

Grand Karelian Tour

Day 1. St.Petersburg. Travel to Karelia

You arrive in St.Petersburg on own (it is possible to book accommodation and tours there before the start of the main program, please request our managers. You will be picked up by the driver (no English-speaking guide) at about 20:45 and taken to the Ladozhsky train station. The driver will deliver the tickets to you during the transfer. The train #658 departs at 22:02.

Day 2. Petrozavodsk and Kizhi



An English-speaking guide will meet you at the train station. He/she will take you to the hotel to have breakfast. Free early check-in may be available. If rooms are not ready you will be able to leave your luggage at the hotel in the left luggage office. Please take all the necessary things for the city tour and the tour to the island of Kizhi (a windbreaker, camera, etc.). The guide will show you the city and tell you about the history, architecture and culture of Petrozavodsk during the walking tour in downtown. He/she will advise you cafes and restaurants as you will have dinner on own in the evening. Please, do not hesitate to ask questions. After the city tour you will go to the river-boat station where the embarkation on a hydrofoil takes place. The guide will give you the voucher for the hydrofoil and the voucher for the excursion on the island of Kizhi. The guide will not travel with you to the island. Usual departure time for Kizhi is 11:30 and return to Petrozavodsk is at 17:00, but small changes may occur. The exact times will be advised by your guide. The trip lasts for 1 hour and 15 minutes one way. When you arrive at the island, please follow the main stream of travelers as they all head for the excursion bureau of the museum and further to the churches. You must show your voucher at the excursion bureau and they will appoint a guide. You will have an individual English-speaking guide (German, French, Italian, Finnish-speaking guides may be also available), so you may enjoy the museum at your own pace. The tour will last for about 1,5-2 hours and then you will have free time. Near the pier there are summer cafes, so you may buy snacks and water there. You are to be near the hydrofoil at least 15 minutes prior to departure. You will arrive in Petrozavodsk at ~17:00. In the evening you will

have free time.

Day 3. Kivach Waterfalls, Petroglyphs, the White Sea – Baltic Canal

At about 09:00 morning the guide will meet you in the lobby of the hotel. The bus will be at the entrance and you will take your seats and the journey to the North will start. You say god-bye to Petrozavodsk. On the way the guide will show some interesting places and tell you about the region. The first stop will be the Nature Reserve and Kivach Waterfall (~80 km from Petrozavodsk). The guide will show you the waterfall, a small wood of Karelian birch-trees (enlisted in the Red Data Book) as well as the museum devoted to the local flora and fauna. There are several souvenir shops and cafes there. After that we continue to the town of Segezha. We will make a stop at the café at the entrance to the town. Lunch is on own. The guide will help you with the menu, which is in Russian. After lunch you have a choice of tours. We can make a stop in a small village of Vygostrov, where the local guide will meet us. The local guide does not speak English, so your tour leader will translate for you. We will walk through the forest to find Petroglyphs - the ancient rock carvings. There are mosquitoes in the forest, do not forget to take a repellent. Taking good walking shoes is a good idea as well. Or we can have a tour to the White Sea - Baltic Canal, constructed during Stalin's time mainly by Gulag prisoners. After the tour we continue to Kem, our final destination today. Accommodation at local hotel. We will have a short orientation walk. Dinner on own at the hotel.

Day 4. Solovetsky Islands

We will have breakfast early in the morning as departure for Solovetsky is at 08:00; we should be at the pier at least 30 minutes prior to departure for embarkation. There is open seating on the ship. The voyage will last for about 2,5 hours. When we arrive at the island we will be taken to the hotel by car or bus. As check-in is at 12:00 we will leave our luggage at the reception. The tour leader will show you the neighborhood area including the local café, grocery shops and the monastery itself. We check-in. After that you will have some time for lunch. After lunch there will be a walking tour to the Monastery and Fortress of Solovetsky including the museum of Gulag hard-labour camp which was functioning on the Islands in 1920-30s. The tour lasts for about 3 hours. Evening is scheduled to be free. You may enjoy dinner on own at the local café and socialize with other travelers and local people.

Departure dates and prices are available at www.nordictravel.ru/page/allkarelia.html

Day 5. Solovetsky Islands



Breakfast is served at the hotel. Then we will walk to the excursion bureau where the tour to Zayatsky Island starts. The tour leader will translate the local guide's information from Russian into English. It will take us about 40-50 minutes to reach the Island by boat. Exploration of the Island takes about 1,5 hours. The main places of interest of this Island, covered with tundra-type vegetation, are its prehistoric stone labyrinths and the old wooden church of Andrew the First Caller (1702). If we are lucky enough we may spot seals resting on the shore of Zayatsky. Lunch on own in the village or at the hotel. After lunch you may choose activities: either a walking tour to the Botanical Garden (~4 km one way) or a boat or shore based trip to watch the white whales (from late June till early August only). The Beluga-tour time depends on the timetable of ebbs and flows. Please request us in advance for the prices and tour availability. Evening is free.

Day 6. Solovetsky Islands

After breakfast at the hotel we will walk to the excursion bureau, join the Russian-speaking group and travel to Sekirnaya Mountain by bus. The road is pretty bad - it was made by monks centuries ago and can not be repaired as now it is under protection (sounds funny indeed), so be prepared for a bumpy ride. We will visit the Church of Ascension on the top of the mountain and the observation ground as the mountain is the highest point of Big Solovetsky Island. When we return to the settlement we will have some free time. Lunch on own. Then we will have a transfer from the hotel to the pier. The ship departs for Kem in the afternoon. We will arrive in Kem in the evening and settle at the hotel. Dinner on own at the familiar restaurant.

Day 7. Travel to St.Petersburg

We have early departure by train from Kem to St.Petersburg. Transfer to the railway station, breakfast is provided as a packed meal. We will spend most of the day in the train. We have a nice chance to discuss the trip and exchange opinions. Your tour leader will get off the train in Petrozavodsk, as it is his/her native town. You will arrive in St.Petersburg at Ladozhsky train station. It is possible to book a transfer from the railway station to the hotel and extra nights in St.Petersburg. Please request us for the prices.

Instead of returning to St.Petersburg it is possible to continue your trip from Kem to the Kola Peninsula. Please, request us for the quotation. You can find a more detailed itinerary of this post-trip at www.nordictravel.ru/murmansk/discover_kola.html.