

FREE

# CRIMEA FRIENDLY GUIDE 2013





# Crimea



Crimean peninsula located on the south of [Ukraine](#), between the Black and Azov Seas. In the southern part of the peninsula located Crimean mountains, more than a kilometer high.

Peninsula is connected to the mainland of [Ukraine](#) by several isthmuses. The eastern part of Crimea separated from Russia by the narrow Kerch Strait, a width of less than ten kilometers.

Crimea - is one of the most interesting places for tourism in Ukraine. On a very small

territory - about 26,800 square kilometers, you can find the Sea and the mountains, prairies and lakes, palaces and the ancient city-states, forts and cave cities, beautiful nature and many other interesting places.

During two thousand years, the Crimean land often passed from hand to hand. In ancient times, the Greeks colonized Crimea and founded the first cities. After them the Romans came here. After the collapse of the Roman Empire, Crimea became part of the Byzantine Empire. Here was baptized Prince Vladimir who later baptized Kievan Rus.

For a long time in the Crimea live together Tatars, Genoese and the small principality Theodoro, but in 1475, Crimea was conquered by the Ottoman Empire. More than three hundreds years the Ottoman Empire ruled the Crimea. After the Russian-Turkish war in 1783, the peninsula became part of the Russian Empire.

In 1854-1855 Crimea was occupied forces of Britain, France and Turkey. During the battle near Balaklava death many famous Britons, including Winston Churchill's grandfather. And now, the highest order of the British armed forces - the Victoria Cross minted from metal captured near Balaklava Russian guns.



In 20th century, Crimea became a center of tourism. In February 1945, in the Livadia Palace, Yalta Conference took place, which was decided the fate of Europe after the war. After the Second World War, Crimea is the main place of rest for the inhabitants of the Soviet Union. In Soviet times, the remote beaches of Crimea are becoming popular among nudists and gays. In 1991, Ukraine became independent, Crimea became part of Ukraine as autonomic republic. Near Simeiz village is the most popular beach for gays from Ukraine and Russia. In our time, Crimea - the most popular destination for Ukrainians and citizens of Russia, every year it attracts more than five million tourists.



## Transport



Like every popular resort in Crimea is developed transport infrastructure. Major transportation center in Crimea is Simferopol - the capital of Autonomous Republic. Most guests arrive at the railway station of Simferopol, and then go to the coast. More than a century the railway is the most popular type of transport in Ukraine and Russia. Trains arrive here from almost all the big cities of Ukraine as well as in

Moscow, Sankt-Petersburg, Minsk and other cities. By train you can go to Kerch, Feodosia, Evpatoria and Sevastopol. To find and buy a train ticket, please visit [Ukrainian Railways](#) and [Russian Railways](#). Tickets that you bought on the website must be obtained from the ticket office. Only on the intercity express you can print QR code yourself. On each ticket is name of passenger at the time of boarding the train need to show your passport. The trip from Kiev to Simferopol takes 13-15 hours, from Kharkov to Simferopol 7-9 hours. If you decide to take the train - better buy second-class tickets, wagons should be air-conditioned. The train can not have restaurant wagon, you can buy water and food from the conductor or in stations. Not recommended to buy fish at the stations, the red and black caviar - can be of poor quality.



In Simferopol is international airport. In summer here fly flights from Kiev, Moscow, Istanbul, Tel Aviv, Frankfurt, and other cities. In the airport has three terminals, plans a new transit terminal. At Simferopol voyages low cost [wizzair airline](#).

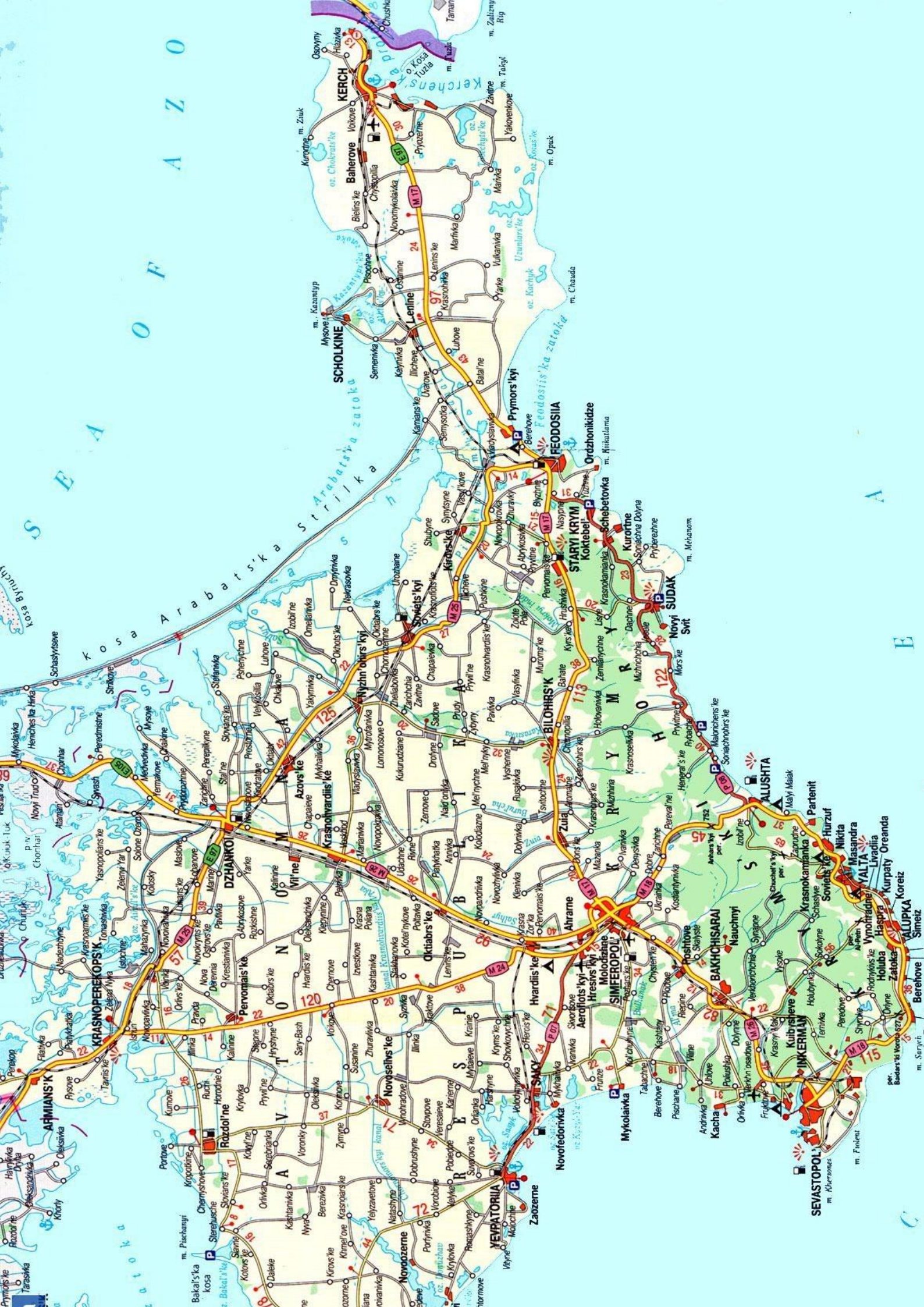
From the railway station of Simferopol you can get to almost all settlements of Crimea.



The bus station is located a few hundred meters from the clock tower. To Alushta and Yalta you can take the trolleybus. Trip to Alushta by trolleybus will take one and a half hour, to Yalta - two and a half hours. Fare - about one euro. The distance between Simferopol and Yalta about 86 kilometers - the longest trolleybus route in the world. Bus trip to Yalta will take about two hours to Simeiz - two and a half hours. Cost of travel to Yalta - about three euros. A taxi ride will cost about 40-50 euros.

Not recommended to exchange money near the station, there is usually disadvantageous course. It is better to change your money in a bank, there need to show a passport. In many supermarkets can pay by card. In small shops, restaurants take only cash. Your [personal guide-interpreter](#) will make your trip more interesting and saves you money.







## Accommodations

A few years ago there was a problem to find a hotel or apartment in Crimea. But in 2012 the situation changed. Before Euro 2012 was created many local sites for search housing, as well many Crimean hotels and hostels become parties to international reservation systems. Most popular in Ukraine international reservation system is [Booking.com](http://Booking.com) and [Agoda.com](http://Agoda.com). You can use the local booking systems such [Vlasne.ua](http://Vlasne.ua), [Hotels24.ua](http://Hotels24.ua). Only a small part of the Crimean hotels have their own sites, or submitted in reservation systems. Most small hotels are working



without any advertising. Guests find these hotels through special agents who take a commission of 10-20%. Peak season is in August, this time quite difficult to find good accommodation. Prices in August can be quite expensive. The most expensive place to stay and it Simeiz and Foros, much cheaper you can rent a house in the big cities and the West Coast. Among gay men also popular resorts Lyubimovka and Uchkuevka located near Sevastopol. For tourists the most interesting

southern coast of Crimea, especially Alushta, Gurzuf, Yalta, Alupka. Crimea, a favorite place for the Russians. Therefore the whole infrastructure of Crimea prepared for Russian tourists, almost no signs in English and hard to find [English speaking guide](#). For foreign tourists the most convenient to live in Yalta. Here, good transport infrastructure, a lot of hotels and restaurants. Accommodation in Yalta, a little cheaper than in nearby villages.

The most popular hotels of Crimea:



come here and all prices are higher.



[Palmira-palace](#), [Hotel Yalta-Intourist](#), [Oreanda](#), [Park- hotel Marat](#), [Bristol](#).

In Simeiz you can stay in this hotels:

[Hotel Simeiz](#), [Hotel Favor](#), Assol or private apartments.

Near the train station and the airport often offer flat, but prices much higher. Accommodation is better to book in advance. The most comfortable time to visit Crimea is in July and August. In August lot of people



## Look around

What you can see in the Crimea. Let's start with the South Bank.



**Nikitsky Botanical Garden.** Located in the village of Nikita, a 15-minute drive from Yalta. Its founder and first director was C. Steven (1812–26), a Swedish botanist and the chief inspector of silkworm breeding in the southern Russian Empire. The garden area is about 280 hectares. It has the largest collection in Ukraine - more than 30,000 plants from different corners of the world, including 2,000 varieties of roses.



**Massandra winery.** Located a few kilometers from Yalta, in Massandra village. Massandra - the oldest wine cellar in Ukraine built in 1894. The main cellar built in 1897 consists of seven tunnels. The length of each of 150 meters and width of 5 meters. Tunnels fan out from the central gallery. They have always maintained a constant temperature 10-12 °C, that is the best for wine. Massandra wine collection (about one million bottles) is the largest in the world and is listed in the 1998 Guinness Book of Records. In

"Massandra" are old Main wines sellers for many years storage and processing of wine, the first own wine was produced in 1898. In the tasting room, you can taste the winery's products.



**Massandra Palace.** Located at the top of Massandra, five kilometers from Yalta. The palace was built as a summer residence of the Emperor Alexander III. Construction was completed after the death of the emperor in 1894. The new Emperor Nicholas II built his own residence at Livadia. Near the fountain planted oldest redwoods in Crimea, seedlings which had been brought from the Russian colony in California. In Soviet times there was a summer residence for state leaders. Today palace is a museum.



**Yalta Zoo** located near the highway Yalta Sevastopol, two kilometers from the bus station. This is the first private zoo in Ukraine, founded in 1995. Here you can see native and exotic animals, and even feed them. The zoo is home to over 120 species of animals and birds, even a family of albino lions. Not far from the zoo is the highest waterfall in Ukraine - Uchan-Su, 98 meters height.





**Livadia Palace** located in Livadia village, three kilometers from Yalta. The most famous building - the white palace built by architect Krasnov in 1910 for Emperor Nicholas II. This was his main summer residence. In February 1945, there took place the Yalta (Crimea) Conference of Heads of Government of coalition - the USSR, the USA and the UK. During the conference in the Livadia Palace housed the whole American delegation led by U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Now the palace is a museum. It is sometimes used by the administration

of the President for international summits.



**Castle "Swallow's Nest"** located in the village of Gaspra, 8 km from Yalta. It was built by architect Sherwood Projects in 1912 on Cape Ai-Todor on a cliff, 40 meters in height. During the earthquake in 1927, part of the rock collapsed into the sea, but the building is almost unaffected. This small castle became a symbol of the Crimea, and a popular destination for excursions by boat. Near the castle is a small observation platform and souvenir market.



**Cableway to Ai-Petri.** The lower cable car station is located in the Mishor village, 10 kilometers west of Yalta. Opened in 1988 and connects the cities Mishor and Ai-Petri. There are 3 stations: lower at height of 86 meters, the average - 304 meters above sea level, and the upper 1152 m. Route length 2980 meters, the height difference between the lower and upper station is 1310 meters. Cableway is open all year. One way trip price about 6 EUR. At the top of the mountain situated souvenir market and many Tatar

restaurants.



**Vorontsov Palace.** The palace was built from 1828 to 1848 as a summer residence of the governor-general of the south of Russia, Mikhail Vorontsov. The palace was built from local stone, designed by an English architect Edward Blore and decorated in English style. In February 1945, the palace was the residence of the British delegation, led by Winston Churchill. Around the palace is a large park, founded by the German botanist Carl Kebah in 1851. The park is divided into two parts: the upper part is similar to central Russia, in the bottom part - the Mediterranean plants grow.





the assault. In the village Blue Bay is a water park.



**Foros Church.** Located on a rock 412 meters high above the village of Foros. The Church was built in 1892 in honor of Emperor Alexander III salvation during catastrophe royal train. Slightly above the church is the pass "Baidar gate." On the pass construct a symbolic gate, as a monument the end of construction of the road on the southern coast of Crimea. During a visit to the Crimea in 1787, Catherine the Great visited Baydarsky pass, but could not visit the South Coast of Crimea, because here the road ended.



**Balaklava,** one of the oldest settlements on the territory of Ukraine, now it's a part of Sevastopol. During Soviet times, it was a secret city, here it was possible to get only with a pass. In the city were located secret factory to repair submarines. After the collapse of Soviet Union factory was closed, now here is a museum of the Navy of Ukraine. In the city are the ruins of Genoese fortress Chembalo, shore batteries, and many other old military facilities. During the Crimean War here located the main camp of English - French troops.



**City-hero-Sevastopol.** Located on Heracleon Peninsula, in the South-West part of Crimea. The city was founded by the decree of Empress Catherine the Great in 1783. Four years later, when Catherine the Great came here, there was already constructed the city. Since then placed in Sevastopol Russian Navy. And today it is the main base of the Black Sea Fleet of Russia. City has experienced two prolonged siege during the Crimean War and the Second World War. In Sevastopol, you can visit many monuments, museums, see the Russian Navy ships and submarines.

In Sevastopol are many military institutes, so in the streets are so many cadets. In the center of Sevastopol is [thematic bar Q-bar](#), our territory near Russian navy museum.

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At Cape Chersonese are ruins of the [ancient city Chersonese](#). Now it is the largest open-air museum in the Crimea. Among the ruins of the ancient city, is the majestic Cathedral of Vladimir. At this place was baptized, Prince Vladimir, who baptized Russ in 988. The city preserved the remains of a basilica, is the most recognizable building of the museum. Sevastopol - one of the most popular tourist centers of Crimea, known not only in Ukraine, but also abroad.



[Bakhchisarai](#) - the old capital of the Crimean Khanate, located almost in the middle, between Simferopol and Sevastopol. In Bakhchisarai you can visit the famous Khan Palace, which for several centuries ruled the Crimean Khans from 1420 to 1783. In the east of the city you can visit the Holy Assumption Cave Monastery, founded in the time of the Byzantine Empire. At the top of nearby mountain is mountain cave city Chufut Kale, founded in the fifth century.



[Mangup](#) - cave city, located on the top of a mountain in the Bakhchisarai area. It is the largest cave cities of Crimea with area about 90 hectares. From the fifth century to 1475 here was the capital of the principality of Theodoro. The city is protected by walls and towers, and on the south side of one hundred meter cliff. At the top of the hill are remains the basilica, the palace of Tsar Alexei and ruins of the citadel of the city and defensive walls. The city has a lot of caves in which lived inhabitants of the city. Mangup was conquered by Turkish troops, after

half-year siege.



**Crimea caves.** In Crimea there are about three thousand caves, some of them lead tours. The most famous caves are located near the village Perevalnoe. This [Red caves](#) and [Marble Cave](#). Red caves you can visit yourself, to get to them is not difficult, it is located two kilometers from the highway Simferopol-Yalta. This is the largest cave in the Crimea. In the Marble cave is better to go with a guided tour, it is located at a height 1000 meters on the plateau Chatyrdag.





**Spirit valley.** Mount Demerdzhi. Mountain massif South Demerdzhi located near Alushta. Top of the mountain has a height of 1239 meters above sea level. Near the mountain is a huge stone chaos, this is the result of numerous rock falls. Some of the stones weigh more than 2,000 tons. From the south-western part of the mountain is a geological reserve - "the valley of ghosts." There are a large number of stone sculptures.

This is only a small part of places, what you can see in the Crimea.









## Simeiz

Simeiz, one of the few places in the Ukraine, where gay people can feel comfortable. For over twenty years the guys come here from all over Ukraine and Russia. On a local beach, you can find interesting acquaintances, and in the evening strengthen the result achieved in the local club "Jerzy" or in a dark park. This is one of the most tolerant places in the Crimea, where people can feel free. Near Simeiz, under Cat mountain is a nude beach where you can sunbathe naked and



find interesting friends. Here, a large number of stones in which you can hide from the sun. The road to the beach is through the rocks, so here almost no walking with children. How to find a gay beach, you can ask passer guy, the main thing here is not to be mistaken. Simeiz was founded in 1901-1917 years as a holiday village, here settled the richest people of the Russian empire. Here worked most famous Russian architects of the time. Therefore in Simeiz you can find a large number



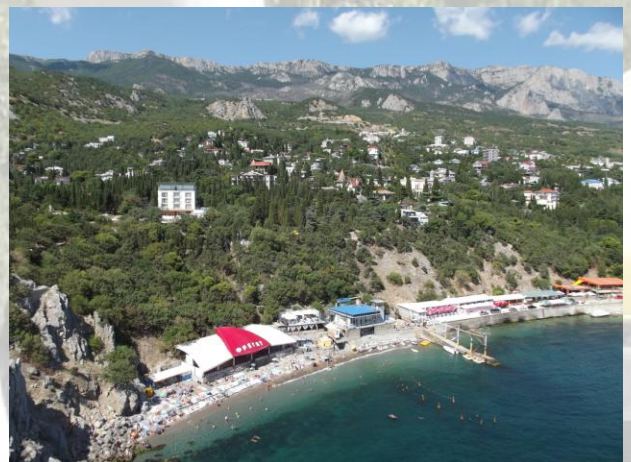
r of buildings of various architectural styles. This is a typical post-Soviet resort town, a little diluted non-traditional views. Due to topography and the conservation area, in Simeiz limited construction. In the village are not a lot good hotels, and accommodation prices higher than in Yalta. Russian guys usually rent a house, or a small guesthouse. Of the thematic clubs have only cafe "Hedgehogs" in which is theme parties and transvestite show. Show the program is



conducted in Russian. On the show program and foam party, entrance fee. At the peak of the season is better to book tables in advance. You can get to Simeiza of Yalta, on the local bus №42(30 min), 26, 36 (50 min). In Simeiz are buses from Simferopol (2.5 hours) and Sevastopol (1:00). Taxi to Yalta cost about 120-150 UAN, to Sevastopol about 350 UAN.

Near Simeiz you can visit aqua park, Cats rock, and Simeiz observatory.

You can found more, about [guide services in Ukraine here](#), or download [friendly guide book](#) for free.



Some more pictures from Simeiz.







## Traditional Crimean dishes.

Crimean traditional cuisine - a mixture of Ukrainian, Russian, Tatar, Armenian and many other culinary traditions. Besides the traditional Ukrainian borsch, in Crimea you can taste many other delicious dishes.



**Ukrainian borsch** - a traditional Ukrainian dish. It is usually cooked in meat broth. Obligatory ingredients - cabbage, potatoes, beets and tomatoes. Served with special buns with garlic and sour cream.



**Lagman** - is homemade noodles with meat in rich broth with vegetables, very tasty and satisfying dish.



**Samsa** - unusually delicious meat pies, traditionally cooked in a tandoor.



**Shurpa** - is rich broth of lamb, which is put in carrots, onions, and, depending on the recipe - potatoes or eggplants.





**Dolma** - this gentle rolls of young grape leaves, in which are wrapped a meat stuffing. By the form resembles a small stuffed cabbage, and the taste is very original dish.



**Chebureks** - a traditional dish made of thin dough stuffed with meat or cheese. Fried in sunflower oil.



**Shashlyk** - traditional Caucasian dish is grilled marinated on coals meat. Served with fresh herbs and special sauce.



**Pilaf** - a dish of Central Asian cuisine. Preparing lamb, fried in oil, onions, carrots and rice, with the addition of Zera and barberry.

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