

# RUSSIA LURES FOREIGN TOURISTS WITH SIMPLIFIED ENTRY MEASURES



As the tourism world awakens, countries are taking measures to get the industry up and running ahead of the much-anticipated summer season, which could look much more “normal” than what we have gotten used to in the past couple of months.

Russia, for example, has facilitated the entry into the country for foreign tourists. Last week President Vladimir Putin **signed a law according to which foreigners will soon be able to obtain tourist visas for up to six months if they have a simple hotel reservation.**

## Positive Development

According to the current procedure, foreign tourists could obtain a Russian visa either for up to 1 month, or up to six months, if the principle of reciprocity was in effect between the state where the tourist came from and Russia.

Now, foreign visitors will be able to obtain a six-month visa regardless of what policy their countries are pursuing in relation to Russian traveler. The new law should come into force after 90 days from the date of its official publication (May 26).

It must also be noted that Saint Petersburg is currently preparing to host three football matches of the group stage as well as one of the quarterfinals of the next UEFA Euro which will take place from June 11 to July 11 in several European cities.

International supporters will be allowed to enter the country without a visa to attend the matches on presentation of the Fan ID introduced during the 2018 World Cup.

## Millions of Foreign Tourists to Arrive

In April, during his annual address to the Federal Assembly, Putin declared that “as soon as the epidemiological situation allows it, we will remove the current restrictions and millions of tourists from all over the world will come to us”.

“This is particularly thanks to the e-visa, as from most countries it will be possible to issue an electronic visa to travel to Russia, without unnecessary formalities and in just four days,” he added.

We will see if President Putin’s prediction will come true, but what is certain is that **in the first four months of the year, 1.83 million foreigners visited Russia.** Out of these, just 13.4 thousand of them came to the country for tourism purposes.

In comparison with January-March last year, the number of foreigners arriving in the country has decreased almost threefold and the number of tourists is 24 times lower.

Date: 2021-05-31

Article link:

<https://www.tourism-review.com/russian-visa-measures-for-foreign-tourists-gets-simplified-news1205>

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