

Traveling To Russia

Flight Arrangements

Airline tickets will be provided to you prior to the trip. Upon receiving your ticket, ensure that your name matches the name in your passport. Also ensure that all ticket segments are included. Remember the following

1. Keep your tickets on your person at all times.
2. Turn in your Airline Frequent Flyer number at the counter or preferably in advance by calling the airline.
3. Seat assignments have been assigned based on the seats available at the time of booking. You are welcome to trade seats to sit together with other members of the team.
4. Your itinerary for your flight will be made available to you prior to the trip.
5. Give a copy of your itinerary to friends or relatives at home.

Traveling to the Airport

It's preferable that everyone ride together to the airport. Mission Trip participants will need to arrive at the airport 2 hours prior to departure. It's best to have your church or other non-participant drive you to the airport instead of leaving your car at the airport. Before you leave home remember the following:

1. Do you have your passport & visa?
2. Do you have your airline tickets?
3. Do you have your money?
4. Do you have your medication in your *carry-on* luggage?
5. Do you have your name and your church address on all of your Luggage?
6. Do you have two forms of Picture ID?

Checking Luggage

You can check TWO pieces of luggage. One will be your Personal Suitcase and the other will be the Ministry suitcase. In addition, you can take *onboard* the aircraft ONE piece of small luggage AND either a purse, fanny pack, or briefcase. Don't forget...

1. Checked Luggage must weigh 55 pounds or less (Russian Customs regulation)
2. Carry-on Luggage must weigh 18 pounds or less
3. Check your luggage all the way to St. Petersburg, Russia
4. The final destination Airport code should show: **LED** (St. Petersburg)
5. Keep track of your luggage tags after check in.

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Water / Hydration

One of biggest problems with traveling long distance is making sure you are getting enough water. Aircraft air filtration systems do not naturally hydrate the air. The air is dry and prolonged exposure can contribute to sickness and extended jet lag. When traveling by aircraft remember the following;

1. Drink plenty of water on your airline trip
2. Start drinking lots of water one day BEFORE your airline trip
3. Drink plenty of water everyday at your destination
4. Non-carbonated / Decaffeinated drinks reduce jet lag
5. Fruit juices can give you gas at higher altitudes! (I'm just seeing if you are reading this!) 😊

Exercise

During the flight it is good to exercise while on the trip. It's recommended that you get up and walk around every 1-2 hours. Here are some tips on exercising on a flight.

1. Get up and walk every 1-2 hours
2. Take a 81mg aspirin (check with your doctor before taking medication)
3. Stretch in your seat by doing isometric exercises.
4. Stand on your toes to stretch your legs when out of your seat

Sleeping

It is imperative that you get plenty of rest on your mission trip and even before you leave. Try to get as much rest the days leading up to the trip instead of doing all your packing and re-packing the night before. Remember the following tips;

1. On the aircraft, set your watch to the destination time. Then begin your sleep pattern for the time in your destination city. St. Petersburg and Moscow are 9 hours ahead of Central time in North America.
2. At the layover city airport, try to get rest but do not go to sleep! If you fall asleep and miss your flight, you will be an unhappy traveler!
3. Try to rest but stay awake during the entire trip. When you get to Russia you will be on their time and will go to bed tired, waking up to the new time zone the next morning.
4. It will take about a day or two to adjust to the new time zone and recover from jet lag.

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Customs Forms

On your last leg of your flight to your destination you will be handed a Customs Form. Please fill this out prior to your arrival. On an index card kept in your passport holder write down the serial numbers of the items you will declare. See the example of the Customs Form in the Appendix of this manual.

1. Declare all your cash. Round your numbers up to the nearest US dollar
2. Declare cameras valued over \$500
3. Declare ALL laptop computer
4. Declare all video cameras
5. Declare any cell phone in your possession
6. Sign and date the back of the form
7. Have this ready when you pass through customs at your destination.

The following questions on the Customs Form have caused confusion in the past. Most of the other answers should be NO for mission trip participants.

1. **Question 2.1 – Accompanied luggage including hand luggage.** This is referring to your TWO checked pieces of luggage, your ONE carry-on and ONE of either your purse, briefcase, or fanny pack. That equals 4 pieces.
2. **Question 3.3 – Drugs and psychotropic substances.** This is referring to illegal drugs not to prescription drugs with YOUR name on it and non-prescription drugs
3. **Question 3.8 – Wildlife objects, parts, and products thereof.** This can include any feathers, rabbit feet key chains, deer horn parts, and other wildlife items.
4. **Question 3.9 – High-frequency radio electronic devices and means of communications.** Answer YES if you have a cell phone. Make sure you DO NOT take anything with a GPS navigation system like a fish finder or mapping device. You may be detained and considered a spy! ☺
5. **Question 4.1 – Information on Merchandise.** This is Not Applicable. Write N/A on this part of the form as seen in the example in the appendix.
6. **Questions 4.2 – Information on transportation unit.** This is referring to a car that is traveling with you. This is Not Applicable. Write N/A on this part of the form as seen in the example in the appendix.