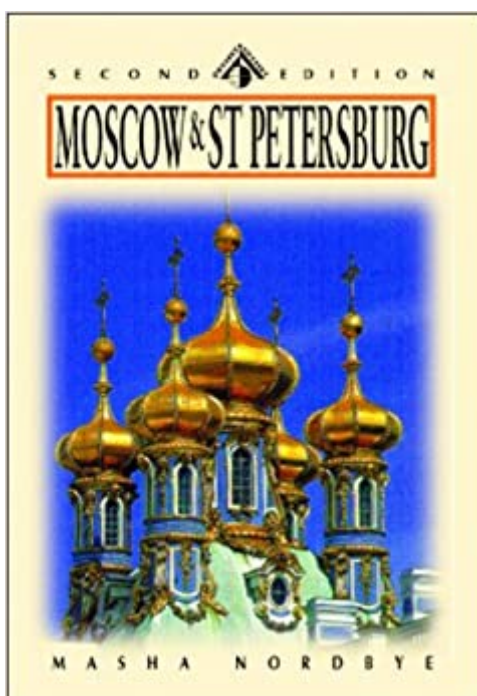


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# Moscow, St. Petersburg & The Golden Ring (Odyssey Illustrated Guide)



## Synopsis

As the symbolic heart of Russia, Moscow, which recently celebrated its 850th anniversary, has enjoyed a renaissance as one of the world's great cities. The capital's once somber streets now buzz 24 hours a day with purposeful activity, and joint ventures

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A definite 'Don't Leave Home Without It!' -- Robert Trent Jones III  
Indispensable...takes the traveler on a splendid journey through the extensive map of the Russian soul. -- Isabel Allende

Masha Nordbye is a writer and TV producer who has visited more than 100 countries. She has traveled extensively throughout the former Soviet Union over the past 25 years, and studied at Moscow University. She has produced films for National Geographic, ABC, The Discovery Channel, PBS, Disney, and 20th Century Fox, as well as other documentaries on the Russian Circus, Lake Baikal and Siberian Tigers. Nordbye also helped organize a North American Tour of the Moscow Circus, leads treks in Russia, and is the author of other books and numerous magazine articles on Russia.

I did originally choose this book because of the great reviews, and because it was one of the most recent publications. It is a fine tome to read for those who are planning a trip. Long term planning, I mean -- read it six months before you go, because that's how long it takes to read and digest all the information. Or even better -- read it and don't bother to go. This book has so many photographs

that you barely need to see the stuff for yourself. It weighs about six kilos, so don't plan on taking it anywhere with you. Otherwise -- a good review of history and valuable detail. It was worth poring through before I moved to Moscow, but a smaller, handier travel guide would be a better reference while traipsing through the city's well-kept secrets.

Friends who've been to Russia kept raving about this book. They found it the old cliché: an indispensable companion for finding their way around. So did I when I eventually followed in their footsteps. And no wonder. Based on information from a person in fourth degree of separation from the author, I found out that Ms. Nordbye has been in and out of Russia on a pretty regular basis since she studied at Moscow U. back when the KGB still bugged your room. Not only does she write travel books, she's also a director of offbeat documentaries and has led many an expedition in and out of Russia, and particularly these two cities, where her knowledge of where to go and what to see has satisfied the narcissism of even the most jaded Hollywood types. In this book, you get the benefit of Ms. Nordbye's linguistic and historical knowledge as well as a frequent traveler's tips on pop culture, lodging and cuisine. If you're going to Russia you're going to go to Moscow and St. Petersburg. BUY THIS BOOK!

The best way to see any country or city is with a trusted friend, someone who has lived in the place and has a special love for it. Through their intervention you meet the country as if it were a cherished acquaintance, seeing the most interesting sides of it, tempered by its challenging aspects. Nordbye has been traveling to and within the former USSR for over 25 years. She conveys a love of the country and its people that is as infectious as it is realistic. There is none of the misanthropic cynicism or boundless blind enthusiasm of other travel guides here. Instead, there is everywhere a reveling in the beauty of the country's eclectic, chaotic nature--on one page, we read that Moscow has more casinos than Las Vegas, on the next there is a wonderful historic passage on cows in Red Square. Flip to a random page and you are led to the place that Russia's finest carriages were once built or to the small cemetery where Turgenev is buried...This book is a delight! "RUSSIAN LIFE Magazine" 9/03

This book is a mixed bag. The color photos are amazing and the historical stuff great. As a travel guide though it has little on the basics (food, hotel, etc), and pretty crummy maps. Also there are NUMEROUS mistakes in the spelling of Russian things. Clearly whoever DID edit it, didn't bother to check the Russian stuff AT ALL. Like page 61 and obmen valyutOO, and page 65 suggesting

women look for bathrooms labeled 'Sch'. The Russian for women is ZHENSchina not SCHENSchina. The author writes for Russian Life magazine, these sorts of errors are pathetic.

I seem to be alone with this 1-star rating when previous voters have all awarded fives, all of which were voted "helpful" by all previous readers. While it's not the worst guidebook I've read, it is however often flawed. I know that keeping a guidebook up to date is a challenge - especially in a place like Moscow - but Ms. Nordbye still could have done a much better job. My edition is 2003, so there are few excuses for her description of the Central Lenin Museum - complete with opening hours etc. The museum was closed right after the coup of 1993. It opened up again for the first time in early 2005 as a venue for an art show, but no longer functions as a Lenin showcase. Yes, there are some interesting historical details in the book - but there are plenty of questionable claims too - example - Russian soldiers in WWII used their daily 100ml vodka rations to make Molotov cocktails to throw at the enemy. [???] Well, it might have happened a few of times - but anyone who knows anything about Russian drinking habits, or the unsuitability of ethyl alcohol to make an effective molotov cocktail - is likely to start being sceptical about the rest of Ms Nordbye's colourful historical titbits.

Filled with glorious photographs and inside information. Ms. Nordbye, who is also a noted writer of travel articles has been to over 100 countries, and regularly to Russia (her second home) for the past 25 years. So her advice is based on broad experience gained not as a tourist, but as an insider. Reading this, you will share her enthusiasm until you simply cannot wait to go there! Get this book!!!

My experiences with Nordbye's book were uniformly positive, and I found the book both useful and informative. It's a useful addition to anyone's collection of travel books, especially if you're contemplating a trip to Russia. Lots and lots of data, and friends who've used the book have come back and thanked me for giving it to them. I'm not using a pseudonym or alias to write this.

One of the most fascinating travel books I have ever read. Ms. Nordbye takes us to every corner of Moscow and St. Petersburg, from the early history of the Tsars to modern-day politics, to the Moscow Circus to hotels, Russian bathhouses, restaurants, and dos and don'ts of being a tourist. I loved this book!

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