The Lower Volga
April 27 – May 9, 2016
13-day Cruise from Moscow to the Caspian Sea

TRIP DESCRIPTION & HIGHLIGHTS

From the Golden Horde to the Soviet era, the scenic cities of Russia’s grand Volga River have been witness to some of the most significant events in Russian history. On a journey aboard the deluxe *M.S. Volga Dream*, cruise from Moscow to the Volga River Delta on the Caspian Sea. Discover iconic onion-domed churches; stroll through gems such as medieval Nizhniy Novgorod; and explore the treasures of Yaroslavl, the Volga’s oldest city.

- Visit magnificent Red Square and Kremlin and examine the collection at the Kremlin’s State Armory
- Experience Russia’s diverse musical traditions at lively folk music performances
- Explore Volgograd, the site of the decisive battle of World War II’s eastern front
- Visit the world capital of caviar and taste this delicacy in the city of Astrakhan
Day 1. MOSCOW
Upon arrival in Moscow, transfer to the deluxe MS Volga Dream. You may spend the rest of the day at leisure relaxing after the flight or exploring Moscow on your own.
Meals: D

Day 2. MOSCOW
Begin your day with orientation tour of Moscow followed by a ride in the ornate Moscow metro. After lunch in a local restaurant proceed to the Old Tretyakov gallery to view its extraordinary collection of Russian art, ranging from 12th-century icons to 20th-century paintings.
Meals: B, L, D

Day 3. MOSCOW
This morning enter the Kremlin for a visit to the Armory Museum, with its collection of tsarist thrones, ceremonial crowns, coaches and gifts of state. Continue to the beautifully frescoed 15th-century Assumption and Archangel Cathedrals. After visiting the Kremlin transfer to the MS Volga Dream where you will be served delicious buffet lunch and begin your breathtaking cruise along the Russian Waterways. Later this evening gather for Captain's welcome reception and dinner.

Volga Dream Experience: Bread, Salt & Vodka Welcome Aboard Ceremony
Meals: B, L, D

Day 4. UGLICH
We arrive this afternoon in Uglich, dating back to the 10th century. A walking tour of this Golden Ring city includes the Chapel of Dmitry on a Spilled Blood, a 17th-century treasure built on the site where Ivan the Terrible’s 10-year old son met his death. Visit the Church of the Transfiguration, noted for its beautiful iconostasis, and attend a concert of choral music.

Volga Dream Experience: Documentary film “Constriction of the Moscow Canal”
Meals: B, L, D
Day 5. YAROSLAVL

This morning visit the oldest city on the Volga River, Yaroslavl, a World Heritage site. In the Spassky Monastery see the Transfiguration of the Savior, adorned with murals depicting St. John's apocalyptic visions, and the richly frescoed Church of St. Elijah the Prophet. Enjoy a costumed reception at the Governor's House, and then reboard the Volga Dream in time for lunch.

Volga Dream Experience: Costumed Russian Tea Ceremony

Meals: B, L, D

Day 6. NIZHNIY NOVGOROD

Nizhniy Novgorod (formerly Gorkiy), once a wealthy commercial center poised on the trade routes to the East, became a closed city due to military activity during the Soviet era. Learn about the city's history as a place of exile for political prisoners. Walk the ramparts of the 16th-century Kremlin with its spectacular views, and visit elaborately painted churches. Tonight, attend a concert by a local children folk group.

Volga Dream Experience: Russian Dinner with Vodka Testing

Meals: B, L, D

Day 7. KAZAN

This morning notice that Russian Orthodox Churches no longer dominate on the Volga river banks. Beautiful Muslim mosques appear from time to time as you cruise down the Volga River and enter the Republic of Tatarstan.

In the afternoon disembark from the Volga Dream to explore Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan and center of Tatar culture of Russia. Visit the white-walled Kazan Kremlin (citadel) where the famous mosque Kul-Sherif neighbours the old Peter and Paul Cathedral. Later this day enjoy a concert by a local Tatar folk group.

Volga Dream Experience: Piano Concert – pieces by Tchaikovsky and Rakhmaninov

Meals: B, L, D
Day 8. SAMARA

This morning rest on the Sun Deck as we sail by the Zhigulevskie mountains and approach the city of Samara.

Start with a city tour of Samara, visit the space museum, then stroll along the Volga esplanade and taste beer at the famous local brewery.

*Volga Dream Experience: Barbeque on the open deck*

Meals: B, L, D

Day 9. SARATOV

Once home to a large German community, today Saratov is known for its connection to Russia's first cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, who lived and studied here. Take a city tour, and visit Radishev State Art Museum - the first Russian picture gallery outside of St. Petersburg and Moscow.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 10. VOLGOGRAD (ex. Stalingrad)

Originally called Tsaritsyn, this remarkable city has had three name changes in its tumultuous history. The site of epic battles during the Russian Revolution, it was known as Stalingrad from 1925 until 1961. The city’s heroic defense by the Russian people during World War II became the decisive battle of the eastern front.

Visit the memorial on Mamayev Hill, where the struggle saw its bloodiest fighting, and Stalingrad battle panorama museum.

*Volga Dream Experience: Russian Cooking Class*

Meals: B, L, D

Day 11. ASTRAKHAN

This evening the *Volga Dream* arrives in the city of Astrakhan – world's caviar capital and fishing capital of the Western Russia - set at the mouth of the Volga, where it flows into the Caspian Sea.

Meals: B, L, D
Day 12. ASTRAKHAN

In the morning proceed with a tour of a local fortress built in the reign of Ivan the Terrible and after lunch attend a lecture about famous black caviar followed by a private tasting of this precious delicacy (optional).

Meals: B, L, D

Day 13. ASTRAKHAN

This morning transfer to the airport for your flight.

Meals: B

All arrangements are subject to availability and modification if necessary. Weather, heavy traffic and heavy crowds may affect the order of your sightseeing program.
April 27-May 2016:

**Standard (Twin) – Cabin Deck (101-108)**  
$4,295 per person, double occupancy, Single Supplement + $1,360

**Superior (Twin) – Main Deck (201-210)**  
$4,995 per person, double occupancy, Single Supplement + $1,610

**Deluxe (Queen) – Promenade Deck (301-324)**  
$5,495 per person, double occupancy, Single Supplement + $1,810

**Deluxe (Twin) – Sun Deck (406-409, 411-412)**  
$5,695 per person, double occupancy, Single Supplement + $2,010

**Junior Suite (Queen) – Promenade & Sun (316, 405)**  
$6,495 per person, double occupancy, Single Supplement + $4,035

**Deluxe Junior Suite (Queen) – Sun Deck (402-404)**  
$7,295 per person, double occupancy, Single Supplement + $4,635

**Owner’s Suite (Queen) – Promenade Deck (300)**  
$8,795 per person, double occupancy, Single Supplement + $5,760

**Standard Single (Single) – Promenade Deck (325-326)**  
$5,895 per person

**Deluxe Single (Single) – Sun Deck (410)**  
$6,595 per person

**Rates include:**
- Arrival & departure transfers
- 12 nights aboard Volga Dream
- Daily sightseeing in a group of 20-25 guests with an English speaking guide
- All meals + complimentary house wine and soft drinks with lunch and dinner on board MS Volga Dream
- Amenities - 25+ hours of the Russian Workshop (Discussions, Classes, Concerts, Films & Performances)
- During the cruise: - 4 lectures by a Russian professor
  - 24 hour coffee station with snacks
  - Welcome fruit basket
  - Bottled Water replenished daily
  - Port charges, local taxes, fuel surcharge

**Not included:**
- Any airfare, visa fee, tips, personal medical insurance, medical treatment, laundry, minibar, personal expenses like gift shop purchases, beverages on board MS Volga Dream other than wine and soft drinks during lunch and dinner, drinks in the bar, telephone and Internet connection, other items not specifically mentioned as inclusion above.

**Payment terms:** 25% deposit to confirm the booking  
75% 90 days prior the departure

**Cancellation terms:**  
Written cancellations received less than 90 days prior to departure are subject to the following forfeit of tour cost
- Deposit is non-refundable
- 90 – 60 days prior to departure, 50% of total tour cost
- 59 days or less prior to departure, 100% of total tour cost.