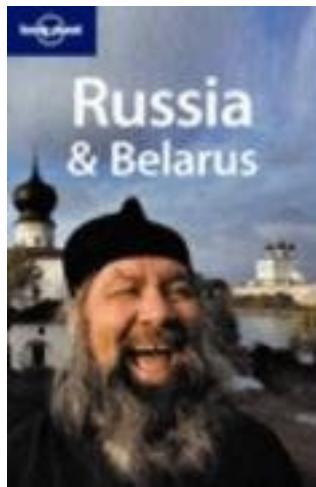


Russia & Belarus



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This guide gives detailed coverage of historic cities such as Moscow, St Petersburg and Kiev. It gives practical advice on activities from boat trips down the Volga River to skiing in the Caucasus, and covers extensive accommodation, eating and entertainment options.

Travel and Leisure

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to Russia features town maps throughout Russia and information on the Caucasus from a BBC journalist.

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Russia

(Officially Russian Federation) (Formerly Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic.) A country of eastern Europe and northern Asia stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean. It was proclaimed a republic in 1917 after the Russian Revolution, and as a constituent republic of the USSR (1922–1991), it constituted 75 percent of the country's total land area. In 1990 Boris Yeltsin became president of the Russian republic, and in 1991 he was reelected to the position in the republic's first popular election. When the Soviet Union disintegrated later that year, Yeltsin took control of the central government, and with Belarus and Ukraine, Russia formed (December 1991) the Commonwealth of Independent States, which was then joined by most of the other breakaway Soviet republics. In March 1992 Russia signed a treaty with most of the remaining Soviet republics, establishing the Russian Federation. Moscow is the capital. Population: 143,000,000.

Belarus

A country of eastern Europe east of Poland and west of Russia. Originally settled by Slavs, the region was subject to Lithuania and Poland before passing to Russia in the late 18th century. It was a constituent republic of the USSR, known as the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, from 1922 to 1991. Minsk is the capital and the largest city. Population: 10,300,000.

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