RUSSIA: HISTORY, CULTURE AND RELIGION
AUGUST 3 — 17, 2020

Day 1, Monday, August 3, 2020
Meals: dinner
Arrival in Moscow. Overnight: Moscow.

Day 2, Tuesday, August 4, 2020
Meals: Breakfast and Lunch
We will start our day by a visit to Moscow Kremlin. Kremlin (kremlin is a general term used to describe strongly fortified central part of the Medieval Russian City). Moscow Kremlin is a true Pride of Russia. Among many other special attractions here we will visit Uspenskiy (Dormition) Cathedral, once the place of the installation of the Russian Patriarchs and Crowning of the Tsars. From here we will walk to the to the Armory Yard (former arms storage, and now World-Famous Museum of the most exquisite historical and jewelry artifacts). After Lunch, we will visit the Red Square – with its iconic “picture of Russia,” the famous Cathedral of St. Basil. Overnight: Moscow

Day 3, Wednesday, August 5, 2020
Meals: Breakfast and Lunch
Our morning will be a sharp contrast of two sites. The first is Butovo. Here, in the place of the NKVD-KGB killing fields, a memorial complex was built to commemorate thousands of innocents who perished from the hands of the
Godless Communist regime. Right after that we will proceed to the Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Yasenevo, a newly built church. The history of its construction is truly awe inspiring, as it was quite literally built by the hands and donations of the thousands of simple folks - the residents of the area. After lunch at the church refectory we will visit the Tretyakov gallery that houses a very fine collection of Russian art from the 10th to the 20th centuries. In the attached museum church we will see the miracle-working “patron” icon of Russia, Our Lady of Vladimir. Overnight: Moscow.

**Day 4, Thursday, August 6, 2020**

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

We will start our day with a visit to the largest functioning Orthodox Church in the World, the Cathedral of Christ the Savior. This magnificent building was demolished in the 1930s and has been rebuilt in recent years, becoming a symbol of changes in the country and the resurrection of the religious life in all of Russia. From here we will proceed to the Holy Trinity Lavra (Monastery) in a small town of Sergiev Posad, some forty miles East of Moscow. The monastic settlement here was established by St. Sergius in the 14th century and became the single most important spiritual center of all of Russia. We will have time to explore the territory of the monastery, with a number of churches, and adjacent territory with a number of little shops. Later in the afternoon we will transfer further East and will arrive for dinner and overnight to an ancient city of Pereslavl-Zalesski. Overnight: Pereslavl-Zalesski

**Day 5, Friday, August 7, 2020**

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

We will start our day with the exploration of Pereslavl-Zalessky, the hometown of the Russian Duke Alexander Nevsky. Here we will visit the Holy Transfiguration Cathedral (dated back to 1152-1157) and Goritsky Monastery (museum now) with its fascinating baroque cathedral and art museum with a collection of Russian icons. One more memorial place on our list for the exploration today is related to the First Russian Emperor Peter the Great. It is here, on lake Pleshcheyevo where in his younger years he in envision and built first Russian Fleet. After late lunch, we will travel some two hours south for an overnight at the “crown jewel” of the Golden Ring – the town of Suzdal. In route we will stop to see Yuriev Pol’skiy, a small and for the most part neglected town that nevertheless has some spectacular sites to offer. We will explore St. George’s Cathedral (built in 1152), in age and quality of artistry rival to that of St. Dimitry in Vladimir; then the Archangel Michael Monastery neatly situated in between medieval earthen ramparts. Overnight: Suzdal

**Day 6, Saturday, August 8, 2020**

**Meals:** Breakfast and Lunch

This morning, we will explore very important and interesting medieval Russian city of Vladimir that is situated some 20 miles south of Suzdal. Here, our plans are to visit Dormition Cathedral with frescoes by Andrei Rublev, St. Dimitry Cathedral with its fantastic stone bas-reliefs, and the museum of
crystal and lacquer miniatures. After the tour of Vladimir we will visit the complex of the convent in Bogolyubovo, built on the spot of one of the earliest residences of the Russian dukes. At the end of the day, we will walk through the pristine fields to explore the world-renowned monument - church of the Protection of the Theotokos on Nerl' River, one of the oldest in all of Russia, that along with other “white monuments” of Russia was added to the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1992. Overnight: Suzdal.

Day 7, Sunday, August 9, 2020
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

It is practically impossible to try to describe Suzdal’ - that miracle little town, doubtlessly the jewel of the Russian Golden Ring and of all Russia. Multiple churches and monasteries always leave something new to explore for an attentive visitor, no matter how many times you have been in Suzdal’. Here we will visit the Suzdal’ Kremlin with its fascinating Cathedral of the Nativity of the Theotokos, built in 1220’s. After lunch we will explore the architectural ensemble of Spaso-Ephymiev (St. Ephymius) Monastery, one of the most impressive Medieval fortress-like complexes in all of Russia. During centuries past, it was used not only as a religious center, but also as a prison for malefactors and riotous rebels. Today former monastery housed a number of very interesting exhibits that help to appreciate and understand history and culture of Ancient Suzdal. Later in the afternoon we will transfer the city of Yaroslavl. Overnight: Yaroslavl.

*Today we will have a later start. Those who would want to, will be able to attend Sunday Divine Liturgy at one of the local churches.

Day 8, Monday, August 10, 2020
Meals: Breakfast and Lunch

The city of Yaroslavl was one of the largest Medieval Russian cities, and certainly one of the cultural Russian capitals before appearance of much more European St. Petersburg. Most of the historical monuments here are of religious nature, but their splendor is truly awe inspiring. We will start our day by a visit to the oldest monument in the city, the Holy Transfiguration Church, built in late 16 century. Right by the Cathedral there is a gallery with the exhibit of the most precious Yaroslavan artifact that demonstrate the craftsmanship of local artisans and opulence of the merchants that commissioned those precious objects. The unique feature of the Yaroslavan churches are their unique interiors that are covered with frescoes as lacquered boxes. We will visit just two that are most presentative of style and are the most splendid visually – the one of St. John in Tolochkovo and the most famous of them all, that of St. Elias the Prophet. After Lunch we will stroll along the embankments of Kotorosl and Volga rivers, will visit the exhibit of the Russian Samovars, and with some luck will hear some balalaika playing while sampling some delicious pryanik (local variety of ginger bread) and fresh strong tea. Overnight: Yaroslavl.
Day 9, Tuesday, August 11, 2020
Meals: Breakfast and Lunch
This morning we will visit yet another “jewel” of the Golden Ring, the “fairy tale” city of Rostov the Great. Being small, it nevertheless fully lives up to its name “the Great” due to its stunning monuments – Kremlin, monasteries, churches and museums filled with ancient artistic treasures. Rostov is also famous as the center of filigree and we certainly going to see an exhibit in one of the hall of Rostov’ Kremlin. After lunch we will return to Yaroslavl. Later in the day, weather, time and strength permitting, you’ll be offered an optional tour to a little town of Tutaev some 30 miles away from Yaroslavl! Overnight: Yaroslavl.

Day 10, Wednesday, August 12, 2020
Meals: Breakfast and Lunch
Today we will explore the city of Vologda, ever-sleeping beauty that Russian Tsar John the Terrible envisioned to be the northern-most capital of Russia ever. That city at times is justly called the “sleeping beauty of Russia”. Vologda will “treat” us with its monumental Kremlin Cathedral, collection of church antiquities and folk art. One of the most unique collections in Vologda is the lace masterpieces produced by local craftswoman and world-famed for their beauty and unique design. After lunch we will visit ethnographic Museum in Semenkovo, located on the outskirts of the city. Semenkovo has one of the finest collections of the wooden architecture of the Russian North. You’ll be able to see typical Russian wooden churches, houses, barns and wells. These wooden monuments have been brought from various regions of Russia for preservation purposes as well as a display of a variety of wooden architectural styles. Overnight: Vologda

Day 11, Thursday, August 13, 2020
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner
Today we’ll be spending in rural Russia – the legendary Belozerye or country of the White Lake. Being remote and distant from all major Russian cities, this land still is invaluable in Russian state, church and art history. Our trip here will be rewarded with visits to the town of Kirillov and the village of Ferapontovo. Kirillov is the location for one of the most famous and important Russian monasteries in all of Russia, that of St. Cyril of Beloozero or of the “White Lake”. It is functioning as a museum now, although the faithful are allowed to worship in a little church on the monastery grounds, where the relics of its founder St. Cyril are. Besides being a place for pilgrimage, the monastery has a very important icon collection on display in the museum and in two churches that are converted into exhibition halls. This remote place has magnificent collection of icons that makes visit here absolutely “a must”. In the village of Ferapontovo, another monastery still has awe-inspiring and well-preserved
Day 12. Friday, August 14, 2020

Meals: Breakfast and Lunch.

We will start our day with a visit to the Alexander-Nevsky Lavra, a beautiful monastery that at one point was one of the biggest and famous in Imperial Russia. We will tour the grounds of the Monastery, including the magnificent Cathedral of the Holy Trinity that houses relics of Saint Alexander Nevsky. We will continue with the exploration of the State Russian Museum, which houses the most comprehensive collection of Russian Art from its Byzantine Origins up to the present day. Practically adjacent to the Museum stands the famous "Savior of the Spilt Blood," or Holy Resurrection Cathedral, that was built to commemorate Russian Tsar Alexander II who was mortally wounded on that very place by terrorists. Magnificent by all means, it is nicely decorated on the outside with tablets on which Tsar Alexander’s laws and orders are inscribed, along with the dates of the most important events that had taken place during his reign. The inside of the Cathedral is completely covered with mosaics. We will finish our day with a boat cruise on Neva River. Overnight: St. Petersburg

Day 13. Saturday, August 15, 2020

Meals: Breakfast and Lunch.

Today we will explore the State Hermitage, once the Winter Palace of the Russian Tsars, which houses one of the world’s largest collections of Fine Arts. Countless artifacts on exhibits cover the evolution of Art from the Neolithic time and Ancient Egypt up until the beginning of the 20th century. After late lunch we will visit splendidly decorated Cathedral of St. Isaac, one of the world’s largest domed Cathedrals. Never a parish church, it was built as a dedication to the Heavenly Patron of Peter the Great, St. Isaac of Dalmatia. The cathedral is very Western in style but adorned with truly Eastern lavishness. The panoramic view of St. Petersburg from its observation deck around the dome is truly magnificent. Overnight: St. Petersburg

Day 14. Sunday, August 16, 2020

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

After breakfast we will explore a Faberge Museum that has one of the largest collections SS. Peter and Paul Fortress that is located in the very heart of St. Petersburg. The day when the ground was broken to build this first stronghold in the newly regained Russian lands became the birthday of St. Petersburg. The main Cathedral of the fortress also serves as the Mausoleum of the Romanov Dynasty that ruled Russia for 300 years. After Lunch we will transfer to the
Historical State Park "Peterhof" with its world-famous Summer Palace of Peter I that is surrounded by a Park with arcades of golden fountains. Overnight: St. Petersburg

*Today we will have a later start. Those who would want to, will be able to attend Sunday Divine Liturgy at one of the local churches.

**Day 15. Monday, August 17, 2020**

Meals: Breakfast

**Departure back home**

If you’d like to extend your stay in Russia, we would be happy to offer to you several different extensions.

Most popular extension is usually the one that covers famous Romanov’s Palaces:

State Historical Park "Tsarskoe Selo" (Tsar’s village), with one of the splendid Catherine’s Summer Palace. Built in the second half of the 18th century, it represents the glory of Russia’s “Golden Age”. The interiors of the palace are fully restored after they were savagely destroyed during WWII. The amber room that was recently restored once again conquers the imagination of visitors. After Lunch on that day we also could visit one more architectural jewel of Russia, 18 century **palace in Pavlovsk**. It was built in 1780 by Catherine the Great personal architect, Charles Cameron in honor of the birth of Catherine' grandson Alexander (the future Russian Tsar Alexander I). Emperor Paul and his wife will use this as their summer residence, and after the murder of Paul, it will become a permanent residence to his widow Empress Maria. Palace is surrounded by an English garden with multiple pavilions. The estate in Pavlovsk covers over a thousand hectares.

If you are interested in that extension, or in some different program altogether, please contact us for details and pricing.
GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE TOUR:

Financial arrangements:
The current cost of the trip is: $3100 per person, in double occupancy in a group of 25+ people. Single supplement (subject to availability) is extra: $900.

Price includes:
• Accommodations in four-star hotels in Moscow, Suzdal, Yaroslavl, Vologda and St. Petersburg,
• Breakfast, daily lunch and some dinners (total of 34 meals)
• Private bus transportation whenever required
• Overnight train ride from Vologda to St. Petersburg
• All admissions to the scheduled museums*
• Professional English-speaking tour guides
• Whisper Audio Guide System
• English speaking guide/escort during the entire tour
• Visa application documents

Price does not include:
• Personal health/accident insurance
• International airfare tickets*
• Transportation to and from the airport in Russia if traveling separately from the group
• Fee for Russian visa**

• Private transfers, additional (optional) tours and tickets to unscheduled show/concerts or museums.
• Some newly introduced fees that may occur in certain places (monasteries or churches)
• Tips to bus drivers and tour guides (Minimal suggested amount per person is $7 ($3 per day for bus drivers and $3-4 for local tour guides). Your generosity will be always greatly appreciated)
• Anything that is not specifically mentioned in “Price includes”

* We can offer a compatible round-trip group airfare (15+ people) rate out of New York or any other major US airport for your consideration
** All the necessary paperwork and instructions for Visa Process will be provided in due time. We also may be able to assist you with the Visa application process. For details, please contact Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky
*** Tickets for evening folk shows, theater, opera and ballet performances will be offered according to the schedule and availability in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

All payments should be made by check to: “Palomnik, LLC” and mailed to: 53 Baxter Street, Binghamton, NY 13905. Any returned checks are subject to $25 fee. For payment with a Credit Card
and for domestic or international bank wires, please contact Fr. Ilya directly.

A deposit of $700 is required when you sign up for the trip. The deposit is non-refundable, unless pilgrimage is cancelled by the organizers due to lack of participation or for some other valid or unforeseen circumstance. In order to avoid any money loss, emergency/travel cancellation insurance strongly recommended.

The deadline for signing up for the trip is March 1, 2020. The entire amount is due 90 days prior to departure, May 3, 2020. Failure to pay in full by May 3, 2020 without written notice of explanation may lead to the cancellation of your participation, with no refund of any previously committed funds. If you decide to join the pilgrimage after the deadline, please contact tour coordinator regarding the availability.

If you need to cancel after you signed up, please note the schedule of charges in addition to the amount of non-refundable deposit:

• 25% of the tour cost, 90 to 61 days prior to the departure
• 50% of the tour cost, 61 to 45 days prior to the departure
• 100% of the tour cost 45 or fewer days prior to the departure

All cancellations must be in writing and sent directly to coordinator of the tour - Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky and must be received for reimbursement by the dates shown in the cancellation schedule.

If your visa is denied for any reason, the above cancellation fees still apply.

Passport and Visa:
A valid passport and Russian visa are necessary for travel to Russia. The passport must be issued at least three months prior to the departure and must be valid for at least six months upon your return. The visa may be obtained through the Russian Embassy in Washington D.C., your regional Russian Consulate General or at the Embassy of the Russian Federation in your country. You may apply for visa personally or via accredited agency. You must have an invitation from an agency in Russian to obtain Russian entry visa. To receive such invitation you must provide us with your full name, date and place of birth, number of your passport and your permanent address. Upon receiving the invitation, all the necessary forms for the visa (invitation form and hotel vouchers, visa application, instructions on how to file for the Russian visa and the list of the Russian official offices where you can obtain visa) will be mailed to you directly. We are willing to help you to apply for the Russian visa. If you apply for the Russian visa yourself, please make sure that the name and dates on your visa are accurate. All possible discrepancies must be corrected while still at home in the US, prior to the departure.

Rules on the road:
It is strongly suggested that you
• Obtain insurance covering medical needs and coverage of personal property
• Be aware that financial coverage for all emergency medical and other emergency needs will be your sole responsibility. We will provide all possible logistical and personal assistance, but the financial aspect is your responsibility.
• Act in a manner consistent with the surrounding environment
• Make arrangements to have access to sufficient funds to cover personal needs and unexpected events
• Be aware that the places that we will be visiting may not have the same amenities that you are accustomed to. Medical facilities in most areas are limited. Because of the difference in language and customs, it is expected that the traveler will follow the directions of the Tour Director at all times. The Director reserves the right to restrict a person’s participation in the group’s activities, including exclusion from the group, when, in the opinion of the Director, such action is appropriate. Please note: The Director of the tour, Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky, does not hold any legal responsibilities concerning any of the arrangements, but acts only as a coordinator.

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REGISTRATION FORM:
RUSSIA: HISTORY, CULTURE AND RELIGION
DATES: AUGUST 3-17, 2020

To register please complete this registration form and return it to along with your deposit check ($700.00) made to PALOMNIK, LLC. Please write “Russia: History, Culture and Religion” on the memo line. Please mail this form and your deposit check to:
Palomnik, LLC, 53 Baxter Street, Binghamton, NY 13905

Full Name:

Date of Birth (day/month/year): 

Passport #

Issue and expiration date (day/month/year): 

Address:

City, State, Zip/Postal Code

Home phone:

Alt. phone and Email:

Emergency Contact Information (Name, Phone, Relation):

Medical restrictions:

Dietary restrictions:

Would you prefer single accommodations at additional costs specified in the itinerary?

Would you prefer to make your own flight reservations, or would you like us to help you to find the best airfare?

Please let us know if there is anything else that we should know in order to make your travel experience more comfortable and pleasant:

Your signature below confirms that you have read the itinerary and agree to abide by Terms and Conditions that accompany the itinerary.

NAME/SIGNATURE: 

DATE: 