

# EXETER INTERNATIONAL

## White Nights

*A small, intimate group tour of St. Petersburg during the magical White Nights Festival*



*Every summer, a unique and wonderful thing happens in St. Petersburg. It is a wonder of nature known as the White Nights. During the White Nights a brief twilight descends on the city and region creating a mystical, and to many, a romantic affect. Because of the city's high latitude the sun does not set completely. Twilight blends into dawn creating a silvery blue glow. This eerie lighting attracts tourists who take to the streets, along with the locals, to enjoy a variety of entertainment and merry making.*

*This celebration runs from mid-May to mid-July and also hosts the height of the theater season in St. Petersburg. Our tour features four performances at premier theaters including the famous Mariinsky. The White Nights experience truly defines the beauty and history of an exceptional city.*

## The Basics

- 6 nights in the historic Rocco Forte Astoria, located in the heart of the city
- Expertly planned small group touring with a top local guide
- Entrance Fees to all the sites mentioned in the program
- 24-hour, English-speaking local assistance in case of emergency or changes

## Highlights of Exeter's White Nights Tour

- Prime tickets to four White Nights Festival performances
- Private backstage tour of the renowned Mariinsky (Kirov) Theater
- Private tour of the Gold Treasures Rooms of the Hermitage
- Private visit to the Amber Room Workshops of Catherine Palace

## Easy to Combine with:

- Copenhagen or Stockholm
- Berlin or Munich
- Vienna, Prague or Budapest

## Day 1

**June 10                      Sunday**

*St. Petersburg*

Arrival into St. Petersburg and transfer to your deluxe hotel in the center of the city.

This afternoon meet your guide in the lobby for a visit to the Peter and Paul Fortress - the birthplace of St. Petersburg. As Peter the Great's original outpost against the Swedes, St. Petersburg was born from this fortress and its historical significance is felt to this day by the presence of every Romanov tomb from Peter the Great.

End with an overview city tour of St. Petersburg including Nevsky Prospect, Vasilevsky Island for the best views of the city, the "prep school" to Russia's noble class and St. Petersburg's beautiful Grand Synagogue.

### ***Evening***

Tonight enjoy a welcome dinner. Dinner consists of three courses, mineral water, and coffee or tea.

**Exeter Services:    Transfer; Half-Day Vehicle, Driver & Guide**

**Hotel:                      Rocco Forte Astoria**

**Meal Included:        Dinner**

## Day 2

**June 11                      Monday**

*St. Petersburg*

This morning is at your leisure to relax and enjoy some down time before touring. This afternoon you will tour the famed Yusupov Palace on the Moika Canal. This elegant city mansion of the Yusupov family is best known as the site of Rasputin's murder.

### ***Exeter International Extraordinary Experience***

Later, you will be invited backstage for an exclusive and rare tour of the historic Mariinsky Theater. Starting from the Tsar's Box, you will explore the sets, costumes and technology of the theater. You may also see firsthand the backstage preparations for tonight's performance.



### ***Evening***

Prime tickets to a White Nights Festival Performance. Please note that the White Nights performance schedule will not be released until approximately 4-6 weeks prior to departure.

**Exeter Services:** Half-Day Vehicle, Driver & Guide; Theater Transfers  
**Hotel:** Rocco Forte Astoria  
**Meals Included:** Breakfast

### **Day 3**

**June 12**                      **Tuesday**

*St. Petersburg*

Today you will travel out to Peter the Great's summer palace, Peterhof, to see firsthand the palace's countless fountains and gardens.

Exeter International has a special early admission time confirmed for touring today. You will tour the Grand Palace, Gardens and Grottos of Peterhof. When you walk to the upper gardens, you can enter the Grand Palace. This stately palace overlooks the gardens and smaller palaces, as well as the Baltic Sea. The ornate baroque interiors of the Grand Palace will no doubt amaze you and no one soon forgets the unique Chinese Room filled with lacquer and ancient silk.



Later you will visit the Grottos of Peterhof. The tremendous variety of fountains is one of the principal features of Peterhof where their extravagance and playfulness indicate the atmosphere of early 18<sup>th</sup> century Russia. You will journey underneath the fountains and learn of their remarkable engineering and history.

Lunch today is casual and will be at one of the restaurants on the grounds of Peterhof. Lunch consists of two courses, mineral water, and coffee or tea.

After touring, you will return to the city via the express hydrofoil. This one-hour ride takes you out of the city traffic and into the Baltic Sea. Your guide will go with you on the hydrofoil and your driver will meet you back in the city.

### ***Evening***

Prime tickets to a White Nights Festival Performance. Please note that the White Nights performance schedule will not be released until approximately 4-6 weeks prior to departure.

**Exeter Services:** Vehicle, Driver & Guide; Theater Transfers  
**Hotel:** Rocco Forte Astoria  
**Meals Included:** Breakfast; Lunch

***Russia Independence Day: Please note that June 12 is Russia Independence Day due to which you might experience traffic congestions and delays.***

## Day 4

**June 13**                      **Wednesday**

*St. Petersburg*

A day outside of the city to see two of the grandest palaces in Europe: Catherine's Palace in Pushkin and Pavlovsk in the nearby countryside. Both are extraordinary examples of Russian and European architecture.

Your first stop will be Pavlovsk Palace, built by Paul I and his wife Maria. This is the understated summer palace of the tsars. Started by Catherine the Great's favorite architect, Cameron (a Scot), the palace was later finished by Paul's and his wife Maria's preferred architect, Andrei Voronykhin- a Russian serf who later became one of the greatest architects ever to work in Russia. *(For those interested in Russian history, with a focus on architecture and design, you won't want to miss reading Suzanne Massie's Pavlovsk: the Life of a Russian Palace.)*

Lunch today is in the village of Pavlovsk. Lunch consists of two courses, mineral water, and coffee or tea.

Afterwards, visit Catherine Palace and its fabled Amber Room. This palace was started by Catherine I (Peter the Great's second wife and not Catherine the Great) and it bears her name. The baroque design is truly a masterpiece and this palace, with its striking blue and gold exterior, is one of the symbols of St. Petersburg. Russian Baroque means gilded statues, gilded mirrors and gilded wall, ceilings and picture frames! The gardens are laid out in the highly stylized French fashion and are definitely worth a stroll.

### ***Exeter International Extraordinary Experience***

While visiting Catherine Palace, you will be invited into the Amber Room workshops where craftsmen rebuilt the famous amber panels lost in World War II.

### ***Evening***

Prime tickets to a White Nights Festival Performance. Please note that the White Nights performance schedule will not be released until approximately 4-6 weeks prior to departure.

**Exeter Services:**    **Vehicle, Driver & Guide; Theater Transfers**

**Hotel:**                      **Rocco Forte Astoria**

**Meals Included:**    **Breakfast; Lunch**

## Day 5

**June 14**                      **Thursday**

*St. Petersburg*

The greatest museum in the world deserves plenty of time to experience. Today's visit to the Hermitage Museum will take you to another world- the tsars' Winter Palace with its collection of the world's finest art. Your guide will escort you through the main section of the museum, including the Imperial living quarters, the famous Malachite Room and beyond.



### ***Exeter International Extraordinary Experience***

While visiting the Hermitage, your guide will take you into the exclusive Gold Treasures Rooms of the Hermitage. Here you will see some of the great treasures of the museum, including Peter the Great's ancient Scythian Gold Collection. These special tours are conducted by Hermitage Guides. Some Hermitage guides speak English, but the tour may be in Russian with your Exeter guide translating. *Please note that these special rooms require an advance appointment. Once confirmed, appointments cannot be rescheduled.*

This afternoon is at your leisure to explore on your own. Perhaps you would like to take a stroll down Nevsky Prospekt to view the fabulous architecture of the city's main boulevard. Alternatively, for a bird's eye view, you may wish to climb the stairs at St. Isaac's Cathedral, right outside your hotel.

*Note: All touring today is on foot. Please wear appropriate footwear.*

### ***Evening***

Prime tickets to a White Nights Festival Performance. Please note that the White Nights performance schedule will not be released until approximately 4-6 weeks prior to departure.

Later, you might want to take a romantic late evening stroll on the banks of the Neva River- the famous bridges of St. Petersburg are raised just before 2AM and it's near daylight at midnight. It's the magic of the White Nights season.

**Exeter Services:** Half-Day Guide; Theater Transfers  
**Hotel:** Rocco Forte Astoria  
**Meals Included:** Breakfast

## Day 6

**June 15**                      **Friday**

*St. Petersburg*

This morning will be left open for shopping and personal exploration.

At 2:00 PM, you'll meet your guide in your hotel lobby and it's off to the Russian Museum in the city center to view one of the greatest collections of exclusively Russian artists, including an extraordinary Repin collection. The Russian Museum also houses one of the world's largest collections of ancient Russian icons. Around the corner you will stop into the Church on Spilled Blood.

### *Evening*

Farewell dinner tonight in one of St. Petersburg's finest restaurants. Dinner consists of three courses, mineral water, and coffee or tea.

**Exeter Services:** Half-Day Vehicle, Driver & Guide  
**Hotel:** Rocco Forte Astoria  
**Meals Included:** Breakfast; Dinner

## Day 7

**June 16**                      **Saturday**

*St. Petersburg*

Morning at leisure until your airport transfer and flight onward.

**Exeter Services:** Transfer  
**Meals Included:** Breakfast

## 2012 Departure

<b>Arrival Date</b>	<b>Return Date</b>	<b>Price 2012</b>
June 10, 2012	June 16, 2012	\$6,550

Single Supplement: \$2,125

All prices are per person, double occupancy. No airfare is included.

**Adding Air** - Please contact Exeter International for special airfares on SAS in economy class, Economy Extra and Business Class. All flights are subject to availability at the time of booking.

### White Nights

This tour takes place during the Stars of the White Nights Festival – the premier opera, ballet and symphony festival of the year in St. Petersburg. Please inquire for extra ticket availability and cost if you are interested.

## **Accommodations**

### St. Petersburg

**One (1) Superior Deluxe Room for Six (6) nights** at the Rocco Forte Astoria, including tax and daily buffet breakfast.

The Astoria opened in 1912 with a bit of an eclectic feel with influences of both Western European & Russian design. In 2003, the hotel completed a multi-million dollar refurbishment and is now part of the Rocco Forte Hotels Luxury collection. In the winter of 2007, the hotel rooms were upgraded yet again. The real ambiance of the hotel is delivered through its light colors and subtle décor among the interiors.

The hotel is located in the heart of the city in St. Isaacs Square and actually closer to the Hermitage and banks of the Neva river. The 227 bedrooms all have parquet flooring, comfortable furniture, and beautiful marble bathrooms. We also love the sumptuous Volga linens on the beds. The hotel is situated off the major avenues yet still in the heart of the city. There is an intimate feeling in the Astoria and the staff is just wonderful. The Astoria also offers a fitness center, Clarins Spa, beautiful bar, restaurant, and business center. Guests at the Astoria have full use of the restaurants and facilities of the neighboring Hotel Angleterre.

**Superior Deluxe Room:** With two twin beds or one queen bed, all Superior Deluxe rooms look onto St Isaac's Square and Cathedral. Even with this extraordinary view, the rooms tend to be quiet. Rooms feature the same size, approximately 270 square feet, and amenities of the Classic Rooms.

*Upgraded rooms and suites may be available. Please inquire for prices and availability.*

*Extra days may be added for additional cost. Please ask your travel consultant for details.*

## **Meals**

Breakfast is included daily at your hotel and includes the buffet breakfast in the main restaurant. Room service items will be charged separately.

Lunches and Dinners include mineral water, coffee and tea. All other beverages are payable locally.

*Your guides will recommend restaurants that fit your exact needs daily and your final documents will list our extensive restaurant recommendations.*

## **Services**

Private vehicle and driver at your service as described. A full-day is generally eight hours in duration. A half-day is generally three and a half hours in duration.

## **Transfers**

All transfers to and from airports are included in the program. Unless otherwise noted, all transfer service is with a driver only, not a guide. In general, drivers have extremely limited English-speaking skills. Should you wish to have an English-speaking guide for your transfer, please inquire for the additional cost.

## **Guides**

Hand chosen for their knowledge on local history, art & architecture. Guides are at your disposal as noted in your itinerary. Guides may assist you with restaurant reservations and purchasing of additional theater and museum tickets at your request.

## **Theater**

Prime seats to the very best ballet, opera or symphony performances during your tour as noted.

## **Tickets**

All museum tickets as described in the program.

## **Airfare**

None Included.

## **Exeter International Small Group Programs**

### *BAGGAGE*

The vehicles reserved for your itinerary can accommodate up to two medium-sized suitcases per person. If you intend to travel with additional luggage, please advise your travel consultant so appropriate arrangements may be made.

### *SIGHTSEEING*

Every effort has been made to confirm that scheduled sightseeing venues will be open at the time you plan to visit them. However, individual estates, museums, gardens and other points of interest can change their hours of operation at short notice. In the event that a particular attraction is closed on the day or time of your visit, your guide will offer alternative arrangements or rearrange your sightseeing to accommodate these unexpected events.

### *GUARANTEED DEPARTURES*

All of Exeter International's Small Group tours are guaranteed departures. This means that we will run the tour in its entirety even if only one or two guests are confirmed. You will be notified prior to final payment if you are the only guests on the tour.

### *OPTIONAL EXPENSES*

Charges for extra meals, transport, sightseeing services or other optional additions to your established itinerary are your responsibility and must be paid locally in the local currency.

### *GRATUITIES*

Gratuities are not included in your tour price. Your copy of "Travel Tips" contains suggested gratuity guidelines for your consideration. Gratuities may be extended in the local currency, U.S. Dollars or Euro.

### *DINING WITH YOUR GUIDE*

On days when dinner and lunch costs have not been included in your itinerary (or in your tour cost), you may, at your discretion, choose to invite your guide to dine with your party. You are under no obligation to do so but, if you do extend such an invitation, the guide is your guest and you will be responsible for the cost of his/her meal.

## **BOOKING CONDITIONS**

### *PAYMENT*

Exeter International must receive a deposit of \$500.00 per person before reservations for your travel program can be initiated. The balance of payment is due 60 days prior to departure. *No reservations are made on your behalf until this deposit has been received.* Availability and pricing is subject to change until this deposit is received. **All deposits are nonrefundable.**

### *CANCELLATION*

Written cancellations received less than 60 days prior to departure are subject to the following forfeit of tour cost

- 59-14 days prior to departure: 50% of total tour cost
- 14 or less days prior to departure: 100% of tour cost.

### *REFUNDS*

We regret that refunds cannot be issued for arrangements confirmed on your itinerary but unused once your tour has begun.

### *INSURANCE*

Exeter International strongly recommends the purchase of travel insurance to protect your investment. You will find insurance costs noted on your invoice and insurance coverage information in your original booking packet.

Exeter International provides all U.S. residents with \$50,000 in emergency medical insurance and emergency medical evacuation as an added benefit of traveling with us. Details may be found in your final documents.

### *PRICES AND ARRANGEMENTS*

The tour price includes planning, handling and operational charges. Rates are quoted in US Dollars on the current rate of exchange and tariff as of 2011. Exeter International reserves the right to increase tour prices to cover increased costs, tariffs and taxes, and to reflect fluctuations in foreign exchange markets. Devaluation of a foreign currency will be weighed against any tariff increases imposed. Exeter International does not break down costs in any Small Group or Individual Travel Program.

*A visa is required for travel to Russia and is not included in the cost above.*

*All arrangements are subject to availability and modification if necessary.*

*Weather, heavy traffic and heavy crowds may affect the order of your sightseeing program.*

*Prices are subject to change until paid in full.*

## **Exeter International**

111 South Dakota Avenue | Tampa, Florida 33606

Phone: (800) 633-1008 | (813) 251-5355 | Fax: (813) 251-6685

[tours@exeterinternational.com](mailto:tours@exeterinternational.com) | [www.exeterinternational.com](http://www.exeterinternational.com)