

Jewish National Fund  
**President's Society Pre-Mission  
to St. Petersburg, Russia**

October 1 – 6, 2013

## Leadership

Michael Blank, *Mission Chair*

## Professional Staff

Glen Schwartz, *Executive Director, Florida*

Marina Furman, *Former Refusnik and Leader of the Soviet Jewry Movement*



Astoria Hotel

## TUESDAY OCTOBER 1 • ARRIVAL

Welcome to St. Petersburg! Approximate arrival time is at 1:50 P.M. Meet the local representative and transfer to the hotel. The pre-mission will officially commence with a **welcome dinner** this evening.

**Overnight, Astoria Hotel, St. Petersburg**

## WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 2 • ST. PETERSBURG

Following breakfast, depart the hotel for an **orientation tour** of St. Petersburg. Known for 70 years as Leningrad, this beautiful city was originally conceived and planned by Peter the Great as Russia’s “Window on the West” and is built on 101 islands, connected by lacy, elegant bridges. Its many palaces, once homes of the nobility, have pastel-colored facades which add to the charm of this lovely city near the Neva River.

During the tour, pass by **Theater Square**, closely associated with Jewish composer and pianist, Anton Rubinstein, who established the Conservatoire, the oldest Russian school of music. See the **Academy of Fine Arts** where Marc Chagall and other great artist studied. Continue along the **English Embankment** to see where the luxurious mansions of Ginsberg and Polyakov were located.



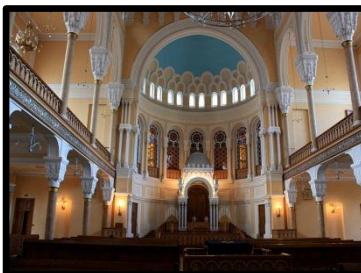
St. Petersburg

In the heart of the city, continue to **Nevsky Prospect** to see an unusual building constructed by Ippolite Wavelberg, a well-known Jewish figure in St. Petersburg. Visit the **Peter & Paul Fortress**, once a prison for revolutionaries and now a final resting place for some of the Romanov Czars. Continue to **St. Isaac’s Cathedral**, with its magnificent gilded dome and imposing bronze doors.



Nevsky Prospect

Proceed to the **Great Choral Synagogue**, the second largest in Europe, for a briefing and **meeting with members of the Jewish community**. The Synagogue was constructed in the old district of Kolomna, the center of Jewish life in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and has recently been restored to its former glory. Today, the Great Choral Synagogue is not only a magnificent architectural monument, but it also serves as the heart of the city’s Jewish community. It has a stunning feature outside: a life size photograph of the Jerusalem Western Wall that has been transferred to fabric and hangs on a long brick wall.



Great Choral Synagogue

Next, proceed to the “**YESOD**” building, the **House of St. Petersburg’s Jewish Community**. This major Jewish center opened in 2005 and provides programs for St.

*Itinerary is Subject to Change.*



Canal in St. Petersburg

Petersburg residents of all ages. Meet with community members and learn more about the Jewish community in St. Petersburg.

Afterward, visit the **Souvenir Market** at the Church of the Resurrection.

Time pending, pay a visit to the **Center of Jewish Arts and Crafts** in Gatchinskaya Street, known for its large display of yarmulkes, candelabra, menorah, challah covers and paintings with a Jewish theme.



Monument to the Heroic Defenders of Leningrad

Later this afternoon, return to the hotel. An **optional Canals and River Cruise** is available this evening for those who would like to join.

**Overnight, Astoria Hotel, St. Petersburg**

## THURSDAY OCTOBER 3 • ST. PETERSBURG

Begin the day with a visit to the **Monument to the Heroic Defenders of Leningrad**, built in the early 1970's to commemorate the heroic efforts of the residents of Leningrad and the soldiers on the Leningrad Front who repelled the Nazis in the 900-day Siege of Leningrad during World War II.

Continue to **Pushkin** see the **Holocaust Monument** by sculptor Vadim Sidur. The monument, which resembles a woman weeping, was erected in 1991 on the spot where Nazis killed the Jews of the town of Detskoye Selo in October 1941.



Catherine's Palace

Continue on a tour of the spectacular **Palace of Catherine the Great**, which has been restored to its original splendor after severe damage during World War II. Visit the **Amber Room** as well. A typical lunch and folklore show awaits in the countryside restaurant before returning to St. Petersburg.

This evening, attend a performance by the world renowned **Mariinsky Ballet**.



Mariinsky Ballet

**Overnight, Astoria Hotel, St. Petersburg**

## FRIDAY OCTOBER 4 • ST. PETERSBURG



Palace Square

This morning, former Refusnik and leader of the Soviet Jewry Movement, **Marina Furman**, will share her remarkable story of bravery and courage and discuss how she became one of the most powerful catalysts for the release of the Soviet Jewry. Join Marina as she retraces the exact steps she took on the day that led to her arrest. Begin at her old apartment in Leningrad and follow the route to Palace Square (part walking, part driving in our bus). See where she protested and was subsequently arrested before continuing to the jail where she was imprisoned and interrogated by the KGB.

Following this emotional morning, visit **Yusupov Palace**, once the primary residence of the House of Yusupov, an immensely wealthy family of Russian nobles, known for their philanthropy and art collections. The building was the site of Grigori Rasputin's murder in 1916.



Yusupov Palace

Later today, meet with several Jewish Community leaders and perhaps some other notable community leaders of St. Petersburg. Return to the hotel to prepare for Shabbat services at the local **synagogue** prior to **Shabbat Dinner** together.

**Overnight, Astoria Hotel, St. Petersburg**

## SATURDAY OCTOBER 5 • ST. PETERSBURG

Today will be at leisure in honor of Shabbat.

An optional walking tour will be offered. The walking tour will head to Palace Square with its **Winter Palace** and the **Hermitage Museum's** three million exhibits, including the **Scythian Gold Treasury**. This afternoon, consider exploring the **Nevky Prospect** area with its many shops, art galleries and unique architecture.

Tonight, enjoy a **farewell dinner** at a local restaurant.

**Overnight, Astoria Hotel, St. Petersburg**



Inside the Hermitage Museum

## SUNDAY OCTOBER 6 • ST. PETERSBURG / ISRAEL

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Tel Aviv which departs at 9:00 A.M.

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