

Journeys to Legendary Destinations
at the Crossroads of Europe & Asia

The Longest Race

Following in the footsteps of George Shuster

Suggested Dates: May 8 – July 15, 2014

Join the small band of loyal enthusiasts on a once-in-a-lifetime around the world driving adventure that follows in the footsteps of George Shuster and the original Great Automobile Race of 1908. From Japan to Russia, China, Siberia, the Baltic's, Poland, Germany, Belgium, and France. Experience the cultural difference, people of all walks of life, exotic foods, and foreign roadside attractions as you drive yourself around the world.



Overview Itinerary:

Japan:

Day 1, Thu, May 8	Arrive Yokohama
Day 2, Fri, May 9	Yokohama
Day 3, Sat, May 10	Yokohama • drive to Kyoto (450 km)
Day 4, Sun, May 11	Kyoto • drive to Kobe (75 km)
Day 5, Mon, May 12	Kobe • drive to Osaka (40 km)
Day 6, Tue, May 13	Osaka • drive to Lake Biwa at Otsu (60 km)
Day 7, Wed, May 14	Otsu • drive to Hachimann and Tsuruga (90 km)
Day 8, Thu, May 15	Tsuruga
Day 9, Fri, May 16	Tsuruga • drive to Sakaiminato (400 km)

206.624.7289 ♦ 800.424.7289 ♦ Fax: 206.624.7360
85 South Washington Street, Suite 210, Seattle, WA 98104
info@mircorp.com ♦ www.mircorp.com

Seattle ♦ Moscow ♦ St. Petersburg ♦ Irkutsk ♦ Ulan Ude ♦ Kiev ♦ Tashkent

Ferry from Japan to Russia:

Day 10, Sat, May 17 Depart Sakaiminato by ferry to Vladivostok
Traveling by ferry to Russia (estimated departure 19:00)
Day 11, Sun, May 18 by ferry to Russia

Russia:

Day 12, Mon, May 19 Arrive to Vladivostok (estimated arrival 13:00)
Day 13, Tue, May 20 Vladivostok • cross border at Suifenhe (200 km) into China

China:

Day 14, Wed, May 21 Suifenhe • drive to Mudanjiang (160 km)
Day 15, Thu, May 22 Mudanjiang • day trip to Jingpo Lake
Day 16, Fri, May 23 Mudanjiang • drive to Harbin (336 km)
Day 17, Sat, May 24 Harbin
Day 18, Sun, May 25 Harbin • drive to Qiqihar (308 km)
Day 19, Mon, May 26 Qiqihar • drive to Arun, via Zhalong (109 km)
Day 20, Tue, May 27 Arun • drive to Yakeshi (298 km)
Day 21, Wed, May 28 Yakeshi • drive to Manzhouli (265 km)
Day 22, Thu, May 29 Manzhouli
Day 23, Fri, May 30 Manzhouli • cross into Russia at Zabaikalsk

Russia:

Day 24, Sat, May 31 Zabaikalsk • drive to Chita (485km)
Day 25, Sun, Jun 1 Chita • drive to Ulan Ude (590km)
Day 26, Mon, Jun 2 Ulan Ude
Day 27, Tue, Jun 3 Ulan Ude • drive to Listvyanka via Irkutsk (522 km)
Day 28, Wed, Jun 4 Listvyanka/Lake Baikal
Day 29, Thu, Jun 5 Listvyanka • drive to Irkutsk (75km)
Day 30, Fri, Jun 6 Irkutsk • drive to Tulun (464km)
Day 31, Sat, Jun 7 Tulun • drive to Kansk (435km)
Day 32, Sun, Jun 8 Kansk • drive to Krasnoyarsk (218km)
Day 33, Mon, Jun 9 Krasnoyarsk
Day 34, Tue, Jun 10 Krasnoyarsk • drive to Tomsk (603 km)
Day 35, Wed, Jun 11 Tomsk • drive to Novosibirsk (268 km)
Day 36, Thu, Jun 12 Novosibirsk
Day 37, Fri, Jun 13 Novosibirsk • drive to Omsk (703 km)
Day 38, Sat, Jun 14 Omsk • drive to Ishim (338 km)
Day 39, Sun, Jun 15 Ishim • drive to Tyumen (307 km)
Day 40, Mon, Jun 16 Tyumen • drive to Ekaterinburg (326 km)
Day 41, Tue, Jun 17 Ekaterinburg
Day 42, Wed, Jun 18 Ekaterinburg • drive to Perm (358 km)
Day 43, Thu, Jun 19 Perm • drive to Izhevsk (278 km)
Day 44, Fri, Jun 20 Izhevsk • drive to Kazan (434 km)

Day 45, Sat, Jun 21	Kazan
Day 46, Sun, Jun 22	Kazan • drive to Nizhny Novgorod (371 km)
Day 47, Mon, Jun 23	Nizhny Novgorod • drive to Moscow via Vladimir (425km)
Day 48, Tue, Jun 24	Moscow
Day 49, Wed, Jun 25	Moscow • drive to St. Petersburg (743 km)
Day 50, Thu, Jun 26	St. Petersburg
Day 51, Fri, Jun 27	St. Petersburg • Pskov (336 km)
Day 52, Sat, Jun 28	Pskov • depart Russia, drive to Dagavapils, Latvia (266 km)

Latvia:

Day 53, Sun, Jun 29	Dagavapils • drive to Vilnius, Lithuania (173 km)
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Lithuania:

Day 54, Mon, Jun 30	Vilnius
Day 55, Tue, Jul 1	Vilnius • drive to Kaunas (105 km)
Day 56, Wed, Jul 2	Kaunas • drive to Kaliningrad, Russia (300 km)

Russia:

Day 57, Thu, Jul 3	Kaliningrad
Day 58, Fri, Jul 4	Kaliningrad • drive to Gdansk, Poland (163 km)

Poland:

Day 59, Sat, Jul 5	Gdansk • drive to Poznan via Gorowo (299 km)
Day 60, Sun, Jul 6	Poznan • drive to Berlin, Germany (281 km)

Germany:

Day 61, Mon, Jul 7	Berlin
Day 62, Tue, Jul 8	Berlin • drive to Hanover (293 km)
Day 63, Wed, Jul 9	Hanover • drive to Cologne (291 km)
Day 64, Thu, Jul 10	Cologne • drive via Eupen to Chimay, Belgium (279km)

Belgium:

Day 65, Fri, Jul 11	Chimay
Day 66, Sat, Jul 12	Chimay • drive to Rheims, France (124km)

France:

Day 67, Sun, Jul 13	Rheims • drive to Paris (143km)
Day 68, Mon, Jul 14	Paris
Day 69, Tue, July 15	Depart Paris

Detailed Daily Itinerary:

Japan:

Day 1, Thu, May 8 Arrive Yokohama

Upon arrival to Yokohama you will be met by your private vehicle and driver and transferred to a centrally located hotel.

Meals: in flight

Breezbay Hotel Resort & Spa

Day 2, Fri, May 9 Yokohama

This morning you will be taken on a half day guided tour of Yokohama including visits to the Minato Mirai 21 District, Red Brick Warehouses and China Town.

After your touring, transfer to the Yokohama Port to get your vehicles from the containers. Drive back to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Meals: B

Day 3, Sat, May 10 Yokohama • drive to Kyoto (450 km)

After breakfast at the hotel, set out for Kyoto. The drive to Kyoto is about 450 km and the driving time will be about 6 hours. You will be accompanied by your Japanese support vehicle and English speaking guide. En route, stop at the Fujigawa Service area for views of Mt. Fuji.

Upon arrival in Kyoto, transfer to the hotel for overnight.

Meals: B

Karasuma Kyoto Hotel

The Karsuma Kyoto hotel has a convenient location in downtown Kyoto, convenient to the main tourism sites.

Day 4, Sun, May 11 Kyoto • drive to Kobe (75 km)

Spend a free morning in Kyoto before gathering in the afternoon for the drive to Kobe. The distance to Kobe is about 75 km and the driving time will be about 1.5 hours. Upon arrival, check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Hotel Pearl City Kobe

The centrally located three star Hotel Pearl City features a restaurant, café, banquet room and conference room.

Day 5, Mon, May 12 Kobe • drive to Osaka (40 km)

After breakfast at the hotel and a free morning in Kobe, gather in the early afternoon for the drive to Osaka. The distance to Osaka is about 40 km and the driving time will be about 45 minutes. Upon arrival, check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Hotel Plaza Osaka

The three star Hotel Plaza Osaka has a convenient location against the backdrop of the Yodo River.

Day 6, Tue, May 13 Osaka • drive to Lake Biwa at Otsu (60 km)

Spend a free morning in Osaka before gathering in the early afternoon for the drive to Otsu. The distance to Otsu is about 60 km and the driving time will be about 1 hour. Upon arrival, check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Otsu Prince Hotel or similar

Day 7, Wed, May 14 Otsu • drive to Hachimann and Tsuruga (90 km)

Enjoy a free morning on the shores of Lake Biwa before gathering in the early afternoon for the drive to Tsuruga. The distance to Tsuruga is about 90 km and the drive will take about 2 hours.

Upon arrival, check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Hotel Route-Inn Tsuruga Ekimae

Day 8, Thu, May 15 Tsuruga

This morning enjoy a half day tour of Tsuruga with a private bus, driver and guide. You will visit the Museum of Sugihara Chiune, Kehi Pine Grove and the Kehi Jingu Shrine.

The afternoon will be free for rest and independent activities.

Meals: B

Day 9, Fri, May 16 Tsuruga • drive to Sakaiminato (400 km)

Following breakfast at the hotel, set out for Sakaiminato. The distance to Sakaiminato is about 400 km and the driving time will be about 6 hours. Upon arrival, check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Sakaiminato Marina Hotel

The three star Sakaiminato Marina Hotel features a coffee lounge, restaurant, conference room and lounge. Guest rooms feature individual temperature control, hair dryers, telephones and TV.

**Day 10, Sat, May 17 Depart Sakaiminato by ferry to Vladivostok
Traveling by ferry to Russia (estimated departure 19:00)**

Gather in the hotel this morning for the drive to the pier. Load your vehicles on to the ferry and depart for Vladivostok (estimated departure 19:00).

Day 11, Sun, May 18 by ferry to Russia

Russia:

Day 12, Mon, May 19 Arrive to Vladivostok (estimated arrival 13:00)

Arrive to Vladivostok this morning, where you will be met by your support vehicle and guide for the drive to the hotel. After check in you will have the day free to explore the city independently.

Meals: Independent

Hyundai Hotel

The four star Hyundai is located in the historic center of Vladivostok, close to the Historical Museum, seaport, Drama Theater and Philharmonic Hall. The beach is a short 15-minute walk away. The Hyundai combines a high level of comfort with Korean style. Amenities include air conditioning, satellite TV, mini-bar, restaurant, cafe and bar.

China:

Day 13, Tue, May 20 Vladivostok • cross border at Suifenhe (200 km) into China

This morning, check out of the hotel and begin the drive to Suifenhe; you will be accompanied to the border by the Russian support vehicle, driver and guide. The drive to Suifenhe is about 200 km and will take about 2.5-3 hours.

After the lengthy customs procedure continue to the hotel in Suifenhe for a free evening and overnight.

Meals: B

*****Please note that upon entry to China a customs and temporary importation of the vehicles must take place. You will be required to get a Chinese drivers license, and other procedures that could take several days. There is also a bond that must be paid as a guarantee to the Chinese government that the vehicles will be taken out of the country. MIR will administer this bond on behalf of the participants and their vehicles, as we have arranged in the past.***

Holiday Inn Suifenhe

The European style Holiday Inn Suifenhe is located in the Sui-Po Trade Zone between Russia and China, just a 5 minute walk from the Russian border and a short drive to central Suifenhe. The hotel features a swimming pool, fitness center and sauna. Rooms feature satellite TV, minibars, safes, and individually controlled air conditioning.

Day 14, Wed, May 21 Suifenhe • drive to Mudanjiang (160 km)

We hope to be ready today to move onto Mudanjiang, but if not due to customs, we will spend another night in Suifenhe.

Set out this morning for Mudanjiang. The distance to Mudanjiang is about 160 km and the driving time will be about 3.5 hours. Upon arrival, check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Holiday Inn Mudanjiang

The modern Holiday Inn Mudanjiang is located a short drive outside of the Mudanjiang city center. The hotel features free WiFi internet access, an indoor pool, and an up to date fitness center. All rooms offer satellite TV, free WiFi, hair dryers and individual air conditioning.

Day 15, Thu, May 22 Mudanjiang • day trip to Jingpo Lake

Take a day trip to Jingpo Lake to witness the natural beauty. This extra day is included in order to guarantee adequate time for all border-crossing procedures. Transfer back to Mudanjiang in the afternoon for a free evening and overnight.

Meals: B

Day 16, Fri, May 23 Mudanjiang • drive to Harbin (336 km)

After breakfast at the hotel, set out for Harbin. The distance from Mudanjiang to Harbin is about 336 km and the drive will take about 4.5-5 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Holiday Inn Harbin City Center

Located in the central business district of Harbin, the Holiday Inn City Center features a currency exchange, beauty salon and Business Center. Rooms include air conditioning, satellite TV, minibar, high-speed Internet access and hair dryer.

Day 17, Sat, May 24 Harbin

Today enjoy a half-day of tour of Harbin. In 1896, Russia won the right to build a railway on Chinese territory through Harbin to Vladivostok. Harbin still has an Old Russian quarter, the Daoli, and the beautiful **Russian Orthodox Church of St. Sofia**. Visit the **Songhua River embankment** as well.

Central Street (Zhong Yang) is, as its name implies, the main thoroughfare in Harbin. Walk down this street in the Daoli district to experience the true international flavor of Harbin, sampling from Russian bakeries, stopping at Japanese restaurants, shopping at French fashion houses, and taking in the visual splendor of St. Sophia Cathedral. Central Street is also the best place to see huangzi, the red and blue lanterns that adorn restaurants and tell patrons whether the food is Chinese (red) or halal (blue).

The green domes and tall spires of the **Russian Orthodox Church of St. Sofia** are the architectural legacy of the Russian influence in this part of China through the Far East Railway. Located in the central district of Daoli, the church was completed in 1932. Though other Orthodox cathedrals were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution, St. Sofia's remains, and now houses a museum dedicated to the multicultural history of Harbin.

The afternoon and evening are free.

Meals: B

Day 18, Sun, May 25 Harbin • drive to Qiqihar (308 km)

Set out this morning for Qiqihar. The distance from Harbin to Qiqihar is about 308 km and the drive will take about 4.5 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Jinzhiyuan Business Hotel

Located in downtown Qiqihar, the Jinzhiyuan Business Hotel features a coffee shop, lobby bar, and restaurant. All rooms feature individual air conditioning.

Day 19, Mon, May 26 Qiqihar • drive to Arun, via Zhalong (109km)

Today transfer to Arun. The distance from Qiqihar to Arun is about 109 km and the drive will take about 2.5 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Arong Hotel

Day 20, Tue, May 27 Arun • drive to Yakeshi (298 km)

Today drive to Yakeshi. The distance from Arun to Yakeshi is about 298 km and the drive will take about 7 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Yakeshi Hotel

Day 21, Wed, May 28 Yakeshi • drive to Manzhouli (265 km)

The distance from Yakeshi to Manzhouli is about 265 km and this morning's drive will take about 5.5 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Manzhouli International Hotel

The centrally located Manzhouli International hotel features a cafe, several restaurants, a swimming pool, and a sauna. Rooms feature individually controlled air conditioning.

Day 22, Thu, May 29 Manzhouli

Today you will have a half-day guided tour in Manzhouli and a free afternoon.

Details on the touring program will be provided later. This is also a day needed for finalizing the paperwork and exit customs materials for the departure from China.

Meals: B

Day 23, Fri, May 30 Manzhouli • cross into Russia at Zabaikalsk

This morning your Chinese support vehicle and guide will accompany you to the Russian border and assist with the border crossing process.

Upon entry to Russia you will be met by your Russian support vehicle and driver, who will accompany you throughout the rest of your time in Russia. From the border continue on to Zabaikalsk to check into your hotel before a short afternoon orientation tour.

Welcome to Russia dinner this evening included with a special meeting about the rules of the Russian roads.

Meals: B, D

Hotel Crystall or similar

Day 24, Sat, May 31 Zabaikalsk • drive to Chita (485km)

The distance from Zabaikalsk to Chita is about 485 km and the drive will take about 6 to 7 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Panama City Hotel or similar

The Panama City Hotel has a scenic location in Chita. The hotel features two restaurants serving Chinese and European food as well as a brewery. Rooms feature telephones and satellite TVs.

Day 25, Sun, Jun 1 Chita • drive to Ulan Ude (590km)

Today ride to Ulan Ude, the capital of Buryat Republic. The distance to Ulan Ude is about 590 km and the drive will take about 7 hours. Formerly called Verhnedinsk, Ulan Ude was founded in 1666 by Cossacks as a winter encampment on the Selenga and Ude Rivers. The city later prospered as a major trading post along the tea route between China and Irkutsk. The indigenous people of the region, the Buryats, resisted frequent attempts to infiltrate their culture and traditions. Today, the unique cultural identity, language and spiritual beliefs of the Buryat people make a visit to Ulan Ude a fascinating experience.

Meals: B

Geser Hotel or similar

The Geser hotel enjoys a great location in the city center, approximately a two-minute walk from the main square. Previously a VIP Communist Party hotel, it is equipped with a restaurant, snack bar, business center, sauna, drugstore, hairdresser and laundry service.



Day 26, Mon, Jun 2 Ulan Ude

Today enjoy a half day guided tour of Ulan Ude. Begin with a tour of the city's highlights, including the covered market, where merchants at small stands sell everything from freshly-cut meat to freshly-baked bread and sweet rolls; the original merchant center of the city, with its wooden Siberian houses; the trade rows and administrative center; the city's first stone Orthodox church; and the biggest Lenin head in the world.

Also visit Ivolginsky Datsan, a colorful, functioning Buddhist monastery. With nearly 30 lamas in residence, it is the spiritual center for Russian Buddhists.

The afternoon will be free for rest and independent exploration.

Meals: B

Day 27, Tue, Jun 3 Ulan Ude • drive to Listvyanka via Irkutsk (522 km)

The distance from Ulan Ude to Listvyanka is about 522 km and the drive will take about 6.5 hours. The scenery will be beautiful as the drive skirts the edge of Lake Baikal.

Later arrive in Listvyanka, a small, charming lakeside village – a tranquil setting where life remains much the same as in centuries past. Take a short tour of the village, including St. Nicholas Church and Baikal Limnological Museum dedicated to the study of the origin of the lake, its characteristics as the oldest and deepest lake in the world, and its species, including some that are found nowhere else, like the *golomyanka*, a transparent fish, the *omul*, a tasty salmon-like fish, and the freshwater seal, the *nerpa*.

The rest of the day is free to explore on your own.

Meals: B

Last Century Lodge Hotel or similar

Located within walking distance of the shores of Lake Baikal, the traditional wooden Last Century Lodge offers modern comforts in a charming atmosphere. All rooms are en suite and there is a traditional banya available onsite.

Day 28, Wed, Jun 4 Listvyanka/Lake Baikal

This morning take a private boat for a cruise on Lake Baikal. One of the most beautiful locations in Russia, Baikal lies 40 miles east of Irkutsk, a 395-mile-long, half-moon shaped fresh water reservoir. Lake Baikal contains one fifth of the world's fresh water, enough to supply all the world's fresh water requirements for forty years. So large is Baikal that it has its own weather and unique plant and animal life. Two thirds of the 2,000 species to be found here only exist in this part of the world. The surrounding *taiga* covered mountains plunging straight down to the water's edge enhance the crystal clear water of the lake.

Enjoy a picnic lunch on the boat before returning to Listvyanka in the afternoon. The rest of the evening is free and dinner is independent.

Meals: B, L



Day 29, Thu, Jun 5 Listvyanka • drive to Irkutsk (75km)

This morning make the 75 km drive to Irkutsk, where you will enjoy a half-day city tour. The city tour includes a visit to the Gagarin embankment, named after Yuri, the Cathedral of the Epiphany, built in 1724, the Church of Our Savior, and Maria Volkonsky's House, a mansion occupied by exiled Decembrists. Additionally, tour the area of old wooden houses, many with the intricate fretwork surrounding brightly painted window frames typical of local Siberian architecture.

The afternoon is set aside for rest and independent discovery.

Meals: B

Victory Hotel or similar

Located in the very center of Irkutsk, the three star Victory Hotel was built in 2006 and features two restaurants serving Russian, Siberian, and Italian cuisine. All rooms have a TV, electronic security system, Internet access and minibar.

Day 30, Fri, Jun 6 Irkutsk • drive to Tulun (464km)

Head out of town, following the Angara River toward Tulun, 464 km. This drive will take about 6 hours. This is Siberia – the name we have heard since we were children – always associated with gulag camps and sub-zero freezing temperatures.

The journalist George Kennan, in his 1891 *Siberia and the Exile System*, wrote:

“You can take the whole of the United States...and set it down in the middle of Siberia without touching anywhere the boundaries of the latter’s territory; you can then take Alaska and all the countries of Europe, with the exception of Russia, and fit them into the remaining margin like the pieces of a dissected map. After having thus accommodated all this you will still have more than 300,000 square miles of Siberian territory to spare...an area half as large again as the Empire of Germany.”

Siberia is a huge region dotted with Soviet industrial towns and small villages, and dissected by the legendary Trans-Siberian Railway. The main purpose for the construction of the railway was to further the economic and social development of Siberia – the “sleeping” wild and pristine land.

Lunch is independent en route and dinner is at the hotel or a local cafe in Tulun on arrival.

Meals: B, D

Centralnaya Hotel or similar

This small hotel, located just outside of Tulun, sits at the banks of the river that gives the property its name. Decorated like a hunting lodge, the eight small houses that make up the compound give the place a rustic feel. A fitness room and banya are available for guests to use.

Day 31, Sat, Jun 7 Tulun • drive to Kansk (435km)

Today’s drive to Kansk will be about 435 km and will take about 5.5-6 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Hotel Sibir or similar

Located in downtown Kansk, the comfortable Sibir Hotel features a second-floor cafe and 24-hour reception. Rooms include TV and electric kettle.

Day 32, Sun, Jun 8 Kansk • drive to Krasnoyarsk (218km)

This morning make the transfer to Krasnoyarsk. The distance between the cities is about 218 km and the drive will take about 3 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Hotel Safari Club or similar

The Siberian Safari Club is a small three star hotel located on the banks on the Yenesei River in Krasnoyarsk. This charming property has a large swimming pool, sauna, billiards, and a restaurant with a riverside terrace. The cozy rooms include all modern amenities.

Day 33, Mon, Jun 9 Krasnoyarsk

This morning enjoy a half day guided tour of Krasnoyarsk. A major industrial city of some 850,000 people, Krasnoyarsk was founded in 1628 on the Yenisei River and was first known as Krasny Yar, meaning "beautiful steep bank." It prospered during the 18th century as an important trading center on the Great Siberian Post Road and the Yenisei waterway. The railway reached Krasnoyarsk in 1896. During World War II many factories were evacuated from European Russia and rebuilt here.

Krasnoyarsk has always been associated with Russian exiles. In the early days the forts were replenished with troops from Europe who had been sent to Siberia instead of a jail sentence. In 1897 23% of the population was convicts. In the same year Lenin was exiled to Krasnoyarsk, joining Stalin, who was already in residence. When in power, Stalin founded one of his infamous Gulags in Krasnoyarsk.

A city tour of Krasnoyarsk begins in **Peace Square** featuring an excellent viewpoint of the Enisei River. After a visit to the **Praskeva Chapel** atop of Watch Hill continue on to the local **Regional Museum of Krasnoyarsk**, considered to be one of the best history museums in Russia.

In the afternoon board a public speedboat for a two-hour tour along the Enisei River, providing an opportunity to enjoy the wild and majestic scenery along the Enisei banks. Disembark from the vessel for a short promenade along the shoreline at Divnogorsk before returning back to Krasnoyarsk.

Lunch and dinner today are independent.

Meals: B

Day 34, Tue, Jun 10 Krasnoyarsk • drive to Tomsk (603 km)

Get an early start to begin the 603 km, 8 hour drive from Krasnoyarsk to Tomsk. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Sports Hotel or similar

The three star Sports Hotel is located near to the center of Tomsk. Rooms feature cable TV, telephones, and refrigerators. The hotel includes a cafe and business center.

Day 35, Wed, Jun 11 Tomsk • drive to Novosibirsk (268 km)

Today ride to Novosibirsk. The driving distance is about 268 km and the drive will take about 3.5 hours. With a population of roughly 1.6 million, Novosibirsk is the largest city in Siberia, and its industrial and scientific center. Novosibirsk did not exist before the Trans-Siberian railway was built, growing up around the place chosen for the rail line's Ob River crossing. Nikita Khrushchev relocated his best scientists 30 km from here in 1959, in a special town built expressly for scientific research, called Akademgorodok, or Academy City.

Meals: B

Hotel Sibir or similar

The huge former Intourist hotel is reputed to be the place where celebrities from Moscow stay. Clean and comfortable, the hotel is a 15-minute walk from the city center and offers a restaurant, several bars and a sauna with a pool. Rooms include TV, phone and minibar.

Day 36, Thu, Jun 12 Novosibirsk

This morning begin a half day tour of Novosibirsk, the largest city in Siberia, to learn about its industrial and scientific center. Novosibirsk did not exist before the Trans-Siberian railway was built, it grew up around the place chosen for the rail line's Ob River crossing. Nikita Khrushchev relocated his best scientists 30 km from here in 1959 to a special town built expressly for scientific research called Akademgorodok, or Academy City.

In Novosibirsk visit the **Ascension Cathedral, Krasny Prospekt and Lenin Square, St. Nicholas Chapel** in the oldest part of the city, the monument at the geographical center of Russia, the old Siberian wooden houses on Gorkova Street, and a farmers' market. Visit the **Regional Studies Museum**. Founded in 1920, the Novosibirsk State Museum of Regional Studies' mission is to collect artifacts and information about Siberia's indigenous peoples, most of whom were still living in the old ways in 1920. Today fourteen Siberian indigenous nations and the early Slavic settlers are represented here.

The afternoon will be free for rest and independent discovery.

Meals: B

Day 37, Fri, Jun 13 Novosibirsk • drive to Omsk (703km)

Today will be a full day drive across the approximately 703 km to Omsk. The drive will take about 9 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Hotel Tourist

Located in the center of Omsk, the three star Hotel Tourist features a restaurant, coffee shop, health center, hair salon and a business center with Internet access. Rooms include satellite TV, minibar and hair dryer.

Day 38, Sat, Jun 14 Omsk • drive to Ishim (338km)

The distance from Omsk to Ishim is about 338 km and the driving time will be about 4.5 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Hotel Ishim or similar

The Ishim Hotel has a great central location and rooms are equipped with all the usual amenities.

Day 39, Sun, Jun 15 Ishim • drive to Tyumen (307km)

The distance from Ishim to Tyumen is about 307 km and the driving time will be about 4 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Tyumen Hotel

The four star Tyumen Hotel is located in the center of town, and features a fine restaurant, cafe, bar and nightclub, and a fitness center with pool and sauna. Rooms include air conditioning, satellite TV and minibar.

Day 40, Mon, Jun 16 Tyumen • drive to Ekaterinburg (326km)

The distance from Tyumen to Ekaterinburg is about 326 km and the driving time will be about 4 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Domashnaya Hotel

Day 41, Tue, Jun 17 Ekaterinburg

Rest today, or take the tour. A morning tour of Ekaterinburg begins at the dam. Ekaterinburg grew up around the **Plotinka Dam**, which harnessed the water in the Iset River for the town's ironworks. The dam has been reconstructed twice, and now holds back the water in the City Pond at the heart of the city. Historical Square surrounds the pond, and on its edges are most of Ekaterinburg's museums.

The **Black Tulip** is a moving new monument. This statue of an exhausted and traumatized soldier is a memorial to the young men sent to fight in Afghanistan in the last years of Soviet power. Here in the square with its bubbling fountains is a corresponding memorial to the people who died and were injured in the war with Chechnya.

Continue on to the **Church on the Blood**, standing over the spot where Czar Nicholas II and his family were executed in July of 1918. The young family has been canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church, and declared martyrs, as holy passion-bearers, reverent believers who were tormented by the Soviets for their beliefs. The church was designed in the early 20th century Russian/Byzantine style that Nicholas favored, and completed in 2003.

A little over six miles from town is the mineshaft where the bodies of the last czar and his family were hidden after their execution. The place is called Ganina Yama, and today there is a monastery here. On the grounds of the new monastery, named the Holy Monastery of the Royal Martyrs Czar Nicholas and Family, are six wooden churches made without the use of nails, in the old-fashioned Russian way, to honor Nicholas and his family.

The afternoon and evening will be free for rest and independent exploration.

Meals: B

Day 42, Wed, Jun 18 Ekaterinburg • drive to Perm (358km)

Today continue on to Perm. The driving distance is about 358 km and the drive will take about 4.5-5 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Amaks Premier Hotel

Amaks Ptemyer Hotel Perm is located in the very heart of Perm, just minutes away from the main streets and avenues. The hotel provides comfortable rooms equipped with a television, refrigerator, telephone and safe. The hotel features a restaurant and bar.

Day 43, Thu, Jun 19 Perm • drive to Izhevsk (278km)

The distance from Omsk to Ishim is about 278 km and the driving time will be about 4 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Hotel Tsentralny

The three star Hotel Tsentralny is located in the center of Izhevsk. Rooms feature cable TV, refrigerators, and air conditioners.

Day 44, Fri, Jun 20 Izhevsk • drive to Kazan (434km)

The distance from Izhevsk to Zelenodolsk (outside of Kazan) is about 434 km and the driving time will be about 6 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Ternopol Hotel



Day 45, Sat, Jun 21 Kazan

Explore **Kazan**, embarking on a half day tour of the Republic of Tatarstan's capital city. Kazan is an old city on the Volga River with a fascinating multiethnic history. When Ivan the Terrible won Kazan from the khans in 1552, making the Volga a Russian river, he brought with him Orthodox Christianity. Today a Russian kremlin wall surrounds the old town, and both Orthodox churches and mosques are found in the city. A tour of Kazan includes the city's kremlin, the Peter and Paul Cathedral, the beautiful new Qol Sharif Mosque, the University, Millennium Park and along the shores of Lake Kaban.

The afternoon and evening will be free for rest and independent discovery.

Meals: B

Day 46, Sun, Jun 22 Kazan • drive to Nizhny Novgorod (371km)

The distance from Zelenodolsk to Nizhny Novgorod is about 371 km and the driving time will be about 5.5 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

AZIMUT Hotel

Jouk Jacque Hotel is located in the city of Nizhny Novgorod, close to some of the area attractions like the kremlin, Historical Museum, Arts Museum and Drama Theater. The onsite restaurant and bar serves a wide variety of Russian and traditional delicacies. Rooms include air conditioning, minibar, hair dryer. Laundry facilities are available as well.

Day 47, Mon, Jun 23 Nizhny Novgorod • drive to Moscow via Vladimir (418km)

Today drive from Nizhny Novgorod to Moscow via Vladimir where you will have the opportunity to stop for an independent lunch. The total driving distance is about 418 km and the driving time will be about 5.5 hours.

Meals: B

Best Western Vega Hotel

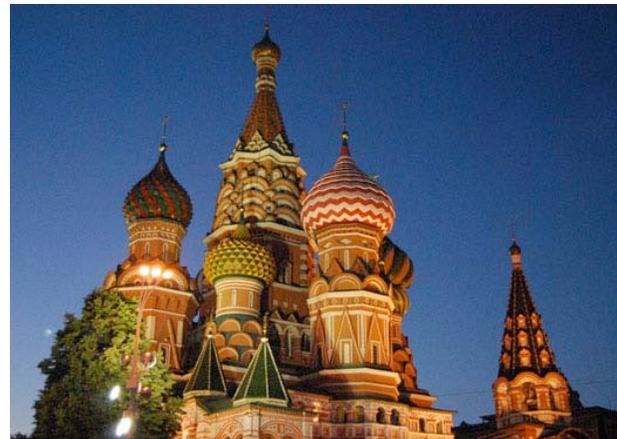
Built for the 1980 Olympics and recently renovated, the three star Best Western Vega is part of the largest hotel complex in the world and is located 15 minutes via Metro from Red Square. Everything a traveler could possibly want is here: a salon, five restaurants, two banquet halls, shopping, a bar, a cafe, a nightclub, and access to many other services through the help of the multilingual staff. Rooms are equipped with internet access, air conditioning and satellite TV.

Day 48, Tue, Jun 24 Moscow

After breakfast at the hotel set out for a half day tour of Moscow. Begin with a drive by some of Moscow's best-known places - the Duma building where Russia's governing body meets; the Bolshoi Theater; the forbidding Lubyanka prison where the KGB was headquartered; Moscow State University on the Sparrow Hills for a panoramic city view; the moving World War II Memorial and Victory Park on Farewell Hill; and a drive along the Sofiyskaya Embankment, past the 16th century Novodevichy Convent and by the Moscow "White House."

After the guided morning tour the afternoon and evening will be free for rest and independent discovery.

Meals: B



Day 49, Wed, Jun 25 Moscow • drive to St. Petersburg (743 km)

Today will be an all day drive from Moscow to St. Petersburg. The distance between the cities is about 743 km and the driving time will be about 10 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Park Inn Pulkovskaya or similar

The Pulkovskaya Hotel is conveniently located only three miles from the airport and seven miles from the city center towards Pushkin. Rooms have the standard amenities including private bath/shower. The hotel has a restaurant and fitness center.

Day 50, Thu, Jun 26 St. Petersburg

This morning set out for a half-day city tour of St. Petersburg. St. Petersburg is often described as one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Its miles of canals, laced together with graceful bridges set amidst 18th century buildings, have earned it the name, “Venice of the North.” Conceived of by Peter the Great and designed by his favorite European architects, St. Petersburg was meant to be Peter’s link to the western world. Capital of Russia from 1712 until just after the revolution, the city celebrated its 300th anniversary in 2003.

A drive near the Neva River introduces you to the heart of Peter’s beautiful city. Visit the spit of Vasilievsky Island with its beautiful view across the river to the Winter Palace and the Peter and Paul Fortress. Drive by enormous Palace Square, framed by the Winter Palace and the General Staff Headquarters, where Imperial parades and festivals were celebrated, and admire the façade of nearby St. Isaac’s Cathedral. Discover the statue of Peter the Great, named the Bronze Horseman by Pushkin.

The afternoon will be free for rest and independent discovery.

Meals: B



Day 51, Fri, Jun 27 St. Petersburg • Pskov (336 km)

Continue your journey today by setting off to Pskov. The distance to Pskov is about 336 km and the drive will take about 4.5 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Rizhskaya Hotel or similar

The three star Rizhskaya Hotel stands close to the city center, close to many popular tourist locations such as the Kremlin and Troitsky Cathedral. All rooms include modern amenities, including private bathrooms, telephone and television. Dine at the on-site restaurant or café, and relax at the cocktail bar. The hotel also offers a casino, business facilities, beauty salon and gift shop.

Day 52, Sat, Jun 28 Pskov • depart Russia, drive to Dagavpils, Latvia (266 km)

Set out for Daugavpils, Latvia. The distance to the Russia-Latvia border crossing point is about 120 km and the driving time will be about 2 hours. After the border crossing formalities, continue on your journey.

The distance from the border to Daugavpils will be about 146 km and will take about 2-2.5 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free evening.

Meals: B

Park Hotel Latgola or similar

The three star Park Hotel Latgola features restaurants, a sauna and Jacuzzi, shops and a beauty salon. Rooms include satellite TV, Internet access and phone.

Day 53, Sun, Jun 29 Dagavapils • drive to Vilnius, Lithuania (173 km)

The distance from Dagavapils to Vilnius is about 173 km and the driving time will be about 2.5 hours. Additional transfer time will be needed for border crossing formalities. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Panorama Hotel or similar

Located close to Vilnius' Old Town, the newly renovated Hotel Panorama features great views on its southern side, free WiFi, a bar and fine restaurant serving European specialties. Rooms include satellite TV and hair dryer.

Day 54, Mon, Jun 30 Vilnius

Enjoy a half day morning tour of Old Town Vilnius. From its founding in 1323, Vilnius has survived successive attacks by Crusaders, Crimean Tatars, Russians, Napoleon's armies, Poles and Germans. Nevertheless, structures in Gothic, baroque, Renaissance and Neo-Classical styles are still standing today. A city tour of Vilnius includes visits to the Cathedral, little St. Anne's Church, the Gates of Dawn and Vilnius University.

Vilnius' diminutive red brick **St. Anne's church** represents the pinnacle of Gothic architecture in Lithuania. Built around 1500, the building displays a remarkable 33 kinds of brick. The intricate combination and variety of arches, finials, brick patterns, and spires with metal crosses make for an elegant and graceful exterior. The interior has been renovated several times, and three baroque altars were included in the middle of the 18th century. The newer adjacent bell tower is neo-Gothic, designed in 1873 by a different architect. St. Anne's has survived more than five centuries almost unchanged, and stands today as the most famous building in Vilnius.

One of the original gates of 16th century Vilnius, the **Gates of Dawn** are one of the last remaining parts of the old city wall. At that time, city gates often incorporated holy icons to

protect the city from invaders. The chapel in the Gates of Dawn is home to one of the most revered icons of Catholic Lithuania, the golden-clad Mother of Mercy.

Stefan Batory, King of Poland, established **Vilnius University** in 1579, and it developed into an important scientific and cultural center. One of the oldest universities in Eastern Europe, its buildings encompass all the major architectural styles that influenced Vilnius over 400 years. Moscow closed the university from 1832 to 1917, but today over 14,000 are students enrolled.

The afternoon will be free for rest and independent exploration.

Meals: B



Day 55, Tue, Jul 1 Vilnius • drive to Kaunas (105 km)

The distance from Vilnius to Kaunas is 105 km and the driving time will be about 1.5 hours. Upon arrival to Kaunas check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Park Inn Kaunas or similar

The Park Inn Kaunas Hotel is located near to tourist attractions in Lithuania's second largest city. The hotel features a restaurant, bar, and on site fitness center. All rooms have air conditioning, free wifi access, TV, and telephones.

Day 56, Wed, Jul 2 Kaunas • drive to Kaliningrad, Russia (300 km)

The distance from Kaunas to Kaliningrad is about 300 km and the driving time will be about 3.5-4 hours. Additional transfer time will be needed for border crossing formalities. Upon arrival to Kaliningrad check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Usadba Hotel or similar

The Usadba Hotel is located in a 19th century mansion just outside Old Town Kaliningrad. The hotel houses a restaurant and all rooms feature TVs, refrigerators, and telephones.

Day 57, Thu, Jul 3 Kaliningrad

This morning embark on a half day tour of Kaliningrad, Russia's southernmost Baltic port and the only year-round ice-free port in Russia. Known since 1255 as Königsberg, the city was for many years the German capital of East Prussia. During World War Two, Königsberg was nearly destroyed by the Allied forces, and after the Soviets were awarded the region in 1945, they did not restore the evidence of its long Germanic past. It was renamed Kaliningrad in 1946 after Mikhail Kalinin, its recently deceased Soviet President. Because the Soviet Baltic fleet was headquartered here, Kaliningrad was closed to foreign visitors until 1991. It is still heavily militarized. The multi-ethnic heritage of its inhabitants, combined with its varied history, makes Kaliningrad an unusual and interesting place to visit.

The afternoon will be free for rest and independent discovery.

Meals: B

Day 58, Fri, Jul 4 Kaliningrad • drive to Gdansk, Poland (163 km)

The distance from Kaliningrad to Gdansk is about 163 km and the driving time will be about 2.5 hours. Upon arrival to Gdansk check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Novotel Centrum Gdansk or similar

The three star Mercure Hevelius is located on the perimeter of the historic center, with views of either the Old Town or the Gdansk shipyards, and features a bar and a restaurant serving Polish and regional cuisine. Rooms include air conditioning, minibar, WiFi, and satellite TV.

Day 59, Sat, Jul 5 Gdansk • drive to Poznan via Gorowo (299 km)

Today drive to Gorowo before continuing on to Poznan. The driving distance from Gdansk to Poznan is about 299 km and the driving time will be 4 hours. Stop for an independent lunch at Gorowo. Upon arrival to the hotel in Poznan check in for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Novotel Centrum Poznan or similar

Centrally located and modern, the Novotel Poznan Centrum's rooms include air-conditioning, a minibar, WiFi Internet access and satellite TV. The hotel's restaurant carries a varied Continental menu and a fitness center is available for the use of guests.

Day 60, Sun, Jul 6 Poznan • drive to Berlin, Germany (281 km)

Depart Poland today and head to Germany. The driving distance from Poznan to Berlin is about 281 km and the driving time will be about 3.5 hours. Upon arrival check in to your hotel in Berlin for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Pullman Berlin Schweizerhof or similar

The Pullman Berlin Schweizerhof Hotel has a central location near to Kurfurstendamm, the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church and the Zoological Garden. The hotel was renovated in 2008 and features a restaurant and cafe. Rooms feature TVs and internet access.

Day 61, Mon, Jul 7 Berlin

This day is completely free for an independent exploration of Berlin. The tour managers and guides can provide suggestions for touring options.

Meals: B

Day 62, Tue, Jul 8 Berlin • drive to Hanover (293 km)

The distance from Berlin to Hanover is about 293 km and the driving time will be about 3 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Mercure Hannover Mitte Hotel or similar

The Hannover Mitte Hotel is located in the city center near to a quiet park. The hotel houses a restaurant and bar, and all rooms include Wi-Fi access.

Day 63, Wed, Jul 9 Hanover • drive to Cologne (291 km)

The distance from Hanover to Cologne is about 291 km and the driving time will be about 3 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Hotel Mondial am Dom or similar

The Hotel Mondial am Dom is located in the heart of Old Town Cologne. The hotel includes a restaurant and bar and the rooms feature satellite TV, air conditioning and WiFi access.

Day 64, Thu, Jul 10 Cologne • drive via Eupen to Chimay, Belgium (271km)

The distance from Cologne to Chimay is about 271 km and the driving time will be about 3 hours. Additional transfer time will be needed for border crossing formalities. Upon arrival to Chimay check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Hotel Le Petit Chapitre or similar

The Hotel Le Petit Chapitre is a historic boutique hotel located near to Chimay.

Day 65, Fri, Jul 11 Chimay

This day is completely free for an independent exploration of Chimay. The tour managers and guides can provide suggestions for touring options.

Meals: B

Day 66, Sat, Jul 12 Chimay • drive to Rheims, France (124km)

The distance from Chimay to Rheims is about 124 km and the driving time will be about 2 hours. Additional transfer time will be needed for border crossing formalities. Upon arrival to Rheims check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Mercure Reims Cathedrale or similar

The Mercure Reims Cathedrale is located in the heart of the city center near to the major tourist attractions. The hotel includes a bar and restaurant and all rooms feature individual climate control, air conditioning, satellite TV and WiFi access.

Day 67, Sun, Jul 13 Rheims • drive to Paris (143km)

The distance from Rheims to Paris is about 144 km and the driving time will be about 2 hours. Upon arrival check in to the hotel for a free afternoon and evening.

Meals: B

Pullman Paris Tour Eiffel Hotel or similar

Located on the West Bank just a short walk from the Eiffel Tower, the four star Pullman Paris Tour Eiffel features a restaurant and a bar, laundry and dry cleaning. Rooms include air conditioning, WiFi, minibar, satellite TV and hair dryer.

Day 68, Mon, Jul 14 Paris

This day is free to explore Paris on your own.

Making our goal, tonight we enjoy a special farewell dinner at a local restaurant to celebrate our journey to Paris!

Meals: B, D

Day 69, Tue, July 15 Depart Paris

After breakfast check out, return home, or continue independently in Europe.

Meals: B

Itinerary specifics subject to change.

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