

# ST. PETERSBURG THE 19<sup>TH</sup>, 20<sup>TH</sup> AND 21<sup>TH</sup> OF MAY

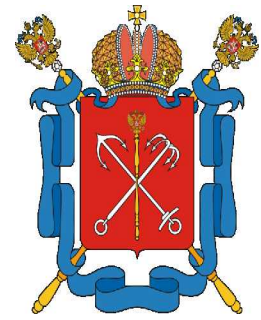
## City tour by bus in the morning the 19<sup>th</sup> of May



St. Petersburg on the map



City flag



City coat of arms



Peter the Great founded St. Petersburg in 1703 as he wanted to create Russia's "window to the West", a European metropolis.

The city is located in a swamp area that once belonged to Sweden, where the river [Neva](#) drains into the [Gulf of Finland](#). It was this strategic location in relation to the [Baltic Sea](#), which was the reason why St. Petersburg was built right there.

The town was officially Russia's capital in 1712, when the Tzar family moved from [Moscow](#), and was the capital until 1918. When World War I broke out in 1914, it was renamed Petrograd, because St. Petersburg was German, and under communism it was renamed Leningrad on 29 January 1924, after [Vladimir Lenin](#) died.

During World War II, the city was surrounded and besieged by the Germans. The siege lasted from 8 September 1941 to 27 January 1944, a total of 29 months. During the siege it is estimated that 800,000 of the city's four million residents died.

When the Soviet Union came to an end, the city on 6 September 1991 got back its original name, St. Petersburg.

St. Petersburg is currently Russia's second largest and Europe's third largest city after Moscow and London. 4.6 million people live in the city, and over 6 million people including suburbs.

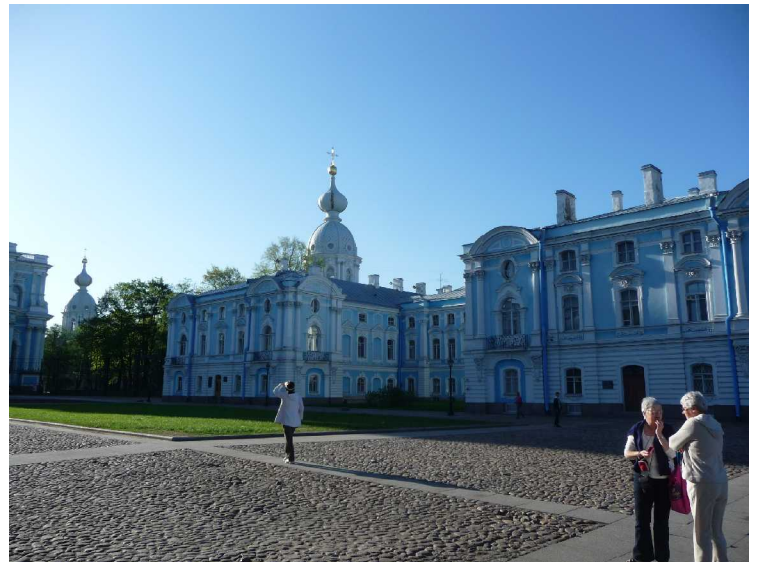
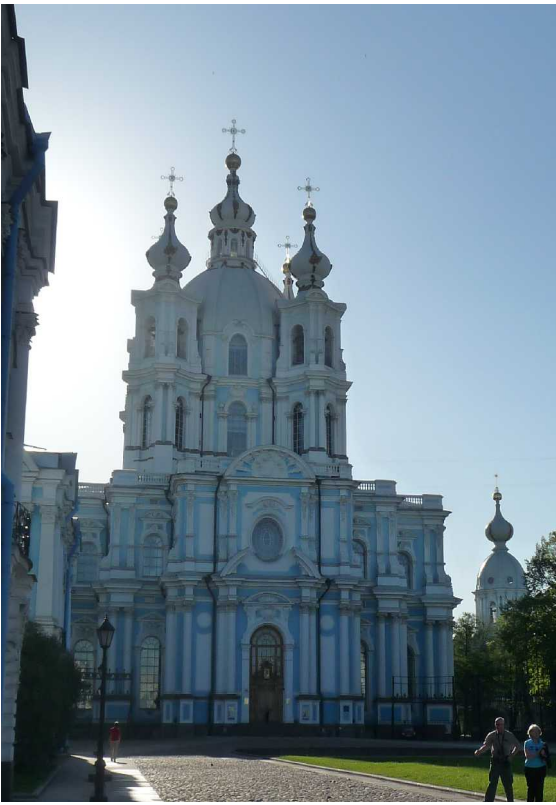
St. Petersburg's historic center is listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.



This is the river [Neva](#) just before arriving to St. Petersburg. We were anchored here a few hours in the morning, because the boat was a little early and we were not going to be in St. Petersburg before 08:00.



Here we are arriving ashore, waiting for the bus to take us on a tour around the city.

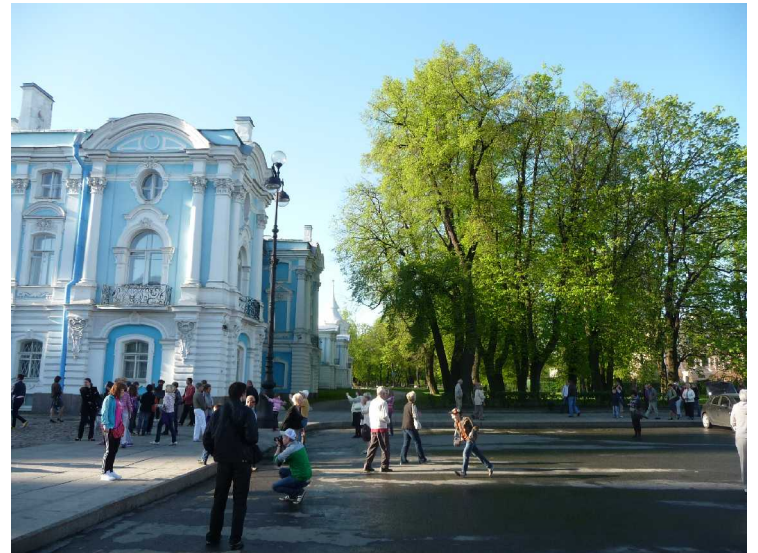


The first stop was at the [Smolny Convent](#). It was finished in 1835. Lenin used it as his office when he was in St. Petersburg.

We can see the clock tower in the middle on the picture above.



The bus is parked on the square in front of the convent.



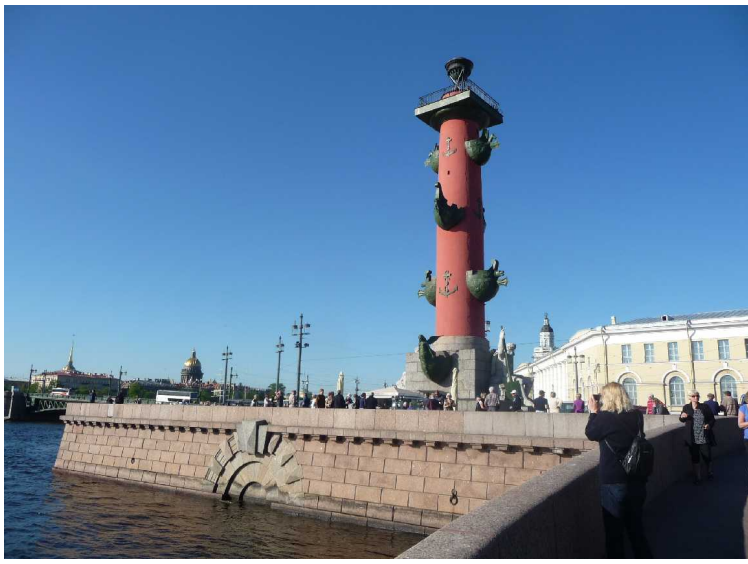
Some of the surroundings.



A part of the [Hermitage](#).



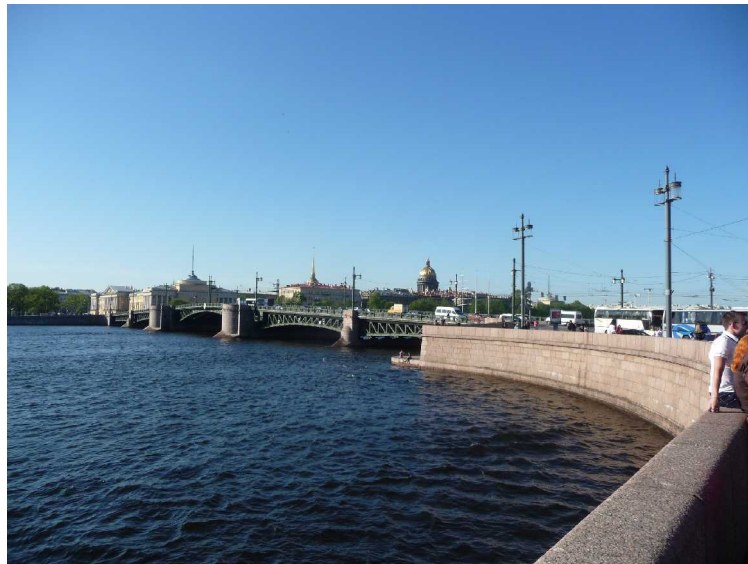
On the other side of the river we can see the [Peter and Paul Cathedral](#). It is lying inside the [Peter and Paul fortress](#)



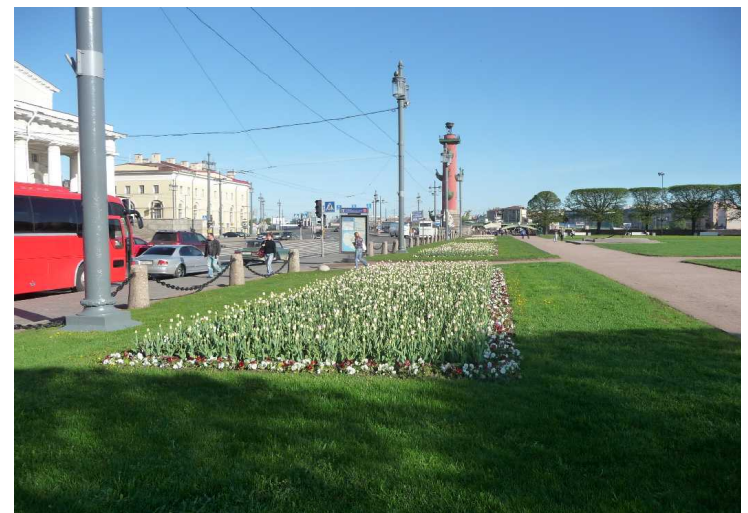
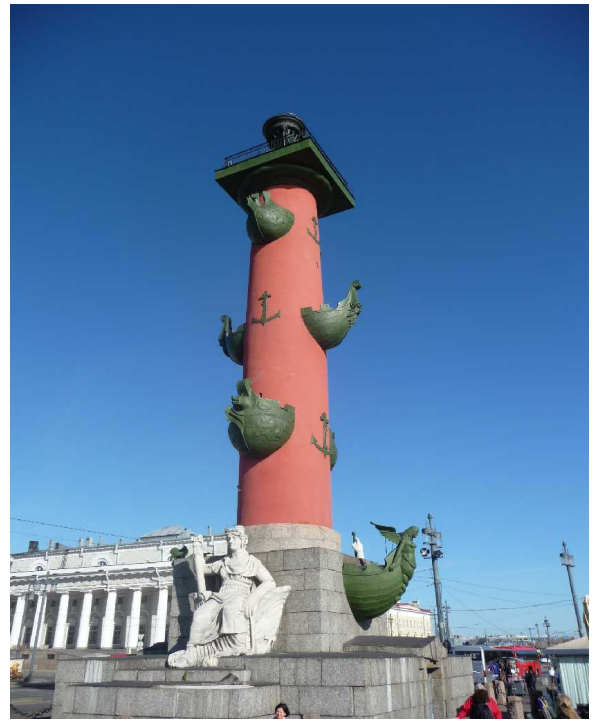
Here we are on the [Vasilevsky island](#) with the [Bourse](#) to the right and one of the [Rostral columns](#). They are a kind of victory pillars. The stock exchange is now a marine museum.



The other Rostral column. They were used as lighthouses with oil lamps on top. These are replaced by gas lamps lit on special occasions.



This is the bridge we passed over. It is called the Bourse bridge.



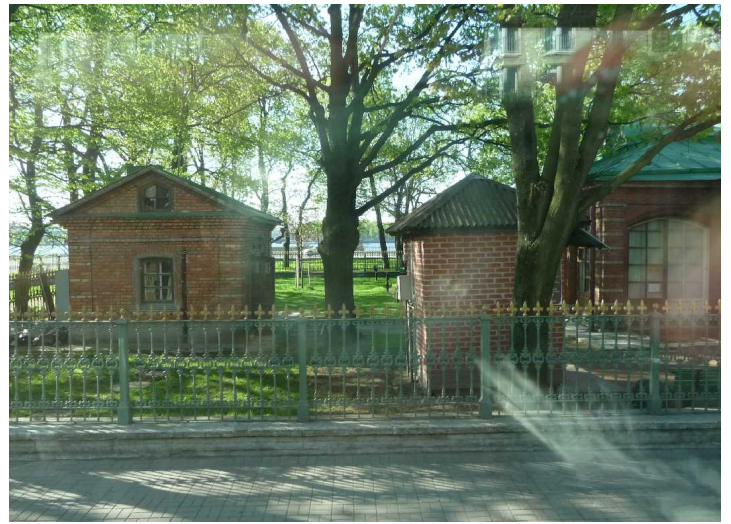
There is a park here at the tip of the Vasilevsky island.



Flag poles and a column in the middle with a star at the top.



There are a lot of tourist buses that stops here at the tip of the Vasilevsky island.



[Peter the Great's cottage](#) where he lived for 9 years.



[The Cruiser Aurora](#) has been in the war against Japan in 1905, and in WWI and WWII. Aurora is mostly known for the shot that marked the beginning of the October Revolution and the Bolshevik's storming of the Winter Palace in 1917.



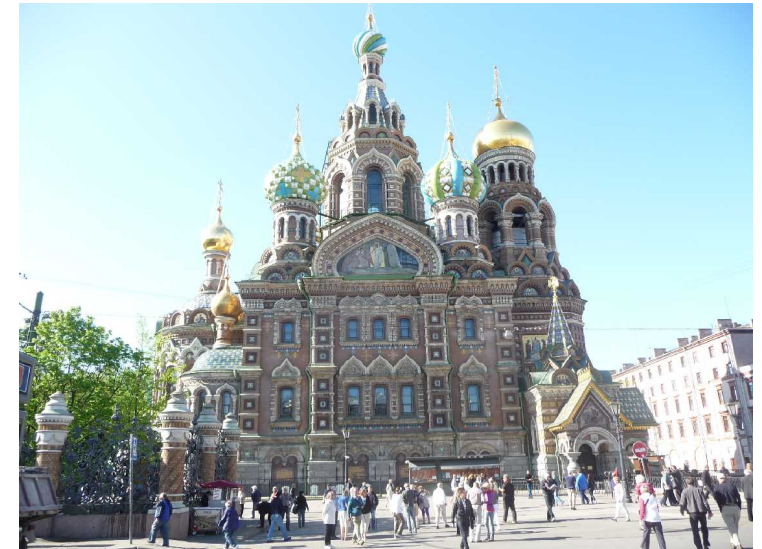
This statue stands on the quay where the cruiser Aurora lies moored.



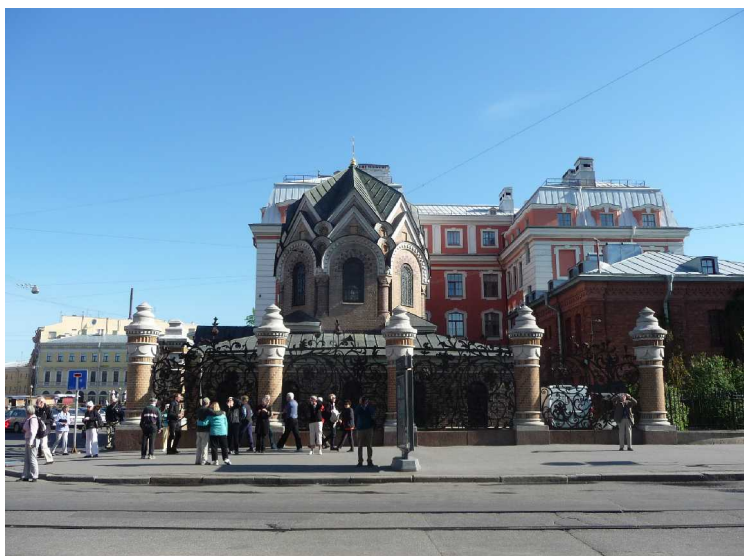
Here are sold [wooden dolls](#).



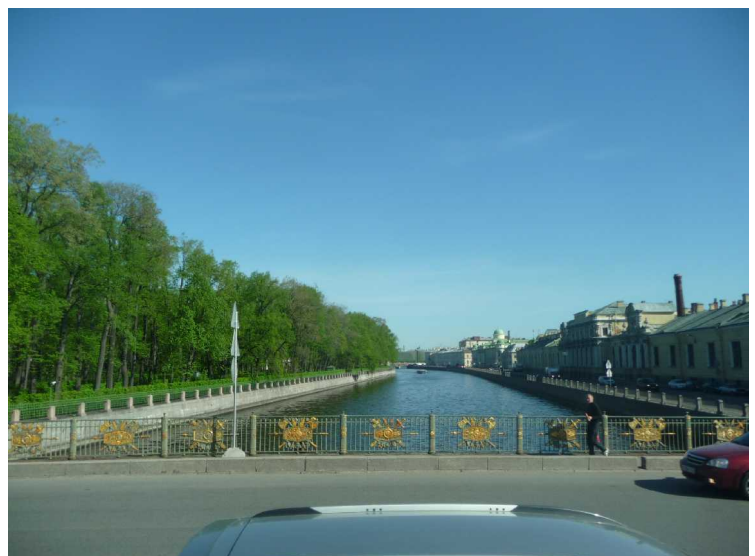
There are many sales booths on the quay.



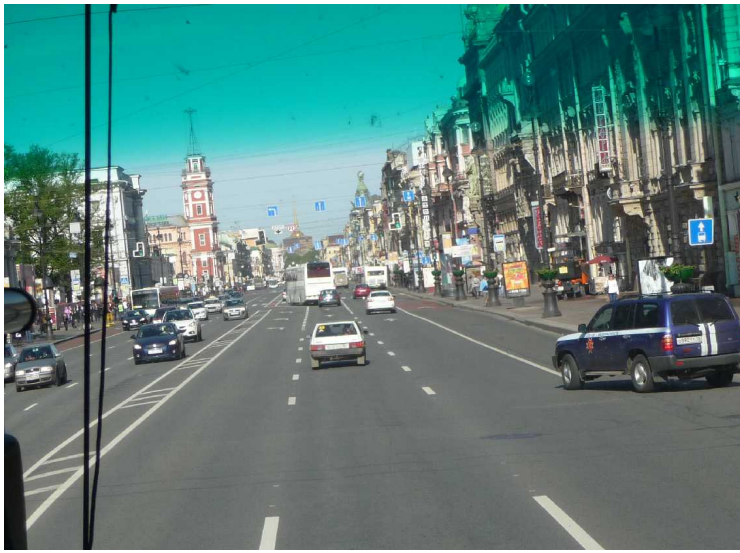
[The Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood](#) or the Church on Spilled Blood. Alexander II of Russia was assassinated on this spot in 1881. The church was built as a memorial.



We don't know the name of this church.



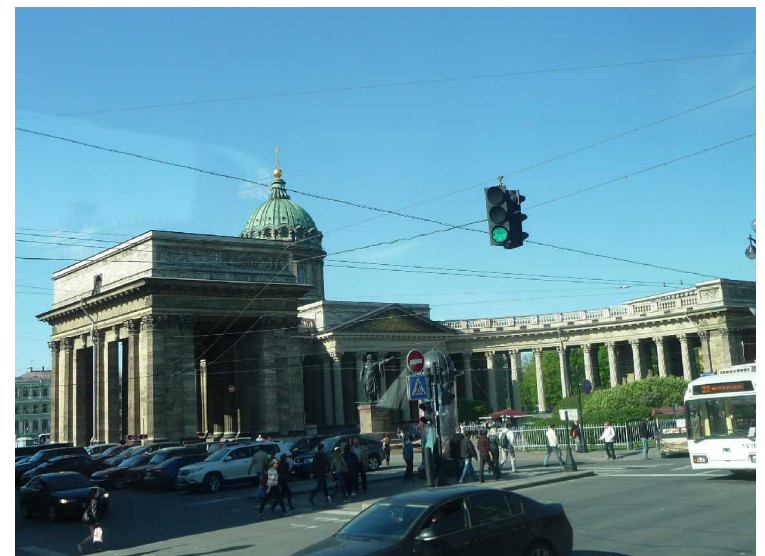
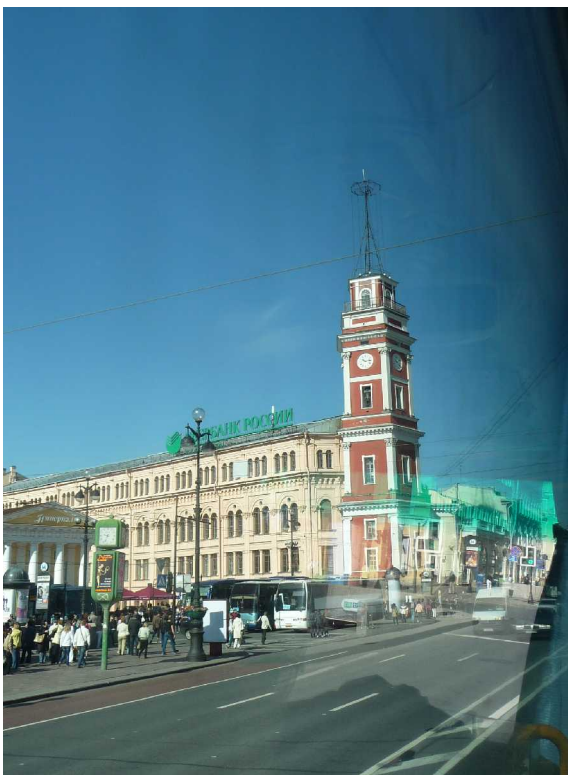
One of the many canals in St. Petersburg.



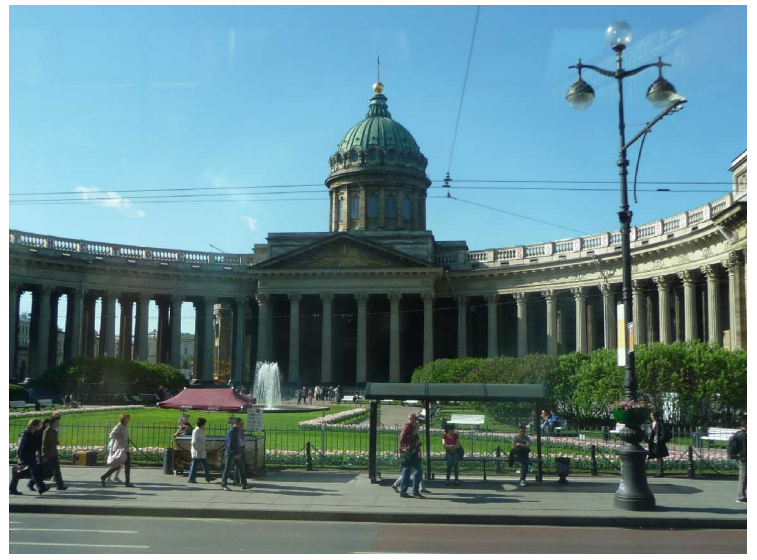
This is [Nevsky Prospekt](#), the main street in St. Petersburg. It is 25 meter wide and four kilometer long. The street was planned by Peter the Great as the start of a road to Novgorod and Moscow.



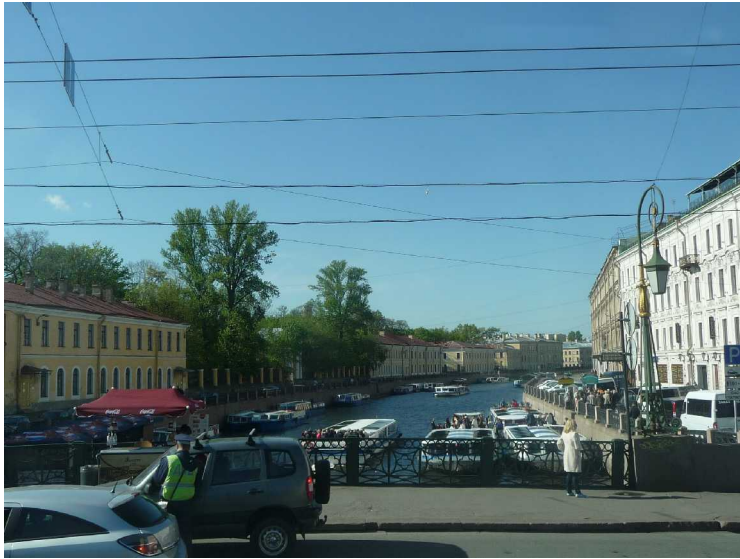
We are driving along the Nevsky Prospekt.



Here we have left Nevskij Prospekt and arrived at the [Kazan Cathedral](#). The foundation stone was laid down by Tzar Alexander I the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 1801. Ten years later it was finished. After the victory over Napoleon in 1812, it became a kind of victory monument.



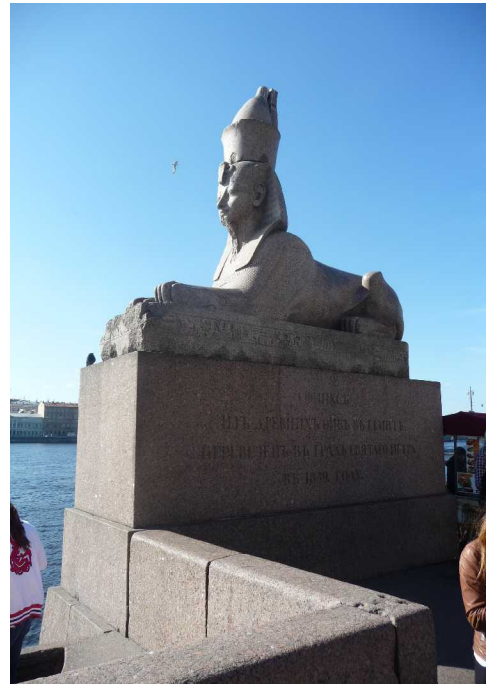
When looking at it, it is easy to think of St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, and that was the intended meaning. Tzar Paul I (1796–1801) approved the 14<sup>th</sup> of December 1800 the plans for the erection, and he wanted this to be Russia's most important church. Then it was only natural to use the world's largest church as a model.



One of the canals.



A bridge over Neva.



There are a number of [sphinxes](#) along the river Neva.



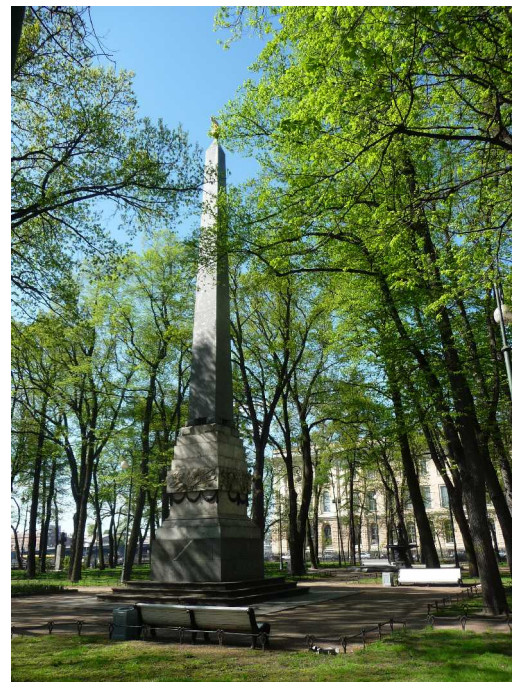
The bus stops here for a toilet visit. It is an expensive shop and there is free vodka for everybody who wants.



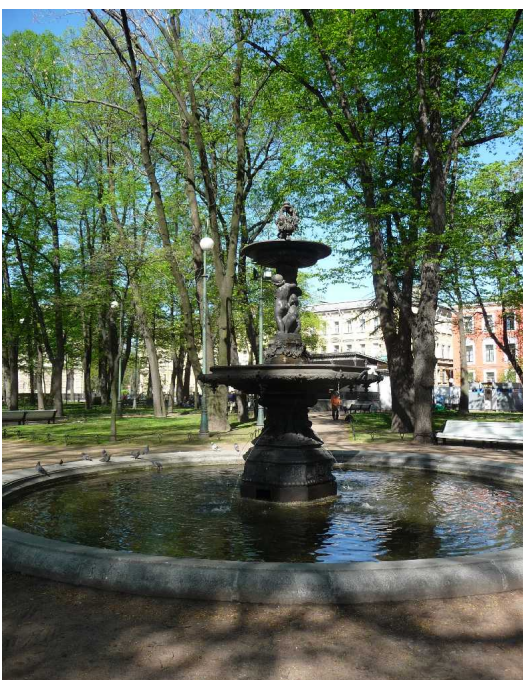
This is the neighbor house.



This is a plan over the shop, Kalinka, and what is sold in the various departments.



In the meantime we went for a stroll in the park outside.



Kjell is of course talking with a dog.





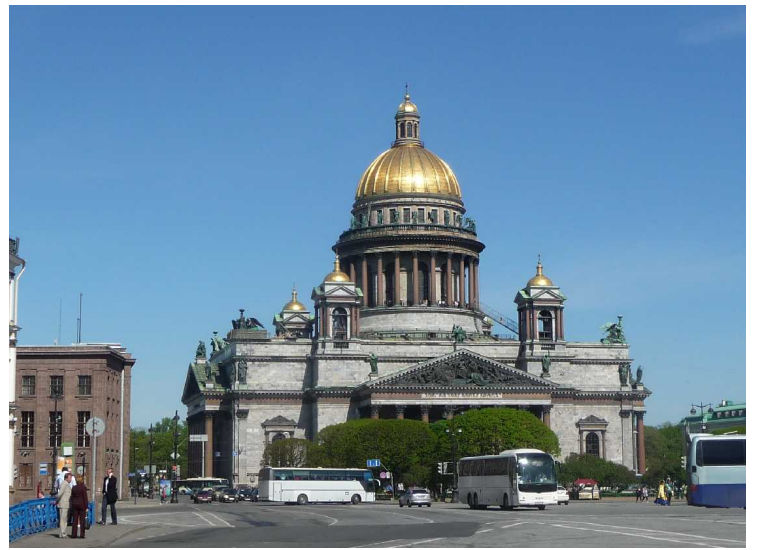
Here is a small dog that wants to take part.



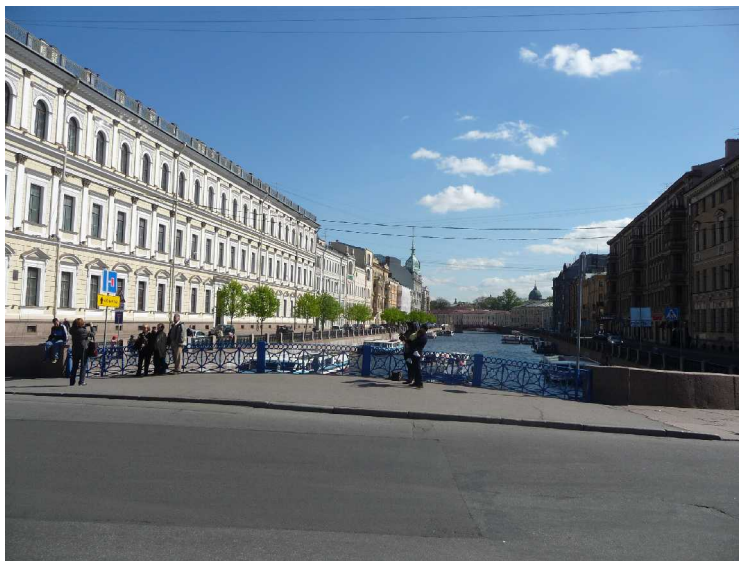
A couple of painters in the park.



Ready to depart.



[Saint Isaac's Cathedral](#). This is the 4<sup>th</sup> church that is dedicated to St. Isaac. This one was finished in 1858. It is the largest Russian orthodox cathedral in the city.



A canal near the bronze statue.



The bronze statue of Nicolas I. The horse tramples on a snake.



[Astoria hotel](#). One of the most expensive hotels in the city.  
It is 100 years in 2012



This building lies beside the hotel.  
It has been [The Embassy of Germany in Saint Petersburg](#).



A limousine on the square in front of the bronze statue.  
The square is named [St. Isaac's Square](#).



A wedding couple is being photographed.



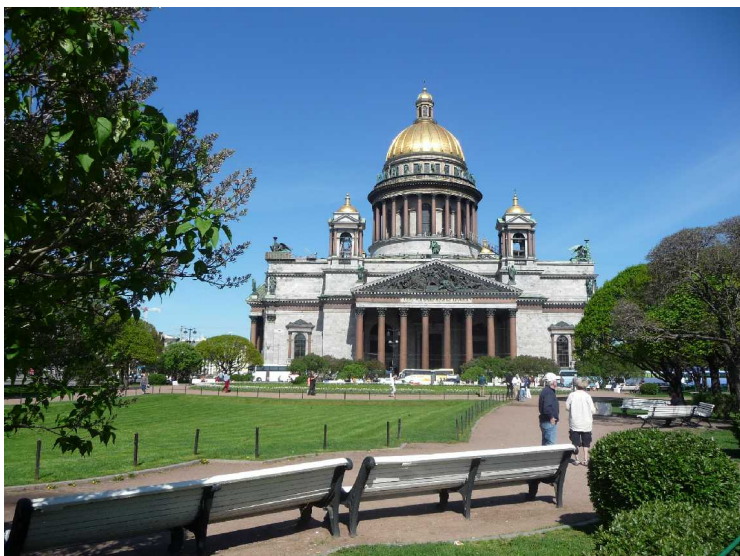
This is quite common here, especially on Saturdays.



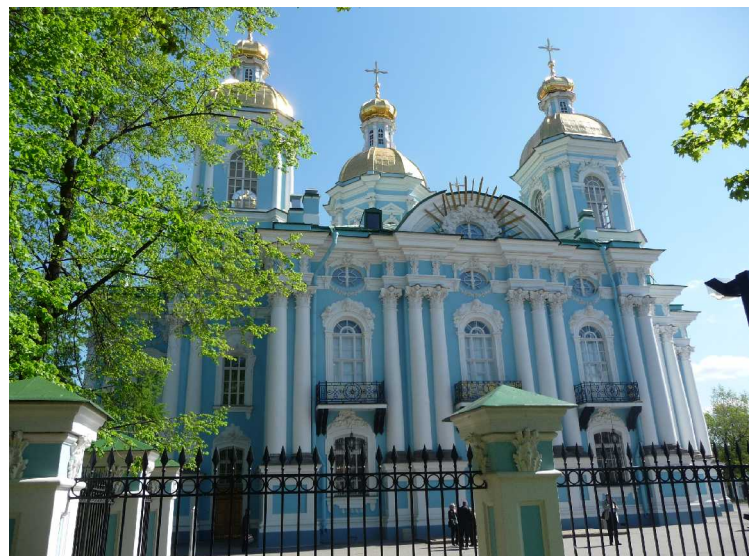
Nice car.



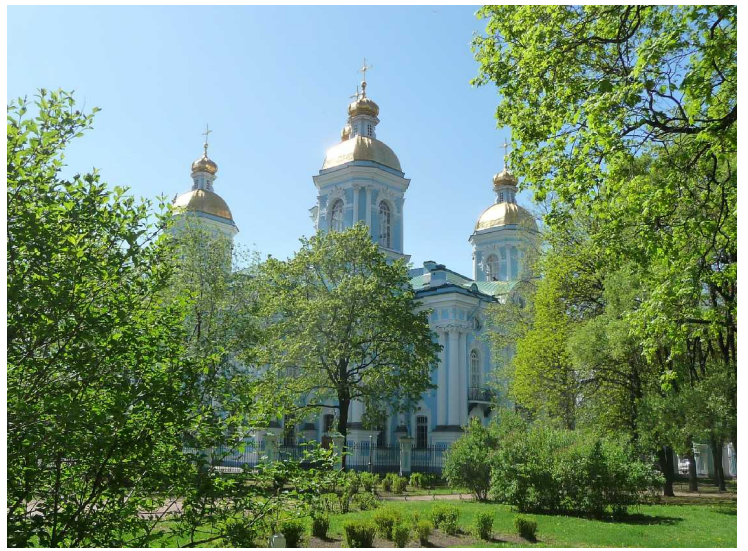
More pictures from the square.



A last picture of the Isaac's cathedral.



This is a church near the park where we ate our lunch.  
It is the [Naval Cathedral of St. Nicholas](#)



The church

A fountain in the park.



The church once more.



There are sightseeing boats on the canals.  
This is the [Kryukov Canal](#).



After we had finished the lunch boxes we were going on to Pushkin and the Catherine palace. See next chapter.