



ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION of SMITH COLLEGE

Imperial Russian Waterways July 3 to 16, 2009

Preliminary Itinerary (subject to amendment)

Days 1 & 2 – Friday, July 3 & Saturday, July 4, 2009

U.S./Moscow, Russia

- Arrive in Moscow on Saturday afternoon on the recommended overnight flight, or independently.
- After settling in to the centrally located hotel, enjoy a special welcome reception and a private performance of classical *balalaika*.

(R)

Marriott Royal Aurora Hotel

Day 3 – Sunday, July 5, 2009

Moscow

- After a private guest lecture by a government dignitary, visit the Tretyakov Gallery, the first museum dedicated exclusively to Russian fine art. Step outdoors to the Sculpture Park, where traditional statues of Dzerzhinsky and Pushkin mingle with modern works.
- Later, explore Moscow's Metro, known for its architectural splendor.
- This evening, relax at the hotel, explore on your own, or seek out a cultural performance at one of the city's renowned venues.

(B, L)

Marriott Royal Aurora Hotel

Day 4 – Monday, July 6, 2009

Moscow/Embark *Volga Dream*

- At the Kremlin, enjoy a specially arranged before-hours visit to the Armory Museum, with its opulent collections of coronation finery, hand-forged armor and weapons, royal carriages and sleighs, and dazzling Fabergé eggs.
- Take a private tour of the 17th century Terem Palace, ordinarily closed to the public.
- Continue to Red Square and marvel at the iconic, fairy-tale confection of St. Basil's Cathedral. Visit GUM, the once-drab Soviet shopping center now filled with attractive stores, and then transfer to the *Volga Dream* along the Moscow Canal.

(B, L, D)

Volga Dream

Day 5 – Tuesday, July 7, 2009

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 Cathedral of the Resurrection and St. John's Church, and, and the Church of St. Dimitri-of-the-Blood.

(B, L, D)

Volga Dream

Day 6 – Wednesday, July 8, 2009**Yaroslavl**

- Yaroslavl, founded in 1010, is one of the oldest cities in central Russia and the *Volga*'s first port.
- At the Monastery of the Transfiguration of the Savior, climb the bell tower for a panoramic view of this tree-lined city.
- Later, admire the mosaics at the Church of Elijah the Prophet, and walk along the river past richly decorated merchant residences.
- Enjoy dinner and a private musical performance by a local folk ensemble.

(B, L, D)

Volga Dream

Day 7 – Thursday, July 9, 2009**Goritzky**

- In the tiny settlement of Goritzky lies the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, founded in 1397. The monastery houses one of the best collections of Russian icons in the world. Once important as a political prison, it was secularized and turned into a museum in 1924. After a guided tour, continue toward majestic Lake Onega.

(B, L, D)

Volga Dream

Day 8 – Friday, July 10, 2009**Kizhi Island**

- 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. The town's centerpiece is an 18th-century wooden Transfiguration church, featuring 22 domes and a fine Baroque iconostasis (shrine).

(B, L, D)

Volga Dream

Day 9 – Saturday, July 11, 2009**Lake Onega/Svir River/Lake Ladoga**

- Cruising along the 139-mile-long Svir River, which connects these two lakes, 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.

(B, L, D)

Volga Dream

Day 10 – Sunday, July 12, 2009**Valaam**

The Valaam archipelago includes more than fifty islands in the northwestern part of Lake Ladoga and boasts thick coniferous forests, wild rocky shores, and picturesque bays.

- Explore the largest island, Valaam, and visit the splendid monastery. Originally founded in the 10th century by two Greek priests, the Valaam Monastery is the oldest in Russia and is known for its remarkable architecture.
- Later, enjoy a special concert performed by a choir of monks.

(B, L, D)

Volga Dream

Day 11 – Monday, July 13, 2009**St. Petersburg**

- Arrive in St. Petersburg via the Neva River and disembark the *Volga Dream*.
- 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 honor of St. Petersburg's 300th birthday.

- After lunch at a countryside restaurant, the balance of the day is at leisure for independent exploration.

(B, L)

Astoria Hotel

Day 12 – Tuesday, July 14, 2009

St. Petersburg

- Enjoy a city tour of St. Petersburg, including Peter and Paul Fortress, burial place of the Romanov monarchs; St. Isaac’s Cathedral, famous for its gilded dome and finely decorated interior; and Nevsky Prospect, where fine shops, cafes, and museums are found.
- Attend a special late opening at the renowned Hermitage Museum, home to one of the most important collections of European art in the world.

(B, L)

Astoria Hotel

Day 13 – Wednesday, July 15, 2009

St. Petersburg

- Drive along the shores of the Gulf of Finland for a special early entrance to the monumental Summer Palace of Peter the Great (Peterhof).
- Return to St. Petersburg by hydrofoil, followed by an afternoon at leisure.
- Gather this evening for a gala farewell dinner.

(B, D)

Astoria Hotel

Day 14 – Thursday, July 16, 2009

St. Petersburg/U.S.

- Transfer to the airport for early afternoon flights on the recommended flight itinerary, or independently, to the U.S.

(B)