



Russia

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Best Places to Eat

- Lavka-Lavka (p954)
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Best Places to Stay

- Hotel Metropol (p954)
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Why Go?

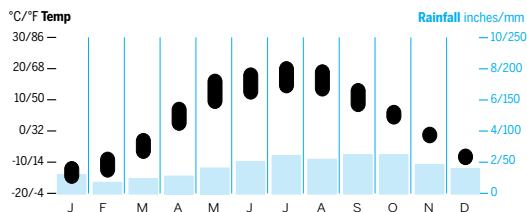
Could there be a more iconic image of Eastern Europe than the awe-inspiring architectural ensemble of Moscow's Red Square? The brash, exciting and oil-rich capital of Russia (Россия) is a must on any trip to the region.

St Petersburg, on the Baltic coast, is another stunner. The former imperial capital is still Russia's most beautiful and alluring city, with its grand Italianate mansions, wending canals and enormous Neva River. Also make time for Suzdal to get a glimpse of old Russia with its golden cupolas and fortress-like monasteries. Emulating the tourist-friendly nature of its Baltic neighbours is little Kaliningrad, wedged between Poland and Lithuania on the Baltic Sea. It's a fascinating destination, combining all the best elements of its enormous mother.

Visa red tape deters many travellers from visiting – don't let it keep you from experiencing the incredible things to see and do in the European part of the world's largest country.

When to Go

Moscow



May Big military parades and a public holiday mark the end of WWII.

Jun–Jul Party during St Petersburg's White Nights, and bask on the beaches of Kaliningrad.

Dec–Jan Snow makes Moscow and St Petersburg look magical, while hotel rates drop.



Russia

- 1 Moscow** (p948)
 Being awe-inspired by the massive scale and riches of Russia's brash, energetic capital.
- 2 St Petersburg** (p959)
 Taking a walking, bike or boat tour of a glorious Italianate slice of Old Europe incongruously placed in Russia.
- 3 State Hermitage Museum** (p963)
 Ogling the seemingly endless collection of masterpieces in St Petersburg's unrivalled museum.
- 4 Petrodvorets and Tsarskoe Selo** (p121)
 Taking a day trip out of St Petersburg to see the imperial country estates in these spectacular sights.
- 5 Suzdal** (p958)
 Crisscrossing this beautiful town by bicycle or on foot, listening to the music of church bells and nightingales.
- 6 Kaliningrad** (p122)
 Exploring this historic city, once part of the Prussian empire, and home to the pristine beaches of the Kurshskaya Kosa National Park.