



BALTIC  
SEA  
REGION

DESTINATION GUIDE 2014

# AMAZING CITIES OF THE BALTIC SEA REGION



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Hamburg



Helsinki



Riga



St. Petersburg



Warsaw

# WELCOME TO THE BALTIC SEA REGION!

The Baltic Sea Region comprises eleven European nations with more than 100 million inhabitants. These nations share many historical ties: in pre-Christian times, the Amber Road ran along the coastline of the Baltic Sea. During the middle ages, merchant guilds founded the Hanseatic League, which ruled over the sea trade routes in the Baltic region. Even today, the nations of the Baltic Sea Region are a part of this important cultural and historic heritage. Experience real European history in the most exciting cities in one of the most beautiful natural areas in Europe: enjoy the Baltic Sea Region!

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## 10 great reasons to go to the Baltic Sea Region

- 1. One Sea** – The proximity of the Baltic Sea welcomes its guests with a maritime flair, full of elemental energy, spectacular views and naval lifestyle!
- 2. Amazing Cities** – The established infrastructure of the region makes it a perfect destination for multiple stopovers in the most important cities during one holiday!
- 3. Rich History** – The various historical backgrounds of the areas result in an exciting cultural diversity and make every metropolis unique and well worth discovering!
- 4. Friendly Locals** – The naval heritage of the region leads to a unique sense of friendliness and open-mindedness that will welcome you with exceptional warmth and cordiality!
- 5. Unique Design** – The distinct style of this European region with its discreet colouring and its clear lines and shapes is a design icon and has given rise to many world-famous brands!
- 6. Fascinating Architecture** – The richness of the Baltic Sea Region can also be perfectly experienced in the variety of architectural styles that can be found – from medieval to postmodern!
- 7. Surprising Cuisine** – From award-winning haute cuisine to traditional cooking, the gastronomy of the Baltic Sea Region has something to offer for every appetite!
- 8. Pure Nature** – Despite being a very modern region, the people of the Baltic Sea have preserved their love for and special relationship with nature, thus offering a vast amount of scenic attractions!
- 9. High-Quality Shopping** – With some of the most important European capitals within reach, the region offers countless shopping opportunities for every interest and every budget!
- 10. Great Connections** – The metropolises of the Baltic Sea Region are conveniently accessible from the US, either by direct flights or by connection to the most important hubs!



# AMAZING CITIES OF THE BALTIC SEA REGION



## Hamburg

Founded in about 500 A.D., Hamburg is captivating because the seafaring-romantic exists to this day. The River Elbe crosses the city near the mouth of the North Sea, which is why Hamburg developed into one of the world's biggest ports. Besides the river many canals find their way through the city, most of them ending in the beautiful Lake Alster situated directly in the heart of the city. Many different cultural influences and historic epochs gave this impressive and fascinating city its distinctive face.



## Helsinki

Throughout its 450-year history, maritime Helsinki has swung between the currents of eastern and western influences. Life in the second-most-northern capital city in the world is full of contrasts and fascinating cultures. Influences from both the east and west are visible in the city's architecture, cuisine, events, traditions and many other elements that are unique to the way of life in Helsinki.





## St. Petersburg

Founded by Tsar Peter the Great in 1703, St. Petersburg has experienced many dramatic historical events, including the palace intrigues of Catherine the Great, the influence of Rasputin on the Russian royal family and his mysterious murder, and the October Revolution of 1917, which brought the communists to power. Today, the former capital of Tsarist Russia is known as the centre of Russian art, culture and literature.



## Riga

Riga – European Capital of Culture in 2014 – has been a city of inspiration for more than 800 years. It has always attracted travellers, urging them to linger, remain or come back. A vibrant metropolis with a rich cultural and historical heritage, which is evident in the city's architecture and cultural life.












## Warsaw

Warsaw is a modern and fast-developing metropolis that cherishes its traditions and rich cultural heritage. This is where an eventful history of freedom-loving people and exquisite art blend with vibrant tourist attractions befitting a capital city.

# SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST THE SEA



## Connections

	Chicago – Helsinki .....	9 h 25 min
	Chicago – Warsaw .....	8 h 55 min
	New York – Hamburg .....	7 h 50 min
	New York – Helsinki .....	8 h 45 min
	New York – Riga .....	8 h 45 min
	New York – Warsaw .....	8 h 20 min
	Helsinki – St. Petersburg*	3 h 30 min
	Hamburg – Berlin .....	1 h 40 min
	Hamburg – Copenhagen .....	4 h 45 min

\* US citizens need Russian visas except for 72 hour group tours by ferry.

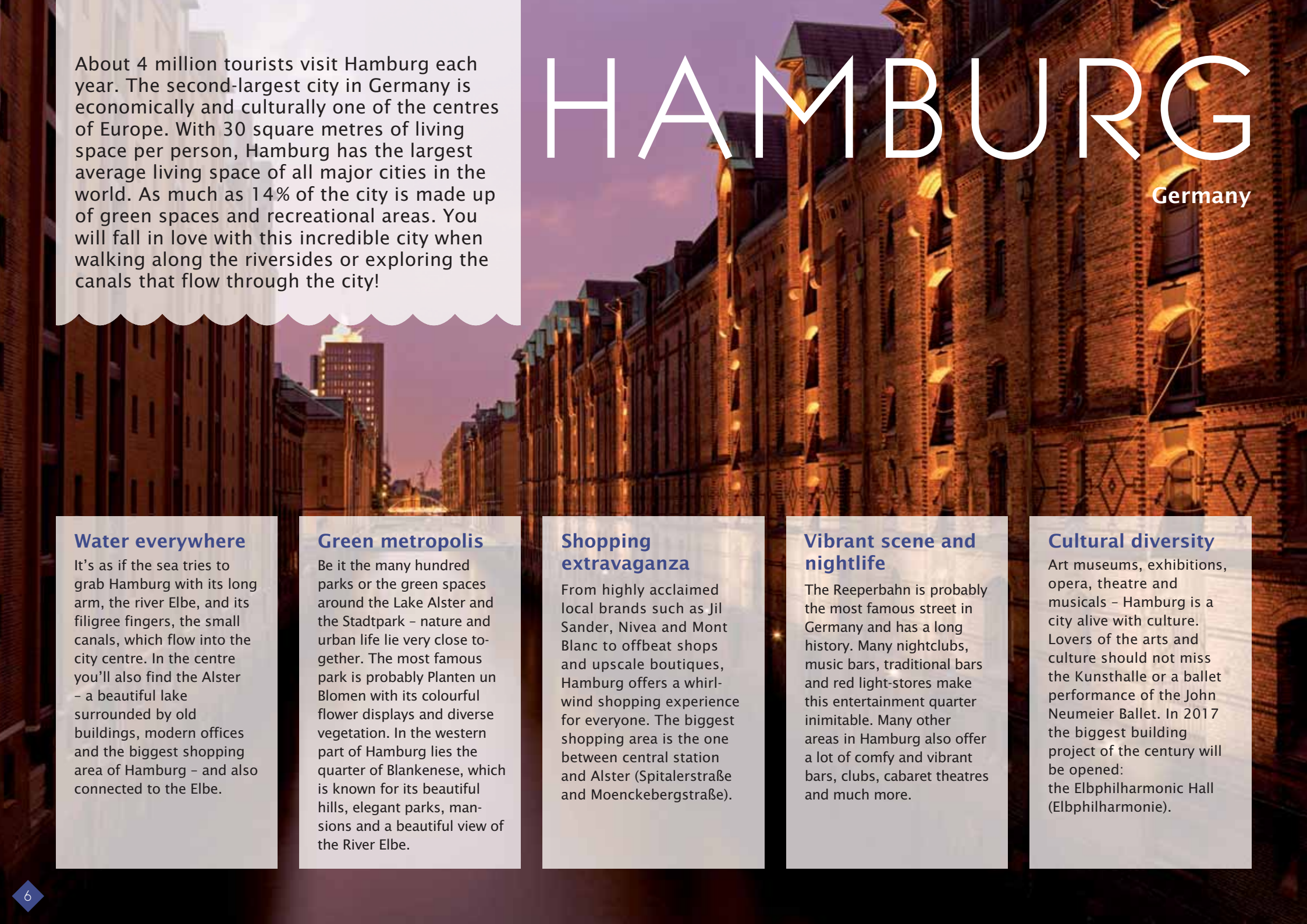


Great connections between all ONE BSR cities  
(as well as Copenhagen, Berlin, Stockholm and  
many others).

100 Miles







About 4 million tourists visit Hamburg each year. The second-largest city in Germany is economically and culturally one of the centres of Europe. With 30 square metres of living space per person, Hamburg has the largest average living space of all major cities in the world. As much as 14% of the city is made up of green spaces and recreational areas. You will fall in love with this incredible city when walking along the riversides or exploring the canals that flow through the city!

# HAMBURG

Germany

## Water everywhere

It's as if the sea tries to grab Hamburg with its long arm, the river Elbe, and its filigree fingers, the small canals, which flow into the city centre. In the centre you'll also find the Alster – a beautiful lake surrounded by old buildings, modern offices and the biggest shopping area of Hamburg – and also connected to the Elbe.

## Green metropolis

Be it the many hundred parks or the green spaces around the Lake Alster and the Stadtpark – nature and urban life lie very close together. The most famous park is probably Planten un Blomen with its colourful flower displays and diverse vegetation. In the western part of Hamburg lies the quarter of Blankenese, which is known for its beautiful hills, elegant parks, mansions and a beautiful view of the River Elbe.

## Shopping extravaganza

From highly acclaimed local brands such as Jil Sander, Nivea and Mont Blanc to offbeat shops and upscale boutiques, Hamburg offers a whirlwind shopping experience for everyone. The biggest shopping area is the one between central station and Alster (Spitalerstraße and Moenckebergstraße).

## Vibrant scene and nightlife

The Reeperbahn is probably the most famous street in Germany and has a long history. Many nightclubs, music bars, traditional bars and red light-stores make this entertainment quarter inimitable. Many other areas in Hamburg also offer a lot of comfy and vibrant bars, clubs, cabaret theatres and much more.

## Cultural diversity

Art museums, exhibitions, opera, theatre and musicals – Hamburg is a city alive with culture. Lovers of the arts and culture should not miss the Kunsthalle or a ballet performance of the John Neumeier Ballet. In 2017 the biggest building project of the century will be opened: the Elbphilharmonic Hall (Elbphilharmonie).

## Must-sees

### Town Hall and Alster

The Town Hall is an imposing, many-sided building which was built in 1897. It is the seat of the Hamburg senate and parliament. Directly beside it lies the Alster, a beautiful lake in the heart of Hamburg; it is framed by the city centre, where most of the exclusive stores are located. For getting the best view of the Alster region, it is recommended to take a roundtrip by Alsterboat.

### The historical warehouse district

The Speicherstadt was built between 1883 and 1927 to store goods from all over world. Even today, the companies in the Speicherstadt handle a third of the world's carpet production, as well as other goods such as cocoa, coffee, tea, spices, maritime equipment and electronic goods.

### HafenCity

Between the port and the Speicherstadt, you'll find HafenCity ("Port City"). It is made up of new and modern buildings, as well as old ones, and is one of the most exciting architectural projects in Europe.

### St. Pauli and fish market

In the quarter of St. Pauli you will find the Reeperbahn with its bars, nightclubs and red-light district. You can get a sense of the nostalgia of seafarers from the past few hundred years during the day and at night you can be a part of Hamburg's world-famous club scene. People who like to stay up until the early hours of the morning should visit the traditional St. Pauli fish market.

### Miniatur Wunderland

The Miniatur Wunderland is a model railway attraction in the Speicherstadt warehouse district. It is the biggest in the world at 1,150 square metres and rising! It's divided into different sections: Alps, America, Hamburg, a fictitious city called Knuffingen, Scandinavia, Switzerland and Austria. There are four more planned: Italy, France, England and Africa.

## Did you know ...

... **Hamburg has more bridges than Venice, London and Amsterdam put together?**

The many streams, rivers and canals in Hamburg are crossed by about 2,500 bridges. Thus Hamburg has more bridges inside its city limits than any other city in the world.

... **that the Beatles started their career in Hamburg?**

The Beatles came to Hamburg in 1960 to perform in different nightclubs. And they continued to do so until December 1962; it became a chapter in the band's history which had a crucial influence on their performance skills.

## Facts and figures

**Dimension:** the total area of the city 292 sq mi (756 sq km)

**Climate:** oceanic climate influenced by Hamburg's proximity to the coast and marine air masses that originate over the Atlantic Ocean. In the summertime the average temperature is 22°C (72°F) and during the winter it goes down to about -2°C (29°F).

**Currency:** euro (€) (EUR)

**Tip:** Twice a day, at 10 a.m. and 9 p.m., the "Michel-Türmer" can be heard playing the trumpet from the top of St. Michael's church tower. This is done in observance of a 300-year-old tradition that began during the Lutheran Reformation.

Town Hall



HafenCity



## Event highlights

Harbour birthday celebration



ELBJAZZ Festival



### May

**Harbour birthday celebration** with some of the world's largest and most beautiful cruise ships, frigates and steamboats.

**ELBJAZZ Festival:** 15,000 jazz addicts celebrate jazz on both sides of the Elbe. More than 80 bands will be performing on 12 stages, indoors and out.

### July

**Hamburg Harley Days:** The whole city of Hamburg is taken over by the two-wheelers. The European Harley Davidson community will be celebrating the cult trademark from Milwaukee with a big party.

### August

**Hamburg Cruise Days and the Blue Port:** A festival for Hamburg's residents and visitors and a spectacular showcase for the city, celebrated every 2 years.

### September


**The Reeperbahn Festival** is Germany's largest club festival and is one of the three most important meeting places for the music and digital industries in Europe.

### December

More than 15 beautiful **Christmas markets** to stroll among and enjoy a cup of warming mulled wine.

For further information please visit:  
[www.hamburg-travel.com](http://www.hamburg-travel.com)





Helsinki, the capital of Finland, is a unique and diverse city, where traditional eastern exotica meet contemporary Scandinavian style. Helsinki today is one of the most inviting and engaging places to visit in Europe. A world-class city with a cosy, coastal and relaxed vibe, there is no shortage of things to do, people to meet and great little places to spend some time taking in the good life.

# HELSINKI

Finland

## Design

Design is a factor deep-rooted in the urban lifestyle of Helsinki. Design is manifest in the everyday lives of Helsinki citizens in many ways, ranging from home furniture and items that represent traditional Finnish design to modern urban solutions in the city and contemporary interior design.

## Maritime appeal

In Helsinki, the sea is an essential part of everyday life. The sea surrounds the city on three sides, with almost 100 kilometres of shoreline and around 300 islands. The archipelago offers endless opportunities for great experiences throughout the year.

## Food culture

Helsinki's food culture is unique, surprising and authentic. The city offers local food made from fresh seasonal ingredients, haute cuisine in Michelin-starred restaurants, hundreds of pop-up restaurants a year, food events and much more. The new local food culture is packed with delightful surprises and long-lasting pleasures.

## Friendly locals

Helsinki's open and friendly residents wish visitors, along with new events and trends, a very warm welcome to this dynamic and lively city. The personable, multi-lingual and friendly residents are among the city's greatest assets for visitors. Community-oriented urban culture is also thriving in Helsinki.

## Nature

The noise, pollution and congestion that are often associated with capital cities are noticeably absent here. Helsinki is one of the greenest metropolises in the world: over one-third of the city consists of parks and other green spaces. The surrounding sea creates a special atmosphere and offers a wide range of recreational opportunities.



## Must-sees

### Tempeliaukio "Rock" Church

Excavated out of the natural bedrock, Tempeliaukio Church is one of Helsinki's most popular tourist attractions. The interior walls are created naturally by the rock. The church was designed by architects Timo and Tuomo Suomalainen and opened in 1969. Due to its excellent acoustics, the church is a popular venue for concerts.

### Suomenlinna Maritime Fortress

Suomenlinna fortress is one of the biggest sea fortresses in the world. Founded in 1748 and built by Augustin Ehrensvärd on islands off the coast of Helsinki, Suomenlinna is one of the most popular attractions in Finland, as well as being a place where people live. It was included in UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1991 as a unique monument to European military architecture.

### Esplanade Park

Situated in the heart of Helsinki, the Esplanade serves as a promenade and the best place for people-watching. Along the park there are several cafés and shops, where you can buy Finnish design and international brands.

### Helsinki Cathedral and Senate Square

The Senate Square and its surroundings form a unique and cohesive example of neoclassical architecture. The square is dominated by Helsinki Cathedral, which is arguably Finland's most famous and photographed building.

### Design District

Design District is a cluster of creative businesses that is full of fascinating attractions for fans of design. The district comprises 25 streets and 200 locations, including jewellery makers, design and antique shops, fashion boutiques, museums, art galleries, restaurants, hotels and showrooms.

## Did you know ...

### ... there is a sauna in almost every home in Finland?

The word sauna comes from ancient Finnish. There are still some public saunas in Helsinki where you can get the original sauna experience.

### ... the lowest ever recorded temperature in Helsinki was -34.3 °C (-29.2 °F)?

That was on 10 January 1987.

### ... if you are travelling in Finland by car, regardless of the weather or time of the day, you are required by law to always drive with the lights on?

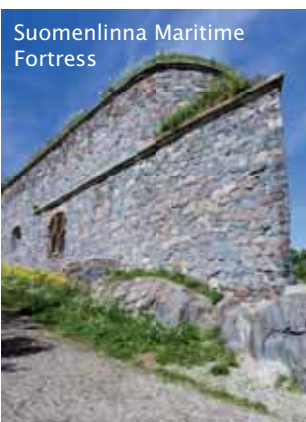
## Facts and figures

**Dimension:** the total area of the city is 276 sq mi (715 sq km)

**Climate:** Helsinki's climate is typical of its northerly location. The proximity of the Arctic Ocean and the North Atlantic creates cold weather, while the Gulf Stream brings in warmer air. The summer in Helsinki is bright, but the winter is very cold.

**Currency:** euro (€) (EUR)

**Tip:** You should travel to Helsinki by boat to get one of the greatest views of the coast that you can imagine.



## Event highlights



### May

**May Day Celebrations:** Join the locals on parades and other events around the city and enjoy a picnic in one of the many parks of Helsinki.

### JUNE

**Helsinki Week** is a compilation of festivals and events that takes place around the city's birthday on 12 June, **Helsinki Day**.

### AUGUST

The **Helsinki Festival** presents a wide range of culture, from classical and world music to circus, dance, theatre, art, film and urban events.

### OCTOBER


**The Baltic Herring Market** is Helsinki's oldest traditional event. The local fishermen gather in Market Square to sell their Baltic herring products and other fish products.

### DECEMBER

**The Christmas Season** in Helsinki is particularly warm and festive. Numerous Christmas concerts and markets are also held throughout the city. The year culminates in the national New Year's Eve celebrations in Senate Square with music and fireworks.

For further information please visit:  
[www.visithelsinki.fi/en](http://www.visithelsinki.fi/en)





Founded in 1201 by the joint efforts of early Hanseatic merchants and German crusaders, today Riga proudly displays its 800-year heritage, combining the dynamic pace of a modern metropolis and the charm of a historic town. Narrow cobbled streets and splendid boulevards, stylish restaurants and cosy taverns, tiny shops for traditional crafts and shiny department stores, with pieces by local designers. Riga has something for everyone!

# RIGA

Latvia

## Cultural richness

Riga has a dynamic cultural life. Latvian National Opera attracts world-leading artists. Concert halls regularly offer classical and popular music concerts, galleries exhibit works by well-known classical and contemporary artists. The cultural life of Riga is rich and varied.

## Beautiful architecture

The architecture of Riga is beautiful and diverse. 800-year-old Gothic churches, built by the founders of Riga, medieval buildings in the old town, and exquisite Art Nouveau and wooden buildings make Riga a true pearl of architecture.

## Where centuries meet

Riga is more than 800 years old. Each century has left its mark on the architecture in the old town and city centre. Here Riga's cultural heritage coexists with the fast pace of modern living.

## Gastronomy capital

Riga's restaurants offer fusion cuisine, where you can try traditional Latvian dishes, and original meals offering an astonishing combination of tastes that take you on an exciting gastronomic journey.

## City for shopping

The old town is perfect for leisurely shopping – you'll find small shops offering souvenirs, art galleries nestled within the narrow streets of the old town, but also shopping centres selling foreign and local brands.



## Must-sees

### Old Riga

Recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, this is the historical and geographical centre of Riga on the right bank of the Daugava river. Old Riga covers a relatively small inner area of the 13th–18th century fortifications where unique monuments of medieval architecture – which, surprisingly, have survived two world wars – are concentrated.

### Freedom Monument

The Freedom Monument has been Riga's central landmark for almost a century. This 42.7 m tall granite and copper work of art was financed entirely by public donations and is a symbol of the Latvian nation's strive for freedom and independence.

### The Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia

Almost 88 hectares of historic buildings and traditional lifestyle are waiting to be discovered at the Latvian Ethnographic Open-Air Museum, which is located on a beautiful lakeside and is one of the oldest open-air museums in Europe.

### Riga Central market

Hemp-seed butter, wild honey, black bread and other tasty goods can be found at Riga Central market. This is a place where you can haggle with the vendors, admire the unique architecture and enjoy a truly local shopping experience.

### Art Nouveau district

Riga is sometimes called "the metropolis of Art Nouveau". There are 800 Art Nouveau buildings in Riga, mostly located in the city centre – particularly along Alberta, Elizabetes and nearby streets. Riga Art Nouveau Museum can also be found on Alberta Street.

## Did you know ...

... the tradition of decorating Christmas trees began in Riga more than 500 years ago?

According to several sources, the first documented use of an evergreen tree in a Christmas celebration was in Riga in 1510. A memorial plaque commemorating the idea can be found at the magnificent House of the Blackheads.

... Riga will be European Capital of Culture in 2014 with a yearlong festival of events?

Riga is already a venue for cultural events on an international scale but in 2014 it will become the cultural epicentre of Europe. The concept Force Majeure will offer almost 200 events for Riga's citizens and guests.

... American jeans were actually invented by a Latvian?

A Latvian tailor named Jacob Davis who was born in Riga and emigrated to the US at the age of 23 came up with the idea to use copper rivets to reinforce the pockets and seams of trousers and patented it together with Levi Strauss.

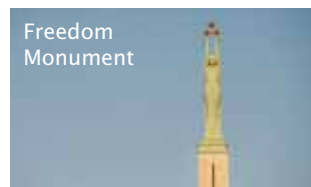
## Facts and figures

**Dimension:** the total area of the city is 117 sq mi (304 sq km). Riga is one of the largest cities in north-eastern Europe.

**Climate:** moderate climate with distinctive seasons. Summers are dry, with temperatures sometimes exceeding + 30°C. Winter is from December to March and usually with snow.

**Currency:** euro (€) (EUR) (from 1 January, 2014)

**Tip:** On the 26th floor of the Radisson Blu Hotel Latvija you find the Skyline Bar. From here you have an excellent view of the city and nature around it.



## Event highlights



Song and dance festival



Winter wonderland Riga

### May

#### The 19th International Baltic Ballet festival

Admirers of ballet and dance will enjoy the colourful shows, performances of world-famous artists and completely new expressions of dance at the 19th International Baltic Ballet Festival. Over the years, the festival has become a festival of dance and ballet an international cultural event where distinguished ballet artists and masters of the dance perform.

#### Nordea Riga marathon

The 24th Nordea Riga Marathon, which has gained wide recognition in Europe, will be held on an internationally certified course, with its start and finish on the 11th November Embankment.

### June

#### Annual summer solstice celebration "Līgo"

The Līgo festival, dedicated to the shortest night of the year when nature and fertility are praised, has been celebrated in Latvia since ancient times. Bonfires, beer and cheese, flower crowns and singing are part and parcel of the festival.

### November 2014 – January, 2015

#### Christmas markets

The tempting smell of mulled wine and toasted almonds, shiny gingerbread cookies and items made by local craftsmen are signs of Old Town's Christmas markets.

For further information please visit:  
[www.liveriga.com](http://www.liveriga.com)



St. Petersburg is often described as the most western city of Russia, as well as its cultural capital. It is the northernmost city in the world to have a population of over one million. The historic centre of St. Petersburg and related groups of monuments constitute a UNESCO World Heritage site. St. Petersburg is also home to the State Hermitage, one of the largest art museums in the world. A large number of foreign consulates, international corporations, banks and other businesses are located in St. Petersburg.



# ST. PETERSBURG

Russia



## Historical and cultural heritage

During its 310-year existence the city of St. Petersburg has made an enormous contribution to the world's culture and been the site of some of the most important events in the world's history. This is proven by more than 8500 state-protected monuments, 182 museums, more than 1000 libraries, 88 theatres and many other cultural institutions.

## Water cruises, yachting, sea ferries

As a city built on over 42 islands, St. Petersburg is surrounded by water and interlaced with a complex web of rivers and canals. A trip on one of the ferries is an unforgettable experience. St. Petersburg is the perfect place for a cruise ship stop on the Baltic Sea and a city you should definitely not overlook.

## Shopping

Along the legendary Nevsky Prospect, a boulevard which is 4.5 kilometres long, you can find the oldest and the most classical shopping centres waiting for people with full wallets and a sophisticated taste. At the same time, there are many other possibilities for shopping as St. Petersburg truly is an impressive European centre of fashion and luxury.

## Nightlife and White nights

St. Petersburg is also well-known for its vibrant and energetic nightlife. Today Paris or Rome can hardly compete when the streets of St. Petersburg are crowded at night all year around, especially during the White nights – an amazing natural phenomenon which occurs in summer.

## Festivals and events

Every year more than 1000 exhibitions and 300 festivals take place in St. Petersburg. The city is also famous for being a big sport centre. There are more than 2000 sport facilities and lots of international competitions take place here regularly. The most magnificent event takes place at the end of May when the Day of the City is celebrated.

## Must-sees

### Fortresses, orthodox cathedrals, imperial palaces

St. Petersburg is also known as a museum under the open sky. The Venice of the North charms many visitors with its orthodox cathedrals and palaces. The sea-green State Hermitage Museum and Winter Palace, the sun-yellow Square of Arts, the Senate Building, the red Belosselskij Palace and golden top of the Admiralty.

### The State Hermitage Museum

The most popular visitor attraction in St. Petersburg and one of the world's largest museums, the State Hermitage is something everybody should see once in their lives. With over 3 million art exhibits, it definitely rewards another visit; as a newcomer you can just try to get an impression of the exhibitions. You would need eleven years to view each exhibit for a minute, so it makes sense to catch the collection's highlights.

### Peter and Paul Fortress

The Peter and Paul Fortress is a fortress from the early 18th century, which forms the origin and the historical centre of St. Petersburg. It is located on an island in the Neva. It houses mainly exhibitions and museums and is a tourist attraction and resort in St. Petersburg. The fort is a central part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, St. Petersburg's city centre.

### Church of the Saviour on Blood

The Resurrection Church is modelled on Moscow's St Basil's Cathedral in the "new style" and is famous as the only building in St. Petersburg's city centre which is not based on the Italian and Western classical styles. It was built in 1883–1912 on the site where Alexander II was killed. It was opened to mark the centenary of the victory over Napoleon Bonaparte in the Fatherland War, and the 300th anniversary of the Romanov dynasty.

## Did you know ...

... that, despite what is often assumed, Peter the Great did not name the city after himself, but after his patron St., the apostle Simon Peter?

... St. Petersburg requested an entry in the Guinness Book of World Records, because of its 4,000-strong choir, which sings at the 26 May city anniversary celebrations?

... the most famous ballet school in the world is located in St. Petersburg?

The Vaganova Ballet Academy.

## Facts and figures

**Dimension:** the total area of the city is 555 sq mi (1,438 sq km)

**Climate:** humid continental climate, with distinct moderating influence of the Baltic Sea cyclones. From December to March there is an average 118 days with snow cover. The frost-free period in the city lasts on average for about 135 days.

**Currency:** Russian ruble (RUB)

**Tip:** April and may are the months with the fewest rainy days in the year, so if you are a friend of sun it would make sense to get there in from spring to summer.

Peter and Paul Fortress



Orthodox cathedrals



## Event highlights

### January

**Leningrad Siege lifting (900 days 2nd World War) 70th anniversary**

Memorable events

### May

**"Night of Museums"** – is an annual event dedicated to International Museum Day. St. Petersburg's museums, large and small, open their doors to the public in the evening and at night, as well as offering a special programme including one-day exhibitions, concerts, performances, readings, master classes and historical reenactments.

Scarlet Sales celebration



Night of Museums



### End of May – End of July

**The XXII International Stars of the White Nights Festival**

The Stars of the White Nights Festival is considered one of the ten best music festivals in the world and one of the most popular and diverse musical events in Russia. Each year, the Festival presents the best opera and ballet performances of the Mariinsky Theatre, the full range of symphonic repertoire, masterpieces of chamber music- and theatrical premieres.

For further information please visit:  
[www.visit-petersburg.ru](http://www.visit-petersburg.ru)



Welcome to Warsaw! City of great artists and scientists, with a rich cultural life and its own wild nature, city of young joyful people and probably the best sweets in northeastern Europe.

# WARSAW

Poland

## Chopin's Warsaw

Fryderyk Chopin – the best-known Polish composer – spent half his life in Warsaw and is without doubt the most famous Varsovian. You will find his traces everywhere, from music-playing benches to the world's finest Chopin museum.

## A walk through centuries

Due to its turbulent history, Warsaw's urban landscape is as surprising as it is eclectic. Within the distance of a short morning walk, you might come across baroque churches, classical palaces, Art Nouveau tenement houses, Communist monuments and modern skyscrapers. History in a nutshell!

## Culture all year round

On average there are over 100 cultural events each month in Warsaw, most of them of international significance and many of them free of charge and open to the public. Keep track of our festival calendar and enjoy some of Europe's finest art events!

## Young and vibrant

There are 300,000 students living in Warsaw – they make the city alive, sparkling and busy 24 hours a day. You can feel this young spirit in the streets and the clubs, on the banks of the river and in the alternative art galleries. Go with the flow of non-stop Warsaw.

## Experience the green

For a fast-developing city, Warsaw is exceptionally green. 25% of the city area is made up of green areas, consisting not only of parks and squares but also a wild bank of the Vistula river and a nature reserve park within the city limits. After a busy day of sightseeing, it's good to relax and have a breath of fresh air.

## Must-sees

### Royal Route

The most important tourist route in Warsaw, consisting of the most significant sites: the Royal Castle in the old town (UNESCO World Heritage Site), Łazienki Królewskie (the most famous park and palace complex with Chopin's monument), Wilanów (royal summer residence) and dozens of other attractions along the way.

### Warsaw Uprising Museum

Opened in 2004, on the 60th anniversary of the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising, the museum pays tribute to all those who fought and died for their country's independence. Housed in a former tramway power station, the modern museum guides visitors through interactive displays, video footage and photographs.

### Palace of Culture and Science

Completed in 1955 as a "gift from the Soviet people", the building is the embodiment of Socialist Realist architecture. It is still the tallest building in Poland and fulfils the role of a cultural centre accommodating theatres, museums, a cinema and a concert hall. The highest viewing platform in Warsaw, on the 30th floor, offers an excellent panoramic view of the city.

### Judaica

Before World War II, Warsaw had the second-largest Jewish community in Europe (over 300,000 people, 30% of the city's population). Despite the Holocaust, you can still feel the special atmosphere of the centuries-old coexistence, which also influences the modern face of this extraordinary city. There are many sites to visit, including places commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto and the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

## Did you know ...

### ... Warsaw has the world's narrowest house?

Built in 2012 for Israeli writer Etgar Keret, the house measures 4.9 ft at its widest point, and only 3 ft at its narrowest. It's Keret's hermitage where he (and other artists too) can contemplate and create.

### ... you can sunbathe on a sandy beach in Warsaw?

On the wild right bank of the Vistula river, there are seasonal sandy beaches with a professional infrastructure: beach bars, skimboard tracks, volleyball and badminton courts, lawn chairs and wicker baskets.

### ... the Warsaw Mermaid, symbol of the city, is said to be the sibling of the Copenhagen mermaid?

According to the legend, one sister stayed in Denmark and the other went further to the east and chose a little fisherman village to stay at and take care of. She fell in love with a peasant called Wars, her name was Sawa – hence the city name: Warszawa.

## Facts and figures

**Dimension:** total area of the city is 200 sq mi (516 sq km)

**Climate:** humid continental climate with cold winters and warm summers. Spring and autumn are usually beautiful seasons.

**Currency:** Polish Złoty (PLN)

**Tip:** You should visit Warsaw in the summertime when the weather is friendly, and the city shows it's most beautiful side.



Historic Museum



Łazienki Palace

## Event highlights

### May

#### FreeFormFestival

FreeFormFestival has become a cultural "must do" event in Warsaw. New trends in world music and arts have always been the heart of this event. Everything is perfectly set in alternative urban scenery which makes the FreeFormFestival an exceptional event on the cultural map of Warsaw each autumn.

### May-September

#### Chopin Concerts in Łazienki Królewskie Park

The world-famous Romantic-era pianist and composer Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849) grew up in Warsaw and completed his musical education there. In the beautiful Royal Łazienki Park, a green oasis in Warsaw's city centre and once King Stanisław August's summer residence, the great Chopin Concerts take place weekly, on Sundays. For more than fifty years now, they have been a true staple of Warsaw's cultural life.



Mermaid Statue (Pomnik Syrenki)



Christmas Market

### December

#### The Great Christmas Illumination

Each December central Warsaw is transformed into a winter wonderland with the "Great Illumination". Every year downtown Warsaw, particularly the Old Town streets Krakowskie Przedmieście and Nowy Świat, is decorated with bright white decorations for the winter season. The lights are switched on during a special ceremony on the first weekend of December.

For further information please visit:  
[www.warsawtour.pl/en](http://www.warsawtour.pl/en)



# ITINERARIES

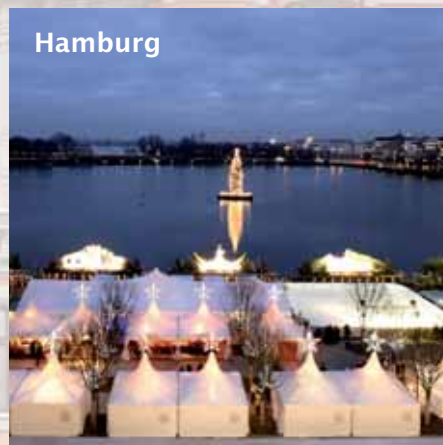
On the following pages you find useful itineraries for trips through the Baltic Sea Region. The brochure describes different activities and trips for a great maritime experience around the Baltic Sea. The focus is on tourist attractions of the cities of Hamburg, Helsinki, Riga, St. Petersburg and Warsaw. Here you find the most interesting must-sees of these cities, places of interest in terms of architecture, design and heritage as well as cultural events. This also includes some useful tips for tourists on how to live like a local by doing typical things a native would do.

## Our special tip: Visit the romantic Christmas markets!

A visit of one of the many Christmas markets in the Baltic Sea Region has become a tradition of the whole Baltic society. Many families, groups of friends, couples but also business partners consider these markets an incomparable event. It is where you find original Christmas presents for family and friends but also the perfect decoration for your house and yard. Standing around tables while having a mug of mulled wine and eating traditional European Christmas food is a must for everyone who is coming to this region around Christmas time.

Usually when the sun is gone, the lights create a Christmas atmosphere you won't find anywhere else. With Christmas music playing, parades taking place and Santa Clauses handing out gifts to kids, you feel the feast of love is coming nearer. There are many Christmas markets in each city. In Helsinki, for example, you have the Christmas World, with its Christmas concerts and the Ice- Park where you can go skating while enjoying the view over the city. In Hamburg you have a Christmas market in almost every quarter with specific features which represent the area.

Hamburg



Riga





# MARITIME

## Hamburg

- ◆ Harbour or Alster boat trip
- ◆ Visit the Speicherstadt Museum or International Maritime Museum
- ◆ Visit the traditional fish market (*Sunday only*)
- ◆ Guided tour of the new urban district "HafenCity"
- ◆ Dine in one of the restaurants at the waterfront

## Helsinki

- ◆ Rent a bike and drive along the shoreline
- ◆ Experience the different marine neighbourhoods
- ◆ Take a lunch cruise to beautiful Helsinki archipelago
- ◆ Dine in one of the summer island restaurants

## St. Petersburg

- ◆ River boat trip – city centre – the history of the city
- ◆ Drawbridges Boat Tour
- ◆ St. Petersburg Museum of Water located in an old water tower
- ◆ "Scarlet Sails"
- ◆ Yachts – Gulf of Finland



# ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

## Hamburg

- ◆ Old and new: new urban district “HafenCity” and old warehouse district “Speicherstadt”, canal boat trip with view of the old warehouse district
- ◆ Guided tour of city centre with Town Hall, Deichstraße, Speicherstadt, St. Michael's Church (incl. tower climbing)
- ◆ Dinner in the old town

## Helsinki

- ◆ Tram ride to Arabia Centre for Finnish Design shopping
- ◆ Helsinki Design District with its design shops

## Riga

- ◆ Riga sightseeing bus tour
- ◆ Guided walking tour of the old city and Art Nouveau district
- ◆ Dinner at a local restaurant
- ◆ Souvenir markets and amber shops
- ◆ Exhibition about Riga architecture

## St. Petersburg

- ◆ Modern art lofts (e.g. Etagi, Taiga, Pushkinskaya street 10)
- ◆ Erarta Museum
- ◆ Design galleries

## Warsaw

- ◆ Short tour around eclectic city centre
- ◆ Shopping tour for original Polish design
- ◆ National Stadium in Warsaw
- ◆ Palace of Culture and Science – city panorama from the terrace on the 30th floor



# LIVE LIKE LOCALS

## Hamburg

- ◆ Visit the traditional fish market (Sundays only)
- ◆ “Eat the world” guided culinary tour
- ◆ Visit Brewery “Ratsherrn”
- ◆ Guided tour of the famous entertainment district “Reeperbahn”

## Helsinki

- ◆ Hietaniemi Market Hall and flea market
- ◆ Haltia Nature Center
- ◆ Nuksio National Park
- ◆ Public saunas

## Riga

- ◆ Guided walking tour
- ◆ Visit Stender’s handmade soap and chocolate workshop at Berga Bazars
- ◆ Dinner at a local restaurant
- ◆ Central market
- ◆ Cooking master classes

## St. Petersburg

- ◆ Off the Beaten Track
- ◆ Metro tour
- ◆ “Horrors of St. Petersburg” show
- ◆ “Feel yourself Russian” show

## Warsaw

- ◆ Sandy beaches on the bank of River Vistula
- ◆ Colourful flea market Bazar na Kole
- ◆ Old Praga District cafes and art galleries
- ◆ Night life in the Powisle and Nowy Świat quarters



# CULTURE AND HERITAGE

## Hamburg

- ◆ Visit Emigration museum "Ballinstadt"
- ◆ Excursion to the Bremerhaven Emigration Museum
- ◆ Following in the footsteps of the famous Beatles with a guided tour
- ◆ Visit St. Jacobi Church with famous Arp-Schnitger Organ
- ◆ Guided tour of the factory of piano makers "Steinway and Sons"

## Helsinki

- ◆ Participate a city sightseeing tour
- ◆ Finlandia Hall, Helsinki Music Centre and National Museum
- ◆ Ferry to Suomenlinna Maritime Fortress to explore the UNESCO World Heritage site
- ◆ Seurasaari, an open-air museum presenting the traditional Finnish way of life

## Riga

- ◆ Ethnographic Open-Air Museum
- ◆ Underground Medieval Feast in the Old City
- ◆ Museum of the History of Riga and Navigation
- ◆ Riga tour by night
- ◆ Guided tour at Mencendorf House

## St. Petersburg

- ◆ The State Hermitage Museum
- ◆ Imperial palace-and-park ensembles: Peterhof, Tsarskoye Selo, Pavlovsk
- ◆ Festival "Stars of White Nights" (opera, ballet)
- ◆ Jazz clubs (The hat, Jazz Philharmonic Hall, JFC, 48 Chairs)
- ◆ Literature tours (Dostoevsky, Pushkin etc.)

## Warsaw

- ◆ Free of charge public jazz festivals, like "Jazz in the Old Town"
- ◆ Backstage tour of the Grand Theatre and National Opera
- ◆ Warsaw museums: Chopin Museum, Warsaw Rising Museum, Copernicus Science Centre
- ◆ Guided tours of the Museum of History of Polish Jews

# CONTACTS

## Target groups of Baltic Sea Metropoles

- ◆ Best Agers 55+
- ◆ Couples 30 to 55
- ◆ Families and multi-generational groups
- ◆ Heritage travellers
- ◆ Young adults, student groups

## Hamburg

### General tourist information, booking and brochures:

Steinstraße 7, 20095 Hamburg  
[www.hamburg-travel.com](http://www.hamburg-travel.com)  
Tel. +49-40-300 51 701  
[info@hamburg-tourismus.de](mailto:info@hamburg-tourismus.de)

### Travel Trade:

Hamburg Tourist Board  
Julia Grundmann, Head of Sales Promotion  
Tel. +49-40-300 51 241  
[grundmann@hamburg-tourismus.de](mailto:grundmann@hamburg-tourismus.de)

We will assist you with contacts of local tour operators and incoming agencies and consult you in setting up leisure and incentive programs.

### Press/Media:

[www.hamburg-travel.com/business-press/press](http://www.hamburg-travel.com/business-press/press)

Images provided by Hamburg Tourist Board (Mediaserver)

## Helsinki

### Visit Helsinki:

Pohjoisesplanadi 19, P.O.Box 28  
FI - 00099 CITY OF HELSINKI  
Tel. +358 (0)9 3101 3300  
[www.visithelsinki.fi/en](http://www.visithelsinki.fi/en)  
[tourist.info@hel.fi](mailto:tourist.info@hel.fi)

### Travel Trade:

[www.visithelsinki.fi/en/professional/travel-trade](http://www.visithelsinki.fi/en/professional/travel-trade)  
[tourist.marketing@hel.fi](mailto:tourist.marketing@hel.fi)

### Media:

[www.visithelsinki.fi/en/professional/media](http://www.visithelsinki.fi/en/professional/media)  
[tourist.media@hel.fi](mailto:tourist.media@hel.fi)

## Riga

### Press:

Riga Tourism Development Bureau  
Kungu 3, Riga, LV-1050, Latvia  
Anna Blaua, PR Account Executive  
GSM +371 28442636  
Tel. +371 67181097  
[anna.blaua@liveriga.lv](mailto:anna.blaua@liveriga.lv)

### Tourist Information:

[www.liveriga.com](http://www.liveriga.com)

## St. Petersburg

### St. Petersburg Tourist Information Bureau

191023, St. Petersburg, 14/52 Sadovaya st.  
(metro station „Gostiny dvor“)  
Tel./Fax +7 (812) 310-28-22  
<http://eng.ispb.info>

### Tourism Board of St. Petersburg:

[www.visit-petersburg.ru](http://www.visit-petersburg.ru)

### St. Petersburg Government, Committee for External relations:

[www.kvs.spb.ru](http://www.kvs.spb.ru)

Russian visa information and application. Useful links about Russia and St. Petersburg for the citizens of the USA:

[www.russianembassy.org/page/important-visa-information](http://www.russianembassy.org/page/important-visa-information)

## Warsaw

### Warsaw Convention Bureau

Plac Zamkowy 10  
00-277 Warsaw, Poland  
Tel. +48 22 629 07 50  
Fax +48 22 628 66 02  
[www.warsawconvention.pl/](http://www.warsawconvention.pl/)  
[wcb@warsawconvention.pl](mailto:wcb@warsawconvention.pl)





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