



Welcome to the Pskov region!

Pskov has always attracted people.

People come here all year round and from all parts of the world. Any person who comes to the Pskov Land definitely wishes to come back here again, because the history and culture of Pskov is so rich and unique and it's absolutely impossible to see everything during one visit.

The Pskov Region is situated at the South-West of Russia and borders three states — republic of Belarus, Latvia and Estonia.

One can get to Pskov

...by car:

from Moscow — 8 hours,
Saint Petersburg — 4 hours;

...by bus:

from Moscow — 15 hours,
Saint Petersburg — 5 h. 50 min.

...by train:

from Moscow — 12 hours,
Saint Petersburg — 6 hours.

The distance to Pskov :

- from Moscow — 689 km;
- from Saint Petersburg — 280 km;
- from Riga — 300 km;
- from Tallinn — 360 km;
- from Stockholm — 860 km;
- from Helsinki — 700 km;
- from Berlin — 1200 km;
- from Brussels — 1740 km.





Open the Rus!

The historical significance of the Pskov land can hardly be exaggerated. This very land, the north-western borders of Russ, is home to the Russian state as such. The Pskov **Veche** was born here, and the basis for democracy in Russ was laid.

For the first time, Pskov was mentioned in the chronicles under year 903 in connection with the marriage between **Prince Igor of Kiev** and **Olga of Pskov** — the future saint and apostle-equal Princess. Gradually, the legends started to link her name with the foundation of the city itself: as one of them has it, Olga saw three beams of light pointing to the cape at the conflux of the rivers Velikaya and Pskova, where the historical center of the city lies today. Having seen this, Olga exclaimed: “On that spot there shall be a temple of the Holy Trinity and a great city, glorious and abundant!”

Positioned on the crossroads of trade routes, Pskov was the open gate to Russ for foreign merchants, and the largest partner to **the Hanseatic Union**. It grew and developed year after year, and in the course of several centuries it

was a powerful city state — **the Veche Republic of Pskov**. By 1510, when Pskov was annexed to Muscovy and adjoined the unified Russian state, it was practically as rich and as big as the nowadays Russia’s capital.

It is so, as if history permeated the Pskov itself. This is where **Truvor** came to rule – one of the three Vikings whose names are linked to the rise of the ruling dynasty. And at the Pskov train station last **Emperor Nicholas II** abdicated, thus concluding the history of the Russian Empire. And it was here, in Pskov, where **Vladimir Lenin** was drafting the issue of **Iskra** (revolutionary newspaper Spark), and here again it was, in Pskov’s suburbs, during the first battles with the advancing Keiser troops that the legendary **Red Army** was born... The great genii worked here, and the unique, authentic artistic idiom of the Pskov architecture and icon-painting formed...

Welcome to the Pskov Region – feel the grandeur of History!

The name ‘Pskov’ is of the Finno-Ugric origin and means ‘tar water’



The Longest Fortress of Europe



Pskov is a unique fortress city. As centuries swept by, it grew its **fortification ring-walls**, and finally surrounded itself with 5 of those. Their total length comprises 9.5 kilometers. This fortress used to be one of a kind in the entire Europe!

The strongest tower of the Pskov fortress — *Pokrovskaya* (the *Tower of the Protecting Veil*) — is outstandingly impressive. It is a hard task to find a comparably strong European tower: it has a circuit of 90 meters; it is over 50 meters tall, and its walls at the foundation are 6-meter strong.

It is not fortuitous that Pskov and its powerful towers and fortress walls, as well as all the sophisticated fortification secrets, was

once considered one of the best fortresses: it is under these very walls that the best armies of Europe were defeated. And **not a single time (!)** was the Pskov fortress captured through a siege or a straight fight, although about one third of its medieval history was lived in war.



The longest siege of Pskov lasted for 6 months. It happened in 1581, when troops of the Polish king Istvan the Bathory tried to siege the city and failed.



Izborsk: The Town of Iron

Izborsk is one of the most ancient Russian towns. In 2012 Izborsk will celebrate its 1150th anniversary. It is this town that the chronicles mention, when telling the story of the **three Viking brothers – Rurik, Sineus and Truvor** – coming to Russ after having been called for Princedom by the Russian land-lords, and laying the foundation to the glorious dynasty, which had ruled Russ up until the 16th century. **Truvor**, as far as this legend goes, stayed to reign here, in Izborsk.

This town was the first to meet the foes at the Russian borders, and therefore was frequently forayed and sieged. This was why Izborsk was one of the **first Russian towns to erect stone fortifications**. So fortunate had been the choice of the spot to locate the fortress, and its walls so impregnable, that European chroniclers referred to Izborsk as the Town of Iron.

Today the unique ensemble of the Izborsk fortress preserves fragments of the walls, towers, special fortifications.



Izborsk has become a favorite spot to hold all sorts of **international historical and folklore festivals**. They plunge you in the life of a militarized medieval town, staging battles between the Russian warriors and the European knights, storming of the fortress and the fascinating tournaments.



The Living History



Izborsk plunges you in the life of a militarized medieval town, staging battles between the Russian warriors and the European knights, storming of the fortress and the fascinating tournaments.

The Isaborg also drawing thousands of onlookers every year in June to Izborsk is the event where you can try yourself with ranged medieval weapons, make a medieval weapon of your own or simply bake some bread along the lines of an ancient recipe, as well as taste some of the authentic dishes of the olden days.

The reconstruction of the famous battle between the troops of Alexander Nevsky and the Livonian knights on the ice of the Chudskoye (Peipsi) Lake — the Battle on Ice — is held every April in the village of Samolva in the Gdov district. The historical locale enables the spectators to feel like an eyewitness of the glorious battle dating back to 1242.

The Pskov Land has become a favorite spot to hold all sorts of international historical and folklore festivals. Some of those have already become traditional. The Town of Iron Festival held annually in August in the Old

For more detail on the festivals, as well as on other interesting events, please see www.tourism.pskov.ru



The Land Of Inspiration: Genii Loci

When speaking of **genii loci** of the Pskov Region, the first thing that comes up would be **Pushkinskiye Gory (the Pushkin Hills)**, where in his estate, surrounded by majestic sceneries, **great Russian poet Alexander Pushkin** worked. He spent several years here — his youth, his exile — and here as well he preferred to be put to rest. In their family estates located

in the region the **two of the famous Five composers, or the Mighty Handful**, worked on their masterpieces — great **Modest Mussorgsky and Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov**. It feels like up to this very day their estates preserve the distant echo of the wonderful melodies.

And it is namely the Pskov Land that gave Russia its main **historiosophical and political idea Moscow: the Third Rome**, which greatly influenced the politics of the Russian State for centuries. This idea was formulated in the messages of the elder from the Yelizarovo Monastery of Christ the Savior, **Philotheus**.

Pskov and its land is a token for the Russian literature: they appeared in the pages of many renowned authors, such as **Alexander Pushkin, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Sasha Chyorny, Veniamin Kaverin, Evgeniy Evtushenko**, as well as the two Nobel Prize winners – **Ivan Bunin and Joseph Brodsky**...

Just try to feel the amazing creative energy of this place!





The Muse of the Great Poet

Pushkin's family estate — **Mikhaylovskoye hamlet** — with all its humpy little bridges the poet loved to walk on so much, the windmill, the fruit garden, his nanny's house and the house the poet once dwelled in, today they look almost identical to what they looked those days of the past.

Having visited these Pushkin spots, it is a must to stop by both Pushkin's ancestral family estate **Petrovskoye** — that of the Hannibals, and that of his friends — **the Osipov-Wolf**, the place that became his second home when in exile. In **Trigorskoye** everything breathes with Evgeniy Onegin – **Onegin's bench**, the solitary oak, and Tatiana's alley. And village **Bugrovo** is the place

where one can feel what the rural household of those days was. Here is a black banya, a stack yard with a drying house, a barn, a lean-to and stables. In the watermill museum, the charming miller will play balalaika for you and let you mill some grain and take a pouch of flour with you as a token.



To know everything about the excursions around Pushkin spots you may contact the Science and Culture Centre based in the Pushkin Hills or by phones +7 (81146) 2-23-21, 2-26-09, www.pushkin.ellink.ru



The Cradle of Faith



The Pskov land has always been a conglomeration of monasteries and remains such. Today, in the Region there are 8 functioning cloisters and another few non-functioning but accessible through guided tours. They all are located in picturesque landscapes and are fine monuments of architecture and history. The monastic life in these cloisters is in its active revival at present.

The Mirozhsky Monastery of the Transfiguration in Pskov is the first such cloister and one of the most ancient architectural

monuments of the city: It dates back to 1156. The monastery is famous for its unique frescos of the 12th century, which have many times been compared by experts with the best masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance. These **frescos**, with preservation rate of 80%, cover the entire walls of the temple from the floor to the dome, and are the exhaustive depiction of the Biblical story.

Murals also can be seen in the **Cathedral of the Godmother's Nativity** (14th century) of the **Snehtogorsky Nunnery** located within the city borders as well.

The **Yelizarovo Monastery** of Christ the Savior, located in the vicinity of Pskov, is home to the unique 14th–century icon Christ the Pantocrator. This cloister is also famous for it was here, where Elder **Philotheus** formulated the famous concept **Moscow: the Third Rome**.

The **Svyatogorsky Holy Dormition Monastery** in the **Pushkin Hills** hosts the tomb of poet **Alexander Pushkin** and the necropolis of the Hannibals-Pushkins.

The company “Vertograd”, based in the Pskov Kremlin, organizes special tours for the pilgrims.
Tel. +7 8112 72-05-32, fax: 72-71-66, www.pskov-palomnik.ru



The God-Given Caves

A place of special pilgrimage for the orthodox is the **Pskov-Pechory Holy Dormition Monastery**.

Its history, dating back over five centuries, started with a small cavern-temple (Old Russian for 'cave' is '*pechora*', hence the name of the town): in the heart of the monastery **the famous karst sand God-given caves**.

The cloister is a spiritual and cultural center, **one of the largest monasteries in the country**, with a history uninterrupted for many a century, and a wonderful historical and architectural ensemble of 16-19th centuries. Within the compact area of the

monastery **11 churches** found their home, with a few of them hidden underground, the fraternity corps, a sacristy, a library, the Patron's house, and a big **Monastery Garden**.

In **the cave necropolis**, with a permanently sustained temperature at around zero centigrade, over ten thousand persons are buried — members of the brethren, participants of glorious events, outstanding warriors and acknowledged public figures. Members of some well-known Russian families found their rest here.



The main holiday of the monastery is the Dormition of Virgin Mary on August, 28. On this date a long road of flowers is laid out, ceremonial public liturgies and religious procession around the monastery take place.



Gardarika*

Practically every small town or a settlement of the Pskov Region has its own zest and originality. Each of them has done its bit into the history and culture of the region.

Velikie Luki, the second large city alongside with Pskov, is famous for its **fortifications** which protected the city against the enemy invasions since XII up to XVIII centuries.

Remains of an ancient fortification wall are also preserved in **Gdov**. Time was also kind to the stone houses built in the XIXth – beginning of the XXth centuries. The houses decorate the centre of the town today.

In **Porkhov** which was founded by **Alexander Nevsky** in 1239 as a part of Novgorod defense system there is also a **fortress well** preserved. It used to defend the city from German and Lithuanian invasions for many times.

In **Ostrov** **unique chain-bridges** built in 1853 are well preserved. Russian tsar Nikolay I took part in the opening ceremony. The town of **Sebezsh** is famous for **the church of the Holy Life-giving Trinity**, the monument of the

architecture made in the XVIIIth century in the style of baroque so unusual for Pskov architectural school. But the main symbol of Sebezsh is the belfry of **the Nativity of Christ Cathedral** built in the XIXth century.



*Gardarika — an ancient Scandinavian name of the ancient Russian state, known by the Vikings in the Middle Ages.

This word translated as «country towns»



The southern shield

Ostrov is an ancient Russian town having an islet as a heart located between two branches of the Velikaya River. The fortress on the islet which was named “Ostrov” appeared approximately in the middle of the XIII century and subsequently became the “**southern shield**” of Pskov.

Unique chain bridges across the Velikaya River built in 1853 are well preserved. Russian **tsar Nikolay the First** took part in the opening ceremony in person.

Of great historic importance are the expositions of the **Ostrov local history museum**, among which the unique museum pieces presented in the subject areas as

follows:

- foundation and development of Ostrov town;
- the nature of native land;
- rare motor vehicles and corresponding technical literature;
- rare TV-sets, radio receivers, cameras, manual typewriters, clock;
- samovars and tea things
- the Great Patriotic war.

Branch of the museum called “**Memorial complex “Stalin line”**” was formed in 2009.



Sports and recreation centre “Yunost”, the place where Russia’s national teams in skiing and biathlon train for worlds championships is located on a picturesque bank of Gorokhovoe Lake just in few kilometers from Ostrov.



Rustic Household



Rural tourism in the Pskov Region is the virgin purity and beauty of the northern nature, the calm and quiet, the coziness of the level rustic household, the cleansing of your soul and body, and the feeling of the total union with nature. The opportunity to spend a few days in a picturesque rural environment, to become familiar with the folk culture and taste the fine foods of the rural periphery – all of this makes a holiday in a hamlet a very attractive idea!

In **Olga's peasant homestead** and the **Honey peasant farmstead** the guests become inseparable part of the rural life – the fragrance of the freshly mown grass, the invigorating river coolness, the

mysterious twilight of the forest, the twitter of birds, the buzzing bees and the chirping grasshoppers — all make for peace of your soul and your body!

Here you will be offered to try comb and extracted honey in combination with birch sap, herbal tea, soused red bilberries, freshly picked cranberries, and have some hot flavory bread straight out of the Russian stove! The hosts will teach you a number of rustic basics – how to milk a cow or a goat, to fly-fish, to tell between medicinal herbs, and read animal habits.

Peasant household museum “Olga’s homestead” is located in village Bereznyuk, and the peasant household museum “Honey farmstead” in village Dubrovka of the Pechory district.



Ostriches of the Cold Russia

In the **neighborhood of Pushkin's estate in the Pushkin Hills**, there is a small household zoo where they breed African ostriches that are not afraid of the Russian cold spells! The crowd-puller of the farm is Kuzya the Young Emu. Kuzya has no fear of people at all, and gladly accepts whatever dainties they bring him.

At this farm they also breed pheasants, hens, peacocks and other rare bird species. Apart from that, people from the nearby villages bring here animals that have suffered from the wild or hunters. This was the way a bear, an elk, Manya the Roe, a one-winged swan, a one-legged black stork and many others ap-

peared here.

Ostriches, pheasants, peacocks and exotic hens can also be seen on a farm near Pskov, in the **neighborhood of Vauliny Gory (Vaula Hills)**.

In the **Razdolye Village (Village of Fun)**, while the parents are enjoying their fishing, the small visitors can find entertainment among such domestic animals as goats, sheep, and rare breeds of hens, as well as ostriches, which all are extremely friendly to their guests.



Ostriches are located in Pushkin Hills — across the road from the turn to Bugrovo, and in Pskov — near Vaula Hills, and in the Village of Fun — Pskov, 48 Zonal'noye shosse.



Recreation for Families

The Pskov land is the best place for family holidays, since everyone can find something suiting for them. Besides, why not mix use and pleasure — visit famous historical sites, learn numerous interesting facts about the land, as well as have a fun steamboat trip along the river Velikaya, go fly-fishing on a forest lake, visit an ostrich farm, or taste the freshest possible honey in the Honey Hamlet?

The Pskov Region is famous for its **health centers** — **resort Khilovo in the Porkhov district** and **resort Cheryokha in the Pskov district**, both located in the most picturesque sceneries, both known for

their therapeutic muds, and the **Blue Lakes Resort** is famous for its unique mineral water wells.

Horseback rides in the valleys of **Old Izborsk** and the vicinities of Pskov will definitely bring lots of fun both to adults and kids!

Even a short stay in the lap of Pskov's nature will help you revitalize and restore for another working year!



A trip on a little train along the bank of the Velikaya River starting from the Pskov Kremlin will bring much pleasure to children and grownups.



Activities Outdoors

Some outdoor activities might serve a good addition to a stay in the Pskov Region.

Horseback riding is the perfect recreation for a modern person. It brings much joy and is extremely healthy. One can go on a ride across the picturesque valleys of Old Izborsk, along the Pskov lakeshore in the village of Pechki, around the broad acres of Duke Apraksin in the Pechory district, as well as in the immediate suburbia of Pskov. Such mounted outings are available around the year and for all ages.

For those keen on mountain skiing, there are the equipped mountain ski routes in the **Maly Valley** and on **Vashina Hill in the Pechory district**, where visitors can try themselves in mountain skiing, snowboarding or tubing.

In the **Ostrov district** there is **sports base Yunost' (Youth)**; this is where Russia's national teams in skiing and biathlon train for world championships, as well as the place hosting rounds of the World Cup in Roller-Ski Biathlon. The roller-skiing route is over 7 kilometers long, and the placement and training conditions for the sports

lovers correspond to international standards.

The tourist resorts of the Pskov Region offer a number of pleasant pastime opportunities — in the summer, there are **wave runners, cutters and tween-decks; bikes, rollerblades and skateboards**. In the winter, there are **snowmobiles, skis and skates**. There are also **scuba-diving** possibilities — the aquatic fauna of the Pskov-Peipsi Lake is incredibly rich, and besides, there is an annual festival for divers and harpooners on the **Beloye (White) Lake** of the **Pustoshka district**.



There is an annual festival for divers and harpooners on the **Beloye (White) Lake** of the **Pustoshka district**.



Latgal



Latgale is an ancient part of Latvia, almost a quarter of the whole country, where one third of the population of Latvija lives. Historically, Latgale was the region of Latvia from the River Daugava in the East to the borders of the Livian and Slavic tribes.

Latgale is rightly called the Land of Blue lakes or land of lakes. The largest lake in Latvia - Lubans (82,1 km²), the second largest lake – the Razna lake (located near Rezekne), the deepest lake Drīdzis (maximum depth - 63 m), which is the deepest in the Baltics are all found in Latgale. A unique protected nature area

is Ezezers with thirty-six islands and Velnezers (the Devil's lake) is famous for its mysterious colours and legends that are told about it.

Latgale greets tourists with its picturesque views, varied mosaic landscapes with its many lakes, forests and hills, and geological curiosities – great stones [the biggest Latvian great stone is situated in Nīcgale (130 m³)], glens and slopes. Latgale is characterized by crucifixes at the road sides, steeples of white churches over coniferous forests, manor-houses and castles. Aglona basilica, the world famous catholic religious centre



attracts thousands of faithful from many countries. attracts thousands of people from different countries) to celebrate the Ascension of the Virgin Mary. You will also find ceramics made by local potters – jugs, pots, vases, plates and candlesticks, glittering glaze in warm earthtone shades – a traditional part of crafts. Each potter has his own specific style, leaving his personal mark on Latgalian craft. Patchwork, different kinds of knitting, crochet, wood, wattle work are popular handicrafts in Latgale.

Take your walking-stick and rucksack! Take your bike and backpack! Put your luggage in the boot and discover for yourself that Latgale is a place where you can relax, enjoy nature and be invigorated!





The Virgin Nature of the North

The Pskov Region is an **incredulously scenic land of forest lakes and the purest air**. It is called a “land of thousand lakes”.

The tourist resorts of the Pskov Region offer a number of pleasant pastime opportunities — in the summer, there are wave runners, cutters and tween-decks; bikes, rollerblades and skateboards. In the winter, there are snowmobiles, skis and skates. There are also scuba-diving possibilities — **the aquatic fauna of the Pskov-Peipsi Lake** is incredibly rich, and besides, there is an annual festival for divers and harpooners on **the Beloye (White) Lake** of the **Pustoshka district**.

The Pskov Region takes special pride in its lakes. Thus, the Pskov-Peipsi Lake is well-known

to fishing fans as one of the few places in the country most abundant in fish, inhabited by 42 fish species, and among those the most luring to fishermen are vendace, bream, pollan, pikeperch, perch, pike and roach. And the **famous Pskov whitefish** is known well beyond the Russian borders.

Game species are also abundant in Pskov forests. **Hunting** here is possible year round. In the spring there are the waterfowls, migratory birds and wood grouses; in the summer and fall — the bigger game. One can try themselves in the traditional Russian bear hunting, or modestly suffice with wolves, hares and foxes.



Many fisheries breed carp, trout and sturgeon, inviting the guests of Pskov to fish out their own dinner!



Welcome to Setomaa

Seto is a **small Baltic-Finnish ethnicity**, inhabiting the south-eastern border areas of Estonia and the Pechory district of the Pskov Region. These areas are also called “**Setomaa**” (the land of seto). Seto dwelling on the borders of the two cultures — Estonian and Russian — fused one of their own, inimitable: they are speaking a special dialect of Estonian; they have their own folk garments and a peculiar tradition to accumulate female silver trinketry, as well as orthodox customs and holidays, among which the tradition to elect the King every year.

In the Pechory district, there is the only **Russian Seto ethnical museum**. The Seto museum, affiliated to the Izborsk Museum Preserve, is hosted in the authentic estate of the Külaots family. Many of the items are still warm from the touch of their owners. Exhibited here are the ethnical Seto dress, household effects, utensils, and photographs from the old days.

The guests will be cordially introduced to pagan **God of Fertility Peko**, and treated to herbal tea with hot pies.

And in the house opposite, in an old Seto estate, there is a **private Seto museum**, whose hostess will tell the visitors of the interesting and anything but simple story of this small ethnicity. Apart from the household implements, the museum possesses the unique audio recordings of the songs that Seto women used to sing.

International festival “Setomaa. Family Meetings” takes place in Sigovo annually in August 27–29. The guests have the great chance to join the round dance, take part in seto traditional dancing masterclass and purchase some authentic souvenirs at a handicraft fair. Various competitions are held within the scope of the festival, such as married couples the most “devil-may-care dance” competition, accordion players and folklore humorous rhyme singers contests.



The Seto Museum is situated 32 km from Pskov, in village Sigovo of the Pechory district.



Tourism Information center

180000, Pskov, 3 Lenin square

Tel.: +7 (8112) 72 25 32

Mobile tel.: +7 953 242 57 00

If you are going to visit the Pskov region and would like to know how to plan your leisure time, the Tourist Information center will help you!

Our assistants are always ready:

- to give the information about sights, institutions dealing with culture and any other information about Pskov and the Pskov region;
- to develop the route of your trip with detailed explanations;
- to give the information about the events, taking place in the region and to book tickets for festive events and concerts;
- to book a room in a hotel;
- to arrange admirable excursions;
- to choose souvenirs and books about our region;
- to rent a hall and to arrange all necessary equipment for holding festive events and conferences.

You are always welcome!

Our website: tourism.pskov.ru

Our e-mail: infopunktpskov@ya.ru

