

Germans from Russia: Tools, Tips, and Tricks

At the invitation of Catherine the Great, many German families settled in the Russian Empire, especially near the Volga River and the Black Sea. Come learn about how to tackle the genealogical research of your German ancestors who lived in Russia! Learn about some of the resources available and people who can support you along the way.

Objectives

1. Understand the basic history of the “Germans from Russia,” including the general areas where they lived and where immigrants to the United States later congregated
2. Learn what resources are available to aid in Germans from Russia research
3. Discover how to connect with others who can aid you in your research

History/Background

- [Germans from Russia Genealogy Introduction](#) on the FamilySearch Research Wiki
- [A brief overview of the history of Germans from Russia](#) from NDSU
- Religion: either Lutheran or Catholic in most cases (knowing which is essential!)
- Immigration to the United States:
 - Many Black Sea Germans congregated in the Dakotas
 - Many Volga Germans settled in Nebraska and the Pacific Northwest, as well as the Great Lakes region of Michigan

Resources

[Germans from Russia Handbook](#)

- **Black Sea Germans**
 - [Blackseagr.org](#)—provides an index of the St. Petersburg Lutheran consistory records (1833-1885) on FamilySearch.org (research→church/parish→St. Petersburg Church Records)
 - [Odessa3.org](#)—full-text search of the same St. Petersburg collection; some US-focused church records are also available here
 - [Saratov archives](#)—include the Tiraspol Catholic diocese records. While they are not digitized, this finding aid for the archive can help you to know if the records you need are there
- **Volga Germans**
 - [Volga.domains.unf.edu](#)—created by former Concordia University professor Brent Mai and designed to help you to identify the various names of the colony where your ancestors came from (see Locations)
 - [Wolgadeutsche.net](#)—use the Genealogies section to search by surname or colony
 - FamilySearch.org—a decent amount of Catholic records can be found here for Novokuznetsk and Nikolaevsk uyezds.

People to Contact

- [Germans from Russia Heritage Society \(GRHS\)](#)—has some Ukrainian records available if you are a member of their society; compare the books they have available in their store to the FamilySearch Catalog to find any hidden gems not at the FamilySearch Library
- [American Heritage Society of Germans from Russia \(AHSGR\)](#)—includes an [Oregon chapter](#), among others; they often produce translated transcriptions of revision lists (taxation records used like censuses in genealogical research)
- [FamilySearch Online Consultations](#)—meet with an expert in Germans from Russia research for a 20-minute consultation up to once every week to discuss personal research questions and receive research advice or direction. Consultations are free.