

Frequently asked questions....

1. Do I need a visa and how do I get one?

Tourist visas are required and are issued for up to 30 days. They can be extended only in case of emergency for a minimum of time. To apply for a visa you will need to get an invitation and voucher. Send us a scanned copy of your passport (valid for 6 months after you depart Russia), and your dates of travel and itinerary in Russia. When you get the voucher and invitation you must download the visa application from the Internet site of your nearest Russian consulate where you will apply for a visa. Fill it out and follow their instructions.

2. What other permits do I need?

Other permits for visitors to some areas of Kamchatka include permissions from the FSB (former KGB) and Border Guards. This is because Kamchatka is still an important military zone and also there are some areas like active mining areas which are under more control. When we arrange your itinerary and agree on a tour we will apply for this permit prior to your arrival. We also can arrange for any needed protected area entry permit.

3. Do I have to register on arrival in Kamchatka? Registration on arrival is required of all non-Russians within 7 working days of your arrival in Kamchatka. We can do this for you by making a copy on arrival of your passport, visa, and migration card (you receive and fill this out on the plane arriving in Russia).

4. Do I have to carry my passport all of the time, even in the wilderness? It depends on where you are going, but if you will be in the back country, you may leave documents and other valuables in safe storage with us.

5. Can I buy things with US dollars or Euros? The preferred currency is rubles. There are many automatic teller machines (ATMs) in both Yelizovo and Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky banks and businesses, and in villages with a "Sberbank," the federal bank of Russia, it is now possible to withdraw rubles at ATMs or from a cashier. If you want to exchange currencies or do any other transaction with a bank cashier, you must have your passport and visa with you.

6. Can I buy meals in restaurants with credit cards? Generally speaking, no. Plan to pay cash in rubles.

7. Is there an airport exit tax? There is no airport tax in Kamchatka.

8. Can I take photographs of people on the street or in the public markets? It is courteous to ask, or to at least make eye contact with the person you want to photograph, and if they say "no," to refrain.

9. Can I drink the water out of the tap? Yes! Kamchatka has some of the world's best water. On camping trips where there isn't a lot of water available we take canisters of water and also buy bottled water.

10. Should I leave a tip in a restaurant? Yes, if the service was good and friendly. This encourages good service, although it isn't universally expected, it is always appreciated. 10% is a good amount.

11. Can I use traveler's checks? No.

12. Where can I get more information if I want to travel more independently?

Contact the Yelizovo District Visitor Center, info@welcomekamchatka.ru, www.welcomekamchatka.ru, Ryabikova 1a, Central Bus Station, 2nd floor, Yelizovo, Kamchatka Region 684000, Tel. 8 961 961-8558.

13. **Are there any flights to Kamchatka from North America?** Starting July 13, 2012 to Sept. 14, 2012, Vladivostok Airlines will run weekly flights to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky from Anchorage, Alaska. Contact Vladivostok Airlines at info@vladivostokairlines.us for ticketing information.