

## lonely planet Hotels & Hostels

Want more Sleeping recommendations than we could ever pack into this little ol' book? Craving more detail – including extended reviews and photographs? Want to read reviews by other travellers and be able to post your own? Just make your way over to [lonelyplanet.com/hotels](http://lonelyplanet.com/hotels) and check out our thorough list of independent reviews, then reserve your room simply and securely.

## SLEEPING

### top picks

- Alexander House (p210)
- Andrey & Sasha's Homestay (p210)
- Anichkov Pension (p205)
- Hotel Astoria (p203)
- Casa Leto (p203)
- Nevsky Forum (p208)
- Pio on Griboedov (p206)
- Rachmaninov Antique Hotel (p205)

# SLEEPING

When choosing a place to lay your head, it is wise to remember two factors: proximity to historic sights, restaurants and bars is always a plus, but so too is easy access to transport. While the Historic Heart is packed with places that cater to all price levels, there are only the two linked metro stations on Nevsky pr, which are a vigorous 20-minute walk from the far corners of the neighbourhood.

Bordering the Historic Heart, Sennaya and Vladimirskaaya and Vosstaniya are lively neighbourhoods that are better served by public transport. Liteyny and Smolny and Mariinsky are quaint but quiet neighbourhoods that are a bit further afield, though they each have their charms.

## ACCOMMODATION STYLES

The most visible type of accommodation in St Petersburg is that of palatial four- and five-star hotels that have proliferated in the past few years. Priced for the business market, they may be prohibitively expensive for some travellers (although many offer far better deals through travel agents and hotel websites). At the other end of the spectrum, the city has a rather depressing collection of post-Intourist Soviet hotels, which are now slowly adapting to the needs of the modern traveller.

As St Petersburg started to be a popular backpacker destination in the 1990s, hostels began to spring up. This is not Prague, of course, but St Pete now offers a good choice of centrally located and well-run hostels.

Unique to St Petersburg but ubiquitous in the city, mini-hotels are a concept that gained currency in the run-up to the tercentennial celebrations in 2003, when it became abundantly clear that there were insufficient beds in the city for the influx of revellers. Ever-resourceful Russian entrepreneurs started opening up small, family-run hotels, many of which are in renovated apartments in unlikely locations. Today, these mini-hotels are some of the best-value and most atmospheric accommodation options in the city.

## LONGER-TERM RENTALS

Anyone spending more than a few days in St Petersburg should consider renting a short-term apartment for the duration of their stay. As well as being financially beneficial (especially if you are travelling in a group), this is a great chance to live life more like the locals, rather than cloistered away in a hotel.

The following agencies and individuals can help you find a flat:

**Apartment Reservation Network** (📞 in Moscow 495-225 5012; [www.apartmentres.com](http://www.apartmentres.com))

**City Realty** (Map p84; 📞 570 6342; [www.cityrealty.ru](http://www.cityrealty.ru); Muchnoy per 2; 🚶 Nevsky Pr)

**Bed & Breakfast** (📞 315 5635; [www.bednbkfast.sp.ru](http://www.bednbkfast.sp.ru))

**Flatmates** ([www.flatmates.ru](http://www.flatmates.ru)) A website for travellers looking for somebody to share short- or long-term accommodation.

**Hofa** ([www.hofa.ru](http://www.hofa.ru)) A time-tested, reliable agency that organises homestays and rental of private flats.

**Nevsky Hotels** (📞 703 3860; [www.hon.ru](http://www.hon.ru))

**Zimmer Frei** (📞 973 3757, 273 0867; [www.zimmer.ru](http://www.zimmer.ru))

## RESERVATIONS

It's wise to reserve a bed in advance, and essential during the summer months when St Petersburg is awash with travellers. It usually suffices to call ahead or send an email, but increasingly hotels will ask for credit card details to guarantee a room. Reservations will sometimes be tied up with visa support (see p249), in which case you may be charged for one night's accommodation in advance in any case.

## ROOM RATES

Accommodation listings in this chapter are ordered by neighbourhood, then by budget (from most expensive to least). Prices quoted are high-season rack rates, which are usually in effect from May to September. Prices tend to be at least 20% cheaper from October to April (although prices may also vary within these periods). By using travel agents and hotel booking websites you can usually obtain lower prices at top-end hotels, so it's worth looking into these options for substantial discounts. Prices quoted also include the 18% VAT tax, which is chargeable on hotel rooms in Russia.

Accommodation prices in St Petersburg are often quoted in euros, but payment is usually

## PRICE GUIDE

\$\$\$	over €150 (R5250) per night
\$\$	€50-150 (R1750-5250) per night
\$	under €50 (R1750) per night

in roubles. In this guide, we have quoted prices in whatever currency the hotel uses – in some cases euros and in others roubles. Breakfast is included in the price and all rooms have private bathrooms unless otherwise mentioned.

## HISTORIC HEART

Many first-time visitors to St Petersburg will spend days without leaving the Historic Heart, with its endless array of museums, churches and canals. There's a huge range of accommodation here, including most of the city's very best hotels, a few excellent budget options and an ever-growing number of idiosyncratic mini-hotels that have opened to cater for the huge demand to stay in the neighbourhood.

## WITHIN THE MOYKA

The blocks between the Moyka and the Neva Rivers are crowded with grandiose high-class hotels and modest mini-hotels.

### TALEON IMPERIAL HOTEL

Map pp68–9 Boutique Hotel \$\$\$  
📞 324 9911; [www.eliseevpalacehotel.com](http://www.eliseevpalacehotel.com); nab reki Moyki 59; r R10,000-15,000; 🚶 Nevsky Pr; 🚶 🚶 🚶

In the pre-revolutionary home of the wealthy Yeliseyev family, this hotel (formerly the Eliseev Palace) is a grand, gaudy affair where every tap is gold-plated, every towel monogrammed and every room decorated with real and reproduction antiques. Enjoy the exclusivity of a hotel where all rooms have king-size beds, hydromassage baths and state-of-the-art entertainment systems; some have lovely views across the Moyka River.

### HOTEL ASTORIA

Map pp68–9 International Hotel \$\$\$  
📞 313 5757; [www.roccofortehotels.com](http://www.roccofortehotels.com); Bolshaya Morskaya ul 39; s/d €490/550, ste €700-1550; 🚶 Nevsky Pr; 🚶 🚶 🚶

What the Hotel Astoria has lost of its original Style Moderne décor, it more than compen-

sates for in contemporary style and top-notch service. Little wonder it's beloved by visiting VIPs, from George W Bush to Mick Jagger. The hotel is now part of the Rocco Forte Hotels group and the rooms marry the hotel's heritage character with a more modern design. The best of the suites are sprinkled with antiques and period furniture and have spectacular views onto St Isaac's Cathedral. The same views – at a slightly lower price – are also available next door at the Angleterre Hotel. Breakfast is not included.

**CASA LETO** Map pp68–9 Mini-Hotel \$\$\$  
📞 314 6622; [www.casaletto.com](http://www.casaletto.com); Bolshaya Morskaya ul 34; r €190-260; 🚶 Sennaya Pl; 🚶 🚶

A dramatically lit stone stairwell sets the scene for this discreet and stylish boutique hotel. The Anglo-Italian owners have named the five guest rooms after famous St Petersburg architects (who also happen to have been Italian). With soft pastel shades and plenty of antiques, the spacious, high-ceilinged quarters are deserving of such namesakes. Enjoy plenty of five-star perks, such as king-size beds and heated floors, not to mention free international phone calls.

**MOYKA 5** Map pp68–9 Mini-Hotel \$\$\$  
📞 601 0636; [www.hon.ru](http://www.hon.ru); nab reki Moyki 5; s/d R5950/6650; 🚶 Nevsky Pr; 🚶 🚶

The newest property in the chain of Nevsky Hotels is on the Moyka River, behind the Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood. It's a pretty slick location for a fairly simple hotel, with 24 rooms that provide all the necessary comforts.

**COMFORT HOTEL** Map pp68–9 Mini-Hotel \$\$  
📞 570 6700; [www.comfort-hotel.spb.ru](http://www.comfort-hotel.spb.ru); Bolshaya Morskaya ul 25; r from R3920; 🚶 Nevsky Pr; 🚶 🚶

This aptly named hotel is indeed comfortable, with 14 cosy rooms, all decorated

## top picks

### CHEAP SLEEPS

- Nord Hostel (p204)
- St Petersburg International Hostel (p208)
- Nils Bed & Breakfast (p207)
- Andrey & Sasha's Homestay (p210)