

Russian Tour Companies Slash Prices on Domestic Destinations

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russian tour operators are lowering prices for domestic destinations in a battle for market share as the ruble's crash boosts demand for vacations at home, newspaper Kommersant reported late last week.

Some tours are even being sold for less than their net cost, with one-week travel packages to Crimea for June starting at 6,000 rubles (\$121) and around 10,000 rubles (\$201) for a trip to the southern region of Krasnodar, Kommersant reported. Plane tickets to Crimea typically cost 8,500 rubles (\$171) for tour operators, said Sergei Romashkin, CEO of tour operator Delfin.

“We've been operating for only two years on the domestic market, and we want to attract the maximum number of clients: We are planning to send a few hundred thousand travelers to Crimea and Krasnodar this season,” Igor Antonov, a representative of travel agency Biblio

Globus, told Kommersant.

Biblio Globus has lowered prices for weeklong trips to Crimea in June to 10,000–15,000 rubles (\$201–\$298).

The Russian tour industry saw a 30 percent rise in sales to domestic destinations in the winter of this year as the ruble's fall made travel abroad more expensive, Kommersant reported. The ruble has fallen around 30 percent to the U.S. dollar since the start of last year as low oil prices and Western sanctions over the Ukraine crisis close off investment into Russia's economy.

The number of Russian tourists to Europe fell around 30 percent in the first three months of this year compared to 2014, the European Travel Commission said earlier in May.

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