

# Moscow - St. Petersburg

**Tour Date**  
10.05.22 - 01.06.22  
**Cut-off Date:** 20.02.2022



## CHARACTERISTICS/IDEA BEHIND THIS TOUR

- + The country and its people as well as the Golden Ring
- + intensive stay in Moscow and St. Petersburg
- + get a taste of Belarus
- + a little chance to meet the locals and to explore the Golden Ring.
- +/- A lot of cultural programmes, less leisure time
- Infrastructure partly good / average / lacking
- the bureaucracy upon entering Russia

## PREPARATION

**Travel documents\*:** Passport (validity until 6 months after tour), International driving license, green card, visa

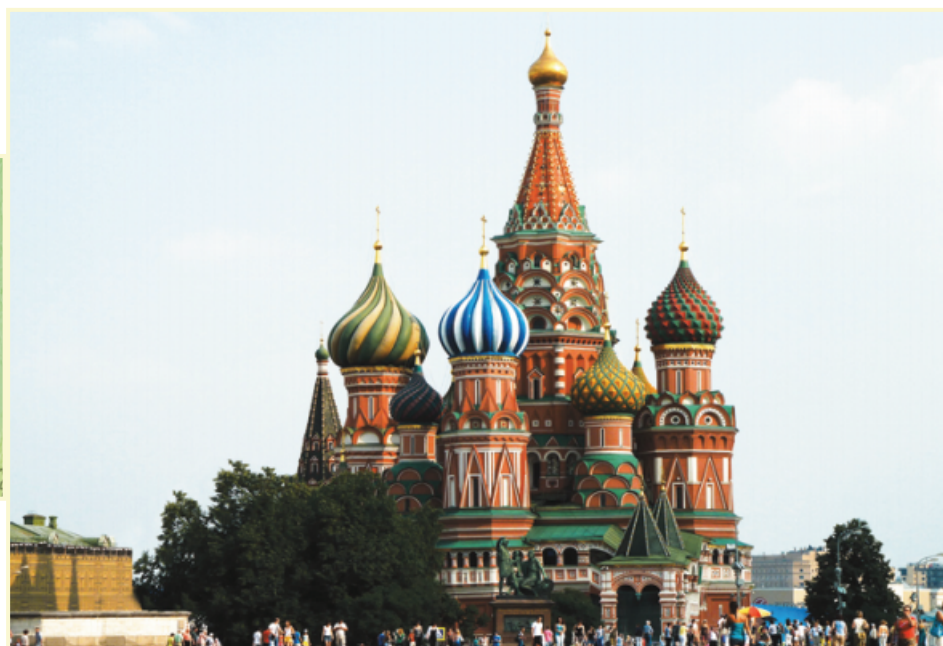
**Visa\*:** The visa is included in the tour price. We need your Passport, passport photographs, a proof of your travel health insurance and a document that you will return home from you.

**CB-radio:** not required Should you like to travel with the tour leader, a cb-radio is recommended.

**Car Insurance:** All countries of this trip are part of the green card system. Some insurances have to be asked to cover Russia. As the local cover is rather low, we recommend that you are insured fully comprehensive.

**Vaccinations:** None are compulsory. A Covid-19 vaccination may be necessary to enter a country/ avoid quarantine. More information at [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

**Pets:** require a pet passport and 10 days attestation from an official veterinarian.



**Pre-Tour Meeting:** The pre-tour meeting, at which we also collect your passport/document to get the visa takes place on March 05th and is only open to booked participants. As a service to our only-English speaking clients may take place as online meeting. Approx 10 days after the physical meeting, we will have a virtual online meeting to clarify any questions that have arisen in the meantime.

## TOUR LOGISTICS

**Meeting Point:** Official meeting point for tour start is Warsaw. As an individual meeting place, we recommend a place not far from the German-Polish border Frankfurt/Oder. From here you may travel together with other participants.

**Tour Leader:** Your tour leader informs regularly about driving stages and daily programmes. If needed he has local support staff.

**Driving Stages:** You may drive all stages by yourselves. The tour leader offers to go with him/her, also a test convoy drive may be arranged. We recommend, that you pass across the non-EU borders as the group.

**Road Conditions:** The main routes are good throughout the route. East of the EU there are partly excellent roads but every now and then stretches with bumps, concrete roads or the odd pothole. Even bad roads on some secondary routes. You also see very long construction sites.

**Overnight Places:** The overnight places in Russia are often so-called hotel sites. This is the car park at the hotel which gives us the necessary infrastructure. The other overnights are in regular campsites of local standard. They might be chosen for being a good starting point for the city tour rather than being a holiday site.

**Supplies:** Electricity and water are available daily. Grey water disposal is available on most sites. The re-fill of gas bottles may be arranged with the tour leader if really required.

**Safety & Security:** The overnight places are safe. In the more touristic areas, you should beware of pickpockets.

## Mobility Rating: 2

See catalogue "Your Journey with Mir Tours" point 7). The required degree of mobility usually only relates to some programmes and segments of the sightseeing. If your walking is not that great, you may still join this trip. To do this, you would skip one or the other programme item or shorten it. We would be happy to discuss the trip with you in this regard. In case you use a tool such as a rollator or travel wheelchair, please note that these may also have to be lifted into the means of transport..

## Food Supply:

Supermarkets with a good selection, similar to western standards are available. Gluten- and lactose-free products are available in larger supermarkets.

### **Climate:** 🌤️

Best time to travel is between Mai and August

### **Clothing:** 🧥

**Ferry:** none

## **MONEY MATTERS**

**Tour Price: 2.080,- €** per person with the own car + caravan or camper when two persons travel in one vehicle  
Additional charge for a single driver 15%

**Fuel:** In Poland and the Baltic States the fuel prices are nearly as high as Central Europe. In Belarus and Russia the prices are approx. 30% cheaper.

### **Additional costs/travel funds:**

up to 80 - 150 € per vehicle for tolls, border fees and insurances  
approx. 18 € per person/day to cover your living expenses  
up to 2 € per person/day for tips

Also plan a little buffer for souvenirs, mishaps, doctor etc.

In Poland, the Baltic States and the Russian cities you may pay at petrol stations, souvenir shops and large supermarkets with a credit card.

**Money Exchange:** without problems 📱  
ATM machines are available for use of your debit or credit card.

🌤️ = like in Western Europe

📱 = will be discussed at length during the pre-tour meeting

All this information is subject to change and is meant for this route as part of a group tour. There might be differences if you book an individual tour to these countries.

\* The information about visa and travel documents is considering that your passport is issued by Switzerland or in a country that belongs to both the EU and the Schengen area. For the other countries we will inform you individually.

## **MANDATORY INFORMATION**

**Cut-off Date:** 20.02.2022

On this date we have to decide if sufficient participants to run this tour have been reached. Ideally, you should have booked by this point.

**Booking Closes:** 31.03.2022

Should you be unable to book earlier, this is the last day that booking is possible under the condition that you bring your documents in time and the required number of participants has been reached at the cut-off date.

**Payments due:** upon booking 10%  
a further 10% is due by 16.03.2022  
Final payment due by 10.04.2022

**Cancellation fee:** in percentage of tour price; is dependent on the time left to the tour start.

as of booking = 10%  
day 54. - 30. before tour start = 25%  
day 29. - 10. before tour start = 35%  
from day 9. before tour start = 75%

## **GENERAL SERVICES:**

**Organization & Booking:** We order the included programmes for your and book the overnight places. For us – as a registered tour operator – the compliance with travel law is obligatory.

**Entry fees for included programme:** The tour price includes the normal entry fees for the sights we have put in the programme. Should there be additional parts (special exhibitions) that are not of interest for everyone they might be at your leisure. Example: We visit the Kremlin as part of the Moscow sightseeing and we pay the entry ticket. Should you opt to see the tsars' weapon chamber you pay this out of your own purse.

**Visa/Visa Fees (BY/RUS):** You hand over the required documents. We will fill out the visa form and obtain the necessary visa.

The German and English-speaking **tour leader** will meet you in the afternoon of the first day in Warsaw and will accompany you until Day 23. His/her tasks are:

- to inform you regularly about overnight places, meals, stage, fuelling, shopping and leisure options
- offer to join him/her on the driving stages
- to give support in case of mishaps.

The **resignation** (travel cancellation) **insurance** is covering if you cannot go on tour due to an insured reason. The **break-off** (travel curtailment) **insurance** refunds the part of the tour price that you did not participate in due to an insured reason. More details on insured reasons can be found in the annex.

During the **participant meeting** (including one camping fee) you can get to know other fellow travellers and clarify all open questions about the trip.

**Information Material:** We create an information booklet for this tour. This informs about all relevant topics from equipment to customs. Forms, brochures, booklets about sites and stages are added by us. Also, you receive GPS waypoints and map material so all participants have the same opportunities.

## **USEFUL INFORMATION:**

When putting this trip together, we are still in the situation that the SARS-Covid19 pandemic is affecting our lives and travels. Please note our general information on this topic in the travel catalogue, as well as our **Corona** promise.

We assume that everyone who goes on a group trip has also taken advantage of the vaccination offer in order to protect themselves and their fellow travellers from infection. Unvaccinated persons could be refused entry or, when crossing the border – regardless of the direction – may be quarantined, which cannot be reconciled with the travel plan. Should you suffer from a medical condition that prohibits a vaccination, please contact us.

The withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU and the only recently concluded contracts for future cooperation may result in changes to the travel documents required. Please also note that there is a special information available for **customers from the UK**.

The Republic of Belarus regularly makes negative headlines in the news. The last dictatorship in Europe is on the brink. We thought about whether we should reschedule the routes that lead through the country. When the catalogue went into print, the situation was tense, but not dangerous. Therefore, the well-known routes remain as they were. If the situation worsens and, for example, the safety of our participants is endangered or a travel warning is issued, we are able to travel through Ukraine to Russia at short notice. The tour length would be identical.

## **ITINERARY:**

### **Day 1 10.05.2022 Warsaw**

The official tour start is in Warsaw. Here the participants travelled individually or met the day before and completed the route through Poland together. After the welcome through the tour leader, you will be briefed on the next day's itineraries. This is followed by a welcome dinner in a nearby restaurant.

*overnight fee, Welcome Dinner*

### **Day 2 11.05.2022 Warsaw**

In the morning we will take the bus to the city centre, where the local guide is waiting for us. She will take us around the old town and various public places. In the afternoon you may return to the campsite with the group or stay behind and return yourself. In the evening the tour leader will brief you on the next driving stage and the border crossing into Belarus. What is a patronymic? What about the customs declaration? Am I really allowed only one piece of electronic equipment? Many questions, that your tour leader is able to answer.

*overnight fee, transfer, local guide*

### **Day 3 12.05.2022 Warsaw – Brest**

We leave Warsaw early to travel to Brest. We meet up at Terespol at the border. Patience is a virtue that is valuable today. One of our tour leaders remarked: "The bureaucracy and handling at the border might seem irritating. One follows a stubborn system, that does not appear to make sense to us. Play along, stay friendly and cooperate." Once you have passed across this border you will cherish the freedom of travel in the EU. Since 2010 there is a customs union of which Belarus and Russia are part of and which will make the next border more easy. We only drive a few kilometres after the border to Brest where our overnight place is situated at a hotel. First thing is a blessing of our vehicle by the local priest and a traditional welcome with bread and salt (and vodka of course). In the evening there is a group dinner and anyone feeling like it may take a stroll through the town centre which is situated just across the road.

*overnight fee, dinner*

### **Day 4 13.05.2022 Brest**

We look at the town, which has the status as a "City of Heroes". The most impressive monument is the fortress which was held several days against the enemy forces in 1941. We attempt to visit the regauging hall, where the waggons of the railway from the Russian narrow gauge can be switched to the European rail. The plant management will only decide at short notice whether the visit is feasible. It is the same with the souvenir factory where the matryoshka dolls are made from wood and painted in bright colours and where many other handicrafts are turned into more or less tasteful souvenirs. The day is filled with various new impressions. If you want to see even more, you can, for example, visit the Railway Technology Museum a few hundred meters from the parking space.

*overnight fee, local guide, entry fee*

### **Day 5 14.05.2022 Brest – Minsk**

It is a so-called driving day as we drive towards Minsk – on the M1 - the motorway to Moscow. This was known as "runway" as it was the fastest route to Moscow in WWII and it was turned into a main route once more for the 1980 summer Olympics. Belarus takes its name from the cardinal direction "bely" meaning West. The largest landlocked country in Europe Belarus is streaked by rivers and small hills. The highest elevation is 345m NN. Several lakes make the country appear rather swampy. Fields and birch forest and small villages and hamlets are characteristic for today's drive. Go along with the tour leader or travel alone, the road is mainly four-lane and well maintained. At the border of each region, you find a police post and sometimes motorhomes are stopped to satisfy the curiosity of the people on duty. At lunchtime, the city of Neswich is the first place to stop for lunch. The small town belonged to the von Radziwills family for around 400 years and is now partly lovingly restored. The castle and the town hall are just a few of the building's worth seeing. The town of Mir is only a good half hour north, about 85km from Minsk is the next option. The castle, built in the 16th century from brick and stone has five towers and meant to be a fortress. The façade is decorated in details and is both classy and impressive. After approx. one hour of sightseeing, move on to the capital city. The entrance to Minsk is impressive for everyone who is here for the first time, because most of the almost 2 million inha-

bitants live in satellite towns. On the drive to the hotel parking lot in the centre you can already see the spacious inner city, which has been laid out as an "open-air museum of Soviet architecture".

*overnight fee*

### **Day 6 15.05.2022 Minsk**

With a bus and local guide we explore the Byelorussian capital city, which was nearly completely demolished during World War II. Therefore the architecture is mostly communistic with wide avenues and monuments, but without a character. We will see the centre with the cathedral and various monuments worshipping the communist cause and the great war. We will meet the Russian soul in the farmers market. Dinner will introduce us to the local kitchen. The locals eat a lot of bread with the starters and the salad. Main course often comes out of the oven, like pork with mushrooms or potato products like Draniki or potato pancakes with butter sauce. Dessert may be a cake. Don't be surprised if the dishes follow quickly, as fast service is considered good service. Time will pass quickly, since there is a folklore show going on.

*overnight fee, bus, local guide, dinner, folklore*

### **Day 7 16.05.2022 Minsk - Gomel**

We leave Minsk behind. On our way south-east on the M5, we recommend a short detour to Gatovsky Manor after almost 200 kilometres. Lieutenant General Michail Gatovsky had the German-Lithuanian builder Viktor Schröter built a country estate here from 1890 to 1893, which combines neo-gothic and neo-renaissance. The ensemble consists of an inconspicuous castle, a few farm buildings and a 10-hectare park. The premises were recently professionally restored and are well worth a visit. Then we continue on the M5. When we arrive in Gomel, we still have to return our toll boxes. Depending on the time, you still have the opportunity to visit the city individually. With over 500,000 inhabitants, Gomel is the second largest city in Belarus. The Gomel region is considered one of the most contaminated areas by the Chernobyl disaster. Today it can be seen that in many areas the radiation exposure has clearly decreased to values that no longer pose a health risk.

*overnight fee*



**Day 8 17.05.2022****Gomel - Bryansk**

We continue towards Bryansk. But first we have to go to the very south of Belarus, where there is a shared border with Russia and Ukraine. We owe it to this fact that we can go to Russia here because there is still a real border post. We hope that the border clearance will go as smoothly as last time, because after the entry there are still about 270km to drive. We will probably only reach our parking space at Bryansk Ring Road towards evening.

*overnight fee*

**Day 9 18.05.2022****Bryansk**

Today we're taking it a little slow. The bus takes us to the city, which is about 20km away, to stroll a little and solve some administrative tasks. On the way back we make a stop at the so-called partisans meadow, a large memorial in honour of the partisans of World War II. Not only the monuments, the eternal flame and the list of the fallen are worth seeing. There is also a small museum and an exhibition with various military equipment. In the evening we come together for a meal in the restaurant of our campsite.

*overnight fee, bus, local guide, dinner*

**Day 10 19.05.2022****Bryansk – Kaluga**

Since the parking space in Kaluga is not that attractive, we should take the time to get there, so it makes sense to make a detour to the glass factory in Diatkovo. Crystal production was founded in 1790 by the famous Russian factory owner Maltsovs and has been developing for over 200 years. Since then, a large selection of household items made of glass has been produced, glasses, goblets, wine glasses, decanters, vases and much more. Not only individual pieces for architectural decoration have found national and international approval. In the attached museum you can get an impression of the rich factory history. In the afternoon we will visit the Museum of Cosmonauts in Kaluga, which is only 200m away from our parking space. The cosmonaut museum not only shows the history of space travel in Russia, you can also enter the Mir space station and admire various flying objects that have already been in space.

*overnight fee, Entrance fee*

**Day 11 20.05.2022****Kaluga - Moscow**

Another driving stage and the Russian Capital is reached. Moscow has large ring roads. We have to go from the south to the north-east of the city, an - depending on the traffic and weather - this is an adventurous undertaking, in which we sometimes move on 12-lane roads. Our parking space is located at a hotel near the city centre. Not exactly a cheap option, but thanks to the location you can quickly go "into town" on the first evening to stroll.

*overnight fee*

**Day 12 21.05.2022****Moscow**

Today a tour of the Moscow Metro is on the programme. It is a short walk from the location to the nearest subway station where everyone gets a ticket. Together with a local tour guide, you will go to the most interesting stations. The most attractive are visited and explained. In the early afternoon you can then pursue your own interests with the day ticket.

*overnight fee, metro, local guide*

**Day 13 22.05.2022****Moscow**

Today you will explore the Russian capital with an extensive sightseeing program. We visit the Red Square, see the Gum department store and St. Basil's Cathedral. Of course, we visit the Kremlin with different churches, see the tsar cannon and the tsar bell. We will see houses with famous names such as the Bolshoi Theatre, the Pushkin Museum and Lomonosov University while the bus travels between the boulevard and garden ring and on to Sparrow Hill. The New Maiden Monastery and the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour are the most important sacred buildings. But we also see modern buildings in which other gods are worshiped: the various sports stadiums and Moscow City with the skyscrapers. The city combines a variety of architectural styles, Art Nouveau, Neoclassicism and of course the famous Russian confectioner style. Between the rows of houses are extremely wide streets, parks and a multitude of monuments that commemorate famous people and special events. Strengthened by a lunch of Caucasian cuisine, there is also some free time. In the late afternoon we are back at our vehicles. A tip for the evening, cultural

program in the city, maybe you can stay back to visit one of the famous museums that are open longer on weekends. The Bolshoi and other theatres or the famous circus always have something in their programme.

*overnight fee, bus, local guide, entrance fee, lunch*

**Day 14 23.05.2022****Moscow**

This day is at your disposal. Make use of the optional programmes or explore the metropolis on your own - your decision. Perhaps visit the bohemian Arbat district, the KGB Museum or the famous Moscow Circus. Your guide will also give you some recommendations.

*overnight fee*

**Day 15 24.05.2022****Moscow - Sergiev Posad**

The group leaves Moscow in a north-east direction. Since our parking space is already in the northeast of the city, we quickly reached the arterial road that leads us through the villages to Sergiev Posad on the Golden Ring. The most easterly point of the journey is reached here. The history of the city of Sergiev Posad is closely connected with the name of the Russian religious dignitary and politician St. Sergius of Radonesh. He became a monk and founded the Trinity Monastery here in 1337. The surrounding villages and settlements became a town called Sergiev Posad at the end of the 18th century. The city changed names several times in the last century, at the beginning of the 20th century it was called Sergiev, then in 1930 it was renamed Sagorsk, today - again Sergiev Posad. We go on a city tour and visit the monastery.

*overnight fee, local guide, entrance fee*

**Day 16 25.05.2022****Sergiev Posad - Valdai**

The day's stage, which is quite long at 420km, requires the group to set off again in good time. In the afternoon we set up camp on the shores of Lake Valdai, we are standing at a hotel. Valdai is still known today for its bells, although the bell factory closed years ago. Take a stroll along the lake and maybe there will still be time for the bell museum. But not too long, because in the evening we have dinner together.

*overnight fee, dinner*

**Day 17 26.05.2022****Valdai – Veliki Novgorod**

Novgorod is the next destination and with over 1150 years one of the oldest cities of our trip. Actually, the real name of the city is "Veliky Novgorod" (Great Novgorod). The title Veliky is given because of its wealth and influence, which was due to its location on the most important trade route between Scandinavia and Greece. Even the Vikings moved through this area in the early Middle Ages. The outside of the Kremlin with the cathedral is rather simple, but still impressive. After the vehicles have been set up at the overnight stop, the city is visited.

*overnight fee, transfer, local guide, entrance fee*

**Day 18 27.05.2022****V. Novgorod – St. Petersburg**

Before heading to Petersburg, there is still time to visit the open-air museum of folk wooden architecture, which is located in the south of Novgorod. This architectural and ethnographic museum, where you can learn about traditional folk culture, consists of four ethnographic zones that represent typical farm estates with all the outbuildings. The 33-hectare complex is located on the grounds of the former aristocratic estate "Oryol Manor", of which two buildings, fragments of the main streets, individual old trees and a pond with an island have been preserved. If you go directly north, you will reach the southern suburbs of Saint Petersburg around noon. Our overnight accommodation is not far from the city's ring road, with good transport links. After the group has settled in, the tour guide will reveal some logistical details about the location in addition to the programme (shopping options, transport options, etc.). If you feel like it, you can already take the bus and subway to the centre and make your first explorations or stroll in the nearby shops.

*overnight fee*

**Day 19 28.05.2022****St. Petersburg**

Full day tour by bus and local guide: It is one of the longest sightseeing programmes that the group can expect on this day. The local guide will explain something about the city's history to you on the way to the centre. You will then see the great Nevsky Prospect, the Kazan Cathedral, the Admiralty, the Russian Museum, Grand Hotel "Europa" and the "Blood Church" before you are given time to stroll through the souvenir market. Then it goes to the Decembrist Square with the monument to Peter the Great (Brazen Rider)

and to Isaac's Cathedral, which is visited. From there the journey goes with interruptions over the Dworzowij bridge to the stock exchange, the Rostral columns, the naval cadet school as well as the armoured cruiser "Aurora" and the Smolnij monastery. Our tour of the city ends not far from the Hermitage, which we visit for about two hours. The tour guide will then arrange a meeting point with you for later, so that everyone can get a first impression, following their own interests.

*overnight fee, bus, local guide, entrance fee*

**Day 20 29.05.2022****St. Petersburg**

Full-day excursion by bus and guide to Peterhof, one of the most beautiful Tsar's summer residences, whose magnificent park with water features, according to the statement of the contemporary French ambassador, even exceeds Versailles. But don't forget your sunglasses, otherwise you run the risk of being almost dazzled by the sheen of the countless fountains and the shimmering water upon arrival. After visiting the park, you will have free time to stroll through the park. If there is enough time, we can also make a detour to Kronstadt. Because of the naval base on Kotlin Island you can see ships and submarines of the Baltic fleet, former fortifications and some monuments. The Marine Cathedral is definitely worth a visit because the structure is impressive. In the early evening the bus brings the group back to the overnight site.

*overnight fee, bus, local guide, entrance fee*

**Day 21 30.05.2022****St. Petersburg**

A trip by bus to the southwestern suburb of Pushkin, also known as Tsarskoye Selo (Tsar's Village). Here is the Catherine Palace with a large park. Built by his wife Catherine in the time of Peter the Great, the Catherine Palace was extensively expanded and embellished by Catherine II the Great. In addition to some of the private and representative rooms, we will of course visit the reconstructed Amber Room. Afterwards there will be time for individual exploration of the extensive park. The grotto, the Cameron Gallery, or the Hermitage are the most important buildings in the park alongside bathhouses and pavilions. Of course, you can also spend your free time in Pushkin. There are various references to the famous poet, an interesting farmers market and various places to stop for a break. In the late afternoon we are back at our vehicles.

*overnight fee, bus, local guide, entrance fee*

**Day 22 31.05.2022****St. Petersburg**

Day at leisure - can be used for optional programs or for exploring the cosmopolitan city of Saint Petersburg on your own. Erected in a very short time - on the orders of the great reformer Peter I - on the swamps of the Neva Delta and the bones of thousands of stonemasons and builders, one of the youngest metropolises is emblazoned both in its original splendour and in the splendour of modernity. The best thing to do is to stroll along the Neva quay yourself and let the backdrop of baroque palaces and the magic of the White Nights sink in, or immerse yourself in the hustle and bustle of Nevsky Prospect, where you can buy everything your heart desires. In the evening we say goodbye to the participants who have only booked the shortened part of the trip and are leaving tomorrow.

*overnight fee, dinner*

**Day 23 01.06.2022****St. Petersburg – Toila**

Your part of the trip is officially over this morning in St. Petersburg, you are welcome to join the group until you cross the border in Narva. Alternatively, you also have the option to extend your stay on site or to travel home via Scandinavia.

As per 12/2021  
Subject to change