
**Ukraine's Dnieper River
& the Black Sea:
Ukraine to Romania**

RIVER CRUISE

Plus optional extensions in

**St. Petersburg, Russia; Istanbul, Turkey;
Transylvania, Romania; Lviv, Ukraine**

UKR/UKK/UKI/UKT/UKL 2013

Grand Circle Cruise Line

Ukraine’s Dnieper River & the Black Sea: Ukraine to Romania

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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

We've gathered some introductory information that may prove helpful for this Grand Circle Cruise Line itinerary. If you expect to embark on personal exploration, or wish to discover more about the countries you visit, we suggest that you consult your choice of the many in-depth travel guidebooks devoted to your destinations. For detailed and timely information, it's wise to visit appropriate websites and confirm luggage regulations, weather conditions and other variable elements of your trip. Refer to our recommended reading list (at the end of the handbook) for alternate sources of insight.

ABOUT GRAND CIRCLE TRAVEL

Grand Circle Travel, founded in 1958 to serve the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP), is the leader in international travel, adventure and discovery for Americans aged 50 and over. Grand Circle vacations have been recommended by *The New York Times*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Travel+Leisure*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel*, among other publications. But our most impressive reviews come from the more than one million people who have traveled with us and from readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* who placed Grand Circle Cruise Lines, the cruise branch of Grand Circle, in the Top 10 of the World's Best Cruise Lines for seven years. Grand Circle has earned a spot on the prestigious *Condé Nast Traveler* Gold List for seven consecutive years as well. For 2011 *Condé Nast Traveler* named seven Grand Circle Cruise Line river ships among the 20 best river ships in the world; for 2012 the Grand Circle Cruise Lines was named to their Platinum Circle of top cruise lines.

YOUR GCCL PROGRAM DIRECTORS

During your exclusive Grand Circle Cruise Line CruiseTour, you'll have reliable assistance available at all times from six onsite Grand Circle Cruise Line Travel Program Directors. Your Program Directors are fluent in English and can give you an inside perspective on your destinations. Supporting them, local tour guides will take you expertly through particular sites and cities.

Many Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Directors are graduates of professional education programs for travel guides. In addition, they receive specialized training directly from Grand Circle Cruise Line, training that is based on what we've learned from thousands of past travelers about how to make the trip most enjoyable.

Your Program Directors will provide sightseeing trips, handle all travel details, reserve optional tours you choose to take, oversee your Discovery Series events, and provide any other assistance you may need. You will be in the company of a Program Director throughout your cruise.

1. PASSPORT, VISAS AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS



Passport Required

You need a passport for this itinerary.

Note

Your passport should meet these requirements for this itinerary:

- It should be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- It should have the recommended number of blank pages (see below for details).
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable.

Recommended number of blank pages:

This recommendation is based on a “worst case” scenario. When you are on this adventure, you might use fewer pages, depending on the whims of the Immigration official on duty that day. Since the consequence of having too few pages can be severe—you could be denied entry into a country—we feel that it’s better to be safe than sorry, and we strongly recommend that you follow these guidelines.

- **Main trip only:** 3 blank “Visa” pages.
- **Optional extension to Lviv, Ukraine:** no additional pages
- **Optional extension to St. Petersburg, Russia:** 1 additional page.
- **Optional to Romania:** no additional pages
- **Optional extension to Istanbul, Turkey:** 1 additional pages.
- **Both a pre- and a post-trip extension:** A maximum of 5 pages.

Please take moment to check if your passport meets all of these requirements. If not, you could be refused entry into a country. And if that happens, you might be required by that country to return to the U.S. immediately, **which would be at your own expense.**

If you need to renew your passport or get extra pages:

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit their website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport, renewing your existing passport, or for additional pages. You can renew your passport by mail if it is not damaged, you obtained it within the last fifteen years, and it’s in the name you want on your new passport. Many local post offices carry forms for renewing by mail or obtaining extra pages. Allow several weeks for processing your passport. You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

***NOTE:** When updating your passport, it is worthwhile to check the prices on all the different services that might apply to you. For example, it might be less expensive to renew your passport than to have pages added, depending on the number of pages you need.*



Visas Not Required—Ukraine, Romania Visas Required—St. Petersburg, Russia; Istanbul, Turkey (optional extensions)

For U.S. citizens, visas are required for entry into Russia and Turkey (optional extensions). Ukraine does not require a visa for entry. For further information, you can contact the countries' tourist boards at the phone numbers and addresses listed in this handbook in the "Reference Materials" section, under Tourist Board Addresses.

- **UKRAINE—Visa NOT required:** Visas for Ukraine are not required for U.S. citizens for a maximum stay of 90 days.
- **ROMANIA—Visa NOT required:** Visas for Romania are not required for U.S. citizens for a maximum stay of 90 days
- **RUSSIA—visa required:** We will send you the visa application and an instruction sheet explaining how to complete it approximately 100 days before your departure. You should send your completed application to PVS approximately 90 days before your departure. **Applying for your visa within 30 days of your departure will result in additional expenses and fees.** The additional fees are charged directly by the Russian Embassy and can range between \$100-\$300 per person, depending on how close to departure you apply.
- **TURKEY—Visa required:** U.S. citizens holding a U.S. passport need a visa for entry into Turkey. This visa can be obtained upon your arrival, but we recommend obtaining it in advance to avoid last-minute complications. We will send you the necessary visa application forms, instructions on how to fill them out, and the amount of the visa processing fees approximately 100 days prior to your departure. This information is provided by PVS International, a national passport service that we highly recommend. *Note: Applying for your visa within 30 days of your departure will result in additional expenses and fees.*

It is very important that you apply for your visa through PVS International—obtaining a Russian visa on your own through an embassy or consulate is a complicated and bureaucratic process. **It requires a letter of sponsorship that Grand Circle Cruise Line is unable to supply.** PVS is able to work within this restriction when your application is processed through them, but for legal reasons cannot assist you with applying directly to the embassy.

Travelers who do choose to apply for this visa on their own often encounter problems with processing their visa and may be prohibited from entry into Russia. Details on obtaining your visa through PVS International will be included with your application.

No U.S. Passport?

Non-U.S. citizens or non-U.S. passport holders: If you are not a U.S. citizen or if you possess a passport from a country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate or embassy about possible visa requirements. For your convenience, we recommend the services of PVS International, who can also assist in this regard.

PVS International
Passport & Visa Services
1700 N Moore Street
Rosslyn Center, suite 310
Arlington, VA 22209
Telephone: 1-800-556-9990

Backup Photocopies

The smartest security precaution you can take is to make photocopies of your passport's personal information pages, your air tickets, your traveler's check serial numbers (if you're using them), and your credit cards. Also, bring extra passport-sized photos. Make a list of the phone and fax numbers for reporting lost credit cards, your travel protection plan company (if you have an optional travel protection plan) and medical emergency network. Keep these documents separate from the originals, and they can save you immeasurable time, money, and trouble if your originals are lost or stolen as you travel. In addition, scan these photocopies and email them to your email address; you can then print out replacement copies if necessary.

2. YOUR HEALTH



Keep Your Abilities In Mind

Journeys sometimes present the traveler with unaccustomed challenges — river cruises, for instance, mean adapting to life aboard ship, with the potential for rocky moments, awkward docking sites and wet, slippery terrain. At some docks you may have to step from ship to ship before reaching shore. In addition, terrain onshore can be uneven, rocky, cobble stoned or precarious; both included and optional tours can require extended walking (the Hermitage and Catherine’s Palace, on the St. Petersburg extension can take one and a half to four hours of walking) to guarantee a truly rewarding experience. Some of the places you’ll visit have not been improved with elevators, escalators, ramps, railings or other aids. While some ships have elevators, they do not necessarily go to all decks—and you may have to use stairs to reach some events. If you have difficulty walking in terms of balance or stamina, or are generally inactive in your daily life consider an exercise program to tone up for your cruise. If in doubt, consult your physician describing the length and type of rigors you’ll encounter. If you have difficulty walking, please consider a different Grand Circle vacation. *Please note that this trip is **not** wheelchair, walker, or rollator accessible; nor can Grand Circle Cruise Line accommodate motorized scooters of any kind.*



Health Check and Inoculations

If you have ongoing medical conditions or concerns about your health, we highly recommend that you schedule a checkup with your personal physician at least six weeks in advance of your departure date. Discuss with your doctor any aspects of your international itinerary that may affect your health and be guided by his or her advice. A loose filling or developing cavity would be difficult to remedy while you are traveling. You may want to have a dental exam before your trip. Feeling healthy and confident of your mobility is essential if you want to fully enjoy your trip abroad. Please consider this program only if you are in good physical condition. If you have a condition that requires special equipment or treatment, you must bring and be responsible for all necessary items related to your condition.

If you take medications regularly, be sure to pack an ample supply that will last your entire trip, as obtaining refills of your medication can be difficult during your cruise. Pack these medications in your carry-on bag, and keep them in their original, labeled containers. To be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications, you should also bring copies of the prescriptions, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name.

Basic Illness Prevention

It’s common for people traveling in contained spaces to be more susceptible to easily transmitted viral and bacterial illnesses such as flu, stomach and respiratory bugs, and colds. The single most effective way to prevent this is frequent hand washing. We ask all travelers to be extra diligent in their normal hand-washing hygiene, and to drink plenty of fluids for proper hydration. Simple steps like these will help ensure that everyone enjoys the comfortable, carefree vacation they looked forward to.

Vaccinations

Check with the CDC: To ensure you receive any needed vaccinations we suggest that you check the current recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for your destination. You can contact them at:

On-line — if you have access to the Internet, we suggest you visit the CDC’s website at www.cdc.gov/travel, where you will find comprehensive information about preventing illness while traveling.

By phone — at the CDC’s Hotline toll-free at **1-800-232-4636** 24 hours a day. Please note that automated information may be arranged topically by disease, rather than by country or region.

Consult your doctor: After checking the CDC’s recommendations we strongly suggest that you consult your family physician concerning any vaccinations or medications that you may need on this trip. At the time of print there were no specific vaccinations required for entry into any of the countries on your itinerary.

Jet Lag Relief

You will feel better on the first days of your trip if, shortly before you leave home, you start to adjust to the different time zone of your destination. Since you will cross several time zones to reach your destination, you may lose many hours of regular sleep. On arrival, your body then will have to suddenly adjust to new sleeping and eating patterns. The result is jet lag. Its symptoms are fatigue—often compounded by insomnia and general restlessness—irritability, and vague disorientation. You cannot totally avoid jet lag but you can minimize it. Here’s how:

- Start your trip well rested. Try to begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave.
- Switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane. Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Try to sleep on overnight flights.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying.
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane, and make an effort to get up and walk about the cabin a few times to keep your blood circulation normal.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don’t push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.



3. LUGGAGE REGULATIONS

Size, Number and Weight Restrictions

It may seem early to discuss luggage and packing, but if you know current industry standards for international flights you can start to plan what type of luggage you'll use, how much clothing to bring, etc. The following information can help you in your trip preparations. We'll remind you to confirm your U.S./international luggage limits (and update regional limits, if applicable) in your final documents (arriving about two weeks before your departure).

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on bag per person
Weight restrictions	Varies by airline. The current standard is 50lbs for checked bags and 15 lbs for carry-on bags .
Size restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches (<i>length+width+depth</i>). Generally, 62 linear inches is the checked bag limit; carry-on limit is 45 linear inches .
Luggage Type	A sturdy, fabric-sided suitcase with built-in wheels and lockable zippers is recommended.
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
All extensions have the same luggage restrictions as the main trip.	
REMARKS / SUGGESTIONS	
One suitcase and one carry-on bag per person: Due to the space limitations on bus transfers, you'll be restricted to one suitcase and one carry-on bag per person. This is to ensure that we have room for everyone's luggage. We ask that you abide by this limit to avoid inconveniencing your fellow travelers and prevent additional airlines luggage fees (which are your responsibility). Most airlines now charge to check more than one suitcase per person for flights to Europe and other international flights.	
Note: Enforcement of published restrictions by countries and airlines is a matter of governmental and corporate policy. Enforcement may include spot checks and may be inconsistently applied. Expect penalties and fines to be imposed immediately, however, when and if enforced. Before you choose to ignore the published restrictions you should ask: <i>Do I feel lucky?</i> And, even if you answer yes, you should make sure that you have the ability to pay the fine.	

Should I confirm luggage restrictions with my U.S./international airline(s) before departure?

Absolutely, confirm current restrictions about a week or so before your departure. You should take this step no matter if your vacation has a lower limit than the average international flight or not, because there may be recent changes, such as new security regulations, or an update to the standard weight/size allowances. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our webpage in the *FAQ* section.

You should also check with the airlines on luggage fees—many airlines charge to check luggage, even on international flights. Others may charge a fee if you bring a second carry-on item, like a purse or a laptop. **These fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines. If you are making a connecting flight, you should also confirm if your luggage can be checked through to your final destination. For more information about air travel, see the “Air Travel” section of your *Important Information* booklet.

Airport Security/TSA

Restrictions on what can be included in your carry-on luggage may change. To avoid inadvertently packing restricted items in your carry-on, we suggest that you consult the Transportation Security Administration website at www.tsa.gov/public.

Liquids and your carry on: Follow the **TSA's 3-1-1 rule**: Liquids must be in a 3.4 ounce or less (100ml) bottle (by volume); all bottles must be in a 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; 1 bag per passenger placed in screening bin. One-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. The 3.4-ounce (100ml) container size is a security measure. Note that this rule is used increasingly throughout the world.

For flights that originate in the U.S:

To reduce the risk of damage to your luggage, do not lock your bags when checking in for flights originating in the U.S. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is responsible for screening all checked luggage at commercial airports throughout the U.S. TSA baggage-handling agents may need access to your luggage and will break locks if required. TSA "accepted and recognized" locks are widely available: screeners can open and re-lock bags using these locks if a physical inspection is required.

For flights originating outside the U.S.:

On all flights outside of the U.S., we strongly recommend you lock your luggage. This is not a legal requirement but merely a precaution against theft. Have the keys handy, as you may need to open your luggage for a security screening or for customs in the U.S. or Europe.

4. WHEN YOU ARRIVE



GCCL Air Travelers

U.S. Departure: If you are among a group of ten or more GCCL travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, a GCCL Airport Representative will assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. The Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time and at the gate one hour before your departure time (security permitting).

Please note: If you are arriving at your international gateway city via a connecting domestic flight, the Grand Circle Cruise Line Representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.

Arrival: A GCCL Representative will meet you at the airport after you exit customs and escort you to a private motorcoach for your transfer to the pier or hotel.

Important note: Airport porters are *NOT* allowed in the Customs hall area. On arrival, you must take your luggage off the baggage carousel and then will move through Customs (carts are sometimes available for a small fee). When you exit the airport building, your motorcoach driver will load your luggage onto your motorcoach.

U.S. Return: At the end of your cruise or post-cruise extension, you'll be transferred to the airport for your return flight to the U.S. If you are among a group of ten or more GCCL travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, a GCCL Airport Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights.

Important Note: Please remember to wear your Grand Circle Cruise Line nametag when you exit Customs, upon arrival and when you return to the U.S., so that you are readily identifiable as a GCCL traveler.

Flying with a Travel Companion

If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.

If your luggage has not arrived

If you haven't found your luggage on the luggage carousel, please fill out a lost luggage claim at the lost luggage office at the airport. Your Program Director will make a copy of the claim to track the search and delivery of the missing luggage to the ship.

5. MONEY MATTERS



How to Carry Your Money

We offer these general guidelines that are pertinent throughout your CruiseTour when you are away from your ship. Information specific to a particular city on the main itinerary or to a destination on an optional extension is in the section that directly follows these general travel tips.

In General

Traveler's checks—not recommended: We urge you not to rely on traveler's checks for your personal expenses. They can be difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high. It's most practical to view any traveler's checks you might bring as a last "cash" resort in the event of a special situation.

We recommend that you wait to exchange your money until you arrive in Ukraine (especially large sums), as you will get a better exchange rate in Ukraine than you will in the U.S. We also recommend that you avoid exchanging money in the Customs section of the airport, as the exchange rate is also high here. Your Program Director can show you the best places to exchange money throughout your trip. In general, you can change money at banks and money exchange offices (to exchange cash you may be asked to show your passport). Please note that torn, dirty, or taped bills may not be accepted.

****Please note that your shipboard account can only be paid in Ukrainian hryvnia or by credit card, and onboard purchases can only be paid by Ukrainian hryvnia. To make sure you have enough Ukrainian hryvnia, it is a good idea to change a large amount at the beginning of your trip, as the ship cannot change money and exchange facilities may not be convenient.**

ATMs

When traveling, typically PLUS, Cirrus, and other bank networks are available throughout large cities and small towns. Always notify your bank before you leave home that you are going abroad so that they may remove any blocks on your account and also ask them about the number of withdrawals you may make abroad. For cash withdrawals, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's 4-digit PIN (Personal Identification Number), as many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their numeric keys, they only display digits.

***Note on ATM use:** Many banks have begun imposing a fee ranging from \$1 to \$5 every time you use an ATM in a foreign city. You may want to limit the number of withdrawals that you make. Your Program Director/Hospitality Desk Representative can advise you on locations, but when to exchange money is left to your discretion.*

Credit (and Debit) Cards

Even if you do not plan on using it, having a credit or debit card as a "backup" is helpful in an emergency. Though major American credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express) and debit cards with a credit card logo are accepted abroad, card acceptance varies by shop. It is best to ask if your type of card is accepted *before* deciding on your purchase. Having several different cards can be advantageous. Remember that **DISCOVER cards do not work** outside the U.S.

Keep your receipts in case you have questions about the conversion or exchange rate. Also, keep your receipts as proof of purchase for items to be shipped home.

IMPORTANT NOTE - Credit card use in Turkey: Turkey is phasing in a new type of credit card, called a “Chip-and-PIN” system. This new system is more secure than the “swipe-and-sign” cards, but it requires a PIN (personal identification number) to work. Many businesses in Turkey have already switched to the new system, so they will ask you for a PIN to complete your transaction (instead of signing a slip).

For this reason, we strongly recommend that you check with your bank or credit card company to see if your credit cards have PINs on file for them. Don’t be surprised if they don’t have anything on file—the “Chip-and-PIN” system has not been released in the U.S. yet, so many U.S. cards don’t have PINs at all. If your credit card company is unable to provide a PIN number, no worries. In some shops you will still be able to sign a slip, and in shops that require a PIN, you can always try a different form of payment, like a debit card or cash.

Since there is no way to predict in advance what each shop will do, we recommend that you bring more than one type of payment when you go shopping. For example, a mix of a couple different credit cards, a debit or ATM card, and some cash is ideal—you’ll be prepared for anything. And remember to memorize your PINs as numbers because the keypads in Turkey rarely have alphabetic characters.

Money Basics By Destination

Onboard Ship

Two separate bills will be issued:

- 1) **Shipboard account:** This bill is for onboard purchases (drinks at the bar, gift shop purchases, laundry, etc) and is calculated in Ukrainian hryvnia.

Payment Options:

Cash: Hryvnia are accepted

Credit card: American Express, MasterCard, or Visa are accepted

NOT accepted: *Debit cards, personal checks or the Discover card.*

- 2) **Optional tour account:** This bill is for optional tours taken on the trip; it is calculated in U.S. dollars.

Payment Options:

Credit card: American Express, MasterCard, or Visa cards are accepted

Debit card: Cards with Visa or MasterCard logos are accepted. The card must allow you to *sign* for purchases — you will *not* be able to enter a PIN. You will need to sign an optional tour form as proof of payment.

NOT accepted: *Personal checks, cash, the Discover card, or PIN-only debit cards.*

Please note: Shipboard and optional tour account payments made by credit card may take up to 3 months to process. We ask that you use a credit card that will not expire until three months after your trip ends. Because our headquarters are in Boston, charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as “**OPT Boston**” (depending on your credit card company).

Concessionaires onboard (including photographers and the gift shop): Photography services must be paid on the spot in Ukrainian hryvnia (credit cards are not accepted). Gift shop purchases must also be paid on the spot, but you may use credit cards.

Exchange services: There are no exchange services aboard the ship.

ATM: There is no ATM aboard the ship.

Currency

Ukraine

Currency: The unit of currency in Ukraine is the *hryvnia* (UHR). One *hryvnia* is worth 100 kopecks. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500 *hryvnias*
- Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 25, and 50. In addition, there are 1, 2, and 5 *hryvnia* coins

Currency exchange rates fluctuate daily. Your Program Director can advise you of the exchange rate upon your arrival. For current exchange rates, please refer to our website, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

Banking hours: Generally banks are open 9 am to 6 pm, Monday through Friday. For cashing checks or credit card advances: 10 am to 5 pm. (A commission or service charge of 5 percent is common.) Exchange offices are frequently open on Saturday and Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm.

Russia

The unit of money in Russia is the *ruble*. On price tags, *ruble* is abbreviated to *p*. Ruble banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: 10, 50, 100, 500, 1,000 and 5,000 *rubles*
- Coins: 1, 5, 10, 50 *copecks* and 1, 2, 5, 10 *rubles*

Currency exchange rates fluctuate daily. Your Program Director can advise you of the exchange rate upon your arrival. For current exchange rates, please refer to our website, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper. On our website select the region and then click on the country you'll be visiting. A link to the currency converter is included in the menu on the page of each individual country.

According to Russian legislation (federal law #173 from 12/10/2003, article 15), residents and **nonresidents** of the Russian Federation may:

- Bring in/out **without any restrictions and Customs declaration** the amount of **rubles in equivalent value of \$1-\$3,000**.
- Bring in/out without any restrictions but subject to declaration at the Customs office the amount of **rubles in equivalent value of \$3,000-\$10,000**
- To bring in/out the amount of **rubles in equivalent value over \$10,000**, the person should have a confirmation of the origin of this amount of money.

St. Petersburg Banking hours: Banking hours vary from bank to bank. In general, hours are 9 am to 6 pm, Monday through Friday.

Romania

Romania's official currency is the leu (plural lei), and 1 leu = 100 bani. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: 1, 5, 10, 50, 100, 200, and 500
- Coins: 1, 5, 10, 20, and 50 bani

ATMs are by far the best way to get cash locally, and at the best exchange rates, but there are also many exchange offices that offer a good rate and don't charge a commission. You will need to show an ID – your passport – to change money. Changing cash at hotels is very expensive, and banks often refuse to change money at all these days.

Turkey

The currency in Turkey is the Turkish lira (TL). The Turkish lira is divided into 100 kuruş (pronounced “koo-ROOSH”). U.S. dollars can sometimes be used in Turkey.

- Bills come in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200 TL
- Coins come in denominations of 1, 5, 25, and 50 kuruş and 1 TL

Some businesses in Turkey will accept U.S. dollars (or euros). This is more common in places/business that cater to tourists. Accepting U.S. dollars is legal, but since it is not the official currency of Turkey, the businesses that accept dollars can do so on their own terms. This means that they may set their own exchange rate and might not be able to make change for large U.S. bills. Generally, you'll be better off using Turkish lira for everyday use, and using U.S. dollars only as a backup.



Shopping

It is Grand Circle Cruise Line's goal to identify and provide you with shopping opportunities that highlight unique, locally produced products with good value from reliable vendors. For this reason there may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is **no** requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. **Grand Circle Cruise Line cannot be responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.**

If you plan a major purchase, we strongly recommend that you research the prices and quality available at home before your trip. Just one visit to an import shop or gold dealer will put you way ahead when you go shopping. This is the only way to know if you are getting a good price.

By Destination

Kiev

Best buys: Most shops and businesses accept major credit cards, but please be prepared to pay cash. The Club New York is a giant flea market on the left bank, open on Saturday mornings. There is also a nice flea market conveniently located next to the NIVKI metro station on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Look for old coins, medals, and mementoes. The Saksaganskoho Antique Shop on Saksaganskoho offers a variety of icons, samovars, and other collectibles. The Globus Mall in Independence Square is a western-style mall with a variety of shops. The Tsum Department Store on Khmelnytskoho 2 is a retail giant and an adventure to explore. The Besarabska Market on Besarabska Plosccha 2 is a farmer's market that offers all sorts of fruits and vegetables.

St. Petersburg

Best buys: Among the best buys in Russia are black caviar (sold in small sealed jars or large tins), the traditional Russian wooden nest of dolls (*matryoshkas*), hand-embroidered shirts and blouses, *balalaikas*, samovars, watches (Raketa brand and military watches), chess sets, pure wool scarves, lacquer boxes, hats, vodka, amber, malachite jewelry, porcelain and books. You'll also find a variety of small Christmas and Easter gifts made by Russian craftsmen for sale throughout the year that make great unique presents for friends.

To bring back a little of Russia with you, you have some traditional items to choose from. The blue and white Russian porcelain Gzhel is used for vases, table settings, some delicate toys, and figurines. Nesting dolls are also widely available, as well as Russian and Ukrainian style shirts with intricate embroidery. *Palekh* boxes (brightly colored and lacquered with native artwork) are on sale in better souvenir shops. Kiosks offer amber and silver jewelry, and some churches allow you to purchase Russian Orthodox religious items.

One of the oldest places to buy souvenirs is Gostinny Dvor (35 Nevsky Prospekt), the most famous of St. Petersburg's department stores. Another option is Passage (48 Nevsky Prospekt), another big department store that specializes in women's clothing.

Bucharest

Bucharest is renowned for its hand-woven carpets, which can be purchased from several authorized retailers in the city. For real bargains consider crystal, porcelain, ceramics, and china, of which good-quality items can be purchased at relatively low prices in local shops, particularly in the Lipscani district. Local arts and crafts can be purchased at Artizanat stores that specialize in dolls, masks, and embroidered objects made by local craftspeople.

The giant department store, Unirea Shopping Center, is a leftover from the days of communism when everything was sold under one roof, and it is worth a look. The main food market in Bucharest is Piata Amzei. It is a bustling marketplace where the locals shop for cheeses, fruits, fishes, and meats.

Lviv

Some upscale stores, big hotels, and some restaurants accept credit cards, but most do not so be prepared to pay cash. There are a number of great places to find local crafts, artifacts, and jewelry. Hand-painted **Pysanky eggs**, native Ukrainian **gerdans** (necklaces), paintings from local artists, and **kvass**, a drink made with Caraway oil, grain, and malt are just some of the local treasures you'll find.

There is a local book market located at the monument of Ivan Federov. It takes place every day. There is also an **Art Market** near Market Square where you can purchase costumes, antique books, and paintings, and a **Vernisazh Souvenir Market** near the Opera House that is very popular for its wide variety of traditional crafts.

Istanbul/Turkey

Fashionable clothes can be bought relatively inexpensively, as Turkey has a booming cotton industry. Turkish carpets and flat woven *kilims* (Turkish village rugs) can be found almost anywhere—the design corresponds to the area in which it was made; each region has its own specialty. You'll also find many wonderful items made with hard-beaten copper or brass: samovars, pots, pans, cauldrons, and more. Other crafts for purchase include ornate Meerschaum pipes; green or gold onyx bowls, vases and ornaments; gold jewelry; lace-edged scarves; and beautifully embroidered cotton blouses. Leather shoes,

bags, cushions, jackets, skirts, vests, hats, gloves, and trousers are also good buys. Don't be afraid to haggle—the shop owners expect it and often you can get items down to a very reasonable price over a glass or two of tea.

Store hours: Smaller shops are open Monday through Saturday, 9 am to 6 or 7 pm, and closed on Sunday. This includes the Grand Bazaar and the Spice (Egyptian) Market in Istanbul. Larger shopping malls in major cities—such as Istanbul and Ankara—are open Monday through Sunday from 10 am to 9 pm.

Value Added Tax: A Value Added Tax, called *Katma Deger Vergisi*, or *KDV* in Turkish, is included in the price of many goods and services in Turkey. This tax is not added to your bill; it is already figured into the prices quoted to you. If you buy some big-ticket items in Turkey, such as a leather coat or Turkish carpet, you can recover the 8% or 18% *KDV* if the purchase was made in an authorized shop. To obtain the refund, you must have your purchase receipt stamped by a Customs officer when you leave the country. Within 20 days after your departure from Turkey, you must mail your stamped receipt back to the shopkeeper (so make sure you have the shop's mailing address), who will then either send you a refund check (if you paid cash) or issue a credit to your charge card (make certain your credit card number is clearly marked on your purchase receipt).

U.S. Customs Regulations and Shipping Charges

Exemption Amounts

Articles totaling \$800, at fair retail value where they were acquired, may be imported free of charge if you bring them with you. A flat rate of duty—usually a percentage—will be applied to the next \$1,000 worth (fair retail value) of merchandise. The U.S. Customs Inspector determines the value of your items when you enter, and is not bound by your bill of sale. In almost every case, however, a genuine bill of sale will be honored.

Fees on Items Shipped Home

Items shipped home are *always* subject to duty when received in the U.S. There will also be charges for shipping. Although some shops abroad may offer to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the customs facility closest to you and payment of the *export* duties (the fee to remove an item from its country of origin) not door-to-door shipping or *import* duties (the fee the U.S. government charges to bring an item into the U.S.). All additional duties or shipping charges would be the responsibility of the purchaser—you.

Therefore unless the item is small enough to mail or to be sent by a global parcel service (like FedEx) you should be prepared to pay customs duties and for shipping or pick-up from the nearest customs facility. This is why the U.S. Customs & Border Protection service states: “The most cost-effective thing to do is to take your purchases with you if at all possible.”

Illegal Items

It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins. For more information on what you may or may not bring back into the United States, you can obtain the publication “Know Before You Go” from the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection by phone, mail or from their website:

U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20229
Tel. **1-877-272-5511**
www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/

Problem with a Purchase?

The best way to address a problem with a purchase is to not have one in the first place! Examine your merchandise before paying, check contracts or agreements before signing, and review your receipt before leaving the shop. For major purchases, ask in advance about the return policy. Local practice may vary from U.S. standards; don't assume that you have "x" number of days after the purchase to speak up.

But what if you do discover an issue with an item later on? In that case, your best recourse is to contact the vendor directly. For this reason we recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. due to delays in communication, the complexities of international shipping/customs duties, and even cultural differences in how business is conducted.



To Tip or Not to Tip

Sometimes *that* is the question. The good news is twofold: we're fresh out of Shakespearean soliloquies, so no thesauri will get hurt here; and the answer to the question "**to tip or not to tip** (and how much to tip if you so choose)" is *always* a personal decision. Tipping is a common practice both at home and abroad and we offer these guidelines to answer requests for appropriate tipping amounts. It can be useful to have this information on site – when the question *must* be answered – and ahead of time for travel budgeting purposes. Tips below are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency (usually preferred) or in U.S. dollars (personal/traveler's checks should *never* be used for tips).

- **GCCL Program Director:** It is customary to express a personal "thank you" to your Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Director at the end of your trip, especially if he/she has provided you with individual assistance. We recommend \$4-\$6 per person, per day. Please note that tips for our Program Directors can only be in the form of cash. Tips in local currency are appreciated and you need only tip the Program Director assigned to your group.
- **Tours & Excursions:** During your vacation, you have the opportunity to participate in included and optional tours. (See optional tour payments section above for details and restrictions). A tip to your motorcoach driver (and local tour guide, if one accompanies the tour) is customary: \$2 per person for each half-day tour, \$3 per person for each full-day tour.
- **Shipboard:** Gratuities to cruise personnel are not included. The ships' tipping guidelines recommend a flat tip of \$10-\$12 U.S. per person, per day, which will be pooled among all cruise staff. Please note that tips for the cruise staff can only be in cash.
- **Hotels:** For your hotel housekeeping staff, a tip worth about \$1 per day is sufficient. (Note: If you are low on local currency, you can use U.S. dollars.)
- **Kiev, Ukraine:** Although service charges are not required, a tip of 5-10% is usually expected in restaurants. Check your bill to see whether a service charge is already included. Tipping is not

required wherever food is ordered at the counter. Taxi drivers are not ordinarily tipped, though it is always appreciated in return for good service.

- **Lviv, Ukraine:** Service charge is sometimes added, but 10% at restaurants, hotels, and other service establishments is generally accepted.
- **St. Petersburg, Russia:** Motorcoach drivers (and local tour guides, if one accompanies the tour): \$2 per person for each half-day tour, \$3 per person for each full-day tour. For hotel housekeeping staff, a tip worth about \$1 per day is sufficient. (Note: dollars and euros are accepted, as well as roubles.)
- **Romania:** Although service charges are generally included, tipping is still expected. A 10% tip at restaurants and bars is sufficient. Make sure your taxi driver does not overcharge by asking for an invoice print out (it's often better to take a taxi ordered by the concierge). If everything is fine, a 5-10% tip is welcome. In these countries, it is acceptable (and welcomed) to tip in U.S. dollars. You might want to bring a supply of U.S. \$1 bills for tipping purposes.
- **Istanbul, Turkey:** Some restaurants will automatically add a service charge (*servis ücreti*) of 10% or 15% to your bill. If service is included, the bill may say "service included" (*servis dahil*). Oddly enough, this does not absolve you from the tip. The service charge goes either to the owner (patron) or to the maitre'd. If you choose to tip, leave 10% of the food bill on the table for the waiter, or hand it directly to him or her. Round off taxi fares. If the meter says 5,80 TL, give the driver 6 TL (the minimum fare is 2.70 TL). Turks don't tip taxi drivers unless the driver has performed some exceptional service.

6. PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP



In General

Travel light. A good rule of thumb is to gather together everything you want to bring; then take half of that. Eliminate all but the essentials and start packing a few days before you leave. That way, you'll have time to think—not fret—about what you might be forgetting. To have a varied travel wardrobe—yet keep your luggage light—we recommend you select a color scheme and pack color-coordinated pants and shirts, skirts and blouses, or pantsuits that can be mixed to create different outfits.

Pack casual clothes. Comfortable, low-key apparel is acceptable at each of your destinations and aboard ship. Basic pants, shirts, walking shorts, sportswear, everyday dresses and skirts, supportive shoes, and functional outdoor clothes are recommended. At dinner, you will not need to don "dressy" clothing; men do not need a tie or jacket. You may want one or two "smart casual" outfits for the Welcome Reception and Farewell Dinner, but it's completely up to you.

Style hints: In religious buildings such as Russian Orthodox churches and mosques it is customary to wear pants or skirts below the knee rather than shorts. It is also customary to cover one's shoulders and in some places, to cover one's head. If an excursion will require more conservative clothing, it will be announced in advance. Always remove your shoes before stepping inside a mosque. This is a strictly enforced practical law. Worshippers kneel and touch their foreheads to the carpets, and they like to keep them clean. You may bring heavy socks or a pair of slippers, as the floors in mosques can be cold. If there are no carpets, as in a saint's tomb, you can keep your shoes on.

Plan to dress in layers on shore excursions. Be prepared for a variety of weather conditions: warm days with sun, chilly temperatures with showers, and evenings that could dip into the 30s or 40s, depending on your travel season. For warmer conditions, a mixture of cotton sweaters, sweatshirts, long-sleeved shirts, summery tops, pants, skirts, and walking shorts is recommended. Evenings call for a warm outfit and a heavy sweater and jacket.

A sturdy windproof shell over a heavy sweatshirt, sweater, or fleece top is ideal for being out on deck at night. On land excursions, dress in layers. You can then easily adjust to any temperature shifts by removing or adding a layer. For possible showers, take a folding travel umbrella and/or rain hat. A waterproof jacket with a hood is ideal.

Good walking shoes are critical. This program features many included tours that follow steep, unpaved or cobbled routes; and even an average day of light sightseeing or shopping can put great demands on your feet. Supportive, waterproof sports shoes are ideal for daytime shore excursions. If you prefer more ankle support, take light hiking boots. Bring five to seven pairs of socks. In case you get caught in the rain, we suggest you bring an extra pair of walking shoes. Aboard ship, you'll want non-slip shoes with rubber soles.

Mosque etiquette: Wear modest clothes when visiting mosques. Women should wear conservative dresses or skirts, preferably to the knees, and have arms and shoulders covered (and sometimes the head). You may want to bring a scarf for this purpose. Men should wear shirts with trousers, not shorts. At some of the most-visited mosques, attendants will lend you long robes if your clothing isn't appropriate.

Always remove your shoes before stepping inside a mosque or onto the clean area just in front of the mosque door. This is not a religious law, but a practical one, and it is strictly enforced. Worshippers

kneel and touch their foreheads to the carpets, and they like to keep them clean. You may wish to bring heavy socks or a pair of slippers, as the floors in mosques can be cold. If there are no carpets, as in a saint's tomb, you can walk right in with your shoes on.

Turkish baths: A bathing suit is the most comfortable attire for Turkish baths, and is useful for swimming pools and saunas.

Luggage Suggestions

Consider a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase for your checked luggage. Due to space limitations on our motor coaches, you are allowed one piece of checked luggage per person. Portage at airports and hotels is provided for **one** bag per person. All bags should have luggage tags.

Consider a daypack or small backpack as your carry-on bag. It will do double duty during excursions and walking trips. A daypack leaves your hands free and distributes its weight onto your back. Packed with daily travel needs (sweater, camera, rain/wind jacket, water bottle, etc.), it will compress to fit the storage space of foreign motorcoaches, and yet still have room for an impulse buy at a local street market.

Inner bags: Packing is easier if you use inner bags to help organize your gear. Use plastic bags, nylon stuff sacks, or packing cubes to organize inside your suitcase. Isolate liquids, store camera gear and important papers in heavy-duty Ziploc style bags.

***Tip:** Bring a second, empty lockable bag folded into your main suitcase, with a luggage tag and small lock. Use this to carry souvenirs home – but remember that you may incur extra luggage fees. If you're traveling with a companion we recommend "cross-packing," i.e., pack 2 outfits of your clothing in your companion's luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.*



Packing Your Carry-On

Using a daypack as a carry-on bag for your flights is a smart solution. We **strongly urge** you to pack your carry-on with at least one full change of clothes, your camera gear, medications, changes of socks and underwear, your important travel documents, and other irreplaceable items, in case your checked bags go astray. Store camera gear and important papers in plastic bags to protect them from dirt and moisture. With a daypack you can then remove these items on arrival and load your bag with the gear you'll need on walking tours and excursions.

NOTE: Restrictions on what can be included in your carry-on luggage change frequently. To avoid inadvertently packing any restricted items in your carry-on luggage, we strongly suggest that you consult the Transportation Security Administration website, at www.tsa.gov, which keeps a current list of restricted items. From the main website click on *Our Travelers*, then *Air Travel*, and then you will see a link for *Prohibited Items*.



Clothing Options

We've included information below on the weather you can expect for the regions you'll be visiting on your travels. Taking into account the climate you'll encounter and the general suggestions we offer above will enable you to create a flexible wardrobe that's light enough for sophisticated travel and will guarantee comfort in all the conditions you can expect to encounter. The luggage weight and size restrictions imposed by travel realities today have made traveling light an absolute necessity. With modern fabrics – Gore-Tex, Polarfleece, polypropylene, etc. – lightweight packing for comfort and protection through a wide range of weather is easy. A visit to any on-line or local sporting goods/outdoor

stores (L.L. Bean, REI, EMS, etc.) will yield a treasure trove of lightweight, specialized, and fashionable clothing and gear that is readily adaptable to your itinerary.

Travel Gear Suggestions

Though it's often fun to do things as the locals do, it can be frustrating when daily necessities or conveniences from home aren't available. To travel wisely these days you must juggle your personal needs and preferences against the physical constraints of your transportation—whether it's an international airplane, a transfer motorcoach, a small ship or a day-long trek on a camel. You'll have to distinguish between what you **must** have, what you'd *like* to have, whether you can zip your suitcase closed, and what you can reasonably expect to wrestle through airport hallways and security checkpoints. Consult the following items to create your personal checklist – ignoring what you don't need and making the tough decisions over borderline cases. Remember that many airlines today will charge you extra for added luggage.

Do not pack aerosol cans, as they tend to leak during air travel. Also avoid packing glass bottles; use plastic containers instead. Leave at home checkbooks and any credit cards not essential for your trip, valuable jewelry, and anything that you would hate to lose. For more packing and luggage tips, you might want to visit www.travelite.org.

Cabin amenities include: shampoo, body lotion, hair dryer, liquid soap, and towels. We have still mentioned some of these items in the checklists below in case you have preferred brands you want to bring with you on your cruise.

Consider ...

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner, shower cap, body soap, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Moisturizer, lip balm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription | <input type="checkbox"/> Wide-brim sun hat or visor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses with a neck strap | <input type="checkbox"/> Pocket-size tissues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen, SPF 15 or stronger | <input type="checkbox"/> Moist towelettes and/or anti-bacterial hand lotion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insect repellent with DEET | <input type="checkbox"/> Compact umbrella |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel money bag or money belt | <input type="checkbox"/> Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra passport-sized photos |

Medicines

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your own prescription medicines | <input type="checkbox"/> Stomach relief: Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamins | <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-diarrheal: Imodium |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cold remedies: Sudafed, Dristan, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Band-Aids, Moleskin foot pads |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pain relievers: Ibuprofen/aspirin/Naproxen | <input type="checkbox"/> Antibiotics: Neosporin/Bacitracin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laxatives: Senokot/Ex-Lax | |

Other Gear

- Travel alarm
- Compact binoculars
- Toiletry bag, with hook and pockets
- Washcloth
- Handkerchiefs
- Basic sewing kit
- Hand-wash laundry soap (Woolite), clothespins/ravel clothesline/stopper
- Electrical transformer & plug adapter--see the "Regional Electricity" section below
- Travel journal/note pad
- Swimsuit, if your ship or hotel has a pool or a whirlpool
- Home address book
- Photos, small gift for home-hosted visit
- Phrase book
- Water bottle for land excursions
- Collapsible walking staff
- Pocket calculator for exchange rate
- Reading material

7. REGIONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION



We can't predict what the weather will be during your travels, but you'll find historical averages and general information on the climate of your destinations below. As your departure nears it's a good idea to visit the *My Account* feature of www.gct.com, where you'll find monthly temperature averages for the countries you'll visit as well as a current 10-day forecast of local temperatures and conditions. Or check Internet weather sites (www.wunderground.com is very comprehensive) for those forecasts.

Kiev, Ukraine: Most of Ukraine, including Kiev, enjoys a temperate continental climate. The typical weather during the months of your travel is warm and sunny. Only the southern coast of the Black Sea, quite a bit farther south than your route, is considered Mediterranean climate. The Kiev region has four clearly recognized seasons. As the hottest month is July, temperatures will be quite comfortable during your August or September sojourn, and the local flora will be showing their first changes of autumn.

Yalta, Sevastopol (Crimea): Temperatures are similar to those on the French and Portuguese Algarve Mediterranean coasts. Fresh sea breezes ensure that the high summer temperatures don't become uncomfortable. Most of Crimea has a temperate continental climate, except for the south coast, which has a humid subtropical climate, due to the influence of the Black Sea. Summers (May – October) can be hot, with a July average of 82 °F. Winters (November-April) are cool, with a January average of 32 °F. In the south, coastal winters are milder than the interior: January averages about 39 °F, and temperatures rarely go below freezing. The interior gets little rain – about 16 inches a year; while the south coast gets more than double that at 41 inches. Because of its climate, the southern Crimean coast is a popular beach and sun resort for Ukrainian and Russian tourists.

Odessa: The climate is similar to the Crimean: dry, relatively mild winters, with temperatures that rarely fall below the mid 20s °F. Summers see more precipitation, and the city often basks in warm weather with temperatures often reaching into the low 80s °F. Snow cover is usually light.

St. Petersburg (optional extension): The weather in St. Petersburg in summer is often comfortably warm and bright, but hot spells also occur, as do afternoon rain showers. By the middle of August, autumn has arrived and by October, the temperatures usually have dropped to the 50s and 40s, and a crispness has entered the air — or there may even be snow.

Romania: Romania's climate is temperate with usually few extreme weather conditions. Mid summer is generally quite warm (it can go over 100 degrees Fahrenheit), especially in the lowlands where summer is usually dry. Spring and fall bring delightful, clear days of sun and comfortable temperatures. The mountains receive more precipitation than along the Danube delta, with brief showers and occasional thunderstorms in the Carpathians. Winters bring cold temperatures and abundant snowfall, along with a cold wind known as the *crivat* that blows down from Russia. Note that during your stay in Sinaia, a mountain pass town, temperatures can fluctuate by 40 degrees or more. It can be in the upper 70s in the afternoon in July and August ... but the *average* high is around 50 degrees.

Lviv (optional extension): Lviv has a moderate climate and very few extreme temperatures at any time of year. Temperatures in the summer run from the mid 60s to the low 80s, and the 40s and 50s in the fall. Rain falls mostly in the winter, and chances for sun are excellent at any time due to the fact that Lviv only averages around 65 cloudy days per year.

Istanbul (optional extension): Situated in the Marmara region, Istanbul tends to be hot and slightly humid at high summer (late July to early September), with very little cloudy weather or rain and temperatures in the 70s or 80s. From May to early July, and again from late September to November, the weather tends to be moderate, with some rain but mostly clear days and pleasant temperatures in the 60s and 70s. In the winter (mid-December to mid-March) it's rainy and cold, with some snow; average afternoon temperatures are in the low 40s.

It's best to be ready for these variable weather conditions by bringing clothes you can wear in layers. Be prepared for intermittent spells of wet, cloudy weather, though extended spells of fine settled weather are also likely.

Here is the data from the weather observation stations closest to our destinations.

WHAT'S THE TEMPERATURE?						
<i>Average highs (taken at 2 pm) and lows (taken just before sunrise) in °F.</i>						
	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
Kiev, Ukraine						
High	68	73	75	74	66	53
Low	47	54	56	54	47	37
Odessa, Ukraine						
High	67	75	79	79	70	58
Low	51	59	62	61	53	44
St. Petersburg (optional extension)						
High	60	66	70	66	56	45
Low	44	52	56	54	45	37
Bucharest, Romania (optional extension)						
High	72	79	82	82	75	63
Low	51	58	60	59	52	43
Istanbul, Turkey (optional extension)						
High	69	78	82	82	76	67
Low	54	62	66	67	61	55
Lviv, Ukraine (optional extension)						
High	64	68	71	71	63	53
Low	48	53	55	54	48	40

Please note: The data cited here reflect *climate* as opposed to *weather* conditions, and serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. A 60 degree *average* high temperature means that days may be as warm as 80 or as cool as 40 – but it's most likely you'll encounter temperatures in the 50 to 70 degree range.

8. TRAVEL AND TECHNOLOGY



In General

Cell phone, digital camera, camcorder, PDA, MP3 player: travel today can involve technology that didn't even exist as recently as ten years ago. The variety of digital gadgets and their usefulness when you travel – en route or after you arrive – is enormous. An e-book reader allows you to keep guidebooks for uncounted countries at your fingertips and not increase your luggage weight by an ounce. (*Tip: you can download **this** document from the Grand Circle Travel website and import it into your tablet or e-reader, many of which can display PDF files. A large screen is best, however, since PDF documents don't scale like documents designed specifically for e-readers.*) Lightweight digital camcorders and cameras let you bring home high definition movies and still images of the people you meet and places you visit on your travels.

Laptops/netbooks/tablets can keep you connected and promise up-to-the-minute information via Wi-Fi and the Internet, but, as with all gadgets, you'll need to determine if bringing them makes sense. Particularly with laptop computers it's often wiser to rely on Internet cafes or, when available, hotel Internet access than pay the packing weight and space penalty for casual Internet use. And, of course, the more time you spend gazing into electronic gadgetry, the less time you have to relish the local people, sites and sights.

To take advantage of the devices you do bring, you'll need to consider some basic variables—particularly in regard to the services that will be available in the countries you visit. You'll encounter a range of electrical current standards, varied physical plug configurations to access that current, erratic availability (electricity and internet access), and different technological standards (cell phone networks can differ across borders.)

You'll need to coordinate your power and data storage needs, and the accessories required to recharge/connect/use these devices under the different conditions you'll encounter. You'll find some tips below aimed at ensuring that your gadgets achieve their full potential. As a general rule, it's good to familiarize yourself with the device(s) you bring by reading the owner's manual *before* you depart. Pay particular attention to electrical, charging and storage requirements to ensure that you understand exactly what you need under which circumstances. And remember that thorough preparation is the best guarantee that you'll get the most benefit from your devices.



Regional Electricity

Outside the U.S. most countries use electrical systems that differ from the standard U.S. 110 V 60 Hz current and flat two- or three-pronged polarized plug system. The use of 220-240 V and 50/60 Hz current is the overwhelming choice for the rest of the world. Plug shapes, sizes, and configurations vary from country to country and often inside countries as well. In addition, some plugs will work with multiple receptacles and some won't. Europe is largely and conveniently standardized to the Type C "Europlug."

Plugging a 110 V U.S. appliance into 220/240 V 50/60 Hz service will result in a broken appliance, since the motor will burn out as it tries to run twice as fast as it was designed to run. We suggest that you bring dual voltage appliances that will work on both 110 and 220/240 voltage. These are widely available, though you may have to read the fine print to confirm the dual voltage capability. With dual voltage appliances you'll only need to carry whatever plug adapters you need - which are both inexpensive and reliable.

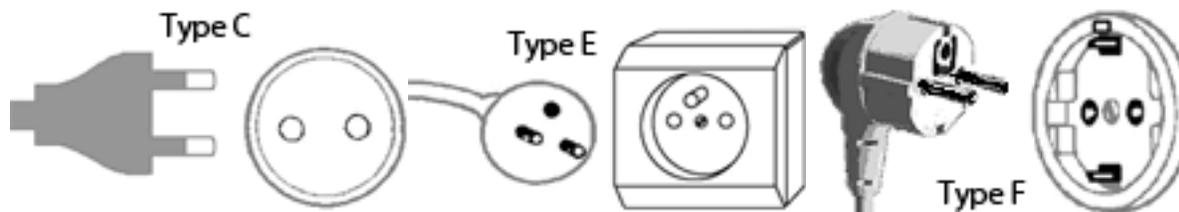
If you do choose to bring 110 V American appliances, such as a hair dryer (note that hotels often supply hairdryers and coffee makers) or shaver, you'll need a current transformer (to cut the 220/240 V in half) as well as the necessary plug adapters. Transformer/adaptor kits can usually be found at your local hardware or at many online stores. Note, however, that transformers are unreliable and tend to burn out - which will render your 110 V appliance useless. Another option is to use battery-operated appliances-which don't need adapters or transformers-just an ample supply of batteries. (Rechargeable batteries are an economical option, but then you'll need a charger.)

Electricity in Ukraine, Russia, and Turkey is generally 220 volts, 50 Hz. *Type F* plugs are the most common, and are generally used in new construction. In older buildings and in Ukraine you may find *Type C* instead. Romania uses the *Type C* plug. *Type C* plugs, which are sometimes called “*Europlugs*”, will fit in *Type F* outlets. In Turkey the most common plugs are *Type C* and *Type E*. Because electric plugs are not standardized in this region, you may wish to purchase a travel kit with more than one plug adapter—often available in regionally appropriate packages.

Onboard

Aboard ship, the cabins are equipped with 110V and 220V, European-style outlets.

Please note: Aboard ships, a limited number of transformers and adapter plugs are available at the ship's reception desk for occasional use. If you need these items for the duration of the cruise, we recommend you bring your own.



If you use multiple digital devices—cell phone, digital camera, and MP3 player for instance – it's handy to have a travel power strip to increase the number of available outlets for charging these devices. Some types include surge suppressors and USB-style plugs capable of charging cell phones and MP3 players without the need for a brand-specific charging block – saving weight and packing space. You'll have to review the specifications of your device to ensure that it will work with the power strip you choose—and that the power strip will work with the various voltages you may encounter.



Cell Phones

If you want to use a cell phone while traveling overseas, be sure to check whether your own phone will work outside the U.S. or whether you're better off renting an international phone. The websites www.travelcell.com and www.globalcellularrental.com have good information on rentals. You may also want to consider buying an inexpensive local phone for your stay.

To use your own phone, it's best to investigate the options and fees your plan offers for international use. Consult your service provider (www.verizon.com, www.t-mobile.com etc.) for details. U.S. service is dominated by the CDMA technology standard, while most of the world uses the incompatible GSM standard. Some U.S. providers do offer GSM, but in either case you may incur high international roaming fees. With GSM, however, you can often choose to have your phone "unlocked" and then add a local SIM card for lower fees. If you can access the Internet as you travel, you can take advantage of email or a Skype Internet telephone (VOIP) account for the best value.

Phone Calling Cards

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, we advise that you use a prepaid calling card, because the only additional charge you'll normally incur (besides the prepaid long distance charges) is a local fee of a few cents and possibly a connection fee if you are using your card at your hotel. It is best to check with the hotel's reception desk prior to making phone calls to avoid unexpected charges.

Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.



Photo Gear

For many people capturing the highlights of their travel experiences in photographs or movies and sharing them with friends later is one of the most enjoyable aspects of the journey. You can remember your experiences and savor your memories for years to come. Digital cameras and camcorders are excellent travel companions—and many do dual duty by recording movies *and* still images. Fist sized camcorders will capture HD movies and high quality still photos; cameras smaller than a deck of cards are great for snapshots and will capture casual movie clips. With an ample supply of high-capacity memory cards you can record your whole trip with a small, lightweight package.

Be sure to bring enough batteries. Recharging batteries is sometimes impossible, due to a lack of outlets, electrical shortages or outages—and some cameras drain batteries *very* quickly. Whether you need standard (2A or 3A) or proprietary batteries, it's handy to have spares. Be sure your charger will work with the local electrical system, and bring enough memory cards—they may be hard to find and are often pricier than in the U.S. Whatever the storage format (often Secure Digital) memory cards are small and thin and, as with being thin, you can never have too much storage.

Compact cameras are impractical for distant subjects (such as African wildlife or architectural details on Europe's taller buildings). Some models have a zoom lens of up to 120mm, which is good for middle distances. For distant subjects a *megazoom* (with a zoom lens of at least 300mm) or a single lens reflex (DSLR) camera with up to a 300mm telephoto lens are good choices. With a DSLR you can carry multiple lenses, though as your gear gets more complex you may reach luggage weight and size constraints. Large lenses that need a tripod, or double reflex cameras are impractical for casual travel photography. A single mid-range telephoto lens coupled with a small, fast prime lens (for low light/no

flash situations) may be the best system for an effective but compact kit. Or, consider mirrorless interchangeable lens cameras (MILC) that combine small bodies and lenses with high quality for both still and HD movie images.

If you use a DSLR or MILC camera, protect the lenses with a UV filter and bring lens caps, covers, cleaning paper and a waterproof bag (a heavy duty Ziploc-style bag is good) to protect your gear. Remember to pack the flash if it's detachable. Be sure your camera has a flash that *can* be turned off, and learn how to turn it off. (At some sites and in many museums, flashes are *not* permitted; flashes can also frighten wary wildlife.) In some countries you may be charged for photography at specific sites; and individuals and some cultures are less receptive to photography than others. It's always best to respect local customs.

Disposable cameras are also an option. They are inexpensive and capable of perfectly acceptable photos in light that is not too dim *or* bright. A panoramic disposable can add a particularly interesting perspective when compared to standard photo formats—and may suggest inventive ways of seeing your subjects. X-rays do not damage the data of digital cameras (in any media format), and so pose no problems for travelers using digital cameras.

Finally, if you've bought a new camera for your travels, get familiar with it before you leave. Read the manual, take some pictures of your garden flowers or pets. A little play up front can save lots of hassle on the trip – and your photos will look better if you have command of the camera.

9. ABOARD GRAND CIRCLE CRUISE LINE'S UKRAINIAN RIVER SHIPS



The M/S *Tikhi Don*

The *Tikhi Don* is nautically equipped for sailing Ukrainian rivers, while also catering to our travelers' needs, yet are somewhat limited due to their general structure. Because it is structurally different from other ships in our European fleet, you'll find smaller common areas. There is no lounge onboard big enough to accommodate all passengers at one time. Most activities onboard will take place in the top deck bar. For briefings we will split passengers into two groups, but each group will always receive the same information.

The *Tikhi Don* can accommodate 216 passengers. It features all outside cabins, Western decor, and a friendly Ukrainian staff. You'll enjoy English-only shipboard announcements, a comfortable dining area with regional and international cuisine, and panoramic views from the lounge and sun deck. Your cabin features a picture window, twin beds that are convertible to a double, color TV, refrigerator, and private, European-style bath with shower.

Please note that, unlike the crew aboard our other European cruise ships, the Ukrainian crew of the *Tikhi Don* do not speak fluent English and may, at times, have difficulty communicating.

Included features of all Grand Circle Cruise Line Ukrainian river ship cabins:

- All outside cabins
- Twin beds that can be pushed together to create a full size bed
- Individual climate control (features both heating and air conditioning units)
- Sufficient closet
- Table and two chairs
- Picture window that can be opened
- Color TV
- In-room safe
- Telephone
- Hair dryer
- Private bath with shower
- Small personal refrigerator

An important word: Please keep in mind that this ship is a river vessel, not a large ocean cruise ship. Riverboat cabins, in comparison, are relatively small, and ship amenities, in general, are comfortable but not lavish.

Please note: The ship is not equipped with wheelchair access. The ship has one elevator; however, the elevator only provides access from the main deck to the boat deck. It does not go to the sun deck.

Shore Excursions

Many sightseeing tours are included on your CruiseTour; and your Program Director will also provide information on optional excursions, available for purchase, when you arrive.

Onboard Activities

During your cruise you'll enjoy exclusive Discovery Series events, such as classical and local music entertainment, theme dinners, organized discussions, group activities that relate to the region (may include a language lesson), and talks on upcoming ports of call.



Dining

You'll enjoy fine cuisine and excellent views in your ship's dining room, featuring a warm decor, large windows, and white-linen and china table settings. Our professional chefs will create unique menus for you that feature regional specialties. Included with dinner is two glasses of complimentary house wine per guest, per meal. Also fine wines, beer, and Russian and Ukrainian vodkas are available for purchase. In addition, there is complimentary coffee and tea at the coffee station on the main deck for early risers and throughout the day.

Passengers may also bring a bottle of their own favorite wine to dinner to enjoy at their table. Should you care to avail yourself of this service, there will be a corkage fee of approximately €10 (Euros) per bottle, charged to your passenger account.

Please note that if you bring your own alcohol aboard, it can only be consumed in the dining room as described above, or in your cabin. Consumption of alcohol purchased outside the ship is not permitted in the lounge or public areas. We also offer complimentary coffee and tea throughout the day, available at meals and from the machine at the coffee station on the main deck.

Open-table, single seating for all meals: Each meal is open seating—reservations of any kind are not accepted. Dinner has only one designated time for its open seating, announced each day aboard ship.

Dining times: Dining times for all meals may vary depending on the day's sightseeing and sailing schedule, but in general, meal times are as follows:

Early riser coffee/tea: 6:00-7:30 am

Breakfast: 7:00-9:00 am

Lunch: 1:00-2:30 pm

Dinner: 7:00-9:00 pm

Special diets & celebrations: Special diets, such as low-cholesterol or vegetarian, can be accommodated, as well as the recognition of an anniversary or birthday. Please call Grand Circle Cruise Line to submit your request no later than 45 days prior to departure. Religious dietary regimens, such as kosher or halal meals, cannot be prepared aboard ship.

Dress code: The dining-room dress code is casual, though most travelers dress nicely for the Captain's Welcome Reception and Farewell Dinner.

Non-smoking policy: The entire dining room is non-smoking at all times.



Embarkation/Disembarkation

On the day you board ship, your cabin will be available at around 2:00 pm. On the day of disembarkation, your cabin will no longer be available after breakfast. You may sit in the ship's lounge or on the sun deck until disembarkation.

Dock and Landing Etiquette

River waterways are simply not big enough to support large landing docks such as those built on ocean shorelines. It is common for river ships to tie up alongside each other at some piers—particularly in ports where docking area is restricted. While we try to arrange the most convenient mooring available in each port of call, outboard boats may occasionally obstruct views, and you may have to step across other ships when you want to go ashore. Also, due to the location of the docks and navigational regulations the ship will dock on both sides during any given itinerary regardless of the direction of the cruise. In other words, the side your ship will dock on can vary throughout the cruise.



Headsets

Throughout your trip, complimentary headsets will be provided on all of your included tours and most optional tours, so that you can better hear your Program Director or local guide. (Note: Headsets will not be used during the optional pre- and post-trip extensions.)

Onboard Facilities



Elevator/Chairlift

The ship has one elevator; however, the elevator only provides access from the main deck to the boat deck. It does not go to the sun deck. The ship is not equipped with wheelchair access.



Lounge/Bar

There are **two** bars onboard, open from 10 am to midnight. The bars offer soft drinks, beer, wine, and liquors for sale. Prices are in Ukrainian hryvnia and payment is accepted only in Ukrainian hryvnia. U.S. dollars and euros are not accepted.



Hair Salon

There is a hair salon/hairdresser available. The appointments are to be made through the ship reception desk.



Laundry Service

Laundry service is available for a fee. Please note that neither self-service laundry facilities nor dry cleaning services are available.



Linen Service

Bed linens are changed twice a week; towels are changed daily.



Medical Care

Our entire fleet adheres to stringent European safety standards. In addition to an emergency call button in all cabins, ships also feature fully staffed reception desks, 24 hours a day. A physician is onboard to provide professional first aid and medical advice in case you need these services.



Recreational Facilities

These include a sun deck with lounge, library, and lounge with bar and dance floor.

Souvenir Shop: Onboard your ship you will find a small souvenir shop that sells only certified authentic local products. (Please note that the shop does not sell personal items like toothbrushes or toiletries.)



Drinking Water

Bottled water is available onboard ship, and there will be one complimentary bottle of spring water in your cabin. This bottle will be replaced once a day as needed. We recommend you avoid drinking the ship's tap water. The ice machine produces ice from purified water. For all port stops, it is best to drink bottled water.

Smoking/Non-Smoking Policy

All cabins are non-smoking. Smoking is only permitted outside on the sun deck. Smoking is not allowed anywhere else on the ship.

Ship Specifications & Crew *m/s Tikhi Don*

Registry:	Russia
Entered Service:	Refurbished in 2004/5 in Romania
Length:	125 m
Passenger capacity:	216 maximum
Crew/Nationality:	Ukrainian
Decks:	5 including lower deck
Elevator:	Yes, up to the boat deck

10. ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS

We're including some handy practical details and a brief introduction to the places you'll visit on your CruiseTour. If you expect to explore in depth on your own, we recommend that you consult one of the many available book-length guides to your destinations. If you have one or two specific sites, museums or features that you're interested in, an Internet search is the ideal way to get-up-to-date information and details. And of course your Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Director or Hospitality Desk Representative will be able to assist you with suggestions and arrangements of activities you wish to participate in during your stay.

Kiev in Brief



City Layout and Details

Established in the 5th century, Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, remains one of the great gateways to Ukraine and Russia. Kiev's Old Town in the northeastern section of the city contains many of the city's great and historic landmarks, including the 11th-century St. Sophia Cathedral. Considered one of the most remarkable structures from the Kievan Rus period, the church is a UNESCO designated landmark with ancient icons and frescoes, as well as old columns that retain the scribbling of people who visited the church centuries ago.

Kiev's main commercial street is the Vulitsya Khreshchatyk, a busy thoroughfare lined with shops and houses. The famous Bessarabsky Market is at the southern end of the street and is a great place to stop and shop for fruits and vegetables. The Andriyivsky Vzviz runs from Old Town to the Podil district, where galleries, shops, restaurants, and cafés abound. The Kontraktova Ploshcha is a huge public square in the heart of the Podil with old buildings and still more restaurants and shops. The Chernobyl Museum is nearby with its exhibits depicting the worst nuclear disaster in history.

Kiev is a river town, and the Pechersk district, south of Old Town, is a good place to see some of the ancient and historic buildings that once dominated this city and its riverfront. Kiev also supports a rich mixture of green and beautiful public parks and gardens, as well as some forestland right in the city. The open space of the city is great for walking, though it's best to enjoy these spaces during the daylight hours. The Central Botanical Garden is famous for its lilacs and for its setting in a neighborhood of beautiful old domed churches. The Hidropark is a summer spot with fine beaches and a variety of cafés, restaurants, and bars. Shevchenko Park is an island of green in the middle of the bustling downtown opposite the National University and the Russian Art Museum. Several traditional Ukrainian restaurants are nearby.



Drinking Water

We recommend you drink only bottled water, which is readily available throughout Kiev. Food is inexpensive and plentiful. Kiev's restaurants offer a variety of cuisine from ethnic dishes to international ones.



Local Transportation

Kiev has an extensive public transportation system with trams, trolleys, and buses, as well as a Metro. Tickets are valid for bus, trolley, or tram and can be bought for 2 hryvnias at the kiosk at almost every stop. Tokens for the Metro cost about 2 hryvnias for one trip with the right to transfer free from line to

line. Minibuses called *marshrutkas* also roam around the city duplicating the routes of buses, trolleys, and trams. They are faster than public transportation, but more expensive. Taxis are commonplace but also more expensive than public transportation, however drivers expect to negotiate price.



Newspapers & Magazines

There are over a dozen newspapers available in Kiev. *Segodva* is the daily Russian Ukrainian newspaper and covers regional and national news. The *Kyiv Post* is an interesting weekly that publishes in English and offers an excellent online as well as hardcopy edition.

St. Petersburg in Brief—Optional Extension



City Layout and Details

St. Petersburg is Russia's largest seaport and second-largest city, with a population of around five million. It lies on the same latitude as southern points of Alaska and Greenland, and yet its climate—which to a large extent depends on the proximity to the sea and the many waterways that crisscross the city—is frequently described as fairly mild.

The city straddles over 40 islands at the mouth of the great Neva River, which sweeps majestically through its center. The Neva River flows southwest from Lake Ladoga to the Baltic Sea. The Neva branches into three arms and separates the Petrograd side and Vasilevsky Island from the mainland. Today, granite embankments (built in the time of Catherine the Great) contain the 65 rivers, canals, channels, and streams that separate the islands, but flooding still occurs when gales drive in from the Baltic. These waterways, Lake Ladoga, and the sea freeze over in winter, but icebreakers keep the port open all year. There are 365 bridges joining the islands.

From the Admiralty on the south embankment, the main streets radiate like spokes of a wheel; the canals and other streets cross these spokes running parallel to the main channel of the Neva. On Vasilevsky Island the streets are divided up into numbered Liniya (lines). In the months after the renaming of Leningrad to St. Petersburg, streets began to revert to their original, pre-Revolutionary names, a process which continues and can cause confusion. Fortunately, many of the most interesting sites, especially those on the left bank of the Neva, along and around the embankments, are located in a relatively compact area, which can be easily explored on foot.



Local Transportation

During your St. Petersburg stay you will be provided with some included sightseeing tours. If you wish to do some additional exploring on your own, you may find the following information useful.

Buses, trams and trolleybuses: These run from 6 am to midnight. To make full use of the system, it is essential to buy a special map.

Stops marked by an “A” sign serve buses, while stops marked “T” serve trolleybuses. The latter are less crowded than buses during rush hour. Tram signs hang from wires above the middle of the road. You can get a ticket from the conductor or bus driver.

Taxis: St. Petersburg taxis can be different colors with a “T” sign or checkerboard design. If you hire a taxi, negotiate the price FIRST. A tip to the driver is at your discretion; locals generally do not tip taxi drivers.

The Metro: Like St. Petersburg’s buses and trams, the Metro runs from 6 am to 0:30 am (no entry after midnight), and like the Moscow Metro, it is famous for its architecture and murals. This is the fastest way to get around St. Petersburg, and it is well worth the effort to learn its routes and destination signs

Cultural Insight

Service with a smile?: That the Soviet era left its mark on Russia is understandable and expected. But what might surprise you is its effect on customer service standards, even today. A famous story illustrates this influence: when the first McDonald’s opened in Moscow, the new employees were given extensive customer service training, to which one of the puzzled newcomers asked “Why do we have to be so nice to the customers? After all, we have the hamburgers and they don’t!”

This is not to say that you won’t experience genuine kindness and good service while in Russia, but rather that you should be prepared—service in restaurants and shops may not be what you expect. And don’t be surprised if the sales or wait staff don’t smile, because in Russian culture smiles are for people you know, not strangers.

(We’d just like to take this moment to point out that the average excellence rating for our Russian Program Directors is 94%. Not that we’re bragging...)

Truth behind the stereotypes: Despite the many years of closer understanding between the U.S. and Russia, many of the current stereotypes of Russian society are holdovers from the Cold War era. Although Russians (like many Europeans) may be critical of the U.S. government, this does not mean that Russians dislike the American people; in fact, surveys reveal that many Russians aspire to a lifestyle similar to their U.S. counterparts. Vodka, although still popular, is not usually drunk with a meal the way beer and wine are. And religion is making a steady comeback from the oppression of the Soviet years.



Russian Cuisine

Original and varied, Russian cuisine is famous for exotic soups, cabbage *shi*, and *solyanka*, which is made of assorted meats. Russians are great lovers of *pelmeni*, small Siberian meat pies boiled in broth.

"No dinner without bread," goes the Russian saying. Wheat loaves have dozens of varieties. As to rye bread, Russians eat more of it than any nation in the world—a peculiarity of the Russian diet.

As the Russian custom has it, a festive table isn’t worth this name without a bottle of vodka. Russians are traditionally hearty drinkers: as good whiskey is identified with Scotland, and port from Portugal’s Oporto, so Russian wheat vodka is considered the world’s best.



Newspapers & Magazines

The city of St. Petersburg publishes many newspapers in English, *The St. Petersburg Times*, *Where* magazine and the *Neva News* being the most popular.

Pick Pocketing in St. Petersburg: Pick pocketing continues to exist in St. Petersburg, as in any major city. However, in recent years pick pocketing has become especially prevalent in the area surrounding the Church of Our Savior on Spilled Blood. For this reason we ask that you are extra cautious of your belongings when visiting this area.

Bucharest in Brief—Optional Extension



City Layout and Details

Once known as the Paris of the Balkans, before World War II and decades of Communism wore the sheen off the city, Bucharest has refurbished itself in recent years and now welcomes visitors to its broad boulevards, small cafés, and historic monuments. Away from downtown, Bucharest is a sprawling metropolis with identical, somewhat drab neighborhoods that make it easy to get lost. The Intercontinental Hotel towers above everything else and is a good marker for locating downtown. The twelve-story Palace of Parliament, built during the reign of Nicolae Ceausescu, houses the parliament, state offices and a conference center. Guided tours through this monumental, 3,100-room complex are available.

The Calea Victoriei is Bucharest's main street and most famous thoroughfare, but you may want to start at the Princely Court, the palace that was home to the 15th-century ruler who was the real-life evil inspiration for Bram Stoker's creepy classic *Dracula*. Here you can still see the thick fortress walls that were originally built from river stones. The huge cellars cover such a large area that surrounding shops and restaurants are often attached to the complex through a below-ground maze. South along Calea Victoriei is the Strada Lipscani, a four-block area of artisans, crafts, and shops that showcase the old Bucharest.

Bucharest has a mixed architectural heritage. Exposed to numerous invaders over the centuries it lacks much of the classic Renaissance feel that older European cities display. The older sections of Bucharest, such as Strada Lipscani, give a glimpse of Bucharest's eastern influences with their narrow streets and crowded bazaars. Late 19th-century influences tended toward the French with the result that Bucharest seems a near modern European capital city, at least in places. In particular, the Calea Victoriei between Revolution Square and Victory Square is worth a look.

The Curtea Veche Church, a 16th-century structure, is next to the Princely Court, and nearby is the Hanul Manuc, a 19th-century hotel that remains a fine place to stop. The Stavropoleos Church, built in 1742, is a good example of the Byzantine influence in the city. The History Museum has a wonderful collection of ornaments, gold, and precious stones. Revolution Square and the palace of the Republic are reminders of the days of the country's last communist dictator, the tyrannical Nicolae Ceausescu.

The streets in Bucharest beyond Victory Square lead out of town. Note the French influence exhibited by the Arc de Triomphe, which honors the Romanian dead from World War I. The Village Museum on Soseaua Kiseleff is full of good examples of Romanian architecture through the ages. A nearby lake and park are good spots for relaxing or even hiring a boat for a small excursion.



Cuisine

Romanian cuisine was rather famous before the country fell behind the Iron Curtain, when the food became as drab as everyday life under communism. Today, however, Romanian cuisine is inching its way back to sumptuousness.

Breakfast: Romanian breakfasts are large and varied with cold meats, cheeses, eggs, and skinless sausages. Pork or chicken in aspic is called *piftie* and often served.

Soups: A national favorite is the hearty soup called *Ciorba*. This is a sour soup made from fermented bran, bacon, potatoes, and beef or chicken. The taste grows on you. *Ciorba de Burta* is a tripe soup, also popular.

Main courses: Pork stuffed with ham and cheese under a sauce, and beef stuffed with mushrooms, bacon, peppers, and a tomato puree are both popular. *Sarmale* is a spicy dish of cabbage leaves stuffed with meat. *Mititei* is small, skinless, grilled sausages made of a mix of minced pork, lamb, beef, and spices. The Danube carp cooked on a spit is a well-known treat.

Desserts: Pastries and doughnuts, usually with a cheese filling, are excellent and a matter of some local pride.



Drinking Water

The quality of water in Romania varies greatly. Expect to drink only bottled water, sold in hotels, restaurants, and food shops.



Local Transportation

Most sights are concentrated in the city center. Bucharest's public transit network consists of a metro system, trams, and buses. There are four subway lines with tickets sold from kiosks inside the station. Buses and maxi taxis (minibuses that stop on request) are readily available up to 11 pm. There are five maxi taxi routes in the city and tickets can be bought onboard. You can hail a taxi on the street, but it is easier to have your hotel call a dispatcher. Taxi fares are displayed on the taxi door, and drivers are obliged to provide a printed bill. In general, transportation is quite cheap in Bucharest.

Istanbul in Brief—Optional Extension

To help you make the most of your extension in Istanbul, Turkey, the following information provides you with practical travel details on the layout of the city, public transportation, shopping areas, and more. Your Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Director will be able to assist you with suggestions and arrangements of activities you wish to participate in during your stay.



City Layout

European Istanbul is divided by the Golden Horn, a freshwater outlet, into two principal regions: the Old City, which is south of the Golden Horn, and Beyoglu (BEHY-oh-loo), which is north of it and more modern. Two bridges span the Golden Horn—the Ataturk and the Galata—and serve as the major thoroughfares that connect these two different sections of town. Ferries also run between them, and are a primary transportation mode for locals who live on one side and work in the other.

The Old City was part of the site chosen by Constantine the Great for his capital, and contains most of the historic sights of Istanbul. Here you'll find the Blue Mosque, Saint Sophia, Topkapi Palace, Hippodrome, and Grand Bazaar. Istanbul University is also located in the Old City.

Modern Beyoglu is home to most of the city's luxury hotels, banks, hospitals, and consulates. This district's central hub is Taksim Square, from which many avenues branch off and lead to various sections of the new city. *Cumhuriyet Caddesi*, a wide, tree-lined road, offers sophisticated nightclubs and fancy restaurants. *Istiklal Caddesi* (Independence Avenue), the main street in Beyoglu, is now a pedestrian mall. Leading off *Istiklal Caddesi* are numerous atmospheric side streets and alleys that are fascinating to explore. The 19th-century palace of Dolmabahce is situated at the edge of Beyoglu, on the shores of the Bosphorus.



Cuisine

Turkish cuisine is thought by many to rank with French and Chinese as one of the world's great basic cuisines. The ingredients are often very simple, but are prepared with such care and finesse that the result is incredibly tasty. In brief, traditional Turkish cuisine is based on lamb and fresh vegetables. You'll find lamb, beef and chicken (but very little pork, which is forbidden to Muslims), and seafood is popular, too – particularly in Istanbul. However, lamb is the foundation.

Most of our travelers find the food in Turkey to be excellent. When you consider that the Ottoman Empire once stretched from the very gates of Vienna, across the Mediterranean and North Africa, and all the way to central Asia, you can begin to grasp the complexity and subtlety of Turkish cuisine. Turkey is also one of only seven nations on earth to produce a food surplus, so there is an abundance of fresh and wonderful fare. We generally eat in small local restaurants or at our hotels.

For breakfast you might want to try Turkish yogurt. The breads are fresh and tasty, too. Turks usually serve their tea black and very sweet; and the coffee served is generally Turkish style, strong and black in a small cup.

A big meal usually starts with mezes, a selection of all sorts of appetizers and salads. Don't pass up the böreks, which are pillow-shaped turnover pastries filled with cheese, meat, parsley, and herbs. Dolma is the name for grape leaves stuffed with rice, nuts and currants. There may also be soup (*çorba*), such as lentil with rice and lemon, or creamy tomato soup.

Lamb, chicken, and beef are the basic meats, often served as shish kebab with rice *pilav* on the side. Fish and shellfish are wonderful; do try the *barbunya* (red mullet) and *kilic baligi* (swordfish). *Pasta* means pastry – not noodles – in Turkish. The Turks are notorious for having a sweet tooth, which will become obvious if you bite into a honey-soaked piece of *baklava* pastry.

Vegetables are on an equal footing with lamb. Many of the best Turkish dishes consist of excellent fresh vegetables cooked with just one or two condiments and a bit of diced lamb for flavor. Fruit—and Turkey abounds in excellent fruit—is readily available with any meal.

Vegetarianism is not prevalent in Turkey. If you merely want to minimize consumption of meat, you'll have no problem as Turkish cuisine has many dishes in which meat is used merely as a flavoring, not as a principal element. However, if you want to avoid meat completely, you'll have to choose carefully. A good dish to try is *menemen*, tomatoes topped with eggs and baked; it is fairly spicy. Eggplant, cheeses,

pilafs and yogurt are good supplements. Note that many of the bean dishes such as *nohut* (chick-peas, garbanzos) and *kuru fasulye* (fava beans) are prepared with lamb as a flavoring.

Restaurants (*restoran, lokanta*) are everywhere, and most are inexpensive (approximately U.S. \$6 to \$8 per person for a meal). Specialties include *patlican salatasi* (pureed eggplant, perhaps mixed with yogurt); *palamut* (a darkish, full-flavored tuna) and *levrek* (sea bass); *karisik ızgara* (a mixed grill of lamb); and *dolma* (stuffed vine leaves): the hot ones (*etli*) have ground lamb in them; the cold ones are made without meat, and seasoned with olive oil (*zeytinyagli*).

Turkish desserts are rich. They tend to be very sweet, soaked in sugar syrup. Many are baked, such as crumpets, cookies or shredded wheat, all in syrup. *Baklava* comes in several varieties: *cevizli* is with chopped walnut stuffing; *fistikli* is with pistachio nuts; *kaymakli* is with clotted cream. *Krem karamel* is the Turkish version of flan, and *sutlac* is a milk-and-rice pudding. As an alternative to sweet desserts, Turkish fruit can't be beat. Try *kavun*, a delicious, fruity melon.



Drinking Water

The water in most parts of Turkey is considered safe, but as an added safety precaution against possible stomach upsets, we recommend you drink only bottled water.



Electric Current

The electric current in Turkey is 220 voltage AC, 50 cycles. If you bring small American appliances, you will need an electric-current transformer and a set of international plug adapters to operate them at hotels. Plugs are of the European variety with two round prongs, but there are two sizes in use. The most common is the small-diameter prong. The large-diameter, grounded plug is also in use, and plugs for these won't fit the small-diameter outlets. Transformer/adaptor kits can usually be found at your local hardware store.



Local Transportation

Metro: Istanbul's ambitious plan to have a modern rapid-transit system is well under way. The system runs from about 6 am to a little past midnight. The fare is less than US\$1.

The Tunnel was the first underground railway line opened in 1875. Still today this short line is important for urban transportation. Trains operate every 3.5 minutes and a trip takes about 15 minutes. The line runs from *Karakoy* to *Tunel* upper station and is linked to Taksim Square by a vintage tram.

The Light rail line was built in 1989, and runs from Aksaray towers in the western suburbs, to Yenibosna. It has a total length of 18 km with 16 stops. *Aksaray, Emniyet, Ulubatli, Bayrampasa, Sagmacilar, Kartaltepe, Otogar, Esenler, Terazidere, Davutpasa, Merter, Zeytinburnu, Bakirkoy, Bahcelievler, Atakoy, Yeni Bosna.*

The Modern tram line was built in 1990 and runs through the older parts of the city.

The Full metro line was built in 2000 and runs from Taksim to 4 Levent. It has a total length of 7 km with 6 stations. Taksim, Osmanbey, Sisli, Gayrettepe, Levent, 4 Levent. Recently a new line was opened which runs from Kabatas to Taksim Square or vice versa.

Taxi: Thousands of yellow taxis throng Istanbul's streets. Most are powered by clean-burning natural gas, and all have digital meters, which the drivers are required by law to run. That doesn't, however, mean they always do. If your driver doesn't start the *taksimetre*, or tries to haggle the start of the trip instead of running it, just point to the meter emphatically and say **Taksimetre!** (TAHK-see-MEHT-treh). This will ensure you are charged the correct price.

Turks don't tip taxi drivers, they round up the fare. If it ends up being US \$4.75, a Turk will round it up to \$5. In many cases if the fare is US \$5.25, the driver will require only US \$5, and not bother with the change. As a foreigner, your driver may assume you'll give a tip, but you needn't unless the driver provides some special service, such as helping with lots of heavy luggage.

Lviv in Brief—Optional Extension



City Layout

Lviv is located in western Ukraine near the border of Poland and 60 miles from the Carpathian Mountains. The historic city center is located on the banks of the Poltva River and is on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The Old Town section contains numerous cobblestone streets and beautifully maintained medieval buildings. There is an international airport less than 6 miles from the city center, and public transportation offers access via train, bus, tram, and marshrutka (routed taxi cab.) Lviv is a major Polish and Jewish cultural center, a shrine to medieval architecture, and maintains a rich Ukrainian history.

Most of Lviv's historic sites and hotels are located in the Old Town section within the city center. Driving is difficult in Lviv which is why most people choose to walk the narrow, tree-lined streets to enjoy the monuments, shops, and cafes. It is the most developed city in the western part of the Ukraine, and it has a considerable amount of European influence in its culture and architecture.

Old Town is anchored by attractions such as Market Square, the Lviv Theater of Opera and Ballet, and the Lviv High Castle that overlooks the city.



Cuisine

The cuisine in Lviv ranges across all types, but the primary focus is on local and traditional dishes. Ukrainian dishes include **borscht**, a soup that is popular in many European countries that contains beetroots making it a dark red and purple color. There is also **varenyky**, dumplings that are often stuffed with fillers such as sauerkraut, cheese, mashed potatoes, cabbage, and various types of meat. They are similar to pierogis.

Lviv also is known for delicious desserts and breakfasts among the various cafes and pastry shops in the city center. There is no shortage of restaurants in Lviv with dozens of restaurants located near many of the city's most popular attractions.

Like many establishments in the Ukraine and Eastern Europe, service is improving, but can be uneven at certain establishments. You may find better service at upscale restaurants.



Drinking Water

Tap water is not safe for drinking in Lviv. Stick to bottled water which is available throughout the city.



Local Transportation

Trains: Lviv is easily accessible by both rail and mass transit. The Lviv Rail Terminal offers transportation to farther destinations such as Kiev, and a suburban rail station that serves the residential areas of the city and the entire Lviv Oblast region.

The **Lviv Tramway** operates nine lines within the city over 46 miles. You can purchase tickets in *Interpress* and *Vysoky Zamok* kiosks within the stations, and from the tram driver.

Bus: Lviv has a network of trolleybuses which can be inconvenient as they navigate the smaller roads. Mini-buses or *Marshrutka* are one of the most popular transit modes within the city. There are 53 lines of these buses that stop at bus stops upon request.

Taxi: There are over 3,000 taxis in Lviv and 2,500 are equipped with meters.

11. DEMOGRAPHICS & GEOGRAPHY

Ukraine

Area: 233,028 square miles

Capital: Kiev

Languages: Ukrainian, Russian, Romanian, Polish, and Hungarian

Location: Occupying an area slightly smaller than Texas in Eastern Europe, Ukraine is bordered on the south by the Sea of Azov, the Black Sea (where the Crimean Peninsula is part of Ukraine), Moldova, and Romania. The Carpathian Mountains extend from Romania into western Ukraine, which is also bordered by Hungary, Slovakia, and Poland. Belarus lies to the north, and Ukraine's longest international border is with Russia on the east.

Population (2007 estimate): 46,299,862

Religions: Ukrainian Orthodox—Moscow Patriarchate, Ukrainian Orthodox—Kiev Patriarchate, Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox, Ukrainian Catholic (Uniate), Protestant, Jewish

Time zone: All of Ukraine is seven hours ahead of Eastern Time in North America (10 hours ahead of Pacific Time): when it is 12 noon in New York (9 am in Los Angeles), it is 7 pm in Kiev. Daylight Saving Time is in effect from the first Sunday of April until the last Sunday of October.

Holidays (nationally recognized; does not include religious, local or culturally based events):

01/01 New Year's Day
01/07 Orthodox Christmas Day
03/08 International Women's Day
05/01 Labor Day
05/02 Labor Day
05/05 Orthodox Easter
05/09 Victory Day
06/23 Orthodox Pentecost
06/28 Constitution Day
08/24 Ukrainian Independence Day

Ukraine is the second largest country in Europe, behind Russia, which for centuries dominated Ukrainian history. Many in the Western world thought of Ukraine as part of Russia, though Ukrainian culture stretches back centuries.

Settlement of Ukraine has been documented from at least 43,000 BC, with a succession of pre-historic peoples from Neanderthals to Neolithic, through the Copper, Bronze and Iron Ages and on. Throughout the first millennium B.C. Cimmerians, Scythians, Sarmatians, and Goths, and other nomadic peoples were the first identifiable groups to populate what is now Ukraine. They were well known to colonists and traders — Greeks, Romans, and others — who established trading outposts that grew into city-states in the region.

In the sixth century Slavic tribes occupied central and eastern Ukraine and played an important role in the establishment of Kyiv, already a burgeoning settlement due to its position on busy trade routes. Prince Volodymyr, a Kievan Rus' noble converted the local nobility and most of the population to Christianity by 1000. By the 11th century, Kievan Rus' was Europe's largest state, known to Europe as Ruthenia. The state unraveled due to conflict among the various principalities, and Mongol raiders razed Kyiv in the 13th century. The name *Ukraine*, usually meaning borderland, began appearing in documents of the 12th century, and on maps in the 16th century.

In the 14th century, most of what is now modern Ukraine was annexed by Poland and Lithuania. Ukrainians had already begun, however, to conceive of themselves as a distinct people. This sense of nationalism survived subsequent upheavals and takeovers by larger powers over the next several centuries. The peasants who fought Polish efforts to make them slaves were called *Cossacks* and had a reputation for fierce martial spirit and love of freedom. The root of the word, *cosac*, literally means “free man,” an individual with no place in society who went into the steppes, where he acknowledged no authority. These semi-martial people played important roles in the histories of both Ukraine and Russia. With the partition of Poland in the late 18th century, Ukraine was almost completely integrated into the Russian Empire.

Largely agricultural throughout the 19th century, the region had few cities and cultural centers. The Austro-Hungarian Empire controlled the extreme west, while the Russian Empire controlled most of the remainder. Ukrainians were invigorated by the nationalistic spirit stirring among European peoples and strove to revive Ukrainian language and cultural traditions, but the Tsarist Russian Government limited all attempts to build a strong Ukrainian culture, even prohibiting the use and study of the Ukrainian language.

With World War I and the Russian October Revolution the Habsburg and Russian empires were overthrown and Ukrainians took the opportunity to declare independent statehood, declaring Ukrainian autonomy in 1917, and in 1918, following the Bolshevik seizure of power in Petrograd, the Ukrainian National Republic declared independence. After 3 years of conflict and chaos, however, western Ukrainian territory was incorporated into Poland, while the central and eastern regions were folded into the Soviet Union. The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was officially created in 1922.

In the twenties Ukrainian culture blossomed until Josef Stalin imposed a campaign of forced collectivization (starting in 1929) of all agricultural resources. The so-called “breadbasket of the USSR” accepted collectivization with reluctance, if at all, and the campaign was enforced by regular troops and secret police. As part of these policies the Soviet leadership imposed a reign of terror that ravaged the intellectual class and created artificial famines (“Holodomor” in Ukrainian). Ukrainian deaths from the 1932/1933 Holodomor are estimated at 3 to 7 million — though these numbers are controversial and impossible to verify.

This explains the relatively positive welcome the Nazis received when they invaded the Soviet Union in 1941. That invasion was seen as liberation from the brutal Communist rule. This perception faded rapidly as Nazi savagery became apparent. Directed mostly against Ukraine's Jews (an estimated 1 million were killed), many Ukrainians also suffered. *Babyn Yar* (Babi Yar, in Russian) in Kyiv was the site of one of the most horrific Nazi massacres of Ukrainian Jews, ethnic Ukrainians, Roma, and many others. Kyiv and other parts of the country were heavily damaged.

After the German and Soviet invasion of Poland in 1939, the western Ukrainian regions were absorbed into the Soviet Union. Armed resistance against Soviet authority continued into the 1950s. During periods of relative liberalization—as under Nikita Khrushchev from 1955 to 1964 and during Mikhail Gorbachev's period of “perestroika”—Ukrainians continued to pursue nationalist objectives. The Chernobyl (*Chernobyl* is the Russian, but the plant was located in the Ukrainian SSR) nuclear power plant explosion in 1986, as well as the Soviet Government's efforts to cover up the extent of the catastrophe from both its own people and the world, revealed the severe problems of the Soviet system to many Ukrainians. Ukraine became an independent state on August 24, 1991. Although it has not officially joined the organization, Ukraine was a co-founder of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Ukraine's initial governance system was built around a presidential-parliamentary with separate executive, judicial, and legislative branches model. The prime minister is appointed by the president with the consent of more than one-half of the parliament. Parliament (the Verkhovna Rada; elected members serve for 5-years), initiates legislation, ratifies international agreements, and has budgetary authority.

After the free elections of December 1, 1991, Leonid M. Kravchuk, former chairman of the Rada, was elected to a 5-year term as Ukraine's first president, and voters overwhelmingly approved a referendum on independence. After independence, a new, democratic constitution was adopted on June 28, 1996, creating a pluralistic political system with protection of basic human rights and liberties.

Since that time the situation in Ukraine has seesawed. New amendments to the constitution adopted during the 2004 "Orange Revolution" became effective in January 2006. These shifted significant powers from the president back to the prime minister and the parliament. However, in October of 2010, a Constitutional Court ruled those amendments unconstitutional and reinstated the 1996 constitution, which returned greater powers to the presidency, and the government to a presidential-parliamentary system.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Contested election results in 2004, and an initial resolution that was deemed illegitimate by the U.S, Europe and Ukraine's parliament due to voting fraud and manipulation. The fraud resulted in popular, peaceful demonstrations that became known as the Orange Revolution. A revote was deemed successful, with opposition leader Viktor Yuschenko replacing the illegitimate former Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich.

Local elections in 2006 and presidential and local elections in 2010 were also fraught with difficulty, alleged fraud, and power struggles between the various parties. Issues within the government continue to this day, with former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshchenko jailed for exceeding her powers while in office—one of a number of selective prosecutions that have raised questions about the independence of the judiciary and have drawn international outrage.

Russia

Area: 6,591,027 square miles, the largest country on Earth

Capital: Moscow

Language: Russian.

Location: Russia spans two continents, with the part west of the Urals considered to be in Europe while the rest of the country is in Asia. On its west, Russia is bordered by Norway, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Belarus, Ukraine, and the Black Sea. On the south, the Russian border touches Georgia, Azerbaijan, the Caspian Sea, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and China. The North Pacific Ocean defines Russia's eastern edge, and the Arctic Ocean lies to Russia's north.

Population (2007 estimate): 141,377,725

Religion: Russian Orthodox 85%, Muslim 13%, other 0.7%

Time zone: From April through most of September, Moscow and St. Petersburg are 8 hours ahead of U.S. Eastern Daylight Time, 11 hours ahead of U.S. Pacific Daylight Time.

Holidays (nationally recognized; does not include religious, local or culturally based events):

01/01 New Year's Day
01/07 Orthodox Christmas Day
02/23 Defender of the Fatherland Day
02/25 Defender of the Fatherland Day observed
03/08 International Women's Day
05/01 Labor Day
05/09 Victory Day
06/12 Russia Day
11/04 Unity Day

The largest of the former Soviet republics, the Russian Federation occupies 6,591,027 square miles in both Europe and Asia; it has a population of almost 142 million and is made up of more than 40 nationalities.

The huge territory is divided by the Urals into two main areas: European Russia and Siberia. The former occupies the lesser half of the Republic's territory but the majority of its population lives here. To the east, the European half is bordered by the Ural Mountains; to the southwest is the "second Baku," the oil fields between the Volga and the Ural Rivers, lying north of the border with Kazakhstan; southwest again are the Caspian plains, the wheat-growing expanse of Krasnodar and Stavropol, and the Black Sea Riviera as far as Sochi. To the west, it is bordered by the iron ore deposits on the edge of Ukraine, the district of Kursk, the forests of Bryansk, and further north by Belarus, Latvia, Estonia, and the Baltic (in the Gulf of Finland).

Early History

The term "Rhos," or "Rus," first came to be applied to the Varangians and later also to the Slavs who peopled the region currently known as Russia in the 10th to 11th centuries. Like many other parts of Eurasia, these territories were overrun by the Mongol invaders, who formed the state of Golden Horde, which would pillage the Russian principalities for over three centuries. Later known as the Tatars, they ruled the southern and central expanses of present-day Russia, while the territories of present-day Ukraine and Belarus were incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Poland, thus dividing the

Russian people in the north from the Belarusians and Ukrainians in the west. This long-lasting nomadic rule slowed the country's economic and social development.

Muscovy

While still under the domain of the Mongols and with their connivance, the duchy of Moscow began to assert its influence in Western Russia. Assisted by the Russian Orthodox Church, Muscovy inflicted a defeat on the Mongols in the Battle of Kulikovo (1389). Ivan the Great (ruled 1456-1505) eventually tossed off the control of the invaders and consolidated surrounding areas under Moscow's dominion.

In 1547, Ivan the Terrible was officially crowned the first Tsar of Russia. During his long reign, Ivan annexed the Muslim polities along the Volga River and transformed Russia into a multiethnic and multireligious state. Russian Cossacks established the first settlements in Western Siberia.

Imperial Russia

Peter the Great (ruled in 1689-1725), after defeating Sweden in the Great Northern War, founded a new capital, St. Petersburg. Peter succeeded in bringing ideas and culture from Western Europe to a severely underdeveloped Russia. After his reforms, Russia emerged as a major European power.

Catherine the Great, ruling from 1762 to 1796, continued efforts at establishing Russia as one of Europe's great powers. In 1812, having gathered nearly half a million soldiers, Napoleon invaded Russia. After taking Moscow, he was forced to retreat back to Europe, with nearly 90% of his forces lost to battles, guerillas and winter weather. The Russian armies ended their pursuit of Napoleon by taking Paris.

Tsar Alexander II (1855–1881) undertook a series of comprehensive reforms and issued a decree abolishing serfdom in 1861. The Great Reforms of his reign spurred rapid capitalist development. The failure of agrarian reforms and suppression of the growing liberal intelligentsia were continuing problems however. Repeated devastating defeats of the Russian army in the Russo-Japanese War and World War I and the deterioration of the economy led to rioting throughout the Empire, and the overthrow of the Romanovs in 1917.

At the end of the Russian Revolution of 1917, the Marxist Bolsheviks seized power in Petrograd and Moscow under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin. A bloody civil war ensued, pitting the Bolsheviks' Red Army against a loose confederation of monarchist and bourgeois forces known as the White Army. The Red Army triumphed, and the Soviet Union was formed in 1922.

Russia as part of the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union was meant to be a transnational worker's state free from nationalism. The concept of Russia as a separate national entity was therefore not emphasized in the early Soviet Union. Although Russian institutions and cities certainly remained dominant, many non-Russians participated in the new government at all levels.

After Lenin's death in 1924, Joseph Stalin cemented his power and gradually eroded the checks and balances which had been designed into the Soviet political system to assume dictatorial power. As the 1930s began Stalin launched the Great Purges, a series of political repressions. Millions of people whom Stalin and local authorities suspected of being a threat were executed or exiled to Gulag labor camps. Stalin enforced rapid industrialization and collectivization of Russian agriculture. Economic output was immediately diverted to establishing heavy industry. Civilian industry was modernized and heavy weapon factories were established. The Soviet Union transformed from an agrarian economy to a major industrial powerhouse in an unbelievably short period, at a cost of widespread misery and famine ensued for millions of people.

The Soviet government, afraid of a German attack, began diplomatic maneuvers and in 1939 signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with Nazi Germany which stated that each country would occupy a portion of Poland, which they did. In 1940, the Red Army occupied Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and installed, pro-Soviet governments in each country. After rigged elections, the countries applied to join the USSR.

Germany invaded the Soviet Union in 1941. After success in the early stages of the campaign, Germany suffered defeat at the outskirts of Moscow, as well as at the Battle of Stalingrad in 1943. The Soviets drove through Eastern Europe and captured Berlin before Germany surrendered in 1945. The Soviet Union emerged as a superpower, and the Red Army occupied Eastern Europe, including East Germany.

As the Soviet Union consolidated its hold on Eastern Europe, the United States helped the Western European countries establish democracies, and both countries sought to achieve economic, political, and ideological dominance over the Third World. Stalin died in early 1953. General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev and other leading politicians staged a coup d'état to outflank Beria and Khrushchev became leader of the USSR.

Khrushchev's reforms in agriculture and administration were unproductive, and foreign policy toward China and the United States suffered reverses, notably during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Following the ouster of Khrushchev, a period of rule by collective leadership ensued, lasting until the early 1970s when Leonid Brezhnev was established as the pre-eminent Soviet political figure.

In the mid 1980s Mikhail Gorbachev introduced the policies of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring), in an attempt to modernize Soviet communism. Perestroika offered economic reforms designed to decentralize the planning of the Soviet economy. His initiatives provoked an unsuccessful military coup attempt that led to the total collapse of the Soviet Union. Boris Yeltsin came to power and declared the end of exclusive Communist rule; the USSR splintered into fifteen independent republics, and was officially dissolved in December of 1991.

Post-Soviet Russia

After the disintegration of the USSR, the Russian economy went through a crisis. The largest state enterprises (petroleum, metallurgy, and the like) were privatized for US \$600 million, far less than they were worth, while the majority of the population plunged into poverty. Yeltsin disbanded the Supreme Soviet and the Congress of People's Deputies by decree, eliciting a military showdown and the Russian constitutional crisis of 1993. With military help, Yeltsin held control. Elections were held and the existing Constitution of the Russian Federation was adopted on December 12, 1993.

Vladimir Putin was elected in 2000. His policies have raised serious concerns about civil society and human rights in Russia. The West and particularly the United States expressed worries about state control of the Russian media through Kremlin-friendly companies, government influence on elections, and law enforcement abuses. High oil prices and growing internal demand boosted Russian economic growth, stimulating economic expansion abroad and helping to finance increased military spending. Putin's presidency has shown improvements in the Russian standard of living.

In March of 2008 Russian held democratic elections in which Dmitry Medvedev was chosen President of Russia. In May, 2012, Vladimir Putin will assume the presidency having won the post in March, 2012 elections.

Turkey

Area: 301,382 square miles

Capital: Ankara

Government: Republican parliamentary democracy

Languages: Turkish is the dominant language in the Turkic language group, which also includes such lesser-known tongues as Kirghiz, Kazakh, and Azerbaijani.

Location: Turkey occupies the Asian peninsula of Anatolia (Asia Minor) and a tiny corner of the European peninsula of Thrace. These two regions form a land bridge, which is interrupted by a narrow waterway called the Bosphorus. To the west, Turkey is bordered by the Aegean Sea, Greece, and Bulgaria; to the east, by Georgia, Armenia, and Iran; on the north, by the Black Sea; and to the south, by the Mediterranean Sea, Syria, and Iraq. While most of Turkey is in Asia, because of her membership in the Council of Europe she is regarded as a European country.

Geography: Turkey is relatively big (larger than Texas) and has a varied geography. Many visitors come to Turkey expecting to find mostly dusty deserts, palm trees, and camel caravans, when in fact its diverse landscape also includes lots of craggy snowcapped mountains, gentle hills, broad lakes, cool pine forests, and miles of white beaches.

Largest City: Istanbul

Population (2011 estimate): 76,805,524

Religion: Turkey is officially a secular state, although 99.8% of the people are Muslim (mostly Sunni)

Time Zone: Turkey goes by Eastern European time: two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time, or seven hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. When it is noon in Turkey, it's 5 am in New York, and 2 am in Los Angeles. In the warm months from late March through late September, Turkish clocks are turned ahead one hour for daylight saving time.

Holidays:

01/01	New Year's Day
04/23	National Sovereignty and Children's Day
05/01	Labor and Solidarity Day
05/19	Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day
08/08	Ramadan Feast
08/09	Ramadan Feast Day 2
08/10	Ramadan Feast Day 3
08/30	Victory Day
10/15	Sacrifice Feast
10/16	Sacrifice Feast Day 2
10/17	Sacrifice Feast Day 3
10/18	Sacrifice Feast Day 4
10/29	Republic Day

Turkey's interior is a high, arid plateau bordered in the north and south by rugged mountains. The country has a Mediterranean climate of dry, hot summers and mild, pleasant winters. The Turkish people welcome visitors.

Turkey is a largely Muslim country; however, Islam is no longer the state religion, nor is it the basis of Turkish law. In fact, in most respects, Turkey resembles a modern, westernized nation, with large, cosmopolitan cities, a strong industrial base and equal rights for women under the law. The literacy rates for women and men, however, aren't equal. As of 1995, 91.7 percent of men over 15 could read and

write. Only 72.4 percent of the women could. And, while Turkey does seek to become a full-functioning part of the European Economic Community, it has to overcome some obstacles to do so.

The country's unique geographic position between Europe and Asia results in a rich blending of cultural influences, including Persian, Celtic, Roman, Arabic and Seljuk. Most of Turkey's 76 million residents are ethnic Turks, but about 20 percent of the population are Kurds. About one half of the Turkish population lives in the four largest cities—Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir and Adana.

Historical Overview

Early History

The earliest known empire in the area now known as Turkey was the Hittite Empire. In the time before Christ, Asia Minor, as it was then called, served as a crossroads between the great civilizations of Europe and Asia. It is an ancient land with important archeological sites. Early Hittite civilization rivaled that of the Egyptians and Babylonians in terms of culture, arts and mathematical achievements. The Hittites kingdom was conquered, however, by the Assyrians, Greeks and Romans, respectively. Asia Minor became a Roman colony around 100 BC. In 330 AD, the city of Byzantium became Constantinople, when the Roman Emperor Constantine made it his capital and converted to Christianity.

From the fourth through most of the eleventh centuries, the area was the heart of the Byzantine, or Eastern Roman, Empire. Under Byzantine rule, Asia Minor flourished as a hub of the Christian faith as well as one of the world's most important trade centers. However, by the 11th century AD, Byzantine power had declined, and an army of Seljuk Turks invaded Asia Minor from Central Asia, bringing the new faith of Islam with them.

The Reign of the Seljuks

The Seljuks established a power base in Anatolia, with Konya as their capital and control center for their military conquests in Syria, Palestine and portions of the waning Byzantine Empire, (which was, at the time, the political center of the Christian faith). The Pope responded by waging a holy war against the Seljuks, who endured seven brutal crusades over the next two centuries.

Despite being under constant attack from European Christians, the Seljuks were able to keep their land holdings until the late 13th century – but their reign would soon come to an end. Interestingly, the Seljuk Empire would not be replaced by its European enemies but by warriors from their ancestral homeland of Turkistan. Forced by the Mongols to leave central Asia, the Ottoman Turks first entered the service of the Seljuks.

The Ottomans Seize Control

At the end of the 13th century, however, Turkish leader Othman I founded the Ottoman Dynasty in the Bursa region. Through a series of carefully crafted treaties, the Ottomans began building a small empire that eventually stretched into Eastern Europe. To build their army for conquest, Ottoman rulers conscripted the smartest and strongest boys among their Christian subjects and schooled them in the Muslim faith, as well as the ways of war. During the next 300 years, this army would become the most feared force in both Europe and Central Asia.

The Ottoman Empire reached its peak in the mid-16th century under the Emperor Suleyman the Magnificent. After its capture in 1453, Constantinople became Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. By then the empire had grown to include Egypt, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Tripoli, Greece, the Balkans, and most of Hungary. At that point, however, Ottoman expansion essentially stopped, except for the acquisition of Cyprus in 1571 and Crete in 1669.

By late in the 17th century, successful opposition by Christian countries began. Through wars and revolts over the next two centuries, the Turks lost Hungary, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Tripoli, Albania and Macedonia. As an ally of Germany in World War I, they also lost Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia and authority over Egypt.

The Birth of a Nation

In response to the Greek occupation of Izmir in 1919, the Turks established a nationalist congress with Mustafa Kemal, known as Kemal Ataturk, as president. Attaturk established a provisional government in opposition to the Allied government in Istanbul. He led his Turkish armies to victory against the Italians, French and Greeks, who were expelled from Turkey in 1922. The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne ended the conflict and recognized Turkey as an independent republic. Mustafa Kemal became the republic's first president. He ruled and reshaped the country until his death in 1938 earning the title *Ataturk*, or, "Father of the Turks."

It is said his political policy was "consistent and radical westernization. He introduced a new legal code, reduced the influence of Islam by abolishing Islamic law, stripped religious leaders of their power and gave equal rights to women. Under Ataturk, the alphabet changed from Arabic to Latin, and the Gregorian calendar was adopted. He then set out to industrialize the economy under a system of state socialism.

After World War II, Turkey furthered relations with Western Europe by joining the United Nations, moving toward open, democratic political institutions and increasing individual liberties. However, economic difficulties led to a military coup in 1960, followed by the adoption of a new constitution in 1961. This led to a series of civilian governments until 1971 when Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel was forced to resign in the face of strikes, student unrest, and opposition from extremists on both the left and the right. The nation struggled to find its identity for the next decade, alternating between civilian and military rule.

In 1982, partly due to international pressure, a new constitution was adopted and, in 1983, political parties were restored. After that, Turkey began strengthening its western ties and, during the Gulf War, supported U.N. forces. During the 1990s, economic and political stability led to a lack of foreign investment in Turkey, but recent government policies promise a brighter economic future.

Romania

Area: 91,699 square miles

Capital: Bucharest

Language: Romanian is the official language. Hungarian and German are also spoken.

Location: Romania is located in southeastern Europe. The Carpathian Mountains cross the northern half of Romania and connect with the Transylvanian Alps near the central region of the country. Northwest of this mountainous arc is the Transylvanian plateau, and the great plains of Moldavia and Walachia lie to the southeast. The Danube River forms the southern boundary with Bulgaria, and then flows north and then east through Romania, entering the Black Sea through its large delta just south of Ukraine.

Population (2007 estimate): 22,276,056

Religion: Eastern Orthodox 87%, Protestant 7%, Roman Catholic 5%, other (mostly Muslim) 0.9%, unaffiliated 0.1%

Time zone: Romania's on Eastern European Time, seven hours ahead of Eastern Time in North America. Daylight Saving Time is in effect from the last Sunday of March until the last Sunday of October.

Holidays (nationally recognized; does not include religious, local or culturally based events):

01/01	New Year's Day
01/02	Day after New Year's Day
05/01	Labor Day / May Day
05/05	Orthodox Easter Day
05/06	Orthodox Easter Monday
06/23	Orthodox Whitsun
06/24	Orthodox Whit Monday
08/15	St Mary's Day
12/01	National Holiday
12/25	Christmas Day
12/26	Second Day of Christmas

12. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Books, Maps and Movies

Ukraine & Russia

Insight Guides: Russia, Belarus, & Ukraine by Jane Hutchings (Guidebook)

Noted for their lavish photography, Insight guides are a real treat to browse before heading off to a foreign destination—and a good guidebook once you're there.

A Traveler's History of Russia by Peter Nefille (History)

Nefille manages to condense Russia's highly eventful history into one volume that's both readable and lively.

Reeling in Russia by Fen Montaigne (Travel Account)

In 1996, after finishing a stint as Moscow bureau chief for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Montaigne went on a three-month fly-fishing adventure across 7,000 miles of Russia. His exploits are less about fishing and more about the Russian people he met along the way.

Chernobyl: Nuclear Disaster by Nichol Bryan (History)

Good description of the world's worst nuclear disaster.

Russian Journal by John Steinbeck (Memoir)

A recount of the prominent American writer's journey through Moscow, Stalingrad, the Ukrainian countryside, and the Caucasus.

Crime and Punishment and *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Mikhailovitch Dostoyevsky. (Fiction)

Two of the most compelling and influential psychological novels ever written.

Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation By Andrew Wilson (History)

One of the most informed and up-to-date accounts of Ukraine and its people. The book focuses on the complex relations between Russia and Ukraine that stretch back centuries.

Transylvania—Optional Extension

In Search of Dracula by Raymond T. McNally (History)

Examines the fictional vampire who made Transylvania world-famous, and traces the history of the legend and its roots in the historical Transylvanian figures of Vlad Dracul and his son, Vlad the Impaler.

Turkey:

A Traveller's History of Turkey by Richard Stoneman (History) A history that concentrates on the pre-Ottoman period, with smaller coverage allotted to the Ottoman and Ataturk eras. Useful for someone who wants an overview of early Turkish history. (And yes, there are two Ls in the title – the series is British).

Birds Without Wings by Louis De Bernieres (Literature) A sweeping historical drama that weaves together the lives of an Anatolian family, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and the rise of Ataturk. Highly recommended.

Crescent and Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds by Stephen Kinzer (History) Contemporary life, culture, and politics in Turkey, from a former New York *Times* Istanbul bureau chief.

Harem: The World Behind the Veil by Alev Lytle Croutier (History/Culture) A fascinating glimpse of harem culture, especially at Istanbul's Topkapi Palace. This book was originally published in 1991, so it may not be in stock at your local bookstore, but it can still be found online.

Innocents Abroad by Mark Twain (Vintage Memoir) Only part of this humorous book deals with Turkey, but that part is a must. Turkey has changed, but you'll recognize vestiges of the old country as described by Twain.

Pawn in Frankincense by Dorothy Dunnett (Novel) An acclaimed historical novel set during the time of the Ottoman Empire, featuring such characters as Suleyman the Magnificent and Roxelana.

River of the Dead by Barbara Nadel (Mystery) Inspector Ikmen heads to Mardin in Turkey's southeast in this 10th book in the series.

The Emergence of Modern Turkey by Bernard Lewis (History) A scholarly work covering Turkey's history from 1850 to 1950, with a few chapters on the earlier history of the Turks. It offers insight into the cultural and historical origins of modern Turkey.

The Fall of Constantinople, 1453 by Steven Runciman (History) Regarded as one of the best accounts of the conquest of Constantinople and final days of the Byzantine Empire. Originally published in 1965, but subsequently republished.

The White Castle and My Name is Red by Orhan Pamuk (Literature) Two moving historical novels by the winner of the 2006 Nobel Prize in Literature. *The White Castle* tells the tale of a seventeenth-century Italian scholar who becomes enslaved in the service of an astronomer, while *My Name is Red* describes the events surrounding the murder of a miniaturist during the height of the Ottoman Empire.

Travelers' Tales Turkey by James Villers (Travel Narrative) An entertaining selection of short stories and essays about Turkey.

Turquoise, A Chef's Travels in Turkey by Greg and Lucy Malouf (Food) A combination cookbook and photo journal—recipes and hundreds of stunning color photographs of the landscapes, people, and food of Turkey.

Guidebooks:

Your Program Director will be happy to provide recommendations and suggestions during the trip, so a guidebook is not a necessity. But a good one can be invaluable as a one-stop reference, so for those travelers who have asked for suggestions, we offer these guidelines. Since different guidebook series each have their own target audience and structure, it is well worth your time to browse your local library or bookstore to find the one(s) you like best. To get you started, here is some general information on the most popular series:

Culture Smart! – Focuses on local customs and etiquette instead of sights, dining, etc.

DK Eyewitness – Innovative visuals make these books easy to use and a nice souvenir once the trip is over. The focus is primarily on the sights and activities.

Fodor's – A classic guidebook with strong information on activities, shopping, and dining. Good mix of upscale recommendations and budget suggestions.

Frommer's – A comprehensive guide series that is known for its restaurant recommendations.

Insight – Offers more information on history and culture than usual, nice visuals, good maps.

Lonely Planet – Practical guides geared towards a more adventurous traveler on a budget.

National Geographic – From the same company that publishes the magazine. Excellent photographs, good information on history, nature, and culture.

Rough Guides –For the independent traveler on a budget. Particularly known for their maps.

Maps:

Most hotels will provide maps free of charge at the reception desk or in your room. These maps are usually sufficient for our travelers, but if you plan on any independent exploration, you may wish to consider purchasing a map before your departure. This can be especially useful in a country that doesn't use the Roman alphabet as the hotel maps may only be printed in the local language.

Some recommended map series include: Rand McNally international maps (especially the *StreetWise* series), Insight's *FlexiMaps*, and Rough Guide's destination maps. We suggest that you visit your local bookstore or library to get a better sense of which type of map is best for your needs before making a purchase.

Suggested Movies

Suggested Movies

Here are few of our favorite movies that are about, or set in, or from the region you'll be traveling. Most are available at movie rental stores and websites—or even your public library. Sometimes films produced outside of the US may be hard to find, but they are usually available online. Lists are highly subjective – if your favorites are missing, start a chat with fellow travelers and you'll likely find even more treasured movies to share.

UKRAINE

The Charge of the Light Brigade (1936 with Errol Flynn; or 1968 with Trevor Howard)

For entertainment, the Flynn film is hard to beat: spectacular Hollywood action filmmaking. From the Indian frontier to a romantic triangle to the atrocity at Chukoti and the foolhardy charge at Balaklava, the camerawork and sweep are astonishing. For historical accuracy (and political correctness) the Richardson movie is a better bet.

Earth (Alexander Dovzheko, 1930, black and white, silent) The third in a triptych of films by Ukrainian director Alexander Dovzheko. The plot revolves around passages from old to new, from traditional to modern, from poverty to prosperity, but the real story lies in the images Dovzhenko reveals, showing his deep love for the Ukrainian people and land.

Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors (Sergei Paradjanov, 1964) Starring Nina Alisov, Tatyana Bestaeva) Deep in the Carpathian Mountains of 19th-century Ukraine, love, hate, life, and death among the Hutsul people continue as since time began. A young man's mother mourns her husband's murder, while the youth is drawn to the beautiful daughter of his father's killer. But the lovers cannot marry, and the young man's obsession with love lost lures him ever closer to a lover's reunion in death.

RUSSIA

Pan Tadeusz: Last Foray into Lithuania (Period Drama, in Polish with subtitles): A family feud set against the backdrop of Russia's rule of Poland/Lithuania at the turn of the century.

Russia: Land of the Tsars (History/Biography): Filmed on location in Russia by the A&E crew, this documentary captures the imperial history of the Tsars. Look for the special edition set that includes bonus episodes from the TV show A&E Biography on Peter the Great, Ivan the Terrible, and Rasputin.

The Shoe (Drama, in German with subtitles) This interesting, tense, and dramatic take on the Cinderella story was an official selection at the Cannes Film Festival. When the Soviet border patrol find a woman's shoe in the sands of the coast of Latvia, an investigation ensues—one that requires each woman in the nearby town to see if the shoe fits. The black and white photography and recreation of 1950s Latvia is especially striking.

The Treasures of Hermitage (Art & Culture) The six-part documentary television series, presented as a two-disc boxed set and with a running time of almost three hours. Each of the 12 programs runs 30 minutes, covering the full scope of the collection. Part of the series "Museums of the World."

TURKEY

Topkapi starring Melina Mercouri, Maximilian Schell, and Peter Ustinov (1964, color) A heist film about the theft of a jeweled dagger from the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul.

Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul (Fatih Akin, 2005, color) A Turkish documentary about the music scene in Istanbul that was screened at the Cannes Film Festival.

Midnight Express starring Brad Davis and Irene Miracle (1978, color) Based on the real experiences of an American tourist who was caught smuggling hashish out of Turkey. This is a famous film that has been referenced and parodied many times, but the harsh prison scenes can be hard to take.

Istanbul starring Errol Flynn and Cornell Borchers (1957, color) A suspected jewel thief returns to Istanbul and finds the woman he loved might still be alive.

ROMANIA

The Death of Mr. Lazarescu

In this Romanian dark comedy from director Cristi Puiu, a 63-year-old man with a history of excessive drinking starts to feel ill and calls an ambulance for help. Mr. Lazarescu continuously tries to get assistance as his health starts to deteriorate fast. This 2005 cynical medical drama reveals Mr. Lazarescu's unpleasant journey from one hospital to the next.

12:08 East of Bucharest

A glimpse of Eastern Europe after that Cold War is presented in this 2006 drama comedy. It's been sixteen years since Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu was overthrown, and one Romanian newsman wants to put the nation's revolution on the air after the fact. This satirical gem from director Corneliu Porumboiu revolves around the idea of bringing ordinary citizen on air to discuss how their lives have changed post-Communist rule.

California Dreamin'

This 2007 film is about a railway chief who delays a NATO train during the war in Kosovo in 1999. Based on a true story, the film takes you on a five-day cultural collision between the Romanian villagers and the Americans aboard the halted NATO train. From director Cristian Nemescu, it brings forth a powerful political message while delicately balancing the comedic elements of the cultural clash.



Grand Circle Community & Useful Websites

If you have access to the Internet, the following sites offer a wealth of information:

Visit the Grand Circle Community website for a world of travel news and information:

www.gct.com/community

Government websites:

International health information: CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

U.S. Customs & Border Protection: traveler information

www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel

Transportation Security Administration (TSA): agency responsible for screening luggage in U.S.

www.tsa.gov/public

National Passport Information Center (NPIC): for passport information

www.travel.state.gov

General travel information websites:

Travel books

www.amazon.com

www.barnesandnoble.com

World weather

www.intellicast.com

www.weather.com

Foreign languages for travelers: basic terms in more than 80 languages

www.travlang.com/languages

Travel tips: packing light, choosing luggage, etc.

www.travelite.org

Net café guide: 100s of locations around the globe

www.cybercafes.com

Electric current and plug types

www.kropla.com/electric2.htm

Foreign exchange rates

www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM locators

www.mastercard.com/atm for **Cirrus ATMs**

www.visa.com/pd/atm for **PLUS ATMs**

Country information:

www.geographia.com/russia/peter01.htm / **St. Petersburg**

www.russia-travel.com/ **Russia Tourist Information**

www.ukraine.com/ **Ukraine**

www.turkey.org **Tourist attractions, Turkish culture, calendar of events, today's news, etc.**

www.kultur.gov.tr **Turkey Ministry of Tourism**

www.visiteurope.com/ **Links to countries**

www.inyourpocket.com/free-instant-city-guides.html



Tourist Board Addresses

Embassy of the Russian Federation

Consular Section

2641 Tunlaw Road, NW
Washington, D.C. 20007
Telephone: (202) 939-8907

Embassy of Ukraine

3350 M Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
Telephone: (202) 333-7507, or (202) 333-0606

Turkey

Office of the Information Attaché
Turkish Consulate-General
821 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
Telephone: 1-212-949-0160
Fax: 1-212-983-1293

U.S. Consulate contact information St. Petersburg

U.S. Consulate St. Petersburg
Furshtatskaya Street 15
Tel 7 812 331 26 00
Fax 7 812 331 28 52
www.stpetersburg-usconsulate.ru

Measurement & Temperature Conversions

Conversion Chart	
U.S. Standard to Metric	Metric to U.S. Standard
1 inch = 2.54 centimeters	1 centimeter = 0.4 inch
1 foot = 30 centimeters	1 meter = 3 feet 3 inches
1 mile = 1.6 kilometers	1 kilometer = 0.6 mile
1 ounce = 28 grams	1 gram = 0.04 ounce
1 pound = 454 grams	1 kilogram = 2.2 pounds
1 US gallon = 3.8 liters	1 liter = 1.1 US quarts

To convert Kilometers to Miles:

Multiply the first digit by 6. A 40-kilometer drive is about 24 miles (6×4). For a one-digit figure, use .6. For a three-digit number, multiply the first two digits by 6; thus, 150 kilometers equals about 90 miles ($15 \times 6 = 90$).

To convert Celsius to Fahrenheit:

Double the Celsius temperature, then add 30 degrees.

For example, if the temperature is 20°C , that's about 70°F :
($2 \times 20 = 40$; $40 + 30 = 70$).

For Celsius temperatures below zero, ignore the minus sign, double the number, and subtract it from 32.

Thus, -10°C equals 12°F ($2 \times 10 = 20$; $32 - 20 = 12$).

To convert hectares to acres:

Multiply the hectares by 2.471.

For example, a 3-hectare area is equal to 7.413 acres:
($3 \times 2.471 = 7.413$)