

# CRUISING THE MIGHTY VOLGA

A cultural journey through the heartland of Russia  
from Volgograd to Moscow  
with Professor Ludmilla Selezneva

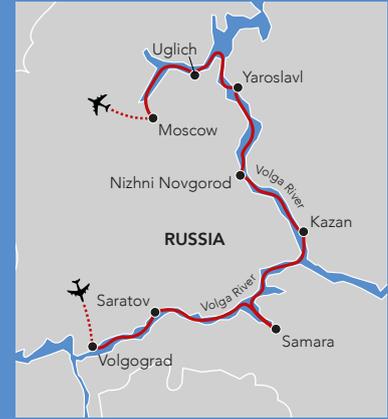
13<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019

SPECIAL  
OFFER - SAVE  
UP TO  
**£400**  
PER PERSON



NOBLE CALEDONIA

Here is a wonderful opportunity to travel along ‘the main street of Russia’, an apt title for the mighty Volga River as she snakes her way from the historic city of Volgograd through the Russian heartland to Moscow. Along the way we will encounter the many ethnic peoples of the Central Volga, learn something of their cultures and enjoy the ever changing landscapes of countryside and city, of towns and villages. We will pass small hamlets of wooden houses, fabulous Kremlins, glorious cathedrals and, in stark contrast, some vast industrial complexes.



Our voyage begins in Volgograd (Stalingrad), scene of some of the fiercest fighting of the Second World War. We then journey through fascinating places such as ancient Nizhni Novgorod, colourful Kazan, and the cities of the Golden Ring to reach Moscow, the striking and dynamic capital of this captivating country.



### Guest Speaker - Professor Ludmilla Selezneva

We are delighted that Professor Ludmilla Selezneva, one of our most popular Guest Speakers will be joining all three of our charters of the MS Volga Dream in 2019. Ludmilla’s passion and expertise on Russia will be one of the many highlights of our cruises and her lectures will add immeasurably to your knowledge of Russian history and culture. Ludmilla is a graduate with honours from Rostov State University and received her first doctorate there in history in 1982. She attained her second doctorate in 1996 from the Russian State University of Humanities in Moscow. Since 2001, Ludmilla has worked as a professor of history and politics at the University of the Humanitarian Education in Moscow. She has published more than 50 articles and authored or co-authored 10 books. She is a well-recognised authority on 20th century Russia, the Russian political movements and parties, and the modern political history.



Domes of the Church of Elijah the Prophet, Yaroslavl



Statue of Mother Russia on Mamayev Hill, Volgograd



Kul-sherif Mosque, Kazan



Iconostasis from the Church of the Transfiguration, Uglich



Moskva River and the Moscow Kremlin

## The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Volgograd, Russia.** Fly by scheduled flight via Moscow. On arrival, transfer to the MS Volga Dream. Moor overnight.

**Day 2 Volgograd.** Formerly known as Tsaritsyn and then Stalingrad, the name-changes of this remarkable city mirror its turbulent and tumultuous past. Being the site of epic battles during the Russian Revolution, it was known as Stalingrad from 1925 to 1961. It is of course, acknowledged for its heroic defense by the Russian people during World War II this being the location of the most decisive battles on the eastern front. We will visit the memorial on Mamayev Hill, where some of the bloodiest fighting transpired and also spend time at the Stalingrad Battle Panorama Museum. This evening join your fellow travellers for the Welcome Drinks & Dinner as we sail towards Saratov.

**Day 3 Saratov.** Arrive this morning into Saratov, once home to a large German community, and today stretching 34 kilometres along the Volga. This ancient city is renowned as a centre of higher education and for its connection to Russia's first cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, who lived and studied here. During our guided city tour we will visit the Radishchev State Art Museum, which was the first Russian picture gallery outside of St Petersburg and Moscow. Return to the vessel for lunch and continue sailing.

**Day 4 Samara.** Relax on the vessel's Sun Deck and admire the serenity and majesty of the Zhigulevskie Mountains as we approach the city of Samara, arriving in the early afternoon. After lunch on board we will depart on a tour of this bustling city. Highlights will include the old historic centre and Kuibyshev Square. We will also visit the Space Museum and the fascinating Samara Art Museum. Sail in the late afternoon towards Kazan.

**Day 5 Kazan.** Enjoy a relaxing morning on board as we cruise along the Volga. As we approach the Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Orthodox Churches no longer dominate the river banks, being instead replaced by the occasional Muslim mosque, all beautifully adorned and with their own unique character. After lunch on board, we will explore Kazan, the centre of Tatar culture in Russia. Here, we will visit the white-walled Kazan Kremlin where the famous mosque, Kul-Sherif, neighbours the old Peter and Paul Cathedral. Later today we will enjoy a concert by a local Tatar folk group. Sail in the early evening.

**Day 6 Nizhni Novgorod.** Enjoy a morning of cruising, arriving this afternoon into Nizhni Novgorod. Formerly named Gorkiy and once a wealthy commercial centre poised on the trade routes to the east, Nizhni Novgorod became a closed city due to the military activity there during the Soviet era. We will learn much of the city's history, including how it became a place of exile for political prisoners and also have the opportunity to walk the ramparts of the 16th century Kremlin with its 13 towers and spectacular views. We will visit a number of the city's elaborately painted churches. Tonight we will be treated by a concert from a local children's folk group and experience a traditional Russian dinner with vodka tasting.

**Day 7 Cruising.** Today we can relax on board and watch the scenery pass by as we wend our way towards Yaroslavl. Enjoy some onboard activities and attend a fascinating talk by our Guest Speaker.

**Day 8 Yaroslavl.** This morning visit the oldest city on the Volga River, Yaroslavl, a World Heritage Site. Visit the Church of St. Elijah the Prophet, featuring detailed frescoes and icons. Here, you will be treated to a stirring a capella choir performance. Afterwards there will be time to experience the lively farm market before reboarding the Volga Dream. Alternatively, join an excursion to the Governor's Palace, a living museum of Russian art, history and culture.



Cathedral of the Transfiguration in Uglich



Space Museum, Samara



St Basil's Cathedral, Red Square, Moscow



Radishchev Art Museum, Saratov

**Day 9 Uglich.** We will arrive this morning into Uglich, a city that dates back to the 10th century. Our walking tour of this Golden Ring city will include the Chapel of Dmitry, a 17th-century treasure built on the site where Ivan the Terrible's 10-year old son met his death. We will also visit the Church of the Transfiguration, noted for its beautiful iconostasis, and attend a choral musical concert. Spend a leisurely afternoon on board cruising towards Moscow. This evening join your fellow travellers in the lounge for the Captain's Farewell Drinks & Dinner.

**Day 10 Moscow.** Disembark today after breakfast and transfer by coach to the city centre for a tour of Russia's dynamic capital city, including Red Square with its iconic St Basil's Cathedral and GUM department store. We will continue to The Ritz Carlton, a deluxe, five-star hotel located just off the Red Square and next to the Kremlin. Check in for our two night stay and enjoy lunch in the hotel. This afternoon, our guided tour will include the glorious Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, followed by a visit to the fascinating Novodevichy Cemetery. The cemetery holds the tombs of notable Russian authors, musicians, playwrights and poets, as well as political leaders and scientists. Return to the hotel and enjoy the remainder of the evening at leisure with dinner under your own arrangements.

**Day 11 Moscow.** After breakfast at the hotel we will depart for a visit to the world famous Kremlin and its Armory Museum, consisting of Tsarist thrones,



Ramparts of the ancient Kremlin, Nizhni Novgorod

ceremonial crowns, coaches and gifts of state. View the ornate gems of the Diamond Fund, including Catherine the Great's diamond-encrusted coronation crown and the 190 Orlov diamond. Also visit the Square of Three Cathedrals (including entrance to one cathedral). After lunch in a local restaurant we will visit the old Tretyakov Gallery to view its extraordinary and diverse collection of Russian art, from 12th century icons to 20th century paintings. Return to your hotel and later gather for our final dinner together.

**Day 12 Moscow to London.** This morning enjoy breakfast at the hotel before transferring to the airport for your return scheduled flight to London.

## PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

### SPECIAL OFFER - SAVE UP TO £400 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Cabin Description	Deck	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Standard twin	Cabin	£4295	£4095
Superior twin	Main	£4795	£4595
Deluxe double	Promenade	£5195	£4895
Junior suite double	Promenade/Sun	£5595	£5295
Superior stateroom twin	Sun	£6195	£5795
Deluxe junior suite double	Sun	£6595	£6195
Owner's suite	Promenade	£6995	£6595
Standard single	Promenade	£4395	£4195
Deluxe single	Sun	£4795	£4595
Standard twin for sole use	Cabin	£6995	£6795
Deluxe double for sole use	Promenade	£7495	£7295

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Economy class scheduled air travel • Nine nights aboard the MS Volga Dream on a full board basis • House wine and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Welcome bottle of champagne (deluxe cabins and suites only) • Shore excursions as described • Two nights at The Ritz-Carlton, Moscow with breakfast • Lunch on Days 10 & 11 • Dinner on Day 11 • Gratuities • Tour Manager • Guest Speaker • Transfers • Port taxes • UK airport taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, Russian visa, dinner on Day 10.

*NB. Ports, itinerary, excursions & entrance timings are subject to change.*



## MS VOLGA DREAM

The vast network of Russian waterways is served by numerous standard class vessels. However for our journey along the Volga we are fortunate to be using the deluxe MS Volga Dream. This elegant vessel has been totally rebuilt from a vessel that originally accommodated over 200 passengers and now accommodates just 100. The result is a splendid and spacious vessel that offers superior accommodation and services.

### Your Cabin

Cabins are located over four decks and categories range from standard cabins on the Cabin Deck to deluxe suites on the Sun Deck. All cabins are outside facing with Standard staterooms on the Cabin Deck featuring porthole windows, Main and Promenade Deck cabins feature large picture windows, except for the Owner's suite located on the Promenade Deck which has both large picture windows and a private wrap around terrace. All cabins and suites on the Sun Deck feature picture windows. All cabins offer individually controlled air-conditioning and heating, direct dial telephone, satellite flat screen television and minibar. Additional comforts provided include bathrobes, slippers, hairdryer, bathroom accessories kit and bottled water (replenished daily).



Owner's Suite



Deluxe Junior Suite



Deluxe Double Cabin

## Your Space

Spread over four decks, the MS Volga Dream is spacious and tastefully decorated to look more like a country hotel than a river vessel. The restaurant is located on the Main Deck and accommodates all guests in one sitting. The Neva Lounge and Bar is a pleasant space for relaxation with large panoramic windows and a bar area where music is performed live. On the large, spacious Sun Deck you will find comfortable deck furniture where you can relax and take in the passing Russian countryside. There is also a library which features board games and internet access, a fitness centre, sauna and small shop.

## Your Dining

The stylish restaurant is located on the Main Deck and seats all passengers in one sitting at tables of four, six and eight. In keeping with the superior quality of the vessel, the cuisine aboard the MS Volga Dream is what you would expect aboard a luxurious river vessel and both Russian and international cuisine is served. Breakfast is served buffet style with both continental and cooked meal options, and lunch is served buffet-style, with an à la carte option for your main course. When weather permits guests are welcome to enjoy their meals on the Sun Deck. Dinner is served à la carte and is a four course affair, including some specialist themed evenings which will feature national delicacies. Afternoon tea is served daily in the lounge and there is a coffee and tea station operating 24 hours a day.



Restaurant



Superior Twin Cabin



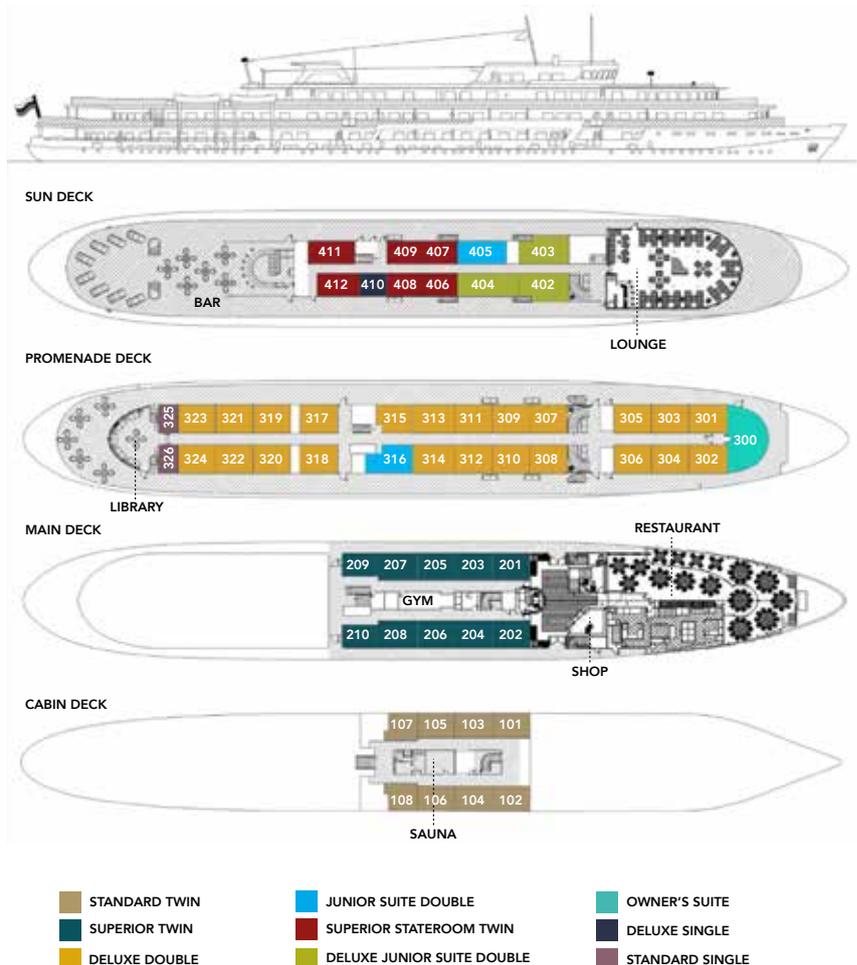
Lounge

## Life On Board

With just 100 fellow passengers and 60 crew members, the MS Volga Dream prides itself in its personal and friendly ambiance. Although the atmosphere aboard is informal, the comfort and service is akin to a deluxe hotel, otherwise not available in remote rural areas of Russia. Your daily programme will be busy ashore, but your time on board will be relaxed and convivial. In addition to shore excursions there will be daily activities aboard the vessel for your enjoyment, such as Russian language classes, matrioshka painting classes, Russian cooking classes and if the weather permits a barbecue on the Sun Deck.

## For your Comfort, Safety and Security

The MS Volga Dream's dedicated crew of 60 is there to ensure that your journey along Russia's iconic river is comfortable, informative and above all safe. The ship is not designed for those with severe mobility restrictions or wheelchair dependent passengers as there is no lift on board. There is a full time doctor on board in the unlikely case of an emergency or a passenger seeking medical attention. Smoking on board is restricted to a specially designated area on the Sun Deck.



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Itinerary and accommodation subject to change. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.  
Cover image: Church of St Dmitry on the Blood, Uglich