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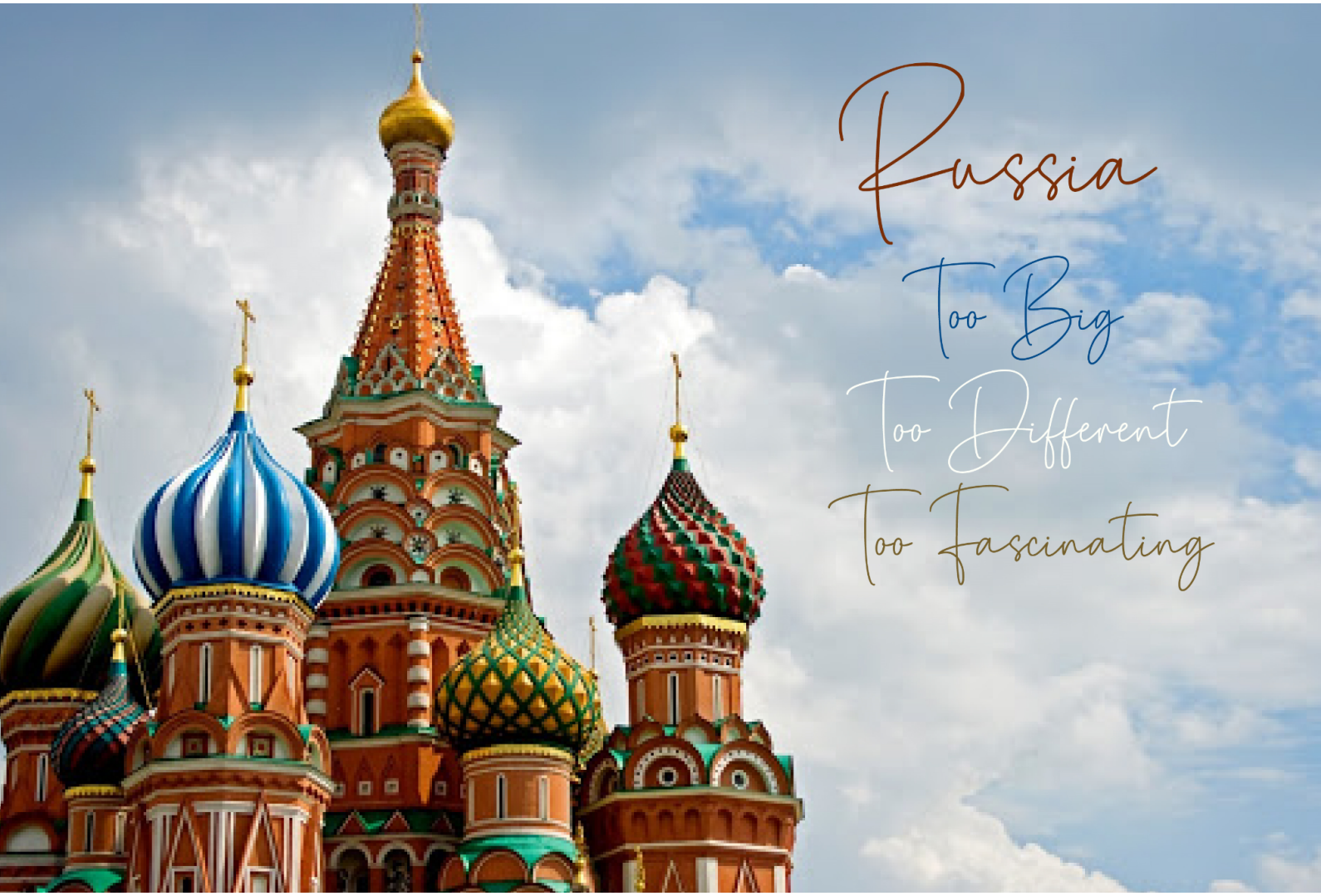
TRAVEL & TOURISM
Since 1970

RUSSIA
Regular Golden Ring
Suzdal - Kostroma
3 - Day Itinerary



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Introduction: The Golden Ring is a group of medieval towns and cities that form a ring to the northeast of Moscow. These towns played a significant role in early Russian history and in the formation of the Russian Orthodox Church. The towns are full of ancient Russian architecture from the Middle Ages including kremlins (walled fortresses), monasteries, cathedrals and churches. Visiting the Golden Ring will give you a chance to go back in time and imagine the fabled Russia of the past. The cities are associated with Russian Princes and knights, early Tsars, the Mongol invasions and many other historical figures and events. Listening to the history and legends told by your experienced guide will evoke memories of storybooks and fairy tales. The towns of the Golden Ring are all in the Russian countryside which is beautiful – full of forests and fields and rivers and lakes.

Day 1 – Suzdal

Day 1 - Moscow – Zagorsk – Alexandrov –Suzdal

Meet with your guide at a hotel in Moscow and transfer to the first stop – Sergiev Posad. The road will take about 2 hours.

10:00 **Sergiev Posad** is the only town from the Moscow region on the UNESCO World Heritage list. In addition, it is a significant spiritual centre of the Russian Orthodox Church. During the tour we will see the Trinity **St. Sergius Monastery** (Lavra) - the unique architectural ensemble. It includes a masterpiece of Russian architecture of the XV century – the Trinity Cathedral. Sergius of Radonezh's reliquiae – one of the most esteemed Russian Saints – is kept there. We will look at a beautiful antique iconostasis painted by famous icon painter Andrei Rublyov in the XV century. We will have a chance to visit the **Assumption Cathedral.** It was built in the XVI century by order of Tsar Ivan the Terrible. Here, in the Refectory, we will look at the wood carving masterpieces of the XVII century

11:30 After that we will head to the country residence of the Moscow sovereigns, which is situated in Alexandrov, about 50 km away.

12:30 Then we will become acquainted with the history of **Alexandrovskaya Sloboda** (village) and the **Alexandrov Kremlin**. It was the capital of the Russian State during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, one of the most complex and contradictory persons on the Russian throne. We will capture the essence of Medieval Rus' while visiting the Palace Chambers (XVI century), Sovereign's Yard, House Temple, where the Tsar prayed, and the Medieval Cellars, where oprichniks, the bodyguards of the Tsar Ivan the Terrible, executed and tortured the «undesirables».

13:30 Free time for lunch for 1 hr

14:30 Afterwards, we will go to the next stop of our tour - **Suzdal.** It is a city with approximately 1000 years of history. Some city facilities are included into the list of UNESCO Heritage. The city is located 3 hours away.

17:00 When we arrive you will have a unique opportunity to taste **Medovukha** – an ancient Russian drink which appeared well ahead of vodka. It is made of honey, water and yeast. Then we will proceed to the hotel – **Pushkarskaya Sloboda.** Here you will be able to have dinner and relax after the busy day.

Expert Tips

Optional activity in Trinity St. Sergius Monastery (Lavra) We would like to suggest you to climb the Bell Tower in , which height is 88 m, and take a picture with the largest operating bell in Russia (Tsar Bell - 72 tons, the younger brother of the Tsar Bell of Moscow Kremlin). This tower offers an unforgettable view of the Lavra and its surroundings. **Please Note (!)** : visiting the Bell Tower has a number of restrictions. Its visiting is forbidden for: - children under 7 years old and older people over 60; - people suffering from cardiac, asthmatic diseases, claustrophobia, fear of heights.

The visit may also be limited due to weather conditions.

Day 2 – Kostroma

Day 2 - Suzdal – Vladimir – Ivanovo - Kostroma

09:00 After breakfast at the hotel, we will start our day with the **Suzdal Kremlin tour** – the oldest part of the city. We will see the facilities of the XII century such as: Church of the Nativity and Archbishops´ Chambers, which were used as household and accommodation for the local priests.

Later we will visit the **open-air Museum of Wooden Architecture** where we will get acquainted with the history and life of Russian peasantry and see vivid examples of Russian architecture.

We will finish our tour in Suzdal with a unique **master-class of bell ringing**. During the workshop you will learn about production of bells and several ways of bell playing. At the end of the lesson you will be able to play your own melody and feel like a real bell ringer.

12:00 Then we will move to the next city – **Vladimir**. It was a capital of the Vladimir-Suzdal principality, or Grand Duchy of Vladimir, in the XII century.

During the Vladimir tour we will see the rarest architecture heritage of the XII century such as: **St. Dmitry and Assumption cathedral** , where the murals by Andrei Rublyov. Also we will take a look at the old gates which earlier were the main entrance to the city. Then we will proceed to the **Museum of Crystal, Lacquer Miniatures and Embroidery**, where a rich collection of Russian handicrafts and folk art, lacquer miniature, rock crystal and glass pieces are presented. Some of the crystal and glass exhibits were created more than 250 years ago.

14:30 Lunch break for 1 hr

15:30 The next stop in our trip is **Kostroma**. Transfer takes about 3 hours. Upon request we can have a technical stop in **Ivanovo** . It is located 106 km from Kostroma.

On the way we can discuss modern life in the Russian Federation outside of Moscow and Saint-Petersburg.

19:00 When we arrive in Kostroma we will check in at the **Old Street hotel**. Here you will be able to have dinner and taste local cuisine. Then you will have free time and comfortable rooms to get some rest and prepare for the last day of our tour.

Overnight: Old Street Hotel The Old Street Hotel occupies the beautiful building of the XIX century. It offers travelers all modern conveniences. It is located near the historical and business center of the city. Within walking distance you may find the main sights of the city of Kostroma, the Volga River embankment and shopping malls. The hotel is a sample of a combination of the Russian hospitality and the European standards of service. Interiors and color scheme of rooms and halls of the hotel emphasize classical style, color and the atmosphere of Kostroma. Guests of 16 comfortable perfectly equipped rooms of various categories may enjoy a restaurant of European cuisine and room service.

Day 3 - End of Itinerary

Day 3 - Kostroma - Yaroslavl – Peryaslavl-Zalessky – Moscow.

09:00 In the morning after breakfast we will discover **Kostroma.** We will see such architectural monuments of the XVI – XVIII centuries as **Trinity Cathedral**. We will also visit the **Ipatievsky Monastery**. It is a place where Mikhail Romanov, the ancestor of the Romanov Royal Dynasty, was chosen to the throne.

Kostroma has been well known for its linen goods. That is why we will visit the **Museum of traditional Russian handicrafts**. In this museum you will learn how linen art developed in Russia. Afterwards, we invite you to take part in a **handicraft master-class**. You will have a unique opportunity to create a talisman by your own hands and take it home. Then we will be on our way to the ancient Russian town, nested on the bank of the Volga river – **Yaroslavl.**

13:00 Lunch at restaurant complex "Volga"

14:00 When lunch ends we will have an overview tour where you will see the main highlight of the city **Transfiguration Monastery**, built in the XII century for defense purposes and one of the oldest friaries of Russia. The monastery was founded on the embankment of the River Kotorosl and for a long time was the spiritual, economic and cultural center of Yaroslavl. On our way to Moscow we invite you to visit the oldest place where the Russian fleet was born – **Pereyaslavl Zalessky**. The road will take about 2 hours.

17:30 Upon arrival we will have a technical break and a photo stop to see the remaining architectural monuments of the XII century. They were built in the days of Vladimir Monomakh. He was a great ancient Russian prince who united the Rus' principals against the Cumans-novad (they attacked the Rus' for a long period of time).

We will finish our tour in Moscow, which is about 150 km away of Pereslavl Zalessky