

VOLGA DREAM

2017 Volga Dream GOLD Program¹⁾

13 days / 12 nights from Moscow to St. Petersburg²⁾

Included³⁾:

3 nights at **Marriott Aurora ******* in Moscow

6 nights aboard **MS Volga Dream**

3 nights at **Kempinski Moika, 22******* in St. Petersburg



1) Sample Program – times and order of tours may change. Please request from us exact travel schedule for each individual cruise

2) Itinerary from St. Petersburg to Moscow mirrors itinerary from Moscow to St. Petersburg

3) Hotels and cruise vessel may be changed for similar

TRIP DESCRIPTION & HIGHLIGHTS

Volga Dream GOLD combines the best of Moscow and St. Petersburg and a deluxe cruise on the Volga. This journey is ideal for individual travelers and small groups looking to explore both the Russian countryside and the treasures of Russia's grandest cities.

- Accommodation in exquisite 5-star hotels in Moscow and St. Petersburg
- Daily sightseeing in small groups of never more than 20-25 guests
- Visits to the Kremlin, Red Square, Armory and Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow
- Visits to the magnificent Hermitage, Faberge Museum, Peterhof and Catherine's palace in St. Petersburg
- All meals aboard *MS Volga Dream* with house wines, beer and soft drinks included with all lunches and dinners
- 4 fascinating lectures by Russian professors about Russian history and politics
- Diverse range of cultural activities aboard *MS Volga Dream*

Day 1. MOSCOW

Upon arrival in Moscow, transfer to the deluxe Marriott Aurora ***** located in the historic city centre near the Bolshoi Theatre and Moscow Kremlin. In the evening gather for the warm-up meeting with your guide (available at the hotel lobby from 6pm to 9pm) or spend the rest of the day exploring central Moscow on your own.

Meals: –

Day 2. MOSCOW

City Tour / Red Square / GUM Department Store / Novodevichy Cemetery



9:30 am – 2:30 pm

Begin the day with an orientation city tour of Moscow and then proceed to the famous Novodevichi Cemetery which holds the tombs of Russian authors, musicians, playwrights, and poets, as well as famous actors, political leaders, and scientists.

The rest of the afternoon is at leisure to explore Moscow on your own or seek out a cultural performance at one of the city's renowned venues.

City tour includes: Red Square walking tour, St. Basil's Cathedral (photo stop w/o entrance), GUM Department Store (entrance), Cathedral of Christ the Savior (entrance if time and availability allows), Novodevichy Cemetery (entrance).

Meals: B

Day 3. MOSCOW

Kremlin / Armoury Museum



9:30 am – 2:30 pm

This morning enter the Kremlin for a visit to the Armoury Museum to view its collection of opulent coronation finery, hand-forged armour and weapons, royal carriages and sleighs. Continue to the beautifully frescoed 15th-century Assumption and Archangel cathedrals.

The balance of the day is at leisure for independent exploration or optional tours at your choice.

Meals: B

Day 4. MOSCOW

Tretyakov Gallery / Metro Ride / Embarkation on the *Volga Dream*



12:00 pm – 5:30 pm

This morning is free for an independent walk or lunch in hotel near-by area.

At noon, check-out from your hotel and proceed to Tretyakov Gallery, the first museum dedicated exclusively to Russian fine art. Explore Moscow's Metro, known for its architectural splendour and transfer to the awaiting luxurious *MS Volga Dream* to begin sailing

along the Russian waterways. Gather for the Captain's welcome reception and dinner as we begin our cruise.

Volga Dream Experience: Bread, Salt & Vodka Welcome Aboard Ceremony

Meals: B, D

Day 5. UGLICH

After a full day of cruising through forested countryside, dock in the ancient trading town of Uglich, one of the spokes of Russia's renowned Golden Ring. Explore the impressive Church of St. Dmitri-on-the-Blood, erected on the site where Dmitri, son of Ivan the Terrible, was murdered in 1591, and attend an enchanting concert of choral music at St. John's Church.

Volga Dream Experience: Documentary Film "Construction of the Moscow Canal"

Meals: B, L, D



Day 6. YAROSLAVL

Founded in 1010, Yaroslavl is one of the oldest cities in central Russia and the Volga's first port. In the Spassky Monastery see the Transfiguration of the Savior and admire the mosaics at the Church of Elijah the Prophet. Take part in a costumed reception at the governor's house, and then re-board the *MS Volga Dream* in time for lunch.

Volga Dream Experience: Costumed Russian Tea Ceremony & Russian Cooking Class

Meals: B, L, D

Day 7. GORITSY

In the tiny settlement of Goritsy, visit the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, founded in 1397, and now home to one of the best collections of Russian icons in the world. After a guided tour, continue cruising toward majestic Lake Onega.

Volga Dream Experience: Russian Dinner with Vodka Tasting

Meals: B, L, D



Day 8. KIZHI

The Kareliya region, which spans the area from St. Petersburg to the Arctic Circle, is a vast wilderness of forest and water. Discover Lake Onega, fed by 58 rivers and home to 1,369 islands, including Kizhi. See a collection of ancient Russian wooden houses and windmills, and the famous Transfiguration church, built in 1714 without a single nail.

Volga Dream Experience: Piano Concert – pieces by Tchaikovsky and Rakhmaninov

Meals: B, L, D

Day 9. SVIR RIVER AND THE VILLAGE OF MANDROGI

While cruising along the 139-mile-long Svir River, appreciate the quiet understated beauty of a region that has long inspired artists and poets. The ship passes quaint riverside hamlets before reaching Lake Ladoga. Step ashore for a brief visit to the vacation village of Mandrogi to experience daily life in a quaint wooden village on your own.

Volga Dream Experience: Barbeque on the Open Deck

Meals: B, L, D



Day 10. ST. PETERSBURG

City Tour / Peter and Paul Fortress / Hermitage Museum

9:30am – 5:30pm

Arrive in St. Petersburg via the Neva River and disembark the *MS Volga Dream*. Enjoy a city tour of St. Petersburg, including Peter and Paul Fortress, burial place of the Romanov monarchs, and Nevsky Prospect, where fine shops, cafes, and museums are found. Following lunch enter the renowned Hermitage Museum, home to one of the most important collections of European art in the world.

This evening check-in at the five-star Kempinski Moika 22.

City Tour includes: Peter & Paul Cathedral (entrance), Split of Basil Island (walking tour), St. Isaac Cathedral (photo stop), Spilled Blood Church (photo stop), Nevskiy Prospekt drive.

Meals: B, L

Day 11. ST. PETERSBURG

Peterhof: Park and Bath Cottage



10:00am – 3:00pm

Begin today at the meticulously restored Peterhof, St. Petersburg's most famous and spectacular Imperial estate, often cited as the Versailles of Russia. Visit the authentic Bath Cottage and stroll in the vast Lower Park with 176 fountains of various forms and styles and four cascades, majestic palaces and numerous gilded statues of ancient gods and heroes.

The balance of the day is at leisure for independent exploration.

Meals: B

Day 12. ST. PETERSBURG

Catherine's Palace / Amber Room / Faberge Museum



9:30am – 5:30pm

This morning travel to Catherine the Great's Palace, which houses the extraordinary Amber Room, its six tons of solid amber deftly carved and framed in gold leaf. Once deemed the "eighth wonder of the world," the room was stripped by the Nazis in 1941, but majestically reconstructed in honour of St. Petersburg's 300th birthday.

After lunch at Podvorie, a restaurant in a traditional Russian log house, return to St. Petersburg and visit Faberge museum, which contains world's largest collection of works by Carl Faberge, including 9 Easter eggs commissioned by the Russian royal family.

Meals: B, L

Day 13. ST. PETERSBURG

This morning check out from your hotel and transfer to the airport for your flight.

Meals: B

All arrangements are subject to availability and modification if necessary. Weather, heavy traffic and heavy crowds may affect the order of your sightseeing program.

ACCOMMODATION

MOSCOW – Marriott Aurora Royal Hotel

Built in 1999 The Marriott Aurora Royal Hotel is one of the most luxurious in town: with the Red Square and the Kremlin as well as the famous Bolshoi Theatre in walking distance, the hotel has the capital's commercial, political and cultural heart literally on the doorstep. With its arches and spires, the hotel gloriously blends traditional Moscow with modern conveniences.



ST. PETERSBURG – Kempinski Moika 22

The Kempinski Hotel Moika 22 is located in a charming and historical area, in the very heart of St Petersburg, on the Moika River, opposite the renowned Hermitage Museum and Palace Square. The Hotel is just two minutes walk from the Nevsky Prospect and close to all major sights and shopping.



Check-in to the hotels starts at 15:00, check-out ends before 12:00