

THE WATERS OF MARS - RUSSIAN SPARKLING RESORT



Martzialnye Vody, or the Waters of Mars, is the oldest spa in Russia. Its special treatments are very popular among local visitors which come here to enjoy the healing power of sulfur-smelling mud as well as lovely scenery.

The Republic of **Karelia** is part of the Russian Federation and even though it is small in size, it offers a wide range of exciting tourist opportunities. Many visitors who visit Karelia wish to spend at least a few days in its famous resort of **Martzialnye Vody**. This spa is a remarkable place whose history goes back to the tsar Peter I., who was its founder. It is **the oldest spa in Russia**, founded in 1719. The tsar himself paid the spa a healing visit several times and many of Russian officers followed his example over the years as well.

The health resort is situated about 50 km away from **Petrozavodsk**. The delightful natural setting and striking landscape seem to have been made for a spa. Local mineral waters are deemed to have healing powers and the springs are very good to drink. The mud treatment is one of the most precious therapeutic methods used here to help the visiting clientele regain their energy and relax. Those who prefer to combine the quiet time of peaceful recreation with sports are more than welcome to. In fact, several of the spa 'healing programs' combine mud treatment and soothing baths with diverse sport activities.

In 1946, a museum commemorating the spa's importance, the story of its grand foundation as well as its development and growth over the years was opened here. The Museum of the Spa "Martzialnye Vody" is now part of the **Karelian State Museum of Regional History**. As for other historical landmarks of the area, not many survived the past centuries. One of the most impressive monuments still standing is the Church of Apostle Peter, built in 1721, which remembers the days of tsar Peter I. The nearby **port of Petrozavodsk** is a great tourist attraction with a charming historical atmosphere as well. Its beginnings date back to the 1700s. It stands on the shore of Onega Lake and features marvelous scenery as well as many natural treasures. There are several natural parks in the area which are perfect for outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy a bit of fresh air and the shades of old beech trees.

Tourists who long to enjoy a bit of art will not be disappointed by local museums and theatres. Karelia is indeed a very inviting place which has the potential to satisfy any of the tourists with demanding dreams and expectations.

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