

TRAVELLING IN RUSSIA'S MOST ISOLATED REGIONS

VISITING THE GHOST TOWN OF **KADYKCHAN** “DEATH VALLEY”

ABANDONED RUSSIA - If this is somehow not enough for you yet we are also offering a tour that no other company has ever even considered running – we call it **ABANDONED RUSSIA**. This is a trip deep into Magadan province to the abandoned city of **Kadykchan**. Meaning ‘death valley’ in Russian this was once a fairly populous mining town, with (at the time) modern facilities and buildings, schools, apartment complexes, workplaces and so on. From the establishment of the city in the early 1970’s up until the mid 80’s life was lived as normal in remote parts of Russia but as the economy began the downward spiral that would end in the dissolution of the Soviet Union and exodus of the population began.

In 1996 a winter even harsher than normal hit and pipes froze while relief vehicles failed to arrive and the danger of starvation reared its head for the remaining population. Finally evacuated by the Russian military they left behind one of the largest and most well preserved ghost towns in the world. Still all standing, albeit in various states of disrepair, the city bears some similarities to Pripyat in the Ukraine (the abandoned town next to the Chernobyl reactor).

A chilling and life-changing experience for any visitor this is somewhere exceptionally difficult to reach but the rewards; in memories, and some of the most remarkable photos you will ever take, make it utterly worthwhile. For aficionados of Dark Tourism there are few places like it. We’ll take you there via a 650km road trip from Magadan to the town of **Susuman** (the airport there was converted into an orthodox church some time ago) which we will use as a base for exploring Kadykchan.

We will explore the city on foot, seeing where people lived, worked, and played; see abandoned apartments, restaurants, and offices. See a place which once bustled with life but is now being reclaimed by nature. In this city you can go inside apartment buildings, the hospitals, schools, technological institutes, the city government, Olympic centre, and much much more. See the bust of Lenin which is now full of holes since being shot at by evacuating local residents, a truly life-changing trip; you’ve never been anywhere like it.



MAGADAN

MAGADAN - One of Russia's remotest and most isolated regions. A place hundreds of thousands of people were shipped to never to return during the darkest days of Stalin's Soviet Union, but also a place of stunning natural beauty and an interesting contemporary lifestyle far removed from the European Russia we are more familiar with. Far from the 'normal' Russian tourist trail and so far removed from the rest of Russia even today that the locals refer to the rest of the country as 'the mainland', this province has no railway line linking it to any other area and the only road that runs in from outside (the Kolyma highway 'the road of bones' from Yakutsk, over 2000 km away) is only passable in winter and takes 4 days in good conditions.

Magadan City is the capital of the province and contains a hardy 100,000 inhabitants although this number drops each year due to migration to the mainland. Still, the place retains its charm and has a lively social scene as well as some photogenic architecture in the city as well as the forests and beaches nearby. Despite its isolation and remoteness from the Russia more commonly seen there is much to experience in Magadan. Dark tourism is but one element and on this special tour we will see what Magadan has to offer, becoming one of the first tour groups ever to go there, and we hope you can make it there with us!

We'll visit the regional museum, the Mask of Sorrow – an evocative and haunting Gulag memorial, a local beach to see how people enjoy themselves in the good weather, a gold and bone working factory to see how the region's main product are turned into commodity form, and more besides. We will then journey to see the remains of the horror that Magadan and the entire Kolyma region became known for; the ruins of some of the nearby camps that formed part of the massive continent-spanning Gulag system of the USSR in the early – mid 20th century.

A dark and saddening place which is nevertheless important to remember and learn from. We'll see what is left of the place to which so many people from so many walks of life came but never left. This part is not supposed to be fun but a life-long memory will be formed. Simply put, this is one of the most tragic places on Earth, so remote that the journey is long and arduous but a place of great historical importance nevertheless.

