

Tips: How to Travel St. Petersburg on Budget

St. Petersburg is among the most populous cities in Russia, with about 5 million people. Most Russians consider St. Petersburg as the country's cultural capital. In fact, you will find numerous theaters, galleries and museums in the city. Read along and discover some tips on how to travel St. Petersburg on budget.



Famous Tourist Destinations

The Palace Square is the initial stop of many people who visit St. Petersburg. You will be amazed at the grand architectural ensemble and impressive façade of the square. Entrance to the square is free of charge, which is why this destination appeals to budget-conscious travelers. The vast grounds and elegance of the building is simply breathtaking. Several other popular landmarks of the city nearby the Palace Square include the Winter Palace, General Staff Building, the Alexander Column, and the Admiralty.

The Winter Palace is a majestic green and white building constructed during the Baroque Era. It occupies an entire block, and the palace is known for its stunning details and enormous size. Moreover, the classical columns adorn the palace's exterior, and you will find elegant figurines that line the roof. A one-day ticket to the Winter Palace and museum costs \$17.95, while a two-day ticket is worth \$25.95.

Another remarkable place to visit in St. Petersburg is the Smolny Cathedral, and entrance to this site is free of charge. It is a sophisticated blue and white cathedral, which was also built during the Baroque period. The grandeur of the cathedral captivates most tourists, and it is definitely one famous destination not to be missed. At present, the church and the surrounding convent buildings are popular venues for concerts.

Budget Restaurants and Eateries

The city is famous for its "Bliny", which is typically a type of pancake filled with home-made jam or cottage cheese. You can choose from a wide range of restaurants in St. Petersburg including authentic Georgian food shops, Russian restaurants, budget fast food stores, and chill-out cafes. An average meal in most restaurants may cost about \$20 to \$30 for each person, although you can find your choice of budget eateries for a \$5 to \$10 a meal.

Laima is a budget fast food chain that is a popular choice among backpackers and locals because of the scrumptious dishes, cheap prices, and ideal location. You can choose from authentic Russian dishes

such as the vareny kartofel (boiled potatoes) for \$1.50, or a la Baltique (fish fillet dish) for only \$3. In fact, you can already avail of a full meal for \$5 per person. Many tourists also adore the relaxed atmosphere of the eatery, and you can find a wall-mounted TV or listen to pop music as you enjoy your food.



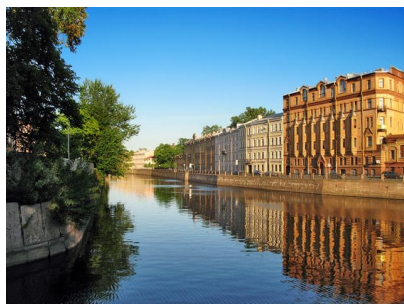
Another great place to eat in St. Petersburg is at the Na Zdorovie restaurant. You will be impressed with the elegant Soviet relics and traditional Russian arts and crafts that surround the restaurant's interior. Highly recommended dishes include baked Sudak fish, pshyonnaya porridge, Mors (home-made berry drink) and potatoes. Furthermore, a dinner will only cost you about \$20, which is quite cheap considering the elegant ambience, as well as the appetizing menus in the restaurant.

Accommodation and Budget Hotels

You do not have to spend a fortune just to find a decent hotel or room to stay during your trip to St. Petersburg. For instance, you might want to consider renting a room at Oktyabrskaya Subsidiary Hotel, which is a 3-star rated hotel in the city. A standard single room costs \$150 a night, while a renovated single costs about \$190.

Labirint Hotel is a cheaper option among travelers, and you can rent a single room for \$60 or a double room for \$70 per night. Moreover, the hotel is only a 15-minute walk from the centre.

The Na Sadovoy Hostel is another popular choice because of the affordable rates and excellent location. The hostel is only a couple of blocks from the Sennaya Ploshchad metro station, and there are major tourist destinations nearby. You will also appreciate the remarkable views from most rooms such as the Yuoupov's Garden. You may also avail of a few services such as bus and walking tours, free visa registration, and airport pick-ups or transfers.



Getting Around St. Petersburg

St. Petersburg has numerous bus terminals, train stations and a major airport. The best way to reach the city is overland from Estonia, Finland or Moscow. You may also avail of budget flights from other European countries.

The metro at St. Petersburg is one of the finest metros that you can find in the world. It does not have special zones, and there is no time limit in using the ticket. You may purchase a token or zheton for only 25 roubles (0.80\$), which you can use for one trip. An economical way to tour the city is to buy a card that you can use for several rides. For instance, you may avail of a card that costs 210 roubles, which is good for 10 rides.

You may also ride buses or trams, and a ticket costs 21 roubles. If you prefer to ride express buses, you may avail of a ticket at a slightly more expensive price at about 30 roubles or \$1. The best thing about an express bus, though, is that it is not as crowded as a standard bus.

Make your trip to St. Petersburg an enriching experience by considering these practical travel tips. Whether you need a place to stay or dine for a couple of days or a few weeks, these highly recommended restaurants, hostels, and tourist destinations will help you enjoy your trip even when you are on a budget.

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