

# Pushkin – Russian Poetry Mecca and Home of Tsarskoye Selo Estate



If you are a lover of Russian poetry, you will definitely like to see a town known today as Pushkin. The town serves as some sort of Mecca for people who love Russian Poetry and it is quite close to Saint Petersburg.

If you are coming from Moscow to this town, you will have to get to Saint Petersburg first. The distance between St. Petersburg and Moscow is approximately 800 km and it is a very popular train route within Russia. A typical overnight train service will do the journey in approximately 8 hours.

As soon as you get there, you have the option of taking one of the Russian tour buses from Nevsky Prospect train station straight to Tsarskoye Selo estate, a journey of about forty minutes. The other option you have is to get on a train from St. Petersburg to Pushkin, this journey is quite short and it will take you to the train station within the locality.

Pushkin is under the jurisdiction of St. Petersburg and is situated about twenty four kilometers from Saint Petersburg's center.

Pushkin was established in the year 1710 and was then an imperial residence referred to as Tsarskoye Selo. It was elevated to the status of a town in 1808 however many today see it as the most charming suburb in St. Petersburg.

Tsarskoye Selo (now called Pushkin) served as the main place of abode for Russian emperors. Back then, the Romanov Tsars set up 2 suburban estates at Peterhof and Tsarkoye Selo, an indication that the Imperial rulers of Russia loved things on the plush side.

Apart from its royal palaces, Pushkin is also known as the town where famous Russian writers and poets such as A. Tolstoy, Lermontov, Pushkin resided at different periods.

Pushkin graduated from Lyceum, an institution that was set up in 1811 for the children of the nobility. He was possibly the school's most famous graduate. This prestigious institution prepared young men for a life of service to the nation. Following the October Revolution, Pushkin was first given the name Detskoye Selo (meaning Children's Village) It was in 1937 that the town was renamed Pushkin to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the demise of Alexander Pushkin Russian poet. There are many sights related to Alexander Pushkin within the town.

Also, the first public railways in Russia then referred to as Tsarkoye Selo Railways opened in the 1830s in Pushkin and their main purpose was to link Pushkin to Saint Petersburg.

The town's main attraction now is the eighteenth century collection of Tsarskoye Selo. This is actually a museum complex comprising the Alexander Palace, Catherine Palace plus other structures and associated parks. Each year many tourists visit Pushkin to see this museum complex and it is one of the monuments being protected by UNESCO.



Presented below are some other impressive things you can also check out any time you are in the town.

Catherine Palace is easily the finest attraction. It was developed by the same draftsman that worked on the Winter Palace of St. Petersburg. Your tour of Catherine Palace will not be complete if you fail to check the Amber room, a masterpiece of the palace. Sometimes museum guards limit tourist's time there so as to control crowds however its uncommon concept plus dramatic history along with huge assortment of amber makes this place worth seeing. The room appears to be smaller than other rooms within the palace and you may not easily notice that the walls have a lining of amber panels, utilizing about one tone of amber. The majority of the creations are actually reproductions of the originals which have since been lost, but they are still remarkable. The initial carved wall panels were presented to Peter the Great by Prussia's King in 1716, but the Germans stole them during the blockade of Leningrad. When the Nazis drew back, the Palace suffered even more devastation and it took decades to reconstruct it.

The Great Hall is another major tourist attraction within the palace. It is an imposing ballroom lined with 2 levels of windows combined with mirrors. It closely resembles Hall of Mirrors of Versailles. The ceiling painting which covers practically the room's length and depicts Russian military achievements and victories in the arts and sciences is another nice feature of the Grand Hall.

Other magnificent halls comprise a Pavilion which is some sort of change room of gleaming Siberian granite, as well as the Blue Chinese Room, Blue Drawing Room which all have walls covered with silk.

You should also find time to check out the grounds, particularly the Marble Bridge on top of the Great Pond plus the Pyramid where the favorite dogs of Catherine the Great were buried.

Many people do not know about Alexander Palace, which is really in a dilapidated state now. In spite of that, it remains a neoclassical masterwork that has a solid link to the household of Nicholas II, the last

Tsar. It was in this location that the royal household was kept under house arrest following the February Revolution.

If you wish to do more exploration, you can always go to Alexander Park where you will be able to see some amazing monuments. As you walk along, you will see well-designed classical buildings, different types of monuments plus even Chinese and Turkish styled structures. You should be aware that this park is quite large, measuring about 120 hectares; therefore you should be prepared to do some real walking.

The dacha-museum of Pushkin located within the town is another place you may also like to visit, but it is best that you understand some Russian, or go with a Russian guide. The poet and Natalya Nikolaevna his wife hired a dacha in this location in the year 1831.



You can also visit Pavlovsk, a nearby town. It will not be difficult for you to tour the two towns in a day, or you can extend your trip over the entire weekend.

Coming back to Pushkin, it is time to take a look at this place which was loved by the czars of Russia.

Tsarskoye Selo was where Catherine I the Empress resided between the year 1708 and 1724. The initial Catherine Palace, was built at that period and major rebuilding was carried out from 1741 to 1762. Several famous artists and architects participated in the project.

Even though Tsarskoye Selo gained greater official prominence after 1905, several grand dukes resided in the town before then. The last Russian emperor was arrested in Tsarskoye Selo by the Interim Government during the 1917 February Revolution. It was also from this town that he was sent into exile to Siberia with his household in July 1917.

The poets Innokenty Annensky, Gumilev, Anna Akhmatova all went to live in Tsarskoye Selo at the start of the 20th century. Several painters also went to live in the town, as they were attracted by the charm of Russian Versailles. Some of these painters were Konstantin Somov, Alexander Golovin, Mstislav Dobuzhinsky.

Tsarskoye Selo suffered neglect and destruction all through the Soviet period. The central church of the town (which was built in 1840) was demolished in 1939 and in the 1960s, a huge Lenin statue was set up in its place. This statue can still be seen there today.

As World War II raged the town fell into the hands of the Nazis who looted it and this resulted to a huge share of the town's artistic heritage being destroyed. After the war, its artistic inheritance was only partly

rebuilt.

Pushkin became some sort of luxury housing development region following the 1990s. Annual festivals are now being held there on June 24 (day following City Day). Starting from 1995, Pushkin have been playing host to International carnivals and the town was admitted into the Federation of Carnival Cities of Europe in the year 2000. Additional improvements were carried out plus large scale reconstruction and cleanup prior to the 300th anniversary celebration of Pushkin in June 2010. This makes the town an excellent place to visit now.

In spite of all this, Tsarskoye is still a notable tourist destination. The town continues to retain its near aristocratic air even while being a location that preserves artistic and literary traditions.

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