

SAINT PETERSBURG SIGHTSEEING GUIDE

DAILY PLAN





Hi! If you're reading this it means you either plan or dream to see one of the most beautiful cities in the world – Saint Petersburg, Russia. Great choice! :) You won't be disappointed, I promise.

In this guide I will lead you through stunning and famous attractions of this city. I spent 6 weeks in Saint Petersburg in 2014, volunteering. I taught basics of finance in Russian school – and after classes I explored the famous and unknown parts of the city. I came back there in August 2017 to visit my friends, show the city to my fiancé –and to prepare this guide for you :)

This file is printable – which means it doesn't contain pictures. You can see pictures in the related post on bornglobals.com. Under the descriptions of majority of attractions I left blank spaces so that you can note current prices and opening hours after printing the file. A link to the source of the information is always next to the blank space. The most efficient way to plan your trip is to use electronic and paper version of this file simultaneously.

If you have any suggestions, comments or questions, let me know on dorota@bornglobals.com, I'll be happy to talk to you!

Ready? Let's go! :)

Day 1

Start your sightseeing from Nevsky Prospekt metro station. The station has many exits, follow the signs for “Griboyedov canal”. Depending on which exits will be open you’ll either go out by the very canal or in the spot pointed on the map below.

[Check your route on the map here](#)

CHURCH OF SAVIOR ON BLOOD

The church was built by tsar Alexander III in the place where his father was killed in a bombing attack by a revolutionary organization. He wanted the building to stand out in the baroque and neoclassical architecture and therefore the church is inspired by medieval Russian style.

[Check the entrance price](#) and put it down here _____

PALACE SQUARE

An impressive, huge square, heart of the city, one of the most popular touristic places in Russia and in the whole world. On the square you will see the Winter Palace. Currently the Hermitage museum is located in the palace. It’s an important place in the history of Petersburg and Russia – let’s only mention that the first person to live in the palace was Catherine the Great and it was the first building taken by the Bolsheviks at the beginning of October revolution.

At the other side of the square you will see the building of the General Staff. In the center of the square there is a monumental Alexander Column raised after Russia won over Napoleon’s France. On top of it an angel smashes a snake with a cross and is a symbol of triumph over evil.

SPIIT OF VASILYEVSKY ISLAND

The eastern end of Vasilyevsky Island is a perfect viewpoint at Peter and Paul Fortress, Neva River, Winter Palace and the dome of St. Isaac’s cathedral.

THE BRONZE HORSEMAN

The Bronze Horseman is a monument offered to Peter I by Catherine II. It stands on a so called Thunder Stone, the biggest stone ever moved by humans. The legend says that till the Bronze Horseman stands in the city, no enemy will conquer it. That’s why during the II World War the

monument was protected with sandbags and a wooden building. That's how it wasn't destroyed by bombs – and Saint Petersburg wasn't conquered.

SAINT ISAAC'S CATHEDRAL

The biggest cathedral in Saint Petersburg and the fourth biggest dome building in the world. The dome is covered with a thin layer of pure gold. At the colonnade under the dome you will find the best viewing point in the city.

[Check prices of the cathedral and viewpoint \(colonnaded walkway\)](#) _____

From there walk or use public transportation and go to Peter and Paul Fortress.

If you want to walk, go through Nevskiy Prospekt, Church of Savior on Blood, The Field of Mars and Trinity Bridge. It's an amazing walk, the views from the Field of Mars and from Trinity Bridge are beautiful. On your way you can stop to eat in a milk bar Stolovaya

[Check the route on the map here](#)

Public transportation options:

- [Walk through Nevskiy Prospekt and the milk bar + metro](#)
- [Other means of transport](#). Choose the hour you expect to leave the cathedral for Google to find the timetables for you.

PETER AND PAUL FORTRESS

While crossing the bridge on the way to the Fortress, don't forget to throw a coin on the hare, the symbol of Hare Island. They say that if you manage to hit the rabbit and make the coin stay on its base you will have good luck :) In the fortress you have a lot of choice of museums and points of interest. You can see Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral with the tombs of Russian tsars, you can climb up the fortress walls, visit the museum of the history of Saint Petersburg and not only – [check the list of all available exhibitions and their prices](#) _____

Or you can relax on the beach right outside the fortress :) Just don't go into the extremely polluted Neva River!

MOSQUE IN SAINT PETERSBURG

Close to the fortress there is an impressive mosque of Saint Petersburg with its outstanding turquoise dome and portals. If the gates are open go inside too. It's so impressive.

AURORA

Aurora is a Russian cruiser. It is believed that its blank shot gave a signal to start the Bolsheviks' assault on Winter Palace – and begin the October Revolution. If you are interested in the museum, go on deck – [check the opening hours and prices here](#). You can also just look at Aurora from the shore, as a monument, an important representative of the country's history.

[Check the route on the map here](#)

Walking from the mosque to Aurora you will see the Cabin of Peter the Great – the first house ever constructed in Saint Petersburg. Peter I lived there for 5 years controlling the construction of Peter and Paul Fortress. The cabin has only 60 square meters! That's nothing for a tsar... :)

Day 2

THE HERMITAGE

The Hermitage is not only the largest museum of art and culture in the world but also an immense and beautiful palace, winter residence of the tsars.

While visiting it make sure to take a map and plan where to walk. Walking around this museum without a plan won't work. The rooms have numbers and you will see them over each door. Check where you are and where you will go next. Plan at least 4 hours for the museum and take your time to rest too. It's an amazing place – but tiring as hell :)

Make sure to arrive to the Hermitage before opening to avoid the biggest crowds. [Check the opening hours on the website here.](#)

OPENING HOURS: _____

[Check the price on the website here](#)

PRICE: _____

WALK ALONG NEVSKY PROSPECT TO VOSSTANIYA SQUARE

Nevsky Prospect is the main and the most famous street in Saint Petersburg, Nevsky Prospect. It's extremely busy almost all day long – but there are a few points of interest you shouldn't miss.

[Check the route on the map here](#)

First of them is **Kazan Cathedral**. An icon Our Lady of Kazan is special for the Russian orthodox church. After the huge fire in Kazan in XVIth century, the Virgin Mary appeared to a little girl and showed her where the icon was under a destroyed house. The icon was taken to Moscow, and then to Saint Petersburg from where it was stolen. Someone found and bought it on a black market. The honorable buyer gave it to the Pope John Paul II, who gave it back to the orthodox church. It's not 100% sure if the icon in Kazan Cathedral is an original or a copy. Anyway, it is an important religious symbol for the orthodox church. The entrance is free.

On the other side of the street you will see the beautiful building of **Singer House, also known as House of Books (Dom Knigi)**.

Next on your way is **Gostiny Dvor**, Petersburg's first shopping center and one of the first shopping arcades in the world. Next you will see Alexander Theatre and the monument of Catherine the Great after which you will cross Anichkov Bridge. It's the oldest bridge through Fontanka river and it is decorated with four sculptures of Horse Tamers.

You can then either continue towards Vosstaniya Square, the huge transportation and traffic hub of the city where you will find a Hero-City obelisk commemorating the victory of the Red Army over the Nazis.

Or you can turn left behind Anichkov Bridge, go to Farsh i Bochka (Stuffing and Barrell) craft beer pub and reward yourself for this long day... :) [Check the route to the bar on the map here.](#)

Day 3

CATHERINE PALACE AND THE PARK IN PUSHKIN (TSARSKOYE SELO)

The palace in Pushkin was originally designed for Catherine I but it grew to its monumental size a few years later for the empress Elizabeth. Catherine the Great also contributed to the building's beauty, she wanted to have it embellished. The palace suffered a great damage during the II world war but it was re-constructed and it's outstanding today again.

In Catherine Palace you will find the famous **Amber Room** – a chamber decorated fully with amber. It's a reconstruction, original amber decorations made by craftsmen from Gdańsk disappeared during the war and have never been found. In the palace **the ball room** is stunning as well. Its walls are covered in mirrors and golden decorations. It gives you a sense of infinite space and extreme splendor.

Come here as early as possible to avoid the crowds.

The park surrounding the palace is beautiful too and it's worth having a long walk there.

[Check prices and opening hours here](#)

PRICE: _____

OPENING HOURS: _____

How to get to Pushkin?

You will find up to date information on how to get there [on the museum's website here](#)

GETTING THERE:

Day 4

THE FOUNTAINS OF PETERHOF

An impressive palace and gardens designed for tsar Peter the Great and often called Russian Versailles. The palace is surrounded by a part divided in two parts. Upper Park – geometrically planned with the plants nicely trimmed and with numerous green tunnels – and the Lower Park, a bit less orderly, giving more freedom to nature. The parks are separated with the palace and the Grand Cascade – famous fountains. It's decorated with 37 gilded sculpture. What's interesting – there are no pumps used to power the fountains. Only the elevation difference creates the water pressure. All fountains use 100 000 cubic meters of water. Daily!

[Check current prices and opening hours of the park](#)

[Opening hours and prices of the palace](#) – however I think the palace is not worth visiting, especially after the Winter Palace and Tsarskoye Selo. It's much smaller and less impressive.

PRICE: _____

OPENING HOURS: _____

Go there early before the biggest crowds arrive. [Check how to get to Peterhof here](#) (information below opening hours and prices)

GETTING THERE:

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL METRO STATIONS

After coming back to Saint Petersburg from Peterhof by any mean of transportation you will be close to the southern part of the city. Use this opportunity to see the most beautiful and the oldest metro stations in Saint Petersburg.

The most beautiful station is Avtovo on a red line. Decorated in Soviet style, it commemorates the Leningrad Blockade during the II World War. You will see 46 columns there, 16 of them covered and beautifully decorated with glass. At the end of the corridor you will see a mosaic of symbolic victory.

Other stations worth seeing close to Avtovo are Kirovsky Zavod and Narvskaya. In the city center you also might want to see Ploschad Vosstaniya (on the red line)

ATTRACTIONS FOR THE NEXT DAYS

Depending on your preferences and interests plan some (or all :) of the below activities and attractions.

A boat trip along the rivers and canals of the city

Saint Petersburg is called Venice of the North for a reason. Even though you won't find romantic gondolas here but if only there are no big pieces of floe floating on the rivers, at every corner of every main street you can find people offering you a boat trip. The boat trip during the day costs around 600 roubles, it's a bit more expensive during the night. You can take a trip during the day or during sunset. There are also night trips during which you can watch the bridges open.

Trip on the rooftops of Saint Petersburg

A bit unofficial, yet very popular attraction of Saint Petersburg. The roofs of buildings in Saint Petersburg city center are connected so it's possible to walk for hours without going down. You just have to know where to climb, where to go and how not to let the wrong people see you... :)

[Try contacting an organizer on the mail from this website.](#) It's only in Russian but don't get discouraged, they should speak English. Keep your eyes open in the city too – I bet you will find people encouraging you to take an “ekskursya po krysham” :)

Walk along Moyka river from Mariinsky Theatre

The golden dome of Saint Isaac's Cathedral always amazes me and river Moyka embankment close to Mariinsky Theatre is one of the best spots to see it. There is also an interesting island around – New Holland which you can visit too.

Relax on The Field of Mars and the Summer Garden

The Field of Mars, despite its central location right next to the Church of Savior on Blood is a popular place where locals relax. You can join or have a walk to a Summer Garden located nearby and to a tiny monument of a bird siskin. You need to hit it with a coin, just like you did with the hare in the fortress. The monument comes from a simple Russian song, it's called Chizhyk-Pyzhik and it's so cute :)

Kirov Central Culture and Leisure Park

Lovely and huge park, taking the whole island. It's a perfect place to breathe some fresh air after a few days in the center of Saint Petersburg. Don't walk there with no target though :) Find a beautiful

building of Yelagin Palace (Елагин дворец) – bought for the mother of tsar Alexander I, Maria Fedorovna.

[Find the map of the park here](#)

Russian Vodka Museum

Vodka is an inherent part of Russian culture. In the museum of vodka you will get to know Russian tradition and culture of drinking vodka, you will learn how the beverage's history connects to the history and development of Russia. And you can also taste different kinds of vodka :) If you like it, there is a restaurant right next to it where you can continue your tasting.

[Find prices and opening hours on their website here](#)

PRICE: _____

OPENING HOURS: _____

State Russian Museum

If you prefer art rather than vodka, go to the State Russian Museum. It's the second biggest collection of Russian art in Russia located in the neoclassical building of Mikhailovsky Palac. I've never been inside but if you are interested in art and you don't have enough of it after the Hermitage – it is the place for you. The museum is located close to the Church of Savior on Blood.

[Tickets prices are available on the museum's website](#)

PRICE: _____

OPENING HOURS: _____

Smolny Convent and other cathedrals and churches

One of my favorite churches in Saint Petersburg is Smolny Cathedral which amazed me with its heavenly colors. At the time of Peter the Great they produced pitch where Smolny Convent is today. It was needed for building the tsar's fleet. That's where the convent's name comes from, smola – means pitch in Russian. The tsar's daughter wanted to have it built but the plan didn't work out well and the convent worked only for four years. In the buildings there was a warehouse, a museum and a concert hall before it was converted back to its functions as a church in 2016! On the cathedral's tower you will find another viewpoint worth visiting. The closest metro station is Chernyshevskaya (red line)

Except for this you can also see [Chesme Church](#), [Trinity Cathedral](#), [St. Nicolas Naval Cathedral in Saint Petersburg](#).

Trip to Kronstadt

It's an option for another day trip outside of Saint Petersburg. Kronstadt is a Russian military fort located on Kotlin island. It used to be a fully military area and repelled a lot of enemy fleets attacking the city. You can see an impressive Naval Cathedral there, monument of Peter the Great – and abandoned military bunkers on the west of the island – fort Rif. You can walk along the dark, empty corridors where soldiers used to hide. Amazing place if you like abandoned buildings :)

[You can find information on how to get to Kronstadt here](#)

GETTING THERE: _____

Hey! It's not the end! Check the below page for useful links and information to plan your trip! :)

USEFUL LINKS AND INFORMATION

While planning your trip to Saint Petersburg you will need the below resources:

- [Currency conversion calculator from RUB to USD](#)
- [Currency conversion calculator from RUB to EUR](#)
- [What is a marshrutka and how to use it?](#)
- [Metro tickets in Saint Petersburg](#). I recommend you to use Russian version of the site and help yourself with Google translate. English version differs from the Russian one and it doesn't show all (the best) options. It's best to buy a ticket for a couple of days – you can also use them in buses and trams (not marshrutkas). One day ticket: На 1 сутки, two days: На 2 суток etc.

Where to go for a beer in Saint Petersburg?

Pubs with local craft beer:

- Redrum – Nekrasova 26
- Farsh i Vochka – Bielinskovo 11
- BeerGeek – Rubinshteyna, 2/45
- Пивная Диета / Beer Diet – Nevskiy prospekt 130
- Vakunin – 2-ya Sovetskaya ul. 25A

I also loved Golitsyn Loft (Голицын Лофт) on Fontanka river embankment 20 (набережная реки Фонтанки 20). It's a yard in between buildings surrounded by bars.

Where to look for accommodation in Saint Petersburg?

The most convenient option is to live in the city center. Look for the accommodation in the center which is:

- [The best rated](#)
- [Well rated and inexpensive](#)

If none of the apartments in the center caught your eye, look for accommodation near any metro station (up to 15 minutes walking). [Use the map view](#) to find them.

Enjoy your stay in Saint Petersburg! If you have any questions, comments or suggestions – don't hesitate to contact me via dorota@bornlgobals.com. I'll be delighted to hear from you :)