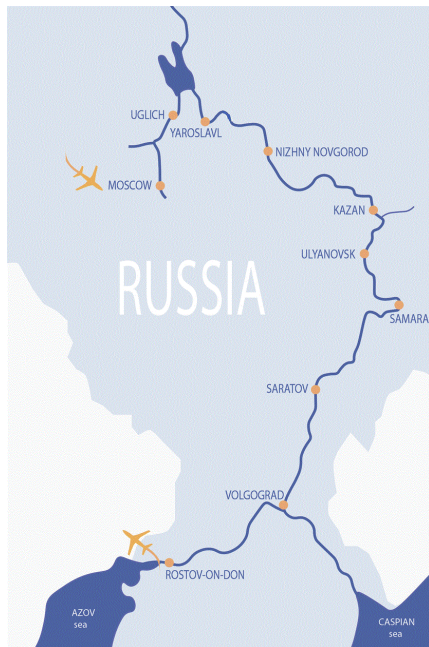


## Sailing through Russian History: Down the Volga and the Don

September 12-25 (14 days, 13 nights)

Join the Albuquerque International Association on a unique Journey. The Volga and Don Rivers are to Russia what the Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio Rivers are to the United States -- great waterways that course through the nation's heartland at the pivot of its history. Along their banks tumultuous events have unfolded: Russia's struggle against the Mongol Khans that opened the gateway to the East, fierce peasant rebellions led by the famous Stenka Razin and Emilian Pugachev, and the battle of Stalingrad that determined the fate of the world. The cities you will visit -- Uglich, Nizhnyi Novgorod, Kazan, Ulyanovsk, Samara, Saratov and Volgograd -- each with their own unique histories, are the birthplaces of many of Russia's cultural and political leaders and are rich in architectural, artistic, commercial and scientific achievements. Beginning with three exciting days in Moscow, you will cruise in comfort down Mother Volga and the Quiet Don, gaining as never before remarkable insights into Russia's past and, perhaps, a glimpse of her future as well.



### Tour Highlights:

Three unforgettable days in **Moscow**, the present, as well as the ancient capital of Russia

Founded in 1148, **Uglich** witnessed the end of the Rurik Dynasty, a crucial turning point in Russian history at the end of the 16th century. Maria Nagaya, the seventh wife of Ivan the Terrible, lived in exile in Uglich with her son Tsarevich Dmitry, a possible successor to the Russian throne. But in 1590 he was killed or "died by accident" there. In the 17th century tales about his alleged murder and rumors that he had somehow escaped would play a significant role during the "Time of Troubles"

**Yaroslavl** is an ancient Russian merchant city and a World Heritage Site. Founded in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, it was the capital of an independent principality of Yaroslavl that was later incorporated into a Grand Duchy of Moscow. In the 17<sup>th</sup>

century Yaroslavl was Russia's second largest city and during the Polish occupation of Moscow in 1612 the country's de facto capital. Situated at the confluence of the Volga and Kotorosl rivers, it is renowned for its 17th-century churches and is also an outstanding example of the urban planning reform launched by Empress Catherine the Great in 1763. The town was renovated in the neoclassical style in accordance with a radial urban master plan but kept some of its significant historic structures including the 16th century Spassky Monastery, one of the oldest in the Upper Volga region. Yaroslavl is one of the "Golden Ring" cities, a group of towns NE of Moscow that have played an important part in Russian history.

Founded in 1221, **Nizhnyi Novgorod** was a great trading center that played an important role in Russia's destiny. It was there in 1612 that Kuzma Minin and Prince Dmitry Pozharsky organized an army that eventually liberated Moscow from the Poles. Re-named Gorki during the Soviet times, in honor of the great Russian writer, it was home for political exiles, including Andrei Sakharov. Off limits to outsiders for many years, Nizhnyi Novgorod has only recently opened its doors to visitors. The city has many well-preserved 13th and 14th-century architectural monuments including its ancient Kremlin cathedrals.

**Kazan**, the capital of Tatarstan Republic, is one of the most important economic, scientific and cultural centers of Russia. Founded about 1000 year ago as an outpost on the northern borders of Volzhskaya Bulgaria, Kazan became an important center of the Golden Horde in the 13<sup>th</sup> & 14th centuries. In 1438, Kazan became the capital of the Kazan Khanate. In 1552 the city was conquered by Tsar Ivan the Terrible, a victory that opened the way for Russian expansion down the Volga and into Siberia.

**Ulyanovsk** (from 1648 to 1780 - Sinbirsk, from 1780 to 1924 - Simbirsk) is the capital of the Ulyanovsk region. It is situated on Privolzhsky hill where the Volga River and Sviyaga Rivers meet. It was renamed Ulianovsk because Vladimir Lenin (Ulyanov), the founder of the Soviet state, was born there in 1870. It is also the birthplace of Alexander Kerensky who was Lenin's rival for power during the revolution of 1917.

**Samara** (Kuybyshev from 1935 to 1991) is the center of the Volga economic region and the capital of the Samara region. Standing on the high left bank of the Volga, at its confluence with Samara river, it is a major economic, scientific, educational, and cultural center. Samara's historical buildings make the city an architectural treasure. The 5 km Samara Embankment is the longest in Russia.

**Saratov** combines the architecture of an old merchant town with that of a modern city. It is a city of universities, theaters, and museums. The city played an important role in the history of the Volga Germans. Until 1941, the town of Pokrovsk (present-day Engels), located across the Volga from Saratov, served as the capital of the Volga German Republic. The ethnic German population of the region numbered 800,000 in the early 20th century. Beginning with Catherine the Great's 1763 manifesto promising land, freedom from military conscription and religious liberty, the Russian Emperors invited German immigration to encourage agricultural development. On the famous "Cosmonauts Embankment" you can enjoy the beauty of the Volga River and will be able to cross it by walking over the "Saratov-Engels" bridge. Saratov was the home town of Nikolai Chernyshevsky, the famous 19th-century radical writer. The street that bears his name is the longest in the city, stretching for 7 km along the Volga.

**Volgograd**, originally Tsaritsyn and later **Stalingrad**, is an important industrial city and the administrative center of the Volgograd Oblast. It is 80 kilometers (50 ml) long, north to south, and is situated on the western bank of the Volga River. Best known for the Battle of Stalingrad, one of the largest and bloodiest in history, a key turning point in WW II.

**Rostov on Don**, located in the southern part of the Russian steppes, was an 18th century Cossack outpost and trading center. A gateway to the Caucasus and to Ukraine, it is an industrial

and agricultural center. Magnificent parks, beaches, theaters, and museums, plus an unusual botanical garden with a vast collection of rare plants, make Rostov the most attractive city on the Don River.

**The Volga-Don canal** links two of Russia's greatest rivers and carries an enormous amount of commercial traffic. The canal was originally a dream of Peter the Great, but he ultimately abandoned the project. Construction of the present canal was begun before WWII and not completed until 1952.

**Estimated cost:**

*The cost of the trip will consist of the land portion of the tour + visa to Russia+ airfare to Russia. AIA will help to obtain Russian visa.*

*An estimated cost of the land portion of the trip & Russian visa (does not include the air-fare from ABO to Moscow) is:*

*Twin standard cabin on main deck (double occupancy) - \$2,660*

*Twin standard cabin on upper deck (double occupancy) - \$2,790*

*Junior Suite upper deck (double occupancy) - \$3, 440*

*We will confirm the prices in August 2019*

**Action required:** *If interested, please send an email message to the Albuquerque International Association and ask to put you on the “interested” list. We need to reserve space for the Albuquerque International Association group by mid-February 2019. It is a unique sailing, and the cruise is filling up as we speak. We will need to make the first payment for the cruise in September of 2019.*

*The ship is for 200 people, and half of it is already booked.*