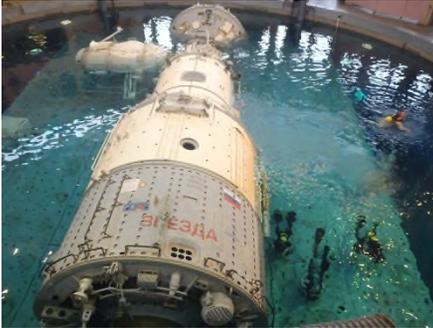


Heavenly Russia:

Aerospace and Imperial Treasures with Bob McDonald
July 20 – August 1, 2018



Prepare yourself for a unique and remarkable trip. There are two Russias to see.

Imperial Russia with onion-domed cathedrals, palaces, thrones, crown jewels and the art masterpieces of the famous Hermitage; and 20th century Russia, leaders in the space race, boasting of technological achievements.

Bob McDonald, the host of CBC's *Quirks and Quarks* and *The National's* Science Correspondent takes us behind the scenes of the once secret complex called Star City. See Mission Control, and the training ground for Russian Cosmonauts and Canadian Astronauts including Chris Hadfield. Bob explains how the underwater, full scale mockup of the Mir Space Station is used as only he can – making it fun and meaningful. Meet a Russian Cosmonaut too!

In Moscow, see the beauty of the Kremlin including Red Square, St Basil's cathedral, the Armoury Palace Museum and the Diamond Treasury. Visit to local markets and art galleries.

There are other sides to Russian history as well. Go underground to see the Cold War bunker built by Stalin, and lunch with an ex-KGB agent. Learn about the impact of WWII.

In St Petersburg, have a once in a lifetime experience at the magnificent Hermitage Museum. Experience an intimate, private tour on a day it is closed to the public.

But St Petersburg is so much more...it is one of the grandest cities of Europe, full of canals, home to majestic cathedrals and palaces. Outside of St Petersburg, travel to the incredible summer palaces of Catherine the Great, with its newly renovated Amber room, and Peter the Great on the Gulf of Finland with its cascading fountains and waterfalls.

The sights are world-renowned. Leaven all this beauty and history with a vodka tasting and a folk dance performance at a Dacha!

There is no other trip to Russia that will give you this combination of the insights, experiences and pleasures at the heart of a land of extreme pride and profound contradictions, where the reality of

revolutions, purges and war is contrasted with the beauty of music, art, literature, architecture and the soaring achievements of space flight pioneers.

Tour Itinerary and Highlights

Day 1 Moscow

Individual arrivals. Evening reception and welcome dinner.

Day 2 Moscow

City tour; Red Square; St Basil's; New Maiden (Novodevichy) Convent & Cemetery; Izmaylovo market; and Metro stations.

Day 3 Moscow

Russian Army Museum or Khronichev Rocket Factory; Cold War bunker with a surprise performance. River cruise.

Day 4 Moscow

Mission Control; Space Centre museum; and Sanduny Baths.

Day 5 Moscow

Special early entrance to the Kremlin; cathedrals; Terem Palace; Faceted Palace; the Armoury Palace Museum; and the Diamond Treasury. Lunch at an artist's gallery. Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts (Impressionists collection). Optional performance at the Bolshoi Ballet.

Day 6 Moscow–Star City–Moscow

Cosmonaut training centre, including Centrifuge, Soyuz scale models, and a visit inside the Mir Space Station mockup. Meet a Cosmonaut. Tretyakov Gallery (historic Russian art).

Day 7 Moscow–St Petersburg

Morning at leisure. Business class train to St Petersburg. Evening at leisure.

Day 8 St Petersburg

Peter and Paul Fortress; St Isaac's Cathedral; Russian State Museum. Optional performance at Mariinsky Theatre.

Day 9 St Petersburg

Aurora cruiser and Russian C189 submarine tour. Yusupov Palace and Faberge Museum. Canal cruise.

Day 10 St Petersburg

Catherine's summer palace; dacha with a folk performance; and the Siege of Leningrad Museum.

Day 11 St Petersburg

Privileged access to the Hermitage Museum with private tour by a Curator.

Day 12 St Petersburg

Special early entrance to Grand Peterhof Palace. Hydrofoil trip back to the city. Church of the Spilled Blood; and Dostoyevsky's house. Farewell Dinner.

Day 13 St Petersburg

Individual departures.

Hotels

Moscow Ararat Park Hyatt Hotel
St Petersburg Angletterre Hotel

Resource Person

Bob McDonald is Host of CBC's *Quirks and Quarks* and Science Correspondent for *The National*. He has won numerous science journalism awards. Bob also accompanied a ROMTravel trip to Chile and Easter Island.

ROMTravel Coordinator

Eric Morrison is a ROM volunteer. He has wide experience as a world traveller in his various roles as a journalist with CTV News and past president of The Canadian Press news agency. Eric led a ROMTravel trip to Argentina in 2014, and to Chile and Easter Island in 2016.

Travel Agency Escort

Robert Kaszanits, President of the Canadian Friends of the Hermitage. He has led numerous trips to Russia.

Tour Cost Per Person

Double Occupancy \$11,490
Single Supplement 2,100

Tour begins at Moscow Domodedovo (DME) Airport. Tour ends at St Petersburg Pulkovo (LED) Airport.

International flight costs to/from your home and Russia are NOT included.

Photos

- Gargarin Cosmonaut Training Centre, Star City, Russia, courtesy of NASA
- Bob McDonald
- St Basil's Cathedral, Moscow, Russia, courtesy of Wikipedia and Stan Shebs

Terms & Conditions

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July 20 – August 1, 2018

Tour Cost

Double Occupancy: \$11,490 per person

Single Supplement: \$ 2,100

Tour cost does NOT include international flight costs to/from your home and Russia. Merit Travel Group can assist with booking flights.

Tour Cost Includes

- If departing from Toronto Pearson (YYZ) Airport, access to the Plaza Premium Lounge.
- Group coach transfer from Moscow Domodedovo (DME) Airport to hotel on Day 1 for those arriving before or at the arrival time of the ROMTravel Coordinator. Group coach transfer from hotel to St Petersburg Pulkovo (LED) Airport on Day 13 for those departing at or after the departure time of the ROMTravel Coordinator.
- Business class train to St Petersburg.
- Porterage of one standard sized suitcase per person at the hotels.
- Ground transport in private air-conditioned coach for transfers/excursions as per itinerary. Public train & boat for river cruise. Private boat for canal cruise.
- Shared accommodation in double occupancy room with private facilities.
- Meals: Buffet breakfast daily, 10 lunches and 8 dinners, including choice of water, coffee or tea. Bottled water daily on the bus. Welcome Reception with wine and finger foods. Welcome and Farewell dinners with wine.
- All visits, entrance fees, speakers' fees and events as per itinerary. Entrance fee to one cultural performance at the Bolshoi Ballet or the Marinsky Theatre.
- All taxes and tips for all goods and services, drivers, hotel, restaurant and guiding staff related to the basic tour; all hotel and local taxes.
- Services of a Resource Person, a ROMTravel Coordinator, and a Travel Agency Escort.
- Services of English-speaking local guides. Services of Merit Travel Group.
- Pre-trip orientations; post-trip reunion. A travel handbook.

Not Included

- International flight costs to/from your home and Russia. Fuel surcharges.
- Items of a personal nature, e.g., laundry, telephone calls, internet access.
- Airline baggage and camera/video fees, if any. Russian Tourist Visa fees.
- Meals, snacks, beverages, and other services unless specified.
- Cancellation and hospital/medical insurance. Emergency evacuation costs.
- Additional meals and accommodations due to delays.

Costs

All prices quoted herein are based on rates, fees and taxes as of December 14, 2016. Costs are subject to change without notice. Should tour costs increase, Merit Travel Group (as per TICO regulations) reserves the right to increase the price accordingly up to a maximum of 7%. Merit Travel Group reserves the right to substitute itineraries, hotels, airlines or vessels due to conditions beyond their control. Any change to itinerary will not result in eligibility for a refund.

ROM Membership Requirement

Participants must be members of the Royal Ontario Museum. Individual annual membership is \$97; family annual membership is \$149 (if both partners join the tour, only one needs to be a member). Non-resident family annual membership (outside L/M postal zones) is \$102. Prices are subject to change without notice.

Deposits and Final Payment

An initial non-refundable deposit of \$1,500.00 per person is required at the time of booking. Optional insurance is payable in full at the time of booking. **A second non-refundable deposit of \$1,500.00 is due on September 21, 2017. The balance of payment, \$8,490.00, and single supplement of \$2,100.00, if applicable, is due on April 19, 2018.**

Reservations

As the number of participants is limited, reservations should be made as soon as possible. In the event of over-subscription, a waiting list will be maintained.

Physical Limitations or Disabilities

Any physical limitation or disability requiring special attention or treatment must be reported when reservation is made. Merit Travel Group and/or its agents reserve the right to decline or accept anyone who may in their sole judgment require care and attention beyond that which can be provided.

Cancellations

Should a confirmed participant cancel, notification must be received in writing by Merit Travel Group. No refund will be issued for unused services. No claim or refund will be considered unless submitted in writing and received by Merit Travel Group within 30 days of the termination of the tour. The following penalties are the costs incurred with cancellation:

- 90 days or more prior to departure: Loss of all deposits paid.
- 89 – 60 days prior to departure: Loss of 50% of total tour cost.
- 59 days or less prior to departure: Loss of 100% of total tour cost.

Documents

A passport valid for six (6) months after the return date is required. It is the individual traveller's responsibility to ensure proper visas or affidavits. Neither Merit Travel Group nor ROMTravel is responsible for missing or incorrect travel documents. Entry to another country may be refused even if the required information and travel documents are complete.

ROMTravel values your Privacy

Your contact information will be published in the Trip Handbook unless you advise NOT to do so. It is for the sole use of trip participants, ROMTravel and the travel agency, and will not be shared with anyone else.

Insurance

Comprehensive insurance to afford protection against penalties caused by cancellation of trip due to injury, illness or death of tour participant or member of participant's family is recommended. Medical insurance including emergency evacuation is mandatory. It is administered by Allianz Global Assistance. The insurance premium is non-refundable and must be submitted at time of deposit. A waiver will be necessary if insurance is not taken. Insurance is taxable in Ontario. Please contact Merit Travel Group for rates.

Royal Ontario Museum Responsibility

Neither the Royal Ontario Museum nor the Department of Museum Volunteers of the Royal Ontario Museum, or any member thereof, assumes any responsibility for the financing, arranging or the conducting of the tour, nor shall be liable for damages or loss to person or property that might occur in connection with this tour however arising, whether by negligence or otherwise, and whether or not a member of the Royal Ontario Museum staff or the Department of Museum Volunteers accompanies the tour. The applicant by applying to join the tour hereby agrees to this limitation of liability on the part of the Royal Ontario Museum, the Department of Museum Volunteers or any member thereof.

Responsibility and Jurisdiction

Merit Travel Group and their agents act only as agents for the passengers with respect to services supplied to passengers by others, including but not limited to transportation, hotel and restaurant services, on the express condition that they are not liable for any failure in such services, or injury, loss or damage, delay or inconvenience arising out of or in connection with any defect in any vehicle or any act, omission, accident or error in providing such transportation, hotel, restaurant or other services. There is no refund for unused portions of the tour. In case of an accident occurring during the land portion of any tour, the passenger must submit any claim therefore only to the competent judicial authorities of the jurisdiction where such accident occurred, to be determined exclusively in accordance with the laws of such jurisdiction. By accepting the coupons and tickets and utilizing the services, the passenger agrees that neither the Royal Ontario Museum nor any affiliated or Merit Travel Group subsidiary companies or representatives shall be liable for any loss, injury or damage to the passenger or belongings or otherwise in connection with any accommodations, transportation or other services or resulting directly from any occurrences beyond its control including breakdown in equipment, strikes, theft, delay or cancellation or changes in itinerary or schedules, etc. Merit Travel Group and its agents reserve the right to refuse, to accept or retain any person as a member of this tour for any reason. The right is reserved to withdraw any or all of the tour or portions thereof. All tour services including, but not limited to hotel accommodations, restaurants, guide services and transportation are furnished by independent contractors. Living standards and practices at the destination and the standards and conditions there with respect to the provision of utilities, services and accommodation may differ from those found in Canada.

Merit Travel Group Inc.
TICO Registration # 4499356

Organized by ROMTravel for
The Department of Museum Volunteers
Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada

The Department of Museum Volunteers' ROMTravel Program was established to provide superior quality tour opportunities for members and to generate income for the Royal Ontario Museum.

For further information, contact:

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