



13 fortresses of Russia

from the Early Middle Ages to the Peter the Great era



The history of Russia is amazing, and the best way to study it is to travel. This presentation presents ancient citadels in different regions of the country and their historical background.

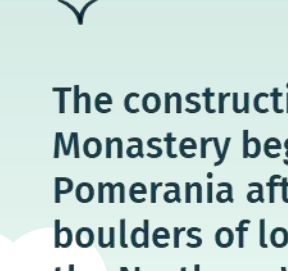
✧ Schlisselburg Fortress

The Schlisselburg fortress, founded by Prince Yuri Danilovich in the XIV century, was originally a wooden structure to protect the Novgorod lands. After the capture by the Swedes in 1352, it was fortified with stone walls. In 1612, the Swedes again besieged the fortress, which ceased to be a defensive facility and turned into a prison for political prisoners. Today, the fortress is a museum in the Leningrad region on Orekhov Island, where you can see the remains of the XIV century and visit the old prisons. The fortress is open from May to October.



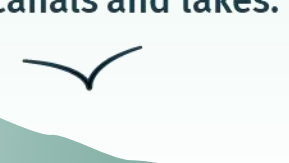


Solovetsky Fortress



The construction of a stone fortress around the Solovetsky Monastery began by decree of Tsar Ivan Fedorovich to strengthen Pomerania after the attacks of the "Kayan Germans", using boulders of local islands and intensified with the beginning of the Northern War, when Peter I sailed here.

After the bombing of 1854, the history of the fortress as a military facility ended. In the XX century, the Solovetsky special purpose camp and prison were opened on the territory, and in 1960 the historical and architectural museum-reserve was founded. Today, visitors can enjoy the architectural ensemble of the monastery, the botanical garden and excursions along the canals and lakes.





Porkhovskaya Fortress

Porkhovskaya fortress, the first mention of which dates back to 1239, was rebuilt from wood to stone in 1387 to protect the Novgorod Republic and became one of the largest outposts of the North Russian state. Despite several sieges and subsequent destruction, three of the four towers have been preserved, and a restoration project for the fortress is currently being developed, which is scheduled to be completed by the autumn of 2026.



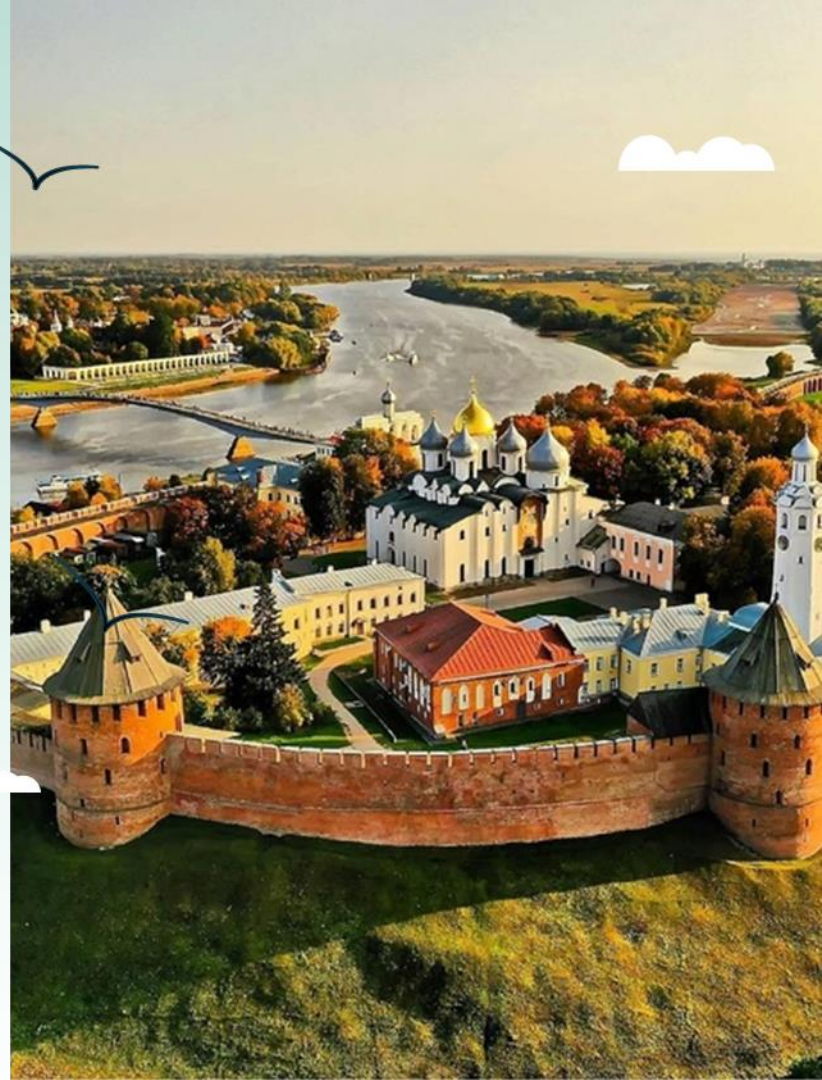
Peter and Paul Fortress

The Peter and Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg, founded on May 27, 1703 according to the plan of Peter I and engineer Lambert de Guerin, is located on Hare Island, from where ships sailing from the Gulf of Finland were controlled. Although the fortress was built as a military structure, it did not participate in battles, but for 200 years served as a political prison for famous prisoners, including Tsarevich Alexei, Nikolai Chernyshevsky and Fyodor Dostoevsky.



Novgorod detinets

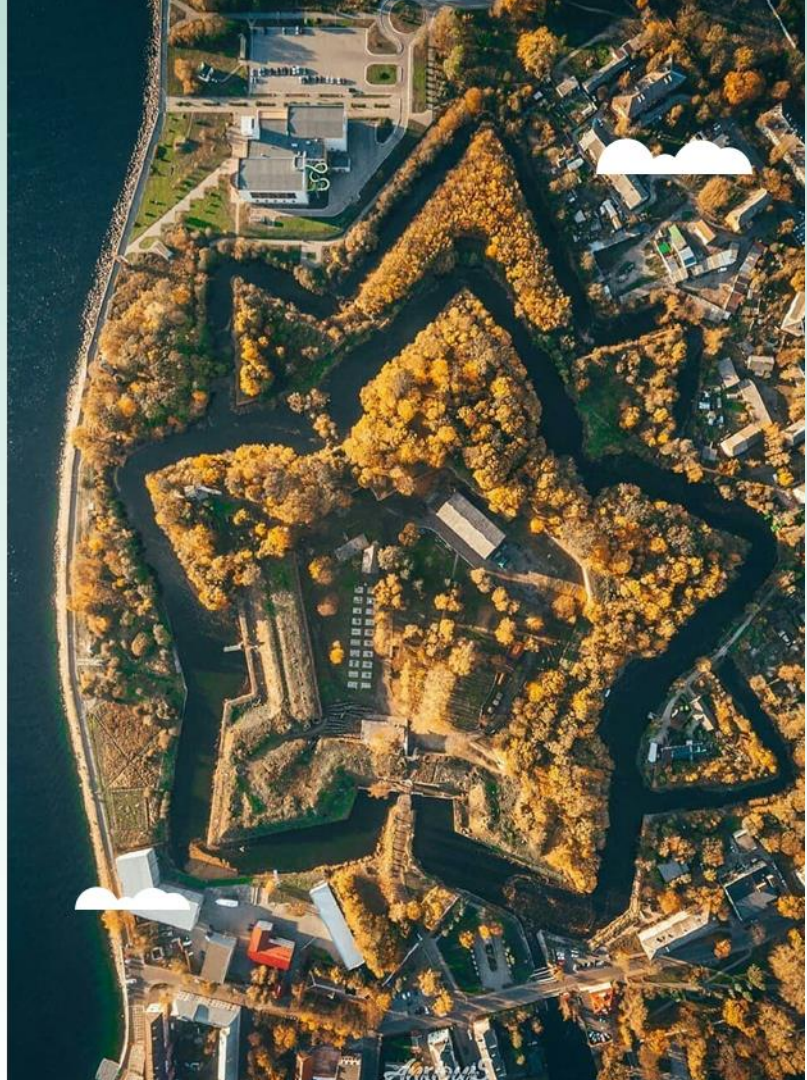
The Novgorod Detinets, known as the Novgorod Kremlin, was founded by Prince Vladimir and is one of the largest fortresses of the Middle Ages in northwestern Russia. In 1333, the fortress was rebuilt from wooden walls to stone ones, and in 1478, after the annexation of Novgorod to the Moscow Principality, its structure was changed to brick, close to its modern appearance. Despite frequent changes, the fortress has been well preserved to this day.



Pillau Fortress

Pillau Fortress, also known as the Baltic or Swedish Fortress, was built by the Swedes on the orders of King Gustav II Adolf in a pentagonal shape and in 1640 was transformed into a stone-brick structure under the leadership of Prussian Prince Frederick William the Great. Peter the Great visited Pillau to study bombardment and artillery skills, and the fortress played an important role in strengthening ties between Russia and Prussia.

After the Great Patriotic War, Pillau passed to Russia, and in 1999 part of its structures was transferred to the Museum of the Baltic Fleet.



Kala Koreish Fortress

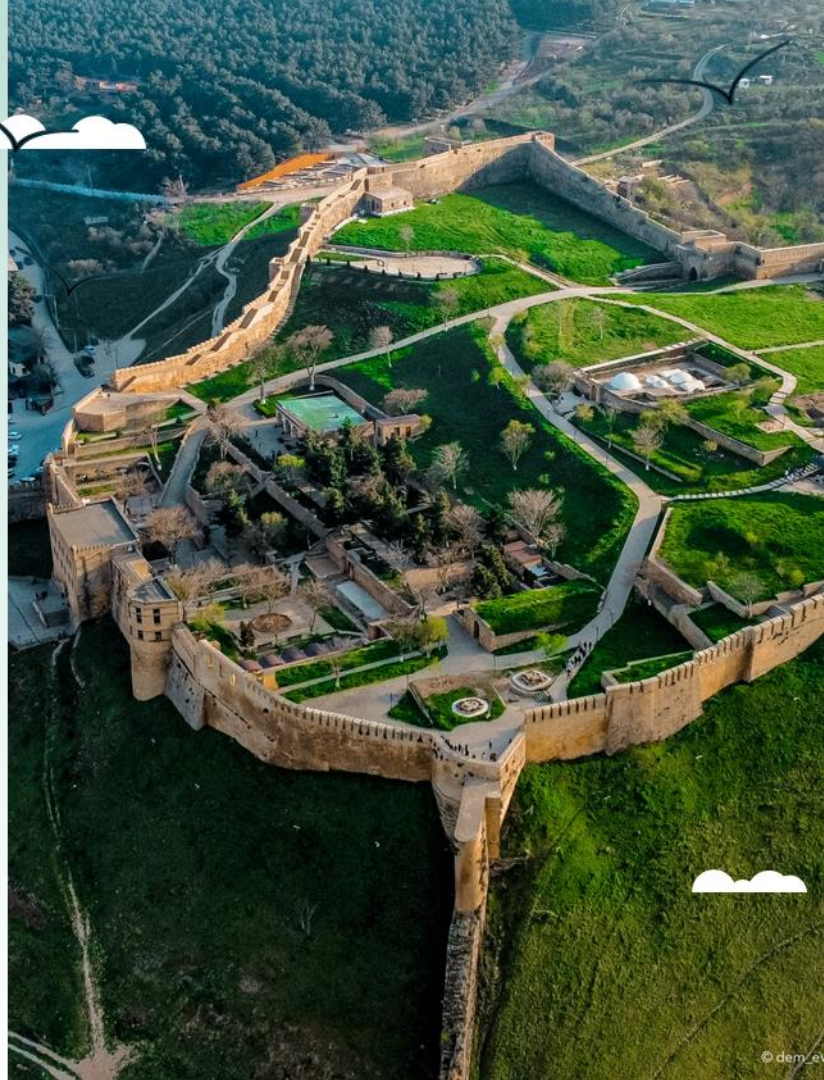
The fortress-village of Kala-Koreish is located in Dagestan. In the Middle Ages, Kala Koreish was the capital of the Kaitag utsmiystvo, the Islamic state. The watchtowers of the fortress are adjacent to ancient monuments, carved tombstones, and ruins of a caravanserai. In addition to the Kala Koreish itself, the Juma Mosque of the IX century is valuable from a historical and architectural point of view.

Now the village is abandoned, but the residents of Kubachi village are looking after Kala Koreish.



Naryn-Kala Fortress

Naryn-Kala is the oldest fortress in Russia, built under the Persian ruler Khosrow I Anushirvan to protect against attacks by barbarian nomads. At various times, it belonged to 10 empires, including the Russian One, and stretched for 255 meters with a wall height of 20-25 meters and an area of 4.5 hectares. Despite its size, the fortress has been invaded more than once, including the use of the "Gate of Shame" for the escape of unsuccessful military leaders.



Korela Fortress

Korela Fortress, built by the Novgorodians in 1310 (the first mention dates back to 1295), is located in Priozersk, Leningrad region. For several centuries, it successfully defended itself against the attacks of the Swedish feudal lords, but in 1610-1611 it was captured and renamed Keksholm. In 1710, the fortress returned to the Russian Kingdom and was later used as a prison. Currently, Korela is a fortress museum.



Kopor Fortress

The Kopor Fortress, located in Koporye, Leningrad region, was built for defensive purposes and throughout its history belonged to both Sweden and Russia, while it was rebuilt several times. Fragments of the walls of the XIII century have been preserved in the fortress, as well as the Spaso-Preobrazhensky Cathedral of the XVI century, the bridge and the chapel-tomb of the Zinovievs.

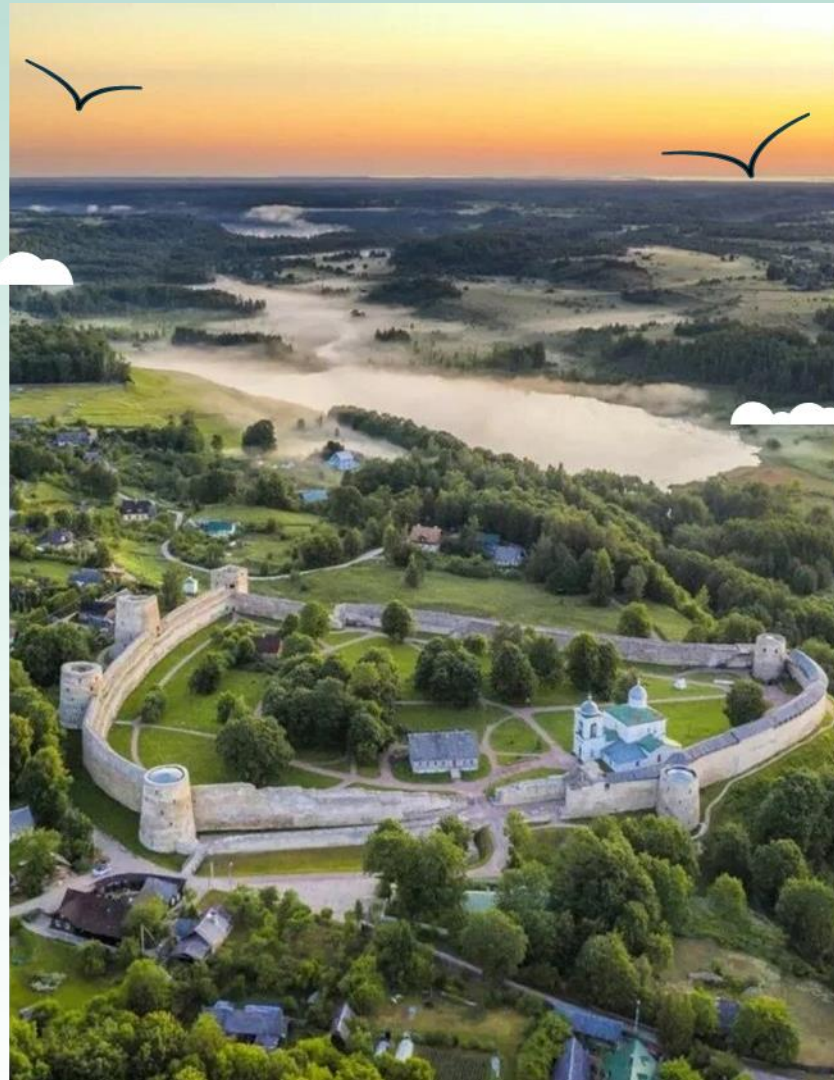
Despite the fact that today the facility is open to the public as a museum, war and time, including the Great Patriotic War, have negatively affected its condition, and now the fortress is in disrepair.



Izborskaya fortress

The Izborsk fortress, built by the Pskov posadnik Sheloga, reliably guarded the Pskov land from the Livonian knights and lost its defensive significance only after the Northern War. Despite the centuries, the fortress on the Zheravy Mountain impresses with its size: the length of the walls is 623 meters, and the total area is 2.4 hectares.

The citadel is interesting due to the presence of narrow corridors, known as zahabs, which did not allow enemies to penetrate deep, as well as secret sorties and passages to the water.



Ivangorod Fortress

Ivan III built the Ivangorod fortress. The building, like many others at that time, was a shield of the Novgorod land. After the Swedish assault and capture, the fortress was rebuilt, but even this did not help it to resist in the XVI century. It was only during the Northern War that the citadel returned to Russia. Despite its age, the Ivangorod fortress has preserved combat passages, traps, and spiral staircases. This was made possible, among other things, thanks to restoration work.



Genoese Fortress

The Genoese fortress, built by Genoese colonists on the site of the old fortress of Sugdea, passed to the Ottoman Empire after the fall of Genoa, continuing to be used for defense with periodic fortifications and reconstructions. In the 19th century, after the Crimean War, the fortress lost its strategic importance and became empty.

Today known as the Sudak Fortress, it has become the hallmark of Crimea, attracting tourists thanks to the architectural complex with towers, gates and museum exhibits found on its territory.

