

# The 27th Annual Russia Clown Tour November 5-20, 2011 Information Packet #1

June 9, 2011

**Dear Clowns! Welcome!!!**

**Congratulations on registering for the 27th Annual Russia Clown Tour  
REGISTRATION PACKET #1**

**Enclosed in this registration packet you will find:**

- **introduction to Clowning**
- **Tour Package and Cost**
- **Flight Information**
- **passport and visa information**
- **Introduction to Maria's Children**

This is going to be an amazing trip filled with clowns from all walks of life from across the world. In Russia, our arrival is eagerly awaited by a host of Russian friends who love and care for us as their family ensuring an incredible cultural experience with Russia and its people, culture, and passions.

We will spend the 1st week in Moscow and the 2nd week in St. Petersburg. Our clown family will assemble from many corners of the globe last years trip included Italy, Quebec, Australia, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Japan, and the USA. Together we will transform into a troupe deeply bonded by shared experience and love!

I am honored to be serving you in my third year as the Russia Tour Coordinator. If you are new to the world of clowning **I am here for you**, to help you in anyway to prepare for this trip! I have been traveling with clowns in Russia since 1997 and can answer specific questions you have about the nature of this tour. If I don't know the answer, I will find out who does.

We are thrilled about your participation and feel confident that you will cherish your experience! Hundreds of people from all walks of life who have gone on these trips almost universally vouch for them as deep, fulfilling, beautiful once-in-a-lifetime experiences—a feeling echoed by the thousands of people touched by this outreach. We're looking forward to working and playing with you!!!

Peace and Love,

Morrighan Clinco

[theclinco@yahoo.com](mailto:theclinco@yahoo.com)

+1 . 520 . 906 . 8177

# Introduction to Clowning!!!

The daily itinerary will not be available from our Russian team until closer to November, but this is what a typical day looks like

Breakfast at the Hotel

Travel by bus to clown at a hospital or orphanage

Lunch

travel by bus to another clowning gig

Dinner

Some of the institutions we clown for are very small and on those days we will split into groups but come back together for meals. We also have many clowning opportunities on the streets, in restaurants and everywhere we go in Russia.

If you come to this tour with a sense of joy and generosity, **there is no “right” or “wrong” way to be a clown**, below, however, are some tips to prepare for success.

---

➔ *Take some time putting together your costume.*

Make sure your clown costumes and shoes are comfortable, even if you feel silly. Thrift stores and yard sales abound with inexpensive clown wear. *Don't overpack*, but bring enough costumes and clothes for the trip. Though November can be very cold the places where we clown are well heated, so *think in terms of layers*. You will also find endless use for *many pockets*. I highly recommend a *red nose*, but this is of course, up to you, remember a clown can be anything you imagine it to be!!!

➔ *Take some time getting toys together.*

Lots of experienced clowns like to **carry a bag full of props and goodies**. There are certain clown tools that never run out of uses, here is a quick list of props or toys you might want to stock up on.

BALLOONS BALLOONS!, (1<sup>st</sup> time clowning and don't know what to do? Try blowing up balloons everywhere you go!),

puppets

stickers

bubbles

face paints

musical instruments

sound makers

woopie cushion

a personal photo album about your life at home, and where you are from

pen and paper

magic tricks

\*\*\*don't stop there, find anything that is funny or interesting to you, lots of folks like abstract props like big pieces of fabric, funnels, or string get creative!!!!\*\*\*\*

⇒ *You don't have to be funny (seriously)*

Clowning is a way to connect to people and share love, don't worry about getting laughs, they will come naturally!

⇒ *Gifts when Clowning*

Gift giving is a wonderful and beautiful thing, but can also be challenging as a clown. Often, if you begin giving out gifts in a *group* of kids you will be transformed in their eyes from a "funny loving clown" to "vending machine." If you want to give presents away it is a good idea to do it with *individual* kids you are having a personal and intimate clowning connection with! I always bring some gifts to share at the end of very special interactions. If you have lots of presents and toys, you can always donate extra materials to Maria's Children who will get toys to children in need and uses donated clown costumes and materials full time.

---

## **A serious note about clowning:**

While clowning can be wild and full of energy, it **very important** to remember that **WE ARE GUESTS** when we visit institutions.

### **BAD BEHAVIOR CAN JEPORDIZE CHANCES TO RETURN IN FUTURE YEARS**

This means while we encourage you to be wildly experimental in your clowning, that **we need to be respectful** of any rules or requests made about behavior. Generally, "potty" humor is unwelcome by institutions directors including, fake poop, pants dropping, and over the top farting. Please come with an open mind, and if someone from the team makes a request about your clowning, be open to the suggestions.

The hospitals are filled with sick people and we often clown in terminal wards.

When I enter a room, until I know it is safe to go crazy, I enter with awe and bewilderment, and **MAKE NO ASSUMPTIONS** about the space I am entering, it might be a utility closet, or it may be a family at a death bed or it could be a staff break room filled with nurses, or a classroom for hospitalized children, or an individual patient.

I have found that the more I establish a relationship with people when clowning the more I can get away with. Being a clown is about connecting with people, alleviating pain and suffering, and creating loving relationships with strangers.

---

## Flight Information

The clown tour begins from your own front door, ***all participants travel in costume.***

---

### **Participants flying from North America**

We will travel roundtrip together from New York, JFK International. Clowns will check in individually from their home towns and will meet at the AirFrance departure gate.

**You are responsible for your own domestic travel to New York, we suggest a minimum of 3 hours connection time.**

If you need assistance booking a ticket please contact

Barbara Gronowski barbg57@yahoo.com

### **Going to Russia**

Depart: Saturday Nov 5 8:05 pm New York, JFK, AirFrance #007  
Arrive: Sunday Nov 6 8:30 am Paris, CDG *for transfer*

Depart: Sunday Nov 6 9:35 am Paris, CDG on AirFrance #1944  
Arrive: Sunday Nov 6 3:15 pm Moscow, Sheremetyevo

### **Returning From Russia**

Depart: Sunday Nov 20 4:40 pm St. Petersburg, AirFrance #2253  
Arrive: Sunday Nov 20 6:00 pm Paris, CDG *for transfer*

Depart: Sunday Nov 20 7:10 pm Paris, CDG, AirFrance #  
Arrive Sunday Nov 20 9:20 pm New York, JFK

---

### **Participants not flying from North America**

Clowns not flying from the USA must book their own travel to and from Russia, **you are encouraged to meet the clown tour in Paris**

To join the Paris Itinerary contact

Barbara Gronowski barbg57@yahoo.com

If you are unable to join the group ticket in Paris:

**ARRIVE IN MOSCOW SUNDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2011.** Try to book your arrival earlier in the day (arrive before 4:00pm)

**DEPART FROM ST. PETERSBURG SUNDAY NOVEMBER 20, 2011**

---

\*\*\*additional info on packing and arrival in Russia in Info Packet #2

## Tour Package and Cost

Package for participants flying from North America

- roundtrip ticket to Russia
  - visa and support documents
  - hotels
  - meals
  - transportation by tour bus
  - train ticket from Moscow to St. Petersburg
- \$4,000\***

Package for participants arranging their own travel to Russia

- visa support documents
  - hotels
  - meals
  - transportation by tour bus
  - train ticket from Moscow to St. Petersburg
- \$3,000\***

*\*Moscow and St. Petersburg are some of the most expensive cities in the world. There is a SMALL possibility that the cost of the trip will go down by several hundred dollars. Final cost of the trip will be known mid-late summer.*

We Register participants on a 1<sup>st</sup> come 1<sup>st</sup> serve basis and this trip is known to fill quickly, please make your \$500 **non-refundable** deposit as soon as you know you are joining us to secure a place. This deposit will be applied to your total trip cost. Our preferred form of payment is Check or PayPal.

---

**Total due for the trip must be paid in full by September 7, 2011**

There will be a late fee \$250, for each week payment is delayed and you may risk your chance to participate.

**Do not make your final payment until the final cost of the trip is announced!**

---

## Passport and Visa Information

To travel to Russia you need a current passport and Russian visa.

The visa application process will begin in August.

**If your passport is due to expire before June 1, 2012 or you do not have a passport, you need to get a new passport ASAP!**

It takes 2-4 weeks to process a Russian Visa. If you need your passport for other travel in the 10 weeks leading up to the Russia Tour, please alert me so we can address your visa issues early.

USA clowns will send their passport and application to a visa company in Washington DC, and will then have their documents mailed back directly to them

Clowns who are not from the USA will need to work with a local embassy or agency to obtain a visa in your individual countries. Please begin research on obtaining a visa. We will provide you with two support documents in August: a Letter of Invitation and a Voucher.

## **Closing Thoughts**

More information will arrive throughout the summer including visa information, Hotel details, and a group roster.

### **Make sure you complete the Registration process**

1. Make sure you have made your \$500 ***non-refundable*** down deposit
2. SUBMIT ONLINE REGISTRATION FORM (click link below)  
**[2011 Russia Clown Tour Registration Form](#)**

I cannot wait to meet and play with you in November! Never hesitate to contact me with questions at any time. I will be traveling throughout the summer, so I may not always be able to return your calls or emails immediately, sometimes there may be a delay of up to 2 weeks.

Coming on this trip is not a small decision, and you are all amazing for making the bold leap

Much Love,  
Morrighan Clinco  
**[theclinco@yahoo.com](mailto:theclinco@yahoo.com)**  
+1 . 520 . 906 . 8177

## An introduction to Maria's Children

In addition to the marvelous clowning experience, you will be meeting a great host of Russian friends including Maria Yeliseyeva, founder of Maria's Children, a Moscow based art program for Russian orphans and other children with special needs.

Though formally Maria's Children teaches art, in a broader sense it is saving lives. The Russian orphanage system is extremely negligent, violent, and corrupt. Children who grow up in this system lack basic personal and social skills and have very little opportunity for success when they leave the orphanage at the age of 16 or 17. Through the vehicle of art Maria's Children is giving orphans a loving caring structure and helping them to develop life skills necessary to enter the adult world.

From its humble beginning in 1993 with twelve orphans, the project has flourished. With more than 300 students, a two week summer camp, and an annual exhibition in the Moscow Central House of Artist, Maria has dreams for the project to grow.

In Moscow you will fall in love with Maria, the children, and this inspiring and romantic project which is deeply connected to the clown tour. You will have an opportunity to buy some of the beautiful art at the annual exhibition, and for the more ambitious buyer, at the annual November auction. The artwork will be some of your finest memories of the clown tour so bring an open heart and generous wallet. Some of you may consider asking your business to sponsor the purchase of a piece of art or do some additional fundraising in anticipation of the auction.

For more information on Maria's Children, and pictures of some of the art check out our website [www.mariaschildren.ru](http://www.mariaschildren.ru)