



## The Summer Palaces of the Romanovs: Treasures from Tsarskoye Selo

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**Specially commissioned photographs by Marc Walter and fascinating archive images capture a bygone age of Romanov splendor that will captivate art lovers and historians alike**

Situated just south of St. Petersburg, the Russian imperial residence of Tsarskoye Selo is now more than three hundred years old. Tsarskoye Selo (“Tsar’s Village”) was once a modest estate housing a summer residence for Catherine I, second wife of Peter the Great. The building now known as the Catherine Palace was extensively rebuilt by Empress Elizabeth and then lavishly refurbished by Catherine the Great. This empress's love of art and decoration is evident in the sumptuous interiors and in the extensive park, filled with fanciful pavilions, bridges, and monuments. Catherine also commissioned the neoclassical Alexander Palace for her favorite grandson, the future Alexander I; this later became home to the last tsar, Nicholas II, and his family until their exile to Siberia. The palace is a glorious showcase for Russian art and craftsmanship in a huge variety of materials and techniques, from the mirrors and lavish gilding of the Great Hall to the blood-red beauty of the Agate Rooms, their walls lined with Siberian jasper. Tsarskoye Selo is not only a piece of art history but a living testimony to the tastes and private passions of the Romanov family. Their clothes and porcelain, their desks and bookshelves build an intimate and involving portrait of life in imperial Russia. 340 illustrations, 289 in color

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