

## Baikal Ice Marathon-2016

*Russia’s most exotic marathon in the superb environs!*



### XII edition of Baikal Ice Marathon Special "Spirit to Preserve" Package



Dear guests,

Marriott continues to grow, and expanding globally has reached across another cultural border of this unique part of Russia, and the area of the world heritage site of Lake Baikal in Siberia.

The opening of the first International hotel in Siberia - Courtyard by Marriott Irkutsk City Center -added a mosaic stone to the rich 350-year history of Irkutsk. And I believe this will take its great share in attracting more travelers to this beautiful area as well as enhance meetings and convention industry of entire Siberia.

The vicinity of the Sacred Lake Baikal and Marriott’s Spirit to Preserve ties very well into Marriott’s® Strategy for Contributing to Environmental Conservation:

”With an increase in global travel comes corporate responsibility for mitigating our business impact on the natural environment. Both in our hotels and beyond, we seek to understand and act on the direct and indirect environmental impacts of our business operations.” For more information visit [www.marriott.com/spirittopreserve](http://www.marriott.com/spirittopreserve)

Wolfgang Koller,  
General Manager, CY by Marriott Irkutsk City Center



## Baikal Ice Marathon & Spirit to Preserve Tour Package Program

Day 1, March 04, 2016

*Welcome to Irkutsk – Siberia's Microcosm and the gateway to Lake Baikal!*

Upon arrival in Irkutsk – we shall be there at the airport to meet you for a further transfer to the **Courtyard by Marriott Irkutsk City Center Hotel** – the -1<sup>st</sup> International hotel of world-famous chain in Siberia.

*Note: On the eve of its opening in 2011 this Marriott hotel in Irkutsk supported Baikal Ice Marathon "For preservation of clean water" and having covered some costs of the Russian participating runners, became the partner of this one-of-a-kind foot race in the world on Lake Baikal...*

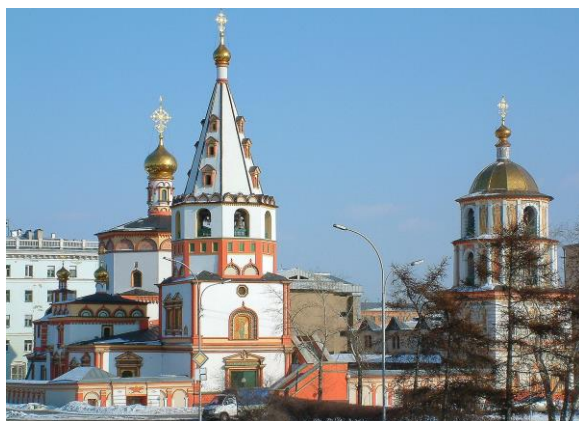
When checking in at deluxe rooms of the Irkutsk Courtyard by Marriott located in the historical and present downtown part of the city, enjoy welcome-drink, and after some time at leisure meet your professional bilingual guide at the lobby for a sightseeing tour of the city of Irkutsk often referred to as the Paris of Siberia, in the past.

During the city tour you shall visit the most atmospheric sites of Irkutsk including Znamenskaya Orthodox Cathedral famous for a rich collection of icons; graves of the Decembrists' revolutionaries who were exiled by the tsar to Siberia for the ill-fated attempt to overthrow the tsar in December, 1825; and grave of so-called Russian Columbus –Gregory Shelekhov – an early Russian explorer of Alaska. We will also then have opportunities to take pictures of richly carved old-style wooden houses, see the Monument to Russian Pioneers of Siberia topped by the bronze figure of Alexander-the-3rd, the White House of Siberian Province as well as visit the local bazaar.

After dinner served at the hotel we welcome you to one of the cozy meeting rooms of the hotel for the slides presentation of winter Lake Baikal and overview of Baikal Ice Marathon followed by an orientation lecture on the upcoming conditions of the marathon ice course. During this lecture – a special briefing for the guests of Courtyard by Marriott done about the Baikal ice Marathon features and peculiarities of winter ice on Baikal. You will learn the difference between ridge ice and hummocks, pancake and brash ice, as well as you will become the first this year to get pre-start registered for your distance at the XII Baikal Ice Marathon.

*Note: The "Baikal Ice Marathon- Marriott "Spirit to Preserve package" being an exclusive offer provides you more opportunities to run on the Baikal ice having a 3 distances choice: full marathon distance of 42 km 195 m, half marathon distance of 21 km, and 15-kilometer distance.*

Overnight at the Courtyard by Marriott Irkutsk City Center.



## Day 2, March 05, 2016



After breakfast we check out from the Marriott for a transfer to Listvyanka settlement located in the outflow of the Angara river from Lake Baikal and 62 km from the city of Irkutsk.

Approaching Baikal we stop in the source of the Angara River from Lake Baikal near the Shaman rock associated with many popular legends. After taking pictures here and learning about some ancient customs of local people, we proceed a short distance further to have lunch of tasty Siberian-Baikal cuisine to be served at a very popular "Proshly Vek" (meaning "Past Century") water front restaurant. After lunch we will have a guided tour of Baikal Ecology Museum which has a nice display of unique exhibits of the lake's flora and fauna, see an interesting video about Lake Baikal and also visit the Baikal fresh water seal aquarium. After the tour of this interesting museum we shall drive to check in at the Legend of Baikal Hotel located on the shore of Baikal right opposite the Shaman Rock in the source of the Angara river.



After check in and accompanied by a guide we shall undertake the checking the ice/training walk on the ice of Lake Baikal near the course of the 9-th Baikal Ice Marathon. Perhaps, some of you will already try to run on the lake preparing for the upcoming the next day great foot race on glorious Baikal.

In the evening – last briefing and issue of starting bibs. Then enjoy special Marathon Pasta-Dinner .

## Day 3, March 06, 2016 – XII Baikal International Ice Marathon

After early breakfast – transfer of the registered runners to the start of the Baikal Ice Marathon course on the opposite eastern shore of Lake Baikal , at the station of Tankhoy. Your special "Marriot's Spirit to Preserve" package allows you to take up to 2 accompanying persons with you on to the marathon ice course, and they can join you as observers and encourage you during the whole time you run your individual distance at the Baikal Ice Marathon.

10:30 – Final Baikal Ice Marathon Course registration at the start line.

11:00 – Start of the IX-th Baikal Ice Marathon event ( 6 feed & drink station shall be operating , support team and hovercrafts available) .

As the participant of the "Spirit to Preserve" package you will have more control time to qualify yourself as the finisher of the Baikal Ice Marathon ( control time will depend on the distance you choose) .

17:00 – 17:30 – after the completion of the foot race – transfer to your hotel. 18:30 - award ceremony, press-conference followed by Gala Dinner.



## Day 4- March 07, 2016 – your special extension tour itinerary begins:



Today we explore the nearby premises of the Pribaikalsky National Park, one of the largest in Russia, covering an area of some 417,000 hectares and encompassing much of the western shoreline of Lake Baikal. It presents a landscape of mountains and sub-alpine meadows, coniferous forests and steppes. Today we aim to explore by snowmobile and husky sleds something of the taiga-woods that cover the wild backcountry. The forested shoreline around Baikal is home to the brown bear, the “Lords of the Taiga”, as well as elk, deer and moose. Departing after breakfast we will journey towards the Chelpanov Meadows, getting the feel of our snowmobiles and practising riding them across this pristine landscape, before taking the opportunity to enjoy a ride through the area on Siberian husky sleds.

We will have an exciting trail and thrilling ride in the great outdoors with spectacular views of the taiga-woods enchanted in snow, led by professional dog sledding musher and the owner of the Baikal Sled-Dogs Center- Oleg Tyuryumin, and with 2 dog-champions of Russia – Bell and Jazz. We will ride true and unique breed of the Kamchatka huskies developed by nature with no an intrusion. These riding dogs have in the ancient past inherited their ancestors’ – wolfs’ - exceptional quick-wittedness...And after few generations that were spent on the shores of Lake Baikal these great outdoor dogs ,surely, acquired another specific feature in their character: this is greatness of that Energy that Baikal grants any being living in harmony with Mother Nature.



Under the expert guidance of the mushers – Oleg Turumin and his wife Natasha who’re hooked on winter wilderness -you’ll gain some understanding of the basic commands, techniques and sled control.

Returning to the meadows we then partake in a picnic lunch, enjoying some delicious smoked omul –endemic fish of Baikal (a distant relative of the salmon) or an al fresco barbecue.

This afternoon gives us the opportunity to continue our exploration of this stunning area, before returning to our hotel.

We will have some time at leisure before taking a walk to visit the local Saint Nicolas Orthodox wooden church built without use of nails in the end of the 19-th century, and that has a very nice iconostasis.

To have dinner we will walk to one of the popular restaurant serving local and Russian cuisine where we can order the meals up to one’s taste or preference.

## Day 5- March, 08, 2016

### Celebration of Maslenitsa – Russian Shrovetide Festival

Today we will discover and experience the way how Russians celebrate their “Maslenitsa” or Pancake week, a Russian folk holiday dating back to the pagan times commonly regarded as the “sun festival” at the imminent end of the winter. From Orthodox Christian ancestry Maslenitsa is the last week before the Great Lent that is the seventh week before the Easter. And since during Lent, meat, fish, dairy products and eggs are forbidden as well as parties, secular music, dancing and other distractions are excluded from the spiritual life, the Maslenitsa represents the last chance to meet with the worldly delights.

After breakfast we’ll depart for a guided tour of the Taltsy Open-Air Museum of Wooden Architecture—the place for all people to experience the history and traditions of the peoples of Siberia-Buryats, Evenks and Russians.



The Taltsy Museum is a unique display of original wooden structures scattered all over the large area and complete with great number of household items dating back to XVII-XIX cent. This one-of-a-kind exhibition including both native Siberians' and Russian sections, unfolds in a truly exciting story about Siberia's past: farmsteads of well-to-do peasant families, huts, log cabins and houses built of pine and larch-tree, broad back yards, storehouses, utensils, and even dog houses – all of them are genuine. In this museum you can take pictures of an authentic distaff, Russian fire stove with "palati" (sleeping boards), and icons placed in the so-called "red" corner and many more. Wandering around this wooden museum-village, especially when there's so much snow about an during the Pan Cake week, will be real fun as well as give an idea as to what life may have been like back in those days

After the tour of Museum one can enjoy horse sleigh ride (optional if available) which in the museum surroundings will make you feel like taking a special tour into the past Russian history, and also you'll be involved in a number of traditional Russian folk games.

For those who like a quick ride, the employees of the museum "Taltsy" usually build a traditional Russian slide and a snow carousel. To ride down here the Russian slide claimed to be the longest one in Siberia people use cow and sheep hides that were previously soaked in warm water and then left to freeze. People queue up to experience sliding down the track as fast as the wind – the insiders of this one-of-a-kind "slide sports" confirm that it is possible to reach a speed of 50 km per hour going down from the top of the slide to the Angara river bank. For the lovers of another old tradition, the employees of the museum also erect an old fashioned Russian snow carousel, on which you can prove your sporting spirit not only by trying to turn the carousel as fast as you can, but simply by your ability to stay on the toboggan...

After much fun in the museums great environment and historical outdoors, we then will have tea party with pancakes –the "bliny" - essential element of Maslenitsa celebration popularly taken to symbolize the sun. Round and golden, they are made from the rich foods still allowed by the Orthodox traditions: butter, eggs, and milk. We will eat the "blynis" in the village pub of the Museum the way Russian people in Siberia usually do (with honey, sour cream, moss berries etc.)

After having enjoyed our time spent at the "Taltsy" Wooden Architecture & Ethnographic museum in the open-air we shall drive to Irkusk for dinner and overnight at the Courtyard by Marriott Irkutsk City Center hotel.



## Day 6- March 09, 2016

### Exploring and learning the culture of the native Buryat people in Ust-Orda.

After breakfast we depart to the Ust-Orda settlement – the central town of the Buryat national district located about 70 km away from the city of Irkutsk. Counting the remaining of 45 km to Irkutsk from the Taltsy museum total distance to drive shall be 115 km. En route our way we shall stop at the holy «obo»- sight of worship by local shamanist believers where following the ancient local customs you'll be invited to "sprinkle some vodka or milk " and tie ribbons on the bushes as if to do offering to the local master-spirits and win them over.

Upon arrival in Ust-Orda we shall drive to the Metelitsa ( meaning "snow storm" ) guest center to check in at this cozy lodge ( rooms with modern amenities) . Then enjoy a tasty dinner and have an overnight at this cozy Metelitsa guest lodge.



This full day we will be exploring the town of Ust-Orda populated mostly by the Buryats, a native Siberian people whose history and culture closely relate to that of their southern Mongolian neighbors. The largest of the indigenous Asian tribes in the region, the Buryats are spread across Siberia, stretching from the Mongolian border to the western fringes of Lake Baikal. The area around Ust Orda is the heart of the shamanism religion, believed to have been the oldest practiced form of this ancient worship.

We shall have a guided tour of the local Buryat National Ethnography Museum which excellent exhibition has on display a great number of interesting items relating to ancient archeological and old shamanistic past. A visit to the museum today will enlighten us on the traditions, lives and cultural mores of these fascinating people.

After having lunch we will proceed to meet famous Buryat artist – a celebrity, handicraftswoman and designer Angelica Alsatkina- at her workshop premises. We'll see Angelica or her apprentices at arts work, watch the working hands of masters in process, and hear their explanations about why and how they do it, what moves them... They will, certainly, be open to you and very much honest and eager then try.



Then and back to our "Snowstorm" Guest Lodge we shall have before dinner an enjoyable visit to the Sauna which is a modern and quite a spacious facility here, and besides sweat-room and washing facilities has a nice pool for bathing. Today this "sauna" facility will be a kind of training for you to get well prepared for the upcoming in 2 days visit to a real, authentic Siberian "Banya" – steam-bath on the Olkhon Island...Your guide will explain to you some of the basic and important things about the Russian sauna called locally "banya".

After the sauna we will have dinner of authentic and very natural Buryat national cuisine featuring such entrees as some Buryat specialties –"salamat" – fried flour with Sauer cream, home made noodle and "bukhler" – soup with mutton, "pozy" –big meat dumplings cooked on steam, mutton ribs, and some more tasty entrees. Besides, the Buryat hosts will offer us to try their "tarasun"- milk moonshine/ low proof Buryat "vodka". At dinner also enjoy the Buryat folklore performance. The local folk ensemble will perform several Buryat folk songs about life of the Buryats, their love for natural world and respect for the ancestral spirits and local deities, about Glorious Sea- Holy Baikal. We will have a nice

opportunity to learn about the culture and ways of life of the western Buryats. Finally, the Buryats will invite you to dance with them their national "youhor" circle dance. After a briefing and short training exercise, you will definitely like dancing the "youhor" together with these charming Buryat people. This will be a great entertainment, trust us! Well entertained and with new interesting knowledge and experience we will spend a night at the "Metelitsa" – Snowstorm guest lodge.

#### Day 7- March 10, 2016

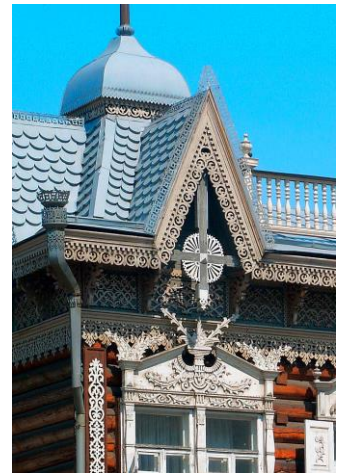
After breakfast this morning we will check out from the hospitable "Snowstorm" lodge and drive back to Irkutsk. Upon arrival in Irkutsk we check in at the "Courtyard Marriott" . After lunch served at one of the popular restaurant of the 130-th historical quarter, we will have free time until dinner. We may go to see various activities the local residents usually have during the week of Shrovetide, or just do souvenir shopping.

Our Farewell Dinner finalizing your great week in Lake Baikal area and "Paris of Siberia" -the city of Irkutsk will be arranged at a special place!

After breakfast we will have a kind of master-class to learn and experience how the omul fish is delicately smoked by the local fishermen. With no doubt the fish we smoke together today will be a tasty and special entrée for our lunch featuring also Siberia meat-dumplings soup and locally popular appetizers and salads.

#### Day 8- March,11, 2016

After breakfast check out from the hotel for a transfer to the airport to board your flight back to home.



**Have an enjoyable flight back home!**

