

Beginning May 1 and on through July, the former royal capital of Imperial Russia celebrates a unique annual event. Because of its location near the Arctic Circle, the spring sun shines for 20 hours a day in the beautiful old city of St. Petersburg. Nowhere else in the world can visitors attend highly professional performances of ballet, classical music, opera and military band music every evening, and then stroll the streets and enjoy the outdoor cafes under the midnight sun until the wee hours of the morning.



One of the highlights we enjoyed during our visit last year was the gathering of uniformed military bands. They hailed from Russia, France, Germany, Holland and many other nations of the world. They performed and competed for prizes at Yubileiny Sports Palace. Then, on Nevsky, the city's main street, they marched to the cheers of thousands of fans and spectators.

You can have your Presleys, Jagers, Springsteins, Spears and rappers. I'll take Sousa and Elgar any time, even if I have to go to Russia to see the elegant uniforms and hear those marches played the way they were performed a century ago down America's main streets.

Check with your travel agency for schedules and tourist information, or contact the St. Petersburg Russian Federation's official sites. Email: [info@petersburgcity.com](mailto:info@petersburgcity.com) and [www.petersburgcity.com](http://www.petersburgcity.com) and [www.bandfest.ru](http://www.bandfest.ru).