

17/06/2019

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The History Department is delighted to announce the **2020 History Tour to Moscow and St Petersburg**.

We will leave on **Saturday 4th April 2020** and arrive back late on **Thursday 9th April**. The trip will focus on two events which dominated and shaped Russia in the 20th Century: The Cold War and the Russian Revolution of 1917. The exact itinerary is still being refined but is likely to include the following:

Day One: An afternoon flight will take us to Moscow, a city which thrills visitors with its artistry, history and majesty. After settling into our accommodation, the early evening will be used to visit the impressive Red Square, framed by the imposing Kremlin on one side and St Basil's Cathedral the other.

Day Two: Using an expert local guide, we will visit Lenin's Mausoleum. This is the final resting place of the Soviet revolutionary leader, whose body has been on display here since 1924. We will then get a taste of Stalin's reign of terror through a visit to the Gulag Museum. The afternoon will be spent sightseeing in Moscow, taking in sights such as the world-famous Bolshoi Theatre and the former headquarters of the KGB.

Day Three: The morning will be based at the Kremlin, exploring the seat of Russian government. After lunch, we will visit Stalin's World War Two bunker. Later in the evening, we will board an overnight train and travel to St Petersburg, arriving in the early hours of the morning.

Day Four: We begin with a guided tour of St Petersburg, capital of Imperial Russia until 1918 and seat of the Tsars. The afternoon will be spent visiting Peter and Paul Fortress, used as a prison in the late 1800s and a prison and execution ground following the 1917 Revolution. The Cathedral in the Fortress houses the remains of nearly all Russian Tsars.

Day Five: Today we visit the Yusupov Palace, one of the most sumptuous palaces in St Petersburg and scene of Rasputin's murder in December 1916. Our afternoon destination is the Hermitage, the state museum, comprising the Winter Palace and several other buildings. The collection contains over 3 million exhibits from prehistoric to modern times.

Day Six: The final morning will be spent visiting the World War Two memorial, commemorating the Russian losses between 1939-45. We will also visit Catherine Palace, the highlight of which is the Amber Room, decorated solely in Amber. We depart in the afternoon, arriving back in the UK late in the evening.

The cost of the trip will be £1499 which covers:

- Outgoing transfer from RGS to the airport. Parents will be required to pick up their son from Heathrow on the return journey.
- Return flights with 1 piece of hold luggage, which will be sufficient for a trip of this length.
- Accommodation
- Overnight train between Moscow and St Petersburg.
- Excursions and experienced local guides in Moscow and St Petersburg.
- Russian visas
- Breakfast and evening meals, but not lunches.

In the first instance we will immediately require a non-refundable deposit of £250 to allow us to secure the booking. A second non-refundable deposit of £250 will be required by Monday 30th September. The remainder of the balance £999 will then be due by Friday 31st January 2020. Withdrawal of your son from the trip less than 21 days before departure will forfeit your full balance.

It is important to note that due to economic variables such as exchange rates, flight and visa costs, there may be minor additional charges added to the final balance. These will be communicated at the earliest opportunity.

All trip participants will require a Russian visa. This will require the following:

- Every applicant will need to leave their passport for 20 working days at the visa centre (collected at school).
- You should plan for your son to be without his passport for at least 4 weeks whilst the visa is processed. We plan to do this after October half-term.
- Passports will require a minimum of 6 months validity from the date of return from the trip (9th October 2020).
- A passport photo for the visa (not more than 6 months old).
- Visa costs may be higher for certain nationalities (non-UK citizens) and these will be communicated to you.

Responsibility lies with the student/parent to ensure adequate passport validity and availability. Please check your son's passport and if necessary, apply for a new one as soon as possible. RGS High Wycombe will not be held liable for any additional costs incurred as a result of any visa complications.

There are 40 student places available on this trip. These will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. If you wish your son to take part in the trip, please log on to ParentPay, look up "Russia History Trip 2020" and pay the deposit of £250. If you are unable to pay online, please contact the Finance Office (finance@rgshw.com) to pay by an alternative method.

If you feel that the cost involved is prohibitive, please do contact me in strictest confidence and I will see if there is any funding available to assist you. We may also be able to arrange an alternative payment plan. Please note, as the school is required to make non-refundable payments to the trip provider, we would not be able to make any refunds should you withdraw your son from the trip.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding the visit.

Yours sincerely
Miss L E Wilson
Assistant Subject Leader for History
lew@rgshw.com