



Magical St Petersburg in the midst of winter

Art, Culture, Music and Gastronomy: A St Petersburg Experience

4 – 9 December 2021



Jon Baines
tours



The great Hermitage Museum overlooking the frozen River Neva

The great city of St Petersburg is a byword for grandeur and opulence. Built in 1703 by the westward looking Peter the Great as a symbol of Russia's growing status, it went on to become the Romanov's magnificent showcase capital. It lost its status as capital after the revolution, but some might argue in name only; St Petersburg still feels every bit the imperial city with its historic heart largely frozen in time.

Built around the Neva River and crisscrossed by canals linked by 342 bridges, St Petersburg is often known as the Venice of the North. Its historic centre is filled with canals lined by

Italianate mansions and elegant plazas adorned with baroque and neoclassical palaces. It is also an almost unrivalled repository of culture and art, with its extraordinary galleries, museums, music venues and ballet.

St Petersburg is dazzling all year round but there is a special charm to the winter season. Five full days take you to some of the stunning historical, architectural and cultural highlights of this incomparable city. Stay in one of its most elegant historic hotels, situated in the heart of chic Nevsky Prospekt, and enjoy the finest food, wine and vodka offerings in the midst of a winter wonderland unlike anywhere else.

Tour Leader and Guide

Until recently **Janice Liverseidge** was a Director at The Royal Society of Medicine. She is now a full time guide and in her spare time a trustee of both the Royal Medical Benevolent Fund and the London Handel Festival. Earlier in her career she worked for the British Medical Association. She is also a registered Blue Badge tourist guide and regularly leads groups in London on medical history walks, tours of the Wellcome Collection and other healthcare locations plus provides music and art tours for the Foundling Museum and the London Handel Festival. Janice has travelled extensively, including an eight-month journey around India, South East Asia and Australia, and has led highly successful RSM tours to Vietnam and Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Cuba, South Africa and China.

Janice has the Visit Britain “Good to Go” Industry standard demonstrating that she



has shown her compliance with government and industry COVID-19 guidelines, has a Risk Assessment in place and ensures social distancing including using a phone app when providing tour commentaries.



Magnificent Catherine Palace in the snow

Day 1: St Petersburg (Sat, 4 Dec) **D**

Pm: Meet your guide at the airport (if taking group flight package) and transfer to the Belmond Grand Hotel Europe via the house of Russian chemist, Dmitri Mendeleev, who developed the periodic classification of the elements.

Eve: Welcome dinner at L'Europe, Russia's oldest continually serving restaurant and known for its Art Nouveau décor and stained glass murals.

café (not included). Visit the Anna Akhmatova Literary and Memorial Museum, a literary museum dedicated to Anna Akhmatova, a significant poet of the 20th century who was shortlisted for the Nobel Prize in 1965. See inside the lavish interior of St Isaac's Cathedral.

Eve: Dinner at Russian Vodka Room No. 1 restaurant, which contains a vodka museum, and enjoy a degustation menu with vodka pairings.

Day 2: St Petersburg (Sun, 5 Dec) **B D**

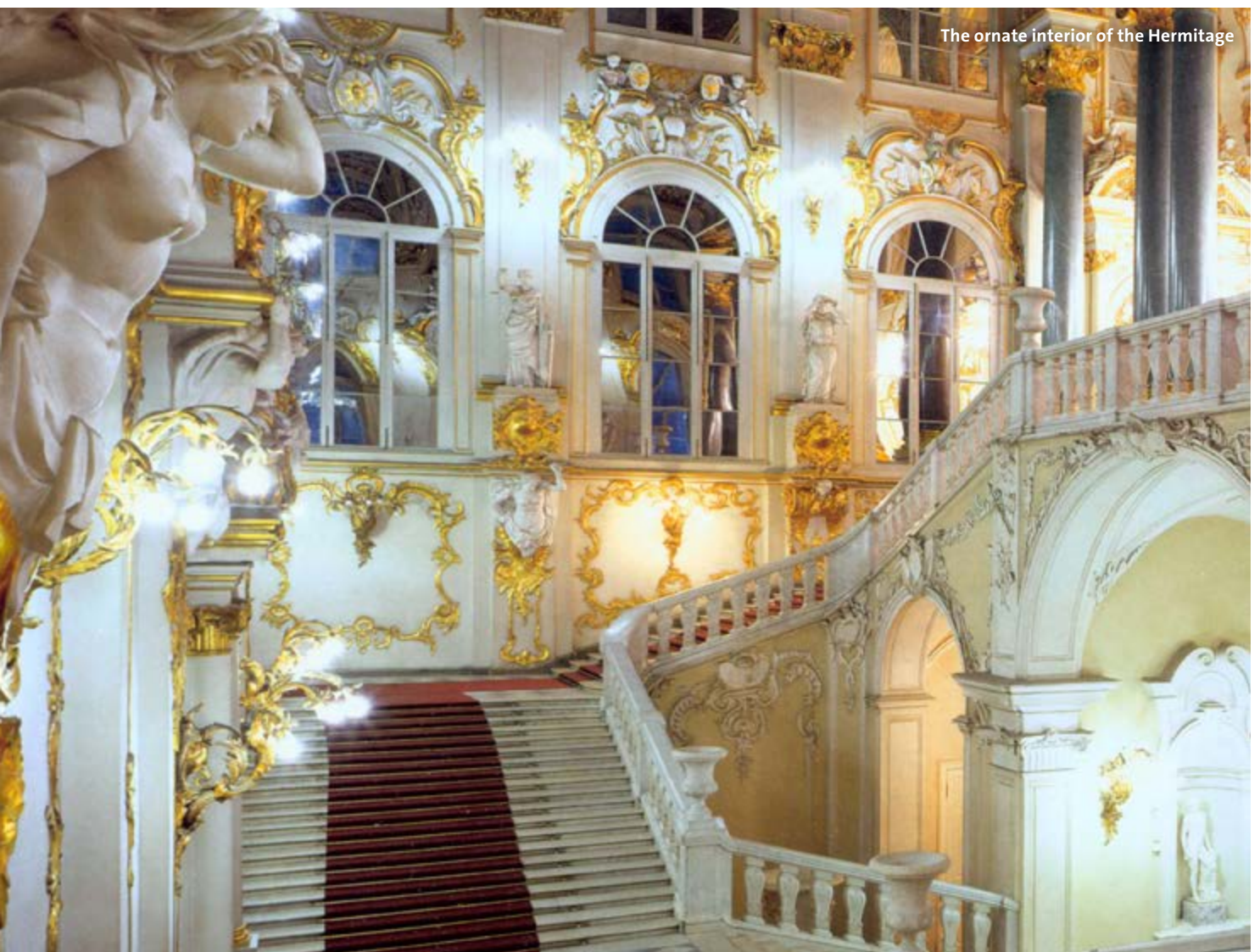
Am: Morning visit to the State Hermitage Museum, one of the world's largest and oldest museums. Set in the magnificent Winter Palace and adjoining buildings, it has over three million items in its collection, a fraction of which are on display in 360 rooms.

Pm: Lunch break at the Hermitage museum

Day 3: St Petersburg (Mon, 6 Dec) **B D**

Am: Transfer to Pushkin to visit the Palace of Catherine the Great, a stunning building with a blue and white facade with a circumference of nearly 1km, which contains the famous Amber Room.

Pm: Enjoy traditional horse-sledding or horse-carriage riding in the park (this is weather dependent; if there is not enough



The ornate interior of the Hermitage



A winter park in St Petersburg

snow you will ride in carriages).

Eve: Dinner at Sadko.

Day 4: St Petersburg (Tues, 7 Dec) B L

Am: Visit The House of the Book, St Petersburg's most famous bookstore since 1938, built in a beautiful Art Nouveau building that originally housed the Singer Sewing Machine Company. Continue to Kazan Cathedral to hear choral music and then on to the Peter and Paul Fortress, the first building and original citadel of St Petersburg.

Pm: Visit the elegant Eliseyev Emporium for lunch at Mezonin, located in a secluded area behind the orchestra gallery. Visit Yusupov Palace, one of the two remaining St Petersburg residences of the monumentally wealthy Yusupov family, and the scene of Grigory Rasputin's assassination.

Eve: Optional visit to the adjacent Mikhailovsky Theatre for a performance (opera or ballet). The Mikhailovsky Theatre is one of Russia's oldest opera and ballet houses.

Day 5: St Petersburg (Wed, 8 Dec) B D

Am: Visit the Fabergé Museum, a small, elegant museum housed within a beautiful 18th century palace. This private museum houses some of the famous Fabergé eggs, the most expensive Easter eggs in the world, as well as some extraordinary items of Russian goldsmithing from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Visit the house museum of the Russian ballet dancer, Matilda Kshesinskaya, which outlines the history of St Petersburg from the early 20th century until the Revolution of 1917.

Pm: Return to the hotel and at leisure, or options to visit the nearby Russia Museum with its collection of Russian art from the 10th to the 21st century, or the museum of the Siege of Leningrad.

Eve: Enjoy a farewell dinner at Menua, which serves traditional Armenian cuisine.

Day 6: St Petersburg (Thur, 9 Dec) B

Am: Depart St Petersburg after breakfast.

Itineraries are subject to change according to local conditions.



L'Europe restaurant (left); The hotel spa (above)

Belmond Grand Hotel Europe

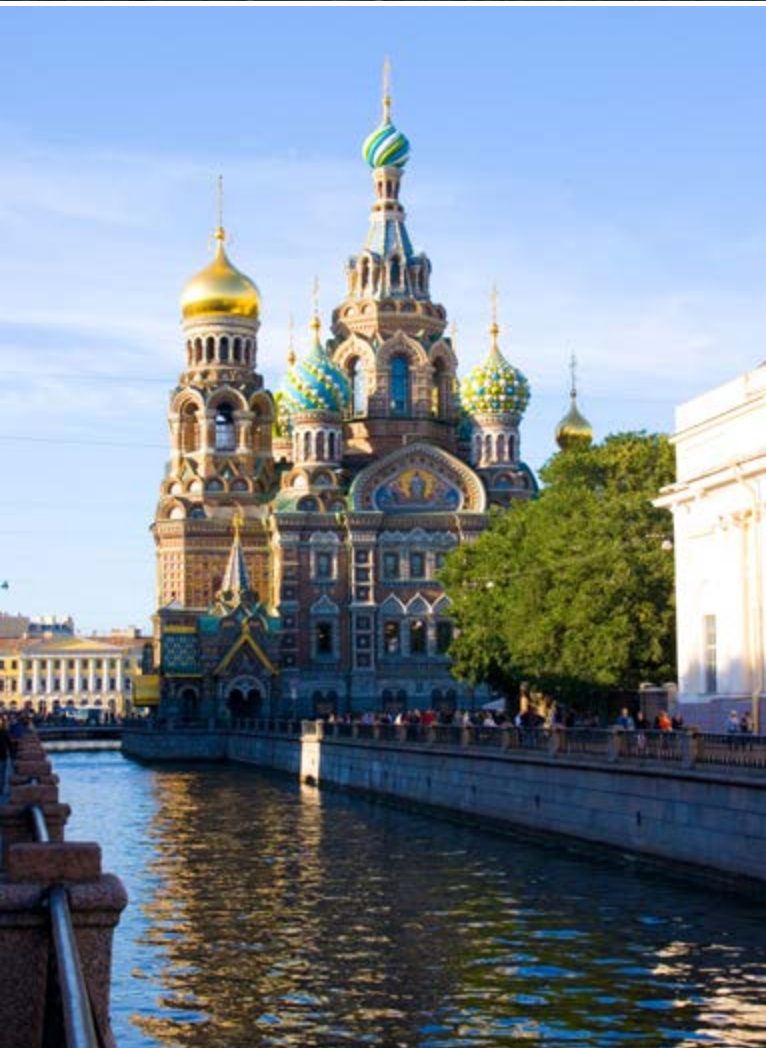
A truly grand historical hotel, the beautiful Belmond Grand Hotel Europe has enchanted Russia's high society for over a century from its prime location on Nevskiy Prospekt. Its magnificent interiors and architecture lend it a stately ambience which is punctuated by Art Nouveau flourishes, particularly in its gorgeous L'Europe restaurant, which is Russia's oldest continuously serving restaurant. The hotel has played a central role in the life of the city for 140 years and is an iconic building; particularly magical in the heart of winter when snow lies outside and a warm welcome awaits within. This luxury hotel provides four restaurants and bars – including the city's only dedicated Caviar Bar - a fitness centre with spa, sauna and plunge pool, and a beauty salon.



A hotel room



The exterior of the hotel with views of the Church of the Spilled Blood



Atlas in St Petersburg (top); Church of Spilt Blood (above)

**The cost of the tour is
USD \$2,464 per person sharing**

The cost includes:

- 5 nights' accommodation in twin- bedded rooms in medium grade hotels

Single supplement: US \$392

- Tour leader (Janice Liverseidge)
- Comprehensive briefing notes
- All breakfasts; dinners on days 1,2,3 and 5; lunch on day 4
- All transport (excluding airport transfers; see below)
- A full programme of cultural visits
- Admission fees where applicable
- English speaking national guide throughout
- Tips

The cost excludes:

- International flights and airport transfers
- Visas and travel insurance
- Meals not mentioned
- All personal extras such as portorage, laundry, inoculation fees, and drinks
- All optional excursions, tours and visits

We will be arranging a group flight package with transfers. Please contact us for details.

There will be opportunities to visit the ballet and/or classical performances. Performances will be confirmed closer to the time and tickets may be bought in advance once the programme is known.

The domes of the Winter Palace



About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.

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Peter and Paul Fortress (top); The exterior of Belmond Grand Hotel Europe; Inside the Hermitage; Lunch at the beautiful Eliseyev Emporium (above)

