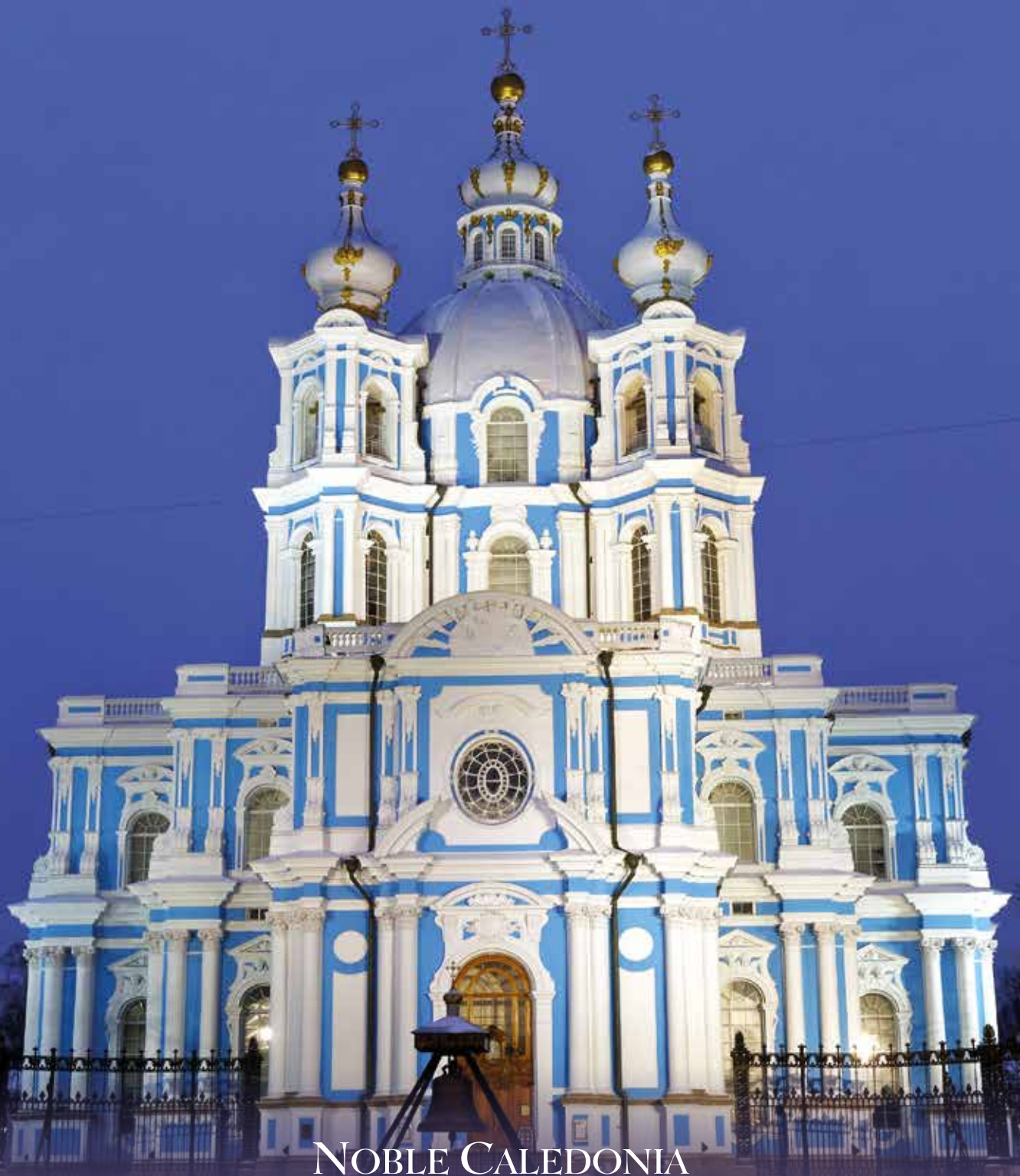


GLORIES OF ST PETERSBURG

An escorted visit exploring the wonders of St Petersburg
staying at the Belmond Grand Hotel Europe

7th to 12th November 2021; 9th to 14th January 2022
& 6th to 11th February 2022



NOBLE CALEDONIA

Here is a wonderful opportunity to see the glories of St Petersburg on a visit hosted by Julia Korn who is resident in the city. These exclusive trips will be a first-class introduction to the most romantically beautiful of all Russian cities. Making this visit extra special is the opportunity to stay in the iconic Belmond Grand Hotel Europe, a hotel that has long attracted the city's most distinguished guests.

St Petersburg is a destination which can be appreciated throughout the year but the winter months are magical and wonderfully atmospheric. Seeing the city under a mantle of freshly fallen snow is enchanting and during our winter visits we can explore without the summer tourists. "A riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma" was how Winston Churchill described Russia, and today this still holds true. Its politics may have changed, but it still remains a mystery and consequently a marvellous place to visit.

Our group size is limited to a maximum of 25 guests per departure and Julia will be looking after all your sightseeing, theatre and dining arrangements. Being part of such a small party you will be able to take full advantage of our host's in-depth knowledge of her home city and because of the central location you will be able to walk to many of the most notable sights such as the Hermitage, Russian Museum, Palace Square, St Isaac's Cathedral and the Nevsky Prospekt. Our stay will also include a number of visits to historic palaces, both within the city and in the surrounding countryside.



Winter Palace Square and the Hermitage Museum

OUR VIEW

“It's a Western cliché to speak of St Petersburg as 'not Russian'. Certainly it's not, St Petersburg is Russia's graceful offspring of the 18th century - a challenge to Europe, neither entirely Western nor entirely Russian, but something entirely its own. For 200 years St Petersburg was the capital of Russia and the centre of all that was best culturally, artistically, and scientifically. Every monument, every street speaks of a great past, of poetry, music, adventure. Splendid Baroque and Neoclassical palaces rich with their memories look majestic and silent in the diamond-bright frosts of winter. A highlight is the Hermitage, one of the greatest museums in the world with its encyclopedic collection. The architectural complex in which it is housed is one of the wonders of the world. No visit to St Petersburg is complete without seeing world-famous Imperial palaces in the city's suburbs. A showcase for the wealth and tastes of the Emperors of Russia from Peter the Great onwards, these extraordinary estates boast sumptuous palaces, extensive landscape gardens, and a treasury of art and history. St Petersburg is also the traditional home of the Russian ballet, opera and music. The renowned Mariinsky (Kirov) Theatre is one of the best Opera and Ballet Houses in the world.”

TRAVELLING WITH YOU



Julia Korn

Julia Korn is a native of St Petersburg and has lived there all her life. She graduated from the Philological Department, St Petersburg University, specialising in Russian Literature and History. In 1988-2016 she worked as a Senior Researcher at the National Pushkin Museum in St Petersburg and published articles on Russian literature, history and the arts. Fluent in English, she has travelled to the U.S.A many times and in 1999 helped coordinate the renowned International Pushkin Conference at Stanford University, California. In 1997-2004, Julia was engaged as a Director for the Stars of St Petersburg Ballet Tours, presenting fully staged productions throughout the western states of the U.S.A regularly. In 2003, she qualified with an Art Management course from the Sibelius Academy, Helsinki. Well travelled herself, Julia has a keen insight into the special requirements for discerning travellers. She qualified in numerous courses and acquired all the licenses to conduct tours in all the major museums and palaces in and around St Petersburg providing services for guests with special interests in the arts, music, ballet, history and literature, both groups and individuals. Her achievements are numerous, and she has proved to be a popular host.

The Itinerary

Day 1 London to St Petersburg, Russia. Fly by scheduled flight. Arrive in the evening and transfer to the Belmond Grand Hotel Europe where we will spend five nights.

Day 2 St Petersburg. This morning meet after breakfast for an introductory tour of the city which will take us past many of the city's fine aristocratic buildings and palaces including the Peter & Paul Fortress, one of Russia's most famous historical fortresses, built in 1703. The day of its foundation is considered to be the birthday of the city. Soon after its construction the Fortress lost its military importance and for two hundred years served as a political prison. In the grounds of Peter & Paul Fortress we visit the Cathedral which is the burial place of the Romanov Dynasty. We will then visit the Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood. Work

started on the church in 1883 at the site where Tsar Alexander II was assassinated two years earlier and it took a total of 24 years to complete. The exterior is fabulous, and the interior has been wonderfully restored with walls lined with mosaic icons and decorative ornamentations. The church has a distinctive golden onion dome and lovingly restored features, including the granite plaques displaying historic happenings from Alexander II's reign. From here we walk to the Russian Museum, the treasure house of Russian national art, including the Benois Wing named after the famous architect, Leon Benois, who designed it from 1910 -1912. We will have lunch in the Mikhailovsky Restaurant in the Benois Wing followed by a museum tour. The museum boasts great Russian art, including the Socialist Realism works of the Stalin era, and countless masterpieces including 12th century icons and avant-garde paintings of the early 20th century. We walk back

to our hotel through Arts Square for some time at leisure before we head out again for dinner at Tzar Restaurant. (B, L, D)

Day 3 St Petersburg. This morning we drive to the majestic St Isaac's Cathedral, one of the world's largest and most opulent domed cathedrals. It took 40 years to construct, under French-born architect Auguste de Montferrand's direction, from 1818 to 1858. The neoclassical exterior of St Isaac's barely hints at the riotously rich interior, decorated with various sorts of marble, semi-precious stones and mosaics. Our next stop, Yusupov Palace, is one of the most beautiful private homes in St Petersburg which used to belong to the Yusupov family. We will see the restored State Rooms, some still with their original furniture, the exquisite Rococo private theatre and the cellars where the murder of Rasputin took place in December 1916 - the scene eerily recreated in



St Isaac's Cathedral



Fabergé Easter Egg from the Fabergé Museum



Interior of the Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood, St Petersburg

wax. After lunch at Sadko we return to our hotel and enjoy an afternoon at leisure. In the early evening we plan to attend a performance at the Mariinsky Theatre (ballet or opera, schedule permitting). The Mariinsky Theatre was built in 1860 for Alexander II's wife Maria Alexandrovna. Known for many years as The Kirov, its Soviet Era name, the internationally renowned theatre has seen the rise of many Russian stars. Today, it is best known for its ballet and is one of Russia's leading opera houses. Snacks and drinks will be served during the interval. (B, L)

Day 4 St Petersburg. This morning we visit the Palace of Pavlovsk which originally belonged to Emperor Paul I and his wife Maria Fedorovna. Catherine the Great gave them the land and appointed her favourite architect Charles Cameron to start the construction of the Palace, to commemorate the birth of their son and heir Alexander I in 1777. At the end of the 18th century Pavlovsk Park was the largest landscaped area in the world. Johann Strauss made Pavlovsk an important musical centre when he was invited to participate in concerts there. We drive to Pushkin and the magnificent Catherine Palace. Outside the palace is the divine Catherine Park, comprised of two parts including the old garden and English Park, which was designed by master Dutch gardeners. Lunch will be taken at the Admiralty Restaurant in the Park. Catherine Palace has seen many changes during its time. Built in 1717 for Catherine I, it has been updated numerous times to reflect the personalities of each royal resident. Starting out as a summer pleasure palace, it now stands at around 325 metres across in a blaze of white, gold and blue. The interior houses numerous artworks exuding luxury and beautiful rooms including the Amber Room, justly regarded by some as the 'eighth wonder of the world'. It caused admiration throughout two centuries until it was looted by the Nazi soldiers during the Second World War. It has now been brought back to life and was unveiled in 2003 for the 300th birthday of

St Petersburg. We return to the hotel and dinner tonight is at the Gogol Restaurant. (B, L, D)

Day 5 St Petersburg. Today we visit the incomparable Hermitage Museum which contains hundreds of thousands of works of art and is possibly the greatest in the world. We visit the State Rooms of the magnificent Winter Palace, home of the imperial family before the revolution, followed by the Old Masters. We then take a private tour of the Diamond Room which exhibits, amongst other valuable items, jewellery from the collections which belonged to members of the Imperial Romanov family and from St Petersburg's private collections; diplomatic gifts to the Russian Imperial Court, works created by the Fabergé firm as well as ancient Greek and Scythian gold from excavations. We enjoy lunch at Hamlet & Jacks restaurant followed by a visit to the General Staff Building, one of the most famous architectural monuments in St Petersburg, designed by the architect K. I. Rossi and built between 1820 and 1830. The project revolved around the architect's idea to unite two separate buildings with a triumphal arch, a monument to Russia's victory in the war of 1812. The reconstruction of the General Staff Building was started in 2008 and ended in 2014. After the restoration the collections of Russian and European decorative art, paintings and sculptures from the 19th and 20th centuries (including Impressionist and Post-impressionist paintings, Matisse, and Picasso), as well as contemporary art were displayed in the building. The exhibition includes the renovated historical interiors of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the personal apartments of the Chancellor of State. We return to our hotel for some time to rest before we walk to the Katyusha Restaurant for our farewell dinner and folklore show. (B, L, D)

Day 6 St Petersburg to London. After breakfast we will take a private tour of the Fabergé Museum. The collection contains more than

4,000 works of decorative applied and fine arts, with a highlight being the group of nine Imperial Easter eggs created by Fabergé for the last two Russian Tsars. Continue on to the airport for our scheduled flight to London. (B)

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Room	
Deluxe Double Room	£2495
Deluxe Double Room for Sole Use	£2995

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Five nights at the Belmond Grand Hotel Europe • Meals as indicated (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner) • Wine with included meals • Excursions • Best available tickets for an opera or ballet performance at Mariinsky Theatre* • Noble Caledonia Tour Leader • Gratuities • Transfers • Airport Taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance, Russian visa.

Group Size: We are restricting the group size to just 25 participants.

* Details for the Mariinsky performance will be advised in your pre-departure information approximately 12 weeks prior to departure. The final order of the itinerary may vary to incorporate the performance.

Important Visa Information: A visa is required for Russia and Noble Caledonia will provide all supporting documentation needed although the process to apply for the visa cannot be started until three months before departure and in some instances can take up to six weeks. To obtain a Russian visa it will be necessary for passengers to attend application centres in London, Manchester or Edinburgh. This information is correct at the time of printing and should the information change, we will be in touch with booked passengers with updated guidelines.



Deluxe Room



Main staircase



Lidval Room



Lobby Bar



L'Europe Restaurant Balcony

BELMOND GRAND HOTEL EUROPE

For our escorted tour of St Petersburg we will be staying at the magnificent Belmond Grand Hotel Europe, ideally located only moments away from some of the city's most prominent attractions like that of the Russian Museum, Mikhailovsky Theatre and the Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood.

Your Room

The hotel is comprised of 266 beautifully decorated rooms and suites which reflect the extravagance enjoyed by that of the Tsars. The rooms are spacious and have wonderful décor as well as including views overlooking Mikhailovskaya Street, the grand thoroughfare leading to Arts Square, and the Philharmonic Hall. Every room features air-conditioning, bathrobes, telephone, minibar, hairdryer, Wi-Fi, safe, writing desk and comfortable armchairs, cable TV and video/DVD player.

Your Space

Lavishly furnished with soaring ceilings and stained-glass windows the Belmond Grand Hotel Europe has long attracted some of the city's most glamorous. The hotel creates its own sumptuous chocolates and pastries which are available at the onsite shop. There is also a fitness centre open 24 hours a day where you can enjoy the plunge pool, as well as CARITA Beauty Salon which provides a range of pampering services.

Dining & Drinking

The hotel features five restaurants and bars serving an array of different cuisines. L'Europe Restaurant is one of Russia's most historic restaurants and offers Russian specialities such as the renowned Egg in Egg. There is also Azia Restaurant which specialises in pan-Asian dishes, a Mezzanine Café ideal for trying Russian afternoon tea and St Petersburg's only dedicated caviar bar. There is also the Lobby Bar which has beautiful stained-glass windows and hosts wonderful jazz and blues performances.



Azia Restaurant



Kryisha ballroom



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Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
 Cover image: Smolny Convent of the Resurrection, St Petersburg.