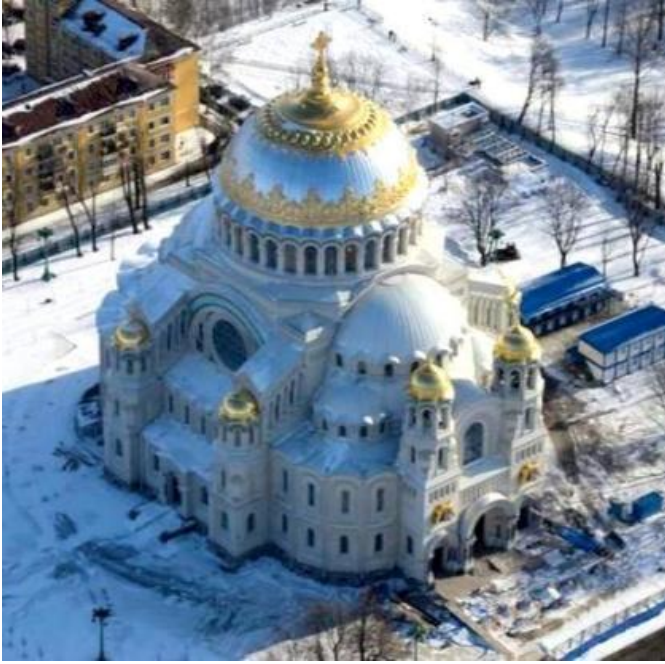


Naval Cathedral of St. Nicholas in Kronshtadt



Erected under the reign of Peter the Great, **Kronshtadt** is the city-fortress and naval base of Saint Petersburg, built on the Kotlin Island in the Neva River. Kronshtadt is famous for at least two important factors: the first one is the figure of **Saint John of Kronshtadt**, a famous priest of the 19th century who attracted a great attention and veneration thanks to his charismatic personality and was chosen as patron of the Island; the other one is the architectonic jewel of the **Naval Cathedral of St. Nicholas**, patron of sailors, whose building began in 1903 during the reign of Nicholas II Romanov.

Believed to be the largest cathedral of the navy in the world, this wonderful church can contain up to 5000-6000 faithful and combines the Byzantine style of the Hagia Sophia Cathedral in Constantinople with the Baroque taste of Western contemporary art, which makes it very bright and distinguishes it sensibly from the Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood.



Exterior and Interior of the Naval Cathedral of Saint Nicholas.





Despite the aesthetic differences, the Cathedral of St. Nicholas shares something with the Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood: their common destiny. Both churches, in fact, have been abandoned during the Soviet period since the October Revolution (1917). After a long period of decadence, the Cathedral underwent a long restoration work. This project included the many enamels decorating its walls, whose recreation has been entrusted to a friend of us, **Ivan Dyakov**. The Cathedral's enamels comprise two icons (about 2 m each) portraying St. Nicholas of Myra (patron saint of the Church) and St. John of Kronshtadt (patron saint of the island) and about **360 enamel icons** decorating the enormous chandeliers hanging from the roof of the Cathedral.

On the left, two icons of St. Nicholas of Myra and St. John of Kronshtadt; below, chandelier with the icons produced by Ivan Dyakov.



Ivan Dyakov was born in Chebarkul and lives in Saint Petersburg. He graduated in 1998 by the State Academy of Art and Design "Baron von Stieglitz" in Saint Petersburg. He became member of the Union of Artists of Russia in 2000. He practices enameling since 1995 and took part in as much as 40 artistic expositions in Russia and abroad and holds international seminars.

Group picture and an example of champlévé icon produced by artist Ivan Dyakov for the Cathedral.



Detail of the gates with saints Nicholas of Myra (patron saint of the church) and St. John of Kronshtadt (patron saint of the Island).



Inauguration of the restored Church presided over by Patriarch Kirill, primate of the Russian Orthodox Church at the presence of then-President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev and his wife Svetlana. On the right, Ivan Dyakov, creator of the enamels for the Cathedral.