

TRANSPORT

St Petersburg is the most accessible Russian city, thanks to its proximity to Europe. It is also relatively easy to navigate. Keep in mind that metro stops are quite spread out, so you'll likely spend a lot of time on your own two feet, unless you learn a few bus routes or spring for a taxi. Flights, tours and rail tickets can be booked online at www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services.

AIR

St Petersburg is Russia's second-largest air hub, although it lags far behind Moscow in terms of the number of long-haul connections. It's well-connected throughout Europe and the former Soviet Union, but from Asia, Australasia and the Americas you'll usually have to change planes in either Moscow or another European hub to fly into St Petersburg.

Airlines

Any airlines flying to and from St Petersburg not listed below will likely have an office at Pulkovo Airport (see p234):

Aeroflot (SU; Map p92; ☎ 438 5583, 718 5555; www.aeroflot.ru; ul Rubinshteyna 1/43; 📄 Dostoevskaya)

Air France (AF; Map pp68–9; ☎ 336 2900; www.airfrance.com; Malaya Morskaya ul 23; 📄 Sadovaya)

Things Change...

The information in this chapter is particularly vulnerable to change. Check directly with the airline or a travel agent to make sure you understand how a fare (and ticket you may buy) works and be aware of the security requirements for international travel. Shop carefully. The details given in this chapter should be regarded as pointers and are not a substitute for your own careful, up-to-date research.

Alitalia (AZ; Map pp68–9; ☎ 334 4451; www.alitalia.com; Nevsky pr 30; 📄 Nevsky Pr)

Austrian Airlines (OS; Map pp68–9; ☎ 331 2005; www.aua.com; Nevsky pr 32; 📄 Nevsky Pr)

British Airways (BA; Map pp68–9; ☎ 380 0626; www.britishairways.com; Malaya Konyushennaya ul 1/3a, office 23b; 📄 Nevsky Pr)

CSA Czech Airlines (OK; Map pp68–9; ☎ 315 5259; www.czechairlines.com; Bolshaya Morskaya ul 32; 📄 Sadovaya)

Delta Airlines (DL; Map pp68–9; ☎ 571 5820; www.delta.com; Bolshaya Morskaya ul 36; 📄 Sadovaya)

Finnair (AY; Map pp68–9; ☎ 303 9898; www.finnair.com; Malaya Konyushennaya ul 1/3, office 33b; 📄 Nevsky Pr)

CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely upon, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel, overall, as a global benefit, but believes we all have a responsibility to limit our personal impact on global warming.

Flying & Climate Change

Pretty much every form of motor transport generates CO₂ (the main cause of human-induced climate change) but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

Carbon Offset Schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators' that allow travellers to offset the greenhouse gases they are responsible for with contributions to energy-saving projects and other climate-friendly initiatives in the developing world – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, supports the carbon offset scheme run by climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff and author travel.


For more information check out our website: www.lonelyplanet.com.

DOMESTIC FLIGHTS FROM ST PETERSBURG

Destination	One-way fare (R)	Duration (hr)	Frequency
Archangelsk	4200-4600	1½	daily
Chelyabinsk	5000-6100	2½	4 weekly
Ekaterinburg	4100-5000	2½	daily
Kaliningrad	2800-3400	1½	1-2 daily
Murmansk	4000	2	daily
Moscow	800-1300	1	8 daily
Norilsk	8000-9300	10	4 weekly
Novosibirsk	6000-6300	4	3 weekly
Samara	3800-4800	2½	3 weekly


All flights are from Pulkovo-1.


KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (KL; [Map pp68-9](#); ☎ 346 6868; www.klm.com; Malaya Morskaya ul 23;  Sadovaya)

LOT Polish Airlines (LO; [Map pp68-9](#); ☎ 273 5721; www.lot.com; Karavannaya ul 1;  Gostiny Dvor)

Lufthansa (LH; [Map pp68-9](#); ☎ 320 1000; www.lufthansa.com; Nevsky pr 32;  Nevsky Pr)

Rossiya Airlines (FV; [Map p92](#); ☎ 333 2222; www.pulkovo.ru; Nevsky pr 61;  Mayakovskaya)

SAS Scandinavian Airlines (SK; [Map pp68-9](#); ☎ 326 2600; www.scandinavian.net; Nevsky pr 25;  Nevsky Pr)

Transaero ([Map p84](#); ☎ 579 6463; www.transaero.ru; Liteyny pr 48;  Mayakovskaya)

Airport

St Petersburg has two terminals at its Pulkovo Airport, 17km south of the city (see [Map p65](#)). **Pulkovo-1** (☎ 704 3822; www.pulkovo.ru) handles domestic flights, as well as flights to some non-

GETTING INTO TOWN

The airport is about 17km south of the city centre. The **Airport Express** (☎ 388 0055; www.airport-express.ru; Moskovskaya/Pushkinskaya/roundtrip R50/70/130) runs between both airport terminals and Pushkinskaya metro station, stopping at Moskovskaya metro station along the way. Buses run every 20 minutes between 9am and 10pm. They are less frequent at other times, but they do run all night. Don't bother taking a taxi unless you have booked in advance, as the sharks waiting out the front will charge as much as R1500. Many hotels will book a taxi for you, in which case a reasonable fare is R400-600. All of the major car hire companies have offices at Pulkovo Airport, so you can pick up your rental car at the airport if you intend to drive into town.

Russian cities within the former Soviet Union. The international terminal is **Pulkovo-2** (☎ 704 3444), a small, well-run airport that was given a decent face-lift for the tercentennial in 2003. There are plans to build a third terminal here because of increased demand.

There are ATMs in both terminal buildings, but make sure you have euros or US dollars to change just in case they are not working.

BICYCLE

Bicycles are becoming more common on the streets of St Petersburg, but cycling is still difficult: pothole-riddled roads and lunatic drivers unaccustomed to cyclists make it a dangerous proposition. That said, the city's relatively compact size means that it is easy to get around by bike – and often much quicker than public transport. Many adventurers swear by their bikes as the ideal form of transport in St Petersburg (at least from May to October).

Especially when you are unfamiliar with traffic patterns, it is advised to stay off the busiest, traffic-clogged roads. Stick to the back streets and sidewalks. Both sides of the Neva River have wide sidewalks (with few pedestrians) that are perfect for pedalling. Car-free Yelagin Island ([p120](#)) is another excellent place for cycling, although bikes are not allowed on weekends and holidays.

Adventurous riders can cycle all the way to Tsarskoe Selo ([p219](#)) by heading due south on Moskovsky pr. It's a nightmare getting down there, but once you are south of the airport you are surrounded by lovely countryside. Look for the statue of Pushkin and appropriate signs that mark the turn-off to Tsarskoe Selo, which is about 25km south of the city. It's a long ride, but you can take your bike on the *elektrichka* (suburban train) to return to St Petersburg.


For bicycle hire, see [p199](#). Note that bikes are prime targets for thieves, so be sure to lock up your bike with a serious bike lock, which is normally provided by the rental shop. Helmets, on the other hand, are not normally provided (nor will you see anyone wearing one).

BOAT




Around St Petersburg

For new perspectives on St Petersburg neighbourhoods, fine views of the Peter & Paul Fortress, or just good old-fashioned transportation, a boat ride along the Neva River and around the canals is one of the city's highlights. See [p246](#) for boat tour companies.

To/From St Petersburg

Between April and September, international passenger ferries leave from the **sea station** (Morskoy vokzal; [Map pp108-9](#); ☎ 322 6052; pl Morskoy Slavy 1;  Primorskaya). It's a long way from the metro, so it's actually easier to take either bus 7 or trolley bus 10 from outside the Hermitage.

At the time of research, however, there were no regular ferry services from St Petersburg to the Baltic or Scandinavian countries. Once a week, **Trans Russia Express** (☎ 703 5410; www.tre.de) operates a combined passenger-cargo vessel between St Petersburg and Lubeck (Germany), offering the experience of 'the real life of seamen'. Other companies have operated services to Tallinn (Estonia), Helsinki (Finland), Kaliningrad (Russia) and other destinations, so it's worth checking with a travel agency such as the **Ferry Centre** (Paromny Tsent; [Map p84](#); ☎ 327 3377; www.paromy.ru in Russian; ul Vosstaniya 19;  Pl Vosstaniya) or **Baltic Tours** ([Map pp68-9](#); ☎ 330 6663; www.baltictours.ru; per Sergeya Tyulenina 4/13;  Nevsky Pr) for an updated schedule. These companies also sell tickets for one- and two-week cruises that depart from St Petersburg and sail around Scandinavia and the Baltics.

From June to August, regular river cruises depart from the **River Passenger Terminal** ([off Map pp146-7](#); ☎ 262 0239, 262 6321; Obukhovskoy Oborony pr 195;  Proletarskaya) and float along the Neva to inland Russia, including cruises to Valaam, Kizhi and Moscow. Prices and schedules vary, so book through a travel agency such as **Solnechniy Parus** ([Map p92](#); ☎ 332 9686; www.solpar.ru in Russian; ul Vosstaniya 55;  Pl Vosstaniya) or **Cruise Russia** ([Map p92](#); ☎ 764 6947; www.cruise-ru.com; Ligovskiy pr 87;  Ligovskiy Pr).

BUS

Around St Petersburg

Bus, tram and trolleybus stops are all marked by roadside signs, many of which also indicate the route number. Most transport runs from 6am to 1am. Buy your tickets (R14) from the attendants on the vehicle.

The following are some of the useful routes around the city:

Nevsky pr, from Dvortsovaya pl to pl Vosstaniya Buses 7 and 22; trolleybuses 1, 5, 7, 10 and 22. Trolleybuses 1 and 22 continue out to pl Alexandra Nevskogo. Trolleybuses 5 and 7 continue to Smolny.


Sadovaya ul, south of Nevsky pr Trams 3, 13 and 14. Tram 3 continues north of Nevsky pr and then crosses the Troitsky most to the Petrograd Side.

From Dvortsovaya pl to Vasilevskiy Island Bus 7 and trolleybus 10.

To the Kirovskiy Islands Tram 34 from Baltic Station (Baltiyskiy vokzal) or Liteyny pr goes along Kamennostrovskiy pr and ends up on Krestovskiy Island. Bus 10 from the corner of Nevsky pr and Bolshaya Morskaya ul will also get you there.

To the Petrograd Side Bus 128 runs from Primorskaya metro station along both Bolshoy prospekts to the Botanical Gardens.

To/From St Petersburg

The city's main bus station is **Avtovokzal No 2** ([Map pp146-7](#); ☎ 766 5777; www.avtovokzal.ru; nab Obvodnogo kanala 36;  Ligovskiy Pr), a recently remodelled building a little out of the city centre. (There is no No 1, in case you were wondering.) Domestic and international services leave from here. Note that buses to Moscow are all en route to somewhere else, which means you will be dropped off in the northern Moscow suburb of Khimki. It is far more convenient to take the train. In any case, it is recommended to buy bus tickets in advance, especially for

BUSES FROM ST PETERSBURG

Destination	Price (R)	Duration (hr)	Frequency (daily)
Helsinki	1700	8	2
Moscow	520	12	1
Novgorod	210	3½	14
Petrozavodsk	320	9	1
Pskov	345	5½	2
Riga	850	11	1
Tallinn	850	7½	7

long-distance journeys. For information on left-luggage facilities, see p239.

A few private companies operate international bus routes to Helsinki and the Baltics:

Ecolines (Map pp146–7; ☎ 314 2550; www.ecolines.ru; Podedzny per 3; 🚏 Pushkinskaya) Daily overnight bus from Vitebsk Station to Riga (R855, 9½ hours). Other buses run to Minsk, Kiev and Odessa.

Eurolines (Map pp146–7; ☎ 438 2839, 441 3757; www.eurolines.ee; Admiral Business Centre, Mitrofanievskoe sh 2; 🕒 9am–9pm; 🚏 Baltiyskaya) Runs five daily buses from Baltic Station to Tallinn (R700–770, seven hours), including one express (R850, 5½ hours). Daily buses go from Baltic Station to Riga (R850, 11 hours) and from Park Inn – Pulkovskaya (p212) to Turku (€45, 11 hours) via Helsinki (€33, eight hours).

Sovavto (off Map pp146–7; ☎ 740 3985; www.sovavto.ru; Park Inn – Pulkovskaya, pl Pobedy 1; 🚏 Moskovskaya) One daily train departs from the Park Inn – Pulkovskaya to Helsinki (eight hours) and Turku (11 hours). Buses are timed to arrivals and departures of the Silja Line and Viking Line ferries from Turku to Stockholm.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Bearing in mind the frequently dire quality of roads, lack of adequate signposting and keen-eyed highway police, driving in Russia may not be for everybody. To legally drive your own or a rented car or motorcycle in Russia, you will need to be 18 years or older and have a full driving licence. Technically, you also need an International Driving Permit with a Russian translation of your licence, or a certified Russian translation of your full licence. Rental agencies are not likely to ask for such documentation, but the traffic police are.

Driving

Russians drive on the right and traffic coming from the right generally (but not always) has the right of way. Speed limits are generally 60km/h in town, but usually there are no signs to say so. Limits are between 80km/h and 110km/h on highways. Children under the age of 12 may not ride in the front seat, and seat belt use is mandatory.

Technically, the maximum legal blood alcohol content is 0.04%, but in practice it is illegal to drive after consuming any alcohol at all. This is a rule that is strictly enforced.

Left turns are illegal except where posted; you'll have to make three rights or a short U-turn (this is safer?). Street signs, except

in the centre, are woefully inadequate and Russian drivers make Italian drivers seem downright courteous! Watch out for drivers overtaking on the inside; this seems to be the national sport. Potholes and jagged crevices are everywhere.

The State Automobile Inspectorate (Gosudarstvennaya Avtomobilnaya Inspektsia; GAI) skulks about on the roadsides, waiting for speeding, headlightless or other miscreant vehicles. Officers are authorised to stop you, issue on-the-spot fines and shoot at your vehicle if you refuse to pull over.

The GAI also hosts the occasional speed trap: the St Petersburg–Vyborg road has this reputation. By law, GAI officers are not allowed to take any money at all; fines should be paid via Sberbank. In reality, Russian drivers normally pay the GAI officer approximately half the official fine, thus saving money and the time consumed by Russian bureaucracy.

St Petersburg has no shortage of petrol stations that sell all grades of petrol. The private company **Neste** (www.neste.ru) currently operates over 40 full-service petrol stations in and around St Petersburg. Prices for petrol at these stations may be slightly higher, but service is faster and major credit cards are accepted. See the *St Petersburg Visitors' Guide Yellow Pages* for listings of parts, service and repair specialists.

BRIDGE TIMETABLE

From May until November all major bridges rise at the following times nightly to allow ships to pass through, meaning you cannot cross the river during these times. Call ☎ 326 9696 for more information. All times are am.

Bridge	Up	Down	Up	Down
Alexandra Nevskogo	2.20	5.10		
Birzhevoy	2.00	4.55		
Bolsheokhtinsky	2.00	5.00		
Dvortsov (Palace)	1.25	4.55		
Finlyandsky	2.20	5.30		
Grenadersky	2.45	3.45	4.20	4.50
Kantemirovsky	2.45	3.45	4.20	4.50
Leytenant Shmidta	1.25	2.45	3.10	5.00
Liteyny	1.40	4.45		
Samponievsky	2.10	2.45	3.20	4.25
Troitsky	1.40	4.45		
Tuchkov	2.00	2.55	3.35	4.55
Volodarsky	2.00	3.45	4.15	5.45

Hire

Expect to pay about €50 per day to rent an economy-class car in St Petersburg. The rental process is fairly straightforward, but driving is another matter. Unless you are going out of town, it is often easier, and around the same price, to hire a car and driver. The major international rental agencies have offices in the centre (listed here), as well as at Pulkovo-2 airport terminal:

Astoria Service (Map p92; ☎ 712 1583, 164 9622; www.astoriaservice.ru; Borovaya ul 11/13, office 65; per hr R270–460; 🚏 Ligovsky Pr)

Avis (Map p92; ☎ 600 1213; www.avis-rentacar.ru; pl Alexandra Nevskogo 2; 🚏 Pl Alexandra Nevskogo)

Europcar (☎ 703 5104; www.europcar.ru; Pulkovo-2 Airport)

Hertz (Map pp68–9; ☎ 326 4505, 324 3242; www.hertz.ru; Malaya Morskaya ul 23; 🚏 Nevsky Pr)

Parking

In the town's centre uniformed parking attendants charge R30 to R50 to watch your car for you. There are guarded parking lots outside many hotels now. Never leave anything of value, including sunglasses, CDs and cigarettes, in a car. Street parking is pretty much legal wherever it seems to be, but it's illegal anywhere on Nevsky pr. Use common sense – avoid parking in dark side streets and isolated areas.

MARSHRUTKA

The *marshrutka* (a Russian diminutive form of *marshrutnoye taxi*) is a crucial form of transport in St Petersburg. These minibuses function like buses, only passengers are free to request a stop anywhere along the route and because of their size they zip through the traffic far faster than normal city buses.

The sheer number of routes is staggering – they connect the city to the suburbs, and far-flung residential neighbourhoods to metro stations, and are often the only public transport serving some parts of the centre (particularly the Mariinsky and Smolny neighbourhoods, where metro stations are almost nonexistent). A *marshrutka* is almost always the fastest and cheapest way to get from one end of Nevsky to the other.

Hold out your arm to flag down the *marshrutka* you want. If in doubt state your destination to the driver to confirm the *marshrutka* is headed there. The fare – payable

to the driver – is displayed inside the bus and varies depending on the route, although it's usually R20 or R25.

When you reach your destination, you need to call out to the driver to stop. The standard phrase is '*ostanavivtes pozhalsta!*' ('stop please!'). Although if you don't dare shout this out, 'stop please' in English is likely to suffice, as long as it's loud enough.

METRO

The St Petersburg metro (www.metro.spb.ru; 🕒 6am–midnight) is a very efficient four-lined system. The network of some 58 stations is most usefully employed for travelling long distances, especially connecting the suburbs to the city centre.

Look for signs with a big blue 'M' signifying the entrance to the metro. The flat fare for a trip is R14; you will have to buy an additional ticket if you are carrying a significant amount of baggage. If you wish to buy a single journey, ask for '*odin proyezd*' and you will be given a *zheton* (token) to put in the machine.

If you are staying more than a day or two, however, it's worth buying a 'smart card', which is good for multiple journeys to be used over the course of a fixed time period. Smart cards are plastic cards that the machine reads when you touch the circular light. The prices of smart cards at the time of research were as follows:

10 trips/7 days R115

20 trips/15 days R220

40 trips/30 days R432

Getting around on the metro can be a bit of an adventure if you do not read Cyrillic. Metro maps in English are available in the tourist publications that are distributed around town, but they are not posted at metro stations. Furthermore, even if you do read Cyrillic, the signs in the stations are difficult to read from the trains.

Listen out for the announcements: just before a departing train's doors close, a recorded voice announces '*Ostorozhno! Dveri zakryvayutsya. Sleduyushchaya stantsia* (name of next station)'. This means 'Caution! The doors are closing. The next station is (name of next station)'. Just before the train stops at the next station, its name is announced.

A confusing aspect of the St Petersburg metro is that where two lines cross and there is a *perekhod* (transfer), the two stations will

CATCHING A CAR

Stand on practically any street and stick out your arm: you can be assured that sooner rather than later a car will stop for you. Usually it's a well-worn little Lada or Zhiguli, but it can be anything – a snazzier car, an off-duty city bus, an army Jeep with driver in camouflage. The drivers may be on their way somewhere, or they may just be trying to supplement their income. These unofficial taxis are the cheapest way to cover distances in the city centre.

So, you've stuck your arm out and a car has stopped. This is where the fun starts. You state your destination, say, *'ulitsa Marata!*' The driver looks away for a second and shouts back *'skolko?'* ('how much?'). You bark back a price. If he's happy with that amount, he'll say, *'sadites!'* ('sit down!'), at which point you get in and drive off. If he's not happy with that price, a period of negotiation might ensue.

If you feel that the driver is trying to rip you off because of your accent, shut the door. If there's more than one person in the car, don't get in. And if the driver seems creepy, let him drive on. There'll be another car coming in a flash. At any time, you are welcome to give a gruff *'nyet!'* and slam the door.

Alternatively, the driver might not ask you for a price and just tell you to get in or not depending on whether he wants to go your way. If that's the case, at the end of the ride you pay him what you think the fare was worth. If your ride is less than 10 minutes long, R100 to R150 is acceptable. For a greater distance reckon on paying R200. The airport from the city centre should be between R400 and R600.

As a bonus, often these drivers are very interesting characters you wouldn't ordinarily meet on your trip, and chatting with them about the potholes, how much better things were under the Soviets, their days in the army, how much you earn, Putin, Bush and Blair can be great fun.

have different names. For example, Nevsky Pr and Gostiny Dvor are joint stations: to all intents and purposes they are one and the same (you don't need to go outside to change), but each has a different name because it's on a different line.

TAXI

One of the most enduring Soviet traditions is that of 'catching a car'. The shadow economy is thriving and numerous people drive the city streets specifically looking to give people paid lifts in their 1970s Zhigulis and Ladas. See the boxed text (above) for more information about the cultural norms associated with this form of transport.

Nearly all official taxis are unmetered, so if you do flag one you'll have to go through a similar process of negotiation to that involved in catching a car, only the driver will want more money for being 'official'.

If you know in advance that you'll need a taxi, it's easiest to order one direct from your hotel. The operator will tell you the price, which will usually be considerably lower than what an official taxi will quote you on the street. Some recommended private taxi companies are listed following (all of these work 24 hours):

Peterburgskoye Taxi (☎ 068, 324 7777; www.taxi068.spb.ru in Russian)

Taxi-4 (☎ 633 3333; www.taxi-4.ru in Russian)

Taxi Blues (☎ 321 8888; www.taxiblues.ru in Russian)

Taxi Million (☎ 700 0000)

TRAIN

St Petersburg is well connected to cities throughout Eastern Europe, the Baltics, Finland and European Russia. Sample fares and schedules are listed in the boxed texts; unless otherwise noted, prices are for a *kupe* (2nd-class in a four-seat couchette) ticket on a *skory* (fast) train. A lux ticket is generally twice as much. Keep in mind that the whole Russian rail network runs on Moscow time. St Petersburg is on Moscow time anyway, but even in other time zones the timetables and station clocks are usually running Moscow time. Also be aware that trains to Warsaw and Berlin traverse Belarus, which requires purchasing a transit visa.

Stations

St Petersburg is served by five train stations:

Baltic Station (Baltiysky vokzal; Map pp146–7; ☎ 768 2859; nab Obvodnogo kanala 120; 🚶 Baltiyskaya) *Elektrichky* (suburban trains) to Gatchina, Oranienbaum and Peterhof.

Finland Station (Finlyandsky vokzal; Map pp122–3; ☎ 768 7687; pl Lenina 6; 🚶 Pl Lenina) Suburban trains to Vyborg and other towns in the north of the Leningradsky Oblast; the main Helsinki trains also depart from here.

Ladoga Station (Ladozhsky vokzal; Map p65; ☎ 768 5304; Zanevsky pr 73; 🚶 Ladozhskaya) For trains to Karelia and Arctic Russia, including the overnight train to Petrozavodsk and the express services to Murmansk and Arkhangelsk. It is located on the Vyborg Side, across the river and east from pl Alexandra Nevskogo.

Moscow Station (Moskovsky vokzal; Map p92; ☎ 768 4597; Nevsky pr 85; 🚶 Pl Vosstaniya) For trains to Moscow and Novgorod.

Vitebsk Station (Vitebsky vokzal; Map pp146–7; ☎ 768 5807; Zagorodny pr 52; 🚶 Pushkinskaya) Trains to Riga, Vilnius, Kaliningrad, Kyiv, Minsk, Berlin, Prague and Budapest. Local trains also leave here throughout the day to Detskoe Selo, the station for Tsarskoe Selo.

LEFT LUGGAGE

You can check your bags at most hotels and train and bus stations. Look for the signs *Камера Хранения* (*kamera khraneniya*; left-luggage counter) or *Автоматические Камеры Хранения* (*avtomaticheskie kamery khraneniya*; left-luggage lockers). Both options are usually secure, but make sure you note the opening and closing hours. To utilise the left-luggage lockers:

- 1 Buy two tokens (*zhetony*) from the attendant.
- 2 Find an empty locker and put your stuff in.
- 3 Decide on a combination of one Russian letter and three numbers and write it down.
- 4 Set the combination on the inside of the locker door.
- 5 Put one token in the slot.
- 6 Close the locker.
- 7 To open the locker, set your combination on the outside of the door. After you've set your combination, put a token in the slot, wait a second or two for the electrical humming sound, and pull open the locker.

Tickets

For long-distance trains, it's best to buy tickets in advance. Tickets can be purchased directly at the train stations, but in some cases it may be more convenient to buy tickets at the **Central Train**

TRAINS TO MOSCOW

Train no & name	Departure (pm)	Fare	Duration (hr)
1 Krasnaya Strela	11.55	R1870	8
3 Express	11.59	R1704	8
5 Nikolaevsky Express	11.30	R1745	8
23 Yunost	1.05	sid R620, kupe R1660	8
53 Grand Express	11.40	lux R3700–4000	8
63 Nevsky Express	11.15	R1370–1660	4½
159 Avrora	4.00	sid R2000–2300, kupe R2430	5½
165 ER200	6.30	R2680–3000	4½

Trains depart from Moscow Station.

Ticket Office (Map pp68–9; ☎ 762 3344; nab kanala Griboedova 24; 🕒 8am–8pm Mon–Sat, 8am–4pm Sun; 🚶 Nevsky Pr) or the **Central Airline Ticket Office** (Map pp68–9; ☎ 315 0072; www.cavs.ru; Nevsky pr 7; 🕒 8am–8pm Mon–Fri, 8am–6pm Sat & Sun; 🚶 Nevsky Pr). It is also possible to buy train tickets from local travel agencies, although they charge a small fee for issuing the ticket. Always take your passport when buying a train ticket. For general information about timetables, contact **Russian Railways** (☎ 055; www.rzd.ru).

Types of Class

On long-distance trains, your ticket will normally give the numbers of your carriage (*vagon*) and seat (*mesto*). For a detailed look

DOMESTIC TRAINS FROM ST PETERSBURG

Destination	Train no	Station	Departure	Fare	Duration (hr)
Arkhangelsk	390A	LS	10.03am Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri	R1403–1965	25
Ekaterinburg	072	LS	5.04pm	R3950	37½
Kazan	103	MS	6.49pm odd days	R2300–2700	26
Murmansk	022	LS	5.20pm	R1700–2072	28½
Novgorod	81	MS	5.18pm	sid R326	3
Petrozavodsk	658	LS	10.13pm	R600–946	8½
Pskov	677	VS	5.20pm	R510	5
Vologda	688	LS	8.40pm	R1200–1500	12½

LS = Ladoga Station (Ladozhsky vokzal)
MS = Moscow Station (Moskovsky vokzal)
VS = Vitebsk Station (Vitebsky vokzal)

INTERNATIONAL TRAINS FROM ST PETERSBURG

Destination	Train no	Station	Departure	Fare	Duration (hr)
Berlin	19	VS	11.40pm Tue, Wed, Thu & Sat*	R5140	35½
Brest	49	VS	3pm	R1662	19
Budapest	49	VS	3pm Tue	R5870	45
Helsinki	33 Repin	FS	7.27am	sid R1960	6
Helsinki	35 Sibelius	FS	3.40pm	sid R1960	6
Kaliningrad	079	VS	6.16pm	R1625-1970	26
Kyiv	053	VS	9.20pm	R1592	24
Minsk	051	VS	7.08pm	R2286	15
Odessa	19	VS	11.40pm except Thu	R1721	35
Prague	49	VS	3pm Wed, Thu	R4170	40
Riga	037	VS	10.08pm	R2573	12½
Vilnius	079	VS	6.16pm	R2070-2400	19½
Warsaw	19	VS	11.40pm Tue, Wed, Thu & Sat*	R2465	27

FS = Finland Station (Finlyandsky vokzal)

VS = Vitebsk Station (Vitebsky vokzal)

*more often in summer

at travelling on Russian trains, see Lonely Planet's *Russia & Belarus* or *Trans-Siberian Railway*.

Compartments in a 1st-class carriage, also called soft class (*myagkiy*) or sleeping car (*spalnyy vagon, SV* or *lux*), have upholstered seats and convert to comfortable sleeping compartments for two people. Not all trains have a 1st-class carriage. Compartments in a 2nd-class carriage, usually called 'compartmentalised' (*kupeynny* or *kupe*), are four-person couchettes. Trains that are not running overnight may also offer 'seated' places (*sid-yashchiy* or *sid*), which are basically seats in an open carriage.

Reserved-place (*platskartnyy*), sometimes also called hard class or 3rd-class, has open bunk accommodation. Groups of hard bunks are partitioned, but not closed off, from each other. This class is low on comfort, privacy and security.

Types of Train

The regular long-distance service is a fast train (*skory poezd*). It stops more often than the typical intercity train in the West and rarely gets up enough speed to merit the 'fast' label. Foreigners booking rail tickets through agencies are usually put on a *skory* train.

Generally, the best *skory* trains (*firmenny*) have cleaner cars, more polite attendants and much more convenient arrival/departure hours; they sometimes also have fewer stops, more 1st-class accommodation or functioning restaurants.

A passenger train (*passazhirskiy poezd*) is an intercity-stopping train, found mostly on routes of 1000km or less. These can take an awfully long time as they clank and lurch from one small town to the next.

When taking trains from St Petersburg, note the difference between long-distance and 'suburban' trains. Long-distance trains run to places at least three or four hours out of the city, with limited stops and a range of accommodation classes. Suburban trains, known as *prigorodnye poezda* or *elektrichky*, run to within just 100km or 200km of the city, stop almost everywhere, and have a single class of hard bench seats. You simply buy your ticket before the train leaves, and there's no capacity limit – so you may have to stand part of the way.

Most stations have a separate ticket hall for suburban trains, usually called the Prigorodny Zal and often tucked away at the side or back of the station building. Suburban trains are usually listed on separate timetables, and may depart from a separate group of platforms.

DIRECTORY

BUSINESS HOURS

The consumer culture is developing rapidly in Russia, and one place it is evident is hours of operation. Most shops are open daily, often from 10am to 8pm. Smaller shops might close on Sunday. Department stores and food shops are also usually open every day from 8am to 8pm. These days, many larger food shops stay open *kruglosutochno* (24 hours).

Restaurants typically open from noon to midnight, although – again – it is not unusual for restaurants to stay open 24 hours a day.

That said, while many businesses claim to open *kruglosutochno*, beware the highly contradictory *tekhnicheskyy pereryv* (technical break). So a '24-hour' exchange office might shut for a technical break for anywhere from 15 minutes to four hours.

Museum hours vary widely, as do their weekly days off. Most museums shut entrance doors 30 minutes or an hour before closing time. Many close for a *sanitarnyy den* (literally 'sanitary day'), a day of cleaning during the last week of every month.

Government offices open from 9am or 10am to 5pm or 6pm weekdays. Hours of banks and other services vary widely. Large branches in busy commercial areas are usually open from 9am to 5pm weekdays, with shorter hours on Saturdays. Smaller branches have shorter hours and often close for a one-hour *pereryv* (break) in the middle of the day.

Throughout this book, opening hours are cited only when they deviate from the following 'standard' opening hours:

Banks ☒ 9am–5pm Mon–Fri, some also open Sat

Businesses ☒ 9am–6pm Mon–Fri, some also open 9am–6pm Sat

Restaurants ☒ noon–midnight

Shops & supermarkets ☒ 10am–8pm

CHILDREN

You will know that Russia has made its transition to capitalism when you see the supermarkets well stocked with nappies, formulas and every other product your children might need.

St Petersburg does not present any particular hazards to your kids, save the ornery

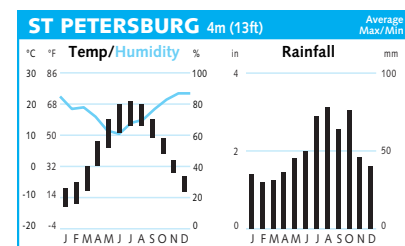
babushkas. (Although even they seem to have a soft spot for children.) Filled with museums, churches and theatres, St Pete may not seem like the most appealing destination, but it is surprisingly well equipped for youngsters. See p117 for a list of kid-friendly sights. In addition to these suggestions, circuses and puppet theatres are two carry-overs from the Soviet period that continue to thrive in St Petersburg (see p192). The concept of babysitting services has not yet developed in St Petersburg, although some upscale hotels offer this service. Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children* contains useful advice on how to cope with kids on the road and what to bring to make things go more smoothly.

CLIMATE

St Petersburg's climate is maritime and much milder than its northern latitude would suggest. January temperatures average -8°C ; a really cold day will get down to -15°C . It's a windy city, especially in some areas exposed to the Gulf of Finland.

Summer is cool and takes a while to get going: snow in late April is not uncommon as temperatures suddenly drop when the melting ice blocks from Lake Ladoga come floating through the city's main waterways. Warm weather doesn't really start until June to August, when temperatures usually surpass 20°C . On the rare hot days of highs up to 30°C , residents flee to the beaches on the north bank of the Gulf of Finland or to their *dachas* (country cottages) in cool but mosquito-infested forests.

The city's northern latitude means long summer days and long winter nights. During White Nights, around the time of the summer solstice, night is reduced to a brief dimming of the lights



about 1am, only to turn to dawn a couple of hours later. In winter the city seems to be in constant dusk. See p16 for more information.

COURSES

A bonus of joining one of these courses is that the hosting organisation usually provides housing (or at least assistance finding it) and issues an invitation for a student visa (allowing you to pay Russian prices for museum admission and theatre tickets).

Language

Inspire your inner Russian-speaker:

Essex Russia Services (☎ in UK 01366-501445; www.russianlanguage.org.uk) Arranges for private lessons through the Benedict School or group classes at Herzen State Pedagogical University.

Extra Class Language Centre (☎ 315 2720; www.learnrussian.ru) Individual and group courses include entertainment activities as well as weekly lectures on Russian culture and history. Accommodation is with a local Russian family.

Herzen State Pedagogical University (☎ 314 7859; www.herzen.spb.ru) Caters mostly to students, offering semester-long courses and dormitory lodging.

Liden & Denz (☎ 334 0788; www.lidenz.ru) More expensive courses service the business and diplomatic community with less-intensive evening courses.

Writing

Inspire your inner Dostoevsky. The **Summer Literary Seminar** (☎ in USA 888-882 0949; www.sumlitsem.org) has two- and four-week courses hosted by Herzen University. Award-winning faculty from all over the world offer seminars in fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, screenwriting, travel writing, arts criticism and translation.

CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

Customs controls in Russia are relatively relaxed these days. Searches beyond the perfunctory are quite rare. Apart from the usual restrictions, you are limited by the amount of cash you can bring in.

Your flight attendants will likely give you a *deklaratsiya* (customs declaration). Here you should list any currency you are carrying, as well as valuables such as computers and cameras. To avoid hassle upon departure, it's best to get this form stamped and to hang on to it. (Sometimes there are no customs officials in sight, in which case it's obviously not possible.)

If you are carrying more than US\$3000 – or valuables worth that much – you must declare it and proceed through the red channel.

Otherwise, on entering Russia, you can pick up your luggage and go through the green channel, meaning 'nothing to declare'.

If you intend to take home anything vaguely 'arty' (manuscripts, instruments, coins, jewellery) it must be assessed by the **Cultural Security Department** (Map pp68–9; ☎ 311 5196; Malaya Morskaya ul 17; ☎ 11am–5pm Mon–Fri; ☑ Nevsky Pr). Take along your passport, a sales receipt and the item in question. The 'experts' will issue a receipt for tax paid and a certificate stating that the item is not an antique. It is illegal to export anything over 100 years old.

DISCOUNT CARDS

There are no discount cards currently operating on a citywide basis. Student cards have a high rate of hit and miss. Many kindly old ladies at museums will give you the benefit of the doubt if you claim to be a student and look relatively young, others will look at your ISIC card as if it were a document from Mars and throw it back at you with a demand for the full price. The Hermitage is the blissful exception where anyone with a student card from any country gets in for free. Senior citizens (usually anyone over the age of 60) are also eligible for discounts.

ELECTRICITY

St Petersburg, like the whole of Russia and most of Europe, uses the Continental plug with two round pins. Electricity is 220 volts, 50Hz AC and supply is very reliable. American and Japanese appliances need a 220V to 110V/100V converter. For more information, see www.kropla.com.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

If your country is not listed below, contact your embassy in Moscow in an emergency.

Australia (Map pp68–9; ☎ /fax 325 7333; www.australianembassy.ru; Italiyanskaya ul 1; ☑ Nevsky Pr)

Austria (Map p84; ☎ 275 0502; fax 275 1170; Furshtatskaya ul 43; ☑ Chernyshevskaya)

Belarus (Map p84; ☎ 274 7212; Bonch-Bruevicha ul 3A; ☑ Chernyshevskaya)

China (Map p102; ☎ 714 7670; http://stpetersburg.chineseconsulate.org; nab kanala Griboedova 134; ☑ Nevsky Pr)

Denmark (Map pp114–15; ☎ 703 3900; www.gskst.petersborg.um.dk; Bolshaya al 13, Kamenny Island; ☑ Chyornaya Rechka)

Estonia (Map pp114–15; ☎ 702 0920; www.peterburg.estemb.ru; Bolshaya Monetnaya ul 14; ☑ Gorkovskaya)

Finland (Map p84; ☎ 331 7600; www.finland.org.ru; Preobrazhenskaya pl 4; ☑ Chernyshevskaya)

France (Map pp68–9; ☎ 332 2270; www.francespb.org; nab reki Moyki 15; ☑ Nevsky Pr)

Germany (Map p84; ☎ 327 2400; www.sankt-petersburg.diplo.de; Furshtatskaya ul 39; ☑ Chernyshevskaya)

Latvia (Map pp108–9; ☎ 327 6054; www.am.gov.lv/stpetersburg; 10-ya i 11-ya liniya; ☑ Vasileostrovskaya)

Lithuania (Map p84; ☎ 327 3167; fax 327 2615; ul Ryleeva 37; ☑ Chernyshevskaya)

The Netherlands (Map pp68–9; ☎ 334 0200; www.nlcg.spb.ru; nab reki Moyki 11; ☑ Nevsky Pr)

UK (Map p84; ☎ 320 3200; www.britemb.msk.ru; pl Proletarskoy Diktatory 5; ☑ Chernyshevskaya)

Ukraine (Map p84; ☎ 271 2123; Bonch-Bruevicha ul 1; ☑ Chernyshevskaya)

USA (Map p84; ☎ 331 2600; http://stpetersburg.usconsulate.gov; Furshtatskaya ul 15; ☑ Chernyshevskaya)

EMERGENCY

Ambulance (☎ 03)

Fire department (☎ 01)

Police (☎ 02)

Police hotline for foreigners (☎ 702 2177)

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

St Petersburg's proximity to Europe means that the city is not quite as conservative as other parts of Russia; the active gay and les-

bian scene reflects this attitude. The *St Petersburg Times* features articles about gay and lesbian issues, as well as listings of gay and lesbian clubs. The newest publication of note is the glossy lesbian magazine *Pinx*, which now accompanies its gay counterpart *Queer* (Квир). Published in Moscow, both offer up articles and artwork aimed at, well, queers.

Most recently, gay activists announced plans for the city's first Pride parade in 2007 and a LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) film festival to be held at Dom Kino in 2008. At the time of research, however, neither event was confirmed. Nonetheless, there are a few clubs aimed specifically at gay and lesbian patrons (see p181). Some other useful resources:

www.discvergaypetersburg.ru This gay tour agency promises, among other things, tours of the homoerotic art of the Hermitage.

www.gay.ru/english The English version of this site includes club listings and tour guides, plus information on gay history and culture in Russia.

www.kriliya.sp.ru Kriliya (Wings) is Russia's oldest officially registered gay and lesbian group, a human rights organisation aimed at uniting the community by hosting roundtable discussions and other activities.

www.lesbi.ru An active site for lesbian issues; Russian only.

www.xs.gay.ru Gay and lesbian news from St Pete, Moscow and around Russia. The links to the English version of the site do not actually work, so it's only useful if you read Russian.

HEALTH

St Petersburg does not pose any particular threats to your health, although you should be aware of the risks associated with drinking the tap water (see the boxed text, below). Also be aware that the city was built on a swamp,

TO DRINK OR NOT TO DRINK

Reports about the harmful effects of drinking tap water in St Petersburg have been widely publicised and greatly exaggerated. The city's water supplier, Vodokanal, insists that the water is safe to drink, as do many local residents. Nonetheless, the pipes are antiquated, so the water may contain some metal pollutants. Furthermore, traces of *Giardia lamblia* have been found on a very small scale. GI is a nasty parasite that causes unpleasant stomach cramps, nausea, bloated stomach, diarrhoea and frequent gas. There is no preventative drug, and it is worth taking precautions against contracting it.

To be absolutely safe, only drink water that has been boiled for 10 minutes or filtered through an antimicrobial water filter (PUR brand makes a good portable one). It's probably safe to accept tea or coffee at someone's house, and most restaurants and hotels likely have filtration systems. Bathing, showering and shaving should cause no problems at all.

If you develop diarrhoea, be sure to drink plenty of fluids, preferably including an oral rehydration solution. Imodium is to be taken only in an emergency; otherwise it's best to let the diarrhoea run its course and eliminate the parasite from the body. Metronidazole (brand name Flagyl) or Tinidazole (known as Fasign) are the recommended treatments for *Giardia lamblia*.

which means the mosquitoes are nasty in the summer months. Be sure to bring plenty of insect repellent. Also advised: aspirin, as you may need something to nurse your hangovers.

HOLIDAYS

During the major holiday periods – the first week in January (between New Year's Day and Orthodox Christmas) and the first week or two of May (around May Day and Victory Day) – St Petersburg empties out as many residents retreat from the city for much-needed vacations. Transport is often difficult to book around these periods, but accommodation is usually not a problem. Although many residents leave, the city is a festive place over New Year's and during the May holidays, usually hosting parades, concerts and other events in honour of the holidays. The downside is that many museums and other institutions have shortened hours or are closed altogether during these holiday periods.

By contrast, the Stars of White Nights Festival was designed with tourists in mind: theatres, museums and other institutions often host special events between late May and early July to appeal to the massive influx of visitors during this period. If you are visiting St Petersburg at this time, book your travel and accommodation in advance and expect to pay top rates. In August there are still plenty of tourists around, but residents tend to retreat from the city to recover. Many theatres close for the month of August, as do some of the smaller museums and galleries.

See p16 for an extensive list of special events in the city.

Public Holidays

New Year's Day 1 January

Russian Orthodox Christmas Day 7 January

Defenders of the Motherland Day 23 February

International Women's Day 8 March

Easter Monday April/May (varies)

International Labour Day/Spring Festival 1 & 2 May

Victory Day 9 May

Russian Independence Day 12 June

Day of Reconciliation and Accord (the rebranded Revolution Day) 7 November

Constitution Day 12 December

INTERNET ACCESS

If you are travelling without a computer, here are some good old-fashioned internet cafés:

abooks internet centre (Map pp108–9; ☎ 974 3919; 6-ya i 7-ya liniya 27; per hr R100; ☎ 9am–10pm; 📍 Vasileostrovskaya)

Café Max (Map p92; ☎ 273 6655; www.cafemax.ru; Nevsky pr 90/92; per hr R40–70; ☎ 24hr; 📍 Mayakovskaya) A big fancy place with 150 computers, a game zone and a comfy café and beer bar.

FM Club (Map p92; ☎ 764 3674; ul Dostoevskogo 6a; per hr R60; ☎ 24hr; 📍 Vladimirskaia)

Kofe In (Map p92; ☎ 717 5793; Nevsky pr 148; per hr R60; ☎ 24hr; 📍 Pl Vosstaniya)

Mirage Univer-City (Map pp114–15; ☎ 498 0758; www.mirage.ru; Bolshoy pr 35; per hr R120; ☎ 8am–2am; 📍 Chkalovskaya)

Northwest Telecom (Severo-Zapadny Telekom; Map pp68–9; ☎ 069; cnr Bolshaya Morskaya ul & Gorokhovaya ul; per hr R60; ☎ 10am–10pm; 📍 Nevsky Pr)

Players' Internet Club (Map p97; cnr Gorokhovaya & Kazanskaya ul; per hr R60; ☎ 24hr; 📍 Sadovaya/Sennaya Pl)

Quo Vadis (Map p92; ☎ 333 0708; www.quovadis.ru; Nevsky pr 76; per hr R100; ☎ 24hr; 📍 Mayakovskaya) Enter from Liteyny pr.

Vosstaniya-1 (Map p92; ☎ 579 5770; www.v1.spb.ru; pl Vosstaniya 1; per hr R120; ☎ 10am–9pm Mon–Sat, 10am–8pm Sun; 📍 Pl Vosstaniya)

WI-FI ACCESS

Besides the plethora of internet cafés, wireless access is also becoming more common around St Petersburg. There is wi-fi access at most hotels and mini-hotels, as well as at a handful of cafés and pubs around the city. Unfortunately, it is usually not free; you might pay a daily access rate at a hotel, while cafés will usually sell you an access card for about R100 for an hour. You can log in at the following venues:

- Che (p170)
- The Idiot (p172)
- Red Club (p185)
- Stolle (p173)
- Zerno Istiny (p181)
- Zoom Café (p166)

For a list of places around town that offer free wireless access, see <http://wifi.yandex.ru>.

LEGAL MATTERS

It's not unusual to see *militionsers* (police officers) randomly stopping people on the street to check their documents. In recent years, this checking tends to focus on anyone remotely Caucasian-looking and other people with darkish skin, but the police have the right to stop anyone. Unfortunately, readers have complained about police pocketing their passports and demanding bribes. The best way to avoid such unpleasantness is to carry a photocopy of your passport, visa and registration, and present that when a police officer demands to see your *dokumenty*. A photocopy is sufficient for such inquiries, despite what the officer may argue. Threatening to phone your consulate usually clears up any such misunderstandings. For legal purposes, Russians come of age at 18, when they are legally allowed to drink, drive and vote (but not simultaneously). Both heterosexual and homosexual sex is legal at 16.

MAPS

Maps in English and Cyrillic are widely available in bookstores – both overseas and in St Petersburg itself. Dom Knigi (p151) has an excellent selection, with maps of transport routes – including *marshrutka* (minibus) routes – and the excellent *Atlas Sankt Peterburg s kazhdym domom*, an invaluable A4 booklet covering the whole city and marking the location of every street number.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Emergency medical care is available at hospitals around town, but many international visitors might be put off by the sad state of public hospitals. The private clinics listed below have facilities that meet international standards. Services are pricey, but they generally accept major international insurance policies, including direct billing. In any case, it is worth checking with your health insurance provider to confirm that you are covered in Russia – and investing in travel insurance if you are not.

Clinics

In case of more serious health issues:

American Medical Clinic (Map p102; ☎ 740 2090; www.amclinic.ru; nab reki Moyki 78; 📍 Sadovaya)

Euromed (Map p84; ☎ 327 0301; www.euromed.ru; Suvorovskiy pr 60; 📍 Chernyshevskaya)

Medem International Clinic & Hospital (Map p92; ☎ 336 3333; www.medem.ru; ul Marata 6; 📍 Mayakovskaya)

MedPalace (Map p84; ☎ 380 7979; www.medpalace.ru; ul Chaykovskogo 6; 📍 Chernyshevskaya)

Pharmacies

Look for the sign аптека (*apteka*) or the usual green cross to find a pharmacy. **36.6 Pharmacy** (<http://spb.366.ru>) is a chain of 24-hour pharmacies with many branches around the city:

Historic Heart (Map pp68–9; Gorokhovaya ul 16; 📍 Sadovaya)

Smolny (Map p84; Liteyny pr 41; 📍 Mayakovskaya)

Vosstaniya (Map p92; Zagorodny pr 6/8; 📍 Vladimirskaia)

MONEY

Russian currency is the rouble, written as рубль or abbreviated as руб. There are 100 kopecks (копеек or коп) in the rouble, and these come in small coins that are worth one, 10 and 50 kopecks. Roubles are issued in coins in amounts of one, two and five roubles. Banknotes come in values of 10, 50, 100, 500 and 1000 roubles. Small stores, kiosks and many other vendors have difficulty changing large notes, so save those scrappy little ones.

The rouble has been relatively stable since it was revalued in 1998. For details of costs in St Petersburg, see p19. For exchange rates, see the inside front cover.

ATMs


ATMs linked to international networks such as AmEx, Cirrus, Eurocard, MasterCard and Visa are now common throughout St Petersburg. Look for the sign Банкомат (*bankomat*). Using a credit or debit card, you can always obtain roubles. The following outlets also give the option to withdraw US dollars or euros:

Alfabank (Map pp68–9; ☎ 329 8050; www.alfabank.ru; nab kanala Griboedova 6/2; 📍 Nevsky Pr)

Citibank Nevsky (Map p92; Nevsky pr 45/2; 📍 Mayakovskaya)

Citibank Petrograd Side (Map pp114–15; Bolshoy pr 18; 📍 Sportivnaya)

Citibank Sennaya (Map p97; Moskovskiy pr 7; 📍 Sadovaya)

Citibank Smolny (Map p84; pr Chernyshevskogo 18;  Chernyshevskaya)

Citibank Vasilevsky Island (Map pp108–9; Sredny pr 27;  Vasileostrovskaya)

Changing Money

US dollars and euros are easy to change around St Petersburg, but other currencies will undoubtedly cause more hassle than they are worth. Whatever currency you bring should be in pristine condition. Banks and exchanges do not accept old, tatty bills with rips or tears. For US dollars make certain they are of the new design, which has the large offset portrait. When you visit the exchange office, be prepared to show your passport.

Credit Cards

Credit cards, especially Visa and MasterCard, are becoming more widely accepted beyond upmarket hotels, restaurants and stores. You can also use your credit card to get a cash advance at most major banks in St Petersburg.

Travellers Cheques

Travellers cheques are still relatively difficult to use in St Petersburg. The process can be lengthy, involving trips to numerous cashiers in the bank, each responsible for a different part of the transaction. Expect to pay 1% to 2% commission. Not all travellers cheques are treated as equal by Russian establishments willing to handle them. You'll have little or no luck with any brands other than AmEx, Thomas Cook and Visa.

NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES

All of the following English-language publications can be found at hotels, restaurants and cafés around town. For information on Russian-language media, see p58.

In Your Pocket (www.inyourpocket.com) This free monthly handout targets tourists and expats with club and restaurant listings, as well as more timely information.

St Petersburg Times (www.sptimes.ru) The long-running biweekly sister paper to the daily *Moscow Times* is a great resource for visitors. The Friday edition has theatre, club, cinema and concert listings, as well as Sergei Chernov's column, 'Chernov's Choice', which sets the weekend agenda.


Visitor's Guide Yellow Pages (www.yell.ru) An invaluable bilingual phone book.

ORGANISED TOURS

We would never recommend seeing St Petersburg from a seat on a bus, but the following options for organised tours offer interesting alternatives for seeing the city – by bike or by boat; from the air or from the water; or by the power of your own two feet.


Bike Tours




St Petersburg is relatively compact, which makes cycling an ideal way to see the sights. For more information about cycling in St Petersburg, see p234 and p199.

A joint project of Peter's Walking Tours (opposite) and Skat Prokat (p199), the **Sunday Morning Bike Tour** (Map p92; ☎ 717 6838; www.biketour.spb.ru; Skat Prokat, Goncharnaya ul 7; per person R800; ☞ 10.30am Sun May-Sep;  Pl Vosstaniya) is a great introduction to St Petersburg's various neighbourhoods and sights, from the banks of the Neva to the back alleys and courtyards of the city. The price of the tour includes bike rental for 24 hours.

Boat Tours


The most romantic way to see St Petersburg is from the water. Tour boats ply the canals and rivers all summer long. Indeed, it's hard to walk down Nevsky pr without being assaulted by megaphoned voices recruiting passengers. It's possible to chat up the owners of the smaller boats to arrange private excursions (particularly recommended at night). Expect to pay from R1500 to R2000 to hire the boat for a group of up to six people. Otherwise, there is little to differentiate between the boats, with the following exceptions.

Anglotourism (Map p92; ☎ 7-921-989 4722; anglotourismo@yahoo.com; nab reki Fontanki 64, most Lomonosova; adult R400-450, student R300-350; ☞ noon, 8.30pm & 12.30am May-Sep;  Dostoevskaya) This is the only regularly scheduled boat tour with English-speaking guides. (Surprisingly, it is not significantly more expensive than the Russian-speaking trips.) The daytime and evening trips tour the canals, while the more expensive night excursion goes out to the Neva to watch the raising of the drawbridges.

Driver (Map pp68–9; ☎ 716 5886; www.driver-river.ru; tours R300-350) Driver's boats stop at three different docks: hop on board in front of the Peter & Paul Fortress (Map pp114–15; Petrogradskaya nab 32;  Gorkov-skaya), in front of Kunstkamera (Map pp108–9; Universitetskaya nab 3;  Vasileostrovskaya) or in front of the Admiralty (Map pp68–9; Admiralteyskaya nab 2;  Nevsky Pr).

Three different routes circle around the Neva, while the longest one (1½ hours) loops around the Fontanka and the Griboedov Canal.

Helicopter Tours

See St Petersburg from the air. On weekends and holidays **Baltic Airlines** (Map pp68–9; ☎ 704 1676; www.balticairlines.ru; Nevsky pr 7/9; helicopter R1000, tandem parachute US\$200;  Nevsky Pr) offers copter flights over the Neva, taking a 15-minute orbit around the Admiralty and Smolny Cathedral. Baltic flies to Peterhof (p216) for the same price. Thrill-seekers can arrange a tandem parachute jump with the same company.

Walking Tours

Both of the following companies can also arrange guided visits (in English) to Kresty Prison (p122). For a series of self-guided walking tours around St Petersburg's neighbourhoods, see the Neighbourhoods chapter.

Peter's Walking Tours (www.peterswalk.com; per person R430; ☞ 10.30am) Peter Kozrev is famous for his 'Original Walking Tour'. With no fixed itinerary, Peter (or one of the other fantastic English-speaking guides) is open to suggestions regarding route or theme. As a result, no two tours are the same. The four-hour walk departs daily from St Petersburg International Hostel (p208). Peter also organises a Friday-night pub crawl and a Saturday-morning excursion about the Siege of Leningrad. The schedule is posted on the website: no reservations required.


VB Excursions (☎ 928 0739; www.vb-excursions.com; per person €14-22) This new outfit offers specialised walking tours on subjects ranging from Revolutionary St Petersburg to *Crime and Punishment*. English-speaking tour guides promise to 'walk at your pace' and 'see things which regular tourists do not see'.

PHOTOGRAPHY

St Petersburg is nothing if not photogenic. The only possible complaint is that nearly all museums, churches and other sights will charge you extra to photograph the interior – usually R100 for photography and R300 for video. Fortunately, you can't put a price on the canals crisscrossed by bridges and golden domes rising above the river. Beware of one Soviet holdover: it's still forbidden to take photographs inside the metro, and those nasty babushkas are sure not going to let you get away with it! For more strategies on taking pictures refer to Lonely Planet's *Travel Photography*.

It's easy to purchase photographic equipment throughout the city. To transfer digital

images onto CD, stop by one of the internet cafés (see p244).

If you are feeling nostalgic for old times, visit the **Second-hand Shop** (Map pp68–9; ☎ 571 2816; Nevsky pr 54; ☞ 10am-9pm;  Gostiny Dvor), which carries an incredible selection of old-school Soviet-made cameras.

POST

Although service has improved dramatically in recent years, the usual warnings about delays and disappearances of incoming and outgoing mail apply to St Petersburg. Air-mail letters take two to three weeks to the UK, and three to four weeks to the USA or Australasia.

To send parcels home, head to the elegant **main post office** (Map p102; ☎ 312 7460; Pochtamskaya ul 9;  Sennaya Pl). Smaller post offices may refuse to send parcels internationally; most importantly, your package is more likely to reach its destination if you send it from the main post office. Bring your item unwrapped: it will be wrapped and sealed with wax for you. You must provide an address in St Petersburg.

RADIO

Most of St Petersburg's popular stations play a mix of trashy Euro pop and its even more over-the-top Russian variant. Still, their play-lists can be unexpectedly eclectic. Some of the more popular FM stations include Eldorado (101.4 MHz), Radio Modern (104 MHz), the grating Europa Plus (100.5 MHz) and the more diversified Radio Nostalgie (105.3 MHz). More Russian content can be heard on Kanal Melodia (91.1 MHz), Russky Shanson (100.9 MHz) and Russkoe Radio (104.4 MHz). Two stations focus on St Petersburg-related news, music and features: Eko Peterburga (91.5 MHz) and Severnaya Stolitsa (105.9 MHz).

SAFETY

You can disregard the horror stories you hear about the mafia in New Russia. While there has been a problem with crime and corruption since the early 1990s, the criminal elements have no interest in tourists.

A far bigger threat is petty theft, especially the notorious pickpocketing in the city centre. Take care among the crowds on Nevsky pr and in the metro: crowded quarters make for rich pickings for the criminally inclined. Be cautious about taking taxis late at night, especially near bars and clubs that are in isolated areas.

Never get into a car that already has two or more people in it.

One far darker problem is the rise of the skinhead and neo-Nazi movement in St Petersburg. You are unlikely to encounter these thugs, but you will undoubtedly read about some disgusting acts of violence that have been committed against Asian, Caucasian and other darker-skinned or foreign-looking residents of the city.

TELEPHONE

Russia's international code is ☎ 7. The international access code from landline phones in Russia is ☎ 8 followed by 10 after the second tone, then the country code and number. From mobile phones, however, just dial +[country code] to place an international call.

Mobile Phones

The mobile phone revolution in St Petersburg that has taken place in the past few years means that nearly everyone in the city has a phone. There are several large networks, most of which operate on the pay-as-you-go system.

Mobile phone numbers start with the country code (☎ 7), plus three digits that change according to the service provider (often ☎ 921), followed by a seven-digit number. To call a mobile phone from a landline, the line must be enabled to make paid calls (all local numbers are free from a landline anywhere in Russia). To find out if this is the case, dial ☎ 8, and then if you hear a second tone you can dial the mobile number in full. If you hear nothing, hang up – you can't call anywhere but local landlines from here.

Main mobile providers include Beeline GSM, Megafon, MTS-GSM and Skylink. You can buy a local SIM card at any mobile phone shop, which you can slot into your home handset during your stay. SIM cards cost as little as €15, after which you only pay to make (and to a lesser extent, to receive) calls, although prices are very low.

Phonecards & Call Centres

At kiosks and in metro stations you can buy a *taksfon karta* (phonecard) to make local, national and international calls from phone booths around the city. Cards are sold in units of 25, 50 or 100. The only trick is to remember to press the 'Talk' button (marked by a speaker) when the other party answers the phone.

Better value for international calls is using a call centre, where you give the clerk the number you want to call, pay a deposit and then go to the booth you are assigned to make the call. Afterwards you either pay the difference or collect your change. There are large numbers of call centres around the city – look for the sign *Mezhdunarodny Telefon*. The most central is the state-run **Telephone Centre** (Map p92; Nevsky pr 88; ☎ Mayakovskaya).

TIME

St Petersburg is GMT +3 hours, the same as Moscow time. Therefore, when it is midday in St Petersburg, it is 10am in Berlin, 9am in London and 4am in New York. Russia employs daylight savings along with much of the rest of the world.

TOILETS

Around nearly all metro stations and tourist attractions there's at least one disgusting blue Portakabin-type toilet manned by an attendant who will charge around R10 for the honour. There are also pay toilets in all mainline train stations and free ones in museums. As a general rule, it's far better to stop for a drink in a café or duck into a fancy hotel and use their cleaner facilities.

TOURIST INFORMATION

You may encounter friendly young people along Nevsky pr wearing T-shirts that ask 'Can I help?' These English-speaking youth are employed by the city and they are usually very helpful in answering questions and pointing you in the right direction. The half-hearted **City Tourist Information Centre** (☎ 310 8262; www.saintpetersburgvisit.ru) has two outlets, both with English-speaking staff and a variety of leaflets:

Dvortsovaya pl (Map pp68–9; Dvortsovaya pl; ☎ 10am–7pm Mon–Sat, 10am–4pm Sun; ☎ Nevsky Pr)

Sadovaya ul (Map pp68–9; Sadovaya ul 14; ☎ 10am–7pm Mon–Sat; ☎ Gostiny Dvor)

TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

Inaccessible transport, lack of ramps and lifts, and no centralised policy for people with physical limitations make Russia a challenging destination for wheelchair-bound visitors.

More mobile travellers will have a relatively easier time, but keep in mind that there are obstacles along the way. Toilets are frequently accessed from stairs in restaurants and museums; distances are great; public transport is extremely crowded; and many footpaths are in a poor condition and hazardous even for the mobile.

This situation is changing (albeit very slowly), as buildings undergo renovations and become more accessible. Most upscale hotels (especially Western chains) offer accessible rooms, and the Hermitage is also now fully accessible.

VISAS

All foreigners visiting Russia need visas. The visa lists entry/exit dates, your passport number, any children travelling with you, and visa type. The primary types of visas are tourist visas (for one entry, 30-day stay) or business visas (one-entry, two-entry or multi-entry, for 30- to 90-day stays). To obtain a student visa you must be enrolled in a Russian educational institute. You can also get a 'private' visa if you have a personal friend who is inviting you to Russia, but be aware that he or she will undergo some serious hassle to get you an invitation. For all visas you'll need the following:

1 A passport valid for at least a month beyond your return date.

2 Two passport-size (4cm by 4.5cm), full-face photos, not more than one year old.

3 A completed application form, including entry/exit dates (note that American citizens must fill out a special application form).

4 The handling fee, usually in the form of a money order. The handling fee varies depending on your citizenship: US citizens pay the most in retaliation for high fees for American visas.

5 A visa-support letter or letter of invitation issued by a tourist operator or some other Russian organisation.

Except for a private visa, you will also need a standard tourist confirmation or an invitation from a tourist company that is registered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Your hotel may be able to provide this service. Some other companies offering visa support include the following:

City Realty (Map pp68–9; ☎ 570 6342; www.cityrealty.ru; Muchnoy per 2; tourist visas from US\$25; ☎ Nevsky Pr) Registration is free if you stay in one of City

Realty's rental units; otherwise, it's an additional €30. If you are short of time, the 'full visa service' is efficient and cost-effective.

Infinity (Map pp68–9; ☎ 494 5085; www.infinity.ru; Anglettere Hotel, Bolshaya Morskaya ul 39; ☎ Nevsky Pr) The St Petersburg branch of this efficient travel agency can help with visas, invites and registration. Staff speak English and can also book you train and air tickets.

Ost-West Kontaktservice (Map p92; ☎ 327 3416; www.ostwest.com; Nevsky pr 105; ☎ Pl Vosstaniya) A reliable outfit charging €30 to register visas for those not staying in hotels.

Application

Apply as soon as you have all the documents you need (but not more than two months ahead). Processing time ranges from 24 hours to two weeks, depending on how much you are willing to pay. Transit visas normally take seven working days, but may take as little as a few hours at the Russian embassy in Beijing.

It's possible to apply at your local Russian consulate by dropping off all the necessary documents with the appropriate payment or by mailing it all (along with a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope for the return). When you receive the visa, check it carefully – especially the expiry, entry and exit dates and any restrictions on entry or exit points.

Registration

When you arrive you will receive an immigration card, which you must fill out and keep with your passport for the duration of your stay. When you check in at a hotel, you surrender your passport and visa so the hotel can register you with OVI (office of visas and registrations). You'll get your documents back the next morning, if not the same day. Alternatively, the tourist agency that issued your visa is responsible for your registration. All Russian visas must be registered within three business days of your arrival in town. The only exception is if you stay for less than three days. Sometimes you may have to pay a registration fee, especially if the registration is provided by an agency, not a hotel.

WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Although sexual harassment on the streets is rare, it is common in the workplace, in the home and in personal relations. Foreign women are likely to receive some

attention, mostly in the form of genuine, friendly interest. An interested stranger may approach you out of the blue and ask: 'Mozhno poznamomitsa?' (May we become acquainted?). The easiest answer is a gentle, but firm, 'Nyet' (No). The conversation usually goes no further, although drunken men may be more persistent. The most efficient way to lose an unwelcome suitor is to enter an upmarket hotel or restaurant, where ample security will come to your aid. Women should certainly avoid taking private taxis alone at night.

Russian women dress up and wear lots of make-up on nights out. If you are wearing casual gear, you might feel uncomfortable in a restaurant, club or theatre.

WORK

Working in Russia can be an exciting, rewarding, enlightening, frustrating, insanity-inducing experience. There are still loads of Westerners employed by multinational and local companies. If you are interested in working in Russia, Jonathan Packer's *Live and Work in Russia and Eastern Europe* is a good reference. English-language publications such as the *St Petersburg Times* also have job listings. These groups can provide a wealth of information and important contacts for doing business in St Petersburg:

American Chamber of Commerce (☎ 326 4525; www.amcham.ru/spb)

Russian-British Chamber of Commerce (☎ 333 0718; www.rbcc.co.uk)

LANGUAGE

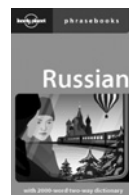
In prerevolutionary Russia, France was considered the epitome of high culture, an estimation reflected in cuisine, music and language. Indeed, among the well-educated upper classes, French was spoken more commonly than Russian.

All this changed in the 20th century, when the language of the people, solid, working-class Russian, became the language of the state. Western influences were generally frowned upon, in any case, and French in particular was derided for its classist pretences. In Russia, one spoke Russian. Indeed, in Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia etc, one spoke Russian. St Petersburgers could travel far and wide, but never leave the boundaries of their same-speaking country.

The legacy is that today everyone in St Petersburg speaks Russian. You can expect English to be spoken at most hotels and some restaurants, but the vast majority of Petersburgers speak only their native tongue. The city is becoming a bit more foreigner-friendly, with some signs in Latin letters and menus and maps in English at major tourist attractions, but at the very least you are advised to learn the Cyrillic alphabet and a few friendly phrases before setting out on your own.

To many people Russian language is as impenetrable and mysterious as Russia itself, because of the Cyrillic alphabet and its complex grammar. The alphabet is not difficult, but it has only five letters in common with the Latin alphabet. The grammar has six cases in which all nouns and adjectives potentially decline, and perfective and imperfective forms for every verb. If that sounds like gibberish to you, you'll understand why Russian is a linguist's dream, but everyone else's nightmare!

There is some good news: spelling closely reflects the way words are pronounced; you can determine a noun's gender by the way it ends; and there's only one irregular verb (*быть*, to be). Russian has fundamental similarities with English, being an Indo-European language, and learning a few basic phrases in Russian is no harder than learning them in French or German. Look for Lonely Planet's *Russian Phrasebook*.



THE CYRILLIC ALPHABET

Russian uses the Cyrillic alphabet, which is not as tricky as it looks. It's well worth the effort to familiarise yourself with it.

The list below shows the letters used in the Russian Cyrillic alphabet with their closest Roman-letter equivalents. If you follow the pronunciation guides included with the words and phrases below, you should have no trouble making yourself understood.

Cyrillic Roman Pronunciation

А а	a	as in 'father' when stressed; as in 'ago' when unstressed
Б б	b	as in 'but'
В в	v	as in 'van'
Г г	g	as in 'go'
Д д	d	as in 'dog'
Е е	ye	as in 'yet' when stressed; as in 'yeast' when unstressed

Ё ё	yo	as in 'yore'
Ж ж	zh	as the 's' in 'measure'
З з	z	as in 'zoo'
И и	i	as in 'police'
Й й	y	as in 'boy'
К к	k	as in 'kind'
Л л	l	as in 'lamp'
М м	m	as in 'mad'
Н н	n	as in 'net'
О о	o	as in 'more' when stressed; as the 'a' in 'ago' when unstressed
П п	p	as in 'pig'
Р р	r	as in 'rub', but rolled
С с	s	as in 'sing'
Т т	t	as in 'ten'
У у	u	as in 'rule'
Ф ф	f	as in 'fan'
Х х	kh	as the 'ch' in 'Bach'
Ц ц	ts	as in 'bits'
Ч ч	ch	as in 'chin'
Ш ш	sh	as in 'shop'
Щ щ	shch	as in 'fresh chips'

ъ		'hard' sign
Ы ы	у	as the 'i' in 'ill'
ь	'	'soft' sign
Э э	е	as in 'end'
Ю ю	yu	as in 'Yukon'
Я я	ya	as in 'yard'

PRONUNCIATION

The sounds of **a, o, e** and **я** are 'weaker' when the stress in the word doesn't fall on them, eg in вода (*voda*, water) the stress falls on the second syllable, so it's pronounced 'va-da', with the unstressed pronunciation for **o** and the stressed pronunciation for **a**. Russians usually print **ë** without the dots, a source of confusion in pronunciation.

The 'voiced' consonants **б, в, г, д, ж** and **з** are not voiced at the end of words or before voiceless consonants. For example, хлеб (bread) is not pronounced 'khlyeb', as written, but 'khlyep'. The **r** in the common adjective endings **-ero** and **-oro** is pronounced 'v'.

SOCIAL

Meeting People

Hello.	
Здравствуйте.	zdrastvuitey
Hi.	
Привет.	privyet
Goodbye.	
До свидания.	da svidaniya
Please.	
Пожалуйста.	pazhalsta
Thank you (very much).	
(Большое)	(bal'shoeye)
спасибо.	spasiba
You're welcome. (ie don't mention it)	
Не за что.	nye za shta
Yes/No.	
Да/Нет.	da/nyet

Do you speak English?

Вы говорите по-английски?
vy gavarite pa angliyski?

Does anyone here speak English?

Кто-нибудь говорит по-английски?
kto-nibud' gavarit pa-angliyski?

Do you understand?

Вы понимаете?
vy panimayete?

I (don't) understand.

Я (не) понимаю.
ya (nye) panimayu

Please repeat that.

Повторите, пожалуйста.

paftarite pazhalsta

Please speak more slowly.

Говорите помедленнее, пожалуйста.
gavarite pa-medleneye pazhalsta

Please write it down.

Запишите, пожалуйста.
zapishyte pazhalsta

Going Out

What's on ...?

Что происходит интересного ...?

Shto praiskhodit interyesnava ...?

locally	
поблизости	pablizasti
this weekend	
на этих	na etikh
выходных	vykhadnykh
today	
сегодня	syevodnya
tonight	
вечером	vyecheram

Where are the ...?

Где находятся ...?

gdye nakhodyatsa ...?

clubs	
клубы, дискотеки	kluby, diskoteki
gay venues	
гей клубы	gey kluby
places to eat	
кафе или	kafe ili restarany
рестораны	
pubs	
бары	bary (or irlandskii bary for 'Irish pubs')

Is there a local entertainment guide?

Есть обзор мест куда пойти в газете?
yest' abzor myest kuda paiti v gazete?

PRACTICAL

Question Words

Who?	Кто?	kto?
What?	Что?	shto?
When?	Когда?	kagda?
Where?	Где?	gdye?
How?	Как?	kak?

Numbers & Amounts

0	ноль	nol'
1	один	adin

2	два	dva
3	три	tri
4	четыре	chityri
5	пять	pyat'
6	шесть	shest'
7	семь	sem'
8	восемь	vosem'
9	девять	devyat'
10	десять	desyat'
11	одиннадцать	adinatsat'
12	двенадцать	dvenatsat'
13	тринадцать	trinatsat'
14	четырнадцать	chetirnatsat'
15	пятнадцать	petnatsat'
16	шестнадцать	shesnatsat'
17	семнадцать	semnatsat'
18	восемнадцать	vosemnatsat'
19	девятнадцать	devitnatsat'
20	двадцать	dvatsat'
21	двадцать один	dvatsat' adin
22	двадцать два	dvatsat' dva
30	тридцать	tritsat'
40	сорок	sorak
50	пятьдесят	pedesyat
60	шестьдесят	shesdesyat
70	семьдесят	semdesyat
80	восемьдесят	vosemdesyat
90	девяносто	devenosta
100	сто	sto
1000	тысяча	tysyacha
2000	две тысячи	dvye tysachi

Days

Monday	понедельник	panidel'nik
Tuesday	вторник	ftornik
Wednesday	среда	srida
Thursday	четверг	chetverk
Friday	пятница	pyatnitsa
Saturday	суббота	subota
Sunday	воскресенье	vaskrisen'e

Banking

I'd like to ...
Мне нужно ...
mne nuzhna ...
cash a cheque
обналичить чек
abnalichit' chek
change money
обменять деньги
abmenyat' den'gi
change some travellers cheques
обменять дорожные чеки
abmenyat' darozhniye cheki

Where's the nearest ...?

Где ближайший ...?

gdye blizhayshiy ...?

АТМ	
банкомат	
bankamat	
foreign exchange office	
обменный пункт	
abmennyi punkt	

Post

Where is the post office?

Где почта? **gdye pochta?**

I want to send a ...

Хочу послать ...
khachu paslat' ...

fax	
факс	faks
parcel	
посылку	pasilku
small parcel	
бандероль	banderol'
postcard	
открытку	atkrytku

I want to buy ...

Хочу купить ...
khachu kupit' ...
an envelope
конверт **kanvert**
a stamp
марку **marku**

Phones & Mobiles

I want to buy a phonecard.
Я хочу купить телефонную карточку.
ya khachu kupit' telefonnyuyu kartachku

I want to make a call (to ...)

Я хочу позвонить (в ...)
ya khachu pazvanit' (v ...)
Europe/America/Australia
европу/америку/австралию
yevropu/ameriku/avstraliyu

Where can I find a/an ...?

Где я могу найти ...?
gdye ya mogu naiti ...?

I'd like a/an ...

Мне нужен ...

mnye nuzhen ...
adaptor plug
переходник для розетки
perychadnik dlya razetki

charger for my phone
зарядное устройство для телефона
zaryadnaye ustroystva dlya telefona
mobile phone for hire
мобильный телефон напрокат
mabil'niy telefon
SIM card for your network
сим-карта для местной сети
sim-karta dlya mestnoi seti

Internet

Where's the local internet café?
Где здесь интернет кафе?
Gde zdyes' internet kafe?

I want to ...
Я хочу ...
ya khachu ...
check my email
проверить мой имейл
praverit moi imeil
get online
подсоединиться к интернету
padsayedinita k internetu

Transport

What time does the ... leave?
В котором часу прибывает ...?
f katoram chasu pribyvaet ...?
What time does the ... arrive?
В котором часу отправляется ...?
f katoram chasu atravlyayetsa ...?

bus	
автобус	aftobus
fixed-route minibus	
маршрутное	marshrutnaye
такси	taksi
train	
поезд	poyezt
tram	
трамвай	tramvay
trolleybus	
троллейбус	tralleybus

When is the ... bus?
Когда будет ... автобус?
kagda budet ... aftobus?
first
первый **pervy**
last
последний **pasledniy**
next
следующий **sleduyushchiy**

Are you free? (taxi)
Свободен?
svobodен?
Please put the meter on.
Включите пожалуйста счетчик.
vklyuchite pazhalsta schetchik
How much is it to ...?
Сколько стоит доехать до ...?
skol'ka stoit daekhat' do ...?
Please take me to ...
Отвезите меня, пожалуйста в ...
atvezite menya pazhalsta v ...

EMERGENCIES

Help!
На помощь!/Помогите!
na pomashch'!/pomagite!
I'm lost.
Я заблудился/заблудилась.
ya zabludilsya/zabludilas' (m/f)
I'm sick.
Я болен/больна.
ya bolen/bal'na (m/f)
Where's the police station?
Где милиция?
gdye militsiya?
Call ...!
Позвоните ...!
pazvanite ...!
the police **v militsiyu**
в милицию
a doctor **vracha**
врача
an ambulance **v skoruyu pomoshch'**
в скорую помощь

HEALTH

Where's the nearest ...?
Где ближайшая ...?
gde blizhishaya ...?
chemist (night)
аптека **apteka**
(дежурная) **(dezhurnaya)**
dentist
зубной врач **zubnoy vrach**
doctor **vrach**
hospital
больница **bal'nitsa**

I need a doctor (who speaks English).
Мне нужен врач (англоговорящий).
mne nuzhen vrach (anglagavaryaschii)

Symptoms

I have (a) ...
У меня ...
u menya ...
diarrhoea **panos**
fever **temperatura**
temperature
headache **galavnaya bol'**
rain **bol'**
stomachache **balit zheludak**
boils

FOOD

breakfast	завтрак	zaftrak
lunch	обед	abed
dinner	ужин	uzhyn
snack	перекусить	peryekusit'
fast food	быстрая еда	bystraya yeda
eat	есть/съесть	est'/s'yest'
drink	пить/выпить	pit'/vyypit'

Can you recommend a ...
Не могли бы вы порекомендовать ...
Nye mogli bi vi parekamendavat' ...
café кафе **kafe**
restaurant ресторан **restaran**

Is service/cover charge included in the bill?
Обслуживание включено в счет?
absluzhivaniye vklucheno v schet?

For more detailed information on food and dining out, see p159-76.

Menu Decoder

Word stress falls on the syllables in italics.

BREAKFAST

блины (bli-ny) – pancakes/crepes; also eaten as an appetiser or dessert
блинчики (blin-chi-ki) – bliny rolled around meat or cheese and browned
каша (ka-sha) – Russian-style buckwheat porridge
кефир (ki-feer) – buttermilk, served as a drink
омлет (ahm-lyet) – omelette
творог (tva-rok) – cottage cheese
яйцо (yai-tso) – egg
яичница (ya-ish-ni-tsa) – fried egg

LUNCH & DINNER

вторые блюда (fta-rye blyu-da) – second courses or 'main' dishes

горячие блюда (gar-ya-chi-ye blyu-da) – hot courses or 'main' dishes
закуски (za-ku-ski) – appetisers
первые блюда (per-vi-ye blyu-da) – first courses (usually soups)
сладкие блюда (slat-ki-ye blyu-da) – sweet courses/desserts

APPETISERS

икра (i-kra) – caviar
красная икра (kras-na-ya i-kra) – red (salmon) caviar
грибы в сметане (gri-by fsme-ta-ne) – mushrooms baked in sour cream; also called жульен из грибов (zhul-yen iz gri-bov)
салат (sa-lat) – salad
овощной салат (a-vash-noy' sa-lat) – 'vegetable salad'; salad of tomatoes and cucumbers
из помидоров (iz pa-mi-dor-ov) – tomato salad
чёрная икра (chor-na-ya i-kra) – black (sturgeon) caviar
столичный салат (sta-lich-ny sa-lat) – 'capital salad'; salad of vegetable, beef, potato and egg in sour cream and mayonnaise

SOUP

борщ (borsh) – beetroot soup with vegetables and sometimes meat, served hot or cold
лапша (lap-sha) – chicken noodle soup
окрошка (a-krash-ka) – soup made from cucumbers, sour cream, potatoes, eggs, meat and kvas, served hot or cold
рассольник (ra-ssol'-nik) – cucumber and kidney soup
солянка (sal-yan-ka) – thick meat or fish soup
уха (u-kha) – fish soup with potatoes and vegetables
харчо (khar-choh) – traditional Georgian soup made of lamb and spices
щи (shi) – cabbage or sauerkraut soup

FISH

лосось/сёмра (lo-sos'/syom-ga) – salmon
осетрина (a-se-tri-na) – sturgeon
отварная (at-var-na-yah) – poached sturgeon
осетрина с грибами (a-se-tri-na zgri-ba-mi) – sturgeon with mushrooms
рыба (ry-ba) – fish
судак (su-dak) – pike perch
треска (tris-ka) – cod
форель (far-yel') – trout
щука (shu-ka) – pike

POULTRY & MEAT DISHES

антрекот (an-tri-kot) – entrecote – boned sirloin steak
бефстроганов (bef-stro-ga-nov) – beef stroganov – beef slices in a rich sauce
биштекс (bif-shteks) – 'steak', usually a glorified hamburger filling
говядина (gav-ya-di-na) – beef
голубцы (ga-lup-tsy) – cabbage rolls stuffed with meat

жаркое по домашнему (*zhar-koy-e pa da-mash-ni-mu*) – meat stewed in a clay pot ‘home-style’, with mushrooms, potatoes and vegetables
 жаркое из птицы (*zhar-koy-e iz pti-tsa*) – poultry stewed in a clay pot
 котлета (*kat-le-ta*) – usually a croquette of ground meat
 котлета по киевски (*kat-le-ta pa ki-ev-ski*) – chicken Kiev; fried chicken breast stuffed with garlic butter
 котлета по пожарски (*kat-le-ta pa pa-zhar-ski*) – croquette of minced chicken
 мясные (*mya-sni-ye*) – meat
 пельмени (*pil'-men-i*) – meat dumplings
 плов (*plov*) – pilaf, rice with mutton bits
 свинина (*sfi-ni-na*) – pork
 шашлык (*shash-lyhk*) – skewered and grilled meat

VEGETABLES

гарниры (*gar-ni-ry*) – any vegetable garnish
 горох (*ga-rokh*) – peas
 грибы (*gri-by*) – wild mushrooms
 зелень (*zhe-lin'*) – greens
 капуста (*ka-pus-ta*) – cabbage
 картошка/картофель (*kar-tosh-ka/kar-to-fil'*) – potato
 морковь (*mar-kof*) – carrots
 овощи (*o-va-shchi*) – vegetables
 огурец (*a-gur-yets*) – cucumber
 помидор (*pa-mi-dor*) – tomato

GLOSSARY

aeropot – airport
alleya – alley
apteka – pharmacy
avtobus – bus
avtomaticheskie kamery khranenia – left-luggage lockers
avtovokzal – bus station
babushka – grandmother
bankomat – ATM
banya – bathhouse
basketbolnaya super liga – Russia’s basketball super league
bolshaya – big, great, grand
bolshoy – big, great, grand
bulvar – boulevard
bylina – epic song
dacha – country cottage
datsan – temple
deklaratsiya – customs declaration
dom – house
duma – parliament
dvorets – palace
elektrichka – suburban train; also *prigorodnye poezd*
galereya – gallery

FRUIT

абрикос (*a-bri-kos*) – apricot
 апельсин (*a-pel'-sin*) – orange
 банан (*ba-nan*) – banana
 виноград (*vi-na-grad*) – grapes
 вишня (*vish-ni-ya*) – cherry
 груша (*gru-sha*) – pear
 фрукты (*fruk-ty*) – fruits
 яблоко (*ya-bla-ko*) – apple

STAPLES

масло (*mas-la*) – butter
 перец (*pyer-its*) – pepper
 рис (*ris*) – rice
 сахар (*sa-khar*) – sugar
 соль (*sol'*) – salt
 сыр (*syр*) – cheese
 хлеб (*khlep*) – bread

DESSERTS

кисель (*ki-sel'*) – fruit jelly/jello
 компот (*kam-pot*) – fruit in syrup
 мороженое (*ma-ro-zhi-ne-ya*) – ice cream
 пирожное (*pi-rozh-na-ye*) – pastries
 торт (*tort*) – cake
 шоколад (*sha-ka-lat*) – chocolate

glasnost – openness; policy of public accountability developed under the leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev
gorod – city, town
kafe – café
kamera khranenia – left-luggage office or counter
kanal – canal
kladbische – cemetery
kolonnada – colonnade
kon – horse
korpus – building within a building
koryushki – freshwater smelt
kruglosutochno – open 24 hours
lavra – most senior grade of Russian Orthodox monastery
letny sad – summer garden
liteyny – foundry
malaya – small, little
maly – small, little
marshrutka – minibus that runs along a fixed route; diminutive form of *marshrutnoye taxi*
Maslenitsa – akin to Mardi Gras; fête that celebrates the end of winter and kicks off Lent
matryoshka – nesting doll; set of painted wooden dolls within dolls
mekh – fur
mesto – seat
militsoner – police officer
militsiya – police

morsky vokzal – sea station
morzh – walrus
most – bridge
muzey – museum
naberezhnaya – embankment
novaya – new
novy – new
Novy God – New Year
ostrov – island
parilka – steam room (at a *banya*)
Paskha – Easter
passazhirskiy poezd – passenger train
perekhod – transfer
pereryv – break, recess
perestroika – reconstruction; policy of reconstructing the economy developed under the leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev
perulok – lane, side street
pivnaya – beer bar
ploshchad – square
prigorodnye poezd – suburban train; also *elektrichka*
proezd – passage
prospekt – avenue
rechnoy vokzal – river station
reka – river
restoran – restaurant
Rozhdestvo – Christmas
rynok – market
ryumochnaya – equivalent of the local pub
samizdat – underground literary manuscript

sanitarny den – literally ‘sanitary day’; a day during the last week of every month on which establishments such as museums shut down for cleaning
shosse – highway
skory poezd – fast train; regular long-distance service
smol – tar
sobor – cathedral
staraya – old
stary – old
stolovaya – cafeteria
taksfon karta – phonecard
tapochki – slippers
teatralnaya kassa – theatre kiosk; general theatre box office scattered about the city
tekhnichesky pereryv – technical break
troika – horse-drawn sleigh
tserkov – church
ulitsa – street
uslovie yedenitsiy – standard units, which is equivalent to euros; often abbreviated as *y.e.*
vagon – carriage (on a train)
veniki – bundle of birch branches used at a *banya* to beat bathers to eliminate toxins and improve circulation
vokzal – station
vyshaya liga – Russia’s premier football league
zal – hall
zamok – castle
zheton – token (for metro etc)

© Lonely Planet Publications. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it’s fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don’t upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - ‘Do the right thing with our content.’