/фасолью)
-
- May I have a glass of _____? = DIGH-tyeh, puh-ZHAN-luh-stuh, stah-KAHN _____? (Дайте, пожалуйста, стакан _____?)
-
- May I have a cup of _____? = DIGH-tyeh, puh-ZHAN-luh-stuh, CHANSH-koо (Дайте, пожалуйста, чашку _____?)
-
- May I have a bottle of _____? = DIGH-tyeh, puh-ZHAN-luh-stuh, boo-TYHL-koо (Дайте, пожалуйста, бутылку _____?)
-
- ...coffee =...KOH-feh (...кофе)
-
- ...tea (drink) =...CHAN-yuh (...чая)
-
- ...juice =...SOH-kah (..сока)
-
- ...(bubbly) water=...mee-nee-RAHL'-nyu vah-DYH (...минеральной воды)
-
- ...water =...vah-DYH (...воды)
-
- ...beer =...PEE-vuh (...пива)
-
- ...red/white wine=...KRAH-snuh-vuh / BYEH-luh-vuh vee-NAH (...красного/белого вина)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

- May I have some _____? = DIGH-tyeh, puh-ZHAN-luh-stuh (Дайте, пожалуйста _____.)

- salt = sohl' (соль)

- black pepper = SHYOHR-nyh PYEH-reets (чёрный перец)

- butter = MAHS-luh (масло)

- Excuse me, waiter? (getting attention of server) = uh-fee-TSAHNT! / DYEH-voosh-kuh! (Официант!/Девушка!)The former is very polite and gender neutral, the latter only for female servers, and should not be used in a nice restaurant.

- I'm finished. = yah nah-YEHL-syuh/yah nah-YEH-las (Я наелся/наелась.)

- It was delicious. = EH-tuh BYH-luh vye-lee-kah-LYEH-nyuh (Это было великолепно.)

- Please clear the plates. = MOH-zhyh-tyeh oo-BRAHT' suh stuh-LAH (Можете убрать со стола.)

- The check, please. = shyoht, puh-ZHAN-luh-stuh (Счёт, пожалуйста.)

- Is there table service? = zdyehs' yehst' ah-fee-TSANT (Здесь есть официант?)

- A beer/two beers, please. = BOOT'-tyeh dah-BRYH, ad-noh PEE-vuh / dvah PEE-vah (Будьте добры, одно пиво/два пива.)

- A glass of red/white wine, please. = BOOT'-tyeh dah-BRYH, bah-KAHL KRAHZ-nyuh-vuh / BYEH-luh-vuh vee-NAH (Будьте добры, бокал красного/белого вина.)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

- A pint, please. = BOOT'-tyeh dah-BRYH, ahd-NOO PEEN-too (Будьте добры, одну пинту.)

- A bottle, please. = BOOT'-tyeh dah-BRYH, ahd-NOO boo-TYHL-коо (Будьте добры, одну бутылку.)

- _____ (hard liquor) and _____ (mixer), please. = _____ (hard liquor) с _____ (mixer in ablative form) (Будьте добры)

- whiskey = VEE-skee (виски)

- vodka = VOHT-kah (водка)

- rum = rohm (ром)

- water = ah-DAH / vah-DOY

- orange juice = uh-peel'-SEE-nuh-vyh / uh-peel'-SEE-nuh-vyhm sohк / SOHK-uhm (апельсиновый/ым сок/ом)

- Coke (soda) = KOH-lah / KOH-luy (кола/ой)

- Do you have any bar snacks? zdyehs' yehst' boo-FYEHT (Здесь есть буфет?)

- One more, please. = yee-SHYOH ahd-NOOH, puh-ZHAH-luh-stuh (Ещё одну, пожалуйста.)

- Another round, please. = puhf-tah-REEH-tye, puh-ZHAH-luh-stuh (Повторите, пожалуйста.)

- When is closing time? = kahg-DAH vyh zuh-kryh-VAH-ee-tyehs'? (Когда вы закрываетесь)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

SHOPPING

- Do you have this in my size? = oo vahs yehst' EH-tuh ma-ee-VOH rahz-MYEH-ruh (У вас есть это моего размера?)

- How much is this? = SKOHL'-kuh EH-tuh STOИ-eet
 9Сколько это стоит?)

- That's too expensive. = EH-tuh SLEESH-kuhm DOH-ruh-guh (Это слишком дорого.)

- Would you take _____? = vyh PREE-mee-tyeh _____? (Вы примете _____?)

- expensive = DOH-ruh-guh (дорого)

- cheap = DYOH-shyh-vuh (дешево)

- I can't afford it. = yah nee mah-GOOH see-BYEH EH-tuh-vuh raz-VOH-leet' (Я не могу себе этого позволить.)

- I don't want it. = yah EH-tuh nee khah-CHOO (Я это не хочу.)

- You're cheating me. = vyh mee-NYAH ab-MAH-nyh-vah-ee-tyeh (Вы меня обманываете.)

- I'm not interested. = mnyeh EH-tuh nee een-tee-RYEHs-nuh (Мне это не интересно..)

- OK, I'll take it. = khah-rah-SHOH, yah vahz'-MOO (Хорошо, я возьму.)

-Can I have a bag? = DIGH-tyeh, puh-ZHAH-luh-stuh, rah-KYENT (Дайте, пожалуйста, пакет.)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

- Do you ship (overseas)? = oo vahs yehst' dahs-TAHF-kah (zah grah-NEET-sooh) (У вас есть доставка (за границу)?)

- I need... = (mnyeh NOO-zhehn / nooh-ZHNAH / NOOZH-nuh / nooh-ZHNYH) Мне нужен/нужна/нужно/нужны...

-...toothpaste. =...ZOOB-nuh-yuh PAHS-tuh (...зубная паста.)

-...a toothbrush. =...ZOOB-nuh-yuh SHYOHT-kuh (...зубная щётка.)

-...tampons. =...tahm-POH-nyh (...тампоны.)

-...soap. =...MYH-luh (...мыло.)

-...shampoo. =...shahm-POON' (...шампунь.)

-...pain killer. =...ah-beez-BOH-lee-vah-yoo-shee-yeh (...обезболивающее.)

-...cold medicine. =...lee-KAHR-stvah aht prah-STOO-dyh (...лекарство от простуды.)

-...stomach medicine. =...lee-KAHR-stvah aht zhyh-VOH-tuh (...лекарство от живота.)

-...a razor. =...BREET-vuh (...бритва.)

-...an umbrella. =...ZOHN-teek (...зонтик.)

-...sunblock lotion. =...luhs'-YOHN ahd zah-GAH-ruh (...лосьон от загара.)

-...a postcard. =...aht-KRYHT-kah (...открытка.)

RUSSIA - LANGUAGE

-...postage stamps. =...pahch-TOH-vyh-yeh MAHR-kee
(...почтовые марки.)

-...batteries. =...bah-tah-RAY-kee (...батарейки.)

-...a pen. =...ROOCH-kuh (...ручка.)

-...English-language books =...KNEE-gee nah ahn-GLEE-skuhm
yuh-zee-KYEH (...книги на английском языке.)

-...English magazines. =...zhoor-NAH-lyh nah ahn-GLEE-skuhm
yuh-zyh-KYEH (...журналы на английском языке.)

-...an English-language newspaper.=...gah-ZYEH-tah nah ahn-
GLEE-skuhm yuh-zyh-KYEH (...газета на английском языке.)



RUSSIA COUNTRY NOTES

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