

## Moscow - Magadan Expedition — Detailed description

Trip Length: 26 Group: 3-9 Departure: Fixed Period: December - January

### Trip overview

Russia is the biggest country in the world with a surface of 17 125 191 km<sup>2</sup>. Each year, Russia welcomes around 30 million of foreign tourists and attracts more and more visitors thanks to its large open spaces, its cultural diversity, its unique History, its records and wild environment.

In 2017, the travel agency BaikalNature has decided to give tourists a new opportunity to see Russia from another angle, launching a new expedition-tour "Moscow-Magadan". The whole trip will be made in off-road vehicles.

This expedition will really lead you through the whole Russian territory. We will depart from Moscow to Magadan, for a 26-day adventure of 11 000 km, crossing nine time-zones. You will be able to experiment how this vast country changes from west to east: you will see the golden domes of the Kremlin and the huge buildings turn into small churches and wooden houses, a modern society at the cutting edge of innovation come back to its traditional roots and nature... The cities will be more and more far from one another to provide room for small villages and forests, while the internet and mobile connection will go more and more rare.

All along the road, we will spend night in hotels, inns and under the tent. This is what makes the whole spirit of this adventure where "flexibility" is the key word: everybody does as he or she wants (hotel or tent, meals or not). If you choose a night under the tent, the organizers will provide the necessary equipment: tents, mattresses, first-aid kit, kitchen tools, camping stove, etc... But in all cases, we will spend some nights on the shores of lakes and rivers where you can enjoy the beautiful scenery. We will also live according to the rhythm of the lively villages to the abandoned ones, a tour within the "real" Russia, a long immersion where men and equipments undergo the long distance. As long as the distance is concerned, our vehicles are the famous Land Cruiser from Toyota, and every one of them is equipped with a camera which will enable you to download the images on your computer or hard drive at the end of the day! Concerning the program itself, we will visit Russia's capital city ; the Golden Ring ; the Ural – natural border between Europe and Asia ; Siberia with the Baikal, deepest lake in the world ; Yakutia ; the Pole of Cold Oymyakon ; ghost towns and ruins from the Gulags. We will visit each city. Our expedition will go through the most popular rivers in Russia: Volga, Ob, Yenissei, Angara, Lena, Aldan, and Indigirka. But also, we will move across the famous mountains: The Ural Chain, the biggest mountain chains in Siberia and of the Okhotsk Sea. Finally, we will drive on the most well-known roads of the country: Amour (M-7, M-51, M-55), Lena (M-56) and Kolyma. The Lena highway (M56) is located on a territory stroke by the permafrost (soils are frozen permanently). The asphalt is only present on a small part of the road, in Tynda, Neryungri and Aldan. In some areas, there is no road surface and when the snow melts, or in case of heavy rain, it becomes difficult, even sometimes impossible to go around. That is why it was declared the most dangerous road in the world in 2006. The Kolyma highway links Yakutsk and Magadan (after that there is no road left, only the Kamtchatka region). We are going to the world's end and the length of this part of the road is 2032 km long. Its nickname "The Road of Bones », comes from the time of its construction under Stalin's dictatorship by the prisoners exploited by the Far-Eastern Russian mining operators. The entire process was made in awful working and living conditions, in the cold, while working hard and under the sadistic temper of the guards of this terrible enslavement working system. Needless to say that the mortality rate was very high and digging tombs was too hard for the already abused and tired prisoners who had to bury their fallen comrades under the same road they were trying to build. According to the legend, they actually became a part of the road themselves and the Kolyma became a mass grave for thousands of people, which inspired this terrible and mournful name...

The expedition route is already known but can also change (which is the spirit of an expedition) according to the weather, the state of the road or any unforeseen events and cases of force majeure. The flexibility of the trip makes it strength, as it is a real expedition. Regarding the nights under the tent, they are a reflection of the casual everyday life while camping, that is to say sharing the different tasks between the members of the expedition and participate to the proper upkeep of the camp (assembling/disassembling...).

And as adage says: we know where it starts, we know where it ends, and in between, there is only the adventure!

NB: This tour has no fixed group departure date. The price is available upon request.

### Highlights

- Trip from the capital to the eastern confines of Russia
- Visit of "Gold ring of Russia"
- Discovery of the Baikal, the deepest lake on Earth
- Visits of ghost-towns
- Meeting with the first Russian folks

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- Visit of GULAGs
- Trip through the permafrost and the Road of Bones
- Visit of the biggest Russian cities
- Crossing the border between Europe and Asia

### Tour type

EXPEDITIONNATURE

### Difficulty

Moderate - 3-5 hours of physical activity daily

### Comfort

Basic — most of nights in tents or rooms with shared WC, some nights in comfortable rooms.

## Program

### Day 1 — Acquaintance with Russian capital

11:00 — Transfer Airport - Hotel

12:00 — Accommodation in the hotel

13:00 — Lunch (Not included)

14:00 — Free time

19:00 — Dinner

Overnight in the hotel

### Day 2 — Cities of the Golden Ring of Russia

09:00 — Breakfast in the hotel

10:00 — Departure for Sergiyev Posad

13:00 — Lunch (Not included)

14:00 — Departure to Pereslavl-Zalessky

16:00 — Departure to Suzdal

19:00 — Dinner (Not included)

Overnight in the hotel

### Day 3 — Kazan - capital of Tatarstan

08:00 — Breakfast

09:00 — Departure to Kazan

13:00 — Lunch on the way (Not included)

18:00 — Arrival and accommodation in the hotel

19:00 — Dinner (Not included)

Overnight in the hotel

### Day 4 — Acquaintance with Kazan

09:00 — Breakfast in the hotel

10:00 — Kazan city-tour

13:00 — Lunch (Not included)

14:00 — Departure to Yekaterinburg

19:00 — Dinner

Overnight in the hotel

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**Day 5 — Arrival to Yekaterinburg**

10:00 — Continuation of the trip towards Yekaterinburg  
13:00 — Lunch on the way (Not included)  
16:00 — Arrival and accommodation in the hotel  
19:00 — Dinner (Not included)  
Overnight in the hotel

**Day 6 — Border between Europe and Asia**

09:00 — Breakfast in the hotel  
10:00 — City-tour to Yekaterinburg city-centre  
12:00 — Lunch (Not included)  
15:00 — Departure to Omsk  
17:30 — Overnight stop in the Yalutorovsk city  
Overnight

**Day 7 — Arrival to Omsk**

10:00 — Continuation of the journey to Omsk  
17:00 — Arrival to Omsk  
19:00 — Dinner (Not included)  
Overnight in the hotel

**Day 8 — Acquaintance with the city**

09:00 — Breakfast in the hotel  
10:00 — Visit of Omsk city centre  
12:00 — Lunch (Not included)  
13:00 — Departure to Novosibirsk  
19:00 — Dinner (Not included)  
20:00 — Arrival and accommodation in the hotel  
Overnight in the hotel

**Day 9 — The biggest city of Siberia**

09:00 — Breakfast  
10:00 — Novosibirsk city-tour  
12:00 — Lunch (Not included)  
14:00 — Departure to Krasnoyarsk  
19:00 — Dinner (Not included)  
21:00 — Arrival to Krasnoyarsk  
Overnight in the hotel

**Day 10 — Acquaintance with Krasnoyarsk**

09:00 — Breakfast  
10:00 — Krasnoyarsk city-tour  
12:00 — Lunch (Not included)  
13:00 — Departure to Irkutsk  
19:00 — Dinner (Not included)  
Overnight in the hotel or in tent

**Day 11 — Road to Irkutsk**

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10:00 —

13:00 — Lunch in the cafe on road (Not included)

17:00 — Arrival to Irkutsk

19:00 — Dinner (Not included)

Overnight in the hotel

Hotels: Accommodation in the hotel Angara, Twin standard room

Comfort: Comfortable accommodation, WC and bath / shower in room

### Day 12 — Acquaintance with the Baikal lake

09:00 — Breakfast in the hotel

10:00 — Irkutsk city tour

13:00 — Lunch (Not included)

14:00 — Departure to Ulan-Ude

17:00 — Arrival to the Vydrino village

19:00 — Dinner (Not included)

Overnight in the tent

### Day 13 — Buryats' culture

09:00 — Free time

12:00 — Lunch (Not included)

13:00 — Departure to Ulan-Ude

18:00 — Arrival and accommodation in the hotel

19:00 — Dinner (Not included)

Overnight in the hotel

### Day 14 — Village of Old Believers

09:00 — Breakfast

10:00 — Departure for Chita

13:00 — Lunch (Not included)

14:00 — Continuation of the road towards Chita

18:00 — Stop near the village Naryn-Talacha

19:00 — Dinner (Not included)

Overnight in the tent

### Day 15 — Country of the permafrost

10:00 — Departure to Skovorodino

19:00 — Dinner (Not included)

20:00 — Arrival to Skovorodino

Overnight in the tent

### Day 16 — Day on the road

10:00 — Departure from Skovorodino to Aldan

13:00 — Lunch on the way (Not included)

19:00 — Dinner (Not included)

20:00 — Arrival to Aldan city

Overnight in the tent

### Day 17 — Departure to Yakutsk

09:00 — Starting the road

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17:00 — Arrival to Yakustk  
19:00 — Dinner (Not included)  
Overnight in the hotel

#### **Day 18 — Acquaintance with Yakutsk**

09:00 — Breakfast in the hotel  
10:00 — City tour  
13:00 — Lunch (Not included)  
14:00 — Excursions to the museums  
19:00 — Dinner (Not included)  
Overnight in the hotel

#### **Day 19 — Kolyma road**

09:00 — Breakfast in the hotel  
10:00 — Starting of the road  
13:00 — Lunch  
15:00 — Continuation of the road  
Night under the tent

#### **Day 20 — Next destination - Tomtor**

08:00 — Breakfast  
09:00 — Starting of the passage  
13:00 — Lunch (Not included)  
19:00 — Arrival to Tomtor  
19:00 — Dinner (Not included)  
Night under the tent

#### **Day 21 — Pole of Cold and Ghost town Kadykchan**

09:00 — Excursion to Oymyakon  
13:00 — Lunch (Not included)  
15:00 — Visit of the town of Kadyktchan  
Night under the tent

#### **Day 22 — Reserved day**

09:00 — Free time  
15:00 — Visit of the Jack London lake  
Night under the tent

#### **Day 23 — Departure to the Sinegorye village**

10:00 — Starting the road  
15:00 — Arrival to Sinegorye  
Night under the tent

#### **Day 24 — Way to Magadan**

09:00 — Visit of the hydroelectric dam of the Kolyma  
11:00 — Departure to Magadan  
18:00 — Arrival to Magadan  
19:00 — Dinner (Not included)

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Overnight in the hotel

Hotels: Accommodation in the Magadan hotel, Twin standard room  
Comfort: Comfortable accommodation, WC and bath / shower in room

## Day 25 — Acquaintance with Magadan

09:00 — Breakfast

11:00 — Magadan city-tour

13:00 — Lunch (Not included)

14:00 — Continuation of the excursion

19:00 — Farewell dinner

Overnight in the hotel

Hotels: Accommodation in the Magadan hotel

## Day 26 — End of the programme

09:00 — Breakfast

11:00 — Transfer to the airport

## Departures

New departures available soon

## Note

The price given is for a group of 3 people (for one car) Total number of vehicles: 2 to 4. If there are less than 3 persons in the car, the price of the expedition will be recalculated. The accommodation in a hotel room is booked for the following cities: Moscow, Suzdal, Kazan, Yekaterinburg, Omsk, Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk, Ulan-Ude, Yakutsk (2 nights), Magadan. For the other nights, the accommodation will be negotiated between the members of the group, either under the tent (no extra charges), either in a hotel along the road (extra charges on spot). Meals included: breakfasts in the hotels (see the involved cities above), dinners for the first (Moscow) and the last day (Magadan). All the other meals will be negotiated with the group members once on spot (additional charges). The itinerary of the expedition can be changed according to the road or weather conditions as well as unforeseen events.

## What's included

### Price includes

- English-speaking guide
- Accommodation as per itinerary
- Transport as per itinerary
- Medical insurance
- Excursions and visits as per itinerary
- Tent rental
- Transfer from airport / railway station on first day
- Transfer to airport / railway station on last day
- Letter of invitation
- Camping outfit rental

### Price does not include

- Personal expenses and tips
- Visa fees and travel insurance
- Optional activities
- Sleeping bag rental
- Airline tickets

## Checklist & Equipment

We recommend you to pack all your stuff in two bags: a small backpack and a large travelling bag.

**SMALL BACKPACK:** will be useful for carrying your personal belongings during the day (camera, film, personal medication, bottled water, etc.) You will also use it as hand luggage during air travel for all your heavy (to lighten the travel bag in the luggage compartment), fragile (camera, etc.) and necessary (toilet bag, etc.) things.

**BIG BACKPACK:** must contain the rest of your stuff. It will be in the luggage compartment during the flight. You will bring it during some days of the trekking.

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## Recommended checklist

Sunglasses

Large 60 litres backpack

Trekking socks

Long sleeve shirts or sweatshirts

Important travel documents: Passport and visa, original or electronic airplane tickets (with a sets of photocopies kept separately), bank card

Charger and spare battery for camera/phone

Photo / video camera

## Visa

You need a tourist visa to travel to Russia. It can be issued for a maximum period of 30 days. Your passport has to be valid for at least six months after the expiry date of your visa and to have at least two blank pages.

BaikalNature offers visa support and has created "BaikalNature letter of invitation" package. If you buy a BaikalNature tour, this package is absolutely free; when you buy any other BaikalNature service, you will have to pay for this package.

For more information please contact your nearest Russian Embassy or Visa Application Center.

## Money

The Russian currency is ruble. In all cities and many large villages of Russia, you can easily withdraw rubles, using a Visa or MasterCard, from ATMs, located in banks, department stores or hotel lobbies, some of them are open 24 hours a day. If you have euros or dollars with you, exchange offices will allow you to change them easily in the cities, seldom in the countryside. However, it can be difficult to exchange traveler's checks, even in cities.

## Tipping

All persons who compose the BaikalNature travel team (guides, drivers, cooks, etc.) are paid a decent wage for their services and do not expect any tips from you. So you have no obligation to leave anything. If you really want to express your satisfaction by leaving a gratuity, and if it is in foreign currency, be aware that torn or glued coins and banknotes cannot be exchanged. Anyway, thank you for your tips, left at your discretion in envelopes.

## Emergency Contact

You can contact BaikalNature by phone: +73952 26 56 94.

In addition, your call will be forwarded to your manager, reachable 7/7.

## Legal Mentions

Professional Guarantees: BaikalNature LLC (ООО "БайкалНейче"), United Federal Register of Tour Operators number: RTO 009402.

Financial Guarantee: "Gaide insurance company" JSC (АО "Страховая компания Гайде"). Insurance contract N 10383/18-49 from November 8, 2018. Amount of coverage: 500 000 RUB. Legal and actual address: BaikalNature LLC 119A Dekabrskikh Sobyti Str., office 13 664007 Irkutsk Russia

## Travel Insurance

In addition to your personal insurance, you have an opportunity to purchase local insurance. Please, do not hesitate to ask us about our services.

## Security

The travelers' security is our primary aim and also the long-term reputation of our travel agency. First-aid kit, adapted for this tour, is available at your guide.

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