

Wonders of nature

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Nature sometimes creates unique objects that can amaze by their beauty even the most sophisticated and skeptical people. Probably that is why regularly varied organizations, such as TV-channel BBC and the company CNN, generate lists of the most interesting miraculous objects worldwide.

Lake Baikal, Irkutsk Region



One of Russia's most famous natural wonders and the symbol of Siberia, Baikal is both the largest lake and the largest source of fresh water in the world. In the summer, you can travel to Olkhon Island and encounter smiling Baikal seals. During the winter, the lake turns into a gigantic ice rink and attracts snow-running enthusiasts. The closest cities to Baikal are Irkutsk and Ulan-Ude, both of which are well connected to other big cities by plane and train.

Altai Mountains



You may know that these mountains are often compared with the Alps because of their picturesque views and vast green meadows. The highest point is Mount Belukha, a UNESCO World Heritage site and part of the Golden Mountains of Altai. Russians call it Belukha, which comes from the word *bely* (“white”), since its peak is covered with snow year round. The nearest cities to the Altai Mountains are Gorno-Altaysk and Barnaul, both of which have plenty of connections onward to other destinations.

Elton Lake, Volgograd Region



Lake Elton is one of the most mineral-rich lakes in the world, making it kind of like Russia's answer to the Dead Sea. Framed by the endless chamomile steppe, the saltwater basin is easy to reach by bus from Volgograd, Saratov or Astrakhan.

Curonian Spit, Kaliningrad Region



Enjoy stunning views and long walks along the sand dunes at the scenic Curonian Spit National Park in western Russia. Almost a million tourists come here each year to enjoy dunes the size of multistory apartment complexes, tranquil pine forests and Baltic beaches that stretch on for kilometers. You can easily get there from Kaliningrad by bus.

Elbrus, Kabardino-Balkaria



Mount Elbrus, located in the Caucasus, is actually a composite volcano. It is the highest mountain in Russia, but you can get a good view without climbing to the top. Plus, climbing to the top of Elbrus is a serious endeavor that requires preparation and a professional guide. The closest big cities are Nalchik and Mineralnye Vody. From there, you can take local transport to Terskol, the most area's popular resort town.

**Thank you for
your attention**