

# Vladimir Putin and Alexander Lukashenko visited Kronstadt

Vladimir Putin and Alexander Lukashenko toured the Museum of Naval Glory, a new site that is part of the Island of Forts tourism and recreation cluster in Kronstadt. The presidents also visited the Stavropegial Naval Cathedral of St Nicholas and afterwards talked with people who had gathered in the square nearby.

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St Petersburg Governor Alexander Beglov accompanied the leaders of Russia and Belarus in the Museum of Naval Glory while Kseniya Shoigu, head of the Island of Forts cluster project office, provided a commentary.

The modern complex comprising the Museum of Naval Glory and the congress and exhibition centre was built on the base of the refurbished World War I artillery arsenals. The complex will be dedicated to the history and development of the Russian fleet. The exhibition area is set to be opened on Russian Navy Day on July 30, 2023.

The centrepiece of the museum is the K-3 Leninsky Komsomol, the first nuclear submarine in the Soviet Union and the third in the world, which will be exhibited inside the building. Visitors will be able to see it from late 2023.

The creation of the Island of Forts tourism and recreation cluster has been in progress since 2019, when the President issued an instruction to set it up. The project is aimed at the comprehensive development of Kronstadt, the preservation of its historic legacy and improvement of the quality of life of its residents. The Real Heroes Camp training complex and the museum and history park have already opened. The restoration of Kronstadt's three forts – Kronslot, Peter the Great and Emperor Alexander I – is scheduled to be completed by 2025.

The foundation stone of the Stavropegial Naval Cathedral was laid down in the fortress city of Kronstadt by decree of Emperor Nicholas II in 1903 to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Russian fleet and was consecrated in his presence in 1913. The cathedral is considered one of the most significant monuments of Russian architecture and attracts the attention of tourists and pilgrims.

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