

# THE RENAISSANCE OF ELEGANT TRAVEL

*The Grand Tour was a travel term  
invented by an Englishman,*

Richard Lessels, in his 1670 book “*Voyage to Italy*”. By the eighteenth century the roads of Europe were busy with elegant carriages taking gentlemen – and some ladies – to complete their education in Paris, Vienna, Dresden and Prague. It was a small world, in which travellers often met each other in post houses, salons and royal courts.

At Exeter International, when we arrange a tour for you, the history of travel is a central part of our thinking. Many of our destinations in Russia, Central and Eastern Europe were on the Grand Tour and we feature many of the sights which were required viewing then.

In the age of the internet and the virtual tour, when there is so much information available about where to go and what to see, we like to think that you need people like us to make sure that your own Grand Tour is exactly as it should be.

Tailor-made travel and small tours of no more than 20 people are our speciality. Perhaps you know what it is that you want to see, and you will find it in the following pages; but if not, with our unique access, local knowledge and contacts in all of our destinations, we are always available to design a tour that gives you not only all that you want to see but, we hope, more than you expected.

Our offices in St Petersburg and Moscow are under the direction of Igor Lipovetsky, a veteran of the Russian travel industry. This enables us to provide an experience of the destination at another level. Our Russian offices also arrange luxury travel for discerning Russian travellers to the rest of the world. In our US office my colleague, Greg Tepper, has been in the travel business for fifteen years and is recognized as the premier specialist in Russia and Eastern Europe. I myself lived in St Petersburg for over two years. This is what we mean by the Exeter difference: when you talk to us about the Silk Road or Imperial Russia,

*you know that  
we speak from experience.*

Ala Osmond, *Managing Director*