

Fascinating Cities and Attractions on the Trans-Siberian Line

While an intense experience in itself, taking the **Trans-Siberian** from Moscow to Vladivostok, or perhaps Beijing, won't offer you a fuller picture in regards to Russia. Not unless you decide to make a few stops along the way. They'll make your trip more comfortable and the scenery easier to take in. Even if you only stop for Baikal lake, it will still be worth it.

Kazan, 12 hours and 800 kilometers from Moscow

The city of Kazan lies on the Trans-Siberian's southern route, so if you intend to visit, make sure your train stops in the Kazan station. If you're not in a hurry, you can take the 082 train that goes from Moscow to Irkutsk. If you'd like to reach your destination quicker, choose a fast train (about 8 hours of travel time). Tatarstan's capital, Muslim, safe and clean, Kazan makes for an interesting stop, full of worthwhile sights and a nightlife to boot.



Ekaterinburg, 1 day and 1800 kilometers from Moscow

A city most famous for its industry, Ekaterinburg can be reached after 32 hours of travel by train. It's situated in the Ural Mountains and gained fame due to its architecture and organized crime in the 1990s. Far from a den of evil today, Ekaterinburg is a safe place to visit, a city that offers sightseeing and nightclubs similar to the ones in the country's capital.

Novosibirsk, 2 days and 3300 kilometers from Moscow

48 hours away from the capital or 24 from Ekaterinburg, this city is Western Siberia's capital, a hub

for scientific research and industry. Although the architecture is new, Novosibirsk carries a charm of its own, a concrete entity rising from the Siberian taiga. The city is bordered by a lake and a vast, sprawling forest. Akademgorodok, a former secret Soviet base is also in the neighborhood and is now open to visitors.

Altay Mountains, 2 days and 3600 kilometers from Moscow

Novosibirsk offers access within the Altay Mountains and Barnaul, which is only 3 hours away by both train and car. Barnaul is welcoming to tourists and travelers can go on long treks in the mountains or perform other activities, like rafting. Campsites are peppered along the way for visitors' comfort.

Krasnoyarsk, 3 days and 4000 kilometers from Moscow

Farther away from the capital, Krasnoyarsk rests around the Enisey river and its strong, quick Siberian currents. The Enisey and its course make for great scenery and are, in themselves, worth the stop. The city is also an attraction for many rock-climbers but is also ideal for camping in its natural park. From there you can head to the Tuva republic and meet the few mountain shamans left.

Irkutsk, 4 days and 5100 kilometers from Moscow

Closer to Vladivostok and Beijing than to Russia's capital, Irkutsk is the main hub bordering the Baikal lake. The city itself carries a rather rural aspect to it and is mostly devoid of attractions. From it though, one could take a bus to the settlement of Listyanka, on the lake's shore and enjoy touristic activities, or travel to Olkhon Island for a doze of Eastern Russian charm.



Baikal Lake, 4 days and 5200 kilometers from Moscow

A main priority stop if crossing Russia, the Baikal is the largest freshwater lake on Earth. Bordered

by Irkutsk and Alan-Ulde, the Baikal is great for both touristic endeavors and spiritual journeys. The majestic surroundings are bound to recharge your batteries after a long trip.

Alan-Ulde, 4 and a half days and 5600 kilometers from Moscow

The capital to the Buddhist republic of Buryatia, Alan-Ulde has an overall Asian vibe to it. Even though you've been traveling through the geographical region of Asia for quite some time now, this city is the first to show it. With friendly locals and the eastern shore of the Baikal lake, Alan-Ulde is certainly worth the stop. Don't expect the same experience as Irkutsk though. The eastern region is more suited for the independent tourist.

Khabarovsk, 5 days and 8000 kilometers from Moscow

Sitting on the Amur river, Khabarovsk is neighbored by the Chinese border. While not very interesting when it comes to its attractions, the town is friendly enough and can offer a much needed break from the long journey eastwards.



Vladivostok, 6 days and 9200 kilometers from Moscow

The end of the Trans-Siberian journey, Vladivostok endures as Russia's main hub of the east. The blend of architecture and natural terrain makes for a fascinating sight.

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