“........true travel, the kind with no predetermined end, is one of the most selfish endeavours we can possibly undertake - an act in which we focus solely on our own fulfilment, with little regard to those we leave behind. After all, we’re the ones venturing out into the big crazy world, filling up journals, growing like weeds......It is only when we return home, that we discover nothing is the way we had left it before.” — Stephanie Elizondo Griest, *Around the Bloc: My Life in Moscow, Beijing, and Havana*

"*Russia is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.*"  *Winston Churchill*

Most of the students I teach would not know who Winston Churchill was. It is not a name that conjures up either an image or an association. For people of my generation, the so-called “baby-boomers”, who were raised in the post-war period, awareness of the horrors perpetrated during the Nazi and Soviet period would constitute a part of the fabric of their consciousness. The Russian Revolution, the struggle between the competing ideologies of Fascism and Communism, World War II, the Holocaust and the Cold War were the defining events of the twentieth century. Any attempt to understand or explain the modern world by extracting Marx, Darwin, Lenin, Stalin and Hitler, would be an exercise in futility. These periods of history, far from being ‘closed’, ‘decided’ or ‘resolved’ are the subject of increasing analysis, reinterpretation and revision. What was learned by school students in the 1960’s, about those events, would have undergone a radical and dramatic transformation for students, fortunate enough, to have curriculum exposure to these eras, in 2013. Such is the nature of history.
My first foray to Russia was in 1986 when it was still officially the Soviet Union (and thus still communist). I subsequently led two school tours in 1993 and 1996. Much of that curiosity was stoked by Russian resistance to the German invasion in 1941:

“The street is no longer measured by meters but by corpses ... Stalingrad is no longer a town. By day it is an enormous cloud of burning, blinding smoke; it is a vast furnace lit by the reflection of the flames. And when night arrives, one of those scorching howling bleeding nights, the dogs plunge into the Volga and swim desperately to gain the other bank. The nights of Stalingrad are a terror for them. Animals flee this hell; the hardest stones cannot bear it for long; only men endure.” — Max Hastings, *Inferno: The World at War, 1939-1945*

The emphasis of this tour is on the tragic events that befell eastern Europeans in the twentieth century with much focus on the plight of the Jews. The tour will commence in Germany, move to the Czech Republic, onward to Poland and then end with the bulk of our time in Russia. The itinerary is a very full one. While the scenery, art, architecture and food, will be stupendous, and while there will be plenty of shopping opportunities, this is mainly a historical tour. If the history of Hitler’s Third Reich, the Holocaust, and communist Russia is of no interest to you, this tour is probably best avoided.

**HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?**

The cost of the tour is $6,700* on a twin share basis. (Single Supplement is $799 per person)

(* Flights in Europe as well as hotel accommodation are costed in Euro. Fluctuations in the exchange rates may occur)

**WHAT IS INCLUDED?**

- All international and local flights on Virgin, Finnair & Qantas in Economy Class
- Fourteen nights hotel accommodation . (Details of accommodation provided in Itinerary)
- The above prices are based on per Person basis sharing a Twin Room (two separate beds)
- Breakfast and dinner daily at local hotels and restaurants.
- All coach transport services using two deluxe coaches.
- High speed train between St Petersburg and Moscow
- Services of accompanying English speaking guides for the duration of the tour

WHAT ISN’T INCLUDED?

• Services not mentioned above
• Expenses of personal nature like any drinks, tips, portage, phone calls, laundry etc.
• Lunches
• Visa fees: Visa cost for Australian passport holders for Russia $200 per person
• Travel Insurance
• Gratuities

WHO GETS TO GO?

Usually any current or past member of the St. Pat’s community. This would normally include existing students, old boys and girls, as well as current and past parents. The mix of different generations has proved to be what makes previous tours so uniquely successful.

HOW DO I SECURE A PLACE FOR MYSELF?

Pay a deposit of $2000* to the College bursar as soon as possible. All cheques and payments are to be made to St. Patrick’s College, and handed to the bursar, Mrs Deanna Hurley. Final payment to be made by the end of Term 4 2013. (Please note that departure taxes are subject to change until paid in full.)

(*)NB. This deposit is non-refundable. Requests for refunds of the deposit cannot and will not be entertained either by St. Patrick’s College, or the travel agent. It is extremely important that funds are not committed to this tour if College fees are in arrears. In these circumstances, the College reserves the right to decline an application to participate in this tour.

WHO WILL LEAD AND ESCORT THE TOUR?

It will be under the joint leadership* of Mr Geoghegan and Mrs Agius.

*Please note: flights and accommodation of Messrs Geoghegan and Agius are included in the overall cost of the tour.

HOW MANY CAN GO?

The maximum number is 60.
St. Pats Europe / Russia Tour Itinerary – 5 to 19 April 2014

04 April: Depart Mackay. Depart Brisbane for Berlin (via Helsinki) on Finnair

05 April: Arrive Berlin, Germany. Arrive Tegel International Airport. Rest of the day at leisure. Accommodation: Hotel N.H. Treptow, Berlin

06 April: Discovering Berlin - Berlin is one of the few cities that has three Unesco World Heritage site with three active opera houses. The visit includes the elegant Ku’damm, the restored Reichstag, Charlottenburg Castle, the Brandenburg Gate, the Holocaust Memorial, and the 21-foot Victory Column in the Tiergarten. Also included are the Deutsches Historisches Museum, Jewish Museum, Pergamon and Neues Museum, Topography of Terror The portion of the Berlin Wall (known as the East Side Gallery), Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, drive along Unter den Linden and Checkpoint Charlie.
7 April Berlin – Visit the Topography of terror, the Kurfürstendamm, the Gedächtniskirche (Memorial Church), the town of Potsdam outside Berlin, including Sanssouci Palace, the Old Market Square, the Dutch Quarter and Sachsenhausen concentration camp outside Berlin. Afternoon free to visit Ku’damm to explore and experience the city’s vibrant culture.

The Auschwitz Gate. From the beginning of 1942 to the end of 1944 – approximately 600 transports arrived at the death Camp

8 April Berlin to Prague - Morning we leave Berlin for Prague in the Czech Republic, a distance of 280 kilometres with a journey time of three and a half hours. Often described as the "Jewel in the Crown" of central Europe. Prague's dramatic history is reflected in the beauty of the architecture of churches, opera houses, concert halls and Prague Castle. We visit the Prague National Museum, Jewish Museum in Prague, Alfons Mucha Museum, Franz Kafka Gallery. (Hradcany and The Prague Castle, The Lesser Town, The Old Town, including The Charles Bridge and Josefov (the preserved part of the former Jewish Town - today a part of the Old Town), The New Town and Vysehrad - have been on the UNESCO World Cultural and Natural Heritage List since 1992. Afternoon Sightseeing on this day highlights include the Old Town Hall with the Astronomical Clock, the Powder Tower, St. Nicholas Church, St. Vitus Cathedral or Petrin Watchtower. Visit Wenceslav Square, Old Town Square or the 'Royal Way' that is lined with the most important sights of the historical Prague. Accommodation: Park Inn Hotel

9 April: Prague sightseeing and by surface to Wroclaw – Morning a visit to the National Technical Museum, the Czech Cubist Museum, Jewish Museum, Franz Kafka Museum and Mucha’s Museum. Late in the afternoon we depart for Krakow. Krakow in Poland is the former seat of the Polish Kings. To arrive in Krakow we cover a distance of 319 kms approx. three and a half hours, moving through spectacular country side of the Czech Republic and Poland. Arrive at hotel in early evening. Tonight dine at one of Europe’s oldest restaurants. Accommodation: Scandic Hotel
10 April : Wroclaw and Oswiecim (Auschwitz) – Zakopane During its long history “Wroclaw” known in Polish as ‘Miasto Spotkań’, the ‘meeting place’. Wroclaw has belonged to Poland, Bohemia, Austria, Prussia and Germany. Move to the town of Oświęcim, better known throughout the world by its German name, ‘Auschwitz’. Here a moving visit to the memorials and museums of Auschwitz and Birkenhau bear witness to the terrible atrocities of the Holocaust. Stay in the resort town of Zakopane in the Tatras mountains, famous for its wooden houses and winter sports. Accomodation: Grand Nosalowy Dwor

11 April : Zakopane and the High Tatras Mountains – Krakow Spend time at leisure shopping for local specialties in the markets of Krupowki Street, or ascend a nearby mountain for panoramic views across the Tatras into Slovakia. A leisurely drive north takes you through the Tatras, highest range of the Carpathian Mountains to the city of Krakow. Accomodation: Qubus Hotel

12 April : Krakow Sight Seeing This morning you are taken for a walk around the Rynek Główny, Europe’s largest and most beautiful town square. See the famous ‘Sukiennice’ Cloth Hall, St Mary’s Church, and the many historic townhouses, palaces and churches. Visit the Cathedral, resting place of the Kings of Poland and former seat of Archbishop Karol Wojtyla, later known to the world as Pope John Paul II. Visit the former Jewish Quarter of Kazimierz, the Oscar Schindler Factory Museum, immortalized in the film ‘Schindler’s List’. There are options to visit the UNESCO Heritage listed Wieliczka Salt Mines.

13 April : Krakow – Warsaw - St. Petersburg - Early morning depart Krakow a distance of 296 kms. On arrival in Warsaw, transfer to airport to connect to your flight to St. Petersburg, Russia. Arrival at the Imperial city of St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad), sitting right at the crossroads of Europe and Russia. Built by Italians, dreamt up by Peter the Great, St. Petersburg has been the home town to many original thinkers. With its fantastic cultural heritage, Venice-like canals, wide avenues and phenomenal buildings. Accomodation: Courtyard by Marriott St.Petersburg Vasilievsky
14 April / 15 April : St. Petersburg Visit the Admiralty and the stunning Church on the Spilled Blood, where Alexander II was killed. Petrodvorets, Peter the Great’s summer palace, the St. Peter and St. Paul Fortress (where the remains of many Tsars including Nicholas II and Alexandra whose bodies were only discovered in the 1990’s) are held. Visit the former Winter Palace and the Hermitage* museum. Once home to Russian Royalty, it makes a scene-stealing backdrop for the priceless works inside, which are the remains of Catherine the Great’s personal collection. (*The Hermitage Museum has some of the world’s largest and most valuable art collections. The Hermitage occupies five impressive buildings on the banks of the River Neva in the heart of St. Petersburg. Featuring over 3 million artefacts, the collection represents the development of world culture and art from the Stone Age to the 20th century.) There’s free time to walk along St. Petersburg’s main street, Nevsky Prospekt. There’s a bit of everything along this street: palaces, lavish shops, museums, churches and buildings from many different eras. There’s also a chance to get up close to St. Petersburg’s traditional art in an optional evening excursion to see the Kirov ballet.

16 April : St. Petersburg to Moscow (3 nights) Depart St. Petersburg for Moscow on the high speed Sapsan train for a four hour journey. Arrive in the afternoon for a short city orientation visiting Red Square, St. Basil’s Cathedral and the Kremlin Wall. Accommodation: Radisson Blu Belorusskaya,

17 April / 18 April : Moscow With two full days, there’s plenty of time to uncover Moscow. Full day visiting Lenin’s Mausoleum, where the former leader of the Russian Revolution still lies, Moscow Metro, Red Square, St. Basil’s Cathedral, the Kremlin and the Armoury and the Central Museum of Armed Forces.

19 April : Depart Moscow – Morning, the tour concludes after breakfast. Transfer to airport for your flight back to Australia via Helsinki (Finland)

BOOKING TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. A non-refundable deposit of $2,000 is required upon reservation.
2. The full balance inclusive of visa costs, are due before end of fourth term 2013.
3. This quotation is based on the rate of exchange of approximately AU$1.00 = Euro 0.72. We reserve the right to vary total cost should there be a fluctuation at the time of final payment.
4. Airfares and taxes quoted are correct as at 15th June, 2013 but are subject to change unless final payment has been received.
5. Passport and completed visa forms should be handed in during the first week of the term one in January 2014. This will allow sufficient time for processing. Passports must be valid for at least six months from the date of re-entry to Australia.
6. Cancellations should be advised to us immediately in writing and the following cancellation terms will apply:
   - 120 to 70 days before departure – 50%
   - 70 to 31 days before departure – 75%
   - Less than 31 days – No refund
5. Payments made by credit card will attract a 1.8% handling fee for Master & Visa Cards.
St. Patrick’s College EUROPE 2014 Booking Form

Please complete one booking form per passenger together with deposit payment and to the bursar’s office.

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Email: As this will be the primary means whereby we communicate updates, provide important documents etc., please provide an active email address, one that happens to be in DAILY use.

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<td>I agree that my/all bookings and travel are subject to the Booking Conditions outlined and as per the conditions on the St Patricks College 2014 Tour brochure. Where I make a booking for others, I warrant that I have their authority to do so. If under 18 years at the time of booking, parent’s or guardian’s signature.</td>
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In order to facilitate the arrangement and administration of this excursion, certain information may be required by and disclosed to certain organizations (e.g. customs and immigration authorities or airline carriers) but only as necessary. We will not be able to properly facilitate the booking and administration of this excursion if you do not provide us with all the information requested on the form.