Wednesday, May 6: Moscow
Following breakfast, visit the Kremlin, Moscow’s fortified city. The complex includes numerous palaces and churches, and the name has become synonymous with Russia’s government. Also see the GUM state department store and Zaryadye Park, the first new park with Russia’s government. Also see the GUM state department store and Zaryadye Park, the first new park

Thursday, May 7: Departure
We depart from Moscow Sheremetyevo Airport to begin the journey home. (Breakfast)
Sunday, April 26: In flight
Depart Portland International Airport for an overnight flight to Helsinki, Finland.

Monday, April 27: Helsinki
Arrive in Helsinki, capital of Finland and the most northerly capital in Europe. Transfer to our central hotel for relaxation and dinner. (Dinner)

Tuesday, April 28: Helsinki
Situated on the tip of a peninsula and surrounded by hundreds of islands, Helsinki was founded in 1550 by Gustav I of Sweden and often comes top in surveys which measure quality of life through various metrics. Visit magnificent Senate Square, home to the Government Palace, Helsinki Cathedral and the main buildings of Helsinki University. Warren Beatty substituted the square for St. Petersburg in his 1981 film ‘Reds’. See Finlandia Palace, a magnificent modernist cultural center on Töölönlahti Bay and visit the amazing Temppeliaukio Rock Church. Then enjoy an afternoon at leisure. (Breakfast & Dinner)

Wednesday, April 29: Helsinki
Take to the water for a trip across the Baltic Sea to Tallinn, capital of Estonia. The country was ruled by Russia during several historical periods, but gained its independence when the Soviet Union broke up in 1991. Today Estonia’s territory consists of a mainland and over 2,000 islands in the Baltic Sea. Situated on the mainland, Tallinn is divided into upper and lower towns, and has one of the best-preserved medieval centers in Europe. Visit Town Hall Square, Neuvsky Cathedral and the characteristic Pikk Street, and enjoy a short walk on the city walls. After some free time for shopping, take the ferry back to Helsinki for a free evening. (Breakfast & Dinner)

Thursday, April 30: Savonlinna
Leave Helsinki to the east, stopping after a short drive at Finland’s second-oldest town, Porvoo. Enjoy a stroll around its well-preserved streets, lined with wooden houses, and visit Porvoo Cathedral. It was here in 1809 that Czar Alexander I of Russia allowed the creation of an autonomous Grand Duchy, recognizing the laws and freedom of religion of Finland and forming the modern state which we know today. Then continue north, passing forests, lakes and hundreds of islands to Savonlinna, one of Finland’s most picturesque locations. (Breakfast and Dinner)

Friday, May 1: Savonlinna
Situated on a group of islands between Lakes Haapavesi and Pihlajavesi in Finnish Lakeland, Savonlinna developed in the shadow of the island castle of Olavinlinna. Built in 1475, the castle is triangular, with three one-hundred foot towers along one side. Visit the castle as part of our guided tour this morning. Then take to the water for a spectacular lake cruise, enjoying lunch on the water. Free afternoon to explore. (Breakfast and Lunch)

Saturday, May 2: St. Petersburg
Depart Savonlinna to the south, crossing the border with Russia. By far the world’s largest country, Russia covers one-eighth of the inhabited land mass and numbering about 147 million people. Enjoy a tour of Vyborg, an attractive medieval town set on an inlet of the Gulf of Finland. Then on to St. Petersburg, often known as Russia’s cultural capital, and check in at our hotel for the first of a three-night stay. (Breakfast and Dinner)

Sunday, May 3: St. Petersburg
Founded by Tsar Peter the Great in 1703, St. Petersburg was the imperial capital before the Russian Revolution of 1917, when that honor was given to Moscow. In 1924, the city was named Leningrad after Vladimir Lenin, one of the main leaders of the Revolution, but regained its original title when Communism collapsed in 1989. See the city on a morning tour, including St. Isaac’s Cathedral, Nevsky Prospekt, the statue of Peter the Great and the Winter Palace and Hermitage Museum, the largest in the world. Enjoy a free afternoon for shopping or sightseeing. (Breakfast and Dinner)

Monday, May 4: St. Petersburg
Drive a short distance outside St. Petersburg this morning to visit the summer residence of the Tsars, known as Catherine’s Palace after Catherine the Great. Built in the Rococo style and about 1,000 feet long, well over 200 pounds of gold were used to gild the facade and statues. The amazing Amber Room was looted by the Nazis during World War II, but recreated in the 1980s and 1990s exactly as the original was. Following a guided tour, return to St. Petersburg for the rest of the day at leisure. (Breakfast)

Tuesday, May 5: Moscow
Take the high-speed train to Russia’s capital, Moscow, arriving in about 3.5 hours. On arrival, enjoy a sightseeing tour of some of Moscow’s main sights, including Red Square and St. Basil’s Cathedral. Check in at our central hotel for dinner and overnight. (Breakfast and Dinner)