

Hermitage Group Digest

In a nutshell, nowadays Russians can fly abroad from 21 Russian cities. The flights are operated by foreign airlines - Turkish Airlines, Emirates, Etihad, Air Serbia, Pegasus, EgyptAir, etc., or by Russian airlines with Sukhoi Superjet. The main hubs are Moscow and Sochi. Red Wings, Azimuth, Aeroflot, Utair, etc. regularly fly abroad.

Russian tour operators have launched tours from Moscow and St. Petersburg to Egypt (Sharm el-Sheikh and Hurghada) - charter Boeing 777-200; and tours to Turkey (Antalya) from Moscow and many regions with the flights by Turkish airlines.

The Czech Republic, Lithuania and Latvia have extended the suspension of tourist visas for Russians (since March 2020); other countries - Spain, Greece, Hungary, Portugal, Croatia, France, Sweden and Switzerland - accept documents for Schengen;

Air services between Russia and all European countries have been suspended, except for Serbia; and also with Cuba, Dominican Republic, Mexico, USA.

From the middle of July Russia removes border crossing restrictions imposed earlier due to the Covid-19

The foreigners again get the opportunity to enter Russia, and the Russians, respectively, can travel across the land border - by car, railway transport, as well as along rivers.

Considering the absence of direct flights to most international destinations, today's lifting of restrictions is a very important factor for the tourism industry.

However, not all countries can be entered. For example, Poland is closed for travelers from the Russian Federation. But Finland, Estonia accept Russian tourists since July 15. The route through these countries will significantly reduce the cost of travelling to Europe.

<https://profi.travel/pages/55501/details>

The number of trips of Russians abroad in the second quarter was a record for three years

The company Megafon came to such conclusions after analyzing the statistics of roaming use. At the same time, the company notes, those who choose foreign resorts for vacation are still half as many as before the pandemic in 2019.

The most popular destination for Russians was Belarus, which was the second most popular in 2019. Turkey and Kazakhstan take the second and third lines. In 2019, Turkey was the undisputed leader of the rating, and Finland closed the top three.

<https://www.forbes.ru/society/470233-cislo-poezdok-rossian-za-rubez-vo-vtorom-kvartale-stalo-rekordnym-za-tri-goda>

Bali in 2022: Russians tested holidays in the popular Indonesian resort

On Thursday, June 30, the Russian President Vladimir Putin met with Indonesian leader Joko Widodo. Among other things, they discussed the possibility of resuming direct flights from Moscow to Bali.

ATOR Vestnik talked to travel agents who just returned from the first post-pandemic promotional tour to Bali, organized by the TO PAKS together with its DMC Bounty Bali Tours.

“Interest in Bali from Russian tourists is growing every day. Only the high cost of air services slows down sales. As soon as prices equalize, the volume of tourist from Russia will go up”, said the DMC Bounty Bali Tours.

The island, according to the participants of the tour, has not changed during 2.5 years of the pandemic. However, experts remind tourists that the destination can not be considered only as a beach holiday. Bali is always a mix of the beach and an authentic and unique excursion program.

<https://www.atorus.ru/node/48555>

Bhutan is ready to receive international tourists

From September 23, the Kingdom of Bhutan will be ready again, after a two-year break due to the pandemic, to receive foreign travellers, including Russians. The corresponding announcement was published on June 29 by the Bhutan Tourism Board. Detailed entry conditions will be published later. Now the country is closed for foreign tourists.

<https://www.atorus.ru/node/48529>

The Russians began actively book tours to Thailand for autumn and winter

The pace of tour sales to Thailand for the autumn and winter seasons is showing steady growth, tourists have again begun to plan their holidays in the kingdom in advance.

Among the reasons: the situation with the lack of direct flights and the high cost of air tickets purchased close to the departure date. It also affects the desire of travelers to purchase hotel accommodation at competitive prices, taking advantage of early booking discounts.

<https://www.atorus.ru/node/48519>

Tourists visit Qatar more often through trips to the Maldives and the countries of South-East Asia

With no direct flights from Russia to Thailand, Indonesia and more recently Sri Lanka, as well as limited capacity and high cost of direct flights to the Maldives, tourists fly to these countries with connections - including Qatar.

According to TO PAKS, today about 25% of tourists from the total number of travelers who travel to Thailand, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bali through Doha (the capital of Qatar) choose long stopovers. Families with children and couples mostly use this stopover.

Stopover for long connections is a great way not only to make the flight more comfortable, but also to relax in several countries within one trip. All airlines offering stopovers provide travelers with discounted hotel rates and other perks.

With regard to stopover in Qatar, this program was developed by Qatar Airways in collaboration with Qatar Tourism. Guests must present their Qatar Stopover booking voucher and their boarding pass (or their Qatar Airways e-ticket number) to check in at the hotel. The duration of a transit stop in Doha must be at least 12 hours.

<https://www.atorus.ru/node/48422>

Gulf Air begins operating daily flights from Moscow to Manama on July 12.

Flights are carried out on an Airbus A320neo with a very spacious cabin: 16 seats in business class and 120 in economy.

Gulf Air is the fifth Middle East carrier to switch to a daily flight schedule. Emirates (two flights a day), Flydubai, Qatar Airways and Etihad Airways are already flying to Moscow. One of the advantages of Gulf Air is a good connection with India and Thailand, as well as with the islands of the Indian Ocean (there are daily flights to the Maldives).

<https://profi.travel/news/55502/details>

Now the MIR card in Turkey is accepted by all banks with state participation. Halkbank became the fifth bank accepting the Russian card.

According to Turizm Guncel, Halkbank announced the start of accepting MIR debit and credit cards. Now tourists from Russia with MIR cards can withdraw cash from ATMs of this bank and pay for purchases in stores and Halkbank member enterprises. MIR payment system cards are currently accepted in Turkey by such banks as Türkiye İş Bankası, Ziraat Bankası, VakıfBank and DenizBank.

For the moment MIR cards are accepted in ten countries - in Abkhazia, Turkey, Vietnam, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and South Ossetia.

<https://profi.travel/news/55463/details>

Rainbow: More exotics destinations from Gdansk. Our Dreamliner will be the first to fly to another continent.

Rainbow, which calls itself "the king of exotics", invests in its long-haul flight programme. After launching four destinations from Poznan in the last winter season, it is developing "exotics" in Gdansk.

Winter flights will start on November 4 to the Dominican Republic (Puerto Plata), the next day the Dreamliner will fly to Mexico (Cancun) and on November 6 to Thailand (Bangkok). Cuba (Varadero) will take off last - on 29 December. Departures will take place once a week: on Fridays to the Dominican Republic, on Saturdays to Mexico, on Sundays to Thailand and on Thursdays to Cuba. This means that every week Rainbow will take one thousand passengers on exotic holidays from Gdańsk.

<https://turystyka.rp.pl/biura-podrozy/art36580581-rainbow-wiecej-egzotyki-z-gdanska-nasz-dreamliner-pierwszy-poleci-na-inny-kontynent>

Starting from the end of October, airBaltic will launch a new flight on the Riga-Marrakesh-Riga route.

Flights between Riga and Marrakech will be operated with Airbus A220-300 aircraft. The flight to Marrakech takes 5 hours and 30 minutes. For travellers from Estonia the airline will offer convenient connection flights.

The flights will operate twice a week on Mondays and Fridays. Price starts from EUR 169.

<https://turist.delfi.ee/statja/120021942/airbaltic-zapuskat-novyy-pryamoy-reys-v-afriku>