

GORGEIOUS KARELIA

with

C  **MINTOUR**





The tours presented in this brochure aim to introduce customers to the unique beauty and culture of the area stretching between the southern coast of the **White Sea** and the **Ladoga Lake**. Karelia is an ancient land that received her name from Karelians – Finno-Ugric people that settled in that area since prehistoric times. Throughout the history the area was disputed between the Novgorod Republic (later incorporated into Russian Empire) and Kingdom of Sweden. In spite of being Orthodox Christians the Karelians preserved unique feel of Finno-Ugric culture, somehow similar to their Finnish cousins across the border. East of the

country had been for centuries populated by the Russian speaking Pomors – proud independent folk that were at the frontier of the survival of the settled civilization against the harshness of the nature and paid allegiance only to God and their ancestors.

For its sheer territory size (half of that of Germany) Karelia is quite sparsely populated, making it in fact the biggest natural reserve in Europe. The environment of this part of Russia is very green and lavish in the summer and rather stern in the winter, but even in the cold time of the year it has its own unique kind of beauty. Fresh water lakes and rivers numbered in tens of thousands interlace with the dense taiga pine forest and rocky outcrops. Wherever you are in Karelia you never too far from a river or lake. Large deposits of granite and other building stones give the shores of Karelian lakes a uniquely romantic appearance. Many monasteries and churches, some of them on the UNESCO World heritage list, as well as other relics of the past, attract tourists.



Evergreen pine and fur forests, covered with white blanket of snow in the winter, amazing darkless “white” nights in summer, plenty of lakes and rivers, and the relatively flat northern landscape are among the main distinctions of the land historically

inhabited by courageous people of strong personal abilities: fishermen, hunters and woodcutters, carpenters and poets. The local character was formed during centuries of living on the frontier of the Russian civilization in the harsh environment and personal freedom.

Unlike the most of the population of Rus' (the name of the medieval Russia) the ancestors of the present inhabitants witnessed neither the three-hundred years of Tatar yoke, nor serfdom. Among those who settled in Karelia were many Old Believers who sought here refuge after the schism of the Russian Orthodox Church (17th century). The obstinate dissenters struggled desperately against severe persecutions by both the Tsar and the Church for over two centuries but were never defeated for. All these factors influenced the forming the local freedom-loving character and the peculiar local culture, which is distinctly original as compared to that of central Russia, either it



their modestly colored icon paintings.

Among numerous churches and monasteries of Karelia two ancient monasteries on two islands especially stand out. It is **Valaam** Monastery on Ladoga Lake and **Solovetski** Monastery on White Sea. Throughout the centuries these two centres of the Orthodox faith and religious studies were among the most important pilgrimage sites of the Eastern Christianity in the North of Russia. It is said therefore that God has lit three candles of faith on the tree islands in the Northern Russia: Kizhi, Valaam and Solovki.



concerns architecture, language, or the way of life. Among the main tourist attractions of the region are the **unique monuments of the wooden architecture**, be it the world renowned architectural ensemble on **Kizhi** island in Onega Lake or the nameless chapels in the forests, with

visiting the highlights of the region, the customers will have a good opportunity to get acquainted with the way of life, traditions and historical background of the local people, which helps to understand the sources of the fascinating craftsmen's mastership.

SOLOVKI GRAND TOUR

The history of Solovetsky Monastery and Solovki Archipelago in the White Sea is as complex and diverse as the history of Russia herself. The Monastery once was one of the most glorious and richest monasteries of Russia. In the Soviet time the first GULAG prison camp was opened there in 1923. Nowadays the monastery is functioning again and nature of the islands are as peaceful and beautiful as ever, though the grim chilling past is still hovering over it. Apart of the impressive looking monastery's citadel visitors can see the prehistoric stone labyrinths believed to be built by ancient Saami people.



The program of the tour: 5 Days/ 4 Nights

Day 1	Arrival to St.Petersburg. City tour, transfer to the train station, taking train to Kem.
Day 2	Arrival at Kem. Meeting with the guide. Transfer to the railway station. 10.00 - Departure for Solovky by river boat. 13.00 - Transfer to the hotel. <u>Lunch</u> . Accommodation. 15:00 - Excursion around the Monastery complex. Guided tour of the history of the legendary Solovetsky Monastery, visit to its functioning church, and go along its thick fortress walls that no enemy could overcome. 19:00 - <u>Dinner</u> at the hotel.
Day 3	09.00 – <u>Breakfast</u> . 10.00 - Transfer to the boat station. Today you will go by boats along the canals of Big Solovetsky Island that form a huge system of water circulation on the island. Gliding over the calm water of these man-made waterways you will enjoy of the most picturesque landscapes on Solovky. 13:00 – Packed <u>lunch</u> after the end of the excursion. 14:00 - After having lunch you will visit the highest point of Big Solovetsky Island, Hill Sekirnaya . On the top of the hill is situated one of the strictest sketes of the island with a unique lighthouse church. During the GULAG time the skete was one of the cruelest of all the detention places for the inmates of the camp. Today it is a living skete again; a very tranquil place that offers a fantastic panorama view over the island. 17:00 - Return to the hotel. Free time. 19:00 - <u>Dinner</u> at the hotel.
Day 4	09.00 – <u>Breakfast</u> . 10:00 - Boat excursion to Island Zayatsky . Stone labyrinths of Big Zayatsky Island are rare and valuable archaeological monuments. You will have a chance to observe the impressive monuments of the past and admire a special beauty of this small island. Climate here is so severe that the island is covered mostly with a variety of moss species and berries. 13:00 - Return to the island. <u>Lunch</u> . 16:00 - Transfer to Kem by slow boat.
Day 5	Arrival to St. Petersburg. Transfer to the hotel or airport.

Price includes: Accommodation based on Twin room sharing at **Solovky Hotel**, FB, transfers and excursions according to the program, English speaking tour leader to accompany the group from 6 persons, train tickets in 4 persons compartment.

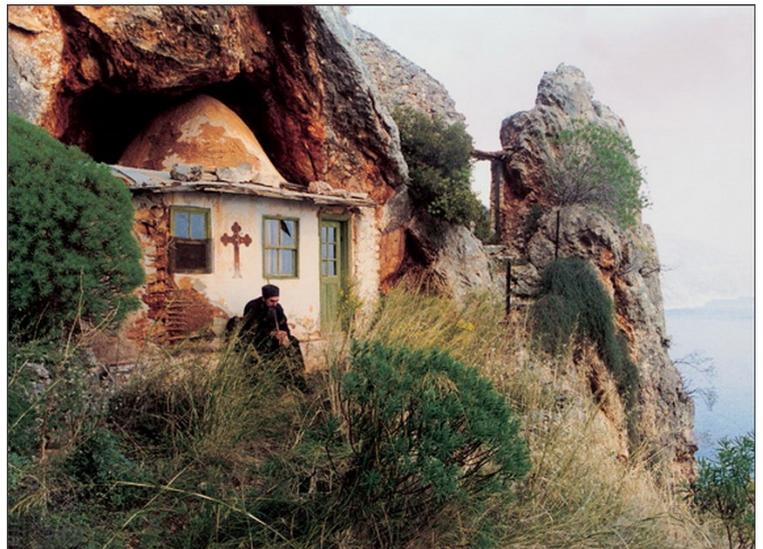
THE PEARL OF THE LADOGA LAKE: VALAAM



with forests (the soil for planting the trees on the rocky island was brought by the monks of the monastery by barges!) and known for its unique microclimate. Intense spiritual life and the austere beauty of services celebrated in the monastery made Valaam a pilgrimage place for both common believers, the members of the Royal family and prominent Russian artists, writers and composers. After the revolution of 1917, when the former Finland Principality of the Russian Empire got its independence, the island became a part of the new state of Finland. Thanks to this fact the monastery, unlike the most monasteries closed by Bolsheviks, kept on functioning until the **Soviet-Finnish war of 1940**. Closed after island's

A longer stay in St.Petersburg gives a good opportunity to make a fascinating trip by boat to the unique island in the Ladoga Lake. Rightly titled both “**The pearl of the Russian North**” and “**The pearl of the Ladoga Lake**”, Valaam (Finnish for “a high mountain”) is renowned as location of the **Russia’s oldest monastery**. As it is considered, **Apostle Andrew** visited the island while preaching among Scythians and Slavs as far back as the 1st century. He demolished the shrines of the pagans and raised a stone Cross on the cliff. The Valaam founders Sergius and Herman were the first monks “from the Eastern countries” who settled on the island when **Rus** (the name of the medieval Russia) **was not yet baptized!** Their prayers mark the beginning of the future **Monastery of the Transfiguration**. The island is wholly covered

restitution to the Soviet Union in February of 1940, the monastery resumed functioning in 1990.



The program of the tour: 3 Days / 2 Nights

Day 1	Transfer to the river-boat station to board a motor-ship. Check-in. Welcome cocktail and presentation of the crew. Departure (at around 21:00)
Day 2	Arrival to Valaam island . Breakfast (aboard the ship). The guided walking tour of the island including visit to a skeet (Russian for a small secluded monastery built for one or several monks, sometimes nearby the main building of the monastery). Visit to the Transfiguration Monastery . Lunch (aboard the ship). An optional boat trip can be arranged in the afternoon to visit several more skits. Dinner (aboard the
Day 3	Arrival to St.Petersburg (at around 7:00). Transfer to the hotel or airport.

Recommended period for travel: late May through late September.

Note: A one-day trip to Valaam island by helicopter can be also arranged.

THE WONDER MADE OF WOOD

DAY TRIP FROM ST.PETERSBURG TO PETROZAVODSK AND KIZHI

The tour includes visiting **Petrozavodsk**, the capital of the autonomous republic of Karelia, and the real gem of the area: **Kizhi island** in the **Onega lake**. Once this area belonged to **the Novgorod Principality**, and was a part of the trade way from the continental **Rus'** (the name of medieval Russia) to the shores of **White Sea**. It was in the 11th century when the enterprising Novgorodians began to populate the lands around the Ladoga and Onega lakes rich in forests, pearl fishery, salt and mica. The main occupation of the new inhabitants, along with hunting, crop farming and woodcutting, was building houses and unique wooden churches. Owing to their skill and taste the local carpenters were well known all over Russia at all times.



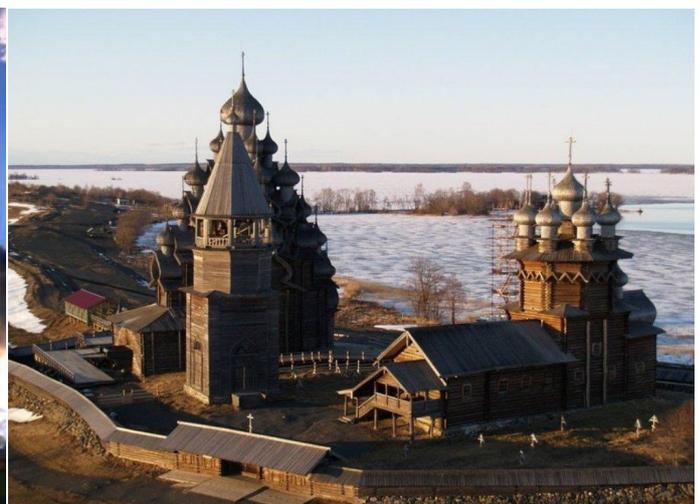
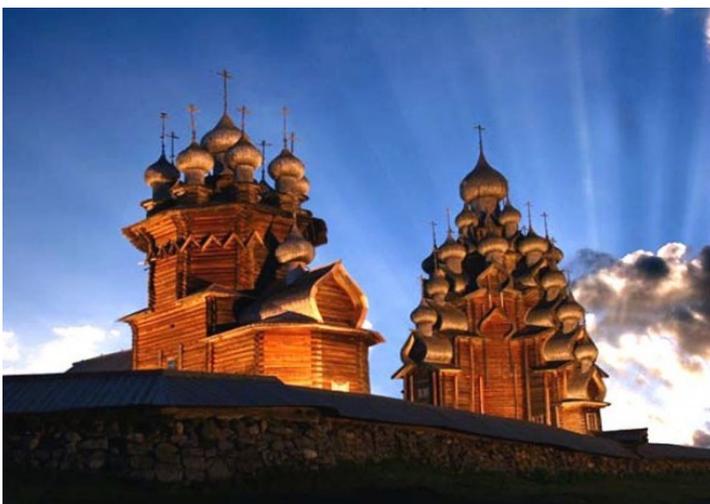
While visiting **Kizhi** (the name comes from the old local dialect for “A place for games or worshipping”) a visitor admires the original monuments of **the Museum of wooden architecture** with its unique styled buildings including **UNESCO listed**

Transfiguration Cathedral. The lore says than when Nestor, the architect and the builder of the Cathedral, finished his work, he cast his axe into the lake ask proclaimed: “No one before has built such a temple of God, and no one will do it again in the future”.

The program of the tour: 3 Days / 2 Nights

Day 1	Arrival to St.Petersburg or Moscow. City tour, transfer to the train station, taking overnight train to Petrozavodsk.
Day 2	Arrival to Petrozavodsk . Transfer to the hotel accompanied by the local guide. Breakfast in the hotel. Trip to the Kizhi island by a hydrofoil (takes 1 hour and 15 minutes). A 3-hour tour of the museum of the wooden architecture in the open air. Among the highlights of the island is The Church of Transfiguration of the Savior crowned with 22 cupolas and built without a single nail. Return to Petrozavodsk . Lunch in a city restaurant. Sightseeing tour of the city . Dinner(Russian cuisine). Transfer to the train station. Departure to St.Petersburg by the overnight train.
Day 3	Arrival to St.Petersburg or Moscow. Transfer to the hotel or airport.

Recommended period for travel: from end of May through mid-September.



SOLOVKY AND KIZHI

SOLOVKI AND KIZHI ON ONE TOUR

The program of the tour: 6 Days / 5 Nights

Day 1	Arrival in St.Petersburg. City tour, transfer to the train station, taking overnight train to Petrozavodsk.
Day 2	<p>Arrival in Petrozavodsk. Meeting with the guide. <u>Breakfast in the restaurant of Petrozavodsk.</u></p> <p>08:30 City tour "The City of Peter the Great" Petrozavodsk, the capital of Karelia, is a pretty and calm city situated on the shore of a beautiful lake. During the city tour you will visit the historic centre of Petrozavodsk with its major sights and walk along the embankment of Lake Onego. Photo stop near the monument to Peter the Great.</p> <p>11:30 Transfer to Kizhi Island by hydrofoil (1 hour 15 minutes).</p> <p>12:45 Excursion in the Kizhi open-air museum of wooden architecture and cultural history. Kizhi is one of the first open-air museums and one of the most popular tourist attractions in Russia. The pearl of the museum is its world-known wooden church ensemble with the magnificent 22-dome church which is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1990.</p> <p>15:45 Transfer to the guest house Kizhskaya Blagodat by boat (10 min). Accommodation. Kizhskaya Blagodat is a cozy family run guesthouse situated on the mainland right opposite Kizhi Island. You will be pleasantly surprised with a tranquil atmosphere of the place as well as with the hospitality of its hosts. <u>"Karelian" lunch.</u> Free time.</p> <p>19:00 <u>Dinner "Welcome to Kizhi"</u>.</p>
Day 3	<p>Breakfast "<u>Morning in the village</u>". 10:00 Transfer to Kizhi Island by boat (10 minutes). Excursion to the inhabited villages of Kizhi Island.</p> <p>14:00 <u>Lunch in the guest house.</u> 15:45 Transfer to Petrozavodsk by hydrofoil (1 hour 15 minutes).</p> <p>17:00 Departure for Kivatch Nature Reserve (82 km). You will see the second largest plain waterfall in Europe and listen to the melody of its roaring waters. You will also visit the museum of nature, get acquainted with the wildlife of Karelian taiga and walk along the alley of well-known Karelian birches. 21:30 Return to Petrozavodsk. <u>Dinner at a local restaurant.</u></p> <p>00:00 Transfer to the railway station. 00:56 Departure for Kem by train.</p>
Day 4	<p>09.00 Arrival at Kem. Transfer to the railway station. <u>Boxed breakfast.</u></p> <p>10.00 Departure for Solovky by slow boat.</p> <p>13.00 Transfer to the hotel to leave your baggage. <u>Lunch at a cozy restaurant "Izba"</u>.</p> <p>15:00 Excursion around the Monastery complex. You will listen to the history of the legendary Solovetsky Monastery that once was one of the richest monasteries of Russia, visit its functioning church, and go along its thick fortress walls that no enemy could overcome.</p> <p>19:00 - Accommodation at the Priyut Hotel. <u>Dinner at the hotel.</u></p>
Day 5	<p>Breakfast "<u>Morning on Solovetsky Island</u>".</p> <p>10:00 – Excursion to Hill Sekirnaya. You will visit the highest point of Big Solovetsky Island and enjoy a breathtaking panorama over the northern shore of the island, see the buildings of the functioning skete, where the isolation ward was situated in the times of the Solovetsky Labour Camp, and a unique lighthouse church.</p> <p>13:30 – <u>Lunch on the island.</u> 16:00 – Departure from Big Solovetsky Island to Kem.</p> <p>19:00 – <u>Dinner in Kem.</u> Transfer to the railway station. 20:25 – Departure for St. Petersburg.</p>
Day 6	Arrival to St.Petersburg. Transfer to the hotel or airport.

SILVER RING OF KARELIA

The program of the tour: 7 Days/ 6 Nights

Day 1	<i>Arrival to Moscow or St.Petersburg. City tour, transfer to the train station, taking train to Petrozavodsk.</i>
Day 2	<p>06:50 Arrival in Petrozavodsk. Meeting with the guide. <u>Breakfast</u> in the restaurant of Petrozavodsk.</p> <p>08:30 City tour "The City of Peter the Great" Petrozavodsk, the capital of Karelia, is a pretty and calm city situated on the shore of a beautiful lake. During the city tour you will visit the historic centre of Petrozavodsk with its major sights and walk along the embankment of Lake Onego. Photo stop near the monument to Peter the Great.</p> <p>11:30 Transfer to Kizhi Island by hydrofoil (1 hour 15 minutes).</p> <p>12:45 Excursion in the Kizhi open-air museum of wooden architecture and cultural history. Kizhi is one of the first open-air museums and one of the most popular tourist attractions in Russia. The highlight of the architectural ensemble is its world famous wooden church with the magnificent 22-dome tower. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1990. <u>Lunch boxes</u>.</p> <p>15:45 Departure for Petrozavodsk.</p> <p>17:00 Arrival in Petrozavodsk. Transfer to the Onego Palace Hotel 4*. Accommodation.</p> <p>19:00 <u>Dinner at the hotel</u>.</p>
Day 3	<p>Early wake up for the morning trip to unforgettable Valaam Island.</p> <p>06:30 Departure for Sortavala (250 km). <u>Boxed breakfast</u>.</p> <p>10:30 Arrival in Sortavala. 11:00 Transfer to the Valaam Archipelago by hydrofoil (50 minutes).</p> <p>12:00 Excursion program around the Central Monastery Complex. Today you will get acquainted with one of the main Orthodox sacred places in Russia and visit its cathedral of the Transfiguration. In a small cozy church above the Holy Gates you will listen to the singing of the Valaam choir that reflects the spiritual atmosphere of the place. After a walk around the monastery complex you will also visit one of the sketes (small monasteries) and try simple monastic food during the <u>lunch in the monastery's refectory</u>.</p> <p>17:00 Departure to Sortavala by hydrofoil (50 minutes). 18:00 <u>Dinner in Sortavala</u>.</p> <p>23:00 Arrival in Petrozavodsk.</p>
Day 4	<p><u>Breakfast at the hotel</u>. 09:30 Departure for Kem (500 km).</p> <p>On the way a short stop in the Kivatch Nature Reserve. You will see the second largest plain waterfall in Europe and listen to the melody of its roaring waters. You will also visit the museum of nature, get acquainted with the wildlife of Karelian taiga and walk along the alley of Karelian birches (which famous as source of precious wood for carving). 14:00 <u>Lunch in Medvezhyegorsk</u>.</p> <p>17:00 Excursion to one of the most favourite tourist routes "Belomorsk Petroglyphs". It is an archaeological complex comprising over 2000 images of wild animals, sea animals, people and boats including the oldest images of a skiing man not only in Northern Europe but in the whole world. During the excursion you will make a trip to the Karelian past and comprehend the mysteries of the Stone Age people.</p> <p>20:30 Accommodation at the Pritchal Hotel in Kem. <u>Dinner at the hotel</u>.</p>
Day 5	<p><u>Breakfast</u>. 07:30 Boarding time. 08:00 Departure for Solovky by boat (3 h).</p> <p>11:30 Walking excursion round the Central Architectural Complex of the Solovetsky Monastery. You will learn the unique history of one of the most northern monasteries of Russia, observe the massive walls and towers of the Solovetsky Kremlin, outstanding for the Middle Ages household achievements of the monastery and its austere white stone churches.</p> <p>14:00 <u>Lunch "Warm Welcome of Solovky"</u>. Free time on the island. 17:00 Boarding time.</p> <p>17:30 Departure for Kem. 20:30 Accommodation at the Prichal Hotel. <u>Dinner at the hotel</u>.</p>
Day 6	<u>Breakfast boxes</u> . 05:30 Transfer to the railway station. 06:19 Departure for St. Petersburg/Moscow.
Day 7	Arrival to St. Petersburg/Moscow. Transfer to the hotel or airport.

ST.PETERSBURG AND KARELIA

ST.PETERSBURG / KIZHI / VALAAM

The tour combines the highlights of both St.Petersburg and Karelia in a week's trip. After the busy city life and fast pace of Russia's Northern Capital, peace and tranquility of Karelia may be a nice change to unwind and relax. Taking a hydrofoil across Onega Lake with its myriads of the islands to the beautiful wooden cathedral on thy Kizhi island could be truly unforgettable experience.



The program of the tour

8 Days / 7 Nights

Day 1	Arrival in St.Petersburg. Transfer to the hotel Check-in. Dinner at the hotel.
Day 2	Breakfast. Sightseeing tour of the city , including visit to the Peter & Paul Fortress . Lunch in a city restaurant. Tour of the Hermitage museum .
Day 3	Breakfast. Trip to Pushkin , for the tour of the Catherine's Palace . Lunch. Proceed to Pavlovsk for the tour of the Emperor Paul' Palace . Return to the hotel. Dinner in a city restaurant. Transfer to the train station. Departure to Petrozavodsk , the capital of the Republic of Karelia, by the overnight train.
Day 4	Arrival in Petrozavodsk. Transfer to the hotel, accompanied by the local tour escort. Check-in. Breakfast. Sightseeing tour of the city . Visit to the Dolls' House private art gallery. Proceed to the Russia's oldest resort of Martial Waters . Visit to the Church of the Apostle Peter built in 1721 for the guests of the resort. Trip to Kivatch waterfall , the Europe's second highest flat fall. Picnic on the site including shish kebab as the main course. Return to Petrozavodsk. Dinner at the hotel.
Day 5	Breakfast. Visit to the exhibition of the petroglyphs (rock carvings) from the Onega Lake and the White Sea. Made by the ancient hunters and fishermen about 6 thousand years ago the carvings are considered among the most outstanding monuments of the primitive art in Northern Europe. Trip to the Kizhi Island by hydrofoil across the Onega Lake . Tour of the open air museum of the wooden architecture. Among the highlights of the island is the UNESCO listed Church of Transfiguration of the Savior crowned with 22 cupolas and built without a single nail. Visit to the Church of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God . Return to Petrozavodsk. Dinner at the hotel.
Day 6	Breakfast. Departure by bus to Sortavala (260 km away from). The trip includes a 2-hour rafting the Shuya river followed by lunch on the picturesque river bank. (the customers can optionally get to the lunch place by bus). Arrival to Sortavala. Check-in. Dinner at the hotel.
Day 7	Breakfast. Check-out. Transfer to the river-boat station. Trip to Valaam Island by boat across the Ladoga Lake . Walking tour of the Valaam Island . Visit to the Transfiguration Monastery . Visiting a skeet (Russian for a small secluded monastery built for one or several monks, sometimes nearby the main building of the monastery). Lunch in the refectory. Concert of sacred music. Departure by bus to Petrozavodsk (via Sortavala). Dinner on the way in the village of Kinerma featuring the authentic specialities of the Karelian cuisine . Arrival in Petrozavodsk. Transfer to the train station. Departure to St.Petersburg by the overnight train.
Day 8	Arrival in St.Petersburg early morning. Breakfast in a downtown restaurant. Transfer to the airport. Departure.

GRAND TOUR AROUND LADOGA AND ONEGA LAKES

ST.PETERSBURG / KIZHI / VALAAM

Day 1	<i>Arrival to St.Petersburg. Transfer to the river-boat station to board the ship. Dinner aboard a ship. Departure (at around 20:00).</i>
Day 2	<i>After the breakfast we arrive to the village of Upper Mandrogi, located 270 km north-east of St.Petersburg on the bank of the Svir River. This is a beautiful picturesque site with abundant flora and fauna, known for the tourist complex of stylized Russian wooden houses and peaceful surrounding perfectly situated for hunting and fishing. In the village the group will visit handicraft shops and attend master-class of making some typical Russian souvenirs, an elk farm, a windmill and the museum of Russian vodka. Picnic with the Russian folklore show is another amusement of the tour. Departure. Dinner on the boat.</i>
Day 3	<i>Breakfast. Our ship is passing through the Kizhi skerries, the multitude of beautiful green and rocky islands on the Onega Lake, finally arriving to the main island of Kizhi. The place is world renowned for the ensemble of two unique multi-domed wooden churches built without a single nail, that regarded as the ultimate masterpiece of traditional wooden architecture. The main UNESCO-listed Transfiguration cathedral is one of the most visited tourist sites of Russia as well as the iconic symbol of the Russian North-West. The best surviving examples of wooden residential buildings, barns and windmills are gathered around the churches to form an excellent museum of wooden architecture. Here we have a guided tour. Departure. Lunch and dinner aboard the cruise ship.</i>
Day 4	<i>Breakfast. Time at leisure. Arrival to the Valaam Island on the Ladoga Lake (the biggest lake of Europe) to visit the Valaam Monastery and its Churches. Rightly titled “The pearl of the Russian North”, the picturesque Valaam Island (about 30 km large) is famous as location of the Russia’s oldest monastery. As a legend says, Apostle Andrew himself visited the island while enlightening Scythians and Slavs as far back as the 1st century. He demolished the shrines of the pagans and raised a stone Cross on the cliff. In more recent historical times two hermits Sergius and Herman were the first monks “from the Eastern countries” who settled on the rocky island when the whole Rus (the name of the medieval Russia) was not yet baptised. Their prayers mark the beginning of the future Monastery of the Transfiguration. The island is wholly covered with thick forests (the soil for planting the trees on the rocky island was brought by the monks of the monastery by barges!) and known for its unique microclimate. Intense spiritual life and the austere beauty of services celebrated in the monastery made Valaam a popular pilgrimage place for common believers, the members of the Royal family and prominent Russian artists, writers and composers. After the revolution of 1917, when the former Grand Duchy of Finland got its independence from the Russian Empire, the island became a part of the new Finnish state. Thanks to this fact the monastery, unlike the most monasteries closed by Bolsheviks, kept on functioning until the Winter war of 1940. Closed after island’s restitution to the Soviet Union in February of 1940, the monastery resumed functioning under the Russian Orthodox Church in 1990. Here we take a guided tour of the island. Dinner aboard a ship. Sail back to St.Petersburg.</i>
Day 5	<i>Arrival to St.Petersburg. Breakfast in a city restaurant. City tour including a visit to the Peter & Paul Cathedral. Lunch in a city restaurant. Transfer to the hotel. Check-in. Dinner at the hotel.</i>
Day 6	<i>Breakfast. The tour of the Hermitage Museum. Lunch in a city restaurant. The tour of St.Isaac’s Cathedral. Dinner at the hotel.</i>
Day 7	<i>Breakfast. The tours of Pushkin and Pavlovsk. Lunch in Pushkin with a Russian folklore show. Time at leisure. Dinner at the hotel.</i>
Day 8	<i>Breakfast. Transfer to the airport.</i>

LAND OF WHITE NIGHTS

ST.PETERSBURG / KIZHI / SOLOVKI ARCHIPELAGO

The so called White Nights is a natural phenomena that occurs at high latitudes in the summer. The sun at this time of the year goes down just briefly for few hours and still there is only twilight, instead of proper dark night.. The further you go to the North, the shorter nights become. This tour allows you almost to the Polar Circle to enjoy all the beauty of the Northern nature and architectural masterpieces of the Russian past in the mysterious land of the White Nights.



The program of the tour 8 Days / 7 Nights

Day 1	<i>Arrival in St.Petersburg. Transfer to the hotel Dinner at the hotel.</i>
Day 2	<i>Breakfast. Sightseeing tour of the city, including the Peter & Paul Fortress. Lunch at a city restaurant.</i>
Day 3	<i>Breakfast. Trip to Pushkin for the tour of the Catherine's Palace. Lunch. Proceed to Pavlovsk for the tour of the Emperor Paul' Palace. Return to St.Petersburg. Dinner at a city restaurant. Transfer to the train station. Overnight train to Petrozavodsk.</i>
Day 4	<i>Arrival to Petrozavodsk. Transfer to the hotel. Check-in. Breakfast. Transfer to the river-boat station. Trip to the Kizhi Island by hydrofoil across the Ladoga Lake (lasts for 1,5 hours). Tour of the island, known as museum-preserve of the wooden architecture. Among the island's highlights is world famous The Church of Transfiguration of the Savior crowned with 22 cupolas and built without a single nail. Return to Petrozavodsk by hydrofoil. Lunch aboard the ship (lunch boxes packed at the hotel). Sightseeing tour of the city (upon arrival), including the Museum of Dolls (Dolls' House). Lunch. Dinner.</i>
Day 5	<i>Breakfast. Check-out. Departure by bus to Kem' (440 km away from Petrozavodsk). Lunch (on the way). Arrival to Kem'. Transfer to the river-boat station for a 3-hour trip to the Solovetsky Archipelago (consists of 6 big and a number of small islands) with its famous monastery which in the Tzar's and Soviet time also served as a place of the political exile. Transfer to the Solovki hotel **. Check-in. Dinner at the hotel.</i>
Day 6	<i>Breakfast. The trip by rowing boats (6-8 persons in each) along the Smaller Circle of the canals showing the hydrotechnical structure of the monastery: the canals, locks, piers and dykes. Picnic on the shore. Visiting the Sekirnaya Hill, the place where the exiles were executed (the name of the hill comes from "Sekira", which is Russian for "pole axe"). The tour of the unique Botanical Garden (located less than 100 miles South from the Polar Circle!). Dinner at the hotel.</i>
Day 7	<i>Breakfast. Walking tour of the Solovetsky Monastery, one of Russia's oldest and most famous, including the Ascension Cathedral, the country house of the Archimandrite and the necropolis. After the schism of the Russian Orthodox Church (17th century) the monastery became the stronghold for Old Believers (the religious schism persecuted by the Tsars and the Church). After the revolution of 1917 the monastery was closed and turned by Bolsheviks into political prison, the remains of which (very few) can be seen during the tour. Lunch at the hotel. Departure to Kem' by boat. Dinner. (upon arrival) at the river-boat station. Transfer to the train station. Overnight train to St.Petersburg.</i>
Day 8	<i>Arrival in St.Petersburg. Breakfast in a city restaurant. Transfer to the airport. Departure.</i>

KARELIA IN WINTER

KIZHI FROSTWORK



Our snowmobile tour gives you the real taste of Karelian winter and introduces to the famous Kizhi Island at more leisurely pace and without the traffic and crowds of a summer visit. Feel the thrill of speed as you head to Kizhi across the frozen Onego, the second largest lake in Europe. After such an adventure hot Russian sauna and a substantial dinner will be waiting for you. Isn't it a winter vacation of a lifetime?

Group: 6 - 16 pax

Duration: 5 days/ 4 nights

Day 1	<i>Arrival to Moscow or St.Petersburg. City tour, transfer to the train station, taking overnight train to Petro-</i>
Day 2	<i>06:50/ 08:50 Meeting at the railway station with the guide. Transfer from Petrozavodsk to Kedrozero (90 km). Breakfast. Getting equipped. Safety measures. Training course. 12.00 - Snowmobile safari: settlement Kedrozero - settlement Pegrema - settlement Yuzhny Dvor - settlement Lypovitsy - Kizhi Island - settlement Sennaya Guba 80 km. Tea with sandwiches on the way. Accommodation at guesthouse «Ostrov». The guesthouse is situated on island Klimenetsky on Lake Onego. Dinner. Sauna.</i>
Day 3	<i>Breakfast.12:00 - Snowmobile safari: settlement Sennaya Guba - Kizhi Island - settlement Podyelniky - settlement Volkostrov - settlement Sennaya Guba 50 km. Excursion in the Kizhi Museum. Tea with sandwiches on the way. Dinner. Sauna for extra pay.</i>
Day 4	<i>Breakfast. Snowmobile safari: settlement Sennaya Guba - settlement Yuzhny Dvor - settlement Pegrema - settlement Kedrozero 80 km. Tea with sandwiches on the way. Transfer settlement Kedrozero - Petrozavodsk 90 km. 18:00 - Dinner at a cafe.</i>
Day 5	<i>Arrival to St. Petersburg/Moscow. Transfer to the hotel or airport.</i>

Price includes: accommodation and meals according to the program, transfers, snowmobile and snowmobile equipment rent, entrance tickets to the Kizhi Museum, guide services, train tickets in 4 persons compartment.

Snowmobile equipment: Snowmobile «Yamaha VK-540 III». Warm windproof overalls, snowmobile helmet, balaclava, snowmobile shoes and gloves.

What to take with you: Backpack, comfortable clothes: pants, warm sweater, 2 pairs of woolen socks, 2-3 pairs of cotton socks, T-shirts, warm jacket, woolen hat, gloves, warm comfortable shoes.

WINTER ADVENTURE IN THE KARELIAN COUNTRYSIDE

This 2-day snowmobile tour to the Karelian countryside is a great way to explore a winter wonderland and get acquainted with Karelian culture. Trees covered with snow blankets, snowy fields, pristine winter forests and flakes of fluffy snow falling on the cozy houses of Karelian villages turn your adventure to a perfect winter dream. Let this fairytale enchant you!



Group: 6-16 pax

Duration: 4 days / 3 nights

Day 1	<i>Arrival to Moscow or St.Petersburg. City tour, transfer to the train station, taking overnight train to Petrozavodsk.</i>
Day 2	<i>06:50/ 08:50 – Meeting at the railway station with the guide. Transfer Petrozavodsk – tourist complex Denisov Mis (70 km). <u>Breakfast.</u> Getting equipped. Safety measures. Training course. Our snowmobile adventure starts at the tourist complex (total distance of the day is 80 km). Today we will go along forest paths to the zoo complex “Three Bears” and enjoy the pristine beauty and breathtaking scenery of Karelian winter landscapes. The zoo complex houses animals typical of Karelian woods (mooses and bears, wolves and lynxes, foxes and polar foxes). You will not only observe these animals and learn some interesting facts about their mores but also help to feed them. <u>Tea with sandwiches on the way.</u> When we return to the tourist complex a hot sauna and a substantial <u>dinner</u> will await us.</i>
Day 3	<i><u>Breakfast.</u> Today we continue a scenic exploration of Karelian forests and head to the ancient Karelian village of Rubcheyla. You will visit a typical Karelian village of the 19th century and enjoy a concert of a local folk ensemble. This thrilling ride will be rewarded not only with an excursion around the village but also with a delicious <u>lunch</u> in an ancient Karelian house. After lunch we return to the tourist complex. Transfer to Petrozavodsk (70 km). <u>Dinner.</u> 19:00 – Departure for Moscow/22:50 – Departure for St. Petersburg.</i>
Day 4	<i>Arrival to St. Petersburg/Moscow. Transfer to the hotel or airport.</i>

Price includes: accommodation and meals according to the program, transfers, snowmobile and snowmobile equipment rent, entrance tickets, guide services, train tickets in 4 persons compartment.

Snowmobile equipment: Snowmobile «Yamaha VK-540 III». Warm windproof overalls, snowmobile helmet, balaclava, snowmobile shoes and gloves.

What to take with you: Backpack, comfortable clothes: pants, warm sweater, 2 pairs of woolen socks, 2-3 pairs of cotton socks, T-shirts, warm jacket, woolen hat, gloves, warm comfortable shoes.

SNOWMOBILE TOUR – WINTER KIZHI

This snowmobile tour is a perfect getaway for those who have never tried snowmobiling as well as for those who want to experience true Karelian winter first hand. Woods glistening under a thick blanket of snow, endless frozen lakes and traditional Karelian wooden architecture unite in full harmony with fun and excitement that you get from riding a snowmobile.

Group: 6 - 16 pax

Duration: 4 days/ 3 nights



Day 1	Arrival to Moscow or St.Petersburg. City tour, transfer to the train station, taking overnight train to Petrozavodsk.
Day 2	<p>06:50/ 08:50 - Meeting at the railway station with the guide. Transfer Petrozavodsk - settlement Kedrozero (90 km). <u>Breakfast</u>.</p> <p>After breakfast, we take you through snowmobile safety instructions, do a riding briefing and equip you with boots, a special snowmobile suit and helmet. Now it is time for our snowmobile adventure to begin! Today we will cover the distance of 80 km and plunge into the idyllic winter landscapes and the thrill of speed.</p> <p>Starting in Kedrozero we drive through ancient Karelian villages Pegrema, Yuzhny Dvor and Lypovitsy and across the second biggest lake in Europe, Lake Onego, to the world-known Kizhi Island. <u>Tea with sandwiches on the way</u>.</p> <p>Excursion in the "Kizhi" Museum of Wooden Architecture and Cultural History.</p> <p>After the excursion we drive to the settlement Sennaya Guba and get accommodated. Hot sauna and substantial <u>dinner</u>.</p>
Day 3	<p>After <u>breakfast</u> we head back to Kedrozero passing by the same villages of Lypovitsy, Yuzhny Dvor and Pegrema. Total distance 90 km. <u>Tea with sandwiches on the way</u>.</p> <p>Transfer settlement Kedrozero - Petrozavodsk 90 km..</p> <p>18:00 - <u>Dinner</u> at a cafe. 19:00 - Departure for Moscow/ 22:50 - Departure for St Petersburg.</p>
Day 4	Arrival to St. Petersburg/Moscow. Transfer to the hotel or airport.

Price includes: accommodation and meals according to the program, transfers, snowmobile and snowmobile equipment rent, entrance tickets, guide services, train tickets in 4 persons compartment.

Snowmobile equipment: Snowmobile «Yamaha VK-540 III». Warm windproof overalls, snowmobile helmet, balaclava, snowmobile shoes and gloves.

What to take with you: Backpack, comfortable clothes: pants, warm sweater, 2 pairs of woolen socks, 2-3 pairs of cotton socks, T-shirts, warm jacket, woolen hat, gloves, warm comfortable shoes.

LADOGA BY SNOWMOBILE



Enjoy snowmobiling on the largest lake of Europe! Lake Ladoga is a unique ecosystem of exceptional beauty that unites picturesque landscapes of the Ladoga skerries, outstanding architecture of the Valaam Monastery and crispy fresh air.

Group: 6 - 12 pax

Duration: 3 days/ 2 nights

Day 1	Arrival to Moscow. City tour, transfer to the train station, taking overnight train to Lodeynoye Pole.
Day 2	<p>Arrival at Lodeynoye Pole by train # 18 from Moscow. Meeting with the guide. Transfer to the tourist complex Lamberg (250 km). <u>Breakfast</u>.</p> <p>After breakfast, we take you through snowmobile safety instructions, do a riding briefing and equip you with boots, a special snowmobile suit and helmet. Now it is time for our snowmobile adventure to begin! Today we will cover the distance of 60 km and plunge into the idyllic winter landscapes and the thrill of speed.</p> <p>Starting on the territory of the tourist complex we drive across the lake passing by picturesque rocky isles of Lake Ladoga. <u>Tea with sandwiches on the way</u>.</p> <p>After we return to the tourist complex a substantial <u>dinner</u> will be waiting for us in the restaurant.</p>
Day 3	<p>After <u>breakfast</u> we head to the real pearl of Lake Ladoga which is the Valaam Monastery. "Mount Athos of the North" - so is often called the ancient orthodox monastery on Valaam Island which has always been an indispensable religious and cultural center of the Russian North. The heart of Valaam is its magnificent monastery complex founded in 992. Upon arrival a local guide will acquaint us with the central monastery complex.</p> <p><u>Tea with sandwiches on the way</u>. Total distance of the day 100 km.</p> <p>Hot and delicious <u>dinner</u> at the restaurant of the tourist complex.</p>
Day 4	<p><u>Breakfast</u>. Today we cover the distance of 90 km to visit the famous Ruskeala Marble Canyon which is not only a sight of rare beauty but also a monument of industrial history of four nations - Karelians, Swedes, Russians and Finns. Ruskeala marble was used to decorate churches and palaces of St.Petersburg and fountains of Petrodvorets. <u>Tea with sandwiches on the way</u>. Transfer to the railway station of Lodeynoye Pole (250 km).</p> <p>Departure to Moscow by train # 17.</p>
Day 5	Arrival to Moscow. Transfer to the hotel or airport.

Price includes: accommodation and meals according to the program, transfers, snowmobile and snowmobile equipment rent, entrance tickets, guide services, train tickets in 4 persons compartment.

Snowmobile equipment: Snowmobile «Yamaha VK-540 III». Warm windproof overalls, snowmobile helmet, balaclava, snowmobile shoes and gloves.

What to take with you: Backpack, comfortable clothes: pants, warm sweater, 2 pairs of woolen socks, 2-3 pairs of cotton socks, T-shirts, warm jacket, woolen hat, gloves, warm comfortable shoes.

HUSKY TOUR - KARELIAN ADVENTURE



Husky dogs were originally bred by Arctic indigenous peoples to pull sleds in cold northern regions. They are muscular and energetic, with thick fur coat and often blue or brown eyes (or sometimes each of different color). Scientific research has shown that Huskies are one of the oldest types of dog, domesticated by people since very early. Nevertheless (or may be because of that) they are among the most intelligent kinds of dog. For the people who do not know huskies it seems sometimes that it's hard for relatively small dogs to pull large sleds, but actually it is more of a fun to them. What they fear most is boredom. Having a sleds race is an exciting adventure for the huskies as well as much as it can be for you.

Period: December - April

Duration: 5 days/4 nights

Group: 2-12 pax

Day 1	<i>Arrival to Moscow or St.Petersburg. City tour, transfer to the train station, taking overnight train to Petrozavodsk.</i>
Day 2	<i>Meeting with the guide at the railway station of Petrozavodsk. Transfer to the village of Matrosy (35 km). After <u>substantial breakfast</u> in the guest house you will get acquainted with safety measures and riding technique and meet huskies that during the following three days will become your closest friends. Soon the sledges are ready, the dogs are harnessed and cheerful huskies' bark is the signal of the coming adventure. Today you will cover the distance of 25 km from Matrosy to Pryazha and enjoy the stunning winter scenery of the Karelian countryside. <u>Tea with sandwiches on the way.</u> Accommodation in the guest house upon arrival at Pryazha. Time to have a rest and enjoy a delicious <u>dinner</u>.</i>
Day 3	<i><u>Breakfast</u>. Today you will broaden your knowledge in the skill of husky sledding and continue the snowy trip in the Karelian countryside. Fresh air, white snow soft like a blanket and sleeping nature create an unforgettable atmosphere of a winter fairy tale. You will cover the distance of 20 km till the village of Svyatozero (20 km). <u>Tea with sandwiches on the way.</u> Accommodation in a traditional Karelian house in Svyatozero (Attention: WC is situated outside of the house). After you get accommodated a <u>traditional Karelian dinner</u> will await you. Sauna for extra pay.</i>
Day 4	<i><u>Breakfast</u>. Huskies and you have achieved a full harmony in communication and work with each other. You have become not only a strong team but also good friends. Today you cover the distance of 15 km and make a circle starting from the village of Svyatozero. Transfer from Svyatozero to Matrosy. <u>Farewell dinner</u>. Transfer to the railway station.</i>
Day 5	<i>Arrival to St. Petersburg/Moscow. Transfer to the hotel or airport.</i>

Price includes: accommodation in the guest houses and meals according to the program, transfers, dog team, professional dog musher, and guide, train tickets in 4 persons compartment.



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