

Our 2017 River Cruise

Francesco Boero's Report



Cattedrale di San Basilio



Cattedrale della TRASFIGURAZIONE



Consegna della cresta al Comandante

On June 5th, at 7.00 am sharp, a group of 34 members, led by Dino, left for their adventure in one of the biggest countries in the world, on a coach hired by Bubble Viaggi S.p.A.

We were accompanied by Mrs. Elisabetta to Malpensa airport where, after long and boring queues, checks, check-ins and waiting, we embarked on a Russian Airbus bound for Moscow.

The flight was pleasant. The air crew wore uniforms with the sickle and the hammer on their sleeves. They were helpful and friendly but did not smile a lot.

In Moscow, while transferring from the airport to the river port, we got acquainted with the local traffic, which was not too pleasant.

When we arrived at the M/V REPIN, we were welcomed by the vessel staff, wearing traditional clothes, by music and by the traditional offer of bread and salt.

After settling down in our cabins - not too comfortable, to be honest, but we knew it in advance. we met the hotel staff

On the small ship there were also other groups: Vietnamese, Norwegians and other Italians (mainly from Lombardi). Each group was assigned a courier, who could speak their language, whose duty was to accompany the group on the excursions and visits. FEDERICA, a very efficient Francorosso S.p.A. Assistant was responsible for the general organization.

The food on the cruise was varied and refined, the table and cabin service was satisfactory, despite the language difficulties.

The tour started the following day. We were accompanied by NINA, who was very nice and very attentive, and by a local guide who could speak Italian.

We spent two days visiting Moscow: sightseeing tours by day and by night, lunch in a typical restaurant, view of the most important buildings and sights, walks on the Red Square and around the Kremlin

Some daring members also visited (by themselves) some underground stations, and also travelled on the trains!

After two days the ship left the Russian capital sounding her siren and began sailing towards St. Petersburg. It was nice and warm.

We sailed on the calm waters of the Moscow canal, the Volga River, the Rybinsk Basin, the Šeksna River, the White Lake, the Kovia canal (with its beautiful locks), the Onega Lake, the Svir River, the Ladoga Lake and finally the Neva River.

The sailing offered beautiful views of unique natural landscapes, breathtaking sunsets, towns and villages with particular architectures, containing precious works of art.

The REPIN called at UGLICH, on the Moscow Canal, belonging to the so-called Golden Ring, with its ancient fortress, the cathedral of the Transfiguration, and the church of St. Dimitri; at YAROSLAV, an ancient town at the confluence of the Volga and the Kotorosl, rich in historical monuments; at GORITZY, on the White Lake, with its orthodox monastery of St. Cyril; at KIZHI, on Lake Onega, an open air museum of wooden architecture; at MANDROGA, on the Svir, with its typical Russian landscape, where we tasted some typical barbecued dishes. The passage through the many locks encountered was very interesting.

The cruise ended in St.Petersburg but the trip continued with the visit to the city. We visited St, Peter and Paul's fortress and the huge, fantastic Hermitage. We saw a spectacular show of Cossack folklore. We went on an excursions to Pushkin, where we visited the Palace of Catherine (the amber chamber), and to Petrodvorec where we visited the Palace of Peter the Great and its gardens sloping down to the Baltic Sea and featuring ingenious water games.

The cruise was very nice and the sailing calm even on the dreaded Lake Ladoga. The trip was enlivened by pleasant, interesting and entertaining onboard activities (the ship has a conference room, a reading room, a card room and a piano bar). In particular there were concerts, folk shows, musical evenings; lessons of Russian dances and games, language lessons and cooking lessons, bingos, a painting and matriosque modelling competition (Paola was the winner), a visit to the bridge during which we seafarers exhibited all our expertise, a the Pirates' Dinner where somebody wore appropriate clothes, a talent show, the Captain's cocktails: the welcome-on-board cocktail, when all the crew were introduced, and the farewell cocktail during which. the President Bauer (that's me), the v. President Dino and the representative of the Captains, Guido Biasi, congratulated the Master for the beautiful cruise and the calm navigation and gave him the Association crest and book We thanked Federica for her excellent organization and gave her the cap with the Association logo. We gave Nina the badge of the Association

Back in Genoa, we found that it was really hot. We got back to our usual problems , but we had the memory of a beautiful and instructive holiday in the land of the Tsars

