

## The Post Workshop Tour round the Golden Ring of Russia



The Golden Ring is a symbolic ring of ancient Russian towns situated to the North-West from Moscow and is keeping unique monuments of the Ancient Russian architecture of the 12-17th centuries: Sergiev Posad and Alexandrov, Kostroma and Pereaslavl-Zalesky, Uglich and Ivanovo, Yaroslavl and Rostov the Great, Suzdal and Vladimir, each of these towns is a real pearl of Russia. Nowadays they are often called "museums in the open air". Cathedral and churches, convents and fine art museums strike by their beauty. A tour of the Golden Ring will give you a wonderful possibility to make the acquaintance of the history of ancient Russians towns, their culture and their traditions.

**The duration of the Tour: 5 days/ 4 nights**

Golden Ring Towns, which played the great role in the Russian ancient history:

***Vladimir – Suzdal – Kostroma – Yaroslavl - Rostov Veliky (Rostov the Great) - Pereslavl Zalesky - Sergiev Posad***

## **Vladimir**

Vladimir is referred to as the gates to "Russian Golden Ring". The city came about at the end of the X century and is named after the Kiev-born prince Vladimir Svyatoslavich, the baptizer of Russia. The city was in its prime and achieved historical significance in the middle of the XII and beginning of the XIII centuries when the fundamentals of a new government was forming. International trade and cultural relations were actively developing and the city opened its own architectural school.

The defensive walls, the main city gates, the Golden gates, the gold-topped Uspensky Cathedral with frescoes by Andrei Rublev, and the Dmitrievsky cathedral are still preserved in Vladimir as proof of the past beauty and power of the former capital of Ancient Russia.

## **Suzdal**

The city Suzdal is rightfully called an "open air museum", which consists of only 9 sq. km. This is 1/100 the size of Moscow and has retained almost 200 ancient monuments. The city remained in the borders of the XVIII century. People say that "The city's future is in its past".

In 1982 the FIJET international organization awarded Suzdal its "Golden Apple" prize. In 1992, the main architectural ensembles of the city were added to the UNESCO heritage list: the Kremlin, Pokrovsky and Spasso–Efimovsky Monastery and church of Boris and Gleb in Kideksh.

Today Suzdal is a major tourist center, city-reserve, Vladimir oblast regional center.

## **Kostroma**

Kostroma was founded in 1152 by Yuri Dolgoruky during his military expedition. In the XV century, Kostroma was thrice ravaged by fires.

The story of Ivan Susanin's feat during the "Time of Troubles" is linked with Kostroma. Mikhail Romanov hid from the Poles in the Ipatjevsky Monastery in 1613. Ivan Susanin saved the new dynasty, by enticing the Poles into the forest.

Now Kostroma is a regional center and to this day still retains the charms of a Russian merchant city.

There is a museum on the territory of convent with an interesting collection of icons of the 16th–19th centuries, needlework, books, church plates and some exhibits representing the art of provincial painting of the 18th–19th centuries. The best Russia's museum of nature with fine collection of butterflies is located there. Moreover, this is a place where one can find a wonderful collection of stuffed animals and birds — representatives of local fauna.

Wooden churches and chapels built in the 18th–19th centuries were moved to Ipatievsky Convent from the nearest villages.

The Museum of Arts is located in Kostroma, not far from the town center. The collection comprises fine pieces of painting of the 18th–19th centuries. The Museum also has an interesting collection of the Russian art of the first years of the 20th century.

## **Yaroslavl**

The city was founded about 1010 by Prince Yaroslav the Wise on the bank of the Volga River. In the 17th century Yaroslavl was the biggest trading town in the northern Russia.

The Yaroslavl churches of the 17th century differ by great dimensions, multiple domes, picturesque asymmetry created by side–chapels, vestibules and porches. The churches are strongly decorated by tiles and figured carving. On the whole, this is the style called «the Russian style», unique and inimitable.

There are some other interesting monuments related to the 17th century, these are the architectural ensemble in Korovniki, the Church of Nicola Mokry, the Palace of Metropolitan and the Church of Savior in Town. The embankment of the Volga River is very beautiful; local citizens admire this place.

There is also the Art Museum in town located on the Volga embankment. The museum collection includes icons, including the icon of Savior dated by the 12th century, the pictorial image of Yaroslavl the Wise, the Tolgskaya Icon of the Virgin, the finest collection of Icons of the 17th century.

### **Rostov Veliky (Rostov the Great)**

Rostov Veliky (Rostov the Great) is one of the ancient and most beautiful towns of the Russian land. It was first mentioned in chronicles in 862. It is a sleepy old town with some magnificent buildings next to a lake. The focal point of the town is Kremlin. Its churches are good examples of Russian 17th century architecture.

The town stands on the bank of Nero Lake with water of striking pearl, gray and blue shades.

The town has its own peculiar structure. The main streets meet at the historic center, where, built in the 16th century, the Dormition Cathedral stands, with its bell tower erected in the 17th century. The bells of tower play one of the most fascinating chime or bell music. The local Kremlin had been called «Bishop's House» up to the 19th century.

There are two convents located on the banks of Nero lake to the left and to the right of the Kremlin: the St. Abraham Convent to the north–east (16th–19th cent.) and Yakovlevsky Convent (17th–19th cent.) to the southwest.

### **Pereslavl–Zalesski**

Pereslavl–Zalesski was founded by Prince Jury the Longhand (Dolgorukiy) in the first half of the XII century.

Ancient town on the banks of Pleshevo Lake was founded in 1152 by Prince Yuri Dolgorukiy — the Moscow Prince — and it is only 5 years younger than Moscow. The town is very small, but the great history and outstanding names are connected with it.

Peter the First founded the Russian fleet, starting from the «potesny flotilla». Now you can see the elegant and austere Spasso–Preobrajensky (Transfiguration) Cathedral of 1157, splendid churches and monasteries (three of XVI–XVII c). Visiting to Goritsky monastery you can see the wonderful collection of ancient icons in the Art and Historical Museum. The place, where Peter the First had builds the flotilla — now used as the Estate–Museum «Botik» (boat). There is the unique exhibit — the only unique served ship from Peter's shipyard.

### **Sergeev Posad**

The city Sergeev Posad is famous for the Troitse-Sergiev Monastery. Thanks to this, the city became famous as the capital of Russian orthodoxy and the "Russian Vatican". A friary sprang up in the XIV century.

In the course of a century the monastery was the largest religious and cultural center of the Russian government. Behind the high walls of the Troitse-Sergiev Monastery, there is a men's large monastery, which acts as the Moscow Spiritual Academy and Seminary. Generous gifts to the monastery are kept in the vestry.

The historical-architectural ensemble of the Troitse-Sergiev Monastery consists of outstanding architectural monuments of the XV-XIX centuries and is included on the UNESCO heritage list.

### **Day 1**

- Arrival to Vladimir
- Lunch
- City tour with visits to Assumption and St. Dimitry Cathedrals, Golden Gates,
- Embroidery Art museum
- Transfer to Suzdal
- Accommodation in the hotel
- Dinner
- Overnight

### **Day 2**

- Breakfast
- City tour with visits to the local Kremlin and its famous St. Cross Hall
- Ephimievsky the Savoir monastery
- Wooden Architecture museum
- Lunch
- Transfer to Kostroma
- Accommodation
- Dinner
- Overnight

### **Day 3**

- Breakfast
- City tour with visits to the Resurrection on Debra and Ipatievsky monastery (Trinity church, Nature museum)
- Lunch
- Free time
- Dinner
- Overnight

### **Day 4**

- Breakfast
- Transfer to Yaroslavl
- City tour with visits to the Salvation and Transfiguration monastery St. Ilya the Prophet church
- Lunch
- Free time
- Dinner
- Overnight

### **Day 5**

- Breakfast
- Transfer to Rostov the Great
- Visit to the local Kremlin (enamel museum)
- Transfer to Pereslavl Zalesky
- Tour to the local Red Square
- Transfer to Sergiev Posad
- Lunch
- Visits to Trinity monastery of St
- Serge and other cathedrals
- Departure

#### **The program cost includes:**

- Person sharing twin accommodation
- Full board
- Tickets to museums in the program
- Daily Excursions
- 1<sup>st</sup> class bus for transfers, departures, excursions
- English-speaking guide during the tour