



# VOLGA DREAM



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THE ULTIMATE RUSSIAN RIVER CRUISE EXPERIENCE

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**Moscow – St. Petersburg • Moscow – Astrakhan**



## Welcome aboard MS VOLGA DREAM

### TECHNICAL DATA

Year build	1959
Year refurbished	2007
Passengers	max 109
Crew	approx 60
Overall length	96 m / 314 ft
Overall width	14.5 m / 48 ft
Draft	2.5 m / 8.2 ft
Max. speed	13.5 knots
Displacement	1,473 tonnes
Electrical voltage	220 V

There is no cruise like the Volga cruise. No cruise that places you so completely in another place and time. Europe's longest and largest river stretches from Ivan the Terrible to Peter the Great to Catherine the Great, and on into today, where live along Russia's central artery looks very much like it always has – the churches, the villages, the people, comprising scenes from an old painting you may swear you have seen in a gallery.

The advent of the boutique VOLGA DREAM reveals the tsarist-era luxury and provides superior service, installing the ship as the class of the waterway. With 60 crewmembers and a capacity for just over 100 passengers, the ship has the lowest passenger-to-crew ratio on the river. With so few guests amid the ship's spacious arrangement, it feels like sailing aboard a private yacht. You'll find no hassle disembarking at the various ports of call, no delays at mealtime.

Russia's first luxury riverboat, featuring the latest technology and superior service, the 314-foot VOLGA DREAM offers what no other Volga ship can: cosmopolitan comfort amid the greater rural envisions.



## Accommodation • Deck Plan

The VOLGA DREAM has 56 comfortable cabins located over four decks. Categories range from Standard Staterooms on the Cabin Deck to Superior Staterooms on the Main Deck. On the upper two decks, Promenade and Sun, you will find Deluxe Staterooms and Suites.

Each cabin features a bathroom with separate glass shower and is equipped with individually controlled air conditioning, mini-bar, safe, flat screen satellite TV, satellite direct-line telephone, 220 volts outlet, hairdryer, slippers and bath robes.

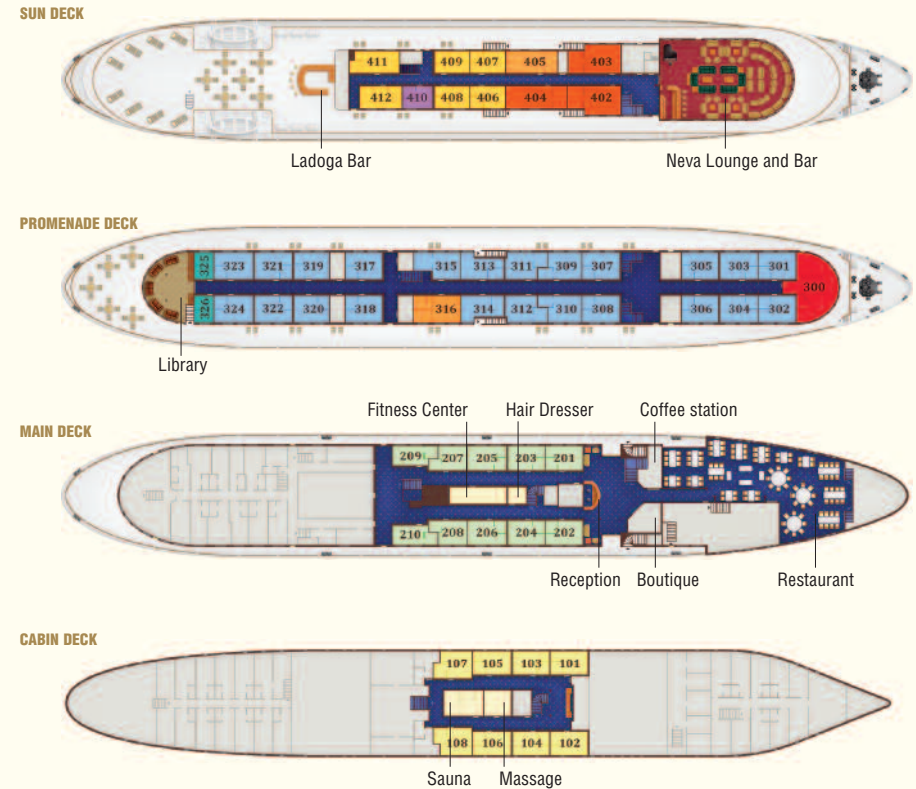
SUN DECK	Stateroom	Size (sq.ft / sq.m)
Deluxe Junior Suite	402, 403, 404	170 / 15.8
Junior Suite	405	141 / 13.1
Superior Stateroom	406 – 409, 411, 412	126 / 11.7
Deluxe Single	410	81 / 7.5

PROMENADE DECK	Stateroom	Size (sq.ft / sq.m)
Owner's Suite	300	260 / 24.2
Junior Suite	316	158 / 14.7
Deluxe Stateroom	301 – 315, 317 – 324	122 / 11.3
Single	325, 326	69 / 6.4

MAIN DECK	Stateroom	Size (sq.ft / sq.m)
Superior Stateroom	201 – 210	114 / 10.6

CABIN DECK	Stateroom	Size (sq.ft / sq.m)
Standard Stateroom	101 — 108	101 / 9.4

All staterooms have outside views and feature either a window or porthole (Cabin Deck). Windows can be opened.



Owner's Suite



Superior Stateroom

## Public Areas • Onboard Facilities

- Single seating dining room with rich choice of Russian and European dishes
- Complementary wine and soft drinks with lunch and dinner
- Neva Lounge and Bar with live music
- Ladoga Bar with Plantation Teak deck furniture
- Tea and coffee station (24 hours)
- Boutique with folk craft items
- Barber and hair dresser
- Fitness center
- Sauna and massage room
- Laundry (no dry cleaning)
- First aid
- Major credit cards accepted
- Wi-Fi in the Lounge
- Non-smoking policy

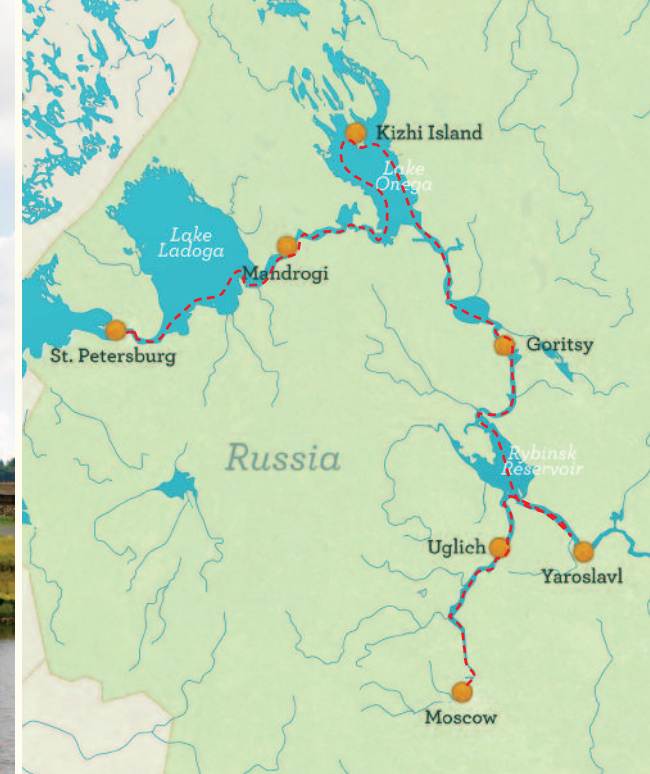


## Moscow – St. Petersburg

Through a dizzying array of canals and locks built by the Soviets, the Volga is now the linchpin of a single water system linking Moscow and St. Petersburg to five separate seas. In partially visible towns flooded by the Soviets, cathedrals rise from water. Medieval Orthodox monasteries are still in use on the riverbanks. Revealing the «real Russia», a cruise down the Volga River offers a rare glimpse into Russia's colorful past and enterprising future.



Kizhi Island

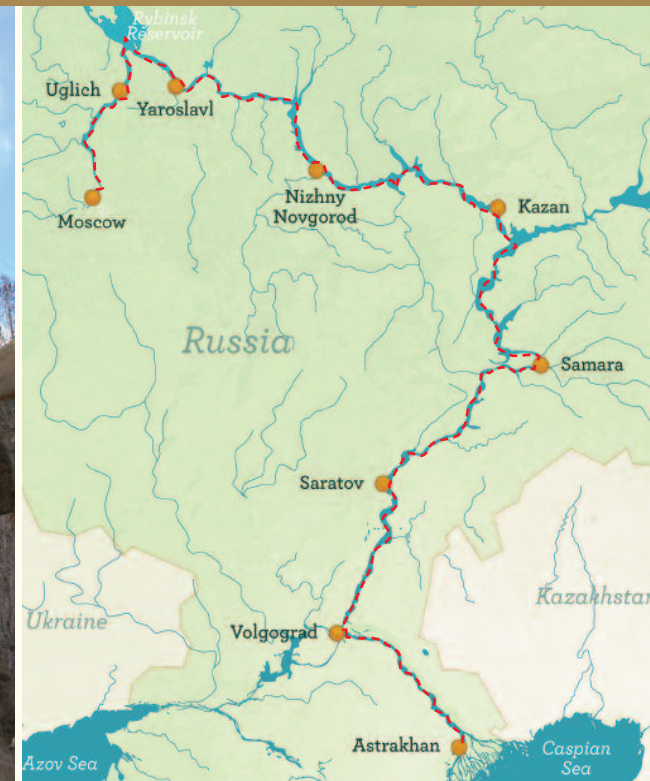


## Moscow – Astrakhan

The Volga basin witnessed signal events in the formation of the Russian state: the emergence of the Golden Horde, Ivan the Terrible's overthrow of the khans, turning battles of the World War II. As rare as a trip along the Upper Volga may be, the Lower Volga, running south and away from the population centers of Moscow and St. Petersburg, is still an area of outstanding beauty largely unexplored by tourists.



Volgograd



# VOLGA DREAM

## 2017 Volga Dream GOLD Program<sup>1)</sup>

13 days / 12 nights from Moscow to St. Petersburg<sup>2)</sup>

### Included<sup>3)</sup>:

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

6 nights aboard **MS Volga Dream**

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



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

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

3) Hotels and cruise vessel may be changed for similar

### TRIP DESCRIPTION & HIGHLIGHTS

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

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

## Day 1. MOSCOW

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

Meals: –

## Day 2. MOSCOW

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



### 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

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

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

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

Meals: B

## Day 3. MOSCOW

**Kremlin / Armoury Museum**



### 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

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

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

Meals: B

## Day 4. MOSCOW

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



### 12:00 pm – 5:30 pm

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

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

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

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

Meals: B, D

## Day 5. UGLICH

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

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

Meals: B, L, D



## Day 6. YAROSLAVL

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

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

Meals: B, L, D

## Day 7. GORITSY

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

***Volga Dream Experience: Russian Dinner with Vodka Tasting***

Meals: B, L, D



## Day 8. KIZHI

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

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

Meals: B, L, D



## Day 9. SVIR RIVER AND THE VILLAGE OF MANDROGI

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

**Volga Dream Experience: Barbeque on the Open Deck**

Meals: B, L, D



## Day 10. ST. PETERSBURG

City Tour / Peter and Paul Fortress / Hermitage Museum

**9:30am – 5:30pm**

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

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

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

Meals: B, L

## Day 11. ST. PETERSBURG

Peterhof: Park and Bath Cottage



**10:00am – 3:00pm**

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

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

Meals: B

## Day 12. ST. PETERSBURG

### Catherine's Palace / Amber Room / Faberge Museum



#### 9:30am – 5:30pm

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

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

Meals: B, L

## Day 13. ST. PETERSBURG

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

Meals: B

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

# ACCOMMODATION

## MOSCOW – Marriott Aurora Royal Hotel

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



## ST. PETERSBURG – Kempinski Moika 22

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



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

# VOLGA DREAM

## 2017 Volga Dream PLATINUM Program<sup>1)</sup>

13 days / 12 nights from Moscow to St. Petersburg<sup>2)</sup>

### Included<sup>3)</sup>:

3 nights at the deluxe **St. Regis Moscow Hotel Nikolskaya\*\*\*\*\*** in Moscow

6 nights aboard **MS Volga Dream**

3 nights at the deluxe **Grand Hotel Europe\*\*\*\*\*** in St. Petersburg



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

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

3) Hotels and cruise vessel may be changed for similar

### TRIP DESCRIPTION & HIGHLIGHTS

Volga Dream PLATINUM caters to discerning travelers who prefer to travel privately or in an intimate group. This journey includes accommodation in the finest 5-star hotels in Moscow and St. Petersburg – the St. Regis Nikolskaya and Grand Hotel Europe – and extensive touring of the most breathtaking sites in a group of 12-15 guests.

- Visit to the Armory, Diamond Fund and Museum of Cosmonautics in Moscow
- Special early entrance to the Hermitage museum in St. Petersburg
- Visit to magnificent Faberge Museum and Catherine's Palace in St. Petersburg
- 6 breakfasts in the hotels / 6 lunches in gourmet Moscow and St. Petersburg restaurants
- 6 breakfasts / 6 lunches / 6 dinners aboard *MS Volga Dream* with house wine, beer and soft drinks included without limit with all lunches and dinners
- 4 fascinating lectures by Russian professors about Russian history and politics
- Diverse range of cultural activities aboard *MS Volga Dream*

## Day 1. MOSCOW

Upon arrival in Moscow, transfer to the deluxe The St. Regis Moscow Hotel Nikolskaya\*\*\*\* located in the historic city centre within a 5 minutes walk to the famous Red Square and Moscow Kremlin. In the evening gather for the warm-up meeting with your guide (available at the hotel lobby from 6pm to 9pm) or spend the rest of the day exploring central Moscow on your own.

Meals: –

## Day 2. MOSCOW

**Kremlin / Armoury Museum / Diamond Fund / Red Square**



### 9:30 am – 5:30 pm

This morning enter the Kremlin for a visit to the Armoury Museum to view its collection of opulent coronation finery, hand-forged armour and weapons, royal carriages and sleighs, and dazzling Faberge eggs.

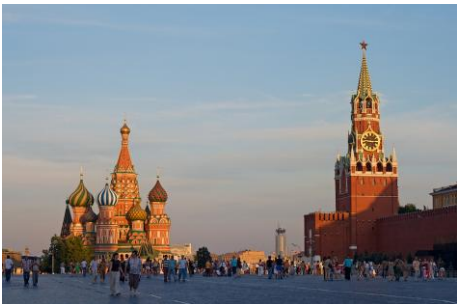
View the ornate gems of the Diamond Fund, including Catherine the Great's diamond-encrusted coronation crown and the 190-carat Orlov Diamond, and continue to the Square of Four Cathedrals.

After lunch walk around the famous Red Square and visit GUM - Moscow's largest department store. The rest of the day is at leisure to explore Moscow on your own or seek out a cultural performance at one of the city's renowned venues.

Meals: B, L

## Day 3. MOSCOW

**City Tour / Novodevichy Cemetery / Museum of Cosmonautics**



### 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

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

After lunch, visit Museum of Cosmonautics to learn about Yury Gagarin's first flight in the space and proceed to an outdoor Exhibition of Achievements of the People's Economy – a truly remarkable footprint of Soviet Architecture and design.

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

Meals: B, L

## Day 4. MOSCOW

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

### 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Check-out from the hotel and proceed to the Tretyakov Gallery, the first museum dedicated exclusively to Russian fine art.



After lunch, explore Moscow's Metro, known for its architectural splendor and transfer to the awaiting luxurious *MS Volga Dream* to begin sailing along the Russian waterways.

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

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

Meals: B, L, D

## **Day 5. UGLICH**

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

Meals: B, L, D



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

Meals: B, L, D

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Meals: B, L, D



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***Volga Dream Experience: Barbeque on the Open Deck***

Meals: B, L, D

## Day 10. ST. PETERSBURG City Tour / Faberge Museum



**9:30am – 5:30pm**

Arrive in St. Petersburg via the Neva River and disembark *MS Volga Dream*.

Enjoy a city tour of St. Petersburg and after lunch visit Faberge museum which contains world's largest collection of works by Carl Faberge, including 9 Easter eggs commissioned by the Russian royal family.

After the tour, check-in to the deluxe Grand Hotel Europe.

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

Meals: B, L

## Day 11. ST. PETERSBURG

State Hermitage (early entrance) / Peterhof: Park and Bath Cottage

**8:30am – 6:30pm**

This morning enter the famed Hermitage Museum before hours to avoid heavy crowds.

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

Meals: B, L

## Day 12. ST. PETERSBURG

Catherine's Palace / Amber Room / Russia in Miniature Museum / Canal boat



**9:30am – 7:30pm**

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

After lunch in Podvorie, a restaurant in a traditional Russian log house, on the way back to St. Petersburg visit a 'Russia in Miniature' Interactive Museum. Done with a great care and attention to detail, this very realistic model of Russia will give you a great picture of this vast country full of stereotypes, generalizations and main attractions of every region.

In the evening, board a small river boat for a sail around the numerous rivers and canals of St. Petersburg.

Meals: B, L

## Day 13. ST. PETERSBURG

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

Meals: B

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



# ACCOMMODATION

## MOSCOW – The St. Regis Moscow Hotel Nikolskaya

The St. Regis Moscow Hotel Nikolskaya is a complex of historical buildings with an unrivalled location at the corner of pedestrian Nikol'skaya Street within a 5 minutes walk to the Red Square.



## ST. PETERSBURG – Grand Hotel Europe\*\*\*\*\*

A cultural and culinary landmark, Grand Hotel Europe has played a central role in the life of St. Petersburg for over 130 years. A truly iconic Orient-Express hotel, it stands on Nevsky Prospekt among the city's great architectural treasures—renowned for its impressive façade and decorative interiors.

Positioned adjacent to Arts Square, the hotel has strong associations with the worlds of theatre, music and dance. Past guests include Tchaikovsky and Pavarotti, crowned heads and world leaders. A stay here takes you straight to the heart of Russia, especially during the White Days of winter, when snow lies outside and a warm welcome awaits within.



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

# VOLGA DREAM

## The Lower Volga

May 3 – 15, 2017

13-day Cruise from Moscow to the Caspian Sea



### TRIP DESCRIPTION & HIGHLIGHTS

From the Golden Horde to the Soviet era, the scenic cities of Russia's grand Volga River have been witness to some of the most significant events in Russian history. On a journey aboard the deluxe *M.S. Volga Dream*, cruise from Moscow to the Volga River Delta on the Caspian Sea. Discover iconic onion-domed churches; stroll through gems such as medieval Nizhniy Novgorod; and explore the treasures of Yaroslavl, the Volga's oldest city.

- Visit magnificent Red Square and Kremlin and examine the collection at the Kremlin's State Armory
- Experience Russia's diverse musical traditions at lively folk music performances
- Explore Volgograd, the site of the decisive battle of World War II's eastern front
- Visit the world capital of caviar and taste this delicacy in the city of Astrakhan

## Day 1. MOSCOW

Upon arrival in Moscow, transfer to the deluxe *MS Volga Dream*. You may spend the rest of the day at leisure relaxing after the flight or exploring Moscow on your own.

Meals: D



## Day 2. MOSCOW

Begin your day with orientation tour of Moscow followed by a ride in the ornate Moscow metro. After lunch in a local restaurant proceed to the Old Tretyakov gallery to view its extraordinary collection of Russian art, ranging from 12th-century icons to 20th-century paintings.

Meals: B, L, D

## Day 3. MOSCOW

This morning enter the Kremlin for a visit to the Armory Museum, with its collection of tsarist thrones, ceremonial crowns, coaches and gifts of state. Continue to the beautifully frescoed 15th-century Assumption and Archangel Cathedrals. After visiting the Kremlin transfer to the *MS Volga Dream* where you will be served delicious buffet lunch and begin your breathtaking cruise along the Russian Waterways. Later this evening gather for Captain's welcome reception and dinner.

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

Meals: B, L, D

## Day 4. UGLICH

We arrive this afternoon in Uglich, dating back to the 10th century. A walking tour of this Golden Ring city includes the Chapel of Dmitry on a Spilled Blood, a 17th-century treasure built on the site where Ivan the Terrible's 10-year old son met his death. Visit the Church of the Transfiguration, noted for its beautiful iconostasis, and attend a concert of choral music.

***Volga Dream Experience: Documentary film "Constriction of the Moscow Canal"***

Meals: B, L, D



## Day 5. YAROSLAVL

This morning visit the oldest city on the Volga River, Yaroslavl, a World Heritage site. In the Spassky Monastery see the Transfiguration of the Savior, adorned with murals depicting St. John's apocalyptic visions, and the richly frescoed Church of St. Elijah the Prophet. Enjoy a costumed reception at the Governor's House, and then reboard the *Volga Dream* in time for lunch.

***Volga Dream Experience: Costumed Russian Tea Ceremony***

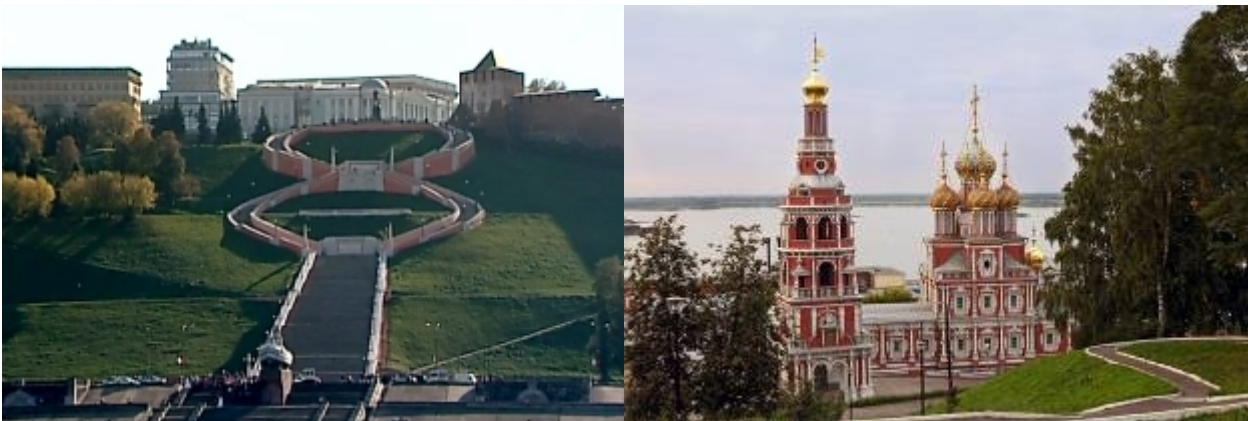
Meals: B, L, D

## Day 6. NIZHNIY NOVGOROD

Nizhniy Novgorod (formerly Gorkiy), once a wealthy commercial center poised on the trade routes to the East, became a closed city due to military activity during the Soviet era. Learn about the city's history as a place of exile for political prisoners. Walk the ramparts of the 16th-century Kremlin with its spectacular views, and visit elaborately painted churches. Tonight, attend a concert by a local children folk group.

***Volga Dream Experience: Russian Dinner with Vodka Testing***

Meals: B, L, D



## Day 7. KAZAN

This morning notice that Russian Orthodox Churches no longer dominate on the Volga river banks. Beautiful Muslim mosques appear from time to time as you cruise down the Volga River and enter the Republic of Tatarstan.

In the afternoon disembark from the *Volga Dream* to explore Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan and center of Tatar culture of Russia. Visit the white-walled Kazan Kremlin (citadel) where the famous mosque Kul-Sherif neighbours the old Peter and Paul Cathedral. Later this day enjoy a concert by a local Tatar folk group.

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

Meals: B, L, D



## Day 8 . SAMARA

This morning rest on the Sun Deck as we sail by the Zhigulevskie mountains and approach the city of Samara.

Start with a city tour of Samara, visit the space museum, then stroll along the Volga esplanade and taste beer at the famous local brewery.

***Volga Dream Experience: Barbeque on the open deck***

Meals: B, L, D

## Day 9. SARATOV

Once home to a large German community, today Saratov is known for its connection to Russia's first cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, who lived and studied here. Take a city tour, and visit Radishev State Art Museum - the first Russian picture gallery outside of St. Petersburg and Moscow.

Meals: B, L, D



## Day 10. VOLGOGRAD (ex. Stalingrad)

Originally called Tsaritsyn, this remarkable city has had three name changes in its tumultuous history. The site of epic battles during the Russian Revolution, it was known as Stalingrad from 1925 until 1961. The city's heroic defense by the Russian people during World War II became the decisive battle of the eastern front.

Visit the memorial on Mamayev Hill, where the struggle saw its bloodiest fighting, and Stalingrad battle panorama museum.

***Volga Dream Experience: Russian Cooking Class***

Meals: B, L, D

## Day 11. ASTRAKHAN

This evening the *Volga Dream* arrives in the city of Astrakhan – world's caviar capital and fishing capital of the Western Russia - set at the mouth of the Volga, where it flows into the Caspian Sea.

Meals: B, L, D



### **Day 12. ASTRAKHAN**

In the morning proceed with a tour of a local fortress built in the reign of Ivan the Terrible and after lunch attend a lecture about famous black caviar followed by a private testing of this precious delicacy (optional).

Meals: B, L, D

### **Day 13. ASTRAKHAN**

This morning transfer to the airport for your flight.

Meals: B

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

# VOLGA DREAM

## The Lower Volga

May 15 – 28, 2017

14-day Cruise from the Caspian Sea to Moscow



### TRIP DESCRIPTION & HIGHLIGHTS

From the Golden Horde to the Soviet era, the scenic cities of Russia's grand Volga River have been witness to some of the most significant events in Russian history. On a journey aboard the deluxe *M.S. Volga Dream*, cruise from the Volga River Delta to Moscow on the Caspian Sea. Discover iconic onion-domed churches; stroll through gems such as medieval Nizhny Novgorod; and explore the treasures of Yaroslavl, the Volga's oldest city.

- Visit the world capital of caviar and taste this delicacy in the city of Astrakhan
- Experience Russia's diverse musical traditions at lively folk music performances
- Explore Volgograd, the site of the decisive battle of World War II's eastern front
- Visit magnificent Red Square and Kremlin and examine the collection at the Kremlin's State Armory

## Day 1. Astrakhan

Upon arrival in Astrakhan, transfer to the deluxe *MS Volga Dream*. You may spend the rest of the day at leisure relaxing after the flight or exploring the city on your own.

In the evening enjoy the concert of a focal folk group.

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

Meals: D

## Day 2. Astrakhan

In the morning proceed with a tour of a local fortress built in the reign of Ivan the Terrible and after lunch attend a lecture about famous black caviar followed by a private tasting of this precious delicacy (optional).

Meals: B, L, D



## Day 3. Sailing day

Meals: B, L, D



## Day 4. VOLGOGRAD (ex. Stalingrad)

Originally called Tsaritsyn, this remarkable city has had three name changes in its tumultuous history. The site of epic battles during the Russian Revolution, it was known as Stalingrad from 1925 until 1961. The city's heroic defence by the Russian people during World War II became the decisive battle of the eastern front.

Visit the memorial on Mamayev Hill, where the struggle saw its bloodiest fighting, and Stalingrad battle panorama museum.

***Volga Dream Experience: Russian Cooking Class***

Meals: B, L, D



## Day 5. SARATOV

Once home to a large German community, today Saratov is known for its connection to Russia's first cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, who lived and studied here. Take a city tour, and visit Radishev State Art Museum - the first Russian picture gallery outside of St. Petersburg and Moscow.

Meals: B, L, D

## Day 6 . SAMARA

This morning rest on the Sun Deck as we sail by the Zhigulevskie mountains and approach the city of Samara.

Start with a city tour of Samara, visit the space museum, then stroll along the Volga esplanade and visit to Space Museum and Samara State Art Museum.

***Volga Dream Experience: Barbeque on the open deck***

Meals: B, L, D

## Day 7. KAZAN

This morning notice that Russian Orthodox Churches no longer dominate on the Volga river banks. Beautiful Muslim mosques appear from time to time as you cruise down the Volga River and enter the Republic of Tatarstan.

In the afternoon disembark from the *Volga Dream* to explore Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan and centre of Tatar culture of Russia. Visit the white-walled Kazan Kremlin (citadel) where the famous mosque Kul-Sherif neighbours the old Peter and Paul Cathedral. Later this day enjoy a concert by a local Tatar folk group.

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

Meals: B, L, D

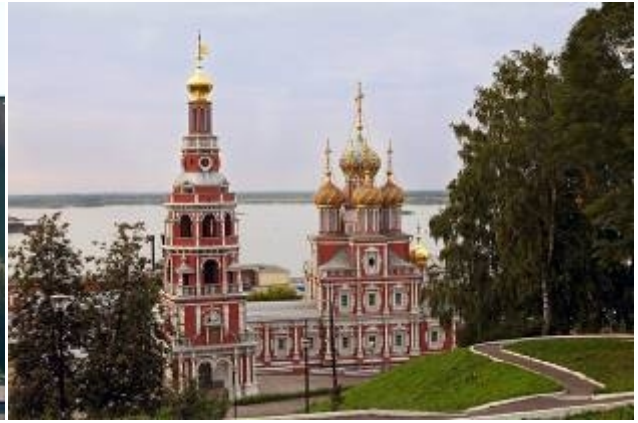


## Day 8. NIZHNIY NOVGOROD

Nizhniy Novgorod (formerly Gorkiy), once a wealthy commercial centre poised on the trade routes to the East, became a closed city due to military activity during the Soviet era. Learn about the city's history as a place of exile for political prisoners. Walk the ramparts of the 16th-century Kremlin with its spectacular views, and visit elaborately painted churches. Tonight, attend a concert by a local children folk group.

***Volga Dream Experience: Russian Dinner with Vodka Testing***

Meals: B, L, D



### Day 9. SAILING DAY

Spend this day at leisure as *Volga Dream* sails along the picturesque Volga River. Be on the Sun Deck as we pass by small villages, provincial towns, churches, and monasteries – an area flourishing for centuries supported by intense trade on the Volga.

Later today attend a lecture by our guest speaker about the history and traditions of these places.

Meals: B, L, D

### Day 10. YAROSLAVL

This morning visit the oldest city on the Volga River, Yaroslavl, a World Heritage site. In the Spassky Monastery see the Transfiguration of the Savior, adorned with murals depicting St. John's apocalyptic visions, and the richly frescoed Church of St. Elijah the Prophet. Enjoy a costumed reception at the Governor's House, and then reboard the *Volga Dream* in time for lunch.

***Volga Dream Experience: Costumed Russian Tea Ceremony***

Meals: B, L, D

### Day 11. UGLICH

We arrive this afternoon in Uglich, dating back to the 10th century. A walking tour of this Golden Ring city includes the Chapel of Dmitry on a Spilled Blood, a 17th-century treasure built on the site where Ivan the Terrible's 10-year old son met his death. Visit the Church of the Transfiguration, noted for its beautiful iconostasis, and attend a concert of choral music.

***Volga Dream Experience: Documentary film "Constriction of the Moscow Canal"***

Meals: B, L, D





### **Day 12. Moscow**

This afternoon arrive in Moscow and following lunch proceed with an orientation tour of Moscow.

Visit magnificent Red Square to see its famous landmarks - Lenin's Tomb and St. Basil's cathedral, drive by the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, one of Russia's most important cathedrals, completely destroyed in Stalin's times and restored in 1990 and visit famous Novodevichi Cemetery which holds the

tombs of Russian authors, musicians, playwrights, and poets, as well as famous actors, political leaders, and scientists.

Meals: B, L, D

### **Day 13. Moscow**

This morning enter the Kremlin for a visit to the Armory Museum, with its collection of tsarist thrones, ceremonial crowns, coaches and gifts of state. Continue to the beautifully frescoed 15th-century Assumption and Archangel Cathedrals.

After lunch in a local restaurant proceed to the Old Tretyakov gallery to view its extraordinary collection of Russian art, ranging from 12th-century icons to 20th-century paintings. Explore Moscow's Metro, known for its architectural splendour.

Meals: B, L, D

### **Day 14. Moscow**

This morning transfer to the airport for your flight.

Meals: B

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