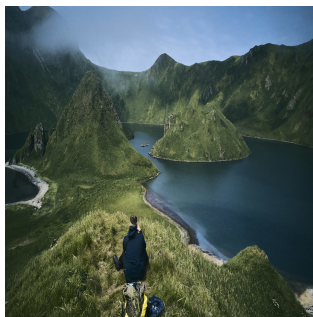


First Luxury Cruise to the Kuril Islands

An expedition aboard a premium ship



Discover the Kuril Islands in a whole new way — on an exclusive RussiaDiscovery cruise. For the first time, you can explore this land of volcanoes in the comfort of a floating five-star hotel. Aboard a premium expedition ship, you will journey to some of the most remote and breathtaking islands — waking up each morning in a new location.

Experiences you'll have

This journey offers the perfect balance of comfort and adventure. On board, enjoy the service and elegance of a five-star hotel, while ashore, immerse yourself in the untamed beauty of the Kuril Islands: trekking and climbing, kayaking and paddleboarding, relaxing in natural hot springs, and fishing in pristine waters.

If, on any day, you prefer not to join an active excursion, one of our experts will stay with you on shore to explore the most interesting places at a relaxed pace.

And when it’s time to unwind, there’s plenty to enjoy on board: a heated outdoor pool, sauna with a view, spa, gym, live music, and board games hosted by a professional entertainer — all awaiting you on SH Minerva.

Expedition Highlights:

- All of the Kurils in one journey — Northern, Central, and Southern islands
- Luxury at the edge of the Pacific — aboard a five-star expedition vessel featuring restaurants, a spa, gym, heated outdoor pool, and more
- The legendary “volcano within a volcano”, Krenitsyn Yankicha Island — one of the most beautiful places in the Kurils
- Encounters with whales, seals, and orcas
- Trekking, climbing, Zodiac boat excursions, kayaking, paddleboarding (SUP), and fishing
- Bathing in natural hot springs — from pristine, untouched spots to well-maintained pools

Sakhalin and the Kuril islands

First Luxury Cruise to the Kuril Islands

Difficulty	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Group size	to 140
Duration	10 days

Accomodation at the trip



9 nights

Языки



guide

from 18 115 EUR

Itinerary

The journey begins in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky and concludes in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. We can help with purchasing tickets — please leave a comment in your application if you would like assistance.

This is the general plan of the expedition; the route may vary.

Day 1

In the morning, you will be transferred from Petropavlovsk-

Kamchatsky to the port, where you will board the SH Minerva. Meet the crew and attend a safety briefing before setting sail.

The ship will depart through Avacha Bay, offering

spectacular views of Kamchatka’s “home” volcanoes: Avachinsky, Koryaksky, Kozelsky, and Vilyuchinsky.

Your expedition begins in Russkaya Bay, where you may

encounter Steller sea lions, white-shouldered eagles, and, during the breeding season, brown bears along the coast. Orcas are also occasionally seen near the bay’s entrance.

Day 2

Today you will see Alaid, the highest volcano in the Kuril

Islands, standing at 2,339 meters. Its perfectly symmetrical cone was admired by the Japanese as even more flawless than the famous Mount Fuji.

The island’s dramatic landscapes, including Alaid’s two

side craters, offer breathtaking views from multiple perspectives.

Day 3

Paramushir is known as the “kingdom of volcanoes,” with

23 peaks ranging from active to long-dormant.

Krasheninnikov Bay is framed by volcanic summits —

including the towering Fussa Volcano, as well as Karpinsky, Lomonosov, Tatarynov, and Chikurachki. The surrounding landscape offers sweeping views of this rugged volcanic region.

In the afternoon, the ship will approach Antsiferov Island,

the summit of an ancient extinct volcano. The island is home to large seabird colonies and one of the largest Steller sea lion rookeries in the Kurils.

Day 4

Today you will explore Onkotan Island, home to one of the

Kurils’ most striking natural wonders — Krenitsyn, the famous “volcano within a volcano.”

Inside the vast caldera of the ancient Tao-Rusyr Volcano

lies Ring Lake, and in its center rises the perfect cone of Krenitsyn. The island’s dramatic mountain ridges and volcanic peaks make this one of the most unforgettable places of the entire expedition.

Alternative route will take you to Nemo Bay. Here stands

the active Nemo Peak (1,018 m), one of the most beautiful volcanoes in the islands’ north. Its cone rises from an ancient caldera, part of which has flooded to form Lake Chernoye (Black Lake).

Day 5

This day will be dedicated to one of the most beautiful

places in the Kuril Islands — Yankicha Island.

The flooded caldera of the Ushishir Volcano, known as

Crater Bay, reveals a truly surreal landscape: two emerald islets lie in the middle of the bay, enclosed by steep crater walls that seem to protect it from the outside world.

Here you can enjoy the island’s geothermal features and

observe local wildlife, including rare Commander Arctic foxes that inhabit the shores.

Day 6

You will continue your journey through the central Kurils

with a visit to Simushir’s most famous landmark — Zavaritsky Volcano, whose flooded caldera forms a striking panorama of water and stone.

Day 7

The Chirpoy and Brat Chirpoyev Islands together referred

to as Chyornye Bratya (the Black Brothers).

Chirpoy impresses with its almost otherworldly landscapes.

The island is shaped by two volcanoes — Chyorny (624 m) and Snow (395 m) — whose steep slopes are cut by deep ravines, covered with solidified lava flows and scattered dark volcanic stones.

The islands’ names come from the Ainu word chiripoi,

meaning “small birds.” True to their name, thousands of seabirds — such as kittiwakes and thick-billed murre — nest on the coastal cliffs. In the surrounding waters, you may also spot fur seals, sea otters, and whales.

Day 8

Today, your ship will call at the shores of Iturup, the

largest island of the Kuril archipelago.

Here, the famous White Cliffs stretch for 28 kilometers

along the coast. The cliffs are made of soft pumice from an ancient volcanic eruption. Over the centuries, wind and storms have carved intricate patterns into the rock, giving the surface a jagged, almost lace-like texture.

The scene is one of vivid contrasts: dark gray volcanic sand

lies at their base, while lush emerald vegetation crowns their tops.

Nearby, at the foot of Baransky Volcano, natural hot

springs form scenic pools, where warm water fills both untouched and lightly maintained spots.

Day 9

Today you will explore the southernmost island of the

Greater Kuril Chain. Its name, from the Ainu language spoken by the Kurils’ Indigenous people, means “Black Island” — likely inspired by its dense coniferous forests, the dark silhouette of Tyatya Volcano, and the volcanic sand along its shores.

Along the coast, Cape Stolbchaty is renowned for its

striking basalt columns, created millions of years ago as lava slowly cooled and solidified. The result is a remarkable natural formation resembling the pipes of a giant organ.

Kunashir is home to several active volcanoes, including

Golovnin, Mendeleev, Rurui, and Tyatya, and features dramatic landscapes shaped by volcanic activity. The island is rich in wildlife, with seals, bears, whales, and dolphins inhabiting its coasts and surrounding waters.

Today you will have a choice of adventures. One group will

head toward the caldera of Golovnin Volcano. Inside the caldera lie two crater lakes — Hot and Boiling. Their waters shimmer with sulfur and minerals, and fumaroles hiss and steam along the shores. The ground beneath your feet feels alive — this is where the volcano breathes. Every step must be taken with care on this surreal, otherworldly terrain.

If you’d prefer a more relaxed day, you can join the second

group for an excursion to Lake Peschanoe (meaning “Sandy”) — the largest freshwater lake in the Kuril Islands. Its calm surface reflects the surrounding forests and mountains, offering a moment of serenity in the heart of wild nature. Later, both groups will visit Cape Stolbchaty.

Day 10

Your ship will arrive at Korsakov Port, just 35 km from

Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. Along the way, you will pass one of the Far East's iconic landmarks — Aniva Cape, crowned by a historic Japanese lighthouse.

After breakfast, you will bid farewell to the crew and

disembark. Transfers will be arranged to your hotel or the airport.

Accomodation at the trip

Your voyage will take place aboard the 5-star expedition cruise ship SH Minerva.

Built in 2021 at a Finnish shipyard, the vessel is equipped with an ice-strengthened hull and extra-large stabilizers. It accommodates up to 140 guests in luxury suites.

Onboard facilities include a club lounge with 24-hour dining, an observation lounge for lectures and live music evenings, an outdoor infinity pool, a sauna with hot tubs offering panoramic ocean views, a spa, a gym, a main restaurant, a basecamp, and a library.

Every cabin is equipped with a realistic flame-effect fireplace, a minibar (restocked daily), a safe, a seating area, and a private bathroom.

Rates depend on the selected cabin type. The price is per person, based on double occupancy in a cabin.

- Oceanview D4 (deck 4, bow and aft) – ~~19,020~~ 18,115 USD
- Oceanview M4 (deck 4, center) – ~~19,970~~ 19,020 USD
- Balcony D5 (deck 5, bow and aft) – ~~23,780~~ 22,650 USD
- Balcony M5 (deck 5, center) – ~~24,730~~ 23,550 USD
- Balcony D6 (deck 6) – ~~27,580~~ 26,270 USD
- Suite (deck 5 and 6) – ~~35,190~~ 33,510 USD
- Premium Suite (deck 6) – ~~39,940~~ 38,040 USD

Bank charges are not included in the USD price.

A 50% prepayment is required to secure a reservation. The remaining 50% is due 90 days before the start of the cruise.

Cabin Types:

Oceanview (20 sq.m.): two single beds or a double bed, sitting area with sofa, a flame-effect fireplace, luxurious bathroom, and panoramic windows

Balcony (25 sq.m.): two single beds or a double bed, sitting area with sofa, a flame-effect fireplace, luxurious bathroom, and a private 5 sq.m. balcony

Suite (40 sq.m.): king-size bed, a separate living room with a flame-effect fireplace, a luxurious ensuite bathroom with a separate bathtub and walk-in shower, and a private 10 sq.m. balcony.

Premium Suite (47 sq.m.): king-size bed, a separate living room with a flame-effect fireplace, a luxurious ensuite bathroom with a separate bathtub and shower, a walk-in wardrobe, and a private 12 sq.m. balcony.

FAQ

What to pack

During your journey across the Kuril Islands, you may encounter a wide range of weather — from scorching sun and temperatures around +20 °C (+68 °F) in the Southern Kurils to near 0 °C (32 °F) in the Northern Kurils. Be prepared for strong winds and high humidity; fog and rain are also possible during the cruise.

Clothing

- Waterproof, breathable pants (preferably “quick-release” style for easy removal after Zodiac landings)
- Down jacket (warm layer)
- Trekking pants
- Thermal base layers
- Fleece jacket
- Wool hat covering the ears
- Balaclava or scarf
- Cap
- Trekking socks
- Warm socks
- Waterproof gloves
- Shirts and T-shirts (one for each day)
- Jeans or other comfortable trousers (several pairs)
- Turtlenecks (for wearing on board or as a base under a warm sweater)
- Sweaters — wool or fleece
- Sleepwear
- Optional: smart attire for the farewell evening

Footwear

- Waterproof trekking boots
- Sandals, sneakers, or other comfortable shoes for on board and for boarding/disembarking
- Flip-flops for showers
- Optional: shoes for the farewell evening (heels not recommended)

Personal Items

- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen (SPF 30+)
- Lip balm
- Binoculars
- Earplugs
- Personal hygiene items
- Swimsuit or trunks (for hot springs, sauna, and optional ocean swimming)
- Waterproof protective case for cameras and video equipment
- Memory cards
- Chargers and power bank
- Medications — enough for several extra days
- Spare pair of glasses or contact lenses
- Insect repellent

Documents

- Passport
- Plane ticket
- Copy of travel insurance

Meals

The cruise includes full board and an open bar with tea, coffee, soft drinks, and alcoholic beverages (premium brands excluded). Cabin service is available 24/7.

Who will be my guide

The ship’s crew includes 120 staff members, among them the expedition team: experienced guides, speakers, and lecturers.

Insurance

Medical insurance is mandatory for this expedition. It is not included in the cruise price and must be purchased separately. If you need help arranging it, let your booking manager know.

Staying comfortable at sea

Rough seas are possible, but motion sickness medication is effective and available at the reception desk if needed.

If you’re unsure whether you get seasick, try waiting before taking medication — some travelers find that ignoring mild symptoms helps their body adjust naturally within a few hours.

Helpful tips:

- Try to limit screen time and reading for long periods, as focusing on still images may make symptoms worse.
- Fresh air helps: step outside onto the open deck and look at the horizon.
- Don’t let the cabin get stuffy.

Booking

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Difficulty 
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Accommodation at the trip



9 nights

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What's included in the price:

- transfers on the first and last days of the program
- accommodation on the ship in a cabin of the chosen category
- full board service (three meals a day)
- coffee, tea, soft drinks, and alcoholic beverages available 24/7
- 24-hour cabin service
- lectures by the expedition team
- all landings and excursions as per the program
- service charges, port fees, and gratuities
- a branded expedition jacket, water bottle, and backpack as gifts
- standard Wi-Fi package
- in-cabin minibar
- photos and videos from the ship’s photographer

Extra charge:

- airfare to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky and from Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk
- mandatory medical insurance covering emergency evacuation from remote and hard-to-reach areas
- hotel accommodation and sightseeing program before and/or after the cruise
- personal expenses onboard (laundry, phone calls, premium Wi-Fi package, etc.)
- premium alcoholic beverages at the bar (not included in the standard package)

21 aug 2026, fri — 30 aug 2026, sun

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