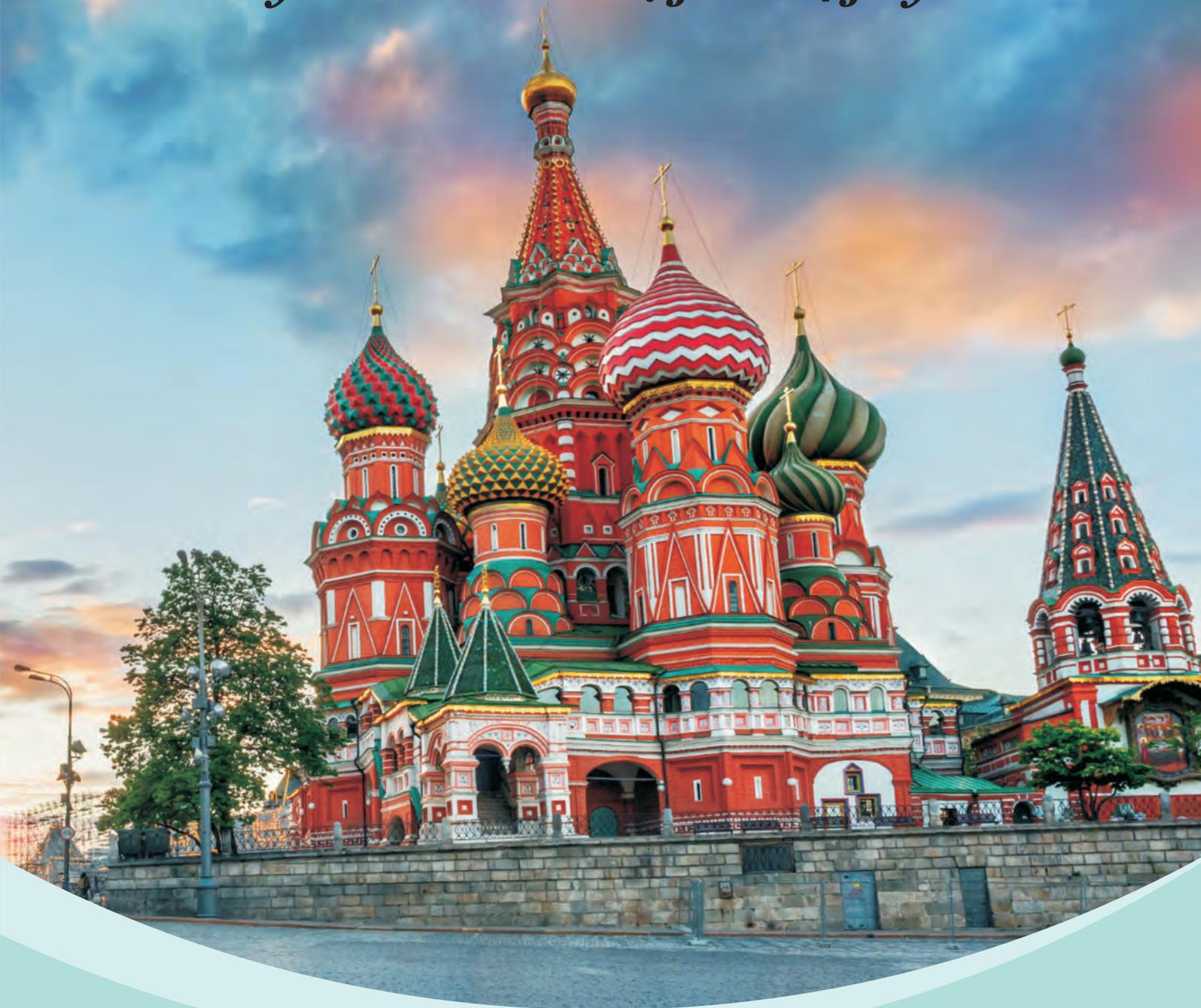




Experience. The Difference.

# Back to the U.S.S.R.

*18 day Escorted Tour 17 June - 4 July 2020*





**Join Discover Travel's Peter Dunne, on this escorted tour of the Baltic state capitals and Soviet Russia, exploring Imperial, World War II and Soviet era history.**

## **This tour highlights the uniqueness of history, culture and landscape of a much-changed region – say “da” to Back to the USSR!**

The Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea, each have a long interesting history and an impressive cultural heritage dating back to the 13th century.

Lithuania's capital, Vilnius, founded in 1323, still bears evidence of its rich heritage in the gothic, renaissance and baroque architecture of its Old Town, best explored on foot. Latvia's capital, Riga, a blend of sophisticated cafés and restaurants, founded in 1201, was once called the "Paris of the North." Estonia, the smallest and most northern of the Baltic states, is fondly referred to as "E-stonia" due to its dynamic, advanced digital society, and bears a distinct European presence. That said, Estonians also follow tradition and are great lovers of poetry, cinema and the arts. Tallinn's charming Hanseatic Old Town is also a World Heritage site. And the world's largest country, Russia, isn't quite what you might expect. Winston Churchill once described Russia as a "riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma."

## **Tour highlights**

- KGB Museum - Lithuania's gruesome memorial to the suffering of thousands under Soviet occupation
- Trakai Island Castle Museum – Vilnius' picturesque lakeside medieval castle
- Explore the sacred Hill of Crosses - more than 200 thousand crosses in one place, on one hill
- Walking tours of the Old Towns of Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn
- Tallinn's Town Hall and onion-domed Alexander Nevsky Cathedral
- Sample traditional Russian delicacies: dinner with caviar, blini, pickled cucumber, and vodka – da!
- Hermitage Museum, home to celebrated works by Rembrandt and Leonardo da Vinci
- Admire the Impressionists Art Collection in the General Staff Building
- Witness the design and colour during your visit to the Church of the Saviour of Spilled Blood
- Feast your eyes on the opulent Faberge Eggs at the Faberge Museum
- Visit Pushkin to see the elegant, baroque style and neo-classical interior of Catherine's Palace
- Visit the Peter and Paul Fortress – St. Petersburg's original citadel
- Experience Moscow's Red Square and the Kremlin, a city-within-a-city
- See the impressive lights of Moscow by night
- Witness the extravagance and personal collections from the tsars' treasury at the Armoury Museum
- Tour through the once-secret Cold War military complex of Bunker 42
- Farewell Dinner with Russian champagne and local specialties - a fitting 'dasvidaniya' to Russia



## Your Tour Itinerary

### 17 Jun – Depart Christchurch

We depart Christchurch mid-morning, via Singapore (in transit) to Copenhagen.

### 18 Jun – Copenhagen – Vilnius

Arrive into Copenhagen (in transit) en-route to Vilnius, arriving mid-morning.

Spend the remainder of the day at leisure in Vilnius, once the splendid centre of the mighty Grand Duchy of Lithuania, A WELCOME DINNER at a local restaurant is included tonight. (D)



### 19 Jun – Vilnius

Vilnius' picturesque historic nucleus is clustered around the remains of a castle built by Prince Gediminas in 1323. Your Local Guide will accompany you on a walk from Cathedral Square through narrow, winding lanes to the OLD UNIVERSITY, founded by Jesuits in 1569. Also visit the KGB MUSEUM, and end your tour with a special visit to Vilnius' artist quarter, UŽUPIS. This afternoon visit TRAKAI CASTLE, Lithuania's most famous and most photographed castle, which lies in the midst of Lake Galve. DINNER tonight is at a local favourite. (B, D)

### 20 Jun – Vilnius – Riga, Latvia

Enjoy a scenic drive from the Neris River through a landscape of alternating dark forests, swamps, and lush pastures. Stop at the Hill of Crosses memorial site on your way to the Baltic port of Riga, the Latvian capital. Tonight sample the local dishes on offer at a local RESTAURANT. (B, D)

### 21 Jun – Riga

Sightseeing with a Local Guide features the historic centre on the right bank of the Daugava River and a walking tour of the OLD TOWN and the ART



NOUVEAU QUARTER. Don't miss the opportunity to TASTE Riga Balsam (a traditional Latvian herbal liqueur) and Laima chocolate. This afternoon visit the renown ETHNOLOGICAL MUSEUM, a visit which includes your lunch as well as discovering one of the largest outdoor museums. Enjoy DINNER at a local restaurant. (B, L, D)

### 22 Jun – Riga – Tallinn, Estonia

Trace the coastline of the Gulf of Riga past the Estonian health resort of Pärnu, a site inhabited since the early Stone Age, on your way to Tallinn, capital of the smallest of the Baltic countries. During your afternoon sightseeing with a Local Guide, discover the Hanseatic Old Town with its 15th-century Lühike Jalg Gate, and visit the TOWN HALL and the onion-domed ALEXANDER NEVSKY CATHEDRAL. DINNER is included at a local restaurant. (B, D)

### 23 Jun – Tallinn

This morning, visit KADRIORG PALACE, one of the most beautiful examples of baroque style in Tallinn. Built by Peter the Great in 1718, it is an example of Tsarist extravagance. Another important reason for visiting the Palace is that it is also home to the foreign art collection of the Art Museum of Estonia. Free time to explore Tallinn this afternoon, before heading for DINNER at a local restaurant, that has a medieval theme. Immerse yourself in the experience of a medieval banquet, complete with entertainers. (B, D)

### 24 Jun – Tallinn – St Petersburg, Russia

A pleasant drive to St. Petersburg, where you will visit magnificent ST. ISAAC'S CATHEDRAL with a Local Guide. This evening experience a real taste of traditional Russian delicacies and enjoy DINNER at your hotel with caviar, blini, pickled cucumber, and vodka. (B, D)

### 25 Jun – St Petersburg

Guided sightseeing starts with the Winter Palace

complex, now home of the world-famous HERMITAGE MUSEUM, with celebrated works by Rembrandt and Leonardo da Vinci. Visit the Church of the Saviour of Spilt Blood, also stop at the Impressionists Art Collection tour in the GENERAL STAFF BUILDING. Enjoy the different and opulent Faberge Eggs at the FABERGE MUSEUM. Tonight, experience the wonder of the RUSSIAN BALLET. Experience DINNER at a local restaurant. (B, D)

### 26 Jun – St Petersburg

Travel to Pushkin and visit magnificent CATHERINE PALACE (if closed, visit PAVLOVSK PALACE instead). This afternoon visit the majestic PETER AND PAUL FORTRESS, commissioned by Peter the Great in 1703, as a defence against the Swedes. Tonight, experience the local culture with a RUSSIAN FOLKLORE SHOW, that includes Cossack dancers and acrobats. (B, D)

### 27 Jun – St Petersburg

Free day to explore St Petersburg. Tour Director will be on hand to suggest sightseeing ideas. Try the local cuisine at DINNER in a local restaurant. (B, D)

### 28 Jun – St Petersburg - Moscow

Board the high-speed SAPSAN TRAIN to Moscow. Tonight, join an evening excursion to the impressive MOSCOW UNDERGROUND and see Moscow by night with its impressive lights, followed by DINNER. (B, D)

### 29 Jun – Moscow

Guided sightseeing features visits to RED SQUARE and the KREMLIN, a city-within-a-city, where you can admire the medieval towers, cathedrals, and palaces. Also visit the ARMORY MUSEUM and see the Bolshoi Theatre. Visit BUNKER 42 and tour through the once-secret military complex, bunker, and Spare Long-Range Aviation Command Post. DINNER is included at a local favourite. (B, D)

### 30 Jun – Moscow

Free day to explore Moscow. Tour Director will be on



## Meet your fellow travellers

Meet Peter and your fellow travellers at our social evenings held prior to departure and receive detailed tour information, as well as hints and tips for your travels.



## Your Tour Itinerary (continued)

hand to suggest sightseeing ideas. Regroup tonight, for DINNER at a local restaurant. (B, D)

### 01 Jul – Moscow

Another day full of highlights: visit the CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE SAVIOUR, the largest Orthodox Christian church in the world, as well as the NOVODEVICHY (New Maiden) CONVENT and its CEMETERY, with the tombs of famous Russian authors, musicians, and political leaders. This evening enjoy a FAREWELL DINNER with Russian champagne and local specialties as a proper “dasvidaniya” to Russia. (B, D)

### 02 Jul – Depart Moscow

Our tour ends with breakfast this morning before making our way to the airport in time for our mid-afternoon departure to Singapore. (B)

### 03 Jul – Singapore

Arriving Singapore early morning, we spend a few hours in our transit accommodation, before departing for Christchurch early evening.

### 04 Jul – Arrive Christchurch

We arrive home mid-morning where our tour concludes.



## Discover Travel

New Zealand owned and operated, Discover Travel is a premier boutique travel agency within the House of Travel Group. Specialising in travel to far-flung places, we have travelled extensively within Europe, returning regularly to ensure our knowledge is current. We aim to experience those places through your eyes and passionately share our knowledge of the destination with you. Our goal is to genuinely connect you with the location and its culture. Consequently, we like to think that our clients come home with the stories that everyone else misses.

**\*CONDITIONS: Price** - The price of \$10,995.00 per person is based on twin-share. **Single Supplement** - For those travellers wanting their own room, the tour price is \$12,795.00. **Business Class Supplement** - available on request, please discuss with your Discover Travel Consultant. **Payments** - The price quoted is for payment by cash, cheque or direct bank transfer. **Cheques:** Should be made payable to 'Discover Travel'. Our postal address is PO Box 2477, Christchurch. **Bank Transfer:** 06 0801 0495605 02 - Discover Travel Worldwide Ltd, using 'USSR20' as a reference. **VISA or Mastercard** payments will incur a 2% convenience fee and American Express a 3% fee. To confirm your booking, a non-refundable deposit of \$750.00 per person is required. Final payment will be due no later than 14 February, 2020. Prices are based on a minimum group size of 10/maximum of 16 (excluding tour escort). Should the group size be less than 10, excluding tour escort, the tour shall not proceed. ^Other nationalities to be confirmed.

## Tour price from \$10,995

per person twin share\*

\$12,795 per person solo occupancy\*

### Price includes:

- Economy class return airfares from Christchurch
- Superior first-class, or best available first-class hotels
- All transfers and sightseeing transport in private air-conditioned motorcoach
- Meals: 14 breakfasts (B), 1 lunch (L), 14 dinners (D)
- High-speed Sapsan train: St. Petersburg - Moscow
- Sightseeing and excursions with local guide where applicable as per itinerary
- Admissions to all excursions noted as 'Highlights'
- Gratuities/tipping for the motorcoach driver, tour director and local guides. Where meals are included, no tipping is required.
- Tour escort
- Russian visa for New Zealand passport holders^.

**Not included:** Travel insurance (compulsory), any meals/beverages not specified, airport portorage and items of a personal nature.

### To secure your place:

Send your \$750.00 non-refundable deposit per person with completed Booking Form to Discover Travel.

### For more details and to book:

Phone: 03 364 3400 or 0800 747 737

Email: [ideas@discovertravel.co.nz](mailto:ideas@discovertravel.co.nz)

Mail: PO Box 2477, Christchurch.

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