Peter the Greats Summer Palace St. Petersburg, Russia

During the communist reign in Russia, architectural styles could best be described as bland. Fortunately, the summer palace of Peter the Great wasnt affected. Peterhof



Known as Peterhof, the summer palace of Peter the Great is a very impressive area. The palace is arranged with a central rectangle format over roughly two or three acres. This area is then surrounded by areas of wood and nature as the Russians call it. Peterhof stands out like a jewel among the bland communist structures found in greater St. Petersburg.Fountains, Fountains, FountainsAt the time of construction in 1715, Peter the Great was clearly in his fountain phase. Peterhof isnt so much a palace as a collection of some of the most impressive fountains youve ever seen. There are fountains in the front, back, each side, in the bathroom and so on. All of them are impressive and worth a look.Foremost of the fountains of Peterhof is the Great Cascade. Arriving from St. Petersburg by boat, one is offloaded on a long pier at the end of the Grand Canal. The Grand Canal cuts through the woods surrounding Peterhof directly to the front of the palace. As you proceed, you start to notice something big and colorful at the front of the palace. Welcome to the Great Cascade. The Great Cascade sites at the base of Peterhof and is more impressive than the palace. Created in the Baroque style, the Great Cascade is hard to describe. At its base is a pool a large pool with rock platforms crowned by golden statutes spouting water. Rising up from the pool to the palace are two sets of steps surrounding a plateau. The steps are a combination of black marble inlaid with gold and white marble. The steps are crowned with statues and, again, fountains, which make them a combination of sprouting water and cascading falls. All of this is built up on a collection of rock and rises over 30 feet to the base of the palace. As I *Great site* said, the Great Cascade is hard to describe. If you would like to see it, just do a search for Peterhof on your search engine of choice.Perhaps the most impressive thing about the Great Cascade is the power source. With fountains blowing water thirty to fifty feet in the air, there must be some serious pump action at work? Nope. Peter the Great created a system that runs entirely off gravity. Great, indeed!Day trips to Peterhof are hocked something fierce in St. Petersburg. While I usually disdain tourist traps, this is one you should definitely see.