



Guest Senior Travel Reporter, WPP, Boston MA: Recently, I arrived in Kiev, the city where my mother's family lived for centuries before coming to America in 1906. I had been to Moscow and St. Petersburg in Russia previously. My latest venture was to the former Imperial Russian city, now the capital of the Ukraine, with a population today of nearly three million.

Getting To Kiev: I went by rail, taking a Eurostar scenic route from London under the Channel to France, Belgium, Germany Warsaw and on to Kiev. It takes 40 hours in a comfortable sleeping compartment, and cost about \$500, including tips, snacks and meals.

City History: Kiev was a thriving commercial center on the Dnieper River as far back as the 11th Century. It was in Czarist Russia in the 19th Century and the Soviet Union in the early 20th Century.

In 1941, German and Romanian troops occupied Kiev for several years, with devastating casualties among the Jewish and other communities. Under Soviet domination again after World War II, the Ukraine became an independent nation in 1991.

Sights in Kiev: The Cathedral of St. Sophia has hundreds of frescos and mosaics dating back to the city's founding. St. Andrew's was built in the 14th Century Baroque style. While both were heavily damaged during World War II, restoration has been very successful.

I visited synagogues and a museum in the Jewish quarter of the city, where my ancestors and those of Star Trek's Leonard Nimoy and Bill Shatner once lived. Some 2,000 Jews now live in Kiev. Before the WW2 Nazi death camps, there were 300,000.

Hotel: Hyatt Regency Kiev, 5 Alla Tarasova Street, Kiev, Ukraine 01001, +380 44 581 1234, kiev.regency@hyatt.com. Five-star rated, it's in the Old City, and walking distance from business, shopping and historic sites. Price from \$300

Pervak Restaurant, str. Rognedinskaya, 2, Kiev, Ukraine, 235-09-62, pervak.kiev.ua. For genuine Ukrainian food, it's a downtown family restaurant. I started off with a plate of local borscht (cold beet soup). Then honey-mustard-flavored veal a la ancient Kiev, with mushroom dumplings, topped with fresh strawberries in sour cream. With a vodka, cost about \$35.