# tourism&leisure in Russia

THE PUBLICATION "NATIONAL TOURIST ROUTES OF RUSSIA"

ESCAPE THE ORDINARY



## Football

*Guide to the 2018 FIFA World Cup*

**MOSCOW**
The cosmopolitan capital welcomes millions annually

**ST. PETERSBURG**
The Venice of the North

**SAMARA**
The ancient city on the Volga river

**KALININGRAD**
The world amber capital

**SOCHI**
A major Black Sea resort and former host of the Winter Olympic Games

**26**
*UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES*
*are located in Russia*

**Where to go on holiday?**

MOSCOW REGION
LAKE BAIKAL
PRIMORYE
KHABAROVSK
YAKUTIA
KAMCHATKA

# Contents

ESCAPE THE ORDINARY



17
Solovki



Ural
26


12 **A Treasure Map**
A tourist route is not just a line connecting several points on the map: cities and sights are united by a shared idea and concept. Learn more about Russia's famous "Golden Ring" and other national tourist routes.

34 **The Red Route**
This is a cultural and educational tour, which includes a visit to four cities important in the life of the "leader of the world proletariat", Vladimir Lenin: Moscow, St. Petersburg, Ulyanovsk and Kazan.

36 **Five Jewels Close to Moscow**
More than 6,000 cultural heritage sites are concentrated in the cities and towns around the Russian capital. The most popular tourist destinations are Sergiyev Posad, Kolomna, Istra, Klin and Dmitrov.

40 **A Gateway to Russia's Illustrious Past**
Situated in the centre of St. Petersburg, the iconic Belmond Grand Hotel Europe is a short walk from the city's most famous sights.

42 **The Bay of Red Pebbles**
Vladivostok landscape photographer Vitaly Berkov climbs the highest peaks in Primorye, crosses mountain ranges, and goes on extreme expeditions – sometimes all for the sake of a single, unique photograph.

50 **The Bright Colours of Primorye**
The warm sea, high mountains, unique sites of nature, modern health resorts, nature reserves and national parks all come together in the Far East region.

54 **On the Banks of the Amur River**
Khabarovsk Territory is one of the most interesting, beautiful and mysterious regions of Russia's Far East.

58 **Marvels of Yakutia**
Immerse yourself in the bright and unusual world of one of the most mysterious regions of Russia – the Republic of Sakha.




Sakhalin
52

62
Kamchatka



PHOTO: ISTOCK / PYOTR NIKITIN / TASS PHOTO AGENCY / VISUALRIAN

# Contents

ESCAPE THE ORDINARY


62 **The Land of Bears**
Pyotr Nikitin recently went to the Kronotsky Reserve as a volunteer and is now taking photographs of the volcanoes of Kamchatka, the Kurile Lake, geysers and brown bears.

68 **Football for Everyone!**
In the summer of 2018 the FIFA World Cup will take place in Russia. "TLR" has prepared a guide to the 11 cities that will be hosting World Championship matches.

98 **Ulyanovsk – Centre of Hospitality**
The city of Ulyanovsk will be a connecting link between the host cities of the World Cup. In the city and its surrounding areas, there are approximately 100 hotels and tourist bases.

100 **The Moscow Region Awaits Fans**
Guests coming to Russia to attend World Cup matches can experience different facets of Russian culture.

102 **Folk Show "Golden Ring"**
The Russian folk show "Golden Ring" allows viewers to see the diversity of Russian traditions and cultures, without leaving Moscow.

104 **The Sanduny "Palace of Bathing"**
Public Russian baths are an amazing, deeply national and cultural phenomenon. They are a trademark of Russia along with samovar, balalaika, vodka and caviar.

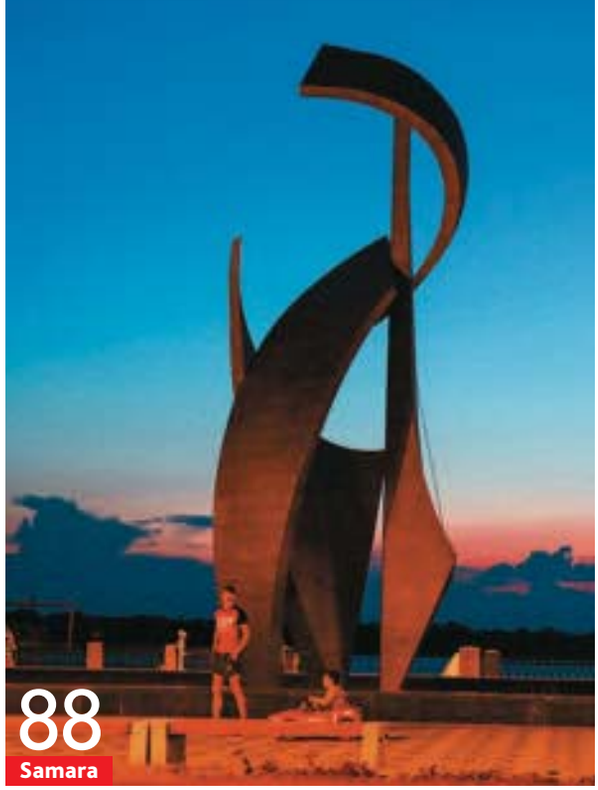
106 **Lake Baikal**
Who doesn't dream of visiting the deepest lake on the planet, Lake Baikal, at least once in their life? Photographer and traveller Anton Agarkov shared his impressions with us.

114 **An Unconquered Mountain Pass**
How two Russians rescued three foreign motorcyclists who got stuck in the Caucasus mountains this summer.

120 **Handmade Masterpieces**
Here is our "Top 10" list of most popular handicraft items, some of which have traditions that date back centuries.

124 **Let's Go to Russia!**
How to apply for a Russian visa? What is the difference between a tourist visa and a private visa? What kind of visa do children need? What are the rules for bringing in medicines and currency, and exporting valuables?

126 **Calendar of Events**
Around the regions: some of the holidays and festivals that tourists can enjoy in 2018.

88
Samara



Moscow
102



126
Yaroslavl

**Shrovetide week. The ancient Slavic holiday people still love to celebrate.**



Sochi
96

PHOTO: ARTHUR DEMCHENKO / ISTOCK / TASS PHOTO AGENCY

## Elbrus A RECORD ASCENT

Zinovy Slavinsky from Nizhny Novgorod has climbed Mount Elbrus at the age of 87, breaking the world record for that ascent. The previous record had belonged to the Ukrainian alpinist, Vladimir Monogarov, who in 2006 conquered Elbrus at the age of 80. For Slavinsky, climbing Elbrus is not his first such climbing record – in 2016, he climbed to the top of Mount Kazbek. During daily training he climbed the Volga slope, with a height about 40 meters, 25 times. In addition, over the past 50 years Slavinsky has never used lifts, and eats just once a day.





St. Petersburg

## ST. PETERSBURG LEADS AGAIN

The award ceremony of the most prestigious international tourism competition, the World Travel Awards, took place at the Ethnographic Museum in St. Petersburg. The city received the right to host the ceremony due to the fact that it had already won prizes in the competition twice before. This year Russia's Northern Capital was the victor in the "Best European City Direction 2017" nomination. "Tourism is an excellent means of communication between countries and peoples, it makes our world brighter and kinder," said Georgy Poltavchenko, Governor of St. Petersburg.

*The 190th anniversary of the birth of the great Russian writer Count Leo Tolstoy will be marked on 9 September 2018.*

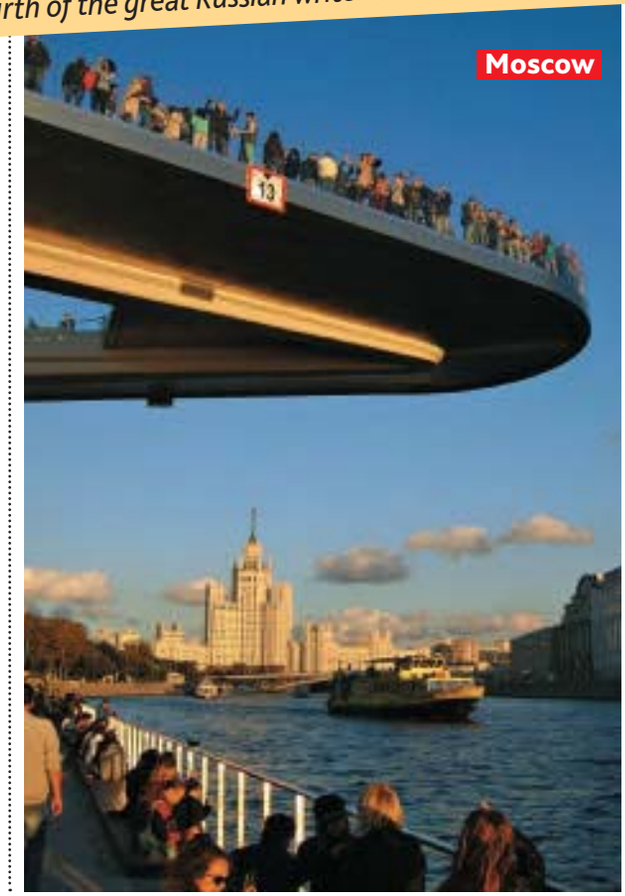
Arkhangelsk

## DELICACIES FOR DARRA

**Darra Goldstein, the American professor of Russian who is an author of popular cookbooks, came to the Arkhangelsk Region to study Pomor cuisine, the cooking of Northern Russian. The first stop on her trip around the Russian North were the Solovetsky Islands, where she was treated to herring, salted herring, halibut, cod, salad from kelp with carrots and marmalade on agar-agar, and wicker nuts with blueberries and cottage cheese cakes. Darra herself admits that she adores cloudberries, and her favourite dish is salmon pie. Her impressions and materials collected from the trip will form the basis of her new book.**



Moscow



# THE FLOATING BRIDGE

CELEBRATIONS OF THE 870TH ANNIVERSARY OF MOSCOW INCLUDED THE OPENING OF THE NEW ZARYADYE PARK IN THE RUSSIAN CAPITAL.

The first major park created in the city for 50 years, its construction cost the city some $250 million. On the territory of the park, there are four landscape zones that are typical of Russia – forest, tundra, steppe and flood meadows. The park also houses a concert hall, a scientific and education centre, an "Ice Cave", an exhibition and cultural complex, and a media centre. Its most impressive construction is the "floating bridge" observation platform which offers majestic views of Moscow, stretching 70 meters in length without supporting structures.

PHOTO: ISTOCK / LADY.MAIL.RU / ROMAN ASKAROV / RUSSIAN MOUNTANEERING FEDERATION



Marble canyon in the "Ruskeala" mountain park in the Sortavala district of Karelia.

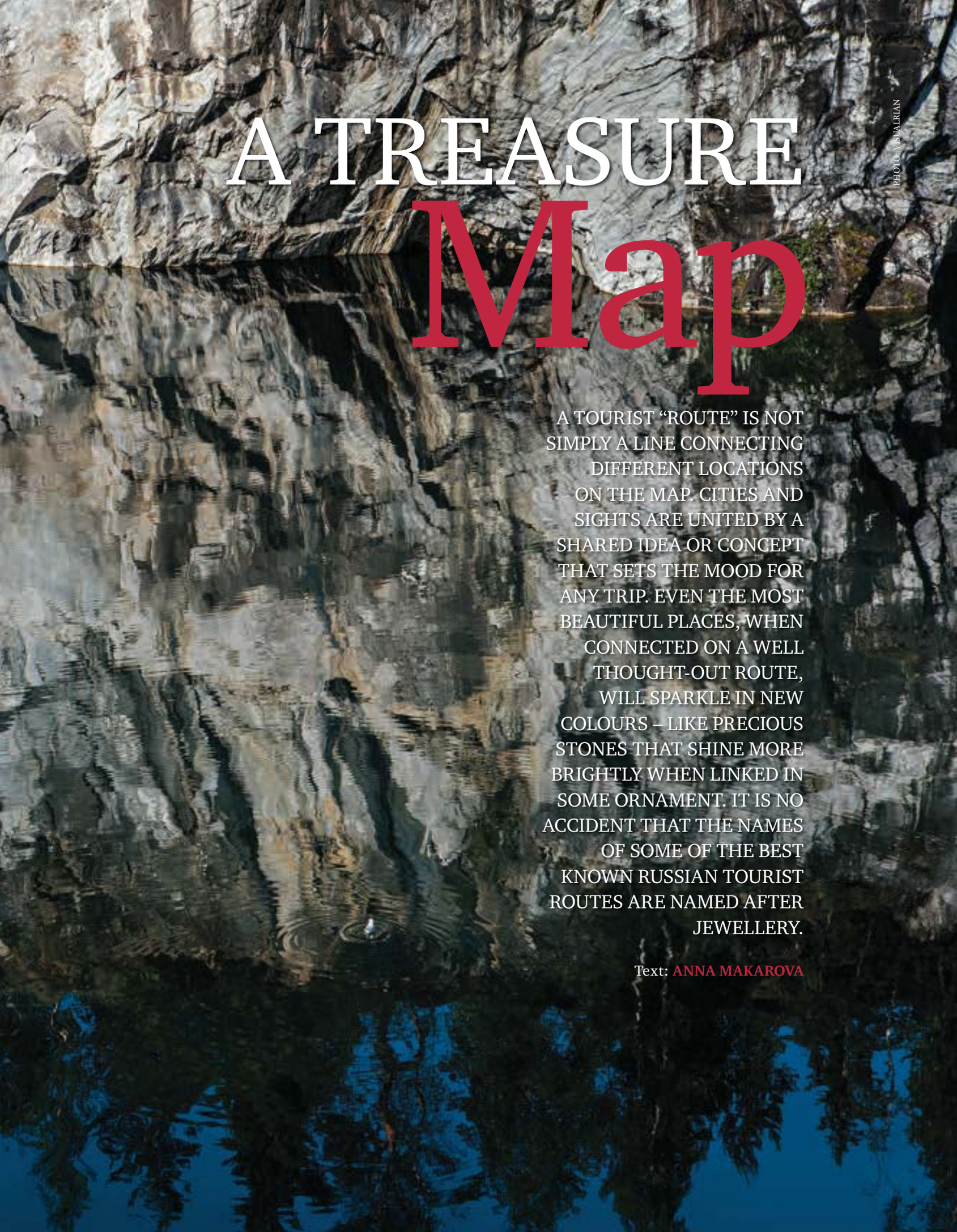


PHOTO: VIVALIRIAN

# A TREASURE Map

A TOURIST "ROUTE" IS NOT SIMPLY A LINE CONNECTING DIFFERENT LOCATIONS ON THE MAP. CITIES AND SIGHTS ARE UNITED BY A SHARED IDEA OR CONCEPT THAT SETS THE MOOD FOR ANY TRIP. EVEN THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACES, WHEN CONNECTED ON A WELL THOUGHT-OUT ROUTE, WILL SPARKLE IN NEW COLOURS – LIKE PRECIOUS STONES THAT SHINE MORE BRIGHTLY WHEN LINKED IN SOME ORNAMENT. IT IS NO ACCIDENT THAT THE NAMES OF SOME OF THE BEST KNOWN RUSSIAN TOURIST ROUTES ARE NAMED AFTER JEWELLERY.

Text: **ANNA MAKAROVA**

# THE GOLDEN RING **OF RUSSIA**

PERHAPS THE MOST FAMOUS AND POPULAR ROUTE FOR FOREIGN TOURISTS IS THE "GOLDEN RING", WHICH FIRST APPEARED SOME 50 YEARS AGO. THIS CLASSIC ROUTE INCLUDES THE ANCIENT CITIES TO THE NORTH-EAST OF MOSCOW, WHICH CAN INDEED BE COMBINED INTO A KIND OF RING.

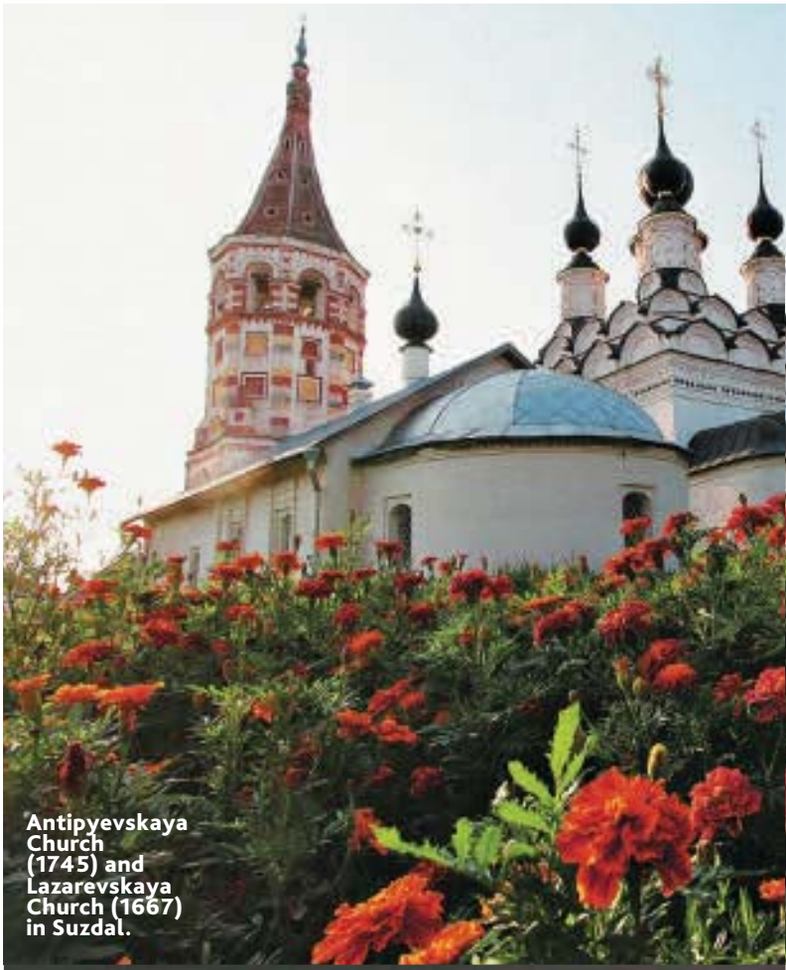
Initially, this circle included Vladimir, Suzdal, Yaroslavl, Pereslavl-Zalessky, Rostov the Great (Rostov Veliky), Kostroma, Ivanovo and Sergiyev Posad. But Uglich, Plyos, Yuryev-Polsky, Tutaev, Kalyazin, Myshkin, Rybinsk, Murom, Gus-Khrustalny, Palekh, Shuya, Gorokhovets, Bogolyubovo, Kideksha and Dmitrov were soon added, known now as "the towns of the Great Golden Ring". Recently



In the city of Myshkin, Yaroslavl Region, the "mouse" brand is widespread.



In the restaurant "Ryapushka" in Pereslavl-Zalessky.



Antipyevskaya Church (1745) and Lazarevskaya Church (1667) in Suzdal.



One of the best souvenirs is the work of Palekh masters.



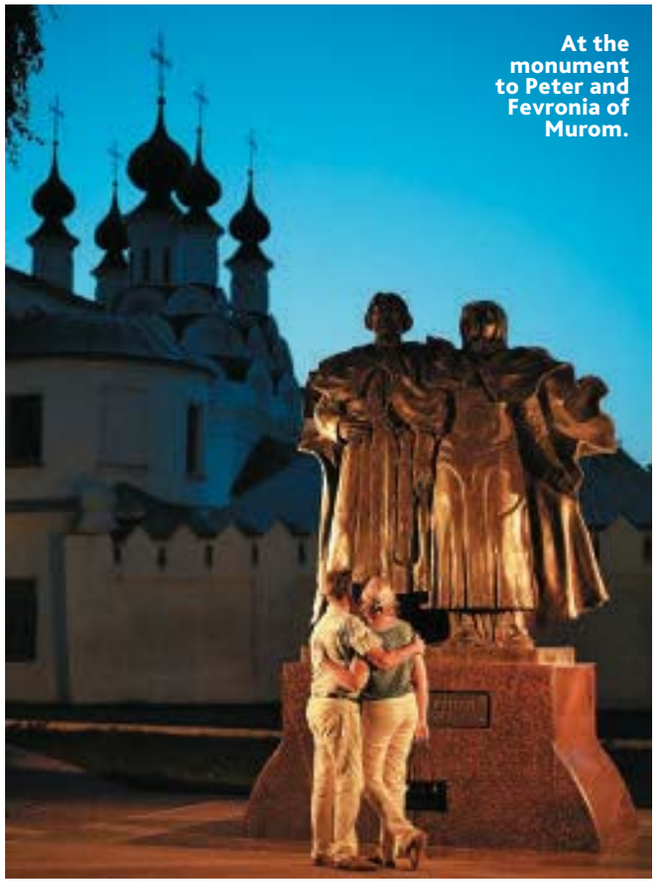
Suzdal Museum of Wooden Architecture.

Sergiyev Posad, Pereslavl-Zalessky, Rostov the Great and Yaroslavl are also on one route. Ivanovo is traditionally combined with nearby Shuya and Palekh to visit the Ivanovo Chintz Museum and examine the lacquer miniatures in the Museum of Palekh Art. There is a series of programmes dedicated to the cities on the Volga, which offer entertainment for all ages and tastes, such as a tour along the Volga to the flooded Kalyazinsky belltower, a visit to the Ipatievsky Monastery of Kostroma, children's interactive programmes in the "Myshkin Chambers", and the house-museum of the artist Isaak Levitan in Plyos. In other words, the essence of Russian culture can be found in the central region of Russia. **TLR**

***This programme allows you to visit the famous Church of the Intercession on the Nerl and admire the frescoes of Andrei Rublev in the Assumption Cathedral of Vladimir.***

Kaluga and Kasimov also joined the list of "ring cities", meaning that the map today is decorated with a whole "jewellery set" of such destinations.

Of course, all the cities of the Golden Ring cannot be included in one programme – that would involve a tour of eight regions. More often travellers choose one or two larger towns and supplement them with small settlements in the vicinity. The classic weekend trip is Vladimir, Bogolyubovo and Suzdal, although from Vladimir you can also go to Murom or Gus-Khrustalny. This programme allows you to visit the famous Church of the Intercession on the Nerl – a UNESCO monument – and admire the frescoes of Andrei Rublev in the Assumption Cathedral of Vladimir, as well as exploring the



**At the monument to Peter and Fevronia of Murom.**

PHOTO: DMITRY OGURTSOV / ALEXANDER FAUSTOVICH / TASS PHOTO AGENCY

## GETTING **THERE**

**How to get there**

It is most convenient to start any trip around the Golden Ring from Moscow. From there you drive along the Vladimir highway (now the M-7) to reach Vladimir, or along the M-8 in the direction of Yaroslavl. You can drive through Pereslavl-Zalessky and Rostov the Great, or the Sergiyev Posad area, then turn towards Kalyazin, and continue on to Uglich and Rybinsk. Most of the major settlements of the Golden Ring can also be reached by electric train or regular buses.

**Where to stay**

It is impossible to list all the accommodation options in these "golden cities" – the ring is also very popular with Russian tourists – but there is a wide range of hotels of different levels. In Vladimir, you can stay in the park hotel "Voznesenskaya Sloboda" on a high hill with a beautiful view of the surrounding area, choose the more modest "Vladimir Yard" or "Monomakh", or one of many hostels like "Air" or "Shankara". Yaroslavl has the colourful "Alyosha Popovich Dvor" and "The Volga Pearl", Kostroma the four-star "Golden Ring" and the "Snow Maiden" fairytale complex. "The Cat's House" is a good choice for those travelling with children to Myshkin, and Levitan's landscapes await guests at the reasonably priced "Private Visit" in Plyos.

**Where to eat**

You explore the Golden Ring to discover Russian culture, so the food *en route* should also be Russian. In Suzdal, the food and interiors of the "Gostiny Dvor" are famous, Yaroslavl has the exquisite "Penates" in an old wooden mansion, and in Pereslavl-Zalessky don't miss the "Montpensier" coffee house in the central square (especially the tea from the samovar and the spiced lamb). In Kostroma the "Old Marina" floating restaurant has interiors from the classic Soviet film "Cruel Romance". For lovers of Caucasian food, the famous "White Sun" restaurant is located right on the bank of the Volga. In the Volga region it is worth trying smoked fish, and in Suzdal it is difficult to avoid the local mead.

**What to buy**

The Golden Ring offers a wide choice of souvenirs. More expensive options include folk crafts, from enamel from Rostov the Great to Palekh boxes; cheaper options are ceramics and products made of flax. From Myshkin you can bring home all kinds of souvenir mice, the production and sale of which, it seems, engages about half the local population. (*Myshka* is the Russian word for mouse.)

# THE SILVER NECKLACE **OF RUSSIA**

THIS JEWEL IS THE NORTHERN VERSION OF THE GOLDEN RING, LINKING THE ANCIENT CITIES AND SIGHTS OF THE NORTH-WEST OF RUSSIA.

The idea of the route appeared only in 2012, but the cities themselves, united in a necklace, have long been popular with tourists.The route originally included Pskov, Izborsk, Pechory, Vyborg, Priozersk, Staraya Ladoga, Novgorod the Great (Veliky Novgorod), Staraya Russa, Velikiye Luki, as well as Ivangorod, Kingisepp and Porkhov. Later, large cities joined the route: St. Petersburg, Kaliningrad, Murmansk, Petrozavodsk, Arkhangelsk, Tikhvin, Vologda and even quite exotic places like Naryan-Mar and Vorkuta. These cities formed a second, much more extensive circle, stretching the necklace through 11 regions. This route has something of a military character: the necklace includes the medieval fortifications on the western borders of the country, of which Pskov Krom and Izborsk fortress are especially famous.

Another major part of the route includes the attractions of nature, which are especially numerous in the Republic of Karelia and the Arkhangelsk Region, while the Solovetsky archipelago on the White Sea stands alone. For an ethnographic flavour alongside Karelia, the Republic of Komi and the Nenets Autonomous Region have sacred camps of reindeer-herders



PHOTO: ISTOCK / VALERY LVOV / ALEXANDER MELETSKY / EVGENY NIKIFOROV

**The Holy Dormition Pskovo-Pechersky Monastery is one of the largest and most famous monasteries in Russia, with a centuries-old history.**



**In the Republic of Komi, the ethnographic local charm and nature rich in mushrooms and berries are popular with tourists.**

**The Kivach waterfall on the River Suna in Karelia.**

**Traditional Karelian *shangi* pies with potatoes and unleavened dough are cooked in a Russian oven.**

**The Solovetsky monastery breathes silence and tranquillity.**





and other northern wonders. Most tourists are attracted to the traditional sights: the Pskov-Pechersky Monastery and a complex of literary and memorial museums in the Pushkin Mountains; the ancient churches of Novgorod with the frescoes of Theophanes the Greek; the monuments ➜



**Leonid MARMER,**
CEO of Intourist Thomas Cook:

*Unlike its "older brother" the Golden Ring, the Silver Necklace is geographically much wider and covers a fairly large area. It is impossible to visit all the sites and regions included in this route. Therefore, we recommend planning your itinerary, based on transport accessibility from major cities – Moscow or St. Petersburg. The Northern Capital is located in the centre of the Silver Necklace. You can get from St. Petersburg to the nearest cities, such as Pskov, Novgorod the Great or Petrozavodsk, in a few hours by car or by rail. For long distances, for example, to Murmansk, Arkhangelsk or Kaliningrad, it is easier to fly. On one trip it is best not to visit more than two or three regions included in the route, otherwise impressions will be overwhelming and memories blurred. The nature, the folk way of life, the monuments of architecture, and the historical sites all create a unique picture of the north-western region of Russia. There are so many interesting places which, without proper planning and prior booking of accommodation and services, will be very difficult to enjoy to the full extent. My personal recommendation – start with Karelia. There are lakes, rivers, forests and just a fantastic feeling of mystery. Fresh air, landscape views, and interesting impressions are guaranteed.*





Most of all, tourists go to Solovki to see the unique 15th century monastery.



*Staraya Russa in Novgorod Region is a resort where you can enjoy health treatments with local mineral waters, as well as visit the Dostoevsky House Museum.*

of wooden architecture in the Kizhi Reserve on Lake Onega, and the Solovki Monastery; Vyborg Castle and Monrepos Park, and the Museum of Vologda Lace.

And, of course, St. Petersburg with its magnificent palaces, museums and embankments.

If you prefer a more adventurous trip in Karelia there is river rafting as well as lake trips. Staraya Russa is a resort where you can enjoy health treatments with local mineral waters, as well as visit the Dostoevsky House Museum. Excursions to Valaam Island depart from Priozersk, and pilgrims visit the Assumption Monastery in Tikhvin, where the icon of the Tikhvin Mother of God was revealed. Arkhangelsk also has an interesting museum of wooden architecture, "Small Korely". TLR

**The town of Tikhvin in Leningrad Region is another pearl in the Silver Necklace. Here you can often see performances of folk groups.**

## GETTING **THERE**

### How to get there

Those travelling by car from Moscow can drive north to Pskov or Novgorod the Great (if a trip to the fortresses of the North-West and St. Petersburg planned). In the direction of Karelia or Arkhangelsk, you pass through Vologda. If travelling without a car, the most convenient point to start the route is St. Petersburg, from where it is easy to go for a day to Vyborg or take a train to Pskov.

### Where to stay

In St. Petersburg, the range of prices for accommodation is considerable: in the historical Grand Hotel Europe a night costs from $315, while in the elegant three-star mini-hotel Herzen House nightly rates start from $65. In Pskov, a night in one of the best city hotels – the Old Estate – costs $90, and the more modest "Rizhskaya" is $50. In Novgorod, you can choose between, for example, the "Park Inn Radisson" (from $75 per night) or the three-star "Sadko" (from $50).

### Where to eat

When travelling to the regions of the North, you definitely need to discover the local cuisine. In Pskov and Novgorod travellers expect Russian cuisine (for example, in the picturesque Novgorod restaurant "Berg House"), while in the capital of Karelia, it is worth finding the "Karelian Room" to try real tartlets with berries, *sulchini* – pancakes with porridge – or fish soup with cream. In Kaliningrad, look out for the German restaurant "Tetka Fisher" and order traditional Königsberg meatballs. You will find a range of fish dishes at most points of the route.

### What to buy

The westernmost "link" of the Silver Necklace – Kaliningrad – is mostly associated with Baltic amber jewellery. In Karelia there are souvenirs from Karelian birch and a variety of berry tinctures and liqueurs (the most interesting taste is cloudberry). And from Novgorod the Great – all kinds of crafts from birch bark, which are especially numerous in the bazaar near the Vitoslavlitsa museum of wooden architecture.



**According to legend, the Church of the Transfiguration on Kizhi Island was built by Nestor the carpenter with an axe and no nails.**

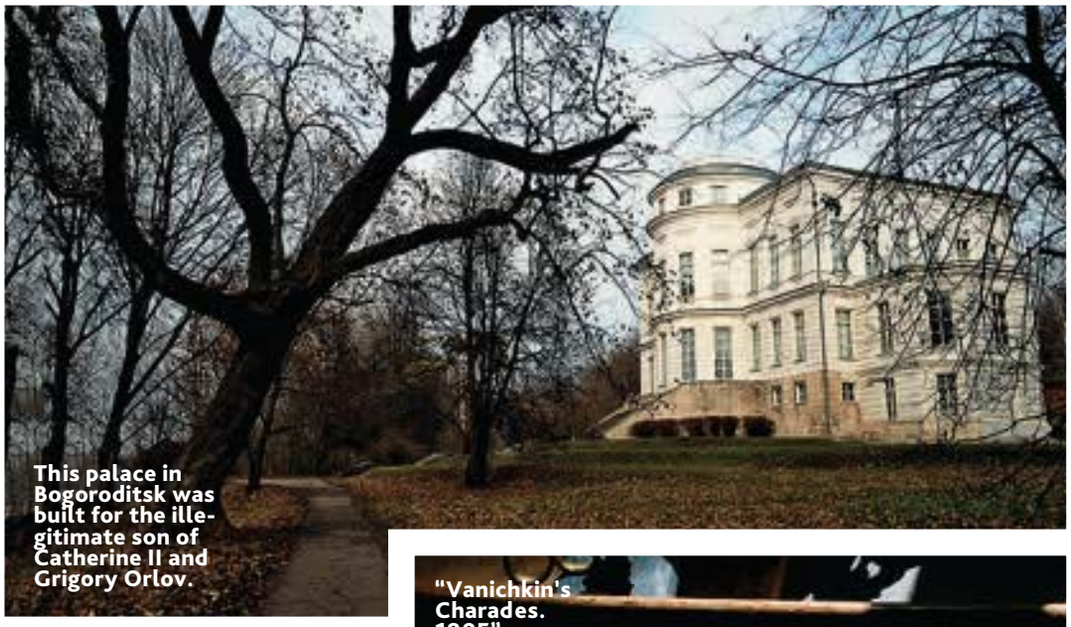
# RUSSIAN **ESTATES**

DEVELOPED IN 2015, THIS ROUTE HAS NOT ACQUIRED ANY SPECIAL NAME DERIVED FROM JEWELLERY, AND IT HARDLY NEEDS ANY SUCH LAVISH DESCRIPTIONS. IT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF: IT IS DEVOTED TO A SPECIAL PHENOMENON OF THE RUSSIAN WAY OF LIFE AND HISTORICAL CULTURE, THE ESTATES OF THE NOBILITY.



**The decoration of this fireplace in Polenovo was created by the artist himself and his younger sister.**

Its theme is lyrical: country manor or estate life, richly reflected in literature and painting, brings a whole range of associations. The core of the route is the Tula Region, which has the famous estate of the great Russian writer Leo Tolstoy, "Yasnaya Polyana", which was where Tolstoy was born and spent much of his life. However, the idea of this thematic itinerary is so good that, with the help of such more popular examples, attention is also drawn to estates that are less well known and less well preserved, especially if the names of their owners have also gone down in history. The Tula Region also has Ivan Bunin's estate at Efremov and the Bobriki estate, which once belonged to the illegitimate son of Catherine II, Count Bobrinsky. In total, the route comprises different estates in 12 regions, including the well-known Arkhangelsk near Moscow, Vyazma and Spasskoye-Lutovinovo, the home of another great writer, Ivan Turgenev. These attractions are divided by topics and areas: one such tour, for example, takes in the old manors of the Moscow Region, associated with the names of the noble aristocracy like Sheremetyev, Volkonsky and Buturlin.



**This palace in Bogoroditsk was built for the illegitimate son of Catherine II and Grigory Orlov.**



**"Vanichkin's Charades. 1895". Notebooks and other exhibits from Yasnaya Polyana.**

The route "From Tula to Polenovo" includes not only the estate of the famous artist Vasily Polenov, but also the estate of the scientist and writer Andrei Bolotov and that of the philosopher Alexei Khomyakov and his family. The "Prioksky manors" can be found in the southern suburbs of Moscow, where you can visit the Troitskoye estate of Yekaterina Dashkova, and the ancient patrimony of the Dolgorukov princes, Podmoklovo, with its remarkable beautiful church of the Nativity of the Virgin. These and other such routes are