

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST-PETERSBURG

Were it not for Tsar Peter the Great, the city of St. Petersburg would not be the miraculous city that it is today. Tsar Peter the Great founded St. Petersburg in May 1703. The city was originally a base for the Swedish army during the Great Northern War of 1703. The fortress was captured by Peter the Great's forces, and shortly after, Peter decided that a great city should be built in its place. Peter's first project was the [Peter and Paul Fortress](#), which still stands beautifully to this day. In the early phases, the majority of the city was constructed by prisoners of war and serfs. It is estimated that tens of thousands of serfs died during the construction of the city.

A short nine years after the city was founded, Peter declared St. Petersburg to be the new capital of the Russian Empire. During the years following the basic construction of the city, Peter wanted a European architect to design St. Petersburg. Peter the Great was a jack-of-all-trades, and it was his wish for the city to become a European city in design. The city would be the capital of the Russian Empire until 1928 when Peter's son, Peter II, moved the capital back to Moscow. Four years later, Empress Anna moved the capital back to St. Petersburg. The city remained the capital of the Russian Federation until the collapse of the Romanov Dynasty.

Its architecture is what makes St. Petersburg different from any other city in Russia. St. Petersburg was slowly decorated and built up with a vast array of European styled buildings, cathedrals, and bridges. These were the wishes of Peter the Great, and the construction and renovation of these buildings continue to this date.

After the tsar's death, St. Petersburg experienced several historical revolts, greatly influencing it in the future. The Decembrist Revolt in 1825 was response to the appointment of the latest tsar, Nicholas I. The revolt was quickly crushed and, 35 years later, the Industrial Revolution began to take hold in St. Petersburg after the serfs were set free by Tsar Alexander II in 1861. Alexander was assassinated in 1881 by the conspiracy group narodniki. This assassination took place on what is now the site of the [Church of the Savior on Blood](#). This iconic church is perhaps the most popular place in St. Petersburg.

The Revolution of 1905 was a result of Russia's defeat by Japan in the Russo-Japanese war, as well as the large economic and industrial failings of the Tsarist regime. After the revolution of

1905, St. Petersburg was a veritable hotbed of revolutionaries in Russia. The city was also the center of the October Revolution in 1917, and the revolution against the intern government of Alexander Kerensky. Kerensky named the city of St. Petersburg Petrograd and the intern government after the Tsar abdicated the throne. After the Russian civil war, the Bolshevik Party was in control of the country, Lenin and Trotsky therefore decided to move the capital away from St. Petersburg, to Moscow. The communist party renamed the city Leningrad. The Second World War brought terrible suffering and horror to St. Petersburg. The siege of Leningrad lasted 900 days and left the city in ruins. Leningrad then endured several years of difficult reconstruction and beautification. Several of the churches, cathedrals, roads, and [bridges](#) were reconstructed and these are the ones that one sees in St. Petersburg nowadays.

From the fall of the Soviet Union to the present, St. Petersburg is an ever-changing city. The [S T-PETERSBURG METRO](#) system is one of the most beautiful in the world, and more stations are being added constantly. The city of St. Petersburg is a favorite of Russian citizens and European tourists for its amazing sites, beautiful churches, interesting [nightlife](#), and vast museums. Petersburg truly is the Venice of the North, and one of a kind in Russia. The continuing growth of business and tourism in the city points to a bright and growing future.

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