

NORDIC AND RUSSIAN TREASURES

21 days
20 nights

5
countries

travel type
Cultural

This is a 3-week holiday devoted to exploring the Scandinavian culture and nature and the Russian capitals in a proper way. Be ready for an incredible journey and see some outstanding places:

- Breathtaking Norwegian fjords.
- The cultural sights of the five capitals – Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki and Moscow, each special in its own way, where you will visit only those attractions worth seeing.
- Saint Petersburg, also called the cultural capital of Russia, one of the most beautiful cities in the world.
- See more of Scandinavia by visiting its charming provincial town: Odense, the town of H. C. Andersen, Bergen, which is famous for the Bryggen area of old wooden houses that is part of the UNESCO World Heritage, and the Danish resort Skagen with a stunning beach where the Baltic and Northern seas meet.
- Visit some great castles including the Kronborg Castle, also known as Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' castle, and the Danish Royal Residence – Frederiksborg Castle.
- Try several means of transportation: Cruise the Northern and Baltic Seas and admire the views of the Oslo fjords and Stockholm archipelago, drive through the dense Scandinavian forest and take a high-speed train between the Russian capitals.

DESCRIPTION

● Day 1, Moscow

Arrival in Moscow. Bus transfer to the hotel. Enjoy a free evening in Moscow by visiting one of the many fancy restaurants, bars or simply having a stroll on its streets while admiring the lights and bright facades of its impressive buildings by night. Overnight: Moscow

● Day 2, Moscow – Kremlin

Highlights: Moscow city tour, Kremlin Start today with a tour to the heart of Russia – the world-famous Red Square, Moscow's Kremlin and the stunning St. Basil's Cathedral. Once you see this incredible ensemble, you will never forget it! Visit the Kremlin and learn about its history, tightly connected to the dramatic history of the country, listen about traditions of Moscow, which left their mark in the names of ancient towers. After the Kremlin the tour continues to Vorobyevi Hills where you will get an incredible view of the city, you will proceed to Moscow State University which is an example of architecture from the time of Stalin, the Diplomatic Village, Triumphal Arch and much more. Meals: B + L Overnight: Moscow

● Day 3, Moscow – Sergiev Posad

Highlights: Sergiev Possad, Moscow Metro and Arbat Morning departure to Sergiev Possad – the city founded around the sacred place of the Russian land and the World Cultural Heritage sight – the Trinity Sergius Lavra, which is Trinity Sergius Lavra monastery named respected

Russian saint Sergius. Afternoon continues with discovering other highlights of Moscow – its famous Metro and Arbat street. This tour introduces the history and architecture of the Metro subway system and includes travels by Metro to see the most famous stations that are uniquely designed with decorative elements including mosaics, statues and marble staircases. You will proceed to Old Arbat street, one of Moscow's oldest streets. The street has gone from being the headquarters of Ivan the Terrible's secret police to the center of aristocratic life in Moscow in the 18th century to finally being the center of the Russian bohemian life. Meals: B + L Overnight: Moscow

● Day 4, Moscow – Saint Petersburg

Highlights: Saint Petersburg city tour Morning transfer to the train station and departure by speed train "Sapsan" to St. Petersburg (4h). Upon arrival you will have a panoramic tour of the cultural capital of Russia. For three centuries St Petersburg has been impressing visitors from all over the world and it doesn't take much time to fall in love with this splendid city. On the way to your hotel you will admire views of magnificent palaces, cathedrals, canals and world-renown theatres. Meals: B + L Overnight: Saint Petersburg

● Day 5, Saint Petersburg

Highlights: St. Isaak Cathedral, Peter and Paul Fortress, Hermitage museum This morning you see the major sights of this impressive city and learn about last three hundred years of the Russian history reflected in its rich architecture. Start with a visit of the former principal cathedral of the Russian capital – St. Isaak Cathedral and continue to Peter and Paul Fortress – the oldest construction in Saint Petersburg, enjoy the beauty of one of the world's great architectural masterpieces, the golden Peter and Paul Cathedral. Afternoon visit to one of the world's greatest art museums – the Hermitage, located within the Winter Palace, baroque masterpiece and residence of the Russian tsars. It boasts a collection of art from the Stone Age to the 20th century. The Hermitage is so large that according to expert's it would take you 9 years to look at each item of the museum collection for one minute! So, don't get frustrated if you can't see it all, but take away some special memories from this visit, because the Hermitage is definitely a "must see" museum for any art lover. Meals: B+L Overnight: Saint Petersburg

● Day 6, Saint Petersburg – Peterhof – Tsarskoye Selo

Highlights: Peterhof Palace, Catherine Palace This day is devoted to exploring one of St. Petersburg suburbs – Peterhof, where famous summer residence of the Russian tsars is located. This palace is Russian answer to French Versailles with an impressive park with 200 fountains that make its major attraction. World best artists designed the unique ensemble of fountains and cascades over long period of over 100 years. You stay in St. Petersburg would not be complete without visit of another outstanding suburban residence of the Russian tsars – Catherine Palace, named after the Empress Catherine I, its the first royal owner of the imperial palace. It is the best example of Russian baroque with incredible collection of art, where you will admire breath-taking interiors of its 29 halls, including the legendary Amber Room assembled with over 500,000 pieces of amber like a huge puzzle. Meals: B + L Overnight: St. Petersburg

● Day 7, Saint Petersburg

Highlights: boat trip in Neva River Morning boat trip in Neva River and canals. Getting around St Petersburg by boat is one of the best ways to enjoy a romantic sightseeing in the city of rivers and canals. The combination of fascinating architecture and water in St. Petersburg, as well as in Venice, has a special charm. Free time in the city. Exploring St. Petersburg on your own is a chance to see some of its main highlights including the fairy-tale like cathedral "Our saviour on the Blood" or other significant monuments. St. Petersburg has numerous ways to

surprise its visitors and you will find your own way to enjoy it in your free time. Dinner in the city center with folk show. Meals: B + D Overnight: St. Petersburg

● Day 8, Saint Petersburg – Helsinki

Morning departure to Helsinki, the capital of Finland. Helsinki is a modern European cultural city whose urban cosmopolitan lifestyle exists in perfect harmony with nature. Surrounded by the sea and its own archipelago, Helsinki offers visitors an endless number of possibilities. Meals: B + D Overnight: Helsinki

● Day 9, Helsinki – Turku

Highlights: Helsinki city tour, Turku Morning Helsinki sightseeing tour takes you around the harbors, up central Mannerheim Street and by the Parliament Building, the Finlandia Hall, market square, and the Sibelius Monument and for a visit at the famous Church-in-the-Rock. In the afternoon departure to Turku. Free time to enjoy Turku city life. In the summer Turku overflows with events and festivals like tango, middle age, music, theater, art, design and much more. Meals: B + L Overnight: Turku

● Day 10, Turku - Stockholm

Highlights: Turku city tour, cruise to Stockholm Morning city tour of Turku. Turku city tour provides overall picture of the city's history and sights. During the tour you will walk the cobblestone streets around the Old Town and visit the Cathedral of Turku, the medieval Castle – largest in Finland, the Market square and Hall, the magnificent Main Library. In the afternoon you take a cruise to Stockholm by ferry (315km, 11 h.). Meals: B Overnight: ferry Turku – Stockholm

● Day 11, Stockholm

Highlights: Stockholm city tour, Vasa museum During the morning Stockholm City tour you will visit two squares on Riddarholmen and Söder island, walk through the Old Town, where you will pass narrow streets and alleys of the medieval part of the city. The excursion continues through the central parts of the modern Stockholm – City Hall. Acquaintance of the Stockholm continues with visit to Vasa Museum, the Scandinavia's most visited attraction. In the large ship hall stands the warship Vasa – the only remaining, intact 17th century ship in the world. The lower rig of it has been rebuilt, complete with masts, stays and shrouds. Meals: B + L Overnight: Stockholm

● Day 12, Stockholm – Uppsala – Sigtuna – Skokloster Castle – Stockholm

Highlights: Uppsala city tour, Sigtuna city tour, Skokloster Castle Morning departure to Uppsala and a sightseeing tour of the town to see the grand Gothic Uppsala Cathedral, Scandinavia's largest cathedral. During the tour you will pass by the Uppsala University, Sweden's oldest university, visit the university library to see the famous Silver Bible and the Botanical Garden. Further drive to Sigtuna, Sweden's oldest town, founded in the 10th century. Today it is a cozy town of narrow streets and colourful wooden houses. During the sightseeing tour of the Sigtuna you will see the Gothic St. Mary's church, Old Town Hall, which is Europe's smallest city hall and runes tones that are scattered through the town. Visit at nearby located Skokloster Castle, a one of the main attractions in the region. The castle interior from the mid 17th century has been kept completely intact. Meals: B+L Overnight: Sigtuna

● Day 13, Stockholm – Oslo

Highlights: Örebro Castle Morning departure to Oslo. The route passes areas with typical Scandinavian scenery and thick forests, which will evoke the atmosphere of the fairy-tales of Trolls, lakes, as well as agricultural areas. En route visit of the Örebro Castle, a medieval castle

fortification, standing in the centre of modern Örebro town, surrounded by a moat. Built for defence and once was used as prison, during the Vasa era it was rebuilt as a magnificent, royal castle. Meals: B+L Overnight: Oslo

● Day 14, Oslo

Highlights: Oslo city tour, Vigeland's Park, Viking Ship Museum City sightseeing tour in the Norwegian capital, beautifully situated by a fjord. You will see all of the main attractions, such as the Royal Palace, the City Hall, the Akershus fortress, admire a magnificent view of the Oslo Fjord from Holmenkollen Hill for a birds-eye view of the city and fjord far below. Afternoon tour continues with visits of two famous Oslo attractions: The Viking Ship Museum displays the world's two best-preserved wooden Viking vessels as well as other finds from Viking tombs dated 9th century. The Vigeland's Park is a unique sculpture park is Gustav Vigeland's lifework with more than 200 sculptures in bronze, granite and wrought iron, who also designed the architectural layout of the park. Meals: B+D Overnight: Oslo

● Day 15, Oslo – Myrdal – Flåm – Gudvangen – Bergen

Highlights: Flambana railway, cruise in Sognefjord After breakfast board the train to Flåm. Norwegian Railway System is a masterpiece of Norwegian engineering is one of the world's steepest railway lines. The four hour journey is full of nature's best offerings – waterfalls and snow-clad peaks, all nestled beautifully into the surrounding mountain side. Stop in Myrdal to see descent 2,600 feet past waterfalls, ravines and sheer cliffs. After Myrdal, change to the 1 hour journey over the world famous Flåmbana that stops on the way to let you enjoy the waterfalls. Lookout for the ferries dancing on the rocks with surreal music. Arrival in Flam. The name "Flåm" means "little place between steep mountains," surrounded by steep mountainsides, roaring waterfalls and deep valleys. In the afternoon board a ferry and enjoy a leisurely cruise on the breathtaking still waters of the the Nærøyfjord, the narrowest and most spectacular branch of the Sognefjord. Meals: B+L Overnight: Bergen

● Day 16, Bergen

Highlights: Bergen city tour Morning sightseeing tour of Bergen you will be introduced to the main sights of this remarkable city, view of the Bryggen area of old wooden houses that is part of the UNESCO World Heritage, as well as the traditional Fish Market. Afternoon transfer to the cruise harbor and cruise to Hirtshals by ferry (570km, 18,5 h). Meals: B+L Overnight: ferry to Denmark

● Day 17, Hirtshals – Skagen – Aarhus – Odense

Highlights: Skagen, Grenen beach – a meeting point of two seas, Aarhus city tour Skagen sits at the northernmost tip of Denmark, a sandy peninsula at the end of which the two seas of Kattegat and Skagerak meet. Today Skagen transformed from a humble fishing village into a well-known holiday destination attracting tourists with its distinctive architecture of yellow houses with red-tiled roofs, busy working harbor and long sandy beaches. Head north out of Skagen – to Grenen, the very top of Denmark. Board the "Sandworm" a tractor pulled bus, which brings you to the uttermost point of Denmark – and actually of the European continent. Further drive to Aarhus, the second-largest city in Denmark with a perfectly preserved old town. It combines a lively atmosphere of a modern and cosmopolitan city with a charm of a small town. During the city tour you will see the city's old town and other the major sights, i.e. summer residence of the Danish royal family, the the Aarhus University and the City Hall. Leave Aarhus to enjoy a free evening in another charming provincial Danish town – Odense. Meals: B+L Overnight: Odense

● Day 18, Odense – Roskilde – Copenhagen

Highlights: Odense city tour, H. C. Andersen museum, Roskilde city tour, Royal Dome in Roskilde, Viking Ship Museum During the morning Odense city tour you will walk along Odense River through the old town, with narrow cobbled streets and small low-ceiling houses. Tour includes visits to the Gothic Saint Canute's cathedral and to the H. C. Andersen museum. The museum exhibits paper cuttings, drawings and many of his personal belongings. Further drive to Roskilde. Short walk through the old streets to the Royal Dome – UNESCO Heritage site. Visit at the Dome and continue to the famous Viking Ship Museum just a few minutes outside the town. Enjoy a free evening in Copenhagen. Meals: B+L Overnight: Copenhagen

● Day 19, Copenhagen

Highlights: Copenhagen city tour Morning Copenhagen city tour is an excellent way to see main highlights of the city including Christiansborg Palace, home to the Danish Parliament, the Old Stock Exchange, Royal Theater, Tivoli Gardens, the colorful harbor district of Nyhavn and Amalienborg Palace – Winter residence of the Royal Family to see the changing of the Guard and followed by a stop by world-famous Little Mermaid, inspired by H. C. Andersen's fairy tale. Free time in Copenhagen. This city is now by far the largest and most important town in Denmark, with numerous Museums and the hippest Nightlife in the country. Enjoy a laid-back cycling or strolling along the medieval streets or take a canal tour to get the best views onboard the canal boats, visit free town of Cristiania without a doubt one of Denmark's most popular tourist attractions. Meals: B+L Overnight: Copenhagen

● Day 20, Copenhagen – Kronborg Castle – Fredensborg Palace – Frederiksborg Castle – Copenhagen

Highlights: Kronborg Castle , Fredensborg Palace, Frederiksborg Castle Today we leave Copenhagen and head north to explore "The Danish Riviera". We drive along the coastline of Sweden, through the magnificent Danish countryside and pass the coastline to Helsingør and Kronborg Castle. It is quite easy to understand why William Shakespeare chose Kronborg Castle as the setting for his famous play 'Hamlet'. Enjoy the beautiful surroundings and feel the atmosphere taken through the Chapel and the Knights' Hall (the longest room in Northern Europe). After the break, our tour continues to Fredensborg. The Queen's summer residence of Fredensborg Palace is attractively located in the middle of a lovely park. The next highlight on this tour of many highlights is Frederiksborg Castle, built by King Christian IV. This pearl of history, built in magnificent Renaissance style, is now a national historical museum. It contains paintings, tapestries, porcelain, silver and furniture of great historical value. Meals: B+L Overnight: Copenhagen

● Day 21, Copenhagen

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to airport. Departure.