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Daniel was a co-host on the television travel series *Best in China* and he and his family were the subject of a Travel Tape podcast about hiking along both the Great Wall of China and Hadrian's Wall in Britain. He has also been a guest speaker at the Bookworm Literary Festival in Beijing and at the Adventure Travel Show in London. You can follow his latest adventures on Twitter (@danielmccrohan), or on his web-site – [danielmccrohan.com](http://danielmccrohan.com).

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The first edition of this book – originally published by Roger Lascelles and shortlisted for the Thomas Cook Travel & Guide Book Awards – was the result of several trips on the Trans-Siberian and six months in the old British Library Reading Room. Subsequent publications have included *Trekking in the Annapurna Region*, also from Trailblazer, and guides to India and Britain for Lonely Planet.

In 1991 he set up Trailblazer, to produce the series of route guides for adventurous travellers that has now grown to over 40 titles.



# Trans-Siberian Handbook

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## Important note

Every effort has been made by the author and publisher to ensure that the information contained herein is as accurate and up to date as possible. However, they are unable to accept responsibility for any inconvenience, loss or injury sustained by anyone as a result of the advice and information given in this guide.

## A request

Things change quickly in this part of the world.

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**Photos – Front cover and this page:** A rare picture, taken in the early 1970s, of the Trans-Siberian being hauled by a steam engine (© Ron Ziel). **Previous page:** St Basil's Cathedral, Moscow. **Overleaf:** Looking across Lake Baikal from Olkhon Island.

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# INTRODUCTION

## Why take the train?

*'Best of all, he would tell me of the great train that ran across half the world ... He held me enthralled then, and today, a life-time later, the spell still holds. He told me the train's history, its beginnings ... how a Tzar had said, 'Let the Railway be built!' And it was ... For me, nothing was ever the same again. I had fallen in love with the Traveller's travels. Gradually, I became possessed by love of a horizon and a train which would take me there ...'*

**Lesley Blanch** *Journey into the Mind's Eye*

The spell that Lesley Blanch's 'Traveller' cast captured me, too, as it has countless others. And after the classic film of Boris Pasternak's

**Almost 6000 miles, a seven-day journey, between Moscow and Vladivostok; just under 5000 miles, six days, between Moscow and Beijing**

love story, *Dr Zhivago*, there can be few people unaware of the magic and romance of crossing Russia and the wild forests and steppes of Siberia on the longest railway journey in the world – the Trans-Siberian. The distances spanned are immense: almost 6000 miles, a seven-day journey, between Moscow and the Pacific port of Vladivostok (for boat connections to Japan); just under 5000 miles, six days, between Moscow and Beijing.

Since the rail service linking Europe with the Far East was established at the turn of the 19th century, foreign travellers and adventurers have been drawn to it. Most of the



**Above:** Rattling across Mongolia enjoying the view. Note that it's generally only in Mongolia where you'll be able to open windows and hang out of them to take photos. In Russia and China they're usually kept locked so as to keep the heating or air-conditioning functioning properly – see p129.



© Anna Cohen Kaminski

From such iconic sights as **Red Square and the Kremlin** in Moscow (**above**, with Lenin's tomb on the right) to former palaces (Beijing's Forbidden City) and temples in China and Mongolia, a journey along the Trans-Siberian gives you countless fascinating opportunities for stopping off along the way.

relaxed and now many people have found the Trans-Siberian a fascinating and relatively cheap way to get to or from both China and Mongolia.

While the ending of the Cold War removed some of the mystique of travelling in the former USSR, Russia's increasing accessibility means that there are new travel opportunities right across the country. With foreigners no longer obliged to stay in overpriced state-run hotels, visiting the country is more affordable than ever before.

Rail passengers inevitably absorb something of the ethos of the country through which they travel: on this train you are guaranteed to meet local people, for this is no 'tourist special' but a working service; you may find yourself draining a bottle of vodka with a Russian soldier, discussing politics with a Chinese academic, or sharing some lip-pursingly sour home-made *aruul* (dried curds) with a Mongolian trader.



If you make only one stopover on the journey it should certainly be **Lake Baikal** (**above**), although both the Trans-Siberian and BAM lines run close to the lake in places.

early travellers crossed Siberia in the comfort of the carriages of the Belgian Wagon Lits company, as luxurious as those of the Venice-Simplon Orient Express of today. Things changed somewhat after the Russian Revolution in 1917 as it became increasingly difficult for foreigners to obtain permits for Siberia.

It was not until the 1960s that the situation improved and Westerners began to use the railway again for getting to Japan, taking the boat from Nakhodka (it now leaves from Vladivostok) for the last part of the journey. In the early 1980s travel restrictions for foreigners visiting China were

relaxed and now many people have found the Trans-Siberian a fascinating and relatively cheap way to get to or from both China and Mongolia. While the ending of the Cold War removed some of the mystique of travelling in the former USSR, Russia's increasing accessibility means that there are new travel opportunities right across the country. With foreigners no longer obliged to stay in overpriced state-run hotels, visiting the country is more affordable than ever before. Rail passengers inevitably absorb something of the ethos of the country through which they travel: on this train you are guaranteed to meet local people, for this is no 'tourist special' but a working service; you may find yourself draining a bottle of vodka with a Russian soldier, discussing politics with a Chinese academic, or sharing some lip-pursingly sour home-made *aruul* (dried curds) with a Mongolian trader. In this jet age most of us have lost touch with the travel experience that is slow enough to give us a real concept of the geographical distance we've travelled. Quite apart from being environmentally unfriendly, to the 21st century traveller air travel has become mind-numbingly routine and unexciting. To embark on a long-distance rail journey, spending days on a train and traversing

thousands of miles over the planet's surface, is just as thrilling now as it was a century ago. As Eric Newby wrote in *The Big Red Train Ride*, 'The Trans-Siberian is the big train ride. All the rest are peanuts'. Nothing can change that.

## Routes and costs

### ROUTE OPTIONS [see Trans-Siberian Highlights map, overleaf]

Travellers crossing Siberia have a choice of three main routes: the Trans-Siberian, Trans-Manchurian and Trans-Mongolian.

The **Trans-Siberian** crosses the entire length of Siberia to the Pacific terminus at Vladivostok. The **Trans-Manchurian** travels through most of Siberia before turning south through Manchuria and ending in Beijing.

The **Trans-Mongolian** also terminates in Beijing but travels via

**The Trans-Mongolian, Moscow to Beijing route via Mongolia, is the most popular route**

Mongolia which gives you the chance to stop off in Ulaanbaatar and to explore the incredible Mongolian countryside. Out of the three, the Moscow–Beijing route is the most popular, but all three have a lot to recommend them. Another alternative to the Trans-Siberian is the road less travelled – the **Baikal Amur Mainline (BAM)**. It runs parallel to the former but 600km to the north, between Tayshet to the west of Lake Baikal and the eastern coast of Russia.

If you want to travel on to Japan after your trip you have several options. From Vladivostok there are both ferries (mid May to December) and flights. There are also cheaper ferry services from various Chinese ports including Shanghai, Tianjin and Qingdao, all of them within easy reach of Beijing.

Trans-Manchurian and Trans-Mongolian travellers can continue from Beijing by train round China, which has an extensive rail system as well as direct rail links into Vietnam. You can even travel back to Europe along the Silk Road on the Kazakhstan–China or the Turkestan–Siberia (Turksib) railways.

### COSTS

#### Overall costs

How much you pay for a trip on the world's longest railway line depends on the level of comfort you demand, the number of stops you wish to make along the way and the time of year you travel. At times Russian Railways offer seriously discounted tickets for those prepared to ride in the less-popular top berths. If these are on offer when you want to go, and



In Mongolia, and particularly in the Gobi desert region, you may see camels.

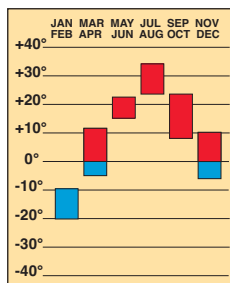
## 16 When to go

seasons, a time of fur coats, sleigh-rides and chilled vodka. In sub-zero temperatures, with the bare birch and fir trees encased in ice, Siberia looks as one imagines it ought to – a barren, desolate wasteland (the train, however, is well heated). Furthermore, during the snowy months you can take part in husky sledging, snowmobile rides, ice biking and expeditions with reindeer if you choose to stop by Lake Baikal.

Russian cities, too, look best and feel most ‘Russian’ under a layer of snow. St Petersburg with its brightly painted Classical architecture is far more attractive in the winter months when the weather is crisp and skies clear. But if you want to spend time in any Siberian city you’ll find it more enjoyable to go in late spring, summer or autumn, when outdoor conditions are more visitor friendly.

In Siberia the heaviest snowfalls and coldest temperatures – as low as minus 40°C (minus 40°F) in Krasnoyarsk and some other towns the train passes through – occur in December and January. From late January to early April the weather is generally cold and clear. Spring comes late. In July and August it is warm enough for an invigorating dip in Lake Baikal. The birch and aspen provide a beautiful autumnal display in September and October.

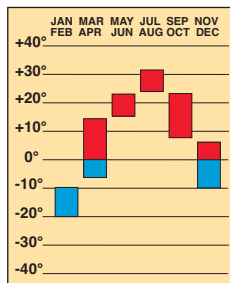
In Moscow the average temperature is 23°C (73.4°F) in summer and minus 9°C (+16°F) during the winter; there are occasional heavy summer showers.



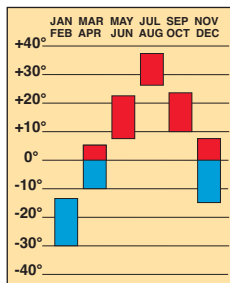
**Moscow – temperature**  
(average max/min °C)

### Tourist season

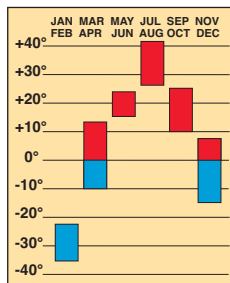
The tourist season runs from May through September, peaking from mid-July to early September. In the low season (October to April) some accommodation may be closed, but you’ll also find it much easier to get a booking for the train at short notice at this time and there are certain tours that are only available during the colder months. During the summer it can be difficult to get a place on the popular non-stop Moscow–Beijing route without planning several weeks ahead.



**Beijing – temperature**  
(average max/min °C)

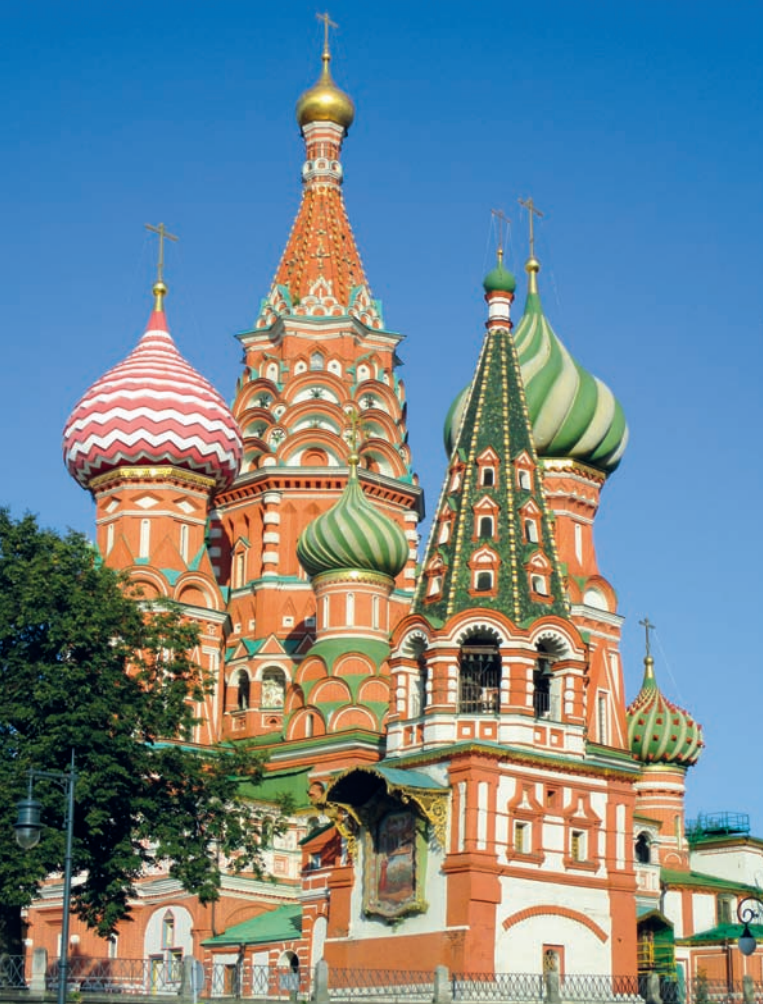


**Irkutsk – temperature**  
(average max/min °C)



**Ulaanbaatar – temperature**  
(average max/min °C)





### Best churches and cathedrals

- **St Basil's Cathedral** (above; p180), Moscow – The undisputed icon of Russia's capital city, with its instantly recognisable multi-coloured domes
- **Cathedral of the Nativity of the Virgin** (p241; **photo p23**), Suzdal – With stunning frescoes inside and topped with five blue domes dotted with golden stars
- **Cathedral of St Sophia** (p276), Tobolsk – Hilltop, golden-domed cathedral with a splendid ceiling mural inside

- **Troitsky Church** (p273), Tyumen – Containing an enormous, gleaming, floor-to-ceiling gold iconostasis; topped with gold-and-black onion domes
- **Church on the Blood** (p263), Yekaterinburg – Built as a memorial to the murdered Romanov royal family
- **Exalted Trinity Monastery of St Sergius** (p216), Sergiev Posad – Studded with blue and gold onion domes and ringed by a whitewashed, 15m-thick, 1km-long wall



### Best natural wonders

● **Lake Baikal** (p320) – The world's oldest and deepest lake is the undoubted natural highlight of any Trans-Siberian adventure. Mystical **Olkhon Island** (above, looking across to sacred Shaman Rock), in the middle of Lake Baikal, has long beaches, craggy cliffs and a shamanistic past.

● **Gobi Desert** – Mongolia's fabled wilderness is home to dinosaur fossils, wild camels, welcoming nomads and sand dunes such as **Khongoryn Els** (left, see p395), the country's tallest

● **Mongolian grassland** (see top right and middle) – Vast sweeping fields of beautiful nothingness, just waiting to be explored

● **Stolby National Park** (see text opposite)



### Best manmade gems

- **The Great Wall** (p439) – China's iconic 9000km-long bricked bastion snakes its way along the mountains just north of Beijing; you can even see it from the train!
- **Red Square** (see p179), Moscow – At the heart of Russia's capital; with the Kremlin on one side, and St Basil's Cathedral on the other
- **Golden Bridge** (top left), Vladivostok's answer to San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge
- **Moscow metro** (bottom left) – Deep, deep underground, the metro stations in Moscow are unique: subterranean works of art with murals and mosaics most museums would be proud of
- **Trans-Siberian Railway** – Of course, you're sitting on the most incredible man-made wonder of them all!

### Best museums and galleries

- **The Hermitage** (above), St Petersburg – One of the world's biggest and most splendid collections of art, housed in the Winter Palace
- **The Kremlin** (p180), Moscow – Within its magnificent walls are five church-museums and an Armoury Chamber
- **The Forbidden City** (p409), Beijing – Similarly, this former palace houses some incredible museum pieces from Imperial China
- **Railway Museums** (see p28)
- **Artisan House** (p278), Tobolsk – A museum/workshop of mammoth-bone carvings
- **National Museum of the Buryat Republic** (p335), Ulan-Ude – Discover the history and traditions of the Buryats, one of Siberia's largest ethnic groups





### Best side trips

● **St Petersburg** (p144) – Russia's cultural capital isn't actually on the Trans-Siberian, but is easily accessible by fast trains from Moscow

● **Suzdal** (below left; p240) – Moscow is surrounded by dozens of so-called 'Golden Ring' towns, but this is the jewel in the crown; rural-village bliss, just a short bus hop from the Trans-Sib. Stunning churches and relaxing river trips.

● **Tobolsk** (below right; p276) – The old Siberian capital boasts a splendidly located, hill-top Kremlin and some quirky museums to boot

● **Tomsk** (p293) – A short detour from Novosibirsk, Tomsk delights visitors with its friendly student vibe, charming café culture and left-field street art. **Above left:** Traditional ornately-decorated wooden house.

● **Mongolian countryside** – Don't just stop off in Ulaanbaatar; venture out into the surrounding wilds for a true taste of Mongolia and stay in a *ger* (yurt, **above, right**)

● **The Great Wall** (p439) – Forget to add on a couple of Great Wall days to the end of your trip and you'll regret it for the rest of your life







### Best Buddhist temples

● **The Lama Temple**, Beijing (p418) – Contains the world's largest sandalwood Buddha

● **Erdene Zuu Monastery** (above; p393), Kharkhorin – An eight-hour bus ride from Ulaanbaatar, this is the fascinating centrepiece of a ruined city that once ruled the Mongolian Empire

● **Gandan Khiid** (below right; p371), Ulaanbaatar – Home to the Khamba Lama, the

spiritual head of Mongolia; one of the largest and most important monasteries in the country

● **Ivolginsky Datsan** (below, left; p341), Ulan-Ude – Siberia's largest Buddhist monastery makes for a fascinating day trip from Ulan-Ude

● **Datsan Rinpoche Bagsha**, Ulan-Ude (p335) If you don't have time to get to Ivolginsky, head to this hilltop monastery on the edge of Ulan-Ude's suburbs for splendid views of the city and beyond





(Above): Plinthed, Class L (Л, 1945-55) steam loco, outside Ulan-Ude station

### Locomotives and great train rides

- The **Circumbaikal Railway** (see p328) between Port Baikal and Slyudyanka
- Tunnels, cliffs, rivers and even glimpses of the Great Wall on the approach to Beijing
- Taiga, snowy mountains and mighty rivers on the BAM's **Severobaikalsk-Tynda** stretch (pp531-3)
- **Russian Railway Museum** (p155), St Petersburg Vast, open-air museum with dozens of locomotives and steam engines dating from as far back as 1890
- **China Railway Museum** (p422), Beijing – The small Tian'anmen Square branch details the history of China's railways, but for proper loco action head to the branch inside a huge hanger in the city's eastern suburbs (photo, right)
- **Museum of Railway Technology, Seyatel** (p290) – an impressive collection of locomotives 25km from Novosibirsk and **Novosibirsk's History Museum of the West Siberian Railway** (p289)



### Gulags and WWII

- **Perm-36** (p260) – the worst of Siberia's notorious forced labour camps
- **Germ Warfare Base, Harbin** (p399), where the Japanese experimented on prisoners of war
- **Museum of the Leningrad Blockade** (p154), St Petersburg, the harrowing story of a starving city

(Right): Russian made EP1 (ЭП1) electric locomotive, common on the Trans-Siberian line




# PLANNING YOUR TRIP

1

## Bookings and visas

### JOINING A TOUR v GOING IT ALONE

#### Fully independent travel

Travelling independently is not difficult and is the best way to gain an insight into the 'real' Russia. Getting a tourist or business visa allows you to wander around freely and it is very easy to purchase train tickets as you go, either at railway stations or online ( eng.rzd.ru). This also gives you far greater flexibility as it means you are not tied to a pre-booked itinerary. It's also a lot cheaper!

For a tourist visa, together with your visa application you must present confirmation of (mostly fictitious) hotel bookings, furnished by a registered Russian tourist organisation. Various agencies and hotels can do this for you. Some will furnish documentation of accommodation for the duration of your visa, in exchange for your booking only your first night's stay with them. Once you have your visa and are registered with the organisation that's sponsoring you, or one of their affiliates, you are free to travel wherever you want, irrespective of what the documentation says.

Business visas currently do not require any proof of hotel bookings, and allow you to stay in Russia for longer than just one month

#### Not the Trans-Siberian Express!

Travel writers often wax lyrical about the fabled 'Trans-Siberian Express' but in fact no **regular** train service of that name exists. While the British generally refer to their trains by a time (eg 'the 10:35 to Clapham'), the Russians and Chinese identify theirs by a number (eg 'Train 003' from Beijing to Moscow). As in other countries a few crack services have been singled out and given names, but 'Trans-Siberian Express' is not among them. 'Trans-Siberian', 'Trans-Mongolian' and 'Trans-Manchurian' are, however, common terms for the main **routes** across Siberia and between Moscow and Beijing.

The train which runs all the way from Moscow to Vladivostok is the 002, and going in the other direction it's the 001; both services are also called the *Rossiya*. The 020 covers the full Trans-Manchurian route from Moscow to Beijing, while in the other direction it's the 019; these are both called the *Vostok*. The Trans-Mongolian route between Moscow and Beijing is 004 (eastbound) and 003 (westbound) identified only by a number. There are now also some luxurious special tourist trains (see p42).



routes. Unless you're American, Israeli or Indian you need a Mongolian transit visa on this route, even if you do not stop along the way. The Trans-Mongolian journey takes about 12 hours less than the Trans-Manchurian.

Despite long-standing Trans-Siberian lore, there's no difference between the restaurant cars on the two routes as these are supplied by the country through which you're travelling. Both trains have weekly departures in each direction. Summer is the most difficult time to book a place on long-distance trains on either route, so if you want to book the whole route in one go, make arrangements several weeks in advance if possible. Buying tickets for segments of either route as you go along is easy any time of year, though.

**Stopping off in Mongolia** If you're taking the Trans-Mongolian route, breaking your journey in Ulaanbaatar is highly recommended. In fact, assuming you have the time, you'd be mad if you didn't; not only is Ulaanbaatar a fascinating city to visit, but stopping there gives you the opportunity to explore the incredible Mongolian countryside; truly an experience not to be missed. See pp389-95 for ideas on where to go and what to do in Mongolia.

### Side trips

There are numerous possibilities for side trips by rail, including on the **Siberian BAM Railway** (from Tayshet, Khabarovsk or Skovorodino) and the **Turksib Railway** (from Novosibirsk), with links via the Turksib to the **Kazakhstan-China Railway**. See pp118-21 for more on all these lines. From **Blagoveshchensk**, on a spur off the Moscow-Vladivostok line at Belogorsk, you can cross the Amur River by boat to Heihe in China. With onward connections via Harbin, this little-known alternative to the Trans-Manchurian line is one of the cheapest land routes from Moscow to Beijing.

A branch line runs from Sibirtsevo, near Vladivostok, via Ussuriysk to Pyongyang in **North Korea**. Tourists can also enter North Korea by rail via Beijing, though in both cases you must be part of an official tour. From Beijing it's also possible to continue by rail into **Vietnam** – a three-night journey – or to Lhasa in **Tibet**.

#### ❑ What if I don't want to do it all by train?

Of course you needn't sit in a train for a week to see Siberia or Mongolia. It's quite feasible to fly to or from an intermediate point and travel only part of the way by train. Major airports along the Trans-Siberian include the following (the prices quoted are for one-way flights):

- **Yekaterinburg** (Moscow daily, from US\$140)
- **Novosibirsk** (Moscow daily, from US\$140; Beijing 3/week, from US\$230; Seoul weekly, from US\$220)
- **Irkutsk** (Moscow daily, from US\$175; Beijing daily, from US\$380)
- **Vladivostok** (Moscow daily, from US\$210; Beijing daily, from US\$75; Seoul daily, from US\$130; Osaka weekly, from US\$650; Tokyo daily, from US\$170)
- **Ulaanbaatar** (Moscow 3/week, from US\$480; Beijing daily, from US\$175; Tokyo 5/week, from US\$410; Seoul daily, from US\$270).



## VISAS

Visas are required of most foreigners visiting Russia, Mongolia and China. Getting a Russian visa is reasonably straightforward, but the process is still convoluted. It's straightforward to get either a Chinese visa or Mongolian visa. **Chinese and Russian visas should be obtained in your country of residence, but Mongolian visas can be obtained easily whilst you are on the road** in either Russia (in Ulan-Ude, for example), China (in Beijing) or elsewhere. In fact we found it far easier to get a Mongolian visa in Beijing than we did when we tried at the Mongolian Embassy in London, which asked for proof of pre-booked accommodation, flights and travel insurance; none of which were required in Beijing.

Note that regulations governing the issuing of Russian visas are particularly **susceptible to change**. Check the latest situation with your embassy, through online forums, or through the organisations listed below.

None of the visas can be acquired at land borders and at the time of writing visas for all three countries were valid for entry within three months of issue, so you have to time your applications to coincide with your proposed trip.

### Visa agencies

The following can assist you with applying for visas for all three countries: **Visa HQ** ☐ [visahq.co.uk](http://visahq.co.uk); **Monkey Business** see p48; **Express to Russia** ☐ [express.torussia.com](http://express.torussia.com); **Visa Link** ☐ [visalink.com.au](http://visalink.com.au); **IVDS** ☐ [visum-dienst.de](http://visum-dienst.de); **Action Visas** ☐ [action-visas.com](http://action-visas.com).

To apply for Russian invitations (see p36) in particular, contact: **Way to Russia** (☐ [waytorussia.net](http://waytorussia.net)) or **Travel Russia** (☐ [travelrussia.su](http://travelrussia.su)).

### Russian visas

A Russian visa is a one-page form stuck directly into your passport, containing your passport information, entry and exit dates, and the name and registration of the organisation that has invited you. It is best to apply at the embassy or consulate in your home country. Check their requirements online before applying, but typically, in addition to a completed visa application form (now available online at ☐ [visa.kdmid.ru](http://visa.kdmid.ru)), you need a passport valid for six months, an invitation/confirmation document, accommodation vouchers (for tourist visas only), a passport-sized photo and the visa fee. UK residents applying independently must apply through the official visa agency VFS Global (☐ [ru.vfsglobal.co.uk](http://ru.vfsglobal.co.uk)).

#### ☐ The longest journey

If it's a long-distance rail-travel record you're after, begin your journey in Vila Real de Santo António in southern Portugal, cross Europe to Moscow, take the Trans-Mongolian route from there to Beijing and continue to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) in Vietnam – a journey of 17,852km (11,155 miles).

For an even longer journey you'll have to wait until the long-proposed 103km tunnel under the Bering Strait goes ahead. If it ever does you'll be able to travel all the way from London to Mexico City via Moscow, Irkutsk, Magadan, Fairbanks and Vancouver – approximately 25,500km (16,000 miles).

### ❑ Getting to Russia or China from Britain

There are direct daily **flights** to Moscow with several major airlines for around £200 one way, but you can get non-direct flights for as little as £75.

Flying to Beijing is more expensive: at least £300 one-way. STA Travel (✉ sta-travel.co.uk) and Trailfinders (✉ trailfinders.com) are both good travel agencies when it comes to searching for the cheapest airfare. Both do discounted flights for students and people under 26. Other good websites to try are Flight Centre (✉ flight-centre.co.uk), Ebookers (✉ ebookers.com), Skyscanner (✉ skyscanner.net) and Alternative Airlines (✉ alternativeairlines.com).

The Man in Seat Sixty-One (✉ seat61.com – see box on p55) has very useful information on the numerous **rail** options available, including taking the Eurostar from London to Brussels and then a direct two-day train via Berlin, Warsaw and Minsk to Moscow, though having to get a Belarus visa can significantly increase the overall cost. Alternatively, you can hop on a St Petersburg train in Warsaw and go via Vilnius (with a change of train) instead.

Tickets to a range of European cities can be booked through French railways (✉ en.oui.sncf/en), Eurostar (✉ eurostar.com), or DB Bahn (✉ bahn.co.uk).

Budget travellers booking from Britain can also arrange Trans-Siberian rail tickets through specialist agencies in Russia (see p44) and China (see p47).

## MAKING A BOOKING IN CONTINENTAL EUROPE

### From France & Switzerland

● **Espace Transsibérien** (☎ 09 70 46 12 02) ✉ www.espace-transsiberien.com) offer a range of Trans-Siberian tours. There are also branches in Geneva (☎ 22 716 30 00) and Lausanne (☎ 021 321 47 37).

● **Les Connaisseurs du Voyage** (Paris ☎ 01 53 95 27 00, Marseille 04 91 92 08 91, ✉ www.connaisseursvoyage.fr) specialise in tours of the world, but also offer Trans-Siberian and Trans-Mongolian trips, some using the luxury trains listed in the box opposite.

### From Germany

● **Die Bahn** (✉ reiseauskunft.bahn.de) With Deutsche Bahn's switched-on, multilingual travel service, you can make Trans-Siberian rail bookings and train bookings from Germany to Moscow online or by phone.

● **Gleisnost** (✉ gleisnost.de) offers Trans-Siberian and Trans-Mongolian trips, and can organise ferry connections from Vladivostok to Korea and Japan.

● **Lernidee-Erlebnisreisen** (☎ 30-786 0000, ✉ lernidee.de) Journeys on trains and rivers. Siberian itineraries range from a 2nd-class ticket on the Moscow–Beijing train to stopovers in Mongolia (three nights including full board).

● **Pulexpress** (☎ 30-887 1470, ✉ www.pulexpress.de) Book Russian rail tickets and have them delivered with this official agent of Russian Railways.

### From the Netherlands

● **Rusreis.nl** (✉ rusreis.nl) Recommended by a reader as excellent value and helpful with their itinerary via Kazan.

tablets you want if you don't speak the local language, or are unable to read labels in the language in question.

### Mobile phones, laptops and other digital media

Pretty much every traveller and local brings a **mobile phone** on the train; usually a **smartphone**. These can be charged using outlets in the carriages; platzkart carriages tend to have one socket at either end that supports 220v; there are also a couple placed at berth 7 and 27. If you have an unlocked tri-band (3G) or quad-band (4G) phone and you are spending some time in Russia, it pays to pick up a SIM card from a Russian mobile company (see p78). Note, as yet there is still **no wi-fi** on Trans-Siberian trains so you'll need to use your phone's data package to get online, or buy a wi-fi dongle to get online with your laptop.

Though most passengers carry smartphones, there is a significant number who travel with **laptops, iPads, Kindles and tablets**, so if you bring one of these devices along, unless you're travelling in a particularly remote area (ie the BAM) you won't be terribly conspicuous.

### Photographic equipment

Most people take all the photos and videos they need with their smartphones these days, but some travellers do still carry digital cameras. Batteries can be charged on board from outlets in the carriages, but as with your phone, it's wise to bring an extra battery as these outlets are few and far between. Many travellers on long journeys carry portable hard drives for storing photos or else bring along an extra memory card.

See p87 for notes about taking photographs in Russia and p129 for information about taking photos from the train.

## MONEY

(See also p76) With certain exceptions, you will have to pay for everything in **local currency** (roubles in Russia, RMB/yuan in China, tugrik in Mongolia). Russian hotels have to accept roubles, even though some set their rates in dollars or euros.

There are abundant, well-signposted, 24-hour international **ATMs** in all major cities along the Trans-Siberian, and in Ulaanbaatar and all Chinese cities. Most accept Visa, MasterCard and other major cards and offer cash withdrawals from your own account in local currency. In Russia, the one bank that seems to accept most cards is TransCreditBank, with ATMs at all major railway stations.

**Cards** are accepted by many hotels and a growing number of guesthouses, restaurants and shops, particularly in Russia. But there are many times when **cash** is essential (in train dining cars, at markets, paying for visas at embassies). So, it's important to have a stash of local cash on you at all times.

It's also a good idea to carry a stash of **foreign currency** for an emergency (if you can't find an ATM, or if your card gets blocked by your bank). In this case, by far the most useful currency in Russia, Mongolia and China is US dollars, though euros and pounds sterling are also widely accepted. Bringing \$100

## Facts about the country

### GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The Russian Federation includes over 75% of the former USSR, but even without the other old Soviet republics it remains the largest country in the world, incorporating 17.175 million sq km (over 6.5 million square miles) and stretching from well into the Arctic Circle right down to the northern Caucasus in the south, and from the Black Sea in the west to the Bering Strait in the east, only a few kilometres from Alaska.

Russia is twice as big as the USA; the UK could fit into it 69 times.

### Climate

Much of the country is situated in far northern latitudes; Moscow is on the same latitude as Edinburgh, St Petersburg almost as far north as Anchorage, Alaska. Winters are bitter: the coldest inhabited place on earth, with temperatures as low as  $-68^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-90^{\circ}\text{F}$ ), is Oymyakon, in Yakutia in north-eastern Siberia.

Geography is as much to blame as latitude. Most of Russia is an open plain, stretching across Siberia to the Arctic; while there is high ground in the south, there are no northern mountains to block the cold Arctic air which blows across this plain. To the west are the Urals, the low range which divides Europe and Asia. The Himalaya and Pamir ranges beyond the southern borders stop warm tropical air from reaching the Siberian and Russian plains. Thus isolated, the plains warm rapidly in summer and become very cold in winter. Olekminsk, also in Yakutia, holds the record for the widest temperature range in the world, from  $-60^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-87^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) to a breathtaking summer high of  $45^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $113^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). Along the route of the Trans-Siberian, however, summers are rather milder.

### Transport and communications

**Railways** remain the principal means of transport for both passengers and goods, and there are some 87,500km of track in Russia. Surprisingly, rail traffic can be quite heavy on certain stretches of the Trans-Siberian, with trains passing every few minutes. The **road network** is comparatively well-developed and ever-growing; more and more people own cars, particularly in the larger cities.



## Practical information for the visitor

### ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS

(Also see Part 1: Planning Your Trip) One 19th-century English traveller who left his passport and tickets behind in London still managed to travel across Siberia carrying no other document than a pass to the Reading Room at the British Library. That would be tricky to pull off these days.

The essential documents are your passport, a Russian visa and, if appropriate, a visa for the countries you'll be entering after Russia. If you are travelling with an organisation which has issued you with vouchers to exchange for accommodation or train tickets, don't forget these. **Always carry a photocopy of your passport when you are in Russia:** if the police stop you and you don't have it on you, you'll be fined, and you may not wish to trust them with the actual document. As backup, you may wish to photograph your passport page and visa and email the photos to yourself.

It's also worth bringing photocopies of your Russian visa. Note that, **in theory, all visas must be registered within seven business days of your arrival in each Russian city** (see p37) that you will be staying at least a week in.

### ARRIVING IN RUSSIA

#### Customs allowances: entering or leaving the country

You should not have any problem bringing into Russia any items for personal use or consumption, including modest amounts of spirits or wine. You need a special permit to export 'cultural treasures', a term used to include almost anything that looks old or valuable. Paintings, gold and silver items made before 1968, military medals and coins may attract the attention of customs officials and may be confiscated or charged at 100% or more duty if you do not have a permit from the Ministry of Culture.

#### Customs declaration forms

At the Russian border you will be given a Customs Declaration Form (*tamozhennaya deklaratsiya*, таможенная декларация) on which you have to declare all the money and luggage you are carrying. These days it's largely a formality and it's unlikely that the border guards will check a foreigner's luggage.

China no longer requires visitors to fill in a separate customs form and neither does Mongolia.

#### Border-crossing procedures

Border-crossing procedures on the train may take anywhere from three to seven hours. The first step is for immigration and customs officers of the country you are leaving to check passports and visas and collect customs forms. At the Mongolian and Chinese borders, they may disappear with your passport for half



# SIBERIA AND THE RAILWAY

## Historical outline

### EARLY HISTORY

#### Prehistory: the first Siberians

Discoveries at **Dering Yuryakh**, by the Lena River 100km south of Yakutsk, have indicated that man has lived in Siberia for far longer than had previously been thought. Archaeologist Yuri Mochanov, who led excavations there in the 1980s and 1990s, believes that the thousands of stone tools he found embedded in geological stratum dating back over two million years suggests human habitation stretching back this far, which would place the site on a par with Professor Leakey's discoveries in East Africa. It's a highly controversial theory as it would mean that initial human evolution also occurred outside Africa. Western archaeologists who have studied the material believe, however, that it cannot be more than 500,000 years old; that would still give the Siberians an impressively long history.

There is evidence of rather more recent human life in the Lake Baikal area. In the 13th millennium BC, **Stone Age nomads** roamed round the shores of the lake, hunting mammoths and carving their tusks into the tubby fertility goddesses that can be seen in the museums of Irkutsk today. Several sites dating back to this early period have been excavated in the Baikal area; the railway passes near one at the village of Malta (see p487), 85km west of Irkutsk.

There is far more archaeological evidence from the **Neolithic Age** (12th to 5th millennia BC) and it shows that nomadic tribes had reached the Arctic Circle, with some even moving into North America via the Bering Strait (then a land bridge) and Alaska. These northern nomads trained dogs to pull their sledges, but remained technologically in the Stone Age until Russian colonists arrived in the mid 17th century.

In the south, several **Bronze Age cultures** emerged around the central parts of the Yenisey River. Afanashevskaya, south of Krasnoyarsk, has given its name to the culture of a people who lived in this area in the 2nd millennium BC and decorated their pottery with a characteristic herringbone pattern.

The first evidence of permanent buildings has been found near Achinsk, where the Andronovo people built huge log cabins in the 1st millennium BC. Excavations of sites of the Karassuk culture, also





**Political exiles**, many of whom came from aristocratic families, were free to adopt whatever lifestyle they could afford within the confines of Siberia, once they had completed their prison sentences.

prisoners. Many came from aristocratic families and, once out of prison, life for them continued in much the same way as it had west of the Urals.

The most famous political exiles were the '**Decembrists**', men who took part in an unsuccessful coup in 1825. Many were accompanied into exile by their wives. Some of the houses in which they lived are now preserved as *dom* (house) museums in Irkutsk (see p311). Kennan secretly visited many of the politicals in Siberia and was convinced that they did not deserve to be exiled. He wrote later: 'If such men are in exile in a lonely Siberian village on the frontier of Mongolia, instead of being at home in the service of the state – so much the worse for the state.'

A few politicals were sentenced to exile with the native Yakuts within the Arctic Circle. Escape was impossible and life with a Stone Age tribe must have seemed unbearable for cultured aristocrats who had until recently been part of the St Petersburg court circle.

### **Temporary abolition of the exile system**

The exile system was abolished in 1900. But, however corrupt the system and inhuman the conditions in these early Siberian prisons, worse was to come only 30 years later. Under Stalin, **vast concentration camps** were set up, in European Russia as well as Siberia, to provide a huge slave-labour force to build roads, railways and factories in the 1930s and 1940s. Prisoners were grossly overworked and undernourished. The **mortality rate** in some of these camps is said to have been as high as 30%. Reports of the number of people sentenced to these slave labour camps range from 3 million to 20 million. Some researchers place the death toll up to the late 1950s as high as 18 million.

## Building the railway

The first railway to be built in Russia was Tsar Nicholas I's private line (opened in 1836) which ran from his summer palace at Tsarkoye Selo (Pushkin) to Pavlovsk and later to St Petersburg, a distance of 23km (14 miles). The Tsar was said to have been most impressed with this new form of transport and over the next 30 years several lines were laid in European Russia, linking the main cities and towns. Siberia, however, was too far away to deserve serious consideration since most people went there only if they were forced to as exiles. As far as the Tsar was concerned traditional methods of transport kept him supplied with all the gold and furs he needed.

### PLANS FOR A TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY

#### Horse-powered Trans-Siberian Express?

The earliest plans for a long-distance railway in Siberia came from foreigners. Most books which include a history of the Trans-Siberian give passing mention to a certain English engineer, if only because of his wildly eccentric ideas and his unfortunate name. Thus it is a '**Mr Dull**' who has gone down in history as the man who first seriously suggested the building of a line from Perm across Siberia to the Pacific, with carriages being pulled by wild horses (of which there were a great many in the region at the time). He is said to have formally proposed his plan to the Ministry of Ways of Communication who, perhaps not surprisingly, turned it down.

In fact the Englishman's name was **not Dull but Duff** and it's not only his name that has been distorted through time. His descendants (John Howell and William Lawrie) have requested that the story be set straight. **Thomas Duff** was an enterprising adventurer who went to China to seek his fortune in the 1850s. He returned to England via Siberia, spending some time in St Petersburg with wealthy aristocratic friends. Here he was introduced to the Minister of Ways of Communication and it was probably during their conversation that he remarked on the **vast numbers of wild horses** he had encountered on his journey. Could they not be put to some use? Perhaps they might be trained to pull the trains that people were saying would soon run across Siberia. It is unlikely that this remark was meant to be serious but it has gone down in history as a formal proposal for a horse-powered Trans-Siberian Express.

#### More serious proposals

At around this time the American Perry McDonough Collins was exploring the Amur River, having persuaded the US government to appoint him as commercial agent in the region. After an enthusiastic welcome by Count Muravyev-Amursky, Governor-General of Siberia, Collins set off to descend the Amur in a small boat. Collins envisaged a trade link between America and Siberia with

- **Class O (O)** The first freight trains on the Trans-Siberian route were pulled by these long-boilered 0-8-0 locos (55 tons) which date back to 1889. The 'O' in the class name stands for *Osnovnoi Tip* meaning 'basic type'. Production ceased in 1923 but as late as 1958 there were 1500 of these locomotives still at work.
- **Class C (S)\*** 2-6-2 (75 tons) A highly successful passenger engine. 'S' stands for *Sormovo*, where these locos were built from 1911. **Class Cy (Su)** ('u' for *usileny*, meaning 'strengthened') was developed from the former class and produced from 1926 to 1951.
- **Class E (Ye)** 2-10-0 1500 Ye 2-10-0s were imported from the USA in 1914.
- **Class Эу/Эм/Эр (Eu/Em/Er)\*** Subclasses of the old type (E) 0-10-0, 80 tons, built in Russia from 1926 to 1952. The old type E was also produced in Germany and Sweden, as Esh and Eg subclasses.
- **Class Ea (YeA)\*** 2-10-0 (90 tons) Over 2000 were built in the USA between 1944 and 1947 and shipped across the Pacific.
- **Class JI (L)** 2-10-0 (103 tons) About 4130 were built from 1945 to 1956.
- **Class II36 (P36)** 4-8-4 (133 tons) 251 were built between 1950 and 1956 – the last express passenger type built for Soviet Railways. 'Skyliner'-style, fitted with large smoke-deflectors, and painted green with a cream stripe. Preserved examples at Sharya, Tayga, Sibirtsevo, Skovorodino, Belogorsk, Mogzon and Chernyshevsk.

Classes **O**, **C/Cy**, **E (O, S/Su, Ye)** have all disappeared from the steam dumps but you will see the occasional one on a plinth.

For more information look online. A good reference book is the comprehensive *Soviet Locomotive Types – The Union Legacy* by AJ Heywood and IDC Button (1995, Frank Stenvalls/Luddenden Press).

ran weekly from Ankara to Tehran was suspended, but in 2018 a new weekly overnight train was introduced between Van (in Turkey) and Tabriz (in Iran).

### Sakhalin railway

The island of Sakhalin (north of Japan) is currently linked to the Russian mainland by rail ferries operating between Vanino and Kholmsk (but see p119). Steam specials are occasionally run on the island's 3ft 6in-gauge rail system.

### A line to North and South Korea

In 2001 negotiations began in earnest to extend the Trans-Siberian Railway into Korea, forming an even more profitable link between Europe and Asia. In 2002 North and South Korea announced they would cooperate in rebuilding the Trans-Korean Railway, with Russia bankrolling part of the project to pay off its US\$1 billion debt to South Korea.

North Korean Railways trains run from Moscow to Pyongyang (2/month). Also, there are two Russian carriages running to Pyongyang from Moscow (4/month); these extra carriages are attached to the 001/002 Moscow–Vladivostok *Rossiya* and run as far as Ussuriysk, near Vladivostok, where they detach and follow the branch line to Tumannan, where there's a change of train to Pyongyang. As with the train service from Beijing to Pyongyang, these services are only available to foreign passengers who book their trip with approved companies such as **Koryo Tours** (📧 koryogroup.com), **Young Pioneer Tours** (📧 youngpioneertours.com) or **Korea Konsult** (📧 koreakonsult.com). It is still not possible to continue from Pyongyang into South Korea.



## Using an automatic ticket machine

The railway stations for all the cities mentioned in this guide are now equipped with automated ticket machines, most of which work. You can either use them to purchase tickets, print out tickets you've purchased online (see p135), or look up train timetables. Regardless of whether you're using the machine to look up train availability or to purchase a ticket, you will first have to insert your credit or debit card and enter your PIN. Do not be alarmed; your card will not be charged unless you actually purchase a ticket.

## Buying at a ticket window

If, by chance, you find yourself in a situation where you have to purchase a ticket from a ticket window – the least efficient choice, as queues tend to be slow – there are usually several ticket windows (*kassa касса*) to choose from, depending on your destination and possibly on whether you want a same-day or advance-purchase ticket. If the choice is not obvious, seek out the *сервис центр* (service centre), found at most major railway stations, where the staff often speak a little English and can book your ticket for a fee of R250 or so.

At the window you'll need to tell them your destination, train number, date of departure and compartment class: Л (L = two-berth SV), М (M = four-berth SV), К (K = *kupé*), П (P = *platzkartny*), О (O = *obshchiy*), either verbally or,

Train number	Depart date	Carriage number & class	Cost of platskartny ticket	Type of passenger
<b>Train type</b> ПРКА 20 Поезд	<b>Depart time (Moscow time)</b> АСУ ЭКСПРЕС 27.09 15.30	М - SV К - Kupé П - Platskartny О - Obshchy 00 К	<b>Supplement for kupe</b> 881046.0	Полный - Adult Детский - Child Студенческий - Student 01 полный
<b>Cost of platskartny ticket</b> 880450.6	<b>Number of people</b> 01	<b>Booking fee</b> 270902.0403	<b>Bed number</b> (or in this case the Проводник (PROVODNIK) will find you a bed) 4082418/Н	<b>Passport number &amp; name</b> ЧИТА 2-ВЛАДИВОСТ (2650001-2034130) МЕСТА УКАЗЫВАЕТ ПРОВОДИК 14 3-СИБ АИ 314833 ВКУ Е1 8804522 270902 0403 4082418/Н 33748198032/ХИЛН-Н8 4-1594.7 РУБ В Т.Ч. СТР 2 3+НСР 75.8/5.0/75 РУБ ПРИВЫТИЕ 29.09 В 22.35
<b>Total cost of ticket</b> 1594.7	<b>Arrival date</b> 29.09	<b>Arrival time (Moscow Time)</b> В 22.35	<b>From - To</b> 20101353148333	<b>Russian Railways Ticket</b>

## TICKET BUYING FOR NON-CHINESE SPEAKERS

If you can't speak Chinese, you can use the form below for train departure-related queries. If possible, find a ticket window that deals with foreigners (not always available) as your fellow Chinese travellers waiting in the queue behind you may not be terribly patient with you. Alternatively, make use of Google Translate or a similar smartphone translation app, or pay a bit more and book your ticket via your hotel or an agency. Note hard sleeper and hard seat are not literally 'hard'. They are perfectly comfortable and much better value than soft sleeper and seats, and are the most sought-after tickets on Chinese trains.

**soft sleeper (软卧) hard sleeper (硬卧) soft seat (软座) hard seat (硬座)**

Please help me.

我需要您的帮助

I can't speak Chinese.

我不会说中文

Please read the question I point to  
and write the answer or....

请您查看我所指向的问题，  
写下您的回答或者.....

\* = circle your choice.

圈出您的回答

Q = question 问题 / A = answer 回答

## Information

Q. When is the next train  
with available

请问下一班通往 .....  
的并且有

soft sleeper\* / hard sleeper\*/

软卧\* / 硬卧\*/

soft seat\* / hard seat\*

软座\* / 硬座\*

spaces to .....?

车票出售的旅客列车什么时  
候发车

A. The train No is .....

车次是 .....

It departs at ..... : ..... .

发车时间是 ..... : .....

Q. Are there soft sleeper\*/

请问通往 (A)..... 的

hard sleeper\*/

(B).....

soft seat\* / hard seat\* tickets

次旅客列车有没有

to (A).....

软卧\* / 硬卧\*/

on train No (B).....?

软座\* / 硬座\* 车票出售

(A) ..... is for destination (B)..... is for train number

A. Yes 有 / No 没有

Q. When does the train depart and  
arrive?

请问该次列车的发车时间和到  
达时间是

A. It departs at ..... : ..... and  
arrives at ..... : .....

该次列车的发车时间是

..... : .....

到达时间是 ..... : .....

# 4 CITY GUIDES & PLANS

## St Petersburg Санкт Петербург

‘It is in Russia – but it is not Russian!’ exclaimed Tsar Nicholas I to his visitor, the Marquis de Custine. The remark speaks volumes: the city was conceived as one to rival any European city. Russia has always wanted to be seen as an equal, first by European powers, and then by world powers – a statement that is as true today as it has been for the past three centuries.

St Petersburg, more Western in appearance and with a more relaxed feel to it than the uncompromisingly Russian Moscow, is named after the patron saint of its founder, Tsar Peter I ‘the Great’, a man who had toured Europe, who wrote fluently in eight languages and who felt his illiterate, unwashed forebears were a shaming heritage. The city was created as a ‘window to the West’, a face Russia could proudly show the world, and remained the capital until the Soviet era. It can hardly be coincidence that Vladimir Putin, architect of post-Soviet Russia’s rediscovered pride in its image abroad, is a St Petersburg lad.

Though not officially part of the Trans-Siberian railway, St Petersburg is nevertheless connected to it and an excellent place to either start or finish your journey, if only to experience a part of Russia that’s markedly different from the rest of the country. Built on multiple waterways, with opulent palaces – former residences of nobles and former rulers – St Petersburg has a wealth of world-class museums, a lively art and music scene and nightlife to rival the capital. This city, which has played a pivotal role in Russia’s history, particularly in the 20th century, and which suffered unimaginably during WWII but managed to recover, epitomises for many Russians that key quality of the ‘Russian character’: stoicism.

### ‘The Northern Capital’

Petersburgers persistently refer to their city as the ‘Northern Capital’ (or more conversationally as ‘Peter’, while to the older generation it remains ‘Leningrad’). The criteria for its location were strategic rather than climatic. At the same latitude as the Orkney Islands or North Dakota, winter photos taken before about 10am or after 2pm will show the city in half-darkness, while summertime darkens for only a few hours of twilight – down to about 45 minutes during June’s ‘White Nights’ celebrations. Biting winter gales off the Gulf



stolen from the Mogul treasury in the 17th century. The Orlov Diamond was presented to Catherine the Great as a gift by Count Gregory Orlov, who was trying to reignite a former flame. He was unsuccessful but Catherine the Great kept the diamond's original Indian rose cut.

**Other buildings in the Kremlin** The **Great Kremlin Palace Большой Кремлёвский Дворец**, now a government building, is only open to state guests and VIPs. A total renovation, to restore the palace to its pre-Communist finery, was completed in 1999. 'Put it back as it was before', said Yeltsin, and they did – for US\$800 million. Also VIP-only is the sole secular building on Cathedral Sq, the Italian-designed **Facetted Chamber Грановитая Палата**, so-called because of its façade of pointed stone blocks. **Teremnoy Palace Теремной Дворец**, closed to the public, has a striking red and white tiled roof.

The modern building facing the Kremlin's main entrance is the **State Kremlin Palace Государственный Кремлёвский Дворец**, formerly the seat of the Parliament of the USSR. It was designed also to do duty as a theatre; now that Parliament meets elsewhere, t's the full-time home of the Moscow Kremlin Ballet as well as hosting some international musicians. Ticketholders get special entrance to the Kremlin in the evenings, but you can't sightsee before the show.

### **Tretyakov Gallery Третьяковская Галерея** [see Map 3]

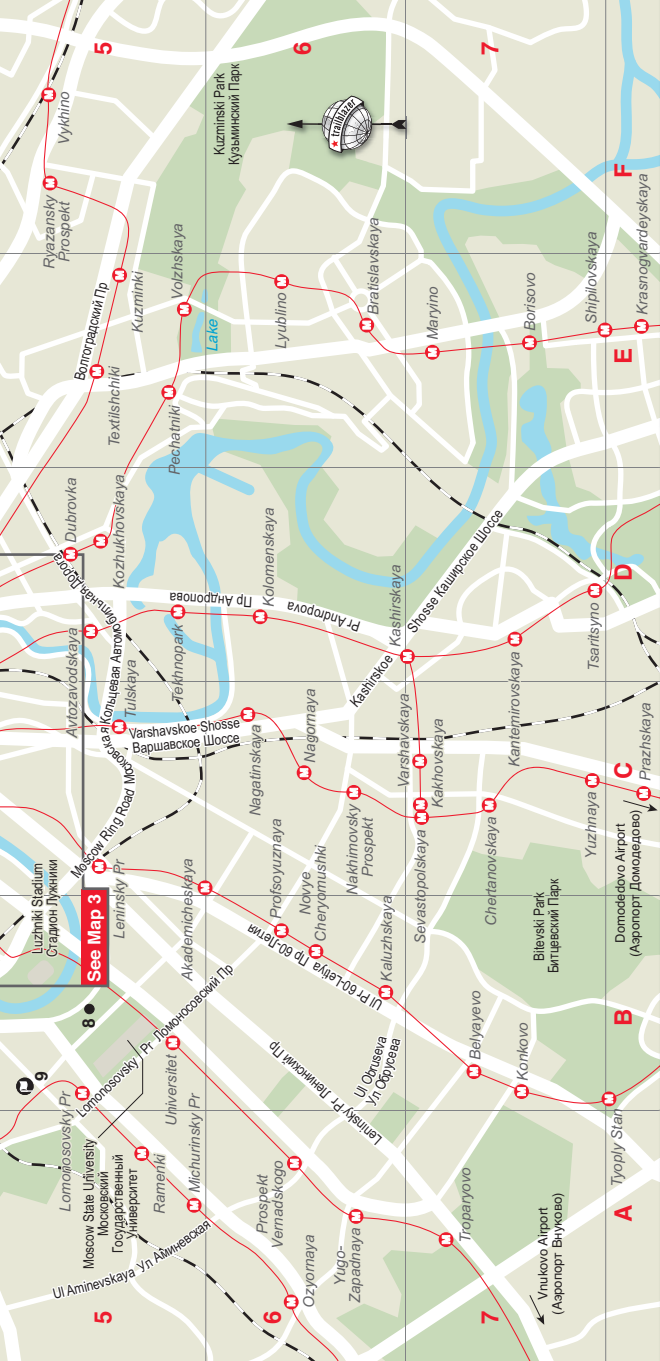
The best collection of Russian paintings, icons and sculpture is housed at the Tretyakov (Lavrushinsky per 10 Лаврушинский пер 10, **M** Tretyakovskaya, ☎ [www.tretyakovgallery.ru](http://www.tretyakovgallery.ru); 10am-6pm Tue, Wed & Sun, 10am-9pm Thur-Sat; R500). Highlights include: icons by Andrei Rublyov; two halls devoted to the great Russian masters Ilya Repin and Vasily Surikov, including Repin's boozy, vodka-stricken portrait of the composer Mussorgsky and his painting, *Ivan the Terrible, Having Murdered His Own Son*; *Christ's First Appearance to the People* which took Alexander Ivanov 20 years to complete; and Nikolai Ge's *Peter the Great Interrogates His Own Son*. Vasily Perov, the leader of the 1870s Peredvizhniki movement, in which painting began to address social issues, has his own hall, while Victor Vasnetsov is particularly good at his depictions of Russian folk tales. There's a nice *café* (10am-11pm) next door.

### **New Tretyakov Gallery Новая Третьяковская Галерея** [see Map 3]

The New Tretyakov Gallery (Krymsky Val 10 Крымский Вал 10, **M** Park Kultury; 10am-6pm Tue, Wed & Sun, 10am-9pm Thur-Sat; R500), 1km away from the original, houses the best of **20th-century Soviet art**, the genres including numerous socialist realism works as well as primitivism, cubism and more. Artists to watch out for include Kazimir Malevich, Lyubov Popova, Vasily Kandinsky, and Anatoly Komelin. The works are extremely well presented and the visitor comes away with a real understanding of the complexities and different stages of the development of modern Russian art.

Next door is the **Central House of Artists Центральный Дом Художника** (11am-8pm Tue-Sun, ☎ [www.cha.ru](http://www.cha.ru); R300), featuring concerts, and contemporary art exhibits. There was a hugely popular Banksy exhibition here in 2018; tickets cost R600-700, causing the elusive graffiti artist to allegedly disavow the show, saying he would never charge people to view his art.





## PLACES OF INTEREST

- 1 [C1] All-Russia Exhibition Centre (VDNKh)  
Всероссийский Выставочный Центр (ВДНХ)
- 2 [E2] Izmaylovsky Market Измайловский Рынок
- 3 [C3] Jewish Museum & Tolerance Centre  
Еврейский Музей и Центр Толерантности

- 4 [A4] Memorial Synagogue  
Мемориальная Синагога

- 5 [C1] Museum of Cosmonauts  
Музей Космонавтики

- 6 [A4] Museum of the Great Patriotic War  
Музей Великой Отечественной Войны

- 7 [D1] Rabochiy i Kolkhoznitsa  
Рабочий и Колхозница

- 8 [B5] Vorobyovy Gory Vorobyёвы Горы

## EMBASSIES

- 9 [B5] German Embassy Посольство Германии

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

## Orientation and services

The long-distance **bus station** and the **railway station** are opposite one another on ul Vokzalnaya. The handy trolleybus No 5

runs from the railway station to the Golden Gate along ul Bolshaya Moskovskaya.

There's an **ATM** inside the railway station, and others along ul Bolshaya Moskovskaya.



## Vladimir Владимир

## WHERE TO STAY

- 15 Hotel Vladimir  
Гостиница Владимир

## WHERE TO EAT &amp; DRINK

- 5 City Mix Café Кафе Сити-Микс  
6 Traders Row Food Court  
Торговые Ряды  
16 Shesh-Besh Шеш-Беш  
17 Cinnamon Coffee House  
Корица Кофейня

## PLACES OF INTEREST

- 1 Crystal, Lacquer Miniatures & Embroidery Museum  
Музей Хрустала, Лаковой  
Миниатюры и Вышивки  
2 Military Museum  
Военный Музей  
3 Golden Gate Золотые Ворота  
4 Exhibition of 'Old Vladimir' in  
Water Tower Выставка 'Старый  
Владимир' и Водяная Башня  
8 House of Officers  
Дом Офицеров

- 9 Monument to 850th Anniversary  
of Vladimir  
Монумент в честь 850-летия  
города Владимир

- 10 Assumption Cathedral  
Успенский Собор  
11 Oblast Arts Centre  
Областной Центр Живописи  
12 Cathedral of St Demetrius of  
Salonica  
Дмитриевский Собор  
13 History Museum  
Исторический Музей  
14 Nativity Monastery  
Богородице-Рождественский  
Монастырь

## OTHER

- 7 ATM ATM  
18 Bus Station Автовокзал  
19 Steam Loco L-0498  
20 Railway Station & ATM  
Железнодорожный вокзал & ATM

If you're here in late August, you may catch the **regional fair** that takes place on Sobornaya Ploshchad, with live music, national costume, food and handicrafts from neighbouring villages.

Vladimir area phone code is ☎ 4922.

## Where to stay

Assuming you're planning to visit Suzdal as well as Vladimir, it's worth noting that it's far nicer to overnight in Suzdal.

Vladimir's congenial hostel, **Hostel Pilgrim Хостел Пилигрим** (ул Токарева 8а, ul Tokareva 8a, ☎ 900 474 9594; dorm/dbl from R500/1200; WI-FI), is a little out of the centre but caters to backpackers' needs, with reading lights by every bed in the dorm, a fully equipped guest kitchen, book exchange and tons of useful information on the city (and nearby Suzdal). To get here from the centre, walk north along Oktyabrsky pr, then cross over ul Mira (ул Мира) and ul Tokareva (ул Токарева) will be on your left after about 250m. The hostel is at 8a, on your right.

The closest hotel to the station is **Hotel Vladimir Гостиница Владимир** (ул Большая Московская 74, ul Bolshaya Moskovskaya 74, ☎ 327 373, 📧 hotel-vladimir.ru; sgl/dbl from R3800/4600; WI-FI), with renovated, comfortable en suite 'Standard' rooms that retain Soviet interior design. The cheaper 'Economy' rooms are in a separate building and are more spartan.

A short walk south from the Golden Gate, and in a beautiful location overlooking the river valley, the Art Nouveau **Voznesenskaya Sloboda Вознесенская Слобода** (ул Вознесенская 4-16, ul Voznesenskaya 4-16, ☎ 322 787, 📧 vsloboda.ru; dbl from R5900) offers stylish rooms either in European or 'classic Russian' style, the latter with wood-panelled walls. Guests have access to a small swimming pool and Finnish sauna. Breakfast costs an extra R500pp.

## Where to eat and drink

The closest place to the railway station for a quick caffeine pick-me-up is the pint-sized **Cinnamon Coffee House корица**

**Кофейня** (82 ul Bolshaya Moskovskaya, ул Большая Московская 82; Mon-Fri 8am-9pm, Sat-Sun 10am-9pm; WI-FI), a friendly café with sandwiches, cakes and decent coffee.

Slightly further along the same road, at No 78, **Shesh-Besh Шеш-Беш** (noon-midnight), specialises in Central Asian dishes such as *kharcho* (spicy mutton soup) and aubergine with walnut sauce, as well as over a dozen types of shashlyk. The weekday set lunch is excellent value.

Further east along the same road is the very affordable **City Mix Café Кафе Сити-Микс** (10 ul Bolshaya Moskovskaya, ул Большая Московская 10; mains R200-300; WI-FI), a comfortable modern café with a mix of Russian food, sushi and noodles. There are cold beers as well as hot drinks and juices and they have an English version of the menu on an iPad.

On the other side of the road, on the top floor of the shopping centre known as **Traders Row Торговые Ряды** (19а ul Bolshaya Moskovskaya, ул Большая Московская 19а; 10am-10pm), there's an inexpensive **food court** selling easy-to-order Russian dumplings, pancakes, Asian-style noodles and ice-cream.

For something more stylish, the upmarket hotel **Voznesenskaya Sloboda Вознесенская Слобода** (see Where to stay) has a steakhouse, a popular restaurant called **Krucha** (Круча) and a café. Expect to pay between R500 and R900 for main dishes in either of the restaurants.

## Moving on

Vladimir is just 180km from Moscow and is an easy day trip from there. Alternatively, work it into your itinerary as a Trans-Siberian stopover along with nearby Suzdal. There are both local and long-distance **rail services** between Vladimir and Moscow (more than 20 trains per day; 1½-3hrs), with seats going for around R800 upwards. Almost as numerous are the trains to Nizhny Novgorod (2¼-3¼hrs).

From the bus station opposite the railway station, **buses** to Suzdal run every half an hour or so between 6.30am and 9.30pm (R98; 45mins).

**Георгиевская** (ул Ленская 35, ul Lenskaya 35, ☎ 220 909, 📧 hotel-georgievskaya.ru; sgl/dbl from R2700/5400; wi-fi), a stylish, modern hotel with well-appointed spacious rooms and young helpful staff. As with all accommodation here, though, don't expect much English to be spoken.

### Where to eat and drink

There's a lovely little café, known simply as **Refectory трапезная** (4-5 Krasnaya pl, Красная пл 4-5; 9am-6pm) in a simple wooden building just outside the Kremlin. It's the earliest place to open in this area, so great for a morning cuppa. It doesn't do cooked food, but you can get pastries, salads and ice-creams, and although no English is spoken the lady who runs the place is very welcoming.

For food as well as hot drinks, the comfortable **Café u Yershova Кафе у Ершова** (7 ul Semena Remezova, ул Семена Ремезова 7; mains R200-400; 10am-10pm) has an English menu with inexpensive Russian favourites such as

pancakes, dumplings, soups and salads. **Restaurant Ladeyny Ресторан Ладейный** (ul Revolutsionnaya 2 ул Революционная 2; mains R400-800; 11am-2am), housed inside a giant modern rebuild of a traditional izba (wooden home), is great for a big slap-up evening meal, or a proper hearty lunch. There are soups, meats and salads, plus Siberian fish and homemade pelmeni (ravioli-like dumplings). English menu.

For contemporary Russian cuisine, and a decent wine list, **Mark & Lev Марк и Лев** (19 ul Semena Remezova, Ул Семена Ремезова 19; 10am-11pm) is arguably the best restaurant in town. Service is slick, the food fresh, and the surroundings more intimate than Ladeyny.

### Moving on

**By rail** There are at least 10 trains a day to Tyumen (4hrs) and around eight a day to Yekaterinburg (10-11hrs). Omsk is trickier, with either one or two trains a day, depending on the day; one leaves at 1.24am (12½hrs). The other at 7.20am (15½hrs).

## Omsk

### Омск

**[Moscow Time +3; population: 1,160,670]** With a laid-back atmosphere accentuated by parks, cafés and public sculptures, Omsk, Siberia's second-largest city, is a pleasant and slightly offbeat place to break your Trans-Siberian trip, though its sights are decidedly modest.

The city was founded in 1719 as a small fortress on the west bank of the River Om, to be used as the military headquarters of the Cossack regiments in Siberia. It had been considerably enlarged and included a large *ostrog* (prison) by the time Fyodor Dostoyevsky arrived in 1849 to begin four years of hard labour for political crimes. His unenviable experiences were recorded in *Buried Alive in Siberia*. He was twice flogged, once for complaining about a lump of dirt in his soup; the second time he saved the life of a drowning prisoner, ignoring a guard who ordered that the man be left to drown. Dostoyevsky received so severe a flogging for this charitable act that he almost died and had to spend six weeks in the hospital.

During the Civil War Omsk was the capital of the White Russian government of Admiral Kolchak, until November 1919 when the Red Army entered

quicker and cheaper to take a minibus from opposite the station or from **Central Market** (leave when full; R120). You can also catch minibuses to Olkhon Island from Central Market (R800-900, leave when full, until around midday), though most travellers book a seat on one through their hostel, for a small mark-up.

Buses for Bratsk (8pm, 11hrs) depart from the ticket booth opposite the bus station. Minibuses to Ulan-Ude (around 4/day in summer, departures before noon, 7hrs) leave from the railway station forecourt.

**By river** Boats for **Lake Baikal** depart from Raketa Terminal above Angara Dam; the dam is 5km upstream (south) of Irkutsk; take Bus No 16 (but not the 16M or 16K) from the railway station via pl Kirova (20mins; R15) and get off at the Raketa (Ракета) stop.

From Raketa Terminal there are hydrofoils to **Listvyanka** (1hr; R450) and **Bolshiye Koty** (1½hrs; R900) between late June and late September (3/day Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat & Sun). These boats fill up, so book in advance at the river station if possible, or through your accommodation.

Hydrofoils for **Bratsk** (12hrs) via **Angarsk** depart from the River Station, near the bridge from the railway station, on Tuesday and Saturday (early June to late Sep). Buy your ticket two days in advance from the river station.

All hydrofoil services are subject to weather-induced delays and cancellations.

All boat services are run by VSRP. For up-to-date timetables and prices, check the English version of their website ([vsrp.ru](http://vsrp.ru)).

**By air** Direct international flights from Irkutsk airport ([iktport.ru](http://iktport.ru)) include Beijing (daily, 4hrs), Seoul (3/week Mon, Thur & Fri, 3hrs), Tokyo (Mon, Wed, Fri & Sun, 5hrs), Bangkok (daily except Mon, 6hrs), Tashkent (1/week on Sun, 7½hrs) and Ulaanbaatar (daily, 1hr 25mins)

**Domestic flights** include Moscow (numerous daily, 5hrs), Vladivostok (2/week, 3hrs), Khabarovsk (3/week, 2½hrs), Novosibirsk (2/week, 2hrs), Yekaterinburg (3/week, 2½hrs), Krasnoyarsk (1/week, 1hr) and Ulan-Ude (4/week, 1hr).

## Lake Baikal

### Озеро Байкал

#### The world's deepest lake

The astonishing Lake Baikal, 64km (40 miles) south-east of Irkutsk, is 1637m (5371ft) deep and estimated to contain more than 20,000 cubic kilometres of water, roughly 20% of the world's non-frozen freshwater supplies; that's more water than all of America's Great Lakes combined.

Known as the 'Blue Eye of Siberia,' it is also the world's oldest lake, formed almost 50 million years ago. And even in terms of surface area, it is the planet's seventh largest lake; about 400 miles long and between 20 and 40 miles wide.

The water is incredibly clear and, except around Baikalsk and the Selenga delta, completely safe to drink, owing to the filtering action of numerous types of sponge which live in its depths, along with hundreds of other species found nowhere else on earth, including nerpa seals, also endemic to Baikal, and the world's only exclusively-freshwater species of seals.

In summer, tourists can swim in its shallows, scuba dive down to its depths or take boat rides across its cool-blue surface. In winter, the lake freezes to a



Catching a train to Harbin in China is a headache and involves staying overnight before the border in Ussuriysk where they detach your part of the train from the 351. It's much easier to fly.

**By bus** The bus station автовокзал (ul Russkaya ул Русская) is 4km north of the centre (see Orientation and services). If you're heading into China, there are buses at around 6am on Mondays and Saturdays to the border town of Suifenhe (4hrs, around R3000). You can then pick up local transport to Harbin on the Chinese side. There are no longer direct buses to Harbin.

**By air** The revamped Vladivostok airport (✈ vvo.aero) is served by several major airlines, including Aeroflot, Transaero, Korean Air and S7, and has direct flights to most major Russian cities and some international destinations in the region.

**Domestic** departures include: Moscow (8hrs), Irkutsk (4hrs), Yekaterinburg (7hrs), Khabarovsk (1¼hrs), Novosibirsk (6hrs), St Petersburg (9hrs), Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky (3hrs), Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk (2hrs), Yakutsk (2hrs), and Magadan (2½hrs).

**International** destinations include Beijing (2½hrs), Hong Kong (5hrs), Tokyo (2½hrs), Pyongyang (3hrs), and Seoul (4½hrs).

### ✈ Ferry to Japan and South Korea

Vladivostok's international ferry services come and go from the **Marine Terminal Морской вокзал** (ticket office Mon-Fri 9am-1pm & 2-6pm), which has its own cafés, restaurants, gift shops and great views of the harbour.

The once-weekly *Eastern Dream* ferry run by DBS Ferries (Marine Terminal, office No 124, ☎ 230 2664, ✉ en.go-to-japan.jp/daisenguide/dbscruise ferry) operates between Vladivostok and Sakaiminato, **Japan**, via Donghae, **South Korea**. At the time of writing, it departed from Vladivostok on Wednesdays at 2pm, arriving in Donghae on Thursday morning at 9am, then departed for Japan at 6pm, and arrived in Sakaiminato at 9am the next day. On the return leg, the ferry left Sakaiminato at 7pm on Saturday evening, arrived in Donghae at 9am on Sunday, left for Russia at 3pm, and finally arrived back in Vladivostok at 1pm on Monday.

One-way tickets between Vladivostok and Donghae cost from US\$180 (economy) to US\$415 (first class). Vladivostok to Sakaiminato costs US\$220 to US\$545 one-way.

## Ulaanbaatar

Улаанбаатар

[GMT +8; population: 1,144,954] The world's coldest capital is a fascinating place to visit even if it is, at first sight, a misshapen jumble of Soviet-style concrete apartment blocks, ancient Buddhist temples, old palaces and Dubai-style curved glass buildings jostling each other for space amidst chaotic traffic snarls. Things are changing fast here and the capital is filled with fascinating incongruities. Nomadic herders from the countryside have filled the city's outskirts with their *ger* tents and today they share the sidewalks of downtown Ulaanbaatar with young, professional urbanites.

There are almost 20 trains a day to Beijing (7-19hrs); the high-speed G- and D-class trains do the journey in 7-8 hours. Z-class in 10 hours. K-class 16-19hrs. Prices vary accordingly, but expect to pay around Y300/500 for a second-/first-class seat on one of the high-speed trains, and around Y300 for a hard-sleeper ticket on one of the overnight K-class trains. Note, some trains leave from Harbin West Station (see Local transport, p401). Be sure to check.

There are also trains to Suifenhe 绥芬河 (6-8hrs; hard-seat Y70) on the China–Russia border, from where buses run to Vladivostok. Note, some of these leave from Harbin East Railway Station (哈尔滨东站, Harbin Dong Zhan), which is the last stop on metro Line 1.

For destinations within China, you can buy your own ticket at the station, but tickets are often sold out days in advance, and few if any ticket sellers speak English. To book tickets online (📄 12306.cn) you need to be able to read Chinese, and have a Chinese mobile phone number and bank account. Alternatively, go through the transparent and trustworthy China DIY Travel (📄 china-diy-travel.com) who, for a flat-rate commission of US\$10 per ticket, will pre-book your tickets and arrange for you to be able to pick them up at any railway station.

As at all stations in China, once you have your tickets and are ready to go, you wait for your train in the assigned waiting room, not on the platform.

**By bus** There are numerous **long-distance bus stations**, but the easiest to find are the two beside the two main railways stations:

**Nangang long-distance bus station** 南岗公路客运站 (Nangang gonglu keyun zhan) is opposite the south exit of Harbin Railway Station and has sleeper buses to Beijing (every other day, 3.30pm, 14hrs; T262) and buses to Suifenhe 绥芬河 (every other day, 2.30pm, 7hrs; T98) for the Russian border towards Vladivostok.

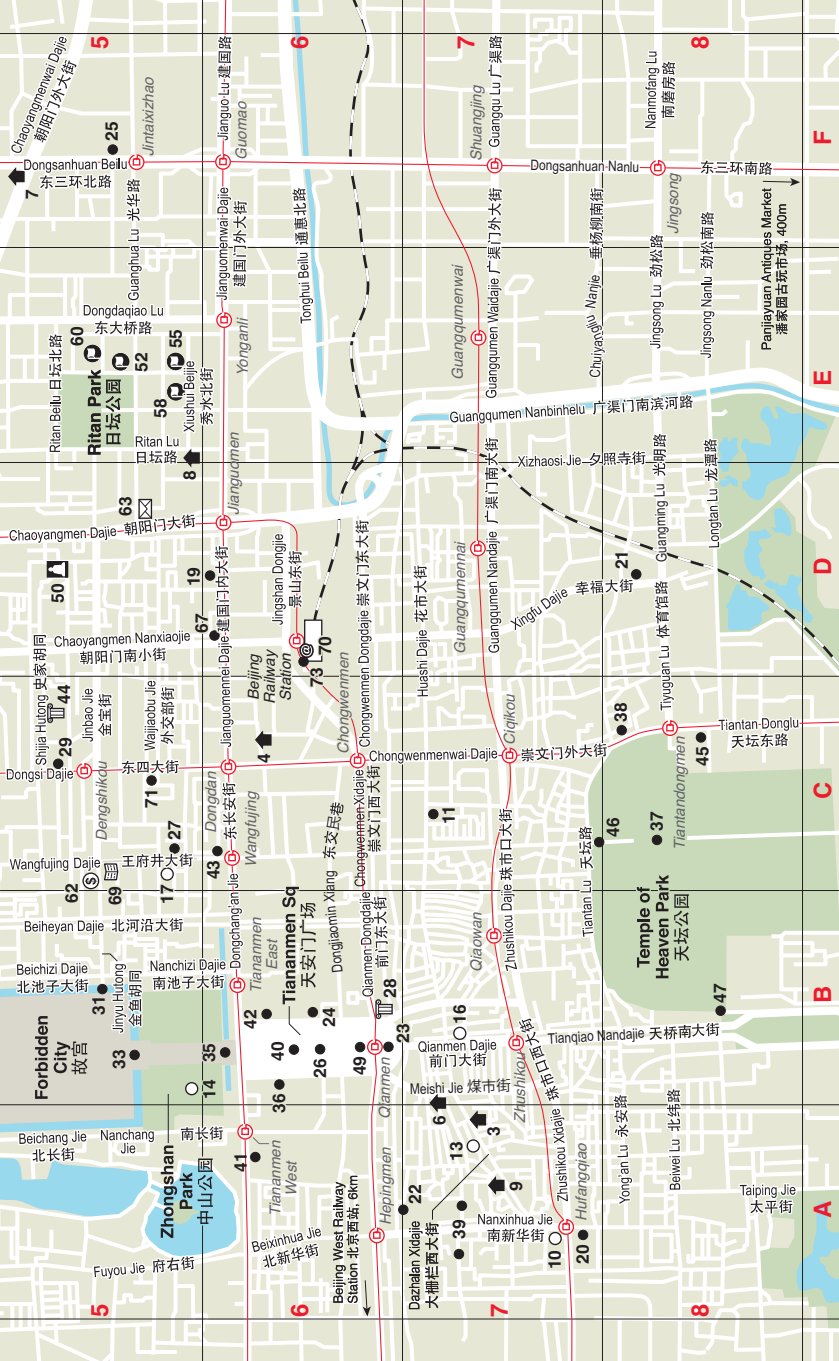
**Harbin West Coach Station** 哈西公路客运站 (Haxi gonglu keyun zhan) is beside Harbin West Railway Station and has buses to Manzhouli 满洲里 (every other day, 4.30pm, 10hrs; T270) for the Russian border towards Chita.

**By air** There are direct flights from Harbin's airport to Beijing (several daily, 2hrs), and numerous other domestic destinations, as well as to Vladivostok (5/week, 1¼hrs), Khabarovsk (3/week, 1½hrs) and Irkutsk (2/week, 3hrs). See Local transport (p401) for how to get to the airport.

## Beijing

北京

**[GMT+8; population: 24.5 million]** Stepping off the train after your journey across Siberia into the international metropolis of Beijing feels like walking into a new world – a land of neon, noise, and nasty traffic, of sizzling street food, convoys of bicycles and incredible crowds of people. This one-time ancient citadel has been transformed in recent years into one of the world's great modern cities – with sky-high tower blocks, a subway system that makes Moscow's look titchy (and very old-fashioned) and a confident, ever-richer, smartphone-wielding population that's fast on its way to enjoying bigger and better things. The city's rich imperial history is still eminently palpable in its wonderfully charming old-city *hutong* (narrow lanes), in its traditional-Chinese parks and in its golden-tiled temples and palaces; this is a city which alone can boast six UNESCO World Heritage sites – just one less than the whole of Egypt! – but



and is a very pleasant area to wander around before and after meals. One wildly popular restaurant strip is **Gui Jie** (簋街), known as **Ghost Street** in English, which is lined with large, bright and noisy hotpot and seafood restaurants, many of which are open round the clock.

For a quick snack, you can get *jian bing* (savoury crêpes; see Beijing street food box, opposite) at **Dahua Jianbing** 大华煎饼 (88 Dongsì Beidajie; 东四北大街88号; **D** Zhangzizhong Lu or Beixinqiao; crêpes Y7; 6am-noon), a hole-in-the-wall joint that serves nothing but north China's favourite pancake.

**Baozi Pu** 包子铺 (108 Guloudong Dajie, 鼓楼东大街108号; **D** Beixinqiao or Nanluoguxiang; dumplings Y8, dishes Y10-20; 6am-9pm) specialises in dumplings (*baozi*; 包子), and is perfect for a cheap breakfast. Dumplings are sold by the basket (usually containing eight). No English menu, but ones to try include steamed pork (包子, *baozi*), steamed vegetable (素包子, *su baozi*) and boiled pork (蒸饺, *zheng jiao*), each of which cost Y8 for one basket (一笼, *yi long*).

Opposite is the very popular Sichuanese restaurant **Bayu Xiongdi Chuancai** 巴渝兄弟川菜 (121 Gulou Dongdajie 鼓楼东大街121号; **D** Beixinqiao or Nanluoguxiang; dishes Y20-60; 9.30am-4am), a place to test your tolerance levels of both chilli and the mouth-numbing Sichuan peppercorn, both of which are used in abundance in Sichuanese cuisine. Specialities include *shui zhu yu* (水煮鱼, called 'brother trouble grass harp' on the menu here), river carp boiled in a chilli-laden broth; *gongbao jiding* (宫保鸡丁, 'kung pao chicken'), spicy chicken and peanuts; and *Sichuan liang mian* (四川凉面, a small side dish of spicy, cold noodles). There's a roof terrace in summer.

For noodles with attitude, seek out **Punk Rock Noodles** 鼓楼吃面 (25 Donggong Jie, off Gulou Dongdajie, 鼓楼东大街东公街25号; **D** Beixinqiao or Andingmen; noodles Y25-60; 11.30am-10pm) a young restaurant-bar set back off the main road, with comfy booth seating and a contemporary take on classic Chinese dishes. The menu is in English.

Under the shadow of the Drum Tower, ★ **Yaoji Chaogan** 姚记炒肝店 (311 Gulou Dongdajie, 鼓楼东大街311号; **D** Shichahai; dishes Y10-20; 6am-10pm) is a no-frills dumplings joint, and one of this district's most famous Beijing-food restaurants. Its namesake speciality is *chao ganr* (see Beijing food, opposite), but it also does big juicy pork dumplings (肉包, *rou bao*) and other local favourites. No English menu. No English spoken.

For a (slightly) more refined dumplings' experience, head north from here to **Xian'r Lao Man** 馅老满 (51 Jiugulou Dajie, 旧鼓楼大街51号; **D** Gulou Dajie; dumplings Y10, other dishes Y20-60; 11am-9pm), which claims their 'dumpling are the fullest'. Also very popular with locals, they specialise in *jiaozi* (饺子 boiled dumplings) ordered by the *liang* (100g) from a checklist menu that has English translations.

Chinese Muslim restaurants, run either by Uighurs from the far western province of Xinjiang or more likely by Hui Muslims who are ethnically Han Chinese, are found all over the city, and are great places for a cheap but filling meal. **Yi Long Zhai** 伊隆斋 (43 Mao'er Hutong, off Di'anmen Waidajie, 地安门外大街帽儿胡同43号; **D** Shichahai; dishes Y12-30; 11am-midnight) has a typical Chinese-Muslim menu, but also the added attraction of its own courtyard area where local men sit bare-chested in summer, cracking open cold beers as they gobble down *yang rou chuan* (羊肉串, lamb skewers). It's also worth trying the *da pan ji* (大盘鸡, literally 'big plate chicken'), a whole chicken chopped up and stewed with potatoes, peppers and noodles; mop up the sauce with *kao nang* (烤囊, naan bread). Photo menu.

The spectacular ★ **Jin Ding Xuan** 金鼎轩 (77 Hepingli Xijie, 地坛南门和平里西街77号; **D** Yonghegong; dim sum Y15-30, dishes Y30-70; 24hr) is a five-storey, temple-lookalike, 24hr Cantonese restaurant that's the most enjoyable place to go for dim sum. Visit in the evening when it's lit up with red lanterns and orange strip lights. No English spoken, but the menu has photos and English translations. There's a separate menu for dim sum (点心, *dian xin*).

# 5 ROUTE GUIDE & MAPS

## Using this guide

This route guide has been set out to draw your attention to points of interest and to enable you to locate your position along the Trans-Siberian line. On the maps, stations are indicated in Russian and English and their distance from Moscow is given in the text.

Stations and points of interest are identified in the text by a kilometre number. In some cases these numbers are approximate so start looking out for the point of interest a few kilometres before its stated position.

Where something of interest is on only one side of the track, it is identified after its kilometre number by the approximate compass direction for those going **away from Moscow**; that is, on the Moscow–Vladivostok Trans-Siberian line by the letter **N** (north or left-hand side of the train) or **S** (south or right-hand side), and on the Trans-Mongolian branch and Trans-Manchurian branch by **E** (east or left-hand side) or **W** (west or right-hand side).

The elevation of major towns and cities is given in metres and feet beside the station name. Time zones are indicated throughout the text (MT = Moscow Time). See inside back cover for **key map and time zones**.

### Kilometre posts

These are located on the southern or western side of the track, sometimes so close to the train that they're difficult to see. The technique is to press your face close to the glass and look along the train until a post flashes by.

On each post, the number on the face furthest from Moscow is larger by 1km than that on the face nearest to Moscow, suggesting that each number really refers to the entire 1km of railway towards which it 'looks'.

Railway timetables show your approximate true distance from Moscow, but unfortunately the distances painted on the kilometre (km) posts generally do



Points of interest and stations in this guide are identified by the nearest kilometre post visible from the train





not: indeed on the Trans-Siberian they may vary by up to 40km, the result of multiple route changes over the years. Distances noted in the following route guide and in the timetables at the back of the book correspond to those on the kilometre posts.

Occasionally, however, railway authorities may recalibrate and repaint these posts, thereby confusing us all! If you notice any discrepancies, please write to the author (see p2).

## Station name boards

Station signs are sometimes as difficult to catch sight of as kilometre posts since they are usually placed only on the station building (though thankfully many old signs have now been replaced with ones in Russian and English) and not always along the platform as in most other countries. Rail traffic on the line is heavy and even if your carriage does pull up opposite the station building you may have your view of it obscured by another train.

## Stops

Where the train stops at a station the duration of the stop is indicated by:

● (1-6mins) ●● (7-14mins) ●●● (15-24mins) ●●●+ (25mins and over)

These durations are based upon timetables for the 001/002 Moscow–Vladivostok (*Rossiya*), 003/004 Moscow–Beijing (Trans-Mongolian) and 019/020 Moscow–Beijing (*Vostok*, Trans-Manchurian) services. Actual durations may vary widely as timetables are revised, and may be reduced if a train is running late.

Route timetables that hang somewhere near the provodnitsa's office tell you exactly how long each train stop should be. Provodnitsas do not let you get off

### Speed calculations

Using kilometre posts and a watch you can calculate how quickly, or more usually how slowly, the train is going. Note the time that elapses between one post and the next and consult the table below. The average speed over the 7-day journey between Moscow and Vladivostok is just 70km (43.5mph).

Seconds	kph	mph	Seconds	kph	mph
24	150	93	52	69	43
26	138	86	54	66	41
28	129	80	56	64	40
30	120	75	60	60	37
32	113	70	64	56	35
34	106	66	68	53	33
36	100	62	72	50	31
38	95	59	78	46	28
40	90	56	84	43	27
42	86	53	92	39	24
44	82	51	100	36	22
46	78	49	120	30	18
48	75	47	150	24	15
50	72	45	180	20	12

if the stop duration is less than five minutes. At longer stops, don't stray far from the train as it will move off without a whistle or other signal (except in China) and passengers can be left behind. If the train is running late, longer stops can be cut short.

### Time zones

All trains in Russia run on Moscow Time (MT). **Siberian time zones** are listed throughout the route guide; major cities include Novosibirsk (MT+4), Irkutsk (MT+5), Khabarovsk (MT+7) and Vladivostok (MT+7).

**Moscow Time** is four hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT+4) year-round, as Russia currently does not observe Daylight Savings Time. Note that **China** has a single time zone, GMT+8, for the whole country and for the whole year. **Mongolian Time** is GMT+8 year-round, as Mongolia also does not observe daylight saving time.

## TRANS-SIBERIAN ROUTE

### Km0: Moscow Москва

**Yaroslavsky Station Ярославский вокзал** Most Trans-Siberian trains depart from Moscow's Yaroslavsky station (see p212), on Komsomolskaya pl (**M** Komsomolskaya). Yaroslavsky station is very distinctive, built in 1902 as a stylised reproduction of an old Russian *terem* (fort), its walls decorated with coloured tiles.

**Km13: Los Лось** Just after this station, the train crosses over the Moscow Ring Road. This road marks the city's metropolitan border.

**Km15: Taininskaya Таининская** A post-Soviet monument here, dedicated to Russia's last tsar, Nicholas II, says, 'To Tsar Nikolai II from the Russian people with repentance'.

### ❑ **Dacha**

A dacha is much more than a country cottage or holiday home: it provides its city-dwelling owners with somewhere to grow vegetables, a base for mushroom and wild berry collecting operations as well as being a place to relax away from the urban environment. Growing fruit and vegetables and collecting mushrooms and berries are not just pastimes for Russians but provide a means of survival during lean years and a supplement to their winter diet during better times. People also pick mushrooms and berries to sell in street markets in the cities. Russians are generally very knowledgeable about preserving techniques, food value and homeopathic remedies.

As one approaches a city on the train, the dacha colonies become larger and more frequent. Each privately owned house will be set on a large wood-fenced lot. The design of the house is very eclectic: small greenhouses abound and many properties have a sauna building. The earth closet of classic design is at the foot of the garden. Electricity is supplied and there is water from a community well or tap. There may be chickens; other livestock such as a goat or cow would belong to permanent residents. Some of the outlying villages contain a mix of small farmsteads and old houses that have been rehabilitated into dachas.

**Nancy J Scarth** (Canada)

### ❑ Important note on km posts – Moscow–Kotelnich

The km posts on this 900km section of the route, between Moscow and Kotelnich (near Vyatka), were originally calibrated from Kursky station. Now that most Trans-Siberian services no longer run on the line via Yaroslavl but via Vladimir and Nizhny Novgorod, there's a chance that the posts may eventually be updated and repainted with the distance from Yaroslavsky station, 19km further away than Kursky. When that happens you'll need to increase all kilometre readings from Fryazevo (Km54) up to the station before Kotelnich. At Kotelnich (Km870) you rejoin the old route.

**Km18: Mytishchi Мытищи** is known for three particular factories. The railway carriage factory, **Metrovagonmash**, manufactured all the Soviet Union's metro cars and now builds the N5 carriages to be seen on Moscow's metro. **Mytishchinsky monument factory**, the source of many of those ponderous Lenin statues that once littered the country, has at last been forced to develop a new line. It now churns out the kind of 'art' banned in the Soviet era: religious statues, memorials to the victims of Stalin's purges and busts of mafia bosses. Some of its earlier achievements displayed in Moscow include the giant Lenin in front of Oktyabrskaya metro station, an equestrian statue of Moscow's founder, Yuri Dolgoruki, on Tverskaya Ploshchad, and the Karl Marx across from the Bolshoi Theatre.

Production has also slowed at the **armoured vehicle factory**, one of Russia's three major tank works, the others being in the Siberian cities of Kurgan and Omsk.

The smoking factories and suburban blocks of flats are now left behind and you roll through forests of pine, birch and oak. Amongst the trees there are picturesque wooden *dachas* (see box opposite) where many of Moscow's residents spend their weekends. You pass through little stations with long, white-washed picket fences.

**Km38: Chkalovskaya Чкаловская** On your right-hand side (S) you'll see an **aeroplane monument** with the Russian inscription: 'Glory to the Soviet conquerors of the sky,' commemorating Chkalov, a famous pilot and Soviet hero who was the first man to fly nonstop from Moscow via the North Pole to Vancouver (Washington, USA, not Canada) in 1937.



tive capital of Tomskaya Oblast and a large centre of industrial engineering.

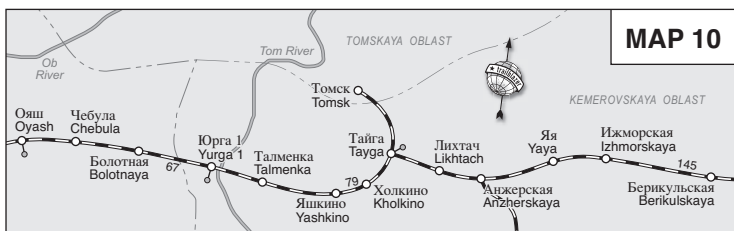
Tomsk was visited by almost every 19th-century traveller to Siberia. The city was an important exile centre and had a large forwarding prison. Having almost succumbed to the stench from the overcrowded cells in 1887, Kennan wrote: 'If you visit the prison my advice to you is to breakfast heartily before starting, and to keep out of the hospital wards.' By the time Annette Meakin visited Tomsk 14 years later the railway had removed the need for forwarding prisons and she could write: 'It was not unlike a group of alms houses. We found very few prisoners.' Tomsk achieved international notoriety when at nearby Tomsk-7 on 6 April 1993 a radioactive waste-reprocessing plant blew up, contaminating an area of 120 sq km.

Near the station is a **steam engine**, P-360192, built in 1956.

**Km3602: Anzherskaya Анжерская** This ugly coal-mining town is at the northern extremity of the giant **Kuzbass (Kuznetsk Basin) coal field** which contains a massive 600 billion tons of high quality, low sulphur coal. The town, formerly called Anzhero-Sudzhensk Анжеро-Судженск, was founded in 1897 during the construction of the Trans-Siberian and in the early days of coal mining here. From the late 19th to early 20th centuries, 98% of all coal from the Kuzbass came through Anzherskaya. Most of the original miners were Tsarist prisoners, whose short and brutal lives are documented in the town's Museum of Local Studies.

A railway branch line leads south from here to **Novokuznetsk** which is the heart of the Kuzbass. In the early 1900s a plan had been put forward to link these coal fields with the Ural region where iron-ore was mined and coal was needed for the blast furnaces. The plan was not put into action until the 1930s when the so-called Ural-Kuzbass Kombinat was developed. Trains bring iron-ore to Kuzbass furnaces and return with coal for the foundries of the Urals. You will have met (or will meet if you're going west) a good deal of this traffic on the line between Novosibirsk and the Urals.

**Km3715: Mariinsk Мариинск (●●●+)** Founded as Kisskoye in 1698, this place was nothing more than a way-station for postal riders who carried messages on the Moscow-Irkutsk postal road. In 1826, however, news of a massive gold find brought tens of thousands of fortune seekers. The gold rush lasted for decades and between 1828 and 1917 more than 50 tons of gold were extracted



### □ The Transbaikal Railway (Km5483-6532)

In 1895 work was begun to connect Mysovaya (the port on Lake Baikal) with Sretensk, on the Shilka River near Kuenga (see p499), where passengers boarded steamers for the voyage on to Khabarovsk. Construction materials were shipped to Vladivostok and thence by boat along the Ussuri, Amur and Shilka rivers. There was a shortage of labour, for it proved impossible to get the local Buryats to work on the line. Gangs of reluctant convicts were brought in, although they became more interested in the operation after it was decided that they should receive 50 kopecks a day in return for their labour.

The terrain is mountainous and the line meanders up several valleys and over the Yablonovy Range. Owing to the dry climate, work could continue throughout the winter, although water was in short supply during these months. Workers were also faced with the problem of permafrost which necessitated the building of bonfires to thaw the ground, or dynamite to break it up.

A terrible setback occurred in July 1897 when over 300km of track and several bridges were damaged or swept away in a freak flood. The line was completed in early 1900 by which time it had cost over 60 million roubles.

The factories here and in Ulan-Ude are notorious for the industrial waste they dump into the Selenga River, which flows into Lake Baikal. Pollution from the Selenga and from the once notorious cellulose mill at Baikalsk has affected over 60% of the lake; even if the pollution were to stop tomorrow it would take 400 years for the waste to be flushed out.

**Km5596: Lesovozny Лесовозный** The town around the station is called **Pyinka Ильинка**.

At about **Km5617** the train crosses the Selenga River, providing an excellent photo opportunity. At **Km5633-4 (N)** there's an army camp with some abandoned tanks. The train approaches Ulan-Ude along the right bank (northern side) of the Selenga River. About 1km before the station (N) is a **monument to five railway workers** executed by Tsarist forces in 1906 for revolutionary activities.

**Km5642: Ulan-Ude Улан-Удэ (●●●/●●●+)**

[see p334]

Ulan-Ude (pop: 416,079; 544m/1785ft) is the capital of the Buryat Republic and a rewarding place to stop off at. If you're just passing through, stretch your legs on the platform where there is a **steam loco** (Class Su) preserved outside the locomotive workshop (N) at the western end of the station.





About 40km west is **Lake Khanka** which has a surface area of 4000 sq km but is nowhere more than 4m deep. The lake is famous for the lotus flower *eurea* which has giant buds and 2m wide leaves.

**Muchnaya Мучная (Km9092)** is the main railway station of the town of Chernigovka Черниговка, founded in 1886 by peasants who migrated from western Russia; it's named after the region from which they came.

**Km9109: Sibirtsevo Сибирцево (●)** This area is the centre of an extremely fertile region where wheat, oats, soya beans and rice are grown. Because of labour shortages these are aerially sown and fertilised. The climate of the southern part of the Russian Far East makes most areas ideal for agriculture as the warm summer rains create a hothouse atmosphere. A branch line runs from here through dairy-farming countryside to Lake Khanka.

**Km9177: Ussuriysk Уссурийск (●●●)** The fertile area around Ussuriysk has been inhabited for over 1000 years, first as the legendary kingdom of Bokhai and then by the Manchus. In the mid 19th century European emigrants began to settle here. At that time the town was called Nikolskoye, in honour of the Tsar. The town stands at the junction of the Ussuri and Chinese Eastern railways. When Tsarevich Nicholas visited in 1891 there were three wooden churches, a half-built stone cathedral and a population of 8000, many of them Chinese. Ussurisk is a now an agricultural and engineering centre, home of the Okean brand of refrigerator.

From Ussuriysk there are branch lines to Harbin in China via the East Chinese Railway and to Pyongyang in North Korea. The scenery is very different from the Siberian taiga. The train winds through the hills in misty forests of deciduous trees (oak, elm, alder and maple) and across European-looking meadows filled with Friesian cows and willow trees.

**Km9221: Amursky Zaliv Амурский Залив** A branch line runs from here to the port of **Nakhodka**. For information on the line to Nakhodka, see box opposite

**Km9246:** If you're heading east keep a lookout on the right (S) for your first glimpse of the Pacific Ocean.

**Km9255: Ugolnaya Угольная (●)** The town here, called **Trudovoye Трудовое**, sits at the northern edge of Uglovy Zaliv (Uglovy Bay). Pleasant beaches



## Trans-Mongolian route

The branch line to Mongolia and China leaves the main Trans-Siberian route at Zaudinsky (see below), east of Ulan-Ude (see p334). From there it takes around 5½ hours to cover the 250km to the Russia–Mongolia border. Between Ulan-Ude and the border the train travels through the heart of Buryatia, the Buryat Republic.

Note that the line turns predominantly southwards after Zaudinsky. For the entire Trans-Mongolian line we shall use (E) and (W) to show which side of the train points of interest are located. Thus if you're coming from Moscow (E) means the left side of the train and (W) the right.

**Km5655: Zaudinsky Заудинский** The line to Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia) follows the valley of the Selenga all the way to the border. The scenery changes remarkably quickly to the rolling green hills which make excellent pasture for the area's many cattle.

Passing through the little station of **Sayatun Саятун** (Km5677) the line crosses to the west bank of the river at Km5689-90 and continues to climb through **Ubukun Убукун** (Km5732).

**Km5769: Zagustay Заргустай** The station sits in the shadow of an ugly factory belching out thick smoke.

About 6km from here is the mining town of **Gusinoozyorsk Гусиноозёрск**; it grew from nothing following the 1939 discovery of a huge coal basin.

**Km5771-99: Gusinoye Ozero (Goose Lake) Гусиное Озеро** The line passes along the western shore of Goose Lake. Until the Revolution the most important Buddhist *datsan* (Iamasery) north of Ulaanbaatar was at **Selenginsk Селенгинск**, 20km to the south-east and overlooking the lake.

In 1887 George Kennan, while researching his book on Siberian prisons, arrived in Selenginsk and visited the datsan. 'We were tired of prisons and the exile system and had enough misery,' he wrote. Nevertheless he found Selenginsk 'a wretched little Buriat town'. At the datsan Kennan and his com-



## Trans-Manchurian Route

For the entire Trans-Manchurian line we use (E) and (W) to show which side of the train points of interest are located. Thus if you're coming from Moscow (E) means the left side of the train, (W) the right.

### Km6199: Chita Чита (●●●)

[see Map 18 and p343]

Chita (pop: 331,346) is the last major Trans-Siberian station before Trans-Manchurian trains branch off to China.

### Km6293: Karymskaya Карымская (●●●+)

[see p498]

**Km6306: Tarskaya Тарская** Tarskaya (formerly called Kaidalovo) is where the branch line to Beijing via Manchuria leaves the main Trans-Siberian route (or joins it if you are coming from Beijing; see p498).

Leaving Tarskaya you cross the **Ingoda River** and head through open steppe-land. Some 20km further south you enter the Buryat Republic (Buryatia). The train makes brief stops at **Adrianovka Адриановка (Km6314)**, and **Mogoytuу Могойтуй (Km6370) (-/●)**.

**Km6444: Olovyannaya Оловянная (-/●)** The 120-flat apartment block by the station was constructed by Chinese labourers using Chinese materials. It was one of many barter deals between the Zabaikalsk (Russia) and Harbin (China) railways.

Since 1988, when the first barter contract was signed, most deals have involved Russia swapping fertilisers, old rails and railway wheel sets for Chinese food, clothes and shoes. As confidence has grown Harbin Railways has provided specialist services such as doctors of traditional Chinese medicine for railway staff at nearby Karpovka, uniforms for Zabaikalsk workers, and reconstruction specialists for Chita 2 and Petrovsky Zavod stations.

Leaving this picturesque town you cross the **Onon River**, which flows north of the main Trans-Siberian line, joining the Ingoda to form the Shilka. Genghis (Chinggis) Khan (see box opposite) was born on the banks of the muddy Onon in 1162. Between Olovyannaya and Borzja you cross the **Adun**



Cyrillic script on some shops signs. The Russian population is now very small, though many Russian students come here to study Chinese.

As a riverside city with a historic shopping strip, Harbin is a pleasant place to stop at in summer, en route to Beijing, but its main tourist attraction is its **Ice Lantern Festival** (see box p396) held in January and early February each year.

The main station, **Harbin Railway Station** 哈尔滨站, was undergoing massive renovations at the time of research, bringing it into line with China's high-speed rail network, and incorporating the city's new metro system. Your train may also stop at **Harbin West Railway Station** 哈尔滨西站.

Between Harbin and Changchun you cross an immense cultivated plain, leaving Heilongjiang and entering Jilin Province.

**Km1260:** The line crosses a wide tributary of the Songhua River. There are numerous small lakes in the area.

**Km1146: Changchun** 长春 Changchun (pop: 3,908,048) is the provincial capital. The station boasts white concrete sculptures of 'The Graces'.

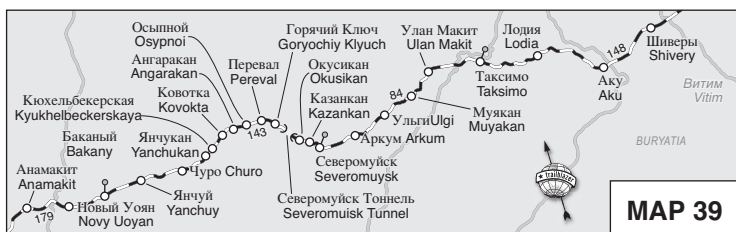
Back in 1913 the *Imperial Japanese Government Railways Guide to East Asia* was reminding its readers (all of whom would have had to change at this large junction) about 'the need of adjusting their watches – the Russian railway-time being 23 minutes earlier than the Japanese'. Between 1933 and 1945 Changchun was the centre of the Japanese puppet-state of Manchukuo. It has now grown into an industrial metropolis of almost four million people. Local industries include car production (Toyota, VW and Audi as well as the old Chinese luxury marque, Red Flag), a rail-carriage factory and film studios.

The main 019/020 Trans-Manchurian no longer stops here, but if you're on a local service and get off here, local delicacies include *shāo lù wěi* (烧鹿尾, roasted deer's tail) and *fěicuì rénshēn Mǎotái jī* (翡翠人參茅台鸡, jade chicken cooked in rice wine and ginseng), although Changchun is probably more popular with rail enthusiasts than with epicureans; RM Pacifics and QJ 2-10-2s are to be seen here and on the Changchun–Jilin line.

**Km1030: Siping** 四平 This town has lots of steam locos in the station. About 10km further south the line crosses the provincial border into Liaoning Province.

**Km841: Shenyang** 沈阳 (●●●/●●) An industrial giant (pop: 6,255,921) founded 2000 years ago during the Western Han dynasty (206BC–AD24). At different times during its long history the city has been controlled by Manchus





**Km1109: Nizhneangarsk II Нижнеангарск II** Here you pass the little airport from which there are seasonal flights to Irkutsk.

**Km1120: Kholodnaya Холодная** A 20-minute walk from the station is an indigenous Evenk village, Kholodny, which is trying to keep its traditions and culture alive in spite of the chronic alcoholism.

**Km1141: Kichera Кичера (●)** You may notice the Baltic influences in the architecture of this small town, built by the Estonian Young Communist Party.

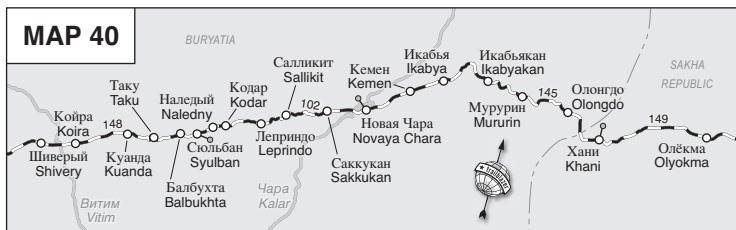
**Km1171: Dzelinda Дзелинда** (see p448) One of the newer stations along the BAM, this one was built in 1996 to accommodate the tiny hot springs spa 2km into the forest.

**Km1242: Anamakit Анамакит** Between here and Novy Uoyan, the railway crosses over the Upper Angara River – the largest river to flow into northern Lake Baikal.

**Km1257: Novy Uoyan Новый Уоян (●●●)** Built in 1976 as a support base for the railway, this small town reflects Latvian influence in its architecture. Here you're often greeted by the sight of timber yards and by locals selling delicious homemade food and smoked fish.

**Km1330: Kyukhelbeckerskaya Кюхельбекерская (●)** This station is named after the Decembrist Wilhelm Kyukhelbecker, a friend of Pushkin's who was exiled to Siberia where he eventually died. From here, the railway goes up a series of steep valleys, climbing to 1200m above sea level.

TIME ZONE MT + 6





**Table 1 Trans-Siberian: Moscow–Vladivostok (Nos 001 & 002: Rossiya) cont'd**

Station		Km from Mos	Stop (mins) E/W	Eastbound No 002		Westbound No 001		Time Zone MT+
				MT	LT	MT	LT	
Spassk-Dalny	Спасск-Дальний	9050	2/3	20:16	03:16	16:28	23:28	7
Muchnaya	Мучная	9092	1/1	20:51	03:51	15:48	22:48	7
Sibirtsevo	Сибирцево	9109	2/2	21:12	04:12	15:25	22:25	7
Ussuriysk	Уссурийск	9177	5/15	22:16	05:16	14:21	21:21	7
Ugolnaya	Угольная	9255	2/2	23:29	06:29	12:54	19:54	7
Vladivostok	Владивосток	9289	—/—	00:07	07:07	12:10	19:10	7
					<b>Day 8</b>	<b>Day 1</b>		

**Table 2 Trans-Mongolian: Moscow–Beijing (Train Nos 003\* & 004\*)**

One per week in each direction: currently ex-Moscow on Tuesday, ex-Beijing on Wednesday. Times shown are departure times – subtract stop for arrival time.

MT = Moscow Time; LT = Local Time; – = no stop

\* Note that these train numbers may be listed on some timetable sources as 0033 and 0043.

Station		Km from Mos	Stop (mins) E/W	Eastbound No 004/0043		Westbound No 003/0033		Time Zone MT+
				MT	LT	MT	LT	
Moscow (Yaroslavsky)	Москва (Ярославский)	0	—/—	23:55	<b>Day 1</b> 23:55	13:58	<b>Day 6</b> 13:58	0
Vladimir	Владимир	191	26/26	03:02	03:02	11:00	11:00	0
Nizhny Nov- gorod (Gorky)	Нижний Нов- город (Горький)	442	12/15	05:59	05:59	07:02	07:02	0
Vyatka (Kirov)	Вятка (Киров)	957	15/20	12:13	12:13	01:15	01:15	0
Glazov	Глазов	1165	2/0	15:11	16:11	<b>Day 6</b>		1
Balyezino	Балезино	1194	26/26	16:11	17:11	21:47	22:47	1
Perm 2	Пермь 2	1436	20/20	20:11	22:11	17:48	19:48	2
					<b>Day 3</b>			
Yekaterinburg (Sverdlovsk)	Екатеринбург (Свердловск)	1816	28/30	01:40	03:40	11:58	13:58	2
Tyumen	Тюмень	2144	20/20	06:20	08:20	06:50	08:50	2
Ishim	Ишим	2431	15/15	10:25	12:25	03:10	05:10	2
Omsk	Омск	2712	16/16	13:53	16:53	23:42	02:42	3
					<b>Day 5</b>			
Barabinsk	Барабинск	3040	27/30	17:45	21:45	19:54	23:54	4
					<b>Day 4</b>			
Novosibirsk	Новосибирск	3335	18/20	21:25	01:25	16:13	20:13	4
Mariinsk	Маринск	3715	27/34	02:58	06:58	10:29	14:29	4
Krasnoyarsk	Красноярск	4098	22/22	08:59	12:59	04:11	08:11	4
Ilsanskaya	Иланская	4375	20/17	13:47	17:47	23:41	03:41	4
					<b>Day 4</b>			
Nizhneudinsk	Нижнеудинск	4680	13/13	18:28	23:28	18:56	23:56	5
					<b>Day 5</b>			
Zima	Зима	4940	30/30	22:35	03:35	15:12	20:12	5
Irkutsk	Иркутск	5185	30/30	03:13	08:13	10:22	15:22	5
Slyudyanka 1	Слюдянка 1	5312	2/2	05:46	10:46	07:17	12:17	5
Ulan-Ude	Улан-Удэ	5642	45/45	10:47	15:47	02:05	07:05	5
Dzhida	Джида	5852	1/2	14:11	19:11	21:50	02:50	5

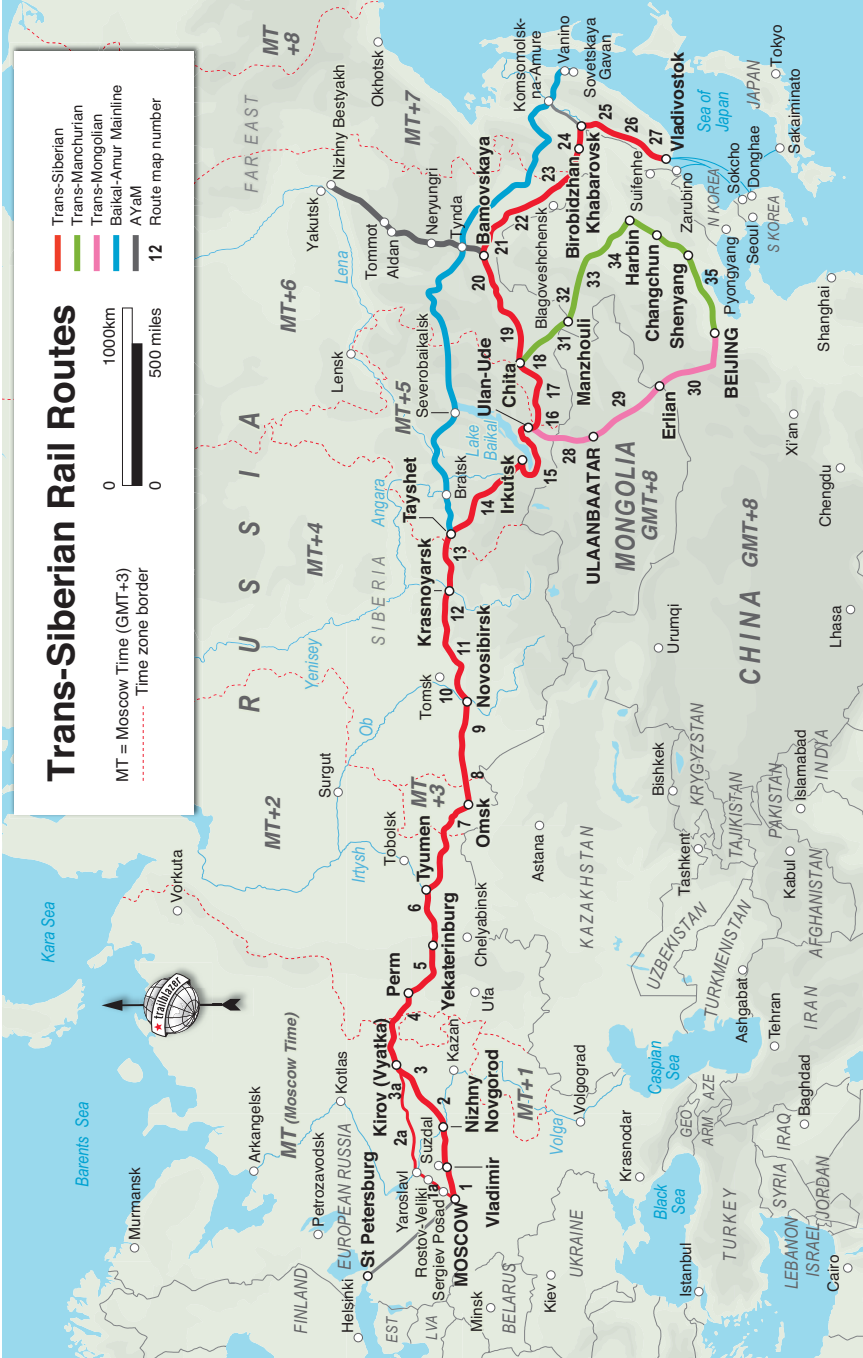
**RUSSIA**

# Trans-Siberian Rail Routes

- Trans-Siberian
- Trans-Manchurian
- Trans-Mongolian
- Baikal-Amur Mainline
- AYaM
- 12 Route map number



MT = Moscow Time (GMT+3)  
Time zone border





**10<sup>th</sup>**  
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