

SUN



ERGOS

*Serving orphans, widows and
the poor in Russia*

TEAM INFO PACKET

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Working together
to build communities of compassion

SAINT PETERSBURG & VELIKIY NOVGOROD | RUSSIA

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1 SUNERGOS INTERNATIONAL – MISSION SUMMARY

OUR MISSION

The mission of SunErgos International is to –

- Provide social services to orphans, elderly and the poor
- Encourage faith communities and organizations in building communities of compassion
- Cut through racial, cultural, social and denominational barriers, bringing people to work together
- Follow the footsteps of Jesus: loving God’s children, not just in word, but in action

FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS

- God has a special interest and love for orphans, widows and the poor.
 - ❖ *Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...* James 1:27
 - ❖ *I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you.* John 14:18
 - ❖ *A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.* Psalm 68:5
 - ❖ *Dear children, Let us not love with words or tongue, but with actions and in truth.* 1 John 3:18

- There is tremendous need to minister to orphans in Russia
(An “orphan” – abandoned to the state, including “social orphan” with parent still living)
 - ❖ There are over a million orphans and homeless children in Russia. Officially, there are 730,000 orphans living in 2,000 state-run orphanages. That means that Russia has more orphans today than after World War II! Statistics show that only one out of ten Russian orphans becomes a functional member of society. At age 18, children are forced to leave the orphanages with little or no formal schooling, very limited life skills, and no one to turn to for assistance. Within the first year of leaving the orphanage, over 40% are involved in prostitution or crime, another 40% are addicted to drugs or alcohol, and another 10% commit suicide. Multitudes of Russian children are on the run; living on the streets or in underground sewers desperately needing basic food, medicine and clothes.
 - ❖ Russia has one of the fastest growing AIDS epidemics in the world, with 100 new infections every day. Increasingly, women and their infants are being affected. Latest figures show 22,000 babies have been born to HIV-positive women. And many are being abandoned by their mothers into the care of the state.

Mission Summary – continued

WHAT WE DO

- Connect churches, universities and faith organizations cross-culturally, to work together to build communities of compassion.
- Minister to orphans and at risk children, who have been impacted by abuse, neglect and abandonment.
 - ❖ Demonstrate the unconditional love of Jesus Christ to at risk children.
 - ❖ Establish long-term relationships with the orphanages and the children in their care by visiting the children on a weekly basis.
 - ❖ Be a facilitator for Christians, Churches and Universities to minister to orphans in their distress through mission trips, volunteer and giving opportunities, both monetary and in-kind.
 - ❖ Demonstrate the love of Christ by providing humanitarian aid to enhance the quality of life for orphan and at risk children.
- Host international teams and interns who work in orphanages, street centers, organize summer camps and give emotional, spiritual and material support to orphans and at risk children.
 - ❖ Organize seminars for the international teams
 - We believe the importance of education. Prior to a team’s ministry, we will provide on-site seminars and language courses.
 1. Russian History, Orthodoxy, Protestant movement in Russia, Culture, Tradition, Language
 2. The significance of Russian orphans in society. The difference between a “complete orphan” and a “social orphan”
 - ❖ Provide for the team when on site: housing, transportation, food, cultural program (excursions), debriefing and material needs of orphanage.

2 WHY GO MYSELF IF I CAN SEND MONEY?

A look at short-term missions...

Many Christians believe that money could be better spent by sending it to hurting places, rather than using it to go on short term mission trips to those places.

The following is an eloquent response by a pastor who ministers to Haitian orphans when asked his opinion.

After all the years I've worked in Haiti, no one there has ever thought to ask me, "Why do you spend all that money on airfare and your expenses to come here? Why don't you just send us money?" The Haitians know, even though they are the poorest people in this hemisphere, that any amount of money will just get used up and they will still be poor, but that building relationships of love is something that last forever, that no one can take away, and that can give people more encouragement to endure than any amount of money ever could.

The very first time I went to Haiti was in August, 1983...when it was time to say goodbye, the Haitian pastor stood before us and said: "The leaders of our church sat together and thought about all the money you spent in order to come here to Haiti. We are a poor people, and what you spent just to get here is more than any of us can ever imagine. Yet, we feel that what we received was the priceless gift of HOPE. Your being here in person to share with us and love us was most special to us. If you had chosen to send us \$10,000 instead of coming to visit us, it would not have meant anything in comparison! Now we have established a *relationship* together. What if a hurricane comes now and blows the roof off our church? We know that you will be with us as best you can, especially in prayer, no matter what happens. God has shown us His special care through your visit. This mission was like a vitamin to us; now we are fortified with new strength and courage!"

Pastor James Glynn, Heart of God Ministries

We must remember – that it is not God's goal to simply get money and supplies to the Russian people, or even to our orphanages.

His goal is always the transformation of lives on both sides.

He is calling you to Russia not simply for what you might give to them, but for what He wants to show you and do in your life.

*If I speak with the tongue of a national, but have not love,
I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.*

*If I wear the national dress and understand the culture and all forms of etiquette, and
if I copy all mannerisms so that I could pass for a national, but have not love, I am nothing.*

*If I give all I possess to the poor, and if I spend my energy without reserve,
but have not love, I gain nothing.*

*Love endures long hours of language study, and is kind to those who mock his accent;
love does not envy those who stayed home; love does not exalt his home culture,
is not proud of his national superiority.*

*Love does not boast about the way he does it back home, does not seek his own ways,
is not easily provoked into telling about the beauty of his home country,
does not think evil about this culture.*

*Love bears all criticism about his home culture, believes all good things about this new culture,
confidently anticipates being at home in this place, endures all inconveniences.*

*Love never fails: but where there is cultural anthropology, it will fail;
where there is contextualization, it will lead to syncretism;
where there is linguistics, it will change.*

*For we know only part of the culture and we minister to only part.
But when Christ is reproduced in this culture, then our inadequacies will be insignificant.*

*When I was an American, I spoke as an American, I understood as an American,
I thought as an American; but when I left America, I put away my American ways.*

*Now we adapt to this culture awkwardly; but He will live in it intimately.
Now I speak with a strange accent, but He will speak to the heart.*

And now these three remain: cultural adaptation, language misunderstandings and love.

*But the greatest of these is **love**.*

2

FUNDRAISING

It is important to fundraise for your trip! There are many ways to raise your support through donations. Doing group fundraisers is extremely important, because you raise your support and at the same time build rapport and unity within your team. Some examples are: car washes, bake sales, auctions, dinners, etc.

Another vital part of fundraising is letting your family and friends know that you are going on a mission trip and giving them the opportunity to participate through prayer and financial giving.

Many people miss out on cross-cultural mission experiences because they do not know how to request support for their trip.

SunErgos strongly encourages all team members to send Support Letters to family and friends. And our recommendation is to send out 50 letters for every thousand you need to raise.

Below is a sample letter asking for short-term mission support. Write your own letter with the correct details following this general model.

Notice that there are 3 basic parts of the letter:

1. Describe the trip;
2. Invite people to participate through:
 - a. Prayer
 - b. Financial giving
3. Thank them for considering your request.

Note: Include a Donation Form for the supporter to fill out and return with his/her check.

Remember: You are inviting people to experience the privilege and joy of giving, and you are connecting them personally with God's work in the world.

Sample Letter | Requesting Support for a Mission Trip

Dear _____,

After prayer and consideration, I have decided to take part in a mission trip to Russia this summer. The opportunity is offered through SunErgos International. It will be a firsthand experience of life and ministry among the orphans and street kids of St Petersburg, Russia.

The main objective of our mission team will be to lead a day camp at a Transit Center for orphans and street kids and teens of St Petersburg, Russia. Every day we will share stories, make crafts and play games with the kids and teens of the center. Building relationships that will change lives. These kids and teens come from very abusive homes, some have seen too much hate and abuse to last them a lifetime. Our goal is to love these kids and teens; and show them, through our actions, that there is a Father in Heaven that loves them very much! Our team of ten will leave May 10th, from Seattle, and return from St Petersburg on June 3rd.

I am writing to give you an opportunity to participate in this ministry. Please consider praying for our team. Pray for the new friends we will make in Russia. And pray for me: for health and protection on the trip, for my effectiveness in ministry and ability to learn new things from this experience. Pray that I will find the financial support to make this trip possible. Pray especially that I will return with a new heart for missions and God's hurting in the world.

Another way that you can participate is to support me financially. The cost of the trip is \$3,500 per person. I am trusting God to move in people's hearts, leading them to donate toward this mission trip. If you feel that you could participate in this way, please:

- a. Make a check payable to _____;
please do not write my name on your check.*
- b. Attach the Donation Info Slip provided.*
- c. Send your check to _____.*

Whether you are able to give financially or not, please pray for me throughout my trip. Thank you very much for considering my request.

Serving Jesus, (or something else),

Next steps:

1. Keep a list of people who have donated for you, and thank them in writing.
2. Share your story with those people upon your return.

3 WHAT TO BRING & WHAT TO LEAVE AT HOME

Clothes

**Note about clothing in St. Petersburg: As a general rule, people in St. Petersburg dress nicer than they do in some parts of the United States. Many Americans feel underdressed and/or sloppy compared to the Russians they see. If you think this will bother you, bring one or two nicer outfits to wear when shopping, sightseeing, etc. But keep in mind most of what you will be doing is working with children, so bring comfortable clothes that can withstand some wear!*

You will only need a 1-week supply of clothes, (2-week for month trip), please pack modestly

Bring clothes for all types of weather

Temperature will range:

60 – 85 F (May-August), 30 - 45 F (March-April)

**In rare occasions we have had 45F in May and 100F in July*

- Jeans, Capri pants, etc.
- Rain jacket and umbrella
- Winter jacket (Oct – Mar)
- Sweater/Fleece
- T-shirts, shorts (at the knee please), etc.
- Ladies, please do not bring short shorts, short skirts or thin strap tank tops; sleeveless shirts are ok
- Swimsuit (if coming in the summer)
- Tennis shoes and/or very comfortable walking shoes!
- Flip flops or slippers to use inside (slippers with rubber bottom)
- Shower shoes (rubber flip flops)
- Church/Theatre clothes: (for 3+ week mission teams)
 - Guys: slacks and shirt (dress shoes if possible)
 - Ladies: skirt/slacks/shirt or dress, dress shoes, head scarf (for some Orthodox churches)
- Money Belt (not over the shoulder!) for carrying passport and dollars when needed.
- Purses – sensible purses only that are hard to pick-pocket from (with zipper closed, many pockets, over the shoulder preferably)
- Remember: you are allowed to bring **1** suitcase, weighing 50 pounds (23 kg). Sometimes, your host will ask you to bring additional things to Russia for SunErgos ministry.

What to bring & What to leave at home - continued

Personal Hygiene products

- Bring what you use every day; try to share among your team.
- If you use something very specific, please bring enough for the trip, otherwise you can find most things in Russia
- **Anti-bacterial gel**
- Hand/body wipes
- If allergic to any laundry detergent, please bring your own (generic detergent will be supplied for the team)
- Sun block; if going in the summer and you burn easily

Medication

- Standard first-aid kit
- Typical medicine for cold/ flu/ upset stomach/ headache/ etc.
- If you need to bring prescribed medication, please leave it in its original containers!
- St. Petersburg/Novgorod is bad for allergy sufferers; (many who have never had allergies get them here!) so make sure to bring enough allergy medicine for the duration of the trip.

Mosquito Repellant!

- Cream or spray repellant
- Anti-itch medicine
- Mosquito nets (for camp - optional)
- There are a lot of mosquitoes, so be prepared!

Journal and Bible

- Journaling is a great way to remember your trip and to process everything
- See “Helpful Ideas for Keeping a Daily Journal” section for ideas.
- Reading the Bible daily will renew your strength and help you to continue your ministry each day
- Your team will have devotions every evening, so be prepared with whatever supplies you need for them, such as: devotional book, songbook, and/or other plan for devotions

Souvenirs from your country and/or city (optional)

- Small things from home are great presents for people that you will meet (do not give presents to kids; if you give to one, you must give to each child)
 - Examples: key chains, magnets, calendars, bracelets, mugs, etc.

What to bring & What to leave at home - continued

ISIC (INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ID CARD) !!!!! (MANDATORY FOR STUDENTS)

Your student ID from your school is not sufficient.

An ISIC can be bought for \$26 (please see their website for locations - www.isic.org)

*note: travel medical insurance can also be bought through this website.

Other

- Camera, charger, memory cards ☺ And plug converter.
- A few pictures of your family/friends/pets to show the kids – they love to see them and it’s a great way to share more about yourself! (Please avoid pictures of your house, car, or other expensive material possessions)
- 2 Copies of your passport and visa (mandatory!). Leave another copy at home with a parent.
- Copy of your insurance card. Make sure you know what paperwork you need to do in order to receive reimbursement in USA.
- Water bottles – Halogen Bottles or other bottle that you can wash and reuse. You will be able to refill your water bottles everyday.

Word of warning:

If it is important to you and it is valuable, think twice before bringing it!

You never know what will get lost or stolen.

DO NOT BRING

1. Anything that requires an electric outlet! If you must, for camera /etc., you must bring an adapter AND converter - there is a different voltage in Russia! You can buy one at Radio Shack for about \$30; try to share among your team. If your charger converts the voltage on its own, all you need is an adapter for the plug.
2. Hairdryer. It will be provided.
3. Towels or bedding - they will be provided for you. (If you prefer a big towel, bring your own).
4. Expensive and/or flashy jewelry.

4 HELPFUL IDEAS FOR KEEPING A DAILY JOURNAL

One of the most valuable ways your mission experience can aid your growth in your personal understanding of God and His concern for the orphaned and the hurting in this world is by keeping a daily journal and referring back to your entries every week or month during the following year.

Examples of some questions and statements to use as a guide for your daily journal entries:

- What was my most fulfilling/happy/funny experience today?
- What was my most frustrating/difficult/stupid experience today?
- What did I learn about myself today?
 - How I work in a group...
 - My strengths/weaknesses...
- What did I learn about God today?
 - His character...
 - His will for Russia/ for children...
 - What He is teaching me...
- What was my influence on my team today? On the people I am serving? How can I improve on it tomorrow?
- Have I shown a grateful spirit today...
 - -to team members?
 - -to my interpreters?
 - -to my leaders?
 - -to Russians who serve me?
- What was the basic message of my devotions today?
- The interesting people I met today...
- The interesting thing I learned about a child today...
- Observations I made today about:
 - -children/teens
 - -missionaries
 - -Russian culture/ American culture
- Assumptions I made today about:
 - -children/teens
 - -missionaries
 - -Russians
 - -Russian culture/ American culture

III. WELCOME TO RUSSIA

1 CULTURE SHOCK

DEFINITION OF CULTURE

“Culture is an integrated system of learning behavior patterns that are characteristic of the members of any given society. *Culture refers to the total way of life of a particular group of people.* It includes everything that a group of people thinks, says, does and makes – its customs, language, material artifacts and shared systems of attitude and feelings. Culture is learned and transmitted from generation to generation.”

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Culture strives to meet basic human needs. Since no two cultures are exactly alike, each arrives at different solutions to meet the same needs. These solutions are generally neither right nor wrong, just different. We are NOT saying that there are no absolutes. We, as Christians, believe that the Bible presents many absolutes. Try to **withhold judgment and wait!** Don't use your culture's solution as the standard.

God wants us to live *above* as well as *in* culture. In the Gospels you can see how Christ exemplified this principle. He lived in his culture, but did not always accept all of their values. Also, for Paul, his culture and its way of doing things was not as important as knowing God! The central issue for all of us knows God through Jesus! (*Phil. 3:4-11*).

WHAT IS CULTURE “SHOCK”?

Culture “shock” is the term used to describe the more pronounced reactions to the psychological disorientation most people experience when they move into a culture markedly different from their own. Culture shock comes from being cut off from the cultural cues and known patterns with which you are familiar (though probably unaware of) – especially the subtle, indirect ways you normally have of expressing your feelings. (A simple “friendly” smile from one culture may unknowingly be interpreted as an “invitation” in another.)

This disorientation may cause different levels of discomfort, home-sickness, withdrawal, resentment and, in rare cases, depression.

Once you begin to orient yourself to the new culture and are able to interpret some of the subtle cultural cues which passed by unnoticed earlier, the culture will seem more familiar. You become more comfortable in it and feel less isolated.

Talking about your feelings and experiences with your teammates and/or host will help you realize what you are going through and process it easier and faster.

2

EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

North American Values

Task/activity oriented
Effectiveness/“Time is Money”
Personal space
Privacy
Idealism

Eastern European Values

Relationship/event oriented
Patience is a virtue
NO Personal space
Lack of privacy
Cynical/fear of reprisal

USE RECEIVER ORIENTED COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Only seven percent (7%) of what is communicated is from our actual words.
1. We communicate through how we dress and act in public.
 2. We communicate through our tone of voice and body language.
 3. We communicate through our attitudes and expectations.
 4. Non-verbal communication greatly affects the way your team relates to each other as well as to Russians.
- B. Your communication should be designed so that the receiver will have the greatest possibility of understanding what is being communicated.
- C. Some areas you need to be aware of:
1. When talking through an interpreter or to someone who doesn't speak English as their first language: remember to remove slang and colloquialisms, simplify your English and slow down a bit while speaking. However, do not talk to them as if they are children!
Note: A common mistake many people make when encountering a person who doesn't speak English: they slow down their speech and speak **louder!** The problem is not with that person's hearing but with the fact that they don't speak English. (Don't feel bad if you catch yourself doing this, everyone does it at first!)
 2. Remember, your Christian lifestyle will be the loudest message they hear. **The local people watch all we do as well as listen to what we say.**
Note: Personal courtesy and chivalry towards women is still highly valued in Russia. Men should be aware of how they relate to women on the team and make the extra effort to carry boxes and bags, open doors, help women off buses, offer women seats in the metro, etc. This is also a part of modeling Christianity and showing respect. Also, women should expect this behavior and should not be offended by it or read anything into it. It is not meant in a demeaning way, but as a matter of courtesy and respect.

Examples of Cultural Differences - continued

3. Drinking alcohol
 - a) Russians drink a great deal of alcohol, and this has many ramifications in Russian culture and is the cause of many societal problems. Our rules state: No Drinking! You will not be offered alcohol on the trip.
4. Protocol for visiting some Orthodox churches:
 - a) Men are to remove their hats.
 - b) Women are to cover their heads with a scarf. (Only in specific churches)
 - c) No shorts or sleeveless shirts. Do not talk loudly or draw undue attention to yourself.
5. Cultural sensitivity
 - a) **Speak quietly among yourselves!**
 - b) Avoid attracting attention by calling to one another, whistling or boisterous laughter.
 - c) Expect that everything you say may be understood or misunderstood by the Russians around you, even though they have given no indications of understanding English.
 - d) Avoid making comparisons of the United States to Russia, especially saying that certain things are better in the US. You never know when an interpreter or someone else may overhear you, which could result in a misunderstanding.
 - e) If invited into a home, remove your shoes inside the door. They most likely will provide slippers for you.
 - f) Avoid eye contact with persons of the opposite sex in public. The meaning may be misunderstood.

3 COPING SKILLS

Stress is a natural result of being in another culture. Everybody experiences it in varying degrees, and no two people respond to it alike.

Adapted from the “Ten Commandments for Tourists”:

1. Do not expect to find things as you remember them at home, for you have left home to find things that are different.
2. Do not take things too seriously, for a peaceful mind is the key to a good trip.
3. Do not let the other travelers get on your nerves, for you have paid good money to have an enjoyable trip.
4. Remember to take half as many clothes as you think!
5. Know at all times where your passport is, for a person without a passport is a person in deep trouble.
6. Remember that if we had been expected to stay in one place, we would have been created with roots.
7. Do not worry, for he that worries has no pleasure. Few worries ever prove fatal.
8. When in a strange land, be prepared to do as its people do.
9. Do not judge the people of a country, even a person who gives you trouble.
10. Remember that you are a guest, and he that treats his host with respect will be honored.

Do's and Don'ts of Coping in a Foreign Culture

1. DO

- A. Be **flexible** and **adaptable**
- B. Expect and tolerate ambiguity
- C. Give yourself the freedom to fail
- D. Have low expectations, focus less on results
- E. Tolerate differences
- F. Show *empathy*
- G. Be open-minded; adopt a learner's attitude
- H. Develop a sense of humor about your own shortcomings. Learn to laugh at yourself!
- I. Be sensitive to cultural cues
- J. Respect your interpreters; without them you cannot speak!
- K. Try to speak the local language!

2. DON'T

- A. Make fun of what they take pride in
- B. Embarrass your guide or interpreter
- C. Continually make comparisons to home, or what *we* do, or who *we* are
- D. Make quick judgments or generalizations
- E. Get frustrated when you don't understand
- F. Expect everyone to speak English
- G. Expect your guide or interpreter to be always at your side, ready to interpret every word.

4 ARRIVING IN RUSSIA

At Immigration/Passport Control you will be given a Migration Card. It will be prefilled on their computer.

DO NOT LOSE THE DEPARTURE PART OF THE CARD!

YOU CANNOT LEAVE RUSSIA WITHOUT IT!

«А» (Въезд/Arrival)				«Б» (Выезд/Departure)			
Российская Федерация Russian Federation		Республика Беларусь Republic of Belarus		Российская Федерация Russian Federation		Республика Беларусь Republic of Belarus	
Миграционная карта Migration Card		Серия/ Serial	41 06	Миграционная карта Migration Card		Серия/ Serial	41 06
		№	0267945			№	0267945
Фамилия/Surname (Family name)				Фамилия/Surname (Family name)			
Имя/Given name(s)				Имя/Given name(s)			
Отчество/Patronymic				Отчество/Patronymic			
Дата рождения/Date of birth			Пол/Sex	Дата рождения/Date of birth			Пол/Sex
День Day	Месяц Month	Год Year	Муж./Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Жен./Female <input type="checkbox"/>	День Day	Месяц Month	Год Year
Гражданство/Nationality				Гражданство/Nationality			
Документ удостоверяющий личность Passport or other ID				Документ удостоверяющий личность Passport or other ID			
Цель визита (нужно подчеркнуть) Purpose of travel (to be underlined)				Цель визита (нужно подчеркнуть) Purpose of travel (to be underlined)			
Сведения о приглашающей стороне (наименование юридического лица, фамилия, имя, (отчество) физического лица), населенный пункт/Name of host person or company, locality:				Сведения о приглашающей стороне (наименование юридического лица, фамилия, имя, (отчество) физического лица), населенный пункт/Name of host person or company, locality:			
Срок пребывания/Duration of stay:				Срок пребывания/Duration of stay:			
С/From:		До/To:		С/From:		До/To:	
Служебные отметки/For official use only				Служебные отметки/For official use only			
Въезд в Российскую Федерацию/ Республику Беларусь/ Date of arrival in the Russian Federation/Republic of Belarus				Выезд из Российской Федерации/ Республики Беларусь/ Date of departure from the Russian Federation/Republic of Belarus			

Procedure upon arrival at St Petersburg airport:

1. Passport Control/ Immigration desk: Give your passport to the Immigration officer. The officer will scan your passport and fill out an Arrival/Departure card, (see above). He/She will put a stamp in your passport and on the Migration Card. You will be given the passport and half, the Departure side, of the above Migration Card. The Departure portion will be taken from you when you depart Russia.

DO NOT LOSE THE CARD!

2. Pick up your baggage.
 - a. If your baggage does not arrive, contact the custom's officer by the green line exit. You will fill out a Customs Form and go to Lost Baggage room to fill out forms. Please provide the phone number and address of your host. We recommend to take a picture of your bags at home, so that you can show it to the person who will fill out the Lost Baggage forms.
3. Go through the "GREEN LINE" - YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DECLARE!
4. Exit the customs area and stay in the large waiting room until directed otherwise by those meeting you.
5. **NEVER** leave any bag unattended!

5 YOU ARE IN RUSSIA

Some things to remember while you are here!

1. Food and water
 - a. **DO NOT drink the tap water.** Tea, coffee, bottled water or other bottled drinks are okay. Bottled water is available to purchase at stores or vendors on the streets in St Petersburg. Ask your host if uncertain of the water you are about to drink! Careful not to swallow water when showering and use bottled water for brushing your teeth.
 - b. Be sure to wash your hands before eating! Use hand sanitizer when soap & water is unavailable
2. Electrical current in Russia is 220 volt AC 50 cycles. A current converter and plug adapters are needed for 110 volt devices. (See What to Bring list)
3. Security
 - a. St. Petersburg is an average large city with petty crimes, so be careful.
 - b. Only bring money you are planning to spend that day with you!
 - c. Passport/visa/departure form will be kept by host. **Have copies of passport/visa/departure form with you at all times!**
 - d. Men: Carry your wallet in your front pocket.
 - e. Ladies: Keep purses and bags close to your body at all times. (see What to Bring list)
 - f. Try to be an inconspicuous tourist by keeping cameras out of sight when not being used and by speaking softly.
4. Leaving your temporary “home”
 - a. Do not explore alone or in the dark. Always go in pairs.
 - b. In case you get lost or have a problem, carry your address in St Petersburg written in Russian. **Find a phone and call your host!!!!**
 - c. **PEDESTRIANS DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT-OF-WAY.** Even when walking with the green light, be sure you observe turning vehicles. They are NOT prepared to stop.
5. Photography
 - a. Some facilities are “off limits” for taking pictures: military personnel/installations, police stations and **especially** the underground metro.
 - b. In order to take pictures within museums and other tourist attractions you will need to pay a fee at the entrance.

You are in Russia - continued

6. Exchanging Money

- a. Your host will assist you in exchanging money for you.
- b. You may bring an ATM card / debit card to withdraw Rubles from an ATM. (You **must tell your bank that you will be in St. Petersburg, Russia** and the dates of your trip so they will not freeze your account! **You must do this with all your Debit/Credit Cards!**)
- c. Best to bring cash for personal spending money.
 - a. **Do not bring Traveler's Checks!**
 - b. Do not bring large sums of Rubles out of Russia; they **can not** be exchanged back to dollars in the US.

7. Purchasing souvenirs

- a. Bargaining is done on the street but not in stores.
- b. Please do not ask your guide or interpreter “is this a good price?” or “is this a good quality?” Remember that there is a large disparity between salaries and the cost of living in Russia and the US. Determine what a good price is for you.
- c. Items available in St Petersburg **MAY NOT** be found in other cities. In Russia, our motto is, “If you find it and want it, buy it because it may not be there when you come back and it may not be anywhere else.”
- d. As a group, you will go to a big souvenir store and a china/porcelain store with a large variety of souvenirs.

8. Photography

- a. Some facilities are “off limits” for taking pictures: military personnel/installations, police stations and **especially** the underground metro.
- b. In order to take pictures within museums and other tourist attractions you will need to pay a fee at the entrance.

9. Toilets

- a. Public toilets are not as accessible as in the US. When eating at restaurants and cafes, use the toilet at those locations. On the streets toilets are hard to find and have an entrance fee.
- b. Not all public toilets have toilet paper; have tissues with you just in case.
- c. Know which door to go in! ☺ Women's – Ж (Женский) Men's – М (Мужской)

6 LEARN THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

...or at least some key words and phrases!

ENGLISH	RUSSIAN
Hello	Zdrastvuytye
Hi	Preevyet
Good bye	dasveedaneeye
Bye	Pakah
Yes / No	Da / nyet
Please/You're welcome	Pazhaloostah
Thank you	Spaseebah
Excuse me	Eezvyeneetye
I'm sorry	Prasteetye
My name is	Meenya zavoot
What is your name?	Kak tebya zavoot?
How old are you?	Skolkah tebye lyet?
How do you say -----	Kak skazat?
What is that?	Shto ehto?
Do you speak English?	Govoritye po ruskee?
Where is -----	Gdye?
Bathroom	Tooahlyet
When is ----- ?	Kagda?
Friend	Droog (male) Padrooga
Boy	Mal'cheek
Girl	Dyevachka

ENGLISH	RUSSIAN
One	Adeen
Two	Dvah
Three	tree
Four	Chyetyiry
Five	Payt'
Six	Shest
Seven	Syem
Eight	Vosyem
Nine	Dyevyat
Ten	Dyesyat
Black	Chyorniy
White	Beliy
Blue	Seeniy
Red	Krasniy
Yellow	Zholty
Green	Zyelyoniy
Purple	Feeolyetaviy
Brown	Karichnyeviy
Play	Eegrat
Ball	Myach
Soccer	Football
Basketball	Basketball

7 SAINT PETERSBURG FACTS

- **Location:** Eastern Europe, the Eastern shore of the Baltic Sea (Gulf of Finland)
- **Founded:** May 27, 1703
- **Population:** Almost 6 million
- **How North:** The most Northern city in the world with a population over 1 million
- **Main River:** Neva. The city is located in the delta of the Neva River on numerous islands, a fact which prompted some observers to call it "The City on 101 Islands"
- **Main natural phenomena:** White Nights; does not get dark in the summer! May-June
- **Origin of the name:** Named in honor of Saint Peter, the Apostle, and not Peter the Great, the founder of the city. The name can be translated as "The City of St. Peter"
- **Name changes:**
 - ✦ St. Petersburg May, 1703 - August, 1914
 - ✦ Petrograd August, 1914 - February, 1924
 - ✦ Leningrad February, 1924 - July, 1991
 - ✦ St. Petersburg July, 1991 - Present

For more information on the city or local news:

<http://www.saint-petersburg.com>

<http://www.spbtimes.com> | St Petersburg Times (English-language newspaper)

**Thank you for taking the time to read through the information packet!
Hopefully you feel more prepared for the adventure you are about to begin!**

We look forward to meeting you and serving together in Russia!

Tanya Mendakoff - *Director and Founder*