

Code EEPE **Eastern Europe Adventure**

Tour Dossier Introduction

Dossier Last Updated: 24-08-2015

Tour Code: EEPE

Duration: 36 nights / 37 days

Joining City: Moscow

Departure City: Istanbul

Nearest Joining International Airport: Moscow Sheremetyevo Intl Airport (SVO), Moscow Domodedovo International Airport (DME), Moscow Vnukovo International Airport (VKO)

Nearest Departing International Airport: Istanbul Ataturk Airport (IST), Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen Intl Airport (SAW)

Please check this document just before departing in case of last minute changes to your tour.

Tour Documents

 PDF Document  Web Page

 [Bulgaria Dossier](#)

 [Czech Republic Dossier](#)

 [Estonia Dossier](#)

 [Hungary Dossier](#)

 [Latvia Dossier](#)

 [Lithuania Dossier](#)

 [Poland Dossier](#)

 [Romania Dossier](#)

 [Russia Dossier](#)

 [Slovakia Dossier](#)

 [Turkey Dossier](#)

 [Russia Visa Form](#)

What's Included

- > Entry & Guided tour of Moscow Kremlin
- > Lenin's Tomb
- > Entry & Guided tour of the Hermitage Museum
- > Entry & Guided tour of the KGB Museum
- > Guided Tour of Auschwitz Concentration Camp
- > Stay in Sighi?oara Citadel

- Entry to Dracula's Castle and Peles Castle
- Entry to a Fortified Church
- Entry to Plovdiv Roman Amphitheatre
- Selimiye Mosque
- 33 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses, 3 night(s) on overnight trains
- 31 breakfasts
- Travel by Public Bus, Private Vehicle, Train, Overnight Train, Minibus, Taxi, Foot
- Tucan Travel tour leader, English-speaking local guide(s) on included excursions

What's not Included

- International flights and departure taxes
- Tips on included excursions, visas, travel insurance, personal items and single rooms.
- Airport transfers and pre and post tour accommodation
- Spending money – budget for meals, snacks, drinks, limited souvenirs, laundry, tips and any extras
- Optional excursions - Please see our optional excursions guide on the dossier page for a comprehensive list of optional activities and excursions available on this tour.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 to 2 - Arrive Moscow

The first day of your tour is simply an arrival day with no pre-organised activities. In order to allow time to relax and see some of the sights you may wish to add pre tour accommodation. On arrival please ask at the reception for information on when the pre departure meeting will be held.

Golden onion domes and towering skyscrapers, cosy cafés and hushed churches, Russia's capital city is beautiful, atmospheric and overflowing with history. There is plenty to see and do here, including numerous cathedrals, museums, art galleries, palaces, the State History Museum and the iconic St Basil's Cathedral, towers and monuments. Moscow's Red Square (Krasnaja Ploshad) is the main centre of Moscow and was a market place during the fifteenth century. The square acquired its present name in the seventeenth century. The red part of its name does not refer to Communism or to the colour of the stone (which is actually grey) but derives from the old Russian word 'krasniy' meaning beautiful. During the Soviet regime the square was known for its May Day parades and is the site of Lenin's Mausoleum

Just a few minutes' walk away from Izmailovsky Park Metro, the lively and bustling Izmailovsky Souvenir Market is an absolute must-see. The entire market is surrounded by a mock wooden fortress which is prettily decorated with statues of figures from Russian legends. Browse around the seemingly endless stands, shopping for wooden matryoshky dolls, chess sets, amber jewellery and Soviet memorabilia such as authentic army belts and gas masks, or if you're looking for less kitsch and more art, you could aim for the traditional Russian handicrafts and original paintings. Don't forget to haggle! A useful word to know is 'skolka' or 'how much?' When you get tired, stop for a freshly barbequed Georgian shashliki (kebab) or relax with a glass of Russian cognac.

More than a people-moving system, Moscow's metro system is a network of beautifully and artistically decorated stations. Why not take a self-guided tour of the system and discover Moscow's original underground art scene. (Please note you will need to pay for your own metro tickets).

We will spend our days in Moscow visiting some of the great historical sites of the city. The Kremlin is UNESCO World Heritage listed as a main focus of Russia's political and historical heritage since the 13th century, housing both royalty and religious figures. The Kremlin wall contains a mass grave of Bolsheviks who perished during the battle for Moscow in 1917, together with the ashes of a number of well-known Russians, including writer Maxim Gorky and Yuriy Gagarin, the first Russian man to visit space.

It is said that soon after January 21, 1924, the day that Vladimir Lenin died, the Soviet government received more than 10,000 telegrams from all over Russia, which asked the government to preserve his body somehow for future generations. Lenin's tomb, and final resting place, was then promptly set about being designed and a wooden tomb was constructed within 6 days of his death. A larger mausoleum was constructed later that year and stands today in the centre of the city in the prominent Red Square.

Included Excursions: The Kremlin • Lenin's Tomb

Optional Excursions: Krasnaya Ploshchad (Red Square) - Free • Pokrovsky Sobor (St Basil's Cathedral) – RUB 250 • Muzey Izobrazitelnykh Iskusstv in A S Pushkina (Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts) – RUB 300 • Tretyakov Galereya (Tretyakov Gallery) – RUB 250 • Sergiev Posad (Pilgrimage site) – RUB 300 train return • Moscow Metro – RUB 40 • Muzey-panorama 'Borodinskaya bitva' (Museum-Panorama 'Borodino Battle') – RUB 200 • Memorialny Muzey Kosmosa

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 3 to 3 - Moscow & Overnight train to St Petersburg

We have the whole day to spend in Moscow enjoying some last minute sightseeing before we next head to St Petersburg by overnight train - it's a good idea to buy some snacks before we board!

Accommodation: 1 night(s) on overnight trains

Day 4 to 6 - St Petersburg

The cosmopolitan city of St Petersburg is known as the 'Venice of the north' because of its rivers and canals which are fascinating and easy to explore by boat. There are many sights to see in this former capital including the Winter Palace, the famous Church of the Spilt Blood and the Hermitage museums.

We will take an orientation walk around the key sights of the city, include a visit to the Hermitage Museum (with a local guide) to explore the extensive art collection there, and then you will be free to explore this great city at your leisure.

Included Excursions: Hermitage Museum

Optional Excursions: Isaakievsky sobor (St Isaac's Cathedral) – RUB 250 • Muzeh-domik Petra I (Cabin of Peter the Great) – RUB 200 • Kneževskaja Krovja (Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood) – RUB 250 • Piskarjovskoye Memorialnoe Kladbishche (Piskarjovskoye Memorial Cemetery) – free • Kreiser Avrorra (Cruiser Aurokyyra) – free • Muzeh Antropologiy i Etnografii imena Petra Velikovo - Kunstkamera (Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology) – RUB 250 • The Vodka Museum – RUB 500 (includes guided tour, tasting and small traditional snacks) • Catherine's Palace – RUB (park entry) RUB 400 (Entry to palace) • Fountains of Peterhof – RUB 500

Accommodation: 3 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 7 to 8 - Tallinn

Our next stop is Tallinn, Estonia's capital. Famous for its enchanting historic centre, the city is a popular holiday destination on the Gulf of Finland. Roam the cobbled streets and explore scenic ruins or climb the hill of Toompea, which is filled with medieval buildings, 14th century churches, turrets, spires and enticing alleyways.

Tallinn also offers alluring boutique shopping similar to that found in Swiss cities. The city is full of artists and artisans so you may also find wonderfully made glass, weaving and pottery here. The café scene is thriving and you can find everything from sunlit street cafés to Art Deco style bakeries. Within the walls of the Old Town there are lots of excellent restaurants to enjoy and a thriving nightlife, with clubs open until the wee hours. Estonians are true beer lovers so you might like to try an authentic local brew.

Optional Excursions: Explore Toompea – free of charge • Kalev Spa Hotel morning/afternoon swim – €7.00/€16 • Visit Kadriorg Park – free • Kadriorg Palace – €5.50 • St. Peter & Paul's Catholic Church – free • Dominican Monastery – €3 • Tallinn City Museum (also called the Linnamuuseum) – €3.20 • St. Olav Church (also called Oleviste) – €2 • The Town Hall – €5 (additional €2 to climb the tower) • Alexander Nevsky Cathedral – free • Kalamaja Walking Tour of Lahemaa N.P - €50 • Tour of coastal cliffs and Soviet Paldiksi - €45

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 9 to 10 - Riga

Riga is more than 800 years old and its clever blend of medieval centre and modern city infrastructure will enchant you. The UNESCO World Heritage listed Old Town has its own particular charm, while the city is also famous for its fascinating Art Nouveau architectural heritage which you can discover as you wander the streets of this 'Paris of the East'. A must-do is a visit to Riga's most famous Gothic church, St Peter's, thought to be about 800 years old. Its famous spire has been rebuilt three times in the same form since 1667, with its latest rebuild completed in 1973. Climb the spire and enjoy spectacular views over the city.

Optional Excursions: St Peter's Tower – €7 • City tour bus – €15 • Latvian Ethnographic Open-Air Museum – €1.50 • Wander the Art Nouveau free Central Market, housed in old WW2 hangars – free • Museum of Ethnic Hats – €4 • The House of Blackheads – €3 • The Dome Cathedral – €3 • Latvian War

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 11 to 12 - Vilnius

The capital of Lithuania, Vilnius boasts an attractive baroque Old Town that is the largest in Eastern Europe and is praised as the 'New Prague'. Located on the edge of the Neris River, with its pine covered hills, friendly people, and blend of old and new, this is a picturesque city well worth exploring. You will have time to explore the main sights of the city including Gediminas Castle on the top of Gediminas Hill and Cathedral Square at the base of the hill,

which is dominated by Vilnius Cathedral and its 57 metre-tall belfry.

While you're exploring the square between the cathedral and the tower you should hunt for the secret stebuklas (miracle) tile. The tile marks the southern end of the 2 million person, 650 kilometre long human chain between Tallinn and Vilnius, which was formed in protest against Soviet occupation in 1989. Local legend has it that if you find the pretty mosaic-covered tile you should stand on it and turn around three times clockwise while making a wish, which shall then be granted.

Included Excursions: KGB Museum

Optional Excursions: Hot air ballooning – €100 per person • Wander the Jewish Quarter – free • Go to Uzupis, the breakaway “republic” east of Old Town free • Take an alternative walking tour (3 hours) – 'free for tips' • Grutas Park- €6.50 •Trakai Castle-€5.50

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 13 to 15 - Warsaw

Warsaw, Poland's capital, has been revitalised as a tourist destination. The city was almost entirely destroyed in World War II but a lot of effort has gone into its rebuilding. Since the fall of communism many old buildings have given way to modern sky scrapers, the dilapidated old town has been brightened up, and entertainment and services transformed to match that of other western capitals.

Home to various palaces, castles and citadels, Warsaw is noted for the Soviet-era Palace of Culture and Science, as well as the marketplace at the 10th Anniversary Stadium, a converted festival site where you can buy all sorts of interesting items. Also recommended is a visit to the Old Town, which was rebuilt between 1949 and 1963 after being destroyed in World War II in the Renaissance, Gothic and Baroque styles of architecture from the 17th and 18th centuries. You can visit the Historical Museum of Warsaw and Royal Castle at nearby Old Town Square.

Optional Excursions: Explore the Old Town – free • Warsaw Rising Museum – PLN 18 • Palace of Culture and Science – free (viewing tower PLN 20) Wander the Jewish district – free • Lazienki Park and Palace – PLN 30 • Wilanow Palace – PLN 20 •Museum of the History of Polish Jews – PLN 30

Accommodation: 3 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 16 to 17 - Kraków

Poland's more famous and cultural city is Kraków, which has managed to preserve centuries of amazing architecture and artistic traditions as most of the historic buildings and monuments emerged unscathed from World War II. Kraków was the royal capital for 500 years so a must-see is the royal Wawel Castle, a beautiful renaissance palace which now houses a museum. During the evening the cosmopolitan city offers a wild nightlife, with plenty of restaurants, music clubs and bars to explore.

Kraków is our base to visit the UNESCO listed Auschwitz-Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp, a sobering tribute to the people that perished there during the Holocaust. Known in Polish as Oświęcim, the camp was originally designed for Polish political prisoners but became the most notorious camp of World War II because an estimated 1.6 million people of 27 nationalities, including 1.1 million Jews, 150,000 Poles and 23,000 Roma were killed by the Nazis.

From Krakow we take an overnight train to Prague.

Included Excursions: Auschwitz Concentration Camp

Optional Excursions: Wander around Kazimierz Jewish area – free • Explore Wawel Hill and Castle complex – free • Entrance to Wawel Castle towers PLN 17 • Royal private apartments – PLN 24 • Crown treasury and armoury – PLN 17 • Entrance to cathedral – PLN 10 • Visit Wieliczka Salt Mine – PLN 65

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 18 to 19 - Prague

Prague is one of the most beautiful cities in Europe and you will have plenty of free time to visit the stunning City of 1,000 Spires, including the bustling Old Town Square where you can find a beautiful astronomical clock, the enchanting Charles Bridge where you can watch artists and buskers at work, Wenceslas Square and the world's only Cubist lamppost just around the corner from the square. There is also time to wander the lofty heights of Hradčany Castle and St Vitus Cathedral for magical views over the city.

Prague is a town that loves to party so you may also want to experience the nightlife as there are many great bars and restaurants and plenty of pulsating night clubs to enjoy. Czechs have been brewing beer since the 9th century and invented the world's first Pilsner, so Prague offers a great opportunity to sample some of the world's finest beers.

Optional Excursions: Explore Hradcany, a lovely neighbourhood behind the Prague Castle – free • Tour the Hradcany Castle complex – CZK 350 Climb the mini Eiffel tower – CZK 50 • Wander the Jewish/Kafka Quarter – free • Take a boat cruise on the Vltava River – around CZK 250 • Go to Kutna Hora,

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 20 to 20 - Prague & Overnight train to Poprad

In the evening we will take an overnight train to Poprad, the main gateway to the High Tatras Mountains in Slovakia.

Accommodation: 1 night(s) on overnight trains

Day 21 to 22 - High Tatras Mountains

The High Tatras constitute a mountain range which forms a natural border between Slovakia and Poland and is the highest mountain range of the Carpathians. The highest mountain is Gerlach at 2,655 metres, located in Slovakia just north of Poprad.

After making our way to Stary Smokovec (Novy Smokovec) we have time to relax and unwind. For the energetic there is an opportunity to go to the nearby mountains for some hiking. There are various paths ranging from gentle to highly demanding, winding among spectacular peaks and rock walls. Alternatively, there are many attractions to amuse you for the next two days such as the glacial lake of Strebske Pleso, the UNESCO World Heritage-listed ruins of Spissky Hrad and the Renaissance buildings of fortified Levoca.

Optional Excursions: Various hiking options – free • Gondola ride to Lomnický Peak (2634 metres) – €30

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 23 to 24 - Budapest

Budapest, Hungary's stylish capital is known as the 'City of Spas' for its abundance of natural thermal springs.

Straddling the Danube River, the city is comprised of two very different historic cities, Buda on the west bank and Pest on the east bank. Highlights here include Castle Hill, Matthias Church, Fisherman's Bastion, the Liberation Monument, the fabulous St Stephen's Basilica and the much photographed Parliament Building.

Terror Haza (Terror House) is a popular museum recounting stories of espionage and atrocities committed during World War II and during the communist period. During your optional visit you can view very moving testimonial footage from survivors and visit old jail cells, torture chambers and interrogation rooms.

The Dohány Street Synagogue is the largest synagogue in Europe and features stunning decorations. You can also wander around Central Market Hall and enjoy the intoxicating sights and smells of 'Budapest's pantry' and get an idea of Hungary's food culture - you can even buy chocolates by the kilo!

The perfect place to relax after a day of sightseeing is in a traditional bath. The Széchenyi Medicinal Baths are one of the city's more famous Neo Baroque-style baths with indoor and outdoor pools, thermal pools, saunas and massages in a beautiful setting. After a nice soak you can visit numerous restaurants and bars to visit on Liszt Ferenc for an enjoyable evening's entertainment.

Optional Excursions: Danube Cruise – €16 (drinks only). You can expect to pay approx €30 for dinner aboard. • Hop on, Hop off bus – HUF 6000
Szechenyi baths – HUF 3600 • House of Terror – HUF 2000 • Basilica of St Stephen – free • Castle Hill – HUF 1700 • Hungarian National Museum – HUF1600

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 25 to 25 - Debrecen

Debrecen is the second largest city in Hungary and is known for its cultural and historical significance. Debrecen's market street called 'Piac utca', is named after the city's medieval livestock market. It is the city's main boulevard, stretching from the train station all the way to the Reformed Church. The part near the Town Hall is pedestrianised, and is lined with many nice boutiques and restaurants with outdoor seating, making it a great place to people watch. The must-see of the city is Nagytemplom, meaning Great Church. It is the centrepiece of the city and you can tour the inside of the building. There are also many museums to explore here, such as the Déry Museum, which first opened its gates in 1930. The beautiful neo-baroque building is home to the most extensive collection of artefacts from the cultural history of Hungary, including medieval craftsmen tools and works by the country's best painters.

Optional Excursions: Déry Museum – HUF 800 • Great Church (Nagytemplom) – HUF 400 (€1.50)

Accommodation: 1 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 26 to 26 - Baia Mare

The day is spent exploring the fascinating Maramures region in North-western Romania, home to many villages where century-old traditions are still part of daily life. We will visit the village of Barsana, where there is a thriving local tradition of woodcarving, with picturesque wooden houses fronted by giant,

ornately-carved gates. There is also a monastery that offers great views over the Izei valley, where people still farm using traditional techniques. We also tour some of the beautiful wooden churches of the region that are well-known for their characteristic high roofs and tall, pointed steeples. One of these has been recognised by UNESCO due its unique folk paintings that show rural representations of heaven and hell, including tortures for such egregious sins as short-changing customers or falling asleep in church. We also make a quick stop at the very peculiar 'Merry Cemetery' of Sapanta, so called because the gravestones are painted in bright colours, hand-carved out of oak and adorned with an image of the deceased and a humorous epitaph in the local vernacular.

From there we travel to the village of Barsana, where there is a thriving local tradition of woodcarving, with picturesque wooden houses fronted by giant, ornately-carved gates. There is also a monastery that offers great views over the Izei valley, where people still farm using traditional techniques. We also visit some of the beautiful wooden churches of the region that are well-known for their characteristic high roofs and tall, pointed steeples. One of these has been recognised by UNESCO due its unique folk paintings that show rural representations of heaven and hell, including tortures for such egregious sins as short-changing customers or falling asleep in church.

We then head to Baia Mare, where you can enjoy the delicacies from the town's open-air food market and explore the town's 15th century medieval fortifications. Baia Mare is one of the most important mining centres of Romania with over 2000 years of gold and silver mining. The town is well preserved and the oldest house here dates back to 1440.

Included Excursions: Guided tour of the Maramures Region

Accommodation: 1 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 27 to 28 - Sighi?oara

As we make our way to Sighi?oara, we stop en-route for a few hours to explore the city of Cluj Napoca, Romania's second largest city after Bucharest. The city is one of the most important academic and cultural centres in Romania, and is home to the country's largest university and its famous botanical gardens. In 2015, Cluj-Napoca is the European Youth Capital, and will showcase its youth-related city life and development to the rest of the world.

In the afternoon we head to Sighi?oara. Located in the historic region of Transylvania, Sighi?oara was once a Saxon settlement established in the 12th century. Recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, the citadel has a very well preserved old town with a clock tower rising 64 meters above the city. Also worth visiting is the Orthodox Cathedral, Cornesti Church and Vila Franka, an amazing restaurant with panoramic views over the valley.

Included Excursions: Sighi?oara Citadel

Optional Excursions: The Clock Tower – Leu 10 • The Church of the Dominican Monastery – a small fee • The Church on the Hill – Leu 2 • Fortified Church – €1.50 • Vlad Dracul's House

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 29 to 30 - Bra?ov

Surrounded on three sides by the Carpathian Mountains, Brasov was a perfect place for a medieval settlement and much of the Old City, founded by the Teutonic Knights in 1211, has been restored. You can visit Rasnov Castle, the fortress of Cet??uia Bra?ovului or wander up Rope Street, the narrowest street in Europe. Bra?ov also provides a great base for exploring the surrounding countryside of the Transylvania region, where the air is fresh and the people friendly. We visit the nearby Bran Castle which is marketed as 'Dracula's Castle' and is (incorrectly) said to have been the home of Vlad the Impaler. We also explore the beautiful Peles Castle, the striking Rupea Fortress and the fortified churches of Prejmer and Viscri, the latter of which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Included Excursions: Bran (Dracula's) Castle • Peles Castle • Traditional fortified churches of Viscri and Prejmer • Rupea Fortress

Optional Excursions: Black Church – €1 • The Council Square - Piata Sfatulu – free • Brasov's defensive fortifications – free • Art Museum • Brasov History Museum – Leu 5 • Ethnographic Museum – Leu 3.50

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 31 to 31 - Bucharest

We continue our journey to Bucharest where you will have free time to explore the area and discover the contrasts of Romania's cultural capital. The architecture here is an eclectic mix of historical, communist period and modern styles and it even has its own Arc de Triomphe. Bucharest also boasts the world's second largest building, the Palace of Parliament, built under the communist regime.

If you'd like to learn more about the traditional way of life of Romanian peasant farmers you can visit the Village Museum, an open air museum with around 300 traditional buildings filled with furniture, pottery and clothing collected from different regions of the country.

Optional Excursions: Ceau?escu Palace – €10 • Village Museum – Leu 6/€1.50 • The Arch of Triumph – free • Calea Victoriei, Bucharest and most

charming street – free • Revolution Square – free • Parliament Palace – Leu 25 • Bucharest History and Art Museum – Leu 3 • Communist Museum – Leu 8

Accommodation: 1 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 32 to 33 - Plovdiv

Plovdiv is one of the oldest cities in Europe. It is the oldest continually inhabited city in Europe going back 8000 years. The town is small and easy to walk around. Places to see include the Roman Amphitheatre, St Marina church and a mosque leftover from the Ottoman Empire. Each step you take in this town opens up another piece of history. While the seven tall hill that used to overlook the town have been reduced to just three, it is possible to walk the hills and the best time to do this is at sunset.

Included Excursions: Plovdiv Roman Amphitheatre

Optional Excursions: Hindlian House – Lev 3 • Ruins of Eumolpias from around 5000BC – free • Dzhumaya Mosque, one of the Balkan's oldest mosques – free

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 34 to 35 - Edirne

This city is located where three countries meet, Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria. Being of such strategic importance, it is not surprising that the town has an abundance of history. You can walk between the main sights, the mosques, towers, museums and the old quarter are all to be admired.

Included Excursions: Selimiye Mosque Castle

Accommodation: 2 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 36 to 36 - Istanbul

Istanbul is an enchanting fusion of East and West. Narrow alleys are flanked by wooden Ottoman houses while a nearby funky restaurant and bar strip in the down-town area pumps out Turkish pop. There are many great places to explore including, but not limited to, the Blue Mosque, St Sophia and the Grand Bazaar. The Blue Mosque, also known as the Mosque of Sultan Ahmet, is nearly 400 years old and still an active mosque that non-Muslims can visit for free outside of the five daily prayers. St Sophia (Hagia Sophia) was built 1,500 years ago and was the largest enclosed space in the world. The Grand Bazaar (Kapali Carsi) is the oldest and largest closed bazaar in the world, housing around 3000 shops within 61 alleyways. It used to be the city's main trading centre of ceramics, jewellery and leather goods.

In your free time you could take a relaxing Turkish bath and then possibly board a local ferry on the Bosphorus to observe the beautifully lit sprawl of Istanbul by night and then finish your evening with the timeless wind-down of smoking a nargileh (Ottoman water pipe).

Optional Excursions: Grand Bazaar – free • Topkapi Palace – €6.75/TRY 20 • Mevlevi Monastery – €11.75 • Bosphorus boat ride - ~~included~~ local service operators • Basilica Cistern, known as the sunken palace – €7.00/TRY 15 • Blue Mosque – donation • Hippodrome – free • Aya Sofia – TRY 20

Accommodation: 1 night(s) in hotels, hostels & guesthouses

Day 37 to 37 - Depart Istanbul

Your adventure of a lifetime comes to an end today. If you have a late flight or have lengthened your stay by adding post tour accommodation you will have more time to explore the sights.

Day by Day Itinerary

Day	Activity	Country	Meals	Single Room
Day 1	Moscow	Russia		✓
Day 2	Moscow		B	✓
Day 3	Overnight Train to St Petersburg		B	✓
Day 4	St Petersburg			
Day 5	St Petersburg		B	✓

Day 6	St Petersburg		B	✓
Day 7	Tallinn	Estonia	B	✓
Day 8	Tallinn		B	✓
Day 9	Riga	Latvia	B	✓
Day 10	Riga		B	✓
Day 11	Vilnius	Lithuania	B	✓
Day 12	Vilnius		B	✓
Day 13	Warsaw	Poland	B	✓
Day 14	Warsaw		B	✓
Day 15	Warsaw		B	✓
Day 16	Kraków		B	✓
Day 17	Overnight train to Prague		B	
Day 18	Prague	Czech Republic		✓
Day 19	Prague		B	✓
Day 20	Overnight train to Poprad		B	
Day 21	High Tatras Mountains	Slovakia		
Day 22	High Tatras Mountains		B	
Day 23	Budapest	Hungary	B	✓
Day 24	Budapest		B	
Day 25	Debrecen		B	✓
Day 26	Baia Mare	Romania	B	✓
Day 27	Sighi?oara		B	
Day 28	Sighi?oara		B	✓
Day 29	Bra?ov		B	✓
Day 30	Bra?ov		B	✓
Day 31	Bucharest		B	✓
Day 32	Plovdiv	Bulgaria	B	✓
Day 33	Plovdiv			✓
Day 34	Edirne	Turkey		✓
Day 35	Edirne		B	✓
Day 36	Istanbul		B	✓

(B - Breakfast, L - Lunch, D - Dinner included)

For tours that include the option of a single supplement, a ? will indicate in which destinations single rooms are available. The detailed and day by day itineraries above are provided in good faith and it is our intention to adhere to the published route. Changes may be made before or during your tour for operational or safety reasons or to incorporate improvements. Impromptu changes may also occur whilst you are travelling as a result of one-off circumstances such as an excursion being closed on a particular day, weather conditions or transport. Delays are rare but occur occasionally and for this reason and the reasons above this itinerary should be considered as a guide only. Published transport times are approximations and may vary depending on local conditions.

Travel Style

This is an Adventure Tour, we see a destination from the locals' perspective using a variety of transport and staying in small locally owned accommodation. There is a maximum of 16 travellers with an average group size of 8-12. All our Adventure Tours are priced per person on a shared room basis meaning there is no compulsory extra payment for those travelling on their own. Please read the Adventure Tour travel style dossier to ensure you understand the style of travel you are undertaking: <http://www.tucantravel.com/travel-styles/dossier/adventure-tours>

I'd like my own room

If you are a solo traveller, a single room is available on most occasions at an extra cost. Price information can be found on the price page of each tour. This must be booked in advance.

Russian Visas

A visa is needed to enter Russia and must be obtained prior to travel. We can issue you a Letter of Invitation which you will need to take to your Russian Embassy for a small fee. [Click here](#) to find out more about Russian Visas.

Joining your tour

Your joining location is:

Hotel Gamma Delta @ Izmailovo Hotel Complex

Building Gamma

71, 4 G-D, Izmailovskoe shosse,

Moscow,

105613,

Phone: +7 495 737-7000

This is the address in Russian, very helpful for taxi drivers:

ГТК "Альфа", Измайловское шоссе ,71 ,корпус А

You will **need** a booking reference when checking in to your hotel. Please take note of your reference before leaving for Russia.

Reference	Departure Date
14990431501	28th March 2015
14990431502	25th April 2015
14990431503	20th June 2015
14990431504	18th July 2015
14990431505	12th September 2015
14990431506	10th October 2015

The hotel serves breakfast (breakfast is not included). The hotels have safe deposit boxes for your use (you will get an itemised receipt). Please leave all of your important documents, money and travellers cheques here when you go out but remember to carry some form of ID and a photocopy of your passport with you.

It is advisable not to wear chains or expensive looking watches or jewellery while in major cities. You should also keep your camera concealed when not in use and carry daypacks on your front for extra safety.

Arriving in Moscow

When arriving at Domodedovo International Airport (34 kilometres south of Moscow) or Sheremetyevo International Airport (29 kilometres northwest of Moscow), we recommend that you obtain some Russian rubles as soon as you arrive. There are numerous international ATMs inside the airports. The rate will always differ slightly depending on where you go. The airport does offer a decent rate and it may otherwise be inconvenient to find an exchange office open in the city, depending on what time you arrive

Airport Transfers

Airport transfers are not included in the tour price and must be booked separately in advance through Tucan Travel. If you have booked an airport/hotel transfer with us, please look out for someone with a sign which has your name, Tucan Travel, or both after exiting the customs hall.

If you have booked an arrival transfer with us and you are going to be delayed by more than two hours, you must advise us of the delay at least six hours before arrival. If we are advised in time, we will make every effort to reschedule your transfer and your driver will be asked to wait for two hours after your new expected arrival time. However, if we are not made aware of any change, the driver will only wait for two hours after the original scheduled arrival time and after this point it will be up to you to arrange transport to your hotel at your own expense. Please contact us on the emergency contact address below if you are likely to be delayed.

Contact your arrival transfer

Phone: + 7 917 523 3268

Contact: Irina

Making your own way

If you would prefer to make your own way to and from your hotel, taxis are available from the airports but you may have problems finding drivers who speak English. The journey should cost approximately 1,500 rubles from airports. The taxi should be on a meter (make sure they start it when you begin your journey) and you pay the driver when you arrive at the hotel.

Moscow is equidistant from all the airports and the the journeys take approximately an hour depending on Moscow traffic which can be notoriously bad.

As taxis are expensive you may prefer to use public transport where possible:

The nearest Metro station to the hotel is Партизанская - Partizanskaya (previously called Izmailovsky Park) on the Arbatsko-Pokrovskaya Line. The hotel is a three- to five-minute walk from the station.

To connect to the Metro network from Domodedovo Airport you can take a shuttle bus to Domodedovskaya Metro station. Travel time to Partizanskaya is about two hours.

From Sheremetyevo Airport the No. 851 bus goes to Rechnoy Vokzal Metro station. Travel time to Partizanskaya is about one hour and 20 minutes.

From Vnukovo International Airport, take the Bhykobo Commuter Train in the city and then transfer to the Metro. Travel time is approximately 1 and a half hours.

Click For [a printable map](#) of the entire Moscow network in English and Russian.

Please note: You must validate your Russia visa within 72 hours of your arrival in each Russian city. This can be done when you check in at your hotel. The price is approximately 3 euros (not included).

Pre-Departure Meeting

When you arrive on day one of your trip, you should find some local information at the hotel lobby. Your tour leader will be staying in the hotel and should have put up a welcome note to let you know what room they are in. A pre-departure meeting is usually held in the afternoon or early evening of day one. You will need to bring the following important items to the meeting with your tour leader:

- Your passport, including any necessary visas and at least one photocopy to give to your tour leader
- Vaccination certificates if relevant to any destinations on your tour
- Travel insurance policy and a photocopy to give to your tour leader
- Your travel voucher
- Your local payment in US\$ cash (Budget Expeditions only)

Missing the tour departure

If you miss the start of your tour, please ask at the reception of the hotel for a message from your tour leader which will give you instructions on how to catch up with the group. Any associated costs will be at your own expense (although, depending on the reason, you may be able to claim these from your

travel insurance so ensure you keep all receipts).

If you know in advance that you are unlikely to arrive on time, please contact Tucan Travel immediately so we can inform the tour leader. Tucan Travel cannot be held responsible should your airline/boat/coach be delayed and we are unable to refund any unused portion of your tour.

Time Keeping

Punctuality is very important and throughout the tour your tour leader will give you the time to meet in reception. Tour leaders will often post notes at reception with meeting times, so remember to always look out for these.

Although rare, delays can occur and we therefore advise you not to arrange your onward travel too close to the end of the tour. We take no responsibility for any missed flights or additional expenses if the group arrives late into the departure city at the end of the tour.

Emergency Contact Details

In the case of an emergency before you meet your tour leader, please contact our Tucan Travel Europe Manager:

Tel:+44 (0)7775 53 2808

Please note that this number is a service for emergency calls only. We respectfully request that you consider the urgency of your enquiry. Non-urgent enquiries should be made during office hours. Visit [contact us page](#) for office hours.

Tucan Travel London office: +44 (0)208 896 1600

Keeping in Touch

Your tour leader will point out internet cafes in all major cities and towns and Wi-Fi may be available in some hotels. Hotel details, apart from the joining hotel, are not given in advance and are subject to change, so if someone needs to contact you urgently during your tour, the best method is to contact our office who can pass a message on to the tour leader.

If you intend to take your mobile phone you should find out in advance from your network provider if your phone is set up for international roaming and if there is coverage in your destination. You may also find it considerably more expensive to send texts and receive calls if you are on a non European or British Network. A much cheaper option would be to purchase a telephone card and use local pay phones.

Money

For personal spending money you should bring Euros alongside the local currency (where applicable). Generally the most convenient way of carrying your spending money is by having at least a couple of credit or debit cards. The majority of cards (Visa, Diners Club, MasterCard, American Express and Maestro, Plus and Cirrus for debit cards) are accepted in most large cities and tourist areas. ATMs (cash machines) are widespread. It is always best to carry a mix of cards and cash with you, including notes in small denominations.

Your spending money should cover some meals, optional excursions, souvenirs, drinks, laundry, border and airport taxes and any visas obtained locally. We provide guideline prices for optional excursions in the itinerary to help you budget, but ultimately the amount you will need to budget for your trip very much depends on your individual requirements. We recommend bringing extra money to cover emergencies or unexpected situations.

Tipping

Tipping is a part of the life in Europe, but you should not feel obliged or pressured to tip if you have not received good service. A gratuity of 10% of the total bill is recommended in restaurants. Gratuities are usually expected for local guides on included and optional excursions. Tips are also appreciated by Tucan Travel tour leaders at the end of your tour and we recommend an average of \$2-\$4 per person per day for the duration of your tour. This is only if you feel that their service was up to standard and is completely at your own discretion.

Packing List

The best advice when packing is to travel light and leave space for souvenirs in your bag.

Luggage

On our tours in Europe your luggage must be strictly limited to one reasonably-sized bag or backpack with a recommended maximum weight of no more than 20 kilograms/44 pounds plus one small day pack. You will have to carry your own luggage, sometimes down cobbled streets and up flights of stairs and cannot expect your tour leader to carry your bags.

We recommend a frameless backpack or a sports type shoulder bag which fits comfortably on your shoulders, as they are less bulky and easier to handle than rigid suitcases or framed backpacks. Suitcases are not suitable for our tours and are not recommended. Tucan Travel takes no responsibility for damage to your luggage while on tour.

In addition to your main bag, you will need a small daypack for your everyday excursions. Try to keep this bag as light as possible and make sure that all main sections of your bags can be padlocked. This daypack should have enough room to carry food and snacks, camera and personal items

Sleeping Sheet

Sleeping bags are not required on this tour, but a sleeping bag liner/sleep sheet is optional if you wish to bring one along. Some passengers like to use them on long bus journeys and overnight trains.

Clothing and Footwear

All clothes should be lightweight, durable and easily washable. Please do not bring any military or camouflage-style clothing as it can be dangerous to wear and occasionally illegal. Nights can be cold so it is a good idea to bring at least one pair of warm trousers or jeans plus several thinner sweaters / fleeces which you can layer.

Good, comfortable walking shoes are essential. These do not need to be expensive boots, but they should have good ankle support and grip, be worn in and ideally waterproof.

Essential items:

- A lightweight water/windproof jacket with hood
- Easy to pack wide-brimmed hat or cap
- Swimwear
- Sandals or thongs/jandals/flip flops

Suggested items:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money belt | <input type="checkbox"/> Small collapsible umbrella |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses | <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic bags for waterproofing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small calculator | <input type="checkbox"/> Inflatable pillow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Universal washbasin plug | <input type="checkbox"/> Towel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel alarm clock | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel plug adaptor with a USB port |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lip balm, sun block with high UV factor | <input type="checkbox"/> Small sewing kit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wet wipes | <input type="checkbox"/> Insect repellent (DEET 35% min) and bite cream |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheap plastic watch | <input type="checkbox"/> Antibacterial hand clensing gel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plenty of spare memory cards for your camera | <input type="checkbox"/> Ear plugs and sleep mask |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spare rechargeable batteries for camera | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel sickness tablets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing materials, address book and diary | <input type="checkbox"/> Spare pair of spectacles or contact lenses and solution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel games, cards and a couple of paperbacks | <input type="checkbox"/> Hard drive or USB stick to back up your photos |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small medical kit with diarrhoea remedy, rehydration salts, antiseptic cream, sterile dressings, plasters, bandages, pain-killers, safety pins etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pocket size phrasebook |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Pegless washing line & travel laundry detergent (bio-degradable preferable) |

Laundry

There are usually laundromats or laundry services in or near most of our hotels. Hotel services can be pretty costly however your tour leader will be able to recommend cheaper options. If you wash clothes yourself take care not to be too obvious where you hang them as most hotels do not like guests washing and drying their clothes in the hotel rooms.

Electricity Supply

If bringing electrical equipment, make sure that you bring a two-pin/pronged, round-pin adapter/plug adapter.

Health, Fitness & Safety

Pack a Medical Kit

A medical kit is handy for minor wounds and ailments. In areas with limited or dubious medical facilities, an emergency medical kit containing sterile syringes is also advisable. By law our staff are not allowed to administer first aid or give drugs to travellers, so please be prepared with your own supplies.

If you are taking medication, please ensure you bring an adequate supply and a letter from your doctor to avoid potential issues at border crossings.

Fitness & Suitability

This is a public transport-based tour so it is essential that you be able to carry your bags over distances between bus and train stations and hotels, generally for up to 20 minutes. Disruptions happen and while your tour leader will make every effort to ensure your trip runs smoothly, patience, a sense of humour and willingness to get involved and help your tour leader are essential ingredients for a successful and happy group.

If you have any pre-existing medical conditions please let us know at the time you book or as early before departure as possible. Depending on the severity of the condition, you may be asked to produce a medical certificate from your doctor approving your participation in this tour. While this would only happen in very exceptional circumstances, if we consider you incapable completing this tour or you have concealed an existing medical condition which is affecting your ability to participate in the tour of Tucan Travel reserve the right to turn you away without reimbursement.

Safety & Security

Europe is generally very safe, even more so in a group. Reasonable precaution is advised; do not bring valuable jewellery or watches (even fakes can catch the eye of a thief), do not bring your camera equipment in a flashy camera bag, be prudent and keep your valuables in a safe secure place whenever possible, wear a money belt and distribute your valuables throughout your luggage, heed your tour leader's advice and always keep an eye and a hand on your camera and bags in public places. Tucan Travel cannot accept responsibility for any valuables left in safe deposits in hotels or on public transport.

Age Restrictions

We have a minimum age on all our group tours of 12 years old. Children aged between 12 and 18 must each be accompanied by a legal guardian or parent and we recommend that children have a companion of a similar age to them so that they have company along the way. While we do not have an upper age limit, the nature of our group tours can be very fast paced and travellers might be required to walk long distances, often in the heat. Please read through our **Tour Suitability** page or contact a member of our Reservations Team if in doubt.

Travel Guides

If you would like to discover more about your destination, including history, geography, climate and language, please have a read of our country travel guides available here: <http://www.tucantravel.com/destination-travel-guides/europe-travel-guides>.

Documents

Passport

Your passport should be valid for at least 6 months after you have finished your tour with sufficient blank pages for visas and immigration stamps. Photocopy your passport, leaving one copy at home and taking one with you on tour. If you lose your passport while on tour, you will be responsible for any expenses incurred such as extra accommodation and transport while replacing your passport and will not be entitled to a refund of any unused portion of your tour.

Tour Documents

Before you depart you will be issued with a voucher for your tour and separate vouchers for any extra services such as airport transfers and pre/post tour accommodation. Please print these out and bring them with you. This dossier is updated regularly, so we recommend checking our website for the latest version just prior to the start of your tour.

Final Balance

The balance for your tour is due no later than 60 days prior to the start of your tour and no tour vouchers will be issued until this is received. In addition please send the following details at least 60 days before you depart:

- Passport number, date of issue, date of expiry, nationality and place of issue
- Your full name and date of birth
- Flight arrival details in your starting city
- Special requirements, e.g. special dietary requirements or allergies

Please let us know if you are travelling with another person on the tour but have made separate bookings and we will endeavour to make suitable rooming arrangements.

Visas

All countries have visa requirements that are subject to change at short notice. A general guideline for visa requirements is available here: <http://www.tucantravel.com/before-you-go/visa-guide>, but you must check with your local embassy or consulate for the very latest visa

requirement information based on your nationality. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have all necessary visas for your tour. If you would like help applying for visas, we have recommended visa agencies on our visa page that we work with regularly.

Important things to check when applying for visas:

- Does the validity of the visa cover the duration of your time spent in the country?
- Do you require a single or multiple entry visa(s) for your tour?
- Are you required to show additional documentation when you arrive in a country? (Examples include proof of onward travel and travel itinerary)

Some visas are only valid for entry within three months of the date of issue which means on some of our longer tours the visa would expire before you are scheduled to enter the country. In these cases you must obtain the relevant visa during your tour. If it is necessary for you to obtain any visas en-route, please contact Tucan Travel or your travel consultant and inform your tour leader at the start of the tour. If you do not have the appropriate visas, Tucan Travel will not reimburse any expenses incurred in acquiring visas or any unused portion of the tour.

It is best to apply for visas in your home country if possible. If applying for visas by post, please allow plenty of time before departure and send your application by registered mail. Postal applications tend to be given a lower priority than in person applications and can take longer to process.

Special Note: If you have dual nationality it is advised not to obtain different visas in different passports. Although this may sometimes be cheaper, you may encounter problems at border crossings if your exit stamps from one country are not the same as your visa for the next.

Travel Insurance Policy

Travel insurance is compulsory for all tours. You must be adequately insured for medical, hospital, baggage and personal expenses, any necessary extra travel (rejoining tour or repatriation) as well as curtailment and cancellation.

We strongly recommend that all clients carry a copy of their full policy document with them at all times, together with any certificate showing the policy number and emergency contact details. Your tour leader will also ask for a photocopy of your insurance document, so please take this to the pre-departure meeting at the start of your tour. You will not be able to commence your tour unless you can provide proof of insurance to your tour leader.

Document Checklist

- Tour Voucher & Vouchers for extra services
- Passport (with photocopies of information pages and visas)
- Tour Dossier
- Cash & credit/debit cards (best to take a mixture and more than one card in case one does not work)
- Travel Insurance Certificate and photocopy for tour leader
- Travel consultant's phone number and email address
- Proof of onward travel, ie airline ticket

Optional Excursions

Optional excursions are not operated by Tucan Travel and while every effort is made prices may not be up-to-date and are intended as a general guide to help you budget for your trip. Prices for vehicle-based excursions such as game drives are approximate based on the optimum number of participants and the actual price may vary depending on group size.

Sufficient safety equipment such as helmets and life jackets are sometimes not available and Tucan Travel is unable to provide this equipment. If you intend to participate in an optional excursion you may like to consider bringing your own safety gear.

Excursions are run by a local operator or third party with both Tucan Travel and the Tour Leader acting as a booking agent only. Optional activities are not part of the tour and Tucan Travel's booking conditions do not apply to them. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the correct travel insurance for the excursions you intend to take part in and Tucan Travel is not liable for any injuries incurred.

Responsible Travel

We work hard to ensure our tours are sustainably and ethically run. You can read our responsible travel policy and advice on how you can travel responsibly here: <http://www.tucantravel.com/about-us/responsible-travel>.

Meet Up

Our free Meet Up app, available on Facebook, on iTunes and Google Play is an opportunity to chat with others passengers before you depart or keep in touch when you arrive back from tour. Information on the app is available here: <http://www.tucantravel.com/before-you-go/meet-up>

Add-ons & Extras

On many of our Group Tours, we spend one night in our arrival and departure cities. If you want to explore these cities more we can book pre and post tour accommodation, city tours and airport transfers for you. Price information can be found on the price page of each tour. We also have **Add-ons** - short packages that can be booked alongside a tour or on their own and have been carefully designed to ensure you don't miss out on popular highlights.

Illegal Drugs

The possession or use of illegal drugs will not be tolerated on our tours. When overseas you are subject to local laws and the penalties for breaking these laws can be harsh. In order to safeguard the interests of the group as a whole, our tour leaders have been instructed to insist that any person found with illegal drugs leave the tour immediately – without refund. The tour leader's decision on this matter is final. If you need to carry certain drugs with your purposes of medication, please inform your tour leader and ensure that you carry a copy of your prescription or letter from your doctor.