



Guide to Tver

This guide contains the following useful information for the duration of your RLUS course in Tver:

- Contact details, school location map
- Your arrival
- Your course
- Visas and registration
- Accommodation
- Safety information
- What to do in an emergency
- Life in Tver: mobiles, internet, food, entertainment, transport



Russia is a wonderful and unique place, which will undoubtedly leave you with memories to treasure for the rest of your life. We hope you enjoy your stay! Please feel free to contact us if you have questions that are not covered in this document.

Contact Details:

International Office, TSU
 33 Zhelyabova street
 Tver
 170000
 Tel: 4822321195

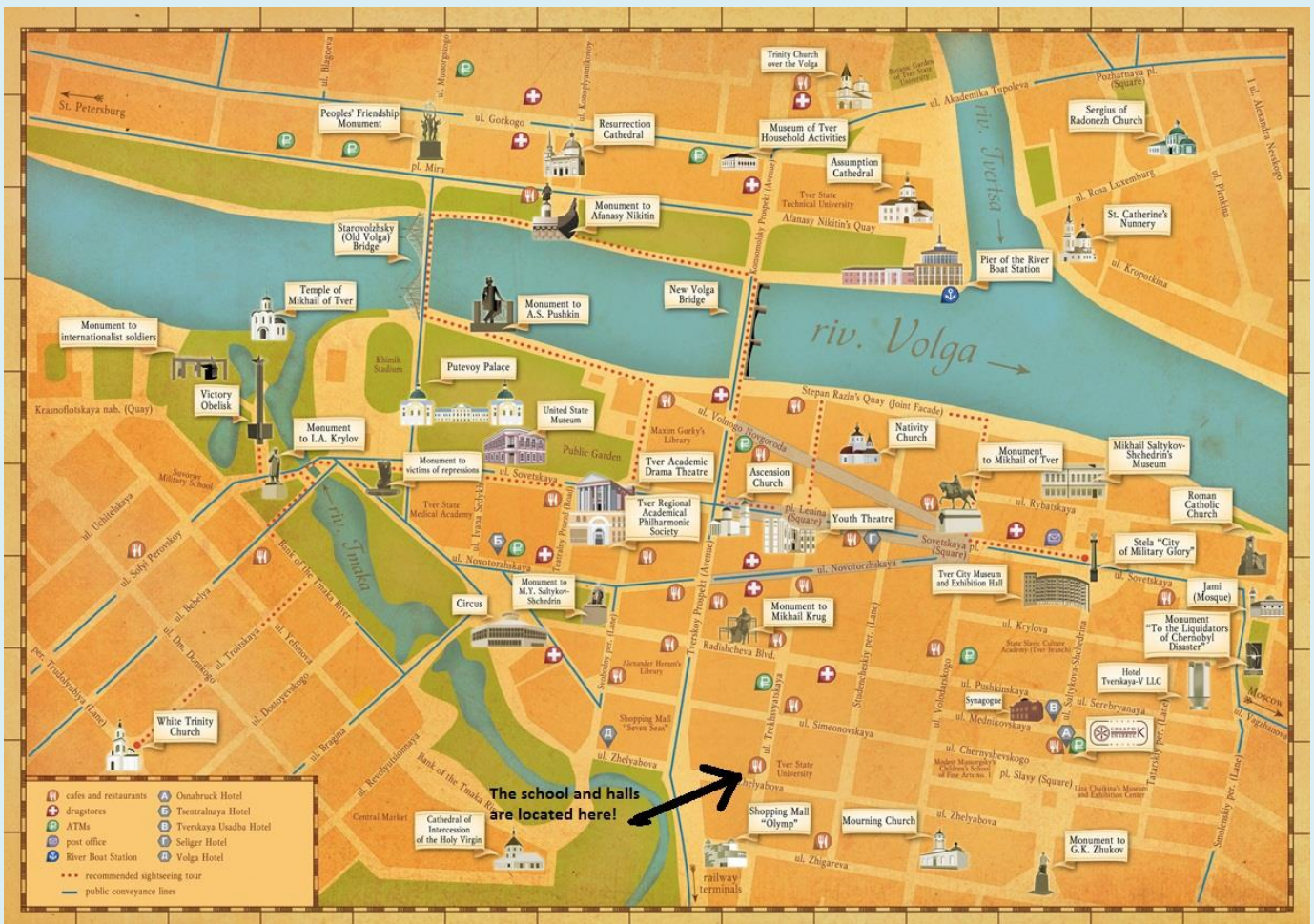
Your RLUS representatives:

Elliott Kaduck Alex Rigby
 +7 966 040 7746 +7 965 269 2318

rlus.moscow@gmail.com

Send your post to:

Russia, Tver 170000, 33 Zhelyabova street, Tver
 State University International Office, your name



Your Arrival in Tver

If you are on the **group flight**, you will be met at the airport by your RLUS representatives. There may be many students coming through all at once, so please be patient. You will then be taken to Tver in a minibus provided by the university, and will be dropped off at your accommodation. The journey to Tver isn't too long, around 2 hours 30 minutes depending on traffic.

If you are not travelling with the RLUS group flight you will be expected to make your own way to Tver, and once you arrive in the town you will be met by a member of the university staff.



Public transport from the airport is cheap and easy. All Moscow airports have a train service to the city, called Aeroexpress. The train costs 400 roubles and takes around 45 minutes to get to the city, depending on which airport you arrive at. When you arrive at the station, follow the signs to the metro which is characterised by a big red M. If you didn't get the train ticket that includes one metro ride, you can buy tickets at the cash desk when you enter the metro. Once you get into Moscow, you can take an **elektrichka** to Tver – these are small, local trains for which you don't need to buy a ticket in advance. You can buy a ticket on the train to Tver, they cost around 350 roubles. You can also buy the tickets from machines at the train station, buy the tickets from machines labelled Пригородные поезда. They leave from Ленинградский вокзал, which is located at Metro Komsomolskaya, and take between 2 and 3 hours – timetables can be found here on the RZD website <http://rzd.ru/>.

Your Course

Your course will start on the day after your arrival. On this day, **you will meet at the school in the morning at around 10 am**. You'll be shown around the area, and you'll be advised where you can buy SIM cards and have passport pictures taken. Getting the passport photos done quickly is important as you'll have to hand them in with your passport and migration card to get registered in Tver. This will be explained in more detail when you have a briefing meeting and are introduced to the Russian department. The head of the department of Russian as a foreign language is Dmitriy Nikolaev. You'll also be introduced to your teachers and the admin staff who deal with issues such as passports, registration and accommodation. Dmitriy Nikolaev and the admin staff all have offices which are located in the main university building. During your course you will study grammar, Russian conversation, reading and writing, translation and modern Russian culture. We will have regular phone calls with you to see how your course is going.

Visas and Registration



When you arrive at the airport, make sure you have filled out a migration card (see picture, left), if it hasn't been done for you automatically (most Moscow airports, especially Domodedovo print it for you at passport control). You cannot enter the country without it. Please check it has been stamped and dated, **before you come through customs**. This is especially important if you are not arriving with the group as the RLUS reps won't be there to check.

Most RLUS students have an initial 3-month single-entry visa which is converted into a multi-entry to cover the duration of their course after the first month. Be aware that you may not be able to travel for the first 6 weeks of your course, as your visa will be with the authorities undergoing extension. If you leave and re-enter the country at any point during your stay, you will have to reregister your visa and new migration card in Tver. To do this, simply take your passport and migration card to the international office on the first working day after you return. You will also need to register in any city in Russia which you visit for more than ten working days. Please make the international office in Tver aware of your travel plans in advance.

Accommodation

Most RLUS students will stay in university accommodation, either together with other foreign students near the school, or further away in the Russian halls. There are usually students from China, Finland and France who will be on separate courses at the same time as you. All the apartments are clean and comfortable, although the ones for Russians are more basic than the ones for foreigners. However, they are also a lot cheaper and you will have more of an opportunity to practise your Russian.

If you stay in university accommodation you will be required to pay a 4000 rouble deposit upon arrival, which will be returned at the end of term provided your room has sustained no damage. The cost of rent will depend on the size of your room, as room sizes often differ, but will range between 4500 and 5500 roubles per month. All student accommodation has an Internet connection, however, connections are often very weak and do not give coverage to all rooms. If your room does not have coverage, you can always find Internet in the common area. We are currently working to improve the connection, but due to the nature of the building this has proven to be a difficult task.

For more information about university accommodation, please see:

http://university.tversu.ru/en/foreign/housing/jeliabova_1.html

Other students choose to stay in homestays. Within the first couple of days of arrival, you will be expected to pay your rent, straight to the international office near your school. For those opting for Bed and Breakfast, you may only have limited use of the kitchen, and it is best to ask your landlady how she feels about this. You will usually be expected to pay for washing machine powder too, if you want to use the machine. If you have any problems with your host, please let one of us know. If you wish to change your accommodation, please give one month's notice.

We strongly recommend that you read the document on the RLUS website entitled 'Living in a Homestay' for more information to help you prepare for your forthcoming homestay experience. You can find the document at: <http://rlus.co.uk/homestay%20info.pdf>

You may want to contact your family to inform them that you've arrived. We suggest that you get an international calling card (see example, right), if Skype is not available. Please ask your host's permission to use the phone.



Safety in Russia

You must have a copy of your **documents** (passport, visa, migration card and registration slip) with you at all times. Avoid carrying the real thing as if you lose your passport it can be a long and difficult process to replace it and also your visa and migration card would need replacing too. The police have the right to arrest anybody without documents. You can be detained for up to 72 hours or until your documents are produced. You should also carry your student card with you, as the police may ask to see it.

Common Sense Advice:

- Foreigners are particularly vulnerable to crime in tourist areas so avoid drawing attention to yourself – don't walk in big groups speaking loudly in English.
- To make a claim, you will need to obtain a police report (справка) within 24 hours of the crime. A member of staff from the university can accompany you to the police station. Never say that something was stolen – this will lead to an investigation being opened, and you will not receive the document you need until it is closed, which can take months. Always say your belongings were lost.

- Absolutely **never touch drugs** here. The penalties are simply not worth the risk, and if you break the law we cannot help you.
- If you go out for the evening, stay in a group, and plan it so that you accompany each other home right up to the front door. Always be aware of yourself, your belongings and your surroundings, and you shouldn't come across any major problems.
- Stay away from Gypsy cabs, use a reputable cab company such as Taxi: 8 (4882) 34 66 66. Gypsy cabs can often lead to trouble.
- If you're out at night, where possible, try to make sure girls are accompanied home.
- Avoid carrying too much cash on you or unnecessary cards. **Carry a maximum of one credit or debit card, and keep driving licenses, British student cards, etc at home.**
- If you lose your documents, inform the reps immediately. Along with the relevant departments at the university, we'll help you sort everything out.
- Don't drink the tap water – it's better to boil the water first, or buy bottled water. There is also a water pump just across the road from the building where your lessons will be, from which it is safe to drink.

If in doubt, always feel free to contact your RLUS representatives. **Please text us** with any questions and we'll reply as soon as possible. Please **only call in an emergency**, as we may be teaching – that's another part of our jobs!

If Something Goes Wrong...

Our phone numbers and the number of the school are at the beginning of this document. Other useful numbers to have are:

British Embassy: +7 495 956 72 00 (if you can't get through in an emergency situation, let us know and we will keep trying for you)

Fire: **01** Police: **02** Ambulance: **03** Or, call **112** and state which service you require.

You should be able to get adequate medical treatment in Tver. Most RLUS centres will send students first to a general clinic and then to a more specific doctor, depending on the nature of the ailment and/or the diagnosis given by the doctor. A member of staff can accompany you to the doctor and help you arrange an appointment.

Tver students are usually referred to the City Hospital Poliklinika №2, located at Смоленский переулок, 34, 8 (4822) 32 18 31. If you prefer a Western style clinic, you may prefer to travel to Moscow where there are several such facilities available. A RLUS representative will be happy to arrange this for you.

You will have to pay for medical care, but keep receipts in order to make a claim with your insurance company later. Check your policy carefully, as care for pre-existing conditions may not be covered.

Always use a condom if you have sex, as STDs in Russia aren't uncommon.

Contact with the **police** (полиция) should be avoided as much as possible. If in doubt, ring your RLUS representative. If the police visit you at your home to check your documents, you are not required to open the door. In the unlikely event that you are arrested, **say nothing** and **sign nothing**. If you are forced to sign something write that **you do not understand what you are signing**. Keep demanding to speak to your RLUS representative or the Embassy Duty Officer. You should be allowed one phone call; use it to call the embassy duty officer as they will be more accustomed to dealing with such situations.

Finally, be wary of food poisoning, and be careful when buying fast food from street kiosks.

Life in Tver

While not as big and happening as the capital cities in Russia, Tver has plenty to offer. As it is a university city it has a young population and you should find a selection of different activities such as sports, theatre, cinema, music and night life to keep you occupied. As it's a small town you may get a few strange looks directed your way if people hear a language which is not Russian but that's all part of the experience! People in the smaller cities tend to be friendlier than in the big cities. And if you run out of inspiration, you are only a short bus or train ride from Moscow for a bit of variety!

Mobile phones and internet

On your first day you'll be advised on where you can purchase a SIM card, and a phone at a good price, if you need one. You may need to get your phone unlocked in the UK before coming out to Russia if you want to use your UK smart phone with a Russian SIM card. The three main networks in Russia are Beeline, MTS, and Megafon. The rates are around the same but Beeline tend to have discounts when phoning and texting others who are also on their network. Be aware that charges increase once you go outside of the Tver region. If you want to use your landlady's phone to call home, you should ask first, and use an International calling card. You can buy these from kiosks or in any phone shop.

There is a weak wireless signal in the school and the adjacent halls of residence. For those living in homestay or Russian halls, you are unlikely to have internet access but you may purchase a portable modem which you plug into the USB port in your computer. You can buy these from phone shops, the three main mobile phone networks have 3G and 4G dongles available. You get so much data a month and top it up at a machine in the phone shops. You can also make use of the free Wi-fi access in most cafes in the city. There are also several computers in the school which you can use between and after lessons.

Money

There are plenty of places in town (обмен валюты) where you can **change cash**. It is generally better to change money in a bank, such as Sberbank, Absolut Bank, Barclay's or other big banks. We don't recommend bringing traveller's cheques as they are simply a nightmare to change. **Cash machines** (банкоматы) are everywhere. Your bank will probably charge you 1.5% to 2% per withdrawal for roubles and some banks may make an additional charge if you withdraw dollars or Euros. *It's a good idea to let your bank know that you will be in Russia for a certain period of time so that they don't think your card has been stolen and block access to your money.* Furthermore there are cards such as Caxton FX and Halifax Clarity which you can sign up for before you come to Russia. These cards don't charge a fee when you withdraw Roubles from an ATM.

Entertainment

You can find listings for many interesting events such as concerts, plays and classes in a variety of local newspapers. A good option is Вечерняя Тверь.

Sport and Leisure

Students have the opportunity to participate in the following sports free of charge:

- Volleyball - in the sports hall of the sport faculty (several times a week)
- Running - there's a track in the стадион.

There are many swimming pools in Tver, both indoor and outdoor. There are also a few fitness centres where you join the gym or take part in aerobics sessions. Please be aware that to swim in a public pool you will first have to obtain a doctor's certificate, which can be done through the university and costs about £40.

At the sports palace, you can ice skate all year round, and at the recreation lodge (10 km outside of town) you can go skiing or snowboarding.

If students have any particular sports in mind, they should refer to the director, Dmitri Nikolaev, as there are a number of unlisted, but also easily located options in Tver.

In previous years, students have joined a dance class, which is currently running on Monday and Friday nights from 21:00. It's for beginners, and they teach all kinds of dancing: waltz, tango, foxtrot. It's based at Дом Офицеров next to the drama theatre.

Cafés, Bars and Clubs

Students need not worry about going far to find food. You may find that the Baskin Robbins, located on the same street as the university, is almost too convenient.

- Надежда - by the river on ул. Советская (near the Medical Institute) offers very reasonably priced and tasty meals (e.g. 55 roubles for a salad and 100 roubles for a main course) and often has live music.
- Кофе-таун - on ул. Волного Новгорода offers a huge range of tea and coffee, and does an amazing hot chocolate.
- Рыба - a popular choice for students looking to have a decent meal at a cheap price after lessons. This is found in the pedestrian district.
- Zebra Club - not far from the university.
- Зеркало - a club which is a good weekend venue.
- Сити - another good club to go to on the weekend.

Culture and the Arts

Despite a difficult early history, Tver experienced something of a rebirth when Catherine the Great made it one of her stopping points between Moscow and St Petersburg. Her eighteenth century palace now houses an art gallery. Tver has several theatres including a drama theatre, puppet theatre and the highly recommended youth theatre. There's also a concert hall, circus, cinemas and sports facilities.

There will be a range of excursions on offer for you organised by your department, e.g. to the Golden Ring and the local Museum of Tver Life (at ул. Горького 19/14). A river boat cruise is also recommended in the warmer months.

For students wishing to take music lessons, there is a good school on пл. Славы (the building opposite the museum). The price is 800 roubles for four lessons, and they have a wide array of musical instruments to choose from.

Shopping

There's a big 24 hour supermarket called Perekrestok within easy walking distance of the RFL Department of the University. It's very much a western style supermarket chain where you can buy food and other household items. A large market that you may want to check out is the covered Центральный Рынок, where everything from bargain clothes, fruit and vegetables to livestock is available after just a little bartering with local shopkeepers. Previous students also found the weekend market stocked a lot of what they needed. This is probably the best place in the city to find fresh fruit and vegetables for a low price. It is located just past the shopping centre Семь Морей off ул. Советская. There are also plenty of small продукты shops all over the place where you can buy basics such as milk and bread.

For cheap, basic household goods, it's best to look for small хозяйственный магазин/товары для дома shops in the area where you live – there are a couple on ул. Трёхсвятская. The mega-market Карусель, located right next to the train station, is also good for household essentials such as kitchenware and cleaning supplies, and you will find them at a very reasonable price here.

Russia is not a great place for buying clothes, as good-quality clothes are very expensive and Russian styles and sizes differ greatly from those in the West. It is best to head to the market (where goods are cheaper,

though the quality can be suspect). Be aware that prices in Western shops which you recognise from back home will probably be marked up by at least 20%.

The most popular place for a day of shopping is along the pedestrian street ул. Трёхвятская. On this street there is there is a Terra Nostra, and other places to buy clothes. The book shop at ул. Трёхвятская 28 is a good source of books and maps; it is open 10:00-19:00, Monday to Friday, and 10:00-17:00 at the weekend. You will find DVD and music shops all over the city, and for much cheaper prices than back home (although most of these goods will be pirated!) You will find that even through the winter, stands with handmade goods are set up along the pedestrian district at ул. Трёхвятская.

Unfortunately, shopkeepers and market stallholders often overcharge people with a foreign accent, so you should always bargain. It's advisable to go souvenir shopping with a Russian who can haggle for you, or find out beforehand what a reasonable price is for whatever you are shopping for (ask your host family, or look around).

Transport

The city is served by an extensive system of trams, trolleybuses, buses and marshrutkas, which look like transit vans and carry around sixteen people. They differ from buses in that they tend to travel more quickly and do not stop at fixed points, but on the request of passengers. To get out, say: "Остановите [на остановке], пожалуйста". They cost around 15 roubles per journey and you pay the driver when you enter the van. Trams, buses and trolleybuses stop automatically and have a fixed rate of 15 roubles. There'll be a conductor who you pay when you get on so there's no need to go to the driver. To get to and from the university and the main train station then you can take the number 5 tram. Get off at the stop named Желябова. You can also take Marshrutkas to and from the university and train station, numbers 3 and 22 are the ones to board.



Travel within Russia

There are several towns near Tver which students have recommended as being worth a visit, including Staritsa, Seleger and Torzhok, which is the home of a beautiful old monastery. These are easily accessible by elektrichka or bus, and only cost a few roubles to get to.

There are excellent transport links between Moscow and Tver. The электричка runs every hour or so from Ленинградский вокзал and costs about 350 roubles per ticket (although tickets can be bought half-price with a student card). Buses between Moscow and Tver leave every half hour. Journeys take 2-3 hours, and the train and bus stations are only 300m apart. You can buy tickets for the электричка and normal trains from the main train station (4km south of the centre). There are several popular destinations you can reach directly from Tver by train, such as St. Petersburg, Helsinki and Tallinn, but for most other trips you may first have to travel to Moscow. The SAPSAN also runs between Moscow and Saint Petersburg and stops off in Tver. The SAPSAN is a high speed train so you can get to Moscow in around an hour and Saint Petersburg in just over an hour. The cost is a lot more than a normal elektrichka with prices ranging from 1500-5000 roubles but the train is on a par with modern western trains in terms of service and comfort.

Train travel within Russia is still very cheap in comparison with the West. The two main classes are купе (four to a cabin, two up two down) and плацкарт (open carriages, less luxurious but cheaper).

Train tickets can be bought in advance from any station. Also you can buy tickets from the new ticket machines located in and around the stations, if you don't want to queue or speak Russian. You **need your passport** number to buy tickets



and your passport to get on the train. If you don't want to go to the station then you can now purchase tickets online through the RZD website. All you have to do is set up an online account then you can browse and purchase tickets online. You'll be given an electronic ticket which you print off and present when boarding the train.

There are **nine railway stations** in Moscow. Generally, these railway stations correspond to the following travel directions:

- Western direction (to Belarus and Poland): Белорусский вокзал
- Northern/north-western directions (St Petersburg and the Baltics): Ленинградский вокзал, Савёловский вокзал, Ярославский вокзал, Рижский вокзал (NB. If you are buying tickets to St Petersburg, the tickets will say Москва-Октябрьская as the departing station, but the trains leave from the Ленинградский вокзал.)
- Eastern, north-eastern, and south-eastern directions: Казанский вокзал, Павелецкий вокзал
- Southern direction: Курский вокзал
- South-western direction: Киевский вокзал

A good place to buy **plane tickets** in Moscow is the big branch of STA travel at metro station Sokol. They have a website at www.statravel.ru. BA use Домодедово airport (where the group flight arrives); you can contact them on 8 (495) 363 2525. Трансаэро, Pobeda and Аэрофлот also offer decent deals, as well as Skyexpress and S7, flying to various locations across Russia. You can also buy flights online and get e-tickets.

Changing Your Return Flight Date

Your RLUS flight is booked through BA. If you wish to change the return date, you should email Roy Bivon (roy.bivon@rlus.co.uk) directly and he will be able to change it for you. Please keep in mind that you will be required to pay a £70 change fee. Please give him a choice of three alternate flight times and dates. To get to the airport, you can take the Aeroexpress (see section on arrival in Moscow).

Before you plan any trips, we recommend you check out the British foreign office website (www.fco.gov.uk), which provides up-to-date information about where it is unsafe to travel, and what regulations there may be.

PLEASE NOTE: Absence from the course is only permitted in cases of illness or during official travel weeks. **Attendance and marks will be sent to your universities.**

Useful Web Links

Processing your Russian visa

- <http://ru.vfsglobal.co.uk/> - Used by previous students to process visas
- www.rusembon.org/ - Consular Section of the Embassy of Russia in the United Kingdom
- www.great-britain.mid.ru/ - Embassy of the Russian Federation in the UK

Advice about travel to Russia

- www.britemb.msk.ru/consular/index_ie.htm - Consular advice for UK citizens (see FCO travel advice: Russia)
- <http://ukinrussia.fco.gov.uk/en/> - British Embassy in Russia

General information about Russia

- www.moscowtimes.ru - English Language newspaper providing up to date news on Russia and entertainment listings for Moscow
- www.expat.ru - The Moscow Ex-pat Site: a virtual community for English speaking ex-pats and Russians

- www.rbcnews.com - news and information site

Travel in Russia

- www.poezdka.ru (Russian) – search engine for flights/air tickets
- www.polets.ru (Russian) – search engine for flights/air tickets
- www.tutu.ru (Russian) – elektrichka timetable, as well as trains and flights
- <http://russia.km.ru/trans/moskwa/vokzal.htm> (Russian) – train timetable for Moscow railway stations
- <http://startravel.ru/eng/index.shtml> - Star Travel (STA Russia) for cheap tickets (air/train/bus) and under-26 and ISIC discount cards
- www.marshrutky.ru – useful for checking train times and routes

Information about Tver

- <http://university.tversu.ru/en/> - English version of the Tver State University site (you are in the Department of Russian as a Foreign Language)
- www.tver.ru/guide.phtml - (Russian) useful information for visitors to Tver with addresses and phone numbers

Information about Moscow

- www.afisha.ru (Russian) - Russian site providing entertainment listings for Moscow
- www.vashdosug.ru (Russian) - Russian site providing entertainment listings for Moscow
- www.waytorussia.net/Moscow/Info.html - featuring 'What is Moscow', and Practicalities, Maps, Transportation, Accommodation, Eating Out, Entertainment, Sightseeing

Final note: All information in this orientation pack is correct at time of going to press, but as things in Russia change almost daily (restaurants open and close, new registration laws are passed), it is very likely that information will change during your stay here. Please let us know if you notice any changes. Thank you!