


PASSPORT MOSCOW

FEBRUARY 2009

www.passportmagazine.ru



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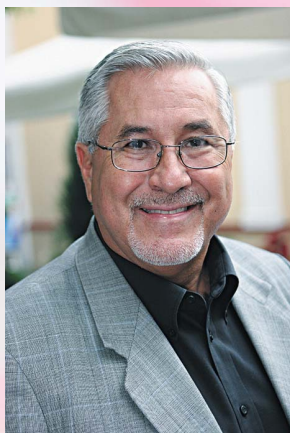
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Letter from the Publisher



John Ortega
Owner and Publisher

This month Passport introduces several new sections. A “How-To” section has been added, aimed at explaining how-to do a few things here that can be insurmountable problems. For example, how to get your car registered.

A new “Russian Festivals” section explores festivals that we should know about, yet somehow don’t; like Sretenie, Maslenitsa, and The Fatherland Defender’s Day! Our calendar section is now extended to include a little more that is going on in this city.

In this issue, we take a step on the wild side and trace the history of the Stilyagi in Russia, written by an original Teddy Boy from south London, now resident in Moscow. Charles Borden visited the workshops of ballet shoes maker Nikolay Grishko, whose painstaking craftsmanship adorns the feet of many prima ballerinas the world over.

Our regular wine tasting feature is based on Sicilian wines, all of which are available in Moscow. Olga Slobodkina-von Bromssen continues her art history series with a description of the life of Antonina Sofronova, a talented artist who created her inimitable paintings and drawings in the first half of the 20th century, and died in 1966, a virtually unknown artist.

James Quentin introduces the life of Moscow-based pilots of private jets, many of whom are foreign nationals. This is a fast, dangerous and highly rewarding lifestyle, similar to the lifestyle of their clients.

Happy Year of the Ox, and as a Chinese friend told me: may the OX of prosperity drag you all the way along a golden highway in 2009.

If there are any themes and issues that readers would like Passport to address, please write to: editor@passportmagazine.ru

Passport is hiring a full-time designer. Candidates should be creative, hard-working team-players. Knowledge of Quark or InDesign essential, English language not required.

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ПРОФИЛЬ

PASSPORT



What's On in Moscow in February

To include an event in our calendar, please email information to editor@passportmagazine.ru or call (495) 978-2012 by the 15th of the month prior to the event.



photo by Natalya Razina
courtesy of Mariinsky Theatre



Sunday, 1

Zolotoy Bouffe

New Circus, 15:00

For more information on shows throughout the month visit www.bolshoicircus.ru

Open lesson and formation of new dance groups

Irish Stage Dancing Studio "Accordance"

Accordance, 19:30

Bremen Musicians (musical)

Mir Concert Hall, 14:00 and 18:00

Through April, visit www.mir-hall.ru for times

Monte-Cristo (opera)

Moscow State Operetta Theatre, 13:00 and 18:00

Through Feb 8th, for more information visit

www.mosoperetta.ru

Tosca (opera in three acts)

Bolshoi Theatre, 19:00, Also February 23

The Barber of Seville (opera in two acts)

New Opera, 19:00

Rasputin (opera)

Helikon Opera on the Arbat, 19:00

Syava Bodryachok and the Boys (concert)

Ikra, 21:00

Edwin Krossli-Mercer (baritone, France) and Semyon Skigin (piano)

MMDM, 19:00, Chamber Hall

Monday, 2

Cheryomushki (opera)

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

Tuesday, 3

Kreutzer Sonata (drama based on Tolstoy's story)

Chekhov Theatre, 19:00

Also February 11, 14

The Pharaoh's Daughter (ballet in three acts)

Bolshoi Theatre, 19:00

Also February 4

"You, Mozart, Are A God..." (two one-act operas)

performed by Vremena Goda Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Ad Libitum young performers ensemble, and soloists of the Moscow Philharmonic Union

Taganka Theatre, 19:00, Small Stage

Brothers Karamazov (opera)

Premiers of the Mariinsky Theatre in Moscow

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

Also February 4

Wednesday, 4

Irina Korina (installations)

Moscow Museum of Modern Art

Exhibition Hall on Ermolayevsky Pereulok, 12:00-20:00

Through March 3, visit www.moma.ru

Also February 18

Norma (opera in two acts)

New Opera, 19:00

Dasha Veliko (concert)

16 Tonn, 21:00

Peasant Cantata

Helikon Opera on the Arbat, 19:00 and 20:30

Thursday, 5

Landscapes...

(photo exhibitions, painting and installations)

RuArts, 12:00-20:00

Through March 3

Figaro's Wedding (opera)

Helikon Opera on the Arbat, 19:00

Also Feb 6, 7, 8

Opening of the Year of Bulgaria in Russia

(gala concert)

Bolshoi Theatre, 19:00

Viva Verdi! (concert)

New Opera, 19:00

The King of Instruments

Carol Williams (organ)

MMDM, 19:00 Svetlanov hall

Friday, 6

The Life of Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Yermolai Solzhenitsyn (speaker)

ELE, 19:00

Aleksander Zabrin (photo exhibitions)

Moscow Museum of Modern Art, 12:00-20:00

Through February 15, visit www.mmoma.ru

Bayaderka (ballet in three acts)

Bolshoi Theatre, 19:00

Also February 7

Troll Gnyot El (rock, Rus)

XO, visit www.xoclub.ru for information

Festival dedicated to Bob Marley's birthday (Rus)

B1 Maximum, 21:00

Living Rhythm: Hip hop from St. Petersburg

16 Tonn, 21:00

Russian Romance and French Ballads

MMDM, 19:00 Chamber Hall

Songs of Our Century, and Winter Waltz (concert)

MMDM, 19:00, Theatre Hall

Oh Mozart, Mozart! (requiem in two parts)

New Opera, 19:00

Saturday, 7

The Enchanted Chest

(children's drama)

MMDM, 14:00, Theatre Hall

"The main thing is that my mother likes this song"

The Best of Pavel Volya)

16 Tonn, 21:00

Aktsyon (rock, Rus)

B1 Maximum, 20:30

Triumph of Jazz Festival

presented by Igor Butman.

MMDM, 19:00, Svetlanov Hall

Rossini Divertissement

New Opera, 19:00

Blagovest Ensemble of Sacred Music (concert)

MMDM, 14:00, Chamber Hall

Meetings in the Theatre Foyer (concert)

Russian Academic Youth Theatre, 16:00

Olga Guryakova (concert)

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

Moscow Symphonic Orchestra

Tchaikovsky Concert Hall, 19:00

Sunday, 8

Stories about Animals (Rus)

Literary meetings with Pavel Lyubimtsev

MMDM, 14:00 Theatre Hall

The Magical Flute (opera in two acts)

New Opera, 14:00

Gala concert for the jubilee of Marina Kondratyeva

Bolshoi Theatre, 19:00

Masterpieces of slavic music

conducted by Jon Marin

MMDM, 19:00 Svetlanov Hall

Die Schöne Müllerin (concert)

Constellation of Consonances Choral Theatre

MMDM, 19:00, Chamber Hall

Viktor Popov's large children's choir

conducted by Anatolii Kislyakov

Tchaikovsky Concert Hall, 14:00

Russian National Orchestra

Conducted by Enrique Mazzolla

Tchaikovsky Concert Hall, 19:00

Monday, 9

Drugie Veshi

Arts and Crafts Fair

at Project OGI throughout February

Visit www.drugie-veshi.ru

What's On in Moscow in February



Tuesday, 10

South Ossetia: war and regeneration
(photo exhibitions, graphic art, performances)
Solyanka, 12:00-20:00
Through March 1

Hamlet
Chekhov Theatre, 19:00
Also February 18

The Love for Three Oranges (opera in four acts)
Bolshoi Theatre, 19:00
Also February 12

Wednesday, 11

King Lear
Chekhov Theatre, 19:00,

The Tortoise (one-man drama)
MMDM, 19:00, Chamber hall

Giselle (ballet in two acts)
Bolshoi Theatre, 19:00
Also February 11

The Violet of Montmartre (opera)
Moscow State Operetta Theatre, 19:00
Also February 19

Martin Drew (percussion, UK), and the Grigorii Fine Trio
MMDM, 19:00, Theatre Hall

Viktor Dobronravov and the kinoprojektor ensemble
(jazz)
16 Tonn, 21:00

Coffee Cantata
Helikon Opera on the Arbat, 19:00 and 20:30
Also February 25

Thursday, 12

Roscon, (Russian Science Fiction Convention)
Visit www.convent.ru/roscon/2009/ for information
Through February 15

Dance Forever! (Celtic ballet)
MMDM, 19:00, Theatre Hall

Dialogues of the Carmelites (opera)
Helikon Opera on the Arbat, 19:00
Also Feb 13, 14, 15

Silva (opera)
Moscow State Operetta Theatre, 19:00
Also February 26

James Blunt (UK)
B1 Maximum, 12:00

James Blunt (UK)
Rossiya Concert Hall
visit www.rossia-hall.ru for information

Oleg Nesterov and the Berlin Postmen Capella
16 Tonn, 21:00

Miniature Orchestral Treasures
conducted by Jon Marin
MMDM, 19:00, Svetlanov Hall

Friday, 13

The Queen of Spades (ballet in one act)
Bolshoi Theatre, 19:00
Also on February 14

The Demon (opera in two acts)
New Opera, 19:00

Lucia di Lammermoor (opera)
Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00
Also February 16

The Flying Mouse (opera)
Moscow State Operetta Theatre, 19:00
Also Feb 20

Him and Her
(Helikon Opera soloists)
MMDM, 19:00, Chamber Hall

Vyacheslav Butusov and Yu-Piter (rock, Rus)
B1 Maximum, 21:00

Lacrimas Profundere (rock, German)
XO Club, 19:00

Saturday, 14

The Cherry Orchard
Chekhov Theatre, 19:00,
Also February 24

Cinderella (ballet)
Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00
Also Feb 15, 12:00

Cinderella (opera)
Moscow State Operetta Theatre, 12:00
Also February 22, 28

Leonid Fyodorov and Vladimir Volkov
16 Tonn, 20:00

Bravo (rock, Rus)
B1 Maximum, 21:00

Aleksander Vinitskii (jazz with classical guitar)
MMDM, 19:00, Chamber Hall

Sergei Zhilin and the Phonograph Jazz Band
MMDM, 19:00 Theatre Hall

St Valentine's Day Party: The RGBs
(electro pop, UK)
16 Tonn

Denis Mazhukov and Off-Beat
(Valentine's Day, rock and roll style)
MMDM, 19:00, Theatre Hall

Sunday, 15

Sinbad the Seafarer (drama)
Moscow New Drama Theatre
MMDM, 14:00, Theatre Hall

We Await Spring (children's show)
Vladimir Spivakov International Charitable Fund
MMDM, 14:00, Chamber Hall

The Tsar's Bride (opera in 4 parts)
Bolshoi Theatre, 12:00 and 19:00

Evgeny Onegin (opera)
New Opera, 14:00

School for Lovers (opera)
Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00
Also Feb 20

Mowgli (opera)
Moscow State Operetta Theatre, 12:00
Also February 21, 23

Masters of Arts from the Republic of Bashkortostan
Mir Hall, 18:00

Monday, 16

International Women's Club of Moscow
Thursday, February 19, 10:00-12:00
General Meeting at the Residence of the Ambassador of Oman
Staromonetny Pereulok 14, Bldg. 1, 2nd floor, Metro Tretyakovskaya
Saturday, February 7 and Tuesday, February 10, 10:00-12:00

Coffee Mornings at Le Pain Quotidien
Novinsky Boulevard 7
Friday, February 27
Embassies of the World Dinner and Masquerade Ball
For information visit www.iwcmoscow.ru

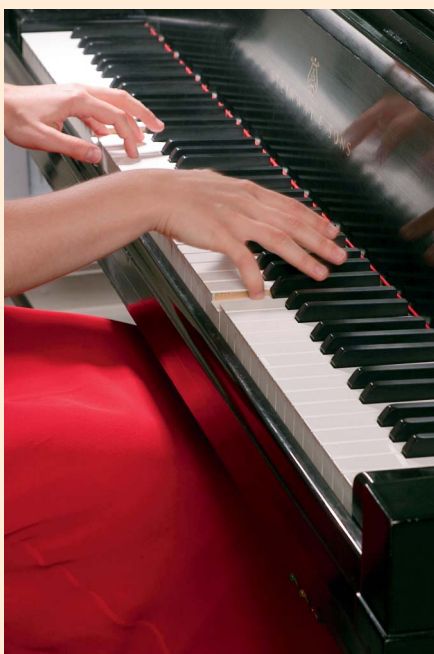
Tuesday, 17

Evgenii Onegin (drama)
Bolshoi Theatre, 19:00
Also February 19

Romeo and Juliet (ballet)
MMDM, 19:00, Theatre Hall

My Fair Lady (musical)
Moscow State Operetta Theatre, 19:00
Also February 25

What's On in Moscow in February



Wednesday, 18

The Elixir of Love (opera in two acts)

New Opera, 19:00

Also Feb 21

Evening of Classical Operetta

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

The Merry Widow (opera)

Moscow State Operetta Theatre, 19:00

Also February 24

Over The Rainbow – All the legendary members of

Rainbow (rock, US/UK)

B1 Maximum, 21:00

Concert of Popular Music

Bolshoi Theatre, 19:00

Thursday, 19

Messa di Gloria and Gianni Schicchi (opera)

New Opera, 19:00

Carmen (opera)

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

Televisor (rock, Rus)

16 Tonn, 21:00

Miniature Orchestral Treasures

conducted by Vladimir Spivakov

MMDM, 19:00, Svetlanov Hall

Friday, 20

Traviata (drama based on Verdi's opera)

New Opera, 19:00

Swan Lake (ballet)

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

Also Feb 21, 12:00

The Legend of Love (ballet in three acts)

Bolshoi Theatre, 19:00

Also February 21

Torba na Kruche (concert)

16 Tonn, 21:00

Black Jack: Maximillian Skiba and Artur8 (Poland)

with DJs Deutschmark, Rob Dirton, and Sandra

16 Tonn, 23:00

Outstanding Pupils of Dmitri Bashkirov

Johnathan Gilad (piano, France) and Dan Tchai Shon (piano, Vietnam)

MMDM, 19:00, Chamber Hall

Saturday, 21

Ballet for children

Moscow State Dance Ensemble

MMDM, 14:00 and 18:00, Theatre Hall

Agatha Christie (rock, Rus)

B1 Maximum, 21:00

Destruction (rock)

XO Club, visit www.xoclub.ru for information

A Man is Singing (Shrovetide concert)

Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble

MMDM, 19:00, Chamber Hall

Songs of a Great Country

V. Popov Children's Choir

MMDM, 13:00, Svetlanov Hall

Concert dedicated to Maria Callas

New Opera, 19:00

Solo concert of North Ossetian artist Felix Tarikati

Rossiia Concert Hall, 19:00

Sunday, 22

Ruslan and Ludmilla (opera)

New Opera, 19:00

Evgenii Onegin (opera)

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

Titans of Rock

Aleksey Kozlov

MMDM, 19:00, Theatre Hall

Moscow Puppet Theatre (musical circus performance)

MMDM, 14:00, Theatre Hall

Monday, 23

Big Cancan (dance)

Moscow State Operetta Theatre, 18:00

The Snow Maiden (ballet)

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

Wednesday, 25

The Art of Evgenii Svetlanov (video anthology)

MMDM, 19:00, Theatre Hall

Amadeus

Chekhov Theatre, 19:00

Tosca (opera)

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

Jah Divison (reggae, Rus)

16 Tonn, 21:00

Thursday, 26

From Blok to Brodsky (drama)

performed by Alla Demidova

MMDM, 19:00, Theatre Hall

Pyram and Thisbe (opera)

Helikon Opera on the Arbat, 19:00

Also Feb 27 and 28

The Tsar's Bride (opera in two acts)

New Opera, 19:00

First Moscow Festival of R&B

featuring Timbaland, Acon, Kelly Rowland, Busta Rymes

and Keri Hilson

Olimpiyskiy Sports Complex, 19:00

National Symbols of Russia

State Academy Russian Folk Choir

MMDM, 19:00, Svetlanov Hall

Loiko Gypsy Trio

MMDM, 19:00, Chamber Hall

Friday, 27

The Seagull

Chekhov Theatre, 19:00

Romeo and Juliet (ballet)

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

Also February 28

Mister Iks (opera)

Moscow State Operetta Theatre, 19:00

Tequilajazzz

16 Tonn, 21:00

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 1 (concert)

conducted by V. Ziva

MMDM, 19:00, Svetlanov Hall

The Baroque Workshop

Pratum Integrum Orchestra

MMDM, 19:00, Chamber Hall

Saturday, 28

Romeo and Juliet (ballet)

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

Jane (opera)

Moscow State Operetta Theatre, 18:00

Hamlet (opera)

Stanislavsky and Nem.-Danchenko MTh, 19:00

Chizh and Co. (rock, Rus)

B1 Maximum, 21:00

All Beethoven's Piano Sonatas

Mikhail Lidsky

MMDM, 19:00, Chamber Hall

A to Z of Jazz

Grigori Fine (piano) and the Stars of Jazz ensemble

MMDM, 14:00, Theatre Hall

Meetings in the Theatre Foyer

(concert dedicated to B. Pasternak)

Russian Academic Youth Theatre, 16:00

Bravissimo! (musical performance)

New Opera, 19:00

What's On in Moscow in February

VENUES

Accordance

Ul. Rabochaya, Bldg. 30/2
(905) 703-5356 / (905) 703-9109
M. Ploshchad Ilycha, Rimsкая
<http://celtic-school.livejournal.com/>

Amadei Moscow Musical Theater

4 Spiridonovskaya
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M. Pushkinskaya, Arbatskaya
www.amadei.ru

B1 Maximum Club

11 Ul. Ordzhonikidze
(495) 648-6777
M. Leninsky Prospekt
www.blclub.ru

Bolshoi Theater

1 Teatralnaya Ploshchad
(495) 250-7317
M. Teatralnaya
www.bolshoi.ru

Bonsai CenterGalley

18 Ul. Shukhova
(495) 410-8703
M. Shabolovskaya
www.bonsai.su

Central House of Artists

10 Krymsky Val
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M. Park Kultury
www.cha.ru

Chekhov Theatre

Kamergersky Pereulok, Bldg. 3
(495) 629-8760, 692-6748
M. Okotny Ryad
www.mxat.ru

Crocus Expo Center

www.crocus-expo.ru

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7 Ostrovnoy Street
(499) 726-3702
M. Krylatskaya
www.baskethall.ru

DK im Zueva

18 Lesnaya
(495) 937-3461
M. Belorusskaya
www.dkZueva.night.ru

English Language Evening (lectures)

Chekhov Library/Cultural Centre
6 Strastnoi Bulvar
M. Chekhovskaya
www.elemboscow.net

Expocentr

14 Krasnopresnenskaya Naberezhnaya
M. 1905 Goda, Mezhdunarodnaya
www.expocentr.ru

Golden Ring Theater

17a Ul. Timiryazevskaya
(495) 611-4800
M. Timiryazevskaya
www.golden-ring.ru

Helikon Opera on Arbat

11 Novy Arbat, Bldg. 2
(495) 290-0971
M. Arbatskaya
www.helikon.ru

Ikra Club

8 Kazakova
(495) 778-5651
M. Kurskaya
www.ikraclub.ru

Manezh Exhibition Center

1 Manezhnaya Ploshchad
(495) 689-1660
M. Okhotny Ryad

Mir Concert Hall

11 Tsvetnoi Bulvar, Bldg. 2
(495) 624-9647
M. Tsvetnoi Bulvar
www.mir-hall.ru

MKHT im. Gorkogo

22 Tverskoi Bulvar
(495) 203-6222
M. Tverskaya
www.mxat-teatr.ru

MMDM

52 Kosmadamianskaya Naberezhnaya
Bldg. 8, (495) 730-4350
M. Paveletskaya
www.mmdm.ru

Moscow State Operetta Theater

6 Ul. Bolshaya Dmitrovka,
(495) 692-5982
M. Tverskaya, Pushkinsakaya
www.mosoperetta.ru

Moscow State Kremlin Museums

M. Okhotny Ryad
www.kreml.ru

Moscow Conservatory im Tchaikovsky Grand Hall

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Moscow House of Composers

8/10 Brusov Pereulok, Bldg. 2
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M. Okhotny Ryad
www.domset.ru

Moscow Museum of Modern Arts

Various venues
(495) 694-6660
www.mmoma.ru

Moscow Gogol Theater

8A Ulitsa Kazakova
(499) 262-9214
M. Kurskaya
www.gogoltheatre.ru

New Circus on Prospekt Vernadskogo

7 Prospekt Vernadskogo,
(495) 930-0300
M. Universitet
www.bolshoicircus.ru

New Opera

3 Karetny Ryad, Ermitazh Garden
(495) 694-0868
M. Chekhovskaya
www.novayaopera.ru

OGI Project

8/12 Potapovsky Pereulok, Bldg. 2
(495) 627-5366
M. Kitai-Gorod, Chistiye Prudy
www.proektogi.ru

Old English House

4a Ul. Varvarka
(495) 298-3952
M. Kitai-Gorod
www.museum-city-moscow.ru

Olimpiisky Sports Complex

16 Olimpiysky Prospekt
(495) 688-3777
M. Prospekt Mira
www.olimpik.ru

Pop/off/art

6/4 Radio (entrance from Ul. Kazakova)
(499) 261-7883,
M. Kurskaya
www.popoffart.com

Project OGI

8/12 Potapovsky Pereulok, Bldg. 2
(495) 627-5366
M. Kitai-Gorod, Chistiye Prudy
www.proektogi.ru

Rossiya Concert Hall at Luzhniki

24 Luzhniki
(495) 246-1543
www.rossia-hall.ru

RuArts

10, 1st Zachatyevsky Pereulok
(495) 637-4475,
M. Kropotkinskaya
www.ruarts.ru

Russian Academic Youth Theater

2 Teatralnaya Ploshchad
(495) 622-0069
M. Teatralnaya
www.ramt.ru

SDK MAI

8 Ul. Dubosekovskaya
(495) 223-3226
M. Sokol (trollebus 43, tram 23 to Pischevoi Institut)
www.sdk.ru

St. Andrew's Anglican Church

8 Voznesensky Pereulok
(495) 629-0990
M. Pushkinskaya, Okhotny Ryad
www.standrewsmoscow.org

Stanislavsky and Nemirovitch-Danchenko Musical Theater

17 Bolshaya Dmitrovka
(495) 629-8388
M. Tverskaya
www.stanislavskymusic.ru

Solyanka

1/2 Ul. Zabelina
(495) 621-5572,
M. Kitay Gorod
www.solgallery.ru

Soyuz Kompositorov Club

8/10 Briusov Pereulok, Bldg. 2
(495) 692-6563
M. Puskinskaya, Okhotny Ryad
www.uclub.ru

State Kremlin Palace

1 Ul. Vozdvizhenka
(495) 628-5232
M. Biblioteka im. Lenina
www.gkd.ru

Taganka Theatre

76/21 Ul. Zemlyanoi Val
(495) 915-1217
M. Taganskaya
www.taganka.theatre.ru

Tchaikovsky Concert Hall

4/31 Triumfalnaya Ploshchad
(495) 232-5353
M. Mayakovskaya

Tchaikovsky Cultural Centre

46/54 Kudrinskaya Ploshchad
(495) 291-1514
M. Barrikadnaya

Tretyakov Gallery at Krymsky Val

(Central House of Artists)
more info at
www.tretyakovgallery.ru

Tochka Club

6 Leninsky Prospekt, Bldg. 7
(495) 737-7666
M. Oktyabrskaya (the Ring Line)
www.clubtochka.ru

16 Tonn Club

6 Presnensky Val, Bldg. 1
(495) 253-5300
M. Ulitsa 1905 Goda
www.16tons.ru

XO Club

65 Vavilova
(495) 125-5349
M. Universitet, Profsoyuznaya
www.xoclub.ru

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the International Women's Club of Moscow
We would like to invite you to join us for our annual

IWC Embassy Dinner and Ball

This tradition of celebrating our international community
while raising money for IWC's chosen charities in Russia
is already in its 13th year.

What started as the

"IWC Embassies of the World Dinner and Dance"

has grown into the most prestigious social event on the international
calendar in Moscow.

You will have a unique opportunity to enjoy warm hospitality
of numerous ambassadors and their spouses during their elegant
dinner parties and later to dance and to be entertained in an atmosphere
of wonderful artistry at Tsereteli's Museum

Come enjoy the mystery and glamour
of this year's ball ... "Masquerade" 2009!

Look out for more information on our website and in the IWC Newsletter

Ticket sales at: IWC General Meetings, Winter Bazaar, newcomers coffee
Contacts: Maxine mjmaters@mtu-net.ru; Zara zaraouzounian@yahoo.co.uk

Russian Holiday Calendar

text Elena Rubinova



February 14

St. Valentines Day.

In the past few years, young and prosperous Russians have gladly welcomed this newcomer to the Russian calendar which is traditionally marked in the West on February 14. Most young Russians do not really attribute a lot of significance to this date, but use it as an additional chance to present a romantic gift to a partner or somebody they secretly admire. Russia has now caught onto the commercial side. Closer to the date you are sure to notice numerous red hearts, roses and Cupids in the glittering window cases of shops and boutiques across the city.

February 15

Sretenie Gospodne, or Candlemas.

The Russian word *Sretenie* in translation from the Old Slavonic means “meeting” and “joy”. It is believed that this day was not only the day of the meeting of infant Jesus with our Lord, but also the meeting of Jesus with the world. The significance of this holiday for Russians is reflected even in the names of Moscow streets: one of the oldest central city arteries is called *Sretenka*, nearby is *Sretensky Monastery* and a section of the Boulevard Ring is also called *Sretensky*.

If you stop for an evening liturgy at a Moscow church or cathedral on Candlemas, you will be more than aesthetically rewarded. Heart-felt singing of the church choir and beautifully-lit alters clearly convey even to a non-believer that the service is very sacred. The holiday is practiced both by Catholics and Orthodox, but

The February holiday calendar presents an eclectic mix of religious and secular occasions as if the country is trying to compensate for the lack of sunshine and winter tiredness. Old and new, sacred and commercial, authentic and adopted – all of this is mingled and fused in modern Russian society. This short monthly guide is to help you navigate in the ocean of Russian traditions, festivals and national habits associated whose names we may, or may not recognize.

in Byzantian rites, Candlemas started to be celebrated as an important holiday from the 4th century onwards, and since that time Orthodox tradition regards it as one of the main 12 holidays of the year. When St. Mary and St. Joseph brought Christ to the temple, Simeon embraced the Child and recited the Canticle of Simeon. Because of the verses of the canticle: “a light to the revelation of the Gentiles,” a custom developed in the West by the 11th century of blessing candles. The candles were lit, and a procession took place through the darkened church, to the accompaniment of the congregation and choir singing the Canticle of Simeon. Because of this, the feast also became known as Candlemas.

Candlemas is held 40 days after Christmas. Since Russian Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas on January 7, *Sretenie* falls on the February 15 in Russia. On the same day, Orthodox Christians also commemorate the existence of a wonder-working icon known as “the Softening

of Evil Hearts” or “Simeon’s Prophecy.” It depicts the Virgin Mary with her hands upraised in prayer, and seven swords piercing her heart. This is one of the few Orthodox icons depicting Jesus as an infant.

Sretenie icon or “Simeon’s Prophecy” iconю

Apart from the religious meaning of *Sretenie*, Russians also see this date as a meeting of winter and spring, and this has pagan connotations. A lot of omens and superstitions prescribe weather signs to this day connected with the change over from winter to springtime: if the sunset is bright, then the frosty weather is over, if there is no sun on *Sretenie*’ evening, get ready for a new cold wave before spring comes. A thaw on this day predicts a bountiful wheat harvest, if it snows on *Sretenie*, this year’s crop is going to be rich. Some omens sound almost like rules to obey: do not hit the ground on *Sretenie*, wait until the next morning. Take care of your garden and select good grain for spring sowing. Whether you believe such folklore or not; especially in the times of global warming and lack of snowfall even in Russia, it is clear that the winter is on the retreat after this date.



February 24 - March 1

Maslenitsa (Pancake week).

Maslenitsa; like many Russian holidays, is a mixture of two separate cultural influence: pagan and Christian. In Slavic mythology *Maslenitsa* is a sun festival, celebrating the imminent end of the winter. On the Christian side, *Maslenitsa* is the last week before the onset of Great Lent. During *Maslenitsa* week, meat is already forbidden to Orthodox Christians,



making it a *myasopustnaya nedelya* ("meat-empty week"). During Lent, meat, fish, dairy products and eggs are forbidden. Furthermore, Lent also excludes parties, secular music, dancing and other distractions from the spiritual life. Thus, *Maslenitsa* represents the last chance to enjoy dairy products and partake in social activities that are not appropriate during the more prayerful, sober and introspective Lenten season. The last day of *Maslenitsa* is called "Forgiveness Sunday," indicating the desire for God's forgiveness that lies at the heart of Great Lent. Many Russians; even non-believers observe this tradition and if by chance you hear Russians asking each other to forgive without any obvious reason, do not be surprised.

Long before the Pancake week comes around, you can see posters and advertisements on display in Moscow streets depicting a cheerful looking plump woman in traditional costume with a samovar and troika pulling a sledge with a background of a snowy landscape behind her; or something along these lines. The appearance of these images is a clear sign that the *Maslenitsa* festival theme has been picked up by the city authorities.

Under communism, the tradition of *Maslenitsa* never fully died away and was widely observed in families without observing its religious significance. *Maslenitsa* became an opportunity to prepare pancakes with all sorts of fillings and coverings and to eat them with friends.

Outdoor festivals resumed on a country scale level after Soviet times, when *Maslenitsa*, like all the other religious holidays, were not officially celebrated. It can be debated whether public celebration represent an artificial restoration of tradition, but the festival certainly adds joy and festival to a usually tense city.

The event usually features traveling choirs dressed in traditional costumes and various folk games including tug-of-war, stilt-walking and pillow-fighting. For instance in *Kolomenskoe* park (Southern Moscow) on a Sunday afternoon you can see a traditional game involving men climbing a 40-50 foot wooden pole in only their underwear! Another highlight involves participants attempting to climb a 7-8 foot snow fort while a group of defenders try to stop them. As the culmination of the celebration, on Sunday evening, Lady *Maslenitsa* (Pancake doll or *Chuchelo*) is stripped off and sacrificed to the flames of a bonfire. In former times ashes were buried in the snow to symbolize the end of winter and

to "fertilize the crops." But in the past few years, Muscovites have not been blessed with enough snow to carry out this rite; even for kid's favorite snowball fights you have had to go to the countryside in recent years.

February 23

The Fatherland Defender's Day.

This is a public holiday and a day off in Russia. But even for school children, no matter what they are told by teachers or what they hear from TV screen, the holiday that until 1993 has been known as Soviet Army Day, has lost the major part of its political meaning. Originally the holiday was to commemorate the first mass draft, on February 23, 1918, into the [Soviet] Red Army, as well as the first combat action against occupying German forces, as well as the very first victories at the fronts of the Civil War.

Soviet Army Day was introduced into the Soviet calendar in 1923 as "Red Army Day," then "Soviet Army Day" in 1946 and after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the holiday was changed to the current "Defenders of the Fatherland Day."

Gradually the political significance of this holiday has been played down, and now it is mostly regarded as a "men's holiday." From a rather early school age onwards, Russian boys get their own holiday. In theory, all men in Russia are liable for call-up, so they all are celebrities. Why wait? Even 10 year old boys get presents from girls in class just because they are future men. It's not surprising that this Soviet-time tradition is actually supported up by those who are in their 30's and 40's who grew up with this holiday. It flourishes in the offices of Russian companies, banks, at industrial enterprises: almost everywhere men are toasted for and presented some gifts. In the army or among law-enforcement officers, this is a special occasion and tends to be seen as professional holiday as well.

And men in Russian never forget that it is their fleeting chance to gain attention because their festival is closely followed by its all-important female counter-part, Women's Day, March 8, when women receive flowers, presents and are toasted by men, and God help any males who forget. **P**





*Kuban Cossack Choir
State Kremlin Palace
February 20
19:00
www.gkd.ru*

Cossacks Are in Town

Whatever songs are currently top of the hit parade, the melodies this choir presents seem eternal. These are Cossacks' songs, which are a lively mix of Russian and Ukrainian melodies and poems. Cossacks, living in separate settlements in the southern steppe regions of Russia since ancient times gradually formulated their songs about freedom and love and grievances about the very land they inhabited. These are harsh, wind-swept and bountiful landscapes. This is one of the oldest folkloric ensembles in Russia. Its history dates back to 1811 when the Cossack army created a military choir. The Kuban Cossack Choir's original repertoire consisted of religious chants and folk songs. Somewhat surprisingly, this ensemble survived Soviet times, to revive in full glory in the 1990s when it gained international fame. Victor Zakharchenko, a Cossack by birth and passion, has directed the Choir for thirty years, combining his musical career with a university professorship. Revival of folk music, the applied arts, costumes and Cossack spirit; that is what Victor Zakharchenko and his wonderful singers brings to life in these concerts.

Maxim Vengerov

Maxim Vengerov is a Novossibirsk born violinist, nowadays considered as one of the world leaders in his field. Brought up in a musical family, Vengerov revealed his talents as a performer at an early age. He gave his first recital when only five. His first professors were Galina Tourchaninova and Professor Zakhar Bron, whom he and his family followed to Moscow when Maxim entered the music school at the Moscow Conservatory. Vengerov won his first music prize when he was ten at the Junior Wieniawski Competition. In 1990, his victory at the Carl Flesch International Violin Competition confirmed his reputation as a top-flight musician. We are so used to seeing Maxim amongst Stradivari violins and professional prizes; that his performances as a conductor have been overlooked. Vengerov is here to give concerts, and to congratulate his colleagues from the Virtuozzy Moskovy Chamber orchestra on their jubilee performance; a program which highlights compositions by Tchaikovsky, Mozart and Mendelssohn.



*Moscow Conservatory, Grand Hall
February 21
19:00
www.meloman.ru*



*photo by Natalya Razina
courtesy of Mariinsky Theatre*

*Operetta Theatre
February 10
19:00*

Ulyana Lopatkina, Dmitry Gudanov "Nijinsky – Pavlova Gala"

Ulyana Lopatkina, prima ballerina from the Mariinsky theatre and Dmitry Gudanov, premier dancer from the Bolshoi theatre, present a new ballet production dedicated to two great ballet stars of the 20th century – Anna Pavlova and Vaslav Nijinsky. Especially for this premiere, they have selected scenes from the brightest productions and repertoires of the Ballets Russes. Among other soloists who are participating in this tribute, are Lopatkina and Gudanov's colleagues from the leading Russian ballet troupes; Ekaterina Krysanova, Andrian Fadeev and Vladimir Shklyarov. One-act ballets Scheherazade and Le Spectre de la Rose will be performed as originally choreographed by Michael Fokine together with other short ballets that made the Russian ballet famous abroad a century ago.

James Blunt, Physics and Lyrics



B1 Maximum
February 12, 21:00
www.b1club.ru

As a proverb says “never say never.” You would never expect that aerospace manufacturing studies could turn into gold and platinum discs on a different continent. That is what happened to James Blunt, a young and already popular music star from United Kingdom. Originating from a family which had for centuries served in the army, Blunt chose a path that led him from his aerospace studies to international musical success with his debut album “Back to Bedlam” and his single “You’re Beautiful” in 2004. James was a schoolboy when he first started to play the guitar; something which his father disapproved of. Of course nobody could tell what successes were awaiting his son in a non-military field. Later, the young man entered the British Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, and served in the army in Central Europe for four years, before returning to his musical vocation. James was fortunate to meet Linda Perry, the legendary US producer who had worked with Pink, Christina Aguilera and Gwen Stefani, and his first single “High” was released in 2004. MTV, Brit Awards and thousands of fans were already there for Blunt. To repeat the success of his first album which was sold out in eleven million copies all over the world was of course difficult. But this was something he wasn’t striving for. “I was only trying to make music that I would like myself,” Blunt said in an interview. Judging by the contents of his next album “All the Lost Souls,” released in 2007, Blunt has not only pleased himself, but thousands and thousands of people who are in love with the melodies of the 1970s.

Glass Heart on Zemlinsky's Sleeve

Glass Heart was recently premiered at the Mariinsky Ballet Festival. The ballet has already been performed abroad, and has now come to Moscow. Kirill Simonov, a winner of the Russian Golden Mask theatrical award, staged this performance in St. Petersburg. He based this production on several compositions by an Austrian composer Alexander von Zemlinsky (“Triumph of Time” and others) and a new libretto. When Zemlinsky wrote the score in Vienna at the turn of the 19th century, he fell in love with Alma Schindler, one of his composition students. The young lady responded to his feelings, but then broke off their relation and married composer Gustav Mahler, a friend of Zemlinsky. That this heart-breaking story took place in the center of the Art Nouveau world in Vienna, could not but inspire choreographers of the time; hopefully to the delight of the audience.



Bolshoi Theatre
February 28
19:00

Eugene Onegin at the Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Centre



photo by Alexander Gayduk

Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Centre
Building 1, 25 Ostozhenka street
February 10
19:00

When Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was conceiving the idea of staging “Eugene Onegin” on stage he invited young students from the Moscow Conservatory to perform, not experienced soloists. That is the tradition Galina Vishnevskaya, artistic director of the Moscow Opera Centre has maintained and staged with her students, inviting Andris Liepa as director and Anna Nezhnaya to design scenes and costumes. “Eugene Onegin” is one of Russia’s most beautiful and well-known operas, and one of Tchaikovsky’s own favorites. “I composed this opera only because I felt strongly that everything in Pushkin’s ‘Onegin’ should be in music,” the composer wrote. For Galina Vishnevskaya, an opera star who now has a world-wide reputation “Eugene Onegin” has an important personal significance, and this is felt by her students. “It is through the part of Tatyana that my career with the Bolshoi theatre began, and it was in the Paris Grande Opera where I sang in ‘Eugene Onegin,’ that I said farewell to the stage. Now my students sing Tchaikovsky’s music, and I am happy to pass on my love for the great Maestro to them.” Tchaikovsky called the opera “Eugene Onegin” as consisting of modestly lyrical scenes. There are no common scenic effects, but performing the opera demands sincerity and simplicity. Vishnevskaya has handled these challenges in a masterful way.

Museums and Galleries



Pushkin's Tales on the Paths of Kolomenskoe

A better location for this exhibition than the 16th century wooden fairy-tale architecture in Kolomenskoe would be hard to find. This exhibition is dedicated to theatrical productions, costumes and set designs used in various productions of Alexander Pushkin's greatest works. The poet's fairy-tales about Tsar Saltan, the Fisherman and the Fish and the Golden Cockerel have always evoked vivid images that inspired composer Rimsky-Korsakov and illustrator Bilibin to create beautiful music and wonderful illustrations. Intermingled with Pushkin's folklore poetry, they are indeed theatrical, and have a powerful visual impact.

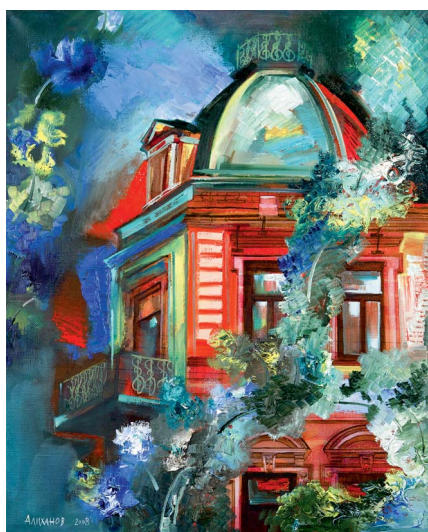
Kolomenskoe Mansion, Pavilion 1825
Open daily (except Monday and Tuesday)
10:00-18:00
www.mgomz.ru

Photographic Mosaics by Sergey Burasovsky

Artists aren't happy with just the word red. What about crimson, scarlet or damask? Sergey Burasovsky is a photographer for whom even the rust on salt-covered ships' keels has its shades. He is in search of those subtle shades and colors that most of us don't notice. Bright wheels of old trains resemble children's toys, and houses in New Mexico – architectural models. Like many other photographers he began with black and white, but eventually became attracted to color films. In the 1990s he made a trip to China from where he could not but create bright and vivid pictures of everyday life. And from that time, color has dominated his works: the yellow lights of the New York nights, the almost orange sand of the American south, pale blue landscapes of the English Channel. His photographic career is extremely varied. A retrospective show is on display at the Moscow House of Photography.



Manezh
February 26 – March 22
Open daily (except Mondays)
11:00-20:00
www.mdf.ru



Theory of Love for Color

Hadji-Murad Alikhanov himself calls his artistic path as a journey to Color. Faithful to Kandinsky's principles, the artist is in a state of constant search. He does not construct reality logically, but his abstract pictures are rather a journey to the essence of color itself, only limited by its subjective dimensions. Hadji-Murad's career as an artist began at arts school where his main inspirations were El Greco, Matisse and Vrubel. He opted out of art school for the Leningrad State Institute of Theatre, Music and Cinema, which he completed with distinction. Very soon, he won a grant with the Artists Union and began participating in exhibitions in the Soviet Union and abroad. His artistic experiments range from etchings to chromatic abstract art. The works on display at this exhibition belong to the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts and the Moscow Modern Museum.

Zurab Tsereteli's Gallery of Arts
January 20 – February 20
19, Prechistenka street
Open daily (except Mondays)
10:00-19:00

Museums and Galleries

Vladimir Shirokov. Black and White Stars

Vladimir Shirokov is a Moscow fashion photographer in great demand. This exhibition in Novinsky Passage is the third in his career. The concept is straightforward: Stars portrayed in black and white. That black and white can render moods and character better than color is nothing new. Shirokov began taking his first black and white shots when still a schoolboy. After serving in the Soviet army he returned to what he had always admired so much – photography. His career started at a photo atelier where he made passport photographs. He moved to Moscow in 1998 where he started an absolutely new life. He gradually made a name for himself, and created a large portfolio featuring cinema and musical stars.

Novinsky Passage, 31 Novinsky boulevard



February 4-12

11:00 – 21:00

www.vladimirshirokov.ru



*Art of the great Mughals
Moscow Kremlin, Assumption belfry
February 21 – May 20
Open daily (except Thursdays)
10:00-17:00
www.kreml.ru*

*Art of the ancient India
State Historical Museum
February 17 – May 19
Open daily (except Tuesdays)
10:00-18:00
www.shm.ru*

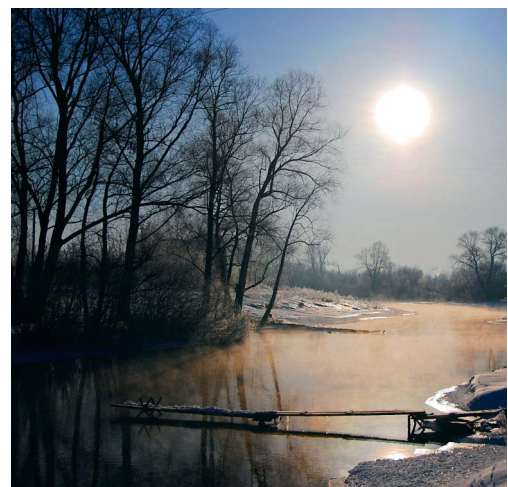
The Mughals' Riches

2009 is the year of India in Russia. It means that throughout the year there will be special events highlighting the culture of modern India and its historic legacy. There will be two large-scale exhibitions related to the art of India in February. The first takes place in the Historical Museum and is dedicated to Indian art from the 3rd century BC to the 18th century AD. The second is taking place close to the legendary Diamond Fund in the Kremlin and is presented by the National Museum of Kuwait. This exhibition features a dazzling collection of 17th century precious rubies, emeralds, sapphires and gold items which belonged to great Mughal emperors of India. Jewelry art has always played a vital role in the culture of India since ancient times. Even ancient Indian sculptures representing gods and goddesses are adorned with ritual jewels. This priceless collection of Indo-Islamic-Persian splendor belonging to Mughal emperors who ruled India from the 16th to the 18th century, has been collected since the nineteen seventies by Sheikh Nasser Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, a member of Kuwait's royal family. Each of the items on display in the Kremlin has its own exciting destiny and could tell us much about its owners if it could speak. The Indian Mughal craftsmen were known as world leaders in the setting of precious and semi-precious stones. They created jewels for their masters to the jealousy of the rest of the world, something that in times gone by caused both military interventions and exultations from all over the world.

Best of Russia, 365 Days a Year

When Winzavod, the Centre for the Modern Art and the Ministry for Culture of the Russian Federation announced a photo contest dedicated to Russia in the summer, they had no idea just how many photographers would want to take part. In October the organizing committee even had to make an appeal for extra jury members. Eventually, all of three hundred and sixty-five photographs were selected for the "365" exhibition, and the event is earmarked to become an annual show. This contest and exhibition is an attempt to make a mosaic picture of Russia, as seen by different people, from various regions of the country, with their different cameras and visions.

*Winzavod
February 4 28
Open daily
11:00-20:00
www.winzavod.ru
www.thebestofrussia.ru*



Moscow and Bely Inspire Artist of the Past

text and photographs, Olga Slobodkina-von Bromssen

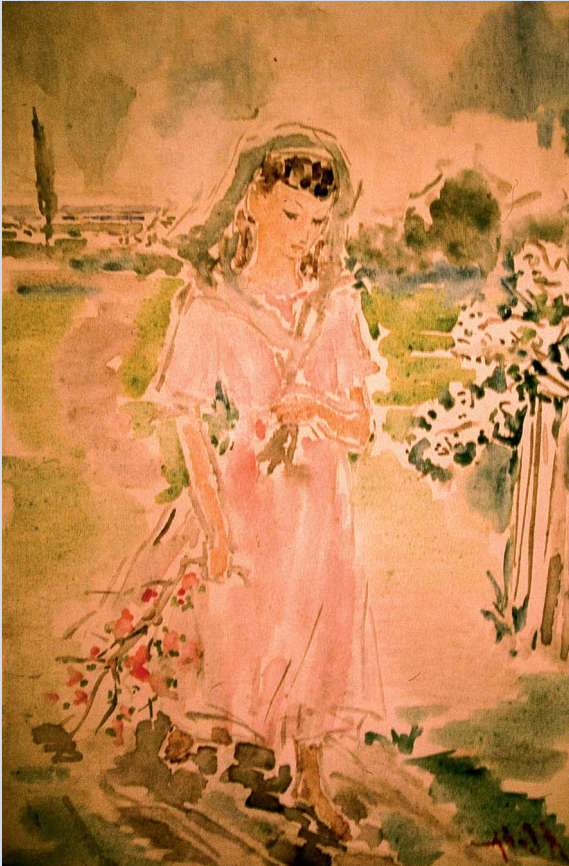


Illustration to Alexander Green's novel "The Scarlet Sails".
1950, watercolors, cardboard



Antonina Sofronova "In Arbat Alleys"
canvas, oil, 1932

... I believe that nature alone is the source which eternally revives forms of art... But I also believe that art exists according to its own distinctive laws, otherwise it stops being art.

Such were the beliefs, as written in a 1915 diary entry, of Antonina Sofronova, a Russian artist who created her inimitable paintings and drawings in the first half of the 20th century, and died in 1966, a virtually unknown artist.

Her only solo show was staged at the Central House of Writers two years before her death in Moscow and had no catalogue to list the works on display.

However, Sofronova's art has not been lost forever. In the 1970s, art critics and galleries began to revise their views of Russian art in the 1930s and Sofronova was one of the artists whose works were highlighted. Her paintings were displayed at the Barbican Center in London in 1989 during the exhibition of "Russian Art from Private Collections," at the memorial apartment of the famous Russian writer Andrei Bely in Moscow in 1995 as well as at the Berlin-Moscow 1900-1950 Grand Show of Russian and German avant-garde and totalitarian art in 1996. Today, several of her works are on display at the Tretyakov Gallery.

It is not by chance that Bely's apartment was chosen for Sofronova's solo show. In the early 1940s, Sofronova turned to Bely's prose and blank verse, bringing to life the already published novel "Petersburg" and the poem "Second Symphony, the Dramatic." In her masterly illustrations, which are in fact easel paintings, the artist managed to render the lofty romantic irony of the novel and the musical rhythms of the poem.

And although she never met or talked with Bely, there is a striking similarity in the mood and feel of Sofronova's Moscow landscapes and Bely's novel "Moscow Under the Siege." The similarities in the visual language of the novel and in the artist's works are amazing. It's as if they both saw Moscow on the same evening.

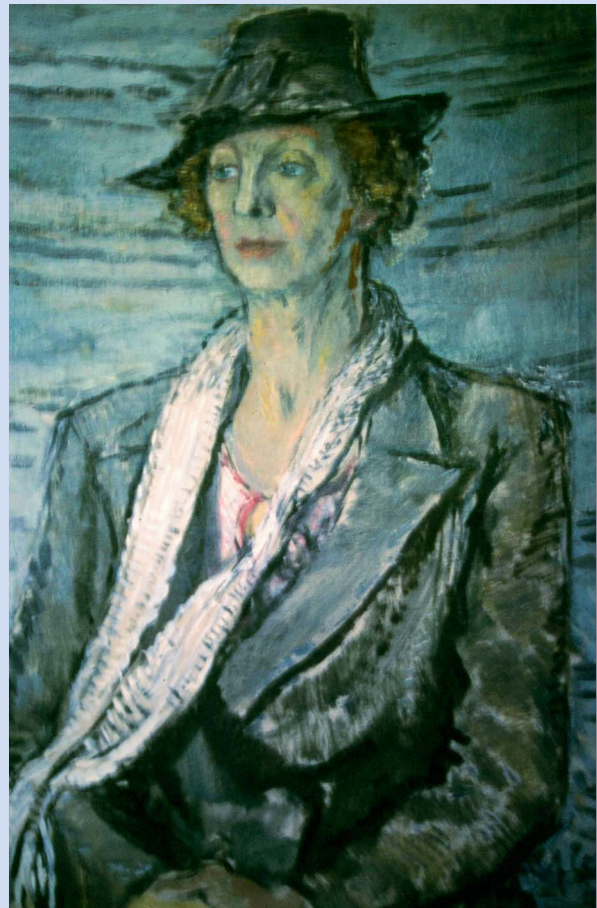
Sofronova was born in 1892 in the village of Droskovo, Orlovskaya province. In 1910, she moved to Moscow to study painting in the studios of F.I. Rerberg, a realist painter of The World of Art group, and I.I. Mashkov, a founder of The Jack of Diamonds group, a group of Moscow artists (1910-16) who painted in the spirit of Cezanne, fauvism and cubism and also turned to the media of Russian cheap popular



Antonina Sofronova. Illustration to Andrey Bely's "The Second Symphony. Farytale"
watercolors, feather, 1941



Antonina Sofronova. Illustration to Andrey Bely's "Second Symphony. Dramatic."
(1941, watercolors, feather)



Antonina Sofronova "Portrait of Lidia Sofronova"
(actress, sister of the artist)
1940, canvas, oil)

prints and national toys. In 1914, Sofronova participated in an exhibition held by The Jack of Diamonds.

Sofronova also participated in a 1917 exhibition of The World of Art group of artists (1898-1924) who approached the arts from a retrospective point of view with attention towards antiquity and the diversity of historical and cultural reminiscences.

Her acceptance by these two groups demonstrated the high quality and cultural integrity of the artist's works. From 1920-1921, the artist taught drawing at secondary school in the town of Oryol and was a professor for free state art workshops in Tver. But in the fall of 1921, her teaching methods were declared "unacceptable" and Sofronova was fired. She returned to Moscow, which she considered her "only native city," where she stayed until her death.

Back in Moscow, she soon joined The Group of 13, a collective of 13 Russian painters who continued in the traditions of impressionism, but with a solid foundation in realism. Her strong individual voice was highly valued by fellow members.

Sofronova's landscapes of Moscow are effusive, energetic, harmonious and expressive. Although there are lots of blind alleys in Moscow, her landscapes almost always have a line receding into the distance – the spaciousness of the Orlovskaya province apparently remained within the artist's creative mind. Her Moscow landscapes are a special contribution to the "street genre" typical in the art of the 1920s.

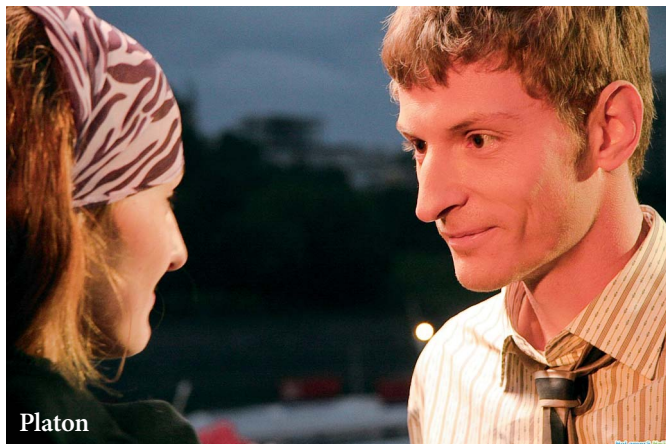
In 1931, Sofronova took part in the last exhibition of The Group of 13, held at Moscow University. That was the finale of the group's collective activity. The group was tagged as being "formalist" and dispersed by the establishment art world.

From that point on, Sofronova was painting entirely for herself without a hope to ever display her works. She etched a meager living by designing book covers and painting portraits from photographs when she was evacuated to the Urals during World War II.

Today, however, the art world tends to call her a classic of 1920s-1930s and a real phenomenon in Russian 20th century art. **P**

Russian Film Industry in Crisis

text Vladimir Kozlov



Platon



Obitaemy Ostrov (Inhabited Island)



Bumazhny Soldat (Paper Soldier)



Tarif Novogodni (New Year Tariff Plan)

The ongoing financial downturn has pummeled the Russian film and TV series industries. But since people often turn to entertainment as a diversion in times of economic difficulties, the situation may not be as bad as it seems at first sight. Thanks to the crisis, cash from random investors, who are willing to finance projects regardless of their quality, will no longer be there, which may improve the overall quality of films and television series produced, while inadequately high fees charged by talent and crew are likely to be reduced, bringing down production costs.

In the last three to four years, the Russian film industry has shown remarkable growth, surpassing even the Soviet figure of about 100 feature films produced annually, even though the quality of many domestic features left a lot to be desired. Fed by state money and cash coming from other sectors of the rapidly developing economy, the Russian movie industry has prospered. When in 2001, Yegor Konchalovsky's action movie "Antikiller" grossed \$1 million in theaters domestically, that figure looked almost fantastic, while today movies like Timur Bekmambetov's *Twilight Watch* or *Irony of Fate II* rake in tens of millions of dollars at the box office, as if this was normal. If compared with the 1990s, when just a handful of movies were made every year, most of which were shown only at film festivals, the overall picture looked almost rosy until last year's late summer and early fall.

It looked even better in the television industry, where domestically made content had almost completely squeezed out Latin American soap operas that had dominated Russian TV screens for almost a decade. Major domestic TV channels, which generated huge advertising revenues, were willing to pay generously for content supplied by domestic TV series producers.

But all that began to change when it became clear that Russia was going to be drawn into the global financial and economic downturn. The first alarm came in September: amedia, one of the leading domestic TV-series producers, said it was cutting back on production and laying off personnel, citing the financial crisis as the main reason. However, at that time, some observers avoided mentioning the word: crisis, saying the company was probably only coping with internal difficulties and tougher competition.

But when in October Karen Shakhnazarov, general director of Mosfilm, the country's largest studio complex, said that 20 out of the 89 movies in production at the studios' facilities, have been cancelled or put on hold, it became clear to just about everyone that the domestic film industry is experiencing a tough time.

A similar, if not tougher situation, emerged for television series producers, as TV stations found themselves stripped of cash, in the light of expected declines in ad revenues, and began tightening their budgets. Russian channels are likely to lower their buying rates for TV series by 30 to 40 percent in 2009, predicted Anton Kudryashov, Chief Executive Officer of CTC Media, Russia's leading independent media company which runs CTC and DTV television channels.

Responding to the situation, many, if not all Russian TV series and movie producers found themselves adjusting their production plans and budgets and dropping some projects.

"Production budgets will have to be cut all over the industry," Vlad Ryashin, chairman of the board of the Star Media group of companies, told Passport. "Production costs will plummet by 30 percent, which is the optimum amount that will allow us to preserve the quality of our product."

"We had to suspend several promising projects in early production stages, and for several more, budgets were reconsidered," Ryashin said, adding that work on projects already launched by Star Media, such as the youth comedy "O, schaslivchik (Lucky Man)" or the biopic TV series "Kotovskiy," is going ahead as planned.

Meanwhile, if TV series producers primarily depend on TV stations, which, in turn, are highly dependent on ad revenues, the theater movie industry has been substantially supported by the state in recent years. And although there have been plans for changing the system of state support, making it more effective, it looks like state money is going to carry on flowing into the theatres, unless the state budget itself falls prey to the ongoing crisis and will have to be sequestered.

Last fall, the government proposed a new program for financing the domestic film industry, which would give the most commercially successful producers 12 billion rubles in state support over the next three years. At the same time, gratuitous state subsidies to producers will be cut from the current 3 billion rubles a year to just 300 million rubles. It is not yet clear now, if this program is going to be implemented in full, given that the country's state budget could have a deficit for the first time in ten years in 2009, and some expenditures will have to be cut. However, it is unlikely that the government would completely give up financing the film industry, which it has been actively supporting since the 1990s.

Regardless of how much state money is going to be pumped into the Russian film industry, there are also good things related to the crisis.

There is a widespread belief that tough times often prompt people to spend more cash on entertainment. And although theater prices in Russia are often disproportionately high, cinema is still something that many people here can afford. If this theory follows through, we should see a surge in attendance of pure-entertainment kind of movies, such as comedies within the next year or so. What is clear at this point is that Russians don't seem to be cutting back so far on cinema-going, something which box office figures of recently released films show. The New-Year themed "Tarif Novogodni (New Year Tariff Plan)" grossed almost \$4 million in the first couple of weeks after being released, while the melodrama/comedy "Platon" hit the \$5 million mark – both being pretty good figures compared with what an average domestic feature grosses.

For sure, there are some practical ways in which the Russian film industry could benefit from the crisis. Industry insiders say that a lot of cash has been pumped into the film business by companies and private individuals coming from different backgrounds and having little understanding of the industry. As a result, there have been generously financed movies of very dubious quality. If that kind of "random" money dries up, it will be only good as there will be more room for more professional projects.

"If fewer bad films are produced here, it can only be for the best," Olga Chirikhina, deputy general director of Monumental

Pictures; the company formed by Sony Pictures and Patton Media Group to produce films for the local market, told Passport.

"The crisis obviously isn't pleasing anyone in the industry, but the good side of it is that it has prompted the sector to eventually begin thinking about the future, also pushing large players into reconsidering their strategies, production plans and relations with partners and competitors," Ryashin said. "In November, the key players in television and movie production decided to form the Association of television and movie producers."

The global downturn may also be good for the industry as it is bringing down fees charged by talent and crew, which, producers complain, have been exorbitant. Some five years ago, when the domestic film industry began to experience a revival after a dry period in the 1990s, producers often complained that, for instance, cameramen or gaffers, who had mostly worked shooting commercials, then migrated to cinema, started to demand exorbitant fees. Eventually, the producers had to give in, but now everyone is beginning to realize that enormously high fees are history. Reportedly, even major stars are now agreeing to work for two thirds or even one half of what they would have demanded before the crisis broke out.

According to Ryashin, one of the main policies of the newly formed producer association will be to bring down the fees of talent and crew, as well as equipment and studio rent, which he says are major items of a movie's budget. "For instance, during 2007 alone, production costs of a film project skyrocketed by almost 60 percent," he says.

Regardless of what the overall situation in the market is, there is always room for creativity, which doesn't always require high budgets. Russian film-makers have traditionally done quite well in the art house domain, earning no small measure of international recognition. Last year, for instance, Anna Melikyan's *Rusalka* (Mermaid) won the World Cinema Dramatic Directing Award at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival and the FIPRESCI Prize for the Panorama program at the 58th Berlin International Film Festival, while Alexei German Jr.'s *Bumazhny Soldat* (Paper Soldier) picked up the best director's Silver Lion at the Venice International Film Festival. When it comes to art house, it is good directing and actors' performances that matter more than lavish sets and expensive visual effects. And in that respect, the effect of the crisis is not going to be that significant. **P**



Flying Out Our Dreams

text and photos James Quentin



Peace Out Over Nevada

A jet-set life filled with adventures, foreign beaches and mysterious strangers all wrapped up into a fantasy of flying airplanes around the world are the stuff of school-boy dreams. The golden age of air of the 1950's and 1960's brought respect and admiration to all men daring to put on a pressed uniform with a wing buttoned on the breast pocket. Choosing a career as a pilot meant carrying a suitcase in one hand and the safety of passengers in the other. Nowadays, for many pilots, all this has become a myth and turned into a routine job of roundtrip flights between Chicago and Denver six days a week, with a two hour turnaround time. On the seventh day, the pilot stands at his neighborhood potluck, and lacking a thriller story to share, listens as his neighbor boasts about a recently purchased lawnmower.

Sitting in a Moscow Starbucks on the opposite side of the world, Kurt Jackson is hunched over a laptop and exam books, studying for his European pilot's license exams. He's tall, tan with broad shoulders and shaggy, California-blond hair. Passing girls smile at him, easily spotting an American with their finely tuned foreign-dars. Kurt smiles back, politely.

"This place is like a little piece of home," acknowledges Jackson, over cheesecake and cappuccino, referring to an American chain coffee shop with the mid-November Christmas decorations and sounds of holiday muzak. Kurt has not lived in his home town Seattle for over three years

since crossing the ocean to work as a full time private pilot in Europe.

In a collision of two worlds vastly different from the environment in which they originated, Russia's business elite and private pilots have come to enjoy the resulting perks of working together. American private pilots come to Europe, specifically Moscow, knowing that their experience is worth a salary twice that of a veteran commercial airline pilot in the States. Kurt is one of four US-trained pilots working for a single client with a two on, two off monthly rotation cycle. In the slumping world's economy, no one's job is safe, even his, but Jackson does not seem to be worried. "As long as there are private charter planes, people will want to fly them." It is a simple philosophy that has been proven valid to him for the better part of a decade through clients in U.S., England, India and now Russia. Kurt is full of unique views on life and work, all of which attribute to his personality, and make him a perfect candidate for a career of little certainty.

Fifteen years ago, Jackson seemingly fell into getting a pilot's license. Out of college, he worked as a programmer helping design new airport terminals. "It was a way for me to support my real passion, skydiving." Working on a project in Phoenix for two months, Kurt decided to take flight lessons to learn how to fly jumper planes for skydivers. After the project ended, he followed his then girlfriend to Florida. Quickly finding himself skydiving

and flying small turbo jets full time, Kurt became a more experienced pilot passing consequential flight exams to fly larger airplanes at higher altitudes.

Convinced by a good friend, and boss, Jackson enrolled in flight school and was hired by a major airline. He moved away from Florida for a four month training session to become a licensed commercial pilot. Two weeks after graduating, Kurt's professional world was turned upside down by the events of September 11th, 2001. In a quick lesson of "your job is never secure here" the airline fired Jackson along with hundreds of other fresh pilots to try and collect government aid for employees of tragedy-affected airlines.

On an idle Tuesday night, Kurt and I find ourselves in a Moscow strip club, *Déjà Vu*, affectionately referred to simply as the *Vu*. We are there to meet his flat-mate and co-pilot, Frank, who's somewhat enthusiastic about Moscow's club scene. With a lot of downtime, each pilot must find their own way to pass the time in a city and country that is unfamiliar in every way. This is a difficult adjustment to make for anyone who's used to being on a set schedule and likes some form of stability in life. For large portions of time, private pilots must sit and wait until their client is ready to travel. Flights may come with an advanced notice or a mid-day phone call about a take off that very evening. "I can pack in ten minutes flat," Kurt proclaims proudly. "If a call comes in to leave and you say you're too busy, you will not last very long at this job. There are no sick days." In return, the private-pilot profession allows plenty of time to do anything one desires in places other people only dream of visiting. The only guarantee this kind of pilot has are holidays away from family. Not exactly a job sealer an employer can print on an application form.

In flight schools, being a private pilot is not viewed as a viable job option. At most, students look at it as a stepping stone for getting more cockpit hours in the air before being allowed to fly bigger, commercial airplanes. "I defy you to go into a class room and find me one guy who wants to fly business charters full time. Ninety nine percent of pilots only dream of one thing, flying the big planes," said Kurt.

Commercial airline and private business charter pilots are as different as they come. In fact, sharing the skies appears to be their only common bond. In recent years, the once guaranteed job security of an airline pilot has disappeared. Even senior flight captains working their entire careers for a single company are losing their jobs. The ones not being laid off suffer severe pension cuts and prefer to stay longer in the work force with recent pilot retirement ages increased from 60 to 65. When hired, pilots are given a number which places them on an employment ladder. As people above retire, a person moves up. The more people below, the more job security an employee has. An airline pilot may be the worst industry position to be let go from because the rank achieved with one company does not carry over to the next. A laid-off flight captain will have to start at the bottom of the ladder; most likely as a co-pilot or an assistant.

The private sector does not offer any more job security than its counterpart, but it makes up for it in other ways.



Lear-45 jet

Once a pilot is a flight captain, he remains a flight captain no matter the employer or a job's location. "My annual pay equals approximately that of a fifteen-year airline veteran. There are flight captains who earn more than I do, but they spend more time getting up to that level and less time earning a significant salary while I stay leveled for most of my career," Jackson says about pay differences between pilots.

Added to his current monthly pay, Kurt's clients cover all his living arrangements and expenses including a daily meal allowance, cell phone bills and traveling costs if the job requires him to stay with the plane in a different location. It's a standard contract requirement.

Conceivably, a pilot with a lot of experience let go by a commercial airline can switch to the private sector, although it is a lot easier to go from smaller to bigger jets.



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Careers

The switch is equally difficult mentally and technically for pilots downgrading from a large aircraft. Modern technology has practically computerized big planes into self-guiding machines. The flights are preset to the extent that in an emergency, a plane can land itself. It is this exact reason Kurt loves to fly smaller, private jets. "In the air, I actually feel in control of an airplane as opposed to sitting in the cockpit of a jumbo jet pre-programmed to get you from point A to point B on its own." Private pilots tend to do too much once inside a major aircraft, commercial pilots don't do enough at the controls of a smaller plane.

But no job, especially a highly alluring one, is without its pasty white underbelly. The price of working with the wealthiest is a necessity to maintain privacy and looming possibilities of an attack on the life of a client. Kurt has the same policy towards all his employers to never discuss their names, dates or other information regarding travel plans with anyone, including his girlfriend. It is no secret that Jackson's client in Moscow is under constant security surveillance. His client's jet does not sit in a hangar at a public or even private airport. Instead it is located at an army base under the watchful eye of a personal security guard twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Prior to take off, the crew checks the entire plane for any suspicious items.

Some of Kurt's past clients have traveled to Iraq, Yemen and other Middle East hotspots for terrorist attacks. Even flying to India proved to be unsettling. As the planes come in from the north, flying below the clouds, pilots are advised to turn off their lights at night because of terror-

ist training camps located below in North Pakistan. "You never know when they can decide to use you as a practice target," says Kurt only half-jokingly. About ten years ago, a fellow private pilot was hired to fly a high ranking, Middle East official to and from Somalia. Returning home, twenty minutes after their plane took off from the African country, an identical plane left from the same airstrip. Enemy militia mistook the later aircraft for the one carrying their intended high profile target and shot down the second plane, killing everyone on board.

After shutting the door on a brief stint as an airline pilot, Jackson returned to Florida. With good contacts and experience of flying larger aircraft, he started to fly private jets. Never being a person to settle on one thing, Kurt took off for Europe the following summer to "see what's on the other side of the pond." He found a few steady jobs, but realized that he would have to be here more permanently if he wanted contracts with a longer shelf life. Returning to Florida to pick up his van, along with some skydiving equipment, Kurt went back to England where his pilot's license has more validity than in other European countries. After answering a few "wanted" ads, Jackson stumbled onto a client with a more long term plan – in India.

This time he lived in a house with a maid and a personal chef, they both felt somewhat enclosed by the environment outside the home's gates. With no driver available, the couple had to rely on taxi to get them around. This proved to be problematic. "We were rarely taken to the places we actually wanted to go because the drivers claimed to not understand us," they both complain to me simultaneously. The client also proved to be somewhat unreliable in terms of fulfilling all contract agreements. A month after starting the job, Kurt was not thrilled with the new arrangements, but in his field, you have to take the good with the bad or find a new job. Jackson chose the later.

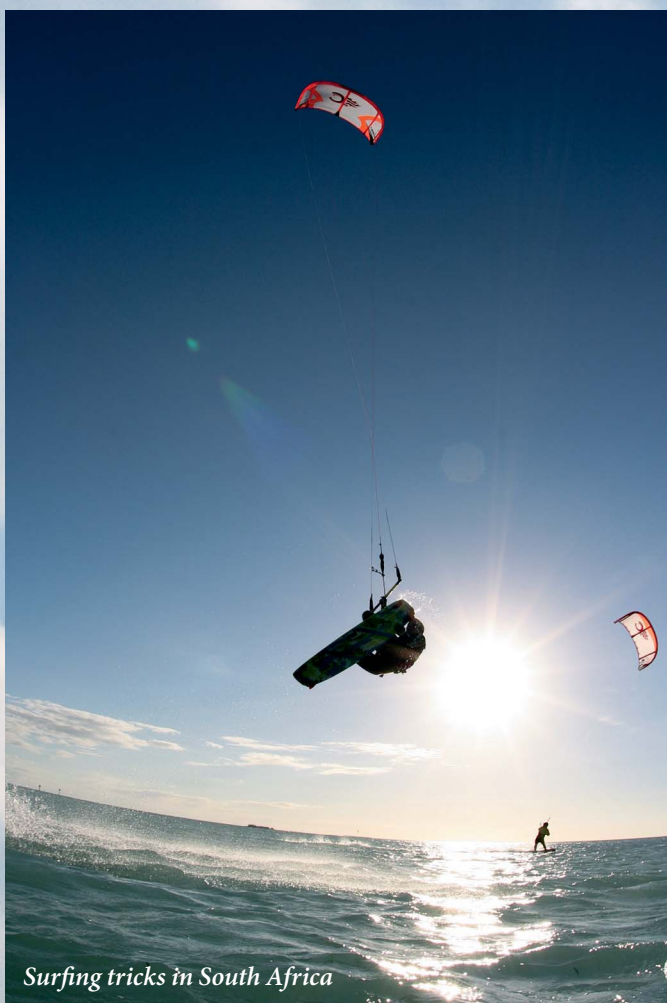
"I was sitting in Delhi, bored out of my mind, researching a new private jet model when a broker from Switzerland contacted me, saying he just sold one to a client in Moscow. Would I be interested in being a flight captain?" Kurt's current gig came to him that simple.

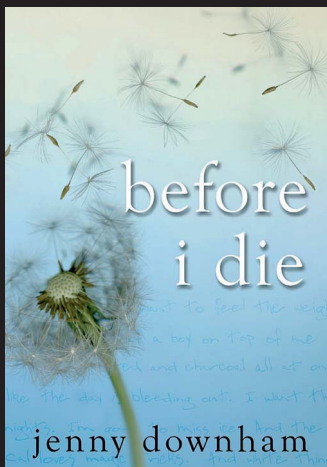
The unique nature of this profession takes its toll on anyone not made of stone. Constant failings of relationships and lack of a steady place to call home is hardly a healthy lifestyle. Kurt, too, knows that this is not a job he can handle for a great length of time. "I love flying, but soon enough I'll want to settle down somewhere and only fly out of one place. That's why I'm taking my European pilots exams, so I can pick a place anywhere in Europe or U.S. to fly from regularly."

This is sobering talk from a man who's lived and worked in more countries than most tourists' visit, a pilot who's flown more different types of aircrafts than people drive cars. It is hard to let go of a dream so many have chased but never found.

"When a call comes in and you find out you're going to a place you've never been to before, that's the coolest thing in the world."

It is. **P**





Ten Things To Do Before You Die

Not the cheeriest of thoughts but something many of us talk about these days. There are books hiding in my parents' shelves morbidly advertising 100 Places to visit or 100 Albums to collect-all before you die. I'd like to sing with Kate Bush, visit Ecuador, buy a Vivienne Westwood suit (and have the guts to wear it outside my flat!), drink Bloody Mary's backstage with Dave Grohl... ah the list could go on and on. However, my wish list seemed to pale into self-absorbed and selfish insignificance after reading Jenny Downham's debut novel 'before I die'.

This is a novel which has caused a stir in Britain last year, receiving praise from many as a story written for young adults but one which most grown-ups could not fail to be moved by. Downham allows her sixteen year old protagonist Tessa Scott (*a good name with three syllables in it*) to tell her own story. Discovering life, escaping the shackles of parental control, experimenting with boys, pushing the boundaries and being disturbed or delighted with changes in our bodies are all things which any teenage girl could empathise with. So what makes Tessa so special?

Tessa Scott has been fighting a losing battle with leukaemia for four years when we meet her. Throughout the next 46 chapters we are privy to the last months of her life. It is not the leukaemia which makes Tessa such an amazing literary heroine though. It is her willful nature, her pragmatic voice, her tantrums and her ability to make a story supposedly about death become so alive. Tessa has a list she must fulfill before she dies.

This is where Downham's novel becomes very different from other young adult's coming of age stories.

On the first page we are introduced to Tessa's first item on the list "I want to feel the weight of a boy on top of me." We witness her breaking the rules, going clubbing with her one friend (the only one not to be frightened off by her disease), smoking drugs and eventually ticking off item one-having sex with a boy. Left disappointed, feeling lonely and empty it is a while before she moves on to item two.

Writing about death, experimenting with different perspectives and voices is nothing new. Other successes have been Lionel Shriver's 2003 novel *We Need to Talk about Kevin* an epistolary novel formed on the letters of a wife and mother to her dead husband, Alice Seobold's *The Lovely Bones* in which the voice of the novel is a brutally murdered teenager watching her family come to terms with her death (2005), Mitch Albom's *For One More Day* which focuses on the regrets of a son dealing with the loss of his mother and not forgetting *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak where the narrator is death itself. All tackle death and its repercussions in different ways; including the reader in its power and encouraging them to think about their own mortality.

Downham's *Before I Die* is equally as successful. Her characters are realistic and gritty; Tessa's best friend becomes pregnant, her younger brother Cal after an argument tells her he hopes she is dead before he gets back from school and that it will be a painful one but also helps her to make "keep-death-away spells" and her once separated parents struggle to come to terms with her illness and her and her recent belief that she can do what ever she likes regardless of the law, others' feelings or her safety

because she is going to die anyway. Tessa is a character which does not demand our sympathy. She does many thoughtless things and utters many painful comments. But she also shows the capability for intense love-her beautiful yet doomed romance with the boy next door and the tender notes she writes to her family when the death finally closes in. Her observations of the world and nature are poignant. A girl whose life has not yet begun chooses being present for the birth of her friend's baby as number ten on her wish list, whose boyfriend boils cinnamon sticks in the kitchen so that she can smell Christmas one last time and who tells her brother that to be the only kid at school with a dead sister will be "cool. *You'll get out of doing lots of homework and all the girls will fancy you.*"

This is a story about death which demands that you enjoy living and is a story for teenagers whose parents will equally enjoy it. This is a must read. You will read it in one sitting just make sure you read it in the privacy of your own home-you will cry! – By Claire Marsden **P**



Rock'n'roll and Teddy Boys in Russia!

text and photographs Richard Hume



1983 – Leningrad Teddy Boys Club (in 1983 St Petersburg was still called Leningrad). As you can see these Teds have got the gear correct with a few amendments

“Rockin’ behind the Iron Curtain;” the old Huey Piano Smith number has come true (despite the disappearance of the Curtain itself)! Rock’n’roll is alive and kickin’ in Russia. Russia and especially Moscow is one of the fastest growing rock’n’roll scenes in the world.

The fans are predominantly young. Russia has much fewer older rockers going back to the 1950s than in other countries: The Communist Party and the history of the Soviet Union didn’t encourage such capitalist culture. I left the UK to live and work in Russia in August 2004. The contrast that immediately struck me most between the rock’n’roll in the two countries was the different generations who follow the great music. Here in Russia young people are joining and staying with it. How Russian rock’n’roll got to this healthy position is linked to Russia’s recent history.

THE HISTORY

During the 1950s in the USSR some people were playing rock’n’roll records but mainly at home. Then in 1959 the Soviet authorities organized a huge youth festival in Moscow. They invited musicians from the USA to come and play, comprising mainly rockabilly, rock’n’roll and jazz bands. The influence of this festival on some

young Russians was immense. It kick-started a significant youth culture movement in Russia, centered on Leningrad and Moscow.

But young Russians paid a price for this festival. Some young Muscovite women tried to get to know more about this exciting culture by chatting to the American musicians during the festival. Later the authorities singled out these women and the Militzia (Russian police) arrested them. Their hair was cut and their dresses torn. In other words they were publicly

humiliated. It was a clear signal from the communists that while they were happy to allow a one-off festival, fraternizing with the “class enemy” was still forbidden.

After this festival, groups of young people began a rock’n’roll culture of their own despite intimidation from the authorities. Foremost in this movement from the early 1960s was the Stilyagi (based on the Russian word for “style”). Recently, with the release of the film ‘Stilyagi,’ which is proving something of a Russian box-office hit, the movement has begun to be remembered with nostalgia. They were more or less the first real rock’n’rollers in Russia. They were not Teddy Boys but the nearest thing the USSR had to Teds. Their style was not 100% rock’n’roll – they also listened to and followed other brands of music such as jazz – and this was also reflected in their style of clothing. But it was close enough to establish them as the original Russian youth rebels.

Teddy Boy Drape jackets were in evidence here as far back as the 1950s and 1960s, centered on Leningrad and Moscow. Here’s the story: Drape jackets were seen being worn in the 1950s but on a very small scale. Then in the early 1960s Russian Leader Nikita Krushchev, even though the “Cold War” against the West was in full flow (this was the time of the Cuban mis-



‘Two Tone Shoes,’ suitable for jive dancing

sile crisis), allowed greater relaxation in cultural activities at home including rock'n'roll. Hence a larger number of drape jackets were seen being worn at this time. Later on in the 1960s the new Russian Leader Leonid Brezhnev, while not banning Teds completely, clamped down more on this "Western decadence."

But a sizeable number of young people from the early 1960s onwards refused to give up and continued to rebel by staying with and adapting their own culture. This culture displayed shades of mod, rockabilly, rock'n'roll and other influences. Again it was the Stilyagi, certainly in the 1960s, who were in the forefront. This rebellion continued up to and into the period of Perestroika which began in the mid-80s.

From 1979 a new phenomenon appeared – a group openly calling themselves Teddy Boys!, in Leningrad. In 1982 they formed their own club "the Leningrad Teddy Boys Club," based in the centre of the city. Their unofficial "leader" was Anton "Teddy." He was an icon amongst youth at that time and a well known figure in cultural circles during the 1980s. The Teddy Boys' Club was very knowledgeable on western youth culture and was instrumental in giving information and advice to the rockabilly rebels of that period, on such things as the correct style of dress, authentic music, etc.

The Teddy Boy Club lasted up to 1984. Unlike in the UK, the youth identities were much more fluid: By the mid-1980s these Teds who were still very much part of the Stilyagi culture had adopted other styles such as punk, biker, rockabilly or new wave, etc.

During the 1980s, both before and during Perestroika, violence between these youth groups escalated. There had been trouble before, dating from the 1960s. But by the beginning of the 1980s gangs of Stilyagi, Teds, punks and bikers became more organized and the agro between them developed into real gang warfare. While not idealizing violence, there is one interesting aspect to this "warfare." This was a code of honor amongst the gangs that no weaponry such as guns, knives, etc., was permitted. And, amazingly, this code was adhered to! Perhaps this was because of a deeply rooted



The Russian band Stressor performing at the Rock'n'Roll Pub in Moscow - 2008

Russian code of honor, something along the lines of "you defend yourself by yourself alone" with no unfair advantage. That's not to say there were no deaths; there were; from beatings and the like.

The Stilyagi played an important part in the development of Russian youth culture. In the 1980s their numbers markedly increased, although nobody can give any clear figures (as did the numbers generally in this youth "rebellion"). Many movements sprang from them, for example the Teddy Boys in the early

1980s. Teds did re-appear again in the 1990s after the fall of the Soviet Union, but their numbers were small and those involved soon gravitated to other styles, in a way similar to what happened to the members of the Leningrad Teddy Boys Club in the mid-80s. The Stilyagi had some rockabilly influences - later in the 1980s and even more so in the 1990s another group established itself, decidedly more hep cat in style. They were more clearly identifiable than other Stilyagi as being rockabilly with regard to their clothes and the music they followed.

In the 1990s, in true youth culture tradition the Stilyagi and the Rockabillies had serious feuds and fights against each other! This led to many criminal arrests; mainly in St Petersburg. Russian friends who lived through those times tell me this violence was inspired mainly by what the two groups had learned about British rock history e.g., 1950s Teddy Boys' aggression, Mods vs. Rockers, Teds/Rockabillies vs. Punks/Skinheads, etc. In other words they felt this was what they were expected to do. Another famous British export!

These Russian pioneers of youth culture deserve praise. Supporting rock'n'roll (and even more so in the period before Perestroika) at that time carried dangers with the authorities so they were real rock'n'roll revolutionaries. In Russia today there are



The Ted (Richard Hume) meets Moscovites at Mayakovsky metro station

only a few Stilyagi left but quite a few rockabilly hep cats (old and new).

The early 1990s witnessed something else. At that time the antics of what can only be described as real gangsters were much more prevalent than they were before or since. Here are some facts: Some members of bands were killed by gangsters in shoot outs; one was even killed on stage! This lawlessness was not confined to the music business but was part of society generally for that brief period. And unlike the “code of honor” mentioned above, these gangsters were bereft of honor and used guns, knives, the lot. Things settled down and now such outrages are a thing of the past (with very few exceptions). But those who lived through these times understandably haven’t forgotten. Thank goodness for Vladimir Putin and law and order!

In the 1990s, with the end of the Soviet Union and greater freedom, local rock’n’roll bands attracted huge crowds especially in Moscow and St Petersburg. Unfortunately the quality of the Russian bands then was not particularly good (with some fine exceptions). But then something strange happened. By the turn of the millennium the rock’n’roll crowds had become smaller, but the quality of the bands drastically improved! The huge crowds had partly been a reflection of Perestroika and Glasnost and the “opening up” culturally of the country after decades of Communism. After a while many simply gravitated to other things as more and more choices became avail-

able. And the crowd that stayed with the music tended to gravitate towards rockabilly rather than standard rock’n’roll. Another phenomenon was the strong support for psychobilly.

The history of the old Soviet Union meant that most members of the bands never grew up with the authentic rock’n’roll sound like we did in the west i.e., listening to it on the radio, TV, or other mass media outlets. So what they did was play and re-play vinyls of the original rock’n’roll recordings when they became more available from the 1980s onwards (that’s not to say they were completely forbidden in the old Soviet Union, but they were hard to come by). After countless hours of such “homework,” the musicians finally acquired the authentic sound, adding on their own individual styles. And the results were impressive.

Today you see the odd drape jacket being worn in the clubs now but no real Teds (apart from the expat writing this article). But the rockers here are genuinely interested in the Teds. As this article testifies Teddy Boys are part of the history of Russian rock’n’roll and youth culture.

ROCK’N’ROLL IN RUSSIA NOW

Here’s some info on the scene now here in the East

First of all Russian entry prices to the clubs are much lower than in the similar venues in western countries. For example at the Rock’n’Roll Pub, the premier venue for rock’n’roll in Moscow, entry to see most of the local bands is free (which means expenses are re-couped from the takings at the bar). If a big name band or a band from out of town is performing, the entry varies from 100-200 rubles. And the quality of the groups here is excellent. You can see, and hear for yourself on www.youtube.com (in the youtube search engine box add “Moscow” after each band’s name):

DENIS MAZHUKOV AND OFFBEAT - DIAMOND HAND - STRESSOR - GREAT PRETENDERS - BEAT DEVILS - ALLIGATORS - CORAL REEFS

Those of you who go to the Rockabilly Rave back in the UK, don’t be fooled re. the quality of Russian rockabilly by the last Russian band that performed there, the Neva River Rockets from St Petersburg. Nothing personal, I spoke to them at a gig when they were last in Moscow and they’re nice guys. But compared to the best Russian bands they’re strictly non-league. I could quote you over half a dozen Russian bands who are premier league material who were NOT invited to the Rave.

The best bands here in Russia are not just cheap imitations of the Western sound – they have their own style and stand up in comparison with all but the elite bands in the West. If Moscow and St Petersburg were closer geographically to the UK and western Europe, these bands would be touring and you’d see what I mean.

More info about Russian rock’n’roll can be found on my web-site at www.coopjive.co.uk (head for the feedback page).

“You can be sure, you can be certain, they’re rockin’ behind that old Iron Curtain”

Printed with kind permission of ‘The Velvet Collar’. The author – a true Ted – would like to thank his Russian friends who helped with the contents of this article. Special thanks to Sergey Kuteynikov and Mikhail “Mike Buster.” **P**



A Stilyagi in Moscow, 1967

Tolstoy's Moscow House

text and photos Ross Hunter



At last! I have found my perfect house in Moscow. There is plenty of choice in this city for the ideal dwelling, from historic to ultra modern, with great views of (or from) the Kremlin, super luxury or perfectly positioned, but if you please, I'd love to live in Tolstoy's house between Park Kultury and Frunzenskaya.

I wouldn't complain about Gorky House, given a bit of a freshen up and a spot of paint, a penthouse above the Metropol would see me through, *pieds a terre* overlooking Tverskaya have their attractions, there are a few eminently acceptable *des res* spots on the riverbank and I am very happy in my little "vyсотка", but Tolstoy's house is a home like no other.

The great man wintered here for nearly twenty years, and produced much of his finest work in the study, although he only stayed there under pressure from his family, as he really only wanted to be on his beloved estate at Yasnaya Polyana. I have not been there yet, but if Ulitsa Lva Tolstovo 21 (*Khamovnicheskaya ulitsa* in his day) is the poor relation, his country haven must be wonderful indeed. Tolstoy's winter residence is a country house in the middle of Moscow: of wooden construction, elegant but understated, graced by a surprisingly large and tasteful wooded garden, and surrounded by remarkably tasteless industrial sheds and yards. It is not a luxury house, although distinctly comfortable for its day, but exudes the same sense of glove-fitting comfort and stability as a favourite leather armchair.

The house has been a museum for over eighty years, but unlike some stale preserves, could be lived in tomorrow, just lifting the claret cords from the doorways, and the dust covers from the dinner service. The samovar is ready to be lit; the bear on the stairs is waiting to serve you. The entrance is welcoming, and the living rooms are begging to be full of laughter. Being wooden, the house is alive and responds to life. It is solid, but with just enough play in the stairs and boards to register your presence, and although sturdy, the years have eased a few degrees off strict right angles, which combined with lots of unexpected steps and kinks in the walls and corridors makes navigation more of an exploration than a procession. It is a mansion for children to play hide and seek and for friends to talk and party at leisure. House guests included a dazzling selection of Russia's late 19th century artistic elite, from Chekhov to Gorky, Rachmaninov to Rimsky-Korsakov,

and their music and poetry has seeped into the very fabric of the house.

Above all, matching perhaps only Iona or Bodhgaya, the whole house is transcendent with spirit. Tolstoy's presence is all enveloping, in the house and the garden. Not that this is a simple matter to explain, or rationalise. The contradictions are legion. Tolstoy railed with exquisite eloquence against the evils of class, yet lived with servants and workers – this house needs a lot of looking after; he was so passionate about the ultimate life of Christian simplicity and love that he could be almost insufferable as a family man; meditatively rejecting the clutter of the world, he was a great one for gadgets – a very early enthusiast for the bicycle despite being in his dotage, and ultimately, as he tried to escape worldly cares, he, like his heroine Anna Karenina, met his end at the railway.

It is fitting that he died far away. His house is a celebration of life and creativity, and lives on. It is a timeless house, with all that was epochal of *fin-du-siecle* Russia, civilised, cultured, and stable, with not a hint of the turmoil to come – and which was made possible in no small measure by Tolstoy's own writings. Astonishingly, the house survived revolution and civil war, unscathed by the chaos of creating a new order on the ashes of the old. It is incredibly familiar: you have met half the furniture, the chairs, the furnishings, the china and the kitchen fittings at your aunt's house or in the attic – all is just so, well made without ostentation, comfortable but not showy. The bicycle is there, and most of all, so is his study, tucked away from the bustle of the house, yet comfortable for work, and for entertaining debate. The chair, complete with legs hacked short, the better for failing eyes to focus on vital writing is at an angle and position inviting occupation.

No lesser writer than Chekhov himself, surpassed by very, very few, he once declared that it is easy and pleasant to be a writer, even when realising that nothing is being created, even as Tolstoy did more than many writers could conceive.

To live in Moscow is an experience in itself. To live in this house would be a dream; and for any wannabee hack writer to try his hand in this atmosphere would be the ultimate privilege. How many atoms of Tolstoy's breath would infuse my pen? As is clear above, none till now. What, then, is to be done? Live in his house, please. **P**



Vilnius. The Old and the New

text Neil Taylor

photos courtesy of the Lithuanian National Tourist Office



Moscow is proud of its 20th century, having become a capital then and with appropriate buildings to mark its new significance. Vilnius would prefer to forget this period in its history, except for the last ten years when it was again the capital of an independent Lithuania. It is much happier reviving the previous 700 years, from its foundation around 1200, and then flaunting all the projects which have started since 2000. The 20th century was a succession of bleak occupations under the Russians, Germans and Poles.

Visitors can best get the sense of Vilnius from the top floor bar of the Lietuva Hotel. Looking south across the river to the Old Town, buildings from the conflicting regimes and religions that used to rule over Vilnius now fight to stand out against each other. Fortunately, the UNESCO World Heritage status that this area enjoys has ensured that no modern intrusion interferes with this view, much as though many developers would have liked to destroy it. What looks like a Greek temple is in fact the Catholic Cathedral, built in what was simply the normal style in the 1820s. Beside it for 200 years was a gap, the result of neglect and plunder during the 17th and 18th centuries. However in the 16th century, it had been the Royal Palace, and that is what it will be again from July 2009. A laborious process of excavation and rebuilding will by then be complete. Above it is Gedimino Castle, looking much as it did when first built in the 14th

century. When enjoying this view, remember that Vilnius has been a capital of a Lithuania 15 times larger than it is now, with its power stretching down to the Black Sea coast.

Walking across the bar and then looking north, east or west, the surroundings are however totally 21st century. The hotel now shares the limelight with the new town hall, a financial centre and shopping arcades. Visitors in the early 1990s will remember an area that had perhaps been salubrious in the 19th century but which no 20th century government had maintained properly. Arturas Zuokas, elected Mayor of Vilnius at the age of 32 in 2000, was determined to make changes. He accepted the Old Town as just that, a tourist attraction but hardly suitable as an economic centre needing to compete with Riga or Warsaw. This is what the New Town has now become. Zuorkas was also well known for turning around a totally run-down area of Vilnius called Uzupis, having been inspired by Montmartre in Paris. Artists and tourists are now equally happy here, particularly on April 1, when it regularly declares itself independent from the rest of Lithuania and even sets up a passport control.

No visitor in 2009 will be allowed to forget that Vilnius is European City of Culture, taking over from Liverpool in the UK which had this role in 2008. The New Year celebrations throughout the town set the scene for what will be a

very public display of arts and culture. Yes, there will be star-studded concerts and grand openings, but the year-long theme of the Festival is that participation should be as wide as possible and that much of it should be free of charge. Until now, the former Town Hall Square has been a place for strolling and for crossing over from one side of the Old Town to the other. This year it will instead be somewhere to linger and to absorb the diversity of Lithuanian music and art. Do not however just look for culture in the obvious places. A building site, an abandoned workshop, a bridge not to mention the airport, bus and railway stations all have roles to play in the City of Culture celebrations. Pictures will be displayed there and performers will bring them to life.

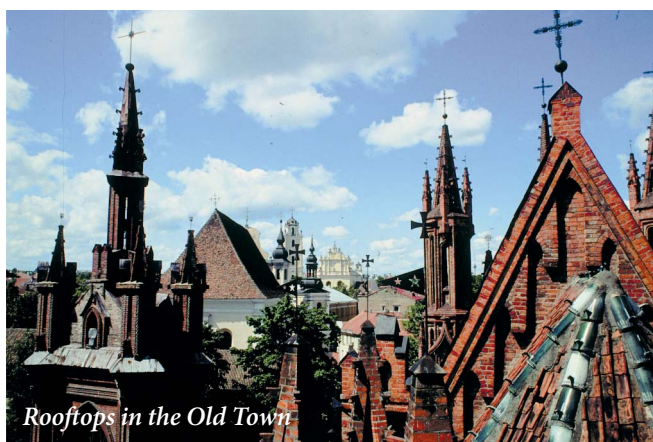
Whereas Estonia and Latvia have carved specific niches in the cultural field, Lithuania has succeeded in covering them all. Its classical orchestras are as talented as its jazz and rock bands; its painters can shock, sooth or stimulate as much as those from countries with a population ten or a hundred times as great as that of Lithuania. The detailed programme for City of Culture activities is on the website www.culturelive.lt/en Even with the program currently incomplete, it is hard to find a day without many competing events and exhibitions. However it will be at its most intense around mid-summer in late June and then again in early December when artificial illuminations all over the city will make up for the almost total lack of daylight.

A walking tour of the Old Town can start from one Catholic centre, the Cathedral and finishes at another, the Gates of Dawn. The flamboyant interior of the Cathedral is a total contrast to its formal exterior. Do not miss the black, white and red marble extravaganza around the chapel that honours St Casimir, Lithuania's patron saint. Many of the portraits along the wall of the nave date from Soviet times, when the building was converted into an art gallery. The restored Royal Palace is next to the Cathedral.

Walking now along Pilies, which crosses the Old Town, remember to divert westwards to the Amber Gallery. The Lithuanian and Kaliningrad coast is the major world source for amber and this museum shows its history and its current uses, which extend well beyond jewellery into medicine and engineering. The Church of St Anne is a further 100 yards or so from here. In June 1812 Napoleon greatly admired it and was a frequent visitor. In December of the same year he fled back though Vilnius to France ahead of his army after his failed invasion of Russia. The full extent of this failure only came to light in 2001 when the bones of 20,000 members of his army were discovered in Vilnius. They had mostly died in Vilnius from cold and malnutrition rather than in battle. Pilies is now such a happy street, full of cafes, colour and jewellery, that its earlier history is probably best forgotten.

To the east of Pilies is the University, Lithuanians love to tell Russians that it was founded in 1579, almost two hundred years before either St Petersburg or Moscow had one. Mingle outdoors with the students or climb inside to the Observatory and to the collection of 16th century manuscripts. Note the frescoes on the ceilings, some are centuries old but others date just from the 1970s and were then a welcome relief from socialist realism.

26 Pilies was where the Lithuanian Declaration of Independence was signed on February 24, 1918, which is



Rooftops in the Old Town



Vilnius university



The Gates of Dawn

TRAVEL

FlyLAL (www.FlyLAL.com) the Lithuanian national carrier flies daily Mon-Fri from Moscow to Vilnius. The early morning schedule means that flying from Moscow on Friday and back on Monday allows three full days in Vilnius and only one day away from the office. There is a daily train between Moscow and Vilnius but it is only used by the very old, the very young and the very patient, given the need for a double-transit Belarus visa.

When arriving in and leaving from Vilnius airport, do not waste money on a taxi or take the cumbersome local bus. Take instead the dedicated train, which came into service in September 2008. Costing two litas, or roughly €0.60, it must be a European bargain.

MONEY

The bank at the airport gives a very good rate of exchange and, equally important, bank notes with low denominations. It is happy to accept roubles and all major currencies and to change back litas on departure. ATMs usually give out 200 litas notes, worth about 60€. The lita is fixed to the euro at 1€ = 3.45LT but do not expect euros to be taken in any shops or restaurants. Credit cards can be used everywhere.

HOTELS

The Reval Lietuva Hotel (www.revalhotels.com) dominates the Vilnius skyline with its 22 storeys and its 300 rooms. Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh stayed there in 2006 but the hotel caters equally well for tourists and business travellers. A pedestrian bridge links it across the river to the Old Town.

There are many small four-star hotels in the Old Town itself, including the 50-room Narutis (www.narutis.com) on Pilies, the main street through the Old Town, the 65-room Artis Centrum (www.centrumhotels.com) which overlooks the Presidential garden, and 80-room Congress (www.congress.lt) beside the river.

RESTAURANTS

It is not worth bothering to track down Lithuanian food. The major national dish is *cepelinai*, enormous dumplings made from potatoes and filled with chunks of meat, so far too close for comfort to basic Russian fare. However all the major European cuisines are now represented in Vilnius, with the same quality as in Moscow or in their home base, but at much lower prices. For a quiet evening in rural France, go to *Les Amis*, Saviciaus 9 which has only six tables and so every dish is freshly prepared. For a livelier time in Italy, *Da Antonio* Pilies 20 fits the bill, both with its food and with its wine. Brits who have skimped on lunch and tea will make up for this at *Lokys* (The Bear) given its generous portions of game. With a large group, go Chinese at *Kinija*, Konstitucijos12, over the river in the New Town.



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why this is now the National Day. It is now a museum commemorating this. Go onto the balcony for the best views of Pilies and of the University buildings.

Walking through the Old Town shows how many religions and ethnic groups Vilnius has hosted over the last 800 years. If the 20th century saw them fighting, the previous seven centuries saw Jews, Lithuanians, Poles and Russians largely at peace and working together. Visit any museum to see the heritage that this cooperation has bequeathed. Pilies broadens out into Town Hall Square. The museum located here, named after its founder Kazys Varnelis, in fact has nothing Lithuanian in it at all. Kazys Varnelis fled from Vilnius in 1944 and had a dual career in the USA as a modern artist but also as a collector and dealer in maps, furniture and first editions. On the restoration of independence, he returned home. Both his own work and his collection are now shown here so expect to see an 18th century mahogany table set against 1960s abstract art.

The Gates of Dawn, part of the former Old Town fortifications, stretch across the street two hundred yards to the south of Town Hall Square. A gold and silver image of the Virgin Mary looks down on pilgrims, many of whom are kneeling in the street. Others crawl up the stairs at the side on hands and knees to show their veneration.

Do not be ashamed if you fail to leave the Old Town during your stay. You will be following in the footsteps of most previous visitors who spend the morning in earnest sight-seeing, the afternoon in galleries and the evenings in self-indulgence. In Vilnius, age is irrelevant. It suits 70-year olds just as much as 25-year olds. For a city now celebrating its 800th birthday, one cannot expect it to distinguish between the two. **P**

Busy Hands

text Charles Borden

photographs Andrey Esytkin

Like the craft industries of many countries, traditional Russian hand-made goods and their makers have dwindled, replaced by manufactured substitutes, some made in Russia and many imported from parts east. Passport made a visit to one, not only surviving, but thriving Moscow workshop to watch busy hands at work on products that have a worldwide demand.

Ballet, a cultural icon of Russia, has long been one of the country's finest exports, whether through the tours of its great ballet companies to stages across the globe or the starring roles of its dance greats in other of the world's great dance companies. Lesser known but no lesser stars of the international ballet world are the productions of Grishko, one of the world's three leading producers of dance shoes, costumes and other dance accessories. A visit to the small Grishko boutique just off Tverskaya is an essential stop for visiting dancers and knowledgeable dance buffs to find the company's hand-made ballet shoes as well as other wares produced by dozens of master-crafts persons in workshops around the city.

Nikolay Grishko is still at the helm of the company he founded by in the late 1980s as a manufacturing cooperative after he observed an interesting phenomenon when he accompanied his professional dancer-wife Tamara during a French tour: Russian dancers were bringing ballet shoes from theater workshops at home to sell to European dancers. Grishko consolidated a number of the master shops and gave master workers employment during the difficult economic transition of the 1990s. At first the company copied older shoe models but Grishko realized that even for classical dance, new dance techniques and movements required new design. The old models were too rigid for modern dance. The company developed and used new technologies and design yet retained hand production.

Grishko pointes and ballet slippers are still handmade in their own workshops. Grishko says that "pointe shoes must be handmade and well fitted since even a small defect can cause injury for strenuous professional dancers. Also, the dancer should feel the soul of the shoemaker in the shoes." Grishko tap shoes also have a solid reputation, not surprising since wife Tamara is a tap dancer herself. Other shoe styles include folk and Flamenco. Most of the Grishko workshops have now been consolidated into one location in eastern Moscow.

Costumes are another Grishko specialty, not only for dance school students, but for some of the world's best dance companies as well as professional figure skaters and theatre casts. The company has a workshop of highly skilled designers and seams-masters that work with luxurious and colorful fabrics to decorate a performer from head to toe.

Nikolay Grishko's office is filled with the mementos of Russian dance he has collected as a patron of the art of dance. He has received numerous awards including a Diaghilev Memorial Silver Medal, the Vaslav Nijinsky International Memorial Medal and a Golden Mask Award among others.

Grishko Boutique

Kositsky pereulok, dom 1-A

+7 495 694 4622

metro Puskinskaya-Tverskaya-Chekovskaya



Nikolay Grishko



Finishing boots for ethnic dance



Pointe shoes in process



Dancewear workshop



Ice-Fishing

text Andy Potts

As Russia's film industry came to grips with the freedoms and commercial responsibilities of post-Soviet life, it was the 'Peculiarities ...' series which helped forge a new, slapstick style. Part 'Carry on', yet with a distinctive Russian accent, they took characteristic obsessions of the country's men folk - from the banya to the bedroom - and poked affectionate fun from the bottom of a regularly-charged glass of vodka.

Among them was 'Peculiarities of national fishing', a fitting tribute to a passion that unites the lowliest worker with the guardians of the levers of power. Whatever the weather, given a rod, a line, a patch of water and probably a bottle or two, Russians will happily embark on a mission to land whatever carp might be within reach.

And a harsh winter is no cause to halt the fun. Sub-zero temperatures merely shift the action from river bank to ice floe. Just as surely as every stretch of water has a sign reading 'It is forbidden to walk on the ice', so there will be hunched figures in the middle of the lake huddling over holes waiting for the bite.

Of course there are risks: in Petersburg every year brings tales of stranded anglers plucked from a bobbing raft of ice as it passes the naval base at Kronstadt. Nationwide, thousands are drowned after misjudging the ice. Yet for devotees this remains the ideal time to fish. Within the fraternity, risks are laughed off: "A good man won't drown, and we're never sorry if a bad man does."

Equipment is pretty much standard - any hunting and fishing store in town can kit out a would-be angler. Venues aren't hard to find either, since anywhere popular with summer's open-water fishermen will also have its share of ice-anglers. From the lakes of Tsaritsyno and Izmailovsky to the beaches of the Moscow Canal enthusiasts will gather for action. Motives vary: a return to nature in the heart of the city, an escape from 'her indoors', even a chance to cheaply restock the fridge - the traditions of catch and release are seldom respected here.

As for avoiding the risks without merely trusting that you are a 'good man', an experienced colleague is useful. Apart from recognising some of the danger signs, he can also help with a rescue if the worst happens. Confirming a long spell of deep frost also helps, since currents, water depth and pollution can turn a seemingly solid freeze into a deceptive coating of treacherous slush with no visible warning. Above all, if a stretch of ice seems to be uncolonised in an otherwise busy area, assume there's a reason for it.

Of course there are those who believe that a planned dip in icy waters is actually good for the health. The so-called 'morzhi' (walruses) who cut out plunge pools in the cities frost-bound waterways follow a tradition of religious penance that is claimed to absolve true believers of the previous year's sins. After a jolt of almost heart-stopping cold, most beginners find the waters seductively warm - at least compared with the air - before being hauled out and told that they have been mysteriously cleansed by embracing part of Russia's obscure 'dusha'. But the ritual is best attempted without a fishing rod in hand! **P**



Two Movies

text Fred Flintstone

During the past year Fred has been watching two movies play out in Bedrock, the first out his kitchen window where he has watched a small grove of trees transformed into a highway construction site supported by a small Tadjik worker village. This film runs continuously since these workers are up before Fred in the morning and many are still at work as he goes to bed.

The second is a wide-screen disaster film, which Fred has dubbed *Katrina-2* – with a Bedrock cast that has been living in growing comfort for nine years but the within shaky dikes of an inefficient economy shored up by windfall oil profits. The stars have been the executives and middle-men who were skilled at siphoning.

To compensate for economic inefficiency, prices had skyrocketed and Fred had watched as butter and sausage became so expensive that it was practically cheaper to fly Paris to shop. Space rentals became so expensive for retailers that it became difficult to profit even in the booming economy.

Clients would ask Fred about Bedrock business costs, “Shouldn’t we have lower employment costs since salaries are low?” His answer: “What about security? Every shop and restaurant has guards, some armed. Fully 20% of the staff of a financial services client consists of security and drivers. And bookkeepers – expect to double your usual contingent.”

The smallest tasks in Bedrock are challenging even without considering traffic problems. Last week Fred girded himself for an early morning trip to the bank to send a small wire transfer to his bank back home. Despite the fact that his bank is western owned, he knew it would likely be lunchtime before he was free.

“*Kto posledny* (who’s last in line)?” Fred inquired as he entered. He waited. Finally called, after a few minutes it appeared that the teller had never made an international transfer before, though this was the main office of an international bank. He was handed off to the supervisor, who after several phone calls and numerous consultations with the handwritten notes in her notebook, completed the transfer. Time elapsed – close to an hour and a half.

Fred then learned that his bank no longer exchanges currency so his next stop was a branch of a giant American bank. He handed his passport to the cashier. Minutes later she summoned a second cashier. Both worked the keyboard and then the second cashier left the room. She returns with a third, a supervisor. This simple \$600 transaction took 20 minutes and three persons to complete. The entire system reminds of the old ethnic anecdote, “How many {fill in favorite ethnic group} does it take to change the ceiling light bulb? Twelve – one to hold the bulb and eleven to turn the ladder.”

Fred doesn’t know if they are actually Tadjiks who reside in the shipping containers outside his window with a few port-a-toilets and a little shower room. They are surely Central Asian guest workers, the ones who don’t look very east Asian – otherwise they might get a better job in a sushi restaurant. As Fred’s old man would say, “these fellows work for a living.” Fred can only imagine what they are paid. Occasionally a big boss shows up, waves his arms and stamps his feet for a few minutes and then cruises off in his *inomark* (foreign car)... **P**

HOW TO: TAKE A GYPSY CAB

One of the best aspects of Moscow life – every other car is a taxi! If you are ready to trust your life to a chain-smoking, beat-up-lada driver, these phrases may help you get where you want to go:.

The destination and the price in the same sentence:

До Киевского вокзала довезёте за двести? (argh, genitive case endings)

Will you drive to Kievskii station for 200?

До ближайшего метро довезёте за пятьдесят?

Will you drive to the nearest metro for 50?

До Большой Никитской (улицы) довезёте за сто?

Will you drive to Bolshaya Nikitskaya for a hundred?

Через мост подвезёте?

Will you drop me over the bridge?

If the above leave you tongue-tied:

Можно на Новый Арбат за сто пятьдесят?

(Simple but effective)

Can we go to Arbatskaya for 150?

Negotiating the price:

200 мало, хотя бы 250!

200's not much, 250 at least!

Что так мало?! Маловато!

Why so little! That's not much!

Дороговато!

That's a bit expensive!

(you can add the ending -овато onto lots of words to give the meaning -ish).

Давайте всё-таки за двести.

Let's agree on 200 after all.

So they're not all professionals:

Дорогу знаете?

Do you know the way?

Скажите как доехать?

Can you tell me how to get there?

Where to stop and get out:

Слева остановите, пожалуйста.

Pull over on the left, please.

Вот справа мой дом.

That's my house on the right.

Я выйду здесь.

I'll get out here.

Я выйду у светофора.

I'll get out at the lights.

The etiquette: remember money shouldn't be put in someone's hand in Russia:

Я положу деньги тут.

I'll put (the money) here.

Courtesy of Ruslingua
www.ruslingua.com

Ruslingua



The Best Summer of Your Life through Camp Counselors USA (CCUSA) Program

Interview with CCUSA Russia Country Director Valery Kostin
text Marina Lukanina and Tatyana Shorova

Approximately twenty years ago the former USSR finally stopped being a “closed country.” Russians were given the luxury of traveling and seeing the world. Various exchange programs began to appear at that time. Some of them gave Soviet students and teachers the option to work in American summer camps. Since the camp movement in Russia has always been popular, such programs quickly became very popular among young people. We decided to talk more about one of such programs, Camp Counselors USA (CCUSA), with CCUSA Russia Country Director Valery Kostin.

Q. CCUSA How did you get involved in camp life in Russia and international camping?

It all started with Artek Camp that still remains one of the most famous camps in Russia. I first went there as a camper many years ago. After graduating from the Mordovian State University I became a counselor, then a program director and then a Head of one of the Artek camps.

Q. What made Artek so unique?

It was the largest international Young Pioneer camp in the Soviet Union established in 1925 on the Black Sea coast in the Crimea, Ukraine. Going to Artek was considered to be an honorable award. In the mid-sixties Artek started running international camp sessions regularly.

Q. What were the circumstances that brought you to the USA first?

At the time of my transfer to the Headquarters of the Young Pioneer Organization in Moscow, American Camp Association

(ACA) was looking for a representative from the Soviet Union who could talk about camps in the USSR at their annual conference. I was chosen a speaker and I went to their Boston conference in February of 1990.

My presentation was very well-received. The delegates were astonished to hear that at that time there were over 100,000 camps in the Soviet Union. I spoke about our large camps, their programs, our staff trainings, and the importance of internships.

Bill Harwood, CCUSA President was among the people who listened to my speech. He suggested the idea of establishing a CCUSA program in the Soviet Union. He said he was eager to come to the Soviet Union and select the first Russian participants.

Q. And did he actually come?

He did. Two months after our first meeting in Boston. We gathered 40 students from different republics of the Soviet Union. There were 23 finalists. Our first group of CCUSA participants went to work at the American camps in the summer of 1990.

Q. Was there any reluctance from the American camp directors to hire staff from Russia at that time?

The year after we sent 75 people, then 113 and the number increased each year. The maximum number of people that we've sent so far is about 3,000 students. The numbers speak for themselves.

Of course we also had to break through the stereotypes and prejudices of some American camp directors about the Russian participants. They could not believe the staff from Russia could

be fluent in English and possess enough skills to teach American kids. I know one camp director who back in 1990 did not even think about having anyone from the Soviet Union. She was convinced however to hire one counselor from Lithuania, then part of the Soviet Union. This Lithuanian student transformed the entire arts & crafts program at that camp. Since then that camp director had been hiring lots of counselors from Russia.

Q. What is the main purpose of this program?

Various organizations have different opinions on that. Some consider it to be just a way of making money. As a person who is involved with this program for over 20 years I strongly believe that its main emphasis is on the cultural exchange.

Q. What are the selection criteria and requirements for the candidates?

All the participants have to go through an interview with the program representatives in Moscow or in the regional representative offices of CCUSA. Not only do we pay attention to the skills of the participants but also take into account their personal disposition.

Though Camp Counselors USA program you can go either as a camp support staff (kitchen staff, for example) or as a camp counselor. Some students hesitate to go as a counselor so they begin with a support staff position and usually return as counselors for their 2nd year.

CCUSA takes care of its participants – each of them has a 24-hr emergency phone; the program representatives visit the camps where the CCUSA participants are placed.

In 1997 we also opened Work Experience Program (WEUSA) in Russia. This program allows the students to work in the US service sector – restaurants, theme parks, hotels, etc.

Generally, we accept full-time students and young teachers under 25 years old for participation in Camp Counselor program, and full-time students only - in our Work Experience Program.

Q. Can a foreign student residing in Russia participate in this program?

Yes, as long as he/she has a legal status in Russia. Students from Ghana, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, and the CIS have already taken part in this program.

Q. How much are the program fees and what do they include? Do the participants get paid at a camp?

The fee for CCUSA program is about \$800-\$1000. It includes insurance, visa, a plane ticket, and administrative expenses. The plane ticket is partially subsidized by the program. At the camp the participants get what we call “pocket money” - approximately \$1000 - and I would like to emphasize again that the purpose of this 9 week cultural exchange program is not earning money.

For WEUSA, the fee is about \$1500-\$2000. This program cost is paid by the participants; there is no subsidy for the plane ticket. On the other hand, in the US you receive a real salary: the minimal hourly rate is \$5.25 and up, depending on the type of job and skills. The program duration is 3–4 months including one month of “grace period” that you can use for traveling.

Q. What kind of camp do the participants work at?

There are traditional program camps (Independent/Private camps and Agency camps) that are based on traditional camp values. Campers stay from one to eight week sessions. There are Day Camps that usually operate Monday to Friday during the

day. There are Girls Scouts Camps, camps for underprivileged and inner-city children, camps for people with physical/mental disabilities, specialty program camps that focus on one or more of the main activity areas, such as Sports, Arts, and there are Religious camps, which emphasize a fun outdoor experience while promoting the values of different faiths.

Q. Can the participants choose the camps they want to work at?

Every year in March we hold a camp director fair for CCUSA participants, there are about 30 representatives of different camps. It gives a chance for the students, who are already accepted to the program, to choose a camp according to his or her individual preferences. On a regular basis, a student has an interview with CCUSA representatives; successful applications are sent to the US office and then are chosen by the camp directors.

Q. How did the idea of establishing Camp Russia (CRUSSIA) program appear?

After the first successful year the Americans decided to send their students to our camps, in 1991 about 20 American students came to Russia. It was a wonderful experience for them in camps all over Russia.

Q. Does this program work only for the Americans?

Initially, it was only the Americans who participated in CRUSSIA, but in 2000 Britain joined the program. Since 2001 there are about 30-50 students coming over to the Russian camps every year.

The countries which have already sent us their students are the following: Canada, USA, Mexico, Venezuela, Puerto-Rico, Ireland, Netherlands, France, Germany, Hungary, Finland, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

Practically every country mentioned has a Camp Counselors representative office. Our web site, www.ccusa.com, provides a complete list of our office locations. If there is none in your country, you can contact the office closest to your place. We cooperate with over 65 countries.

The students work at camps for one – two months and get pocket money (\$100-\$300). The most important part is cultural communication exchange. In some universities it is even considered to be summer training. The camps we cooperate with in this program are members of the Russian Camps Association.

Q. What are the requirements for CRUSSIA program participants? Is knowledge of Russian mandatory?

Overall, knowledge of the Russian language is not required. Those who speak only English can either teach the language or do sports activities at camps. We do emphasize that if a person does not speak Russian, then he/she should at least speak English.

There is no age limit: one can be 18 and over to a reasonable limits. It might be interesting to know that our oldest participant was 72 years old, a retired nurse.

Q. Where can we get more information about these programs?

You should refer to our two web-sites: www.ccusa.com (our headquarters web-site) and www.ccusa.ru is our Russian web-site. And as CCUSA slogan says, I wish everyone who is interested in international exchange experience at least one *Best Summer of Your Life* through Camp Counselors USA. **P**

Experience Japanese Cuisine at Benihana

text Marina Lukanina



If you are up for a healthy meal with plenty of rice and seafood dishes, then go Japanese. This cuisine offers a huge variety of dishes and regional specialties.

Japanese cuisine is known for its seafood, vegetables, and rice. Raw seafood chopped with a sharp knife has long been a distinguishing feature of native Japanese food. Principal seasonings are fermented soybean and rice products, such as soy sauce, “miso (soybean paste)”, and rice vinegar. To preserve the natural flavors of ingredients, strong spices are avoided in favor of milder herbs and spices, such as “yuzu (citron)”, “wasabi (Japanese horseradish)”, “myoga (ginger)”, and dried and ground “sansho” seeds.

Rice is Japan’s most important crop. It has been cultivated there for over 2000 years. The value of this product in Japan is emphasized by various factors: it was even used as a currency at one time. The Japanese word for cooked rice (gohan) also has the general meaning of “meal”; the literal meaning of breakfast (asago-

han) is “morning rice”. Japanese rice is short grain and becomes sticky when cooked.

Many different kinds of fresh fish and seafood are served raw in traditional Japanese dishes. Sushi is the most famous such dish outside of Japan, and one of the most popular dishes among the Japanese themselves. It is usually served on special occasions. Sashimi is also popular inside Japan, but not so well known abroad. While similar to sushi, sashimi is distinct for its absence of vinigered rice. When slices of fish are served on top of a small ball of rice, it is called nigiri zushi.

Seaweeds have been an important part of Japanese cooking for many centuries. Today, various types of seaweed are used extensively as soup stock, seasonings, and other forms in daily Japanese cooking. Three most commonly used types of seaweed are: Kombu, Wakame and Nori

Since the late 90s, Japanese cuisine began to gain popularity in Moscow. The first Japanese restaurants began to

appear in Moscow around that time, such as Planet Sushi in 1999. The number of Japanese restaurants in Moscow has quadrupled since then; there seems to be no end to the increasing popularity of Japanese food in Russia.

Along with the restaurants, Japanese culture has been blossoming in Moscow. It has become fashionable to go to Japanese restaurants; such Japanese authors as Haruki Murakami and Yukio Mishima have been breaking sales records in the book stores.

In 2001, being sensitive towards market trends, Rosinter (Rostik Group Corporation) was awarded the exclusive franchise rights of “Benihana of Tokyo” restaurants in Europe. Benihana of Tokyo is a very famous chain of restaurants that has over 70 outlets worldwide, mostly in the USA, England, Australia, and Japan. In Japanese “Benihana” means “red flower”. It is believed that red flowers brings luck; so all the chefs at Benihana wear red hats.

The founder of Benihana, Roki Aoki opened his first Benihana restaurant in 1964 in New York. At the time, Japanese cuisine was not something Americans knew an awful lot about. The idea of cooking food right in front of the guests was totally unknown, yet it quickly gained popularity. What started as a small place with four tables in New York later grew into an international symbol of wonderful entertainment and excellent food. Benihana initiated the style called "Food as Entertainment". Since 1964 the restaurant has sold over 100 million dishes.

In 2003 the first "Benihana" restaurant was opened in downtown Moscow on Pushkinskaya Square, with Rocky Aoki attending its opening.

At the heart of the Benihana experience is the teppanyaki table (teppan meaning "steel grill" and yaki meaning "broiled"). Guests gather around this table to enjoy experiencing the meal being cooked right before their eyes by a chef who is not only a great culinary expert but also an entertainer. The meal begins with a delicious Japanese soup and a salad. Both are complimentary. And what Japanese meal could be without its famous green tea (Ryoku cha)?! A waiter tops up your special tea cups (Yunomi) from a green tea pot (Kyusu).

Food is prepared right next to the table "teppan-yaki" style. Beef, chicken, and shrimp are prepared "hibachi-style" (an American-style term for "teppan-yaki" cooking). "Hibachi" means "fire pot", "small type of grill" in Japanese. Guests, who sit at communal tables, place their orders with the chef and witness a real performance as these items, sliced and diced, are flipped into the air. Benihana chefs literally play with your food as they cook it. They also include elements of design, such as making a heart with an arrow out of rice.

Interaction and lots of jokes between the chef and the guests are an inalienable part of Benihana experience. You could be asked to help the cook, or asked to tap with your hands on the table into the rhythm of chef's cooking. Witnessing flying shrimp ending up in a chef's pocket is one of the most popular tricks at Benihana.

To achieve such effects, every cook goes through an extensive training program. There is a specially-designed training program based on manuals translated from Japanese. Waitress training takes up to three months. The star role belongs to the chefs who usually come to work

for Benihana from within the company (Rosinter). Theatrical skills and excellent communication skills are mandatory requirements.

Theatre aside, the key element that makes this restaurant stand out, is the food. All ingredients used are freshly prepared. No pre-made food is used; everything is cooked right in front of you; with the exception of the sauces. The menu is original – from Benihana in Tokyo. The restaurant management tracks the popularity of dishes by keeping the most popular ones and eliminating the ones that are not well-liked. The menu is regularly updated with new dishes. The big hits of the menu are Combo and Sombo mix. The basis is rice with vegetables mixed with seafood and meat. Benihana wants to make this experience fun for the entire family. Hence the special Kid's menu.

The atmosphere of the restaurant is designed so as make you feel like you are in Japan. As you walk upstairs (as the restaurant is on the 2nd floor of a building) you can enjoy beautiful scenes of Japanese landscapes. The walls of the restaurant are decorated with various paint-

ings of a red flower as well as Japanese characters. The main two colors of the interior are white and red; the colors of the Japanese flag.

There are two tables that can host 15 people and six tables for 8 people. The concept that people who do not necessarily know each other sit down together at one table is very popular among foreigners and somewhat unusual for Russia, where people generally prefer to order tables just for themselves or their friends. However, with the appearance of Benihana in Moscow this culture is changing. The entire Benihana restaurant atmosphere implies that there should be people around for you to enjoy the food.

Whether you are an expert in restaurant dining or somebody who just wants a good meal, the Benihana experience is something you should try. This restaurant is perceived as a place where you can spend quality time in the company of friends, family and even complete strangers who, by virtue of the magical abilities of the chef will become your fun companions for the evening.

Itadakimasu! (Bon Appetite). **P**



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Sicilian Wine in Moscow

text Charles Borden

This month we are taking a new approach to help our readers select the best wines available on Moscow shelves. We started with distributor wine lists to come up with a list of Sicilian wines that should be available and then conducted our own independent review from rating sources to select the best from that list. We then checked supermarkets for availability, though this was just post the New Year so stocks were probably low. We learned a few lessons in the process.

Sicily has long been the poor cousin of Italian wines best known for its Marsala, a seafarers' fortified wine produced on the far eastern tip of the island using the local Catarrato, Inzolia and Grillo grapes. Though Marsala has been relegated to the kitchen for Chicken Marsala and Zabaglione there are quality examples available in Moscow from Cantine Carlo Pelligrino.

Many of the world's lesser wine regions have seen a resurgence in recent years with the help of modern winemakers, and this is the case with Sicily. Traditional family wineries have incorporated the latest winemaking techniques and are experimenting with blends of traditional grapes such as the red Nero d'Avola and white Catarrato with French varieties such as Chardonnay, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon. Many of the top names are represented in Moscow: Planeta, Calatrasi, Donnafugata, Abbazia Sant'Anastasia, Cusumano, Tasca d'Almerita and Tenuta Rapitala. The principal wine regions are located in western Sicily near Palermo and in the eastern tip of the island, north and south.

Italian wines of distinction carry the labels DOC ((Denominazione di Origine Controllata) or the DOCG (Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita). Wines with these designations are strictly regulated with respect to area of production, grape varieties used, restriction of grape

yields, grapes used, aging and other characteristics. IGT (Indicazione Geografica Tipica) is a less stringent designation.

The Grapes

The best known Sicilian grapes are the deep red Nero d'Avola and white Catarrato. Others include Inzolia, Grecanico, Grillo and Ansonica. French varieties that have thrived in Sicily's hot, dry climate include Chardonnay, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Nero d'Avola, known as Calabrese elsewhere in Italy, likes the hot climate and produces wines with excellent aging potential. Nero d'Avola wines are noted for dark berry and black cherry aromas with notes of black pepper, mint and charcoal – delicious with roasted meats and game. Catarrato is the principal grape traditionally used for Marsala. It produces a somewhat heavy golden white wine that blends well with Chardonnay.

Top Sicilian Wineries Represented in Moscow

Abbazia Santa Anastasia (www.abbaziasantanastasia.it - Italian only)

The original Abbazia Santa Anastasia was founded in 12th century near what would become the city of Castelbuono in southwest Sicily. In 1980, engineer Francisco Lena began to clear the land to establish new vineyards and a winery. L'azienda Enoagricola Abbazia Santa Anastasia now produces wine in two series: Contempo and Cru.

Calatrasi (www.calatrasi.it/eng/index.php)

Calatrasi is located in Sancipirello about 30 kilometers south of Palermo. It is a modern "New World" winery developed by Maurizio and Giuseppe Micciché. Maurizio Micciché is a

regular visitor to Russia and a past guest at a Passport wine tasting. Calatrasi also has wineries in Puglia and Tunisia. Calatrasi's Super Sicilan, Accademia del Sole, D'istinto and Terrale wine series are sold in Russia. Maurizio has started a project with Russia's Chateau Le Grand Vostock to import and bottle Sicilian and Tunisian wines under careful conditions and supervision of winemaker CGV Frank Duseigneur, which are sold as good value "country wines."

Conte Tasca d'Almerita (www.tascadalmerita.it)

Tasca d'Almerita was established by brothers Carmelo and Lucio Mastrogiovanni in 1830 when they purchased the lands of Regaleali in west-central Sicily. It is now a completely modernized winery with 400 hectares of vineyards. Tasca d'Almerita produces a sparkling wine, Almerita Brut DOC.

Cusumano (www.cusumano.it)

Cusumano is a family winery run by brothers Alberto and Diego Cusumano who took over from their father in 2001 and transformed it to a leading modern winery with help from Piedmont winemaker Mario Ronco. Cusumano has about 350 hectares of vineyards across Sicily from Alcamo in the west near Palermo to Butera in the east.

Donnafugata (www.donnafugata.it)

Donnafugata is the modern extension of a 150 year-old family winery in Marsala that now includes vineyards in the DOC Contessa Entellina area in western Sicily and on the nearby island of Pantelleria. Donnafugata also produces dessert wines from Zibibbo (Moscato d'Alessandria) grapes on Pantelleria.

Planeta (www.planeta.it)

Planeta, founded in the 1990s, now consists of four estates extending from the family's original 17th century farmhouse at Sambuca di Sicilia. Two wineries are located in Dispensa (Menfi): Cantina Piccola produces international red wines and Cantina Grande Cantina Piccola the La Segreta line. At Buonivini (Noto), Planeta has built an ultra-modern winery "entirely underground in order to preserve the delightful landscape." At Dorilli (Vittorio), they have restored 100-year old winery to produce Cerasuolo di Vittoria, Sicily's first DOCG wine.

Tenuta Rapitala (www.rapitala.it)

Tenuta Rapitala was founded near Alcamo in southwestern Sicily in 1960 by French Naval Officer Hugues Bernard Comte de la Gatinais. The estate now consists of 225 hectares of grapes.



Part of the extensive Donnafugata winery

SUPERMARKETS

Metro

Find locations at: www.metro-cc.ru

Sedmoi Kontinent

Find locations at: www.7cont.ru/eng/

Azbuka Vkusa

Find locations at: www.azbukavkusa.ru

AM (Aromatniy Mir)

Find locations at: www.aromatnymir.ru

BOUTIQUES

DP Trade Shops

Decanter, Bol. Polyanka 30, Tel: 238-3808

Magnum, Kutuzovsky Prospekt 24, Tel: 937-6515

Magnum, Ul. Plyuschkina 20, Tel: 775 0674

Vinum, Prechistenka 40/2, Tel: 775-2305

Website: www.wine-dp-trade.ru

E-mail: info@wine-dp-trade.ru

Kauffman Shops

Kutuzovsky Prospekt 22, Tel: 243-2238

Ul. Kuznetsky Most 3, Tel: 624-0464

Ul. Ostojhenka 27, Tel: 291-3671

Website: www.whitehall.ru E-mail: whsec@col.ru

Kollektsiya Vin

Kutuzovsky Prospekt 18

Novinsky Bulvar 12

Ulitsa Tverskaya 20

Leninsky Prospekt 16

Website: www.vine.ru

Grand Cru Shops –several in Moscow including:

Novinsky Passage, Novinsky Bulvar 31. Tel: 775-5553 E-mail:

grandcru@grandc.ru

Finding The Best Rated

From our review of various distributor lists we found more than forty Sicilian white wines and fifty red wines and two or more vintages of many of each. However, there were far fewer wines represented on the shelves. Metro Cash and Carry has the best selection and prices that could be 20% or more less than boutiques or other supermarkets though you need a membership card to get in. Azbuka Vkusa also has a good selection but we were surprised that Sedmoi Kontinent had very few as did the AM markets.

Of the boutiques the Grand Cru shops owned by Simple Wines, the importer for Tasca d'Almerita and Donnafugata, had the best selection. The Vinum, Decanter and Magnum boutiques of DP Trade, importer for Abbazia Santa Anastasia, and the Intendant boutique of Cusumano importer MBG Impex, carry their brands, Kolleksiya Vin carries a small selection but Whitehall has almost none.

With few exceptions, the wines found in Moscow from Abbazia Santa Anastasia, Tasca d'Almerita, Cusumano, Donnafugata and Planeta exceed 750 rubles (\$25) and some of the wines from Calatrasi and Tenuta Rapitala are more modestly priced.

Passport has prepared a table of Sicilian wines that it appears have or are imported, however availability varies significantly. Note that each winery tends to have its star wines, those that it enters for tasting panels at trade events or that regularly obtain higher ratings from professionals. However, keep in mind that a high rating in one vintage does not carry over to another. For instance the Planeta Syrah 2004 has a Wine Spectator rating of 91 while the 2005 is rated only 86.

Restaurant Review

PASSPORT MAGAZINE SICILIAN WINE SHOPPING LIST

For this survey, we developed a list of most of the Sicilian wines that are exported to Russia, and from this list we created a shopping list of some of the best rated for our readers. Note that supplies vary and not all wines are likely to be in the shops – for instance some may only be found on restaurant wine lists or be sold out. We shopped right after New Year so supplies were depleted. Those wines that we actually found on the shelves are highlighted:

Wine	Grapes Used	Prizes	Retail Price
White Wines			
Calatrasi Terre di Ginestra Catarratto 2006	Catarratto	Gold medal - Vinitaly 2007 Gold medal - Sélections Mondiales des Vins 2007 – Canada	
Calatrasi Terre di Ginestra Catarratto 2007	Catarratto	Wine Spectator 88	
Cusumano Insolia 2007	Inzolia	Wine Spectator Best Value and 87 points	
Cusumano Jalé 2005	Chardonnay	Wine Spectator 90	
Cusumano Jalé 2007	Chardonnay	Wine Spectator 88	1530r
Donnafugata Anthilia IGT 2007	Catarratto 50%, Ansonica 50%	Stephen Tanzer 88 Wine Spectator Best Value and 87 points	780r
Planeta Chardonnay 2005	Chardonnay	Wine Spectator 93	
Planeta Chardonnay 2006	Chardonnay	Wine Spectator 92	2160r
Tasca d'Almerita Regaleali Bianco 2005	Inzolia, Grecanico, Catarratto	Robert Parker 90	
Tasca d'Almerita Contea Sclafani DOC Chardonnay 2006	Chardonnay	Wine Spectator 90	2750r
Red Wines			
Calatrasi T.D.G. 651	Nero d'Avola/Shiraz	Gold medal - Vinitaly 2007	
Calatrasi Nero d'Avola/Shiraz 2004	Nero d'Avola, Shiraz	Gold medal - Vinitaly 2007	
Calatrasi Terre di Ginestra Nero d'Avola 2005		Gold medal Sélections Mondiales des Vins 2007– Canada	
Cusumano Sagana 2004	Nero d'Avola	Robert Parker 90	
		Wine Spectator 90	
Cusumano Benuara 2006	Nero d'Avola 70%, Syrah 30%	Robert Parker 89	
Cusumano Benuara 2005	Nero d'Avola 70%, Syrah 30%	Robert Parker 90 Vini d'Italia 2007 3 Wineglasses	
Cusumano Noà 2004	Nero d'Avola 40%, Merlot 30%, Cabernet Sauvignon 30%	Wine Spectator 90	
Cusumano Noà 2005	Nero d'Avola 40%, Merlot 30%,	Robert Parker 92	2020r
	Cabernet Sauvignon 30%	Vini d'Italia 2007 3 Wineglasses	
Cusumano Nero d'Avola 2006	Nero d'Avola	Robert Parker 89	579r
Donnafugata Sedàra 2006	Nero d'Avola	Stephen Tanzer 89 Wine Spectator 86	1000r
Donnafugata Tancredi 2004	Nero d'Avola 70%, Cabernet Sauvignon 30%	Robert Parker 92	
Planeta Santa Cecilia 2005	Nero d'Avola	Robert Parker 90	
Planeta Syrah 2004	Syrah	Wine Spectator 91	
Tasca d'Almerita Regaleali Nero d'Avola 2006	Nero d'Avola	Robert Parker 90	750r
Tasca d'Almerita Lamiri 2005	Nero d'Avola	Robert Parker 90	
Tasca d'Almerita Rosso del Conte 2006	Nero D'Avola 85%	Wine Spectator 90	
Tasca d'Almerita Rosso del Conte 2004	Nero D'Avola 85%	Robert Parker 92 Wine Spectator 90	2740r
Tenuta Rapitala Solinero 2003	Syrah	Robert Parker 90 Wine Spectator 86	1320r



Dal Capo and Buddies

text Charles Borden

A slew of new restaurants opened as summer came to a close in Moscow and openings continued unabated throughout the first stage of the Russian financial crisis. It takes months of planning to stage a restaurant opening so despite the plunge of world oil prices, the lifeblood of the Russian economy, with startup costs and leases already committed it appears there was nothing for them to do but forge ahead.

We received a notice from manager Kelvin Pang that one of the last to open in 2008, the sports bar/Asian food **Buddies Cafe**, would open just off Tverskaya on December 28 so we decided to try it out. We had heard that we could expect some pleasant and authentic Thai and Szechuan dishes. Despite the address at Tverskaya 12, the entrance is off a small side street about a block and a half east on the right side. At the large, black vertical sign on the right side of the street you duck into a courtyard and descend a rock-walled stairway to Buddies. The restaurant consists of two spartan open rooms with a few plasma TVs mounted for sports events.

The Szechuan/Thai menu has a touch of Singapore and Vietnam. We started with a selection of hot appetizers: Deep Fried Crispy Wonton (340r), Chinese Spring Roll (320r) and Vietnamese Spring Roll (340r). For the main course we ordered Seafood Fried Rice (380r), Chicken Thai Green Curry Sauce (480r) and Chicken Szechuan Ko Pong Sauce (480r) accompanied with a large bowl of white rice. The quality of the food was good; both the Thai Green Curry and the Szechuan Ko Pong sauces were very tasty if mildly spiced and the rice was perfectly cooked. Buddies is actively promoting itself in the Expat community so our readers should get a good reception at this convenient location in the center. We wish them the best in this tough environment.

Buddies Café
Ulitsa Tverskaya 12, Building 8
+7 495 694 0229
metro Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya, Chekhovskaya
www.buddiescafe.ru

One of our party was hankering for pizza and we had passed several relatively new restaurants on Tverskaya on the way to Buddies including **Pizza dal Capo** at the corner of Tverskaya. We ducked in for a look and taste. Once in, it became clear that Dal Capo is part of the "Etazh Project" that also consists of the Picasso Bar night club and a group of Etazh restaurants around town (with one next door) that offer an array of Asian, Japanese, Mexican and Italian dishes.

The décor at Dal Capo was inviting with a big vase of red roses nearby and seating at comfortable padded red fabric high backed benches, high enough to provide privacy for each table of diners. The music is jazzy and soft, but this evening the pounding tekno from Club Picasso joined in. From the legs we saw heading down the stairway near our table, apparently at least one entrance to Picasso tracks through Dal Capo.

Dal Capo is promoted as Sicilian but from the menu (only Russian available) it appears that Italian chef Vincenzo Abitabile offers a broad range of Italian dishes – Caprese Salad (370r), Spaghetti Carbonara or Bolognese (310r), Grilled Seabass (470r) and even Gazpacho (160r). An American Pizza (400r) is offered with fresh tomatoes, mozzarella, eggplant, mushrooms, spicy sausage, hot dog, olives and sweet peppers. We got our pizza and were satisfied that Da Capo could deliver the goods for Italian near the Pushkinskaya metro station and might make a good business meeting point.

Pizza dal Capo
Tverskaya 12
+7 495 629 5195
metro Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya, Chekhovskaya
www.etaj.ru



Wine & Dine Listings

AMERICAN

AMERICAN BAR & GRILL

Hamburgers, steaks, bacon & eggs and more. Children's room on weekends. Open 24 hours. 2/1 1st Tverskaya-Yamskaya Ul., 250-9525. M. Mayakovskaya
59 Ul. Zemlyanoi Val, 912-3621/3615. M. Taganskaya
14 Kirovogradskaya Ul., (inside Global City Trade Center), 956-4843, M. Yuzhnaya

FLAT IRON BAR & ROADHOUSE

Located in the Courtyard Marriot. American-style pub with great cuisine and meat dishes. 7 Voznesensky Pereulok, 937-3077. M. Tverskaya, Pushkinskaya, Chekhovskaya

T.G.I. FRIDAY'S

American favorites in a cozy wood-paneled setting. Open noon-midnight. 18/2 Tverskaya Ul., 694-3921/2497. M. Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya
1/2 Leninsky Prospekt, 238-3200. M. Oktyabrskaya
33 Ul. Zemlyanoi Val (in Atrium Mall), 970-1187. See www.tgifridays.ru for additional locations.

STARLITE DINER

American '50s-style diner. Extensive menu with great breakfasts, cheeseburgers, milkshakes. Open 24 hours. 6 Prospekt Vernadskogo, 783-4037. M. Universitet
16 Ul. Bolshaya Sadovaya, 290-9638. M. Mayakovskaya
9a Ul. Korovy Val, 959-8919. M. Oktyabrskaya

ASIAN

BELOYE SOLNTSE PUSTYNI

Named after White Desert Sun, one of the USSR's favorite films. An eclectic Asian menu that includes Azerbaijan and Uzbek cuisine. Open noon-midnight. 29 Ul. Neglinnaya, 625-2596, 200-6836 M. Kuznetsky Most, Teatralnaya

BLUE ELEPHANT

Thai cuisine with impeccable service. Try the Royal Thai Platter to sample a range of Thai specialties. Three-elephant rating means very spicy; no elephants means it's mild enough to serve the kids. Open noon-midnight. 31 Novinsky Bulvar, 580-7757. M. Barrikadnaya

INDUS

"Elitny" modern Indian restaurant with Chivas bar on the first floor. Open 24 hours. 15 Plotnikov Pereulok, 244-7979. M. Smolenskaya, Kropotkinskaya

TANDOOR

Upscale Indian. Open noon-midnight. 31 Tverskaya Ul., 699-8062. M. Mayakovskaya

EUROPEAN

APPLE BAR & RESTAURANT

A chic, intimate lounge serving classic and original cocktails. The restaurant offers a selection of simple and tasty European dishes in a contemporary atmosphere. Restaurant Open 19:00-last guest; bar open 24 hours. 11 Ul. Malaya Dmitrovka, 980-7000. M. Tverskaya, Pushkinskaya, Chekhovskaya

CAFE DES ARTISTES

Restaurant and bar offers fine European cuisine in a relaxed atmosphere, often with recent art on the walls of the upstairs room. Open 11:00-midnight. 5/6 Kamergersky Pereulok, 692-4042. M. Teatralnaya

CAFE SWISS

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Located on the 3rd floor of Swissotel Krasnye Holmy. European (including Swiss) cuisine and Russian dishes. Seafood buffet on Tuesdays, Russian buffet Wednesdays. Open 7:00-22:30. 52/6 Kosmodamianskaya Nab, 787-9800/3202. M. Paveletskaya

CITY GRILL

Contemporary European cuisine, modern interior. Open noon-2:00. 2/30 Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya Ul., 699-0953. M. Mayakovskaya

COFFEE MANIA

Good daytime business meeting venue next to Moscow Conservatory. Open 24 hours. 13 Ulitsa Bolshaya Nikitskaya 775-5188, 775-4310, www.coffeeman.ru M. Arbatskaya, Biblioteka im. Lenina

CUTTY SARK

Restaurant made to look like a luxury yacht. Aquarium with live lobsters and crabs; oyster bar; over 40 varieties of fresh fish. Seasonal offerings from the chef. Extensive selection of wine, spirits, cigars. "Captain's Cabin" VIP room. Open 11:00-midnight. 12 Novinsky Bulvar, 202-1312/1621. M. Smolenskaya, Barrikadnaya

DANTES

Several dining halls. Menu consists of European and Soviet dishes. Dantes gives a master-class in style to Moscow's upmarket cocktail crowd. Open 24 hours. 13 Myasnitskaya Ul., Bldg.1 Tel. 621-4688, M. Chistiye Prudy

GALEREYA

Trendy, lavish and expensive. The place to see and be seen. Open 24 hours. 27 Ul. Petrovka, 937-4544. M. Pushkinskaya

KAI RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE

Contemporary French cuisine with an Asian touch. 2nd floor of Swissotel Krasnye Holmy. 52/6 Kosmodamianskaya nab. 221-5358 M. Paveletskaya

OBSERVATOIRE

Excellent – and expensive European cuisine – with attentive service in a relaxed atmosphere. Valet parking available. Free wi-fi. Open noon-midnight. 22 Bolshaya Yakimanka, bldg. 3 643-3606/797-4333, www.observatoire.ru M. Oktyabrskaya, Polyanka

THE SAVOY

Located inside the hotel of the same name, the restaurant lunch and dinner. Its magnificent interior and gourmet menu make it equally suited to corporate events and candlelit dinners. Open noon-last guest. 3 Ul. Rozhdivizhenka, 620-8600. M. Kuznetsky Most

SHOKOLAD

Pan-European menu plus a selection of Japanese dishes. Cozy decor and live music. Open 24 hours. 5 Strastnoi Bulvar, 787-8866. M. Pushkinskaya, Chekhovskaya, Tverskaya

SIMPLE PLEASURES

The large dining room accommodates 80 people, while the cozy Fireplace Hall doubles as a showroom for photographers. As always, a DJ entertains from 22:00. Enjoy the simple pleasures of life! Open noon-06:00 22/1 Sretenska Ul., 607-1521. M. Sukharevskaya

SKY LOUNGE

This sushi bar on the roof of the luxury hotel offers its guests unparalleled views of the Kremlin Palace and Red Square. Top-notch sushi. Open noon-midnight. 32a Leninsky Prospekt (In the Russian Academy of Sciences building), 915-1042; 938-5775. M. Leninsky Propekt

VANILLE

Hip French and Japanese near Christ the Savior Cathedral. Open noon-midnight. 1 Ul. Ostozhenka, 202-3341. M. Kropotkinskaya

VOGUE CAFE

European food, top clientele. Hip and elegant partnership with Vogue magazine. Modern, continental menu. Open Mon.-Thurs., 20:30-01:00, Fri., 20:30-02:00, Sat., noon-02:00, Sun., noon-01:00. 7/9 Ul. Kuznetsky Most, 923-1701. M. Kuznetsky Most

YU CAFE

DJ cafe with inexpensive but good-quality food, drinks and house music. Open weekdays 10:00-midnight. 4 Pushechnaya Ul., 271-8865. M. Kuznetsky Most

ZOLOTOI KUPOL

Upmarket restaurant serving Caucasian and pan-European cuisine. Wide selection of beverages. Open 24 hours. Gorki-10, 70/2 Rublyovo-Uspenskoye Shosse, 634-5278. M. Molodyozhnaya

4 ANGELS CAFE

European, Russian and Japanese cuisine. Cozy cafe with gorgeous interior. Open Sun.-Thurs., noon-6:00, Fri.-Sat., 24 hrs. 5 Pokrovka Ul., 364-3339. M. Kitai-Gorod

5 RINGS RESTAURANT

European and Russian cuisine with cozy atmosphere, elegant interior. Open noon-last guest. 27 Dolgorukovskaya, 250-2551. M. Novoslobodskaya

ITALIAN

BENVENUTO

Great variety of Italian cuisine. Most items run around or below 300 rubles. Open NOON-23:00. 6 Velozavodskaya Ul. 675-0033. M. Avtozavodskaya, Dubrovka

BISTROT

Italian cuisine, three dining rooms, VIP hall, summer patio. Open noon-5:00. 12 Bol. Savinsky Per., Bldg. 2, 248-4045. M. Kievskaya

CASTA DIVA

Andrey Dellos latest venture. Excellent food and pizza to die for, Italian executive chef and pizza chef. 26 Tverskoi Bulvar 651-8181 M. Pushkinskaya

CHIANTI

The feeling in the small dining room is cozy rather than cramped with an open kitchen at one end of the room. The walls have beautiful custom murals depicting a Florence landscape, framed by windowsills with a base hewn from Italian marble. A large variety of pizza and a wide choice of Italian cuisine. 48 Leningradsky Prospekt, 612-5612 M. Dinamo

CIPOLLINO

Coffee-and cream-colored stylish Italian eatery a stone's throw from Christ the Savior Cathedral. Three halls with numerous divans make for cozy dining in this upmarket restaurant. Open noon-6:00. 7 Soimonovsky Proyezd, Bldg.1, 291-6576. M. Kropotkinskaya

DA GIACOMO

An exact copy of Da Giacomo in New York and Milan. This spacious two-level restaurant is heavy with authentic Italian furniture and bric-a-brac... Open noon-23:00. 25/20 Spiridonovka Ul., 746-6964. M. Barrikadnaya, www.litelife.ru

MARIO

Delightful elegance and style with best-quality Italian dishes. Open noon-last guest. 17 Ul. Klimashkina, 253-6505. M. Barrikadnaya

ROBERTO

Cozy, classy Italian. Open 11:00-midnight. 20 Rozhdesventkiy Bulvar, 628-1944 M. Kuznetsky Most

SEMIFREDDO

A little bit of everything. Large selection of wines and spirits, including grappa and cognac. Open noon-23:00. 2 Rossolimo Ul., 248-6169. M. Park Kultury

SETTEBELLO

Classic Italian menu with a Russian twist. Cozy coffee lounge. Open noon-last guest. 3 Sadovaya-Samotechnaya Ul., 699-1656/3039. M. Tsvetnoi Bulvar, Mayakovskaya

SPAGO

Stylish restaurant with a wide range of pastas. Live music. Open noon-23:00. 1 Bolshoi Zlatoustinsky Pereulok, 921-3797. M. Lubyanka

JAPANESE

ICHIBAN BOSHI

High-quality, affordable Japanese with cool ambience. 22 Krasnaya Presnya Ul., 255-0909. M. Krasnopresnenskaya
105 Prospekt Vernadskogo, k.1 M. Yugo-Zapadnaya
50 Ul. Bolshaya Yakimanka NEW LOCATION!
M. Polyanka
Open 11:00-midnight. www.ichiban.ru

SAPPORO

105-1 Prospekt Vernadskogo, 433-9151. M. Yugo-Zapadnaya Modern Japanese with extensive sushi and sashimi menu. Open noon-23:00. 14 Prospekt Mira, 207-0198. M. Prospekt Mira

TSVETNIYE SAKURY

Completely new restaurant concept in Moscow based on the combination of traditional and contemporary Japanese cuisine. Ancient recipes are joined by recent innovations. Open noon-midnight. 7 Krasina Ul., Bldg. 1, 506-0033. M. Mayakovskaya

MEDITERRANEAN

PANORAMA

Located on the 23rd floor of the Golden Ring Hotel, Panorama's service and food are also elevated far above the rest of the city. The Mediterranean cuisine is served on Versace tableware, and the Versace glasses make any drink taste better. Open 18:00-midnight. 5 Smolenskaya Ul., 725-0100. M. Smolenskaya

ARARAT

A little corner of Armenia right in the center of Moscow. Cozy atmosphere and spicy Armenian fare. All ingredients are delivered straight from Armenia, and the wine list abounds with the finest Armenian cognacs. Open noon-midnight. 4 Neglinnaya Ul. (Ararat Park Hyatt), 783-1234. M. Teatralnaya, Kuznetsky Most

RUSSIAN

CAFE PUSHKIN

A Moscow classic serving upmarket Russian cuisine in a lavish, 19th-century setting. Bustling ground-floor dining hall, more sophisticated (and pricier) experience upstairs. Reservation essential. Open 24 hours. 26a Tverskoi Bulvar, 739-0033. M. Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya, Chekhovskaya

GODUNOV

For real lovers of all things Russian, including traditional Russian dancing, flowing rivers of vodka and plates stacked with food. For those who find it thrilling to dine in the Tsar's chambers, which were established during the time of Boris Godunov. Open noon-midnight. 5 Teatralnaya Ploshchad, Bldg. 1, 698-5609. M. Teatralnaya

GRABLI

The best mid-priced Russian food in Moscow. Buffet-style. Russian cuisine. Open 09:00-23:00. 99 Prospekt Mira, 602-4662. M. Alexeyevskaya www.grably.ru

GRAND ALEXANDER

Named after poet Alexander Pushkin, this restaurant is valued for its refined European cuisine with a wide choice of French delicacies that delight Muscovites and foreigners alike. Visitors who seek anonymity can dine in one of the private rooms. Open Mon.-Fri., 18:00-23:00. 26 Tverskaya Ul. (in Marriott Grand Hotel), 937-0000. M. Tverskaya

NA MELNITSE

Uber-Russian eatery. Homemade cuisine – kvas, mors, vodka, pickles. The interior is in Russian style with plenty of wood. The food is far from cheap, but the portions are enormous: it's like being fed by an overzealous babushka. Open noon-last guest. 7 Tverskoi Bulvar, 290-3737. M. Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya, Chekhovskaya
24 Sadovo-Spasskaya Ul., 625-8890/8753. M. Krasniye Vorta www.namelnitse.ru

OBLMOV

In a mansion in the historical Zamoskvorechye area, the interior is crammed with ancient utensils and furniture. Two large halls are named for characters from Nikolai Goncharov's novel Oblomov. Remember to peek in the chimney room on the first floor and the oriental room on the third. Open noon-midnight.
5 1st Monetchikovskiy Pereulok, 953-6828.
M. Dobryninskaya

SENO

This inexpensive Russian restaurant is a good option for the budget- or time-conscious. Excellent self-service buffet offers a wide range of salads and hot meals. Open 9:00-midnight.
6 Kamergersky Pereulok, Bldg. 1, 692-0452.
M. Tverskaya

SUDAR

Authentic Russian dishes prepared from traditional recipes. Located in a 19th-century mansion, Open noon-last guest.
36a Kutuzovskiy Prospekt, 249-6965.
M. Park Pobedy, Kutuzovskaya

TRAKTIR CHERNAYA KOSHKA

This restaurant was opened to mark the 20th anniversary of the cult detective series "Mesto Vstrechi Izmenit Nelya" ("The Meeting Place Can't be Changed") – everything here is connected with the movie, such as the image of a black cat on the entrance wall. Open noon-last guest.
7 Vorontsovskaya Ul., 911-7601.
M. Taganskaya

TSOL

(Central House of Writers)
This opulent Russian restaurant is located in the building with the same name, lavish decor, and opulent atmosphere. A memorable, top-notch meal in luxurious surroundings. Open noon-midnight. 50 Povarskaya Ul., 290-1589.
M. Barrikadnaya

1 RED SQUARE

The menu features lavish, centuries-old recipes. Expect cream-laden meat dishes with fruit-based sauces and live folk music. Open noon-midnight. 1 Krasnaya Ploshchad, 625-3600; 692-1196.
M. Okhotny Ryad, Teatralnaya

STEAK

EL GAUCHO

True Argentine menu. THE place for charcoal-grilled meats and fish. Impressive selection of over 120 Argentine and Chilean wines. Open 11:30-midnight. www.elgauchoru
4 Ul. Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya, 699-7974.
M. Mayakovskaya
6/13 Ul. Zatspeysky Val, 953-2876.
M. Paveletskaya
3 Bolshoi Kozlovsky Pereulok, 623-1098.
M. Krasniye Vorota

GOODMAN

Moscow's premium steak house chain. Open noon-midnight. 775-9888., 23 Ul. Tverskaya.
M. Tverskaya, Puahkinskaya
See www.goodman.ru for additional locations.

GUILLY'S

The oldest steakhouse in Moscow. Steaks from Australian and U.S. beef. Multinational culinary hits. Extensive choice of wines. Located in the basement of an historic mansion and named after Moscow writer Gilyarovskiy, the interior revives the spirit of 19th-century Moscow. Main hall, bar, two banquet rooms. 10% discount with this ad.
6 Stoleshnikov Pereulok, 933-5521.
M. Okhotny Ryad

JU-JU

Meat restaurant with hunting-lodge decor. Open kitchen with wood-burning stove and chargrill. Huge selection of meat and fish dishes. Open noon-last guest.
15 Smolensky Bulvar, 291-1667.
M. Smolenskaya

LOUISIANA STEAKHOUSE

Big selection of Australian and Argentinian beef steaks. Grilled fish. Wines from France, Italy, Spain, New Zealand. VIP "Sheriff room." 20% menu discount weekdays from 12:00 to 16:00. Open 11:00-01:00.
30 Ulitsa Pyatnitskaya, Bldg. 4, 951-4244, 959-5506.
M. Tretyakovskaya, Novokuznetskaya

STEAKS

There's a successful formula to steak-houses, and Steaks follows it almost to the letter with a meat heavy menu of pork, chicken, lamb, sausage and seafood.
21 Verkhnyaya Radishevskaya Ul., 915-1042.
M. Taganskaya

TORRO GRILL The focus here is the best mid-priced meat in Moscow. Wine Bar.
6 Prospekt Vernadskogo, 775-4503.
M. Universitet

FUSION

NAVARRO'S BAR & GRILL From tapas to eclectic Peruvian-Mediterranean fusion, seafood to grilled meat, from popular Moscow chef Yuri Navarro. Open 8:30-3:30.
23 Shmitovskiy Proezd, Bldg. 4, 259-3791.
M. Ulitsa 1905 Goda

POLLY SAD The selection of dishes fuses different cuisines, rather than just alternating between them.

41 1st Brestskaya Ul., Bld. 2, 250-2530.
M. Belorusskaya

BARS AND CLUBS

BOOZE PUB

English-style pub with real British beer and original cocktails.
Daily from 5 a.m. to noon –
English breakfast for only 100 rubles.
Weekdays from 12:00 to 17:00.
Business lunch from 140 rubles and 35% menu discount. Sport matches on the big screen.
5 Potapovskiy Pereulok, Bldg. 2, 621-4717.
M. Chistiye Prudy www.boozebub.ru

KARMA BAR

One of the most popular night-clubs in town. Eastern-inspired interior, hookahs, and pan-Asian cuisine. Offering themed parties. Latin American dancing Thursday-Saturday, 21:00-midnight. Every Saturday, the amazing Show Girls night. Every Sunday 12:00-6:00 – R'n'B and hip-hop party night.
3 Pushechnaya Ul., 624-5633.
M. Kuznetsky Most www.karma-bar.ru

B2 CLUB 4 bars, sushi bar, concert hall for 800. Reasonable prices. Open daily noon-06:00.
8 Bolshaya Sadovaya Ul., 650-9918.
M. Marksistskaya, Tretyakovskaya

JUSTO Monday-Friday, Sunday 13:00-02:00, Friday-Saturday 13:00-03:00. Face control, dress code.
5 Bolshoi Tolmachovskiy Pereulok, Bldg. 9, 937-3750.
M. Tretyakovskaya

PAPA JOHN'S

Tucked in the basement below the Johnny the Fat Boy Pizzeria, Papa John's features live music and lots of sweaty young bodies
2 Myasnitskaya Ul., 755-9554
M. Kitai-Gorod

TOCHKA

Open Monday- Sunday, 18:00-06:00.
6 Leninsky Prospekt, Bldg. 7, 737-7666.
M. Oktyabrskaya

SAKHAR Open Tues.-Thurs. 20:00-06:00, Fri. 12:00-6:00, Sat. 20:00-07:00.

23/25 Bolshoi Sukharevskiy Pereulok, 207-2838.
M. Sukharevskaya

A PRIORI

Open Mon.-Sat. 24:00-12:00.
Face control.

12 Bolshaya Molchanovka Ul., Bldg. 1, 737-5843.
M. Tretyakovskaya

ADRENALIN

Restaurant, bar, disco, billiards, entertainment center. Open noon-midnight.
1 Chermiansky Proyezd, 477-3447.
M. Medvedkovo

CABANA BAR

Tasty Mexican and African food. Male striptease on Tuesdays and Fridays.
4 Raushskaya Naberezhnaya, Bldg. 1, 238-5006, 238-5017.
M. Tretyakovskaya

CENTRAL HOUSE OF ARCHITECTS

Face control. Open Mon.-Sat. 24:00-12:00.
7 Granatny Pereulok, 290-3249.
M. Tretyakovskaya

GOLDEN PALACE CASINO Concert hall, restaurant, open bar for players. Entrance free for women. Face control. Open 24 hours.
15 Ul. 3rd Yamskogo Polya, 212-3909.
M. Belorusskaya

NOTES: Hours of operation are given in the 24-hour clock. All phone numbers are in area code 495 unless otherwise indicated. Reservations suggested for most restaurants.

WOKSTUDIO cafe

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Ninth Birthday of the Moscow Museum of Modern Art

When a museum celebrates its jubilee, like humans it invites its friends – other museums, receives presents and prepares something delicious for its friends. On the 6th of December the Moscow Museum of Modern Art celebrated its ninth birthday. Celebrations were helped along by Zurab Tsereteli, who is a warm entertainer as well as a senior museum official. Olga Sviblova (Director of the Moscow House of Photography), an integral part of the modern Russian arts scene was there to congratulate the Museum, Pierre Brochet (collector), Mikhail Kamensky (director of Sotheby's Russia), Alberto di Mauro (director of the Italian Culture Institute in Moscow) and many artists and art fans. Guests were treated to several courses of brand new exhibitions, a charity auction led by Kostya Tzyu and a musical dessert in the Ball Hall. And as for gifts, a recently restored and renovated building in Gogolevsky Boulevard is for sure one of the best presents the workers of the museum could imagine.



Awarding Pierre Cardin in Moscow

Pierre Cardin visited Moscow once again, this time to receive a distinction from the Russian Academy of Fine Arts. The first couturier to enter the French Academy of Fine Arts when he was awarded the title of Commandeur de la Legion d'honneur Chevalier des Arts et Lettres, Cardin became an Honored Professor of the Russian Academy of Arts. His name has been well-known in this country since his first visit in 1963 when he became acquainted with Russian artists, and theatre people. The celebrated costumes he created for the Russian prima ballerina Maya Plisetskaya showed his ability to adopt French elegance and chic to manifestations of Russian art. In addition to his highest achievements in the world of fashion, Cardin is a patron of arts and honored UNESCO ambassador.

Silver Camera Awards Ceremony

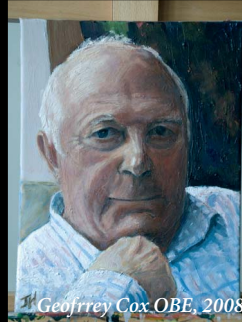
This exhibition of photographs which opened in December at Manezh had an unusual opening ceremony. Members of the Silver Camera Contest jury met guests as they arrived, and the photographers whose works adorned the walls, were scattered amongst the audience, or standing next to their work. Silver Camera is an annual independent competition for both professional photographers and amateurs. On the 16th of January we eventually learnt the names of participants – and winners. The awards ceremony was held in the beautiful hall of the Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Centre. Olga Sviblova (director of the Moscow House of Photography), Igor Burenkov (ROSNANO State Corporation), Nikolay Kanavin (Prolab), Anna Shpakova (Ogonyok magazine) named the grand-prix winners among whom were Igor Makov, Nadezhda Filatova, Sasha Auerbakh. There was no shortage of special prizes from partners of the Contest: MasterCard, VolksWagen, BSGV and Fleming Family and Partners.



Brit Expat Holds Exhibition

Peter Hainsworth, a long-time British expat painter held an exhibition at the Moscow Academic Arts Lycee of the Russian Academy of Arts from the 4th of December to the 26th of January. The fifty seven drawings and paintings on display represent work from the past twenty years, most of which he has spent in Russia.

Peter's work has been called by Natella Voiskounski, the owner of the Asti gallery in Moscow as being "romantic realism." His drawings and many of the paintings reflect a nostalgia for the old Moscow and at the same time a sadness and spirituality which can be found, or used to be found, on every street corner of Moscow and in every landscape in the countryside of the Moscow Oblast; the sources of inspiration of Peter's Russian pictures. The portraits seem inspired by Lucien Freud. At the opening ceremony, the curator of the Lycee Mr Alexei Sukhavetskii commented on a strange feeling whilst looking at the pictures: "I was sure that they had been painted by a Russian, it was a shock to find out that the artist is from Britain." Contact the editor of this magazine for further details of this artist's work: editor@passportmagazine.ru



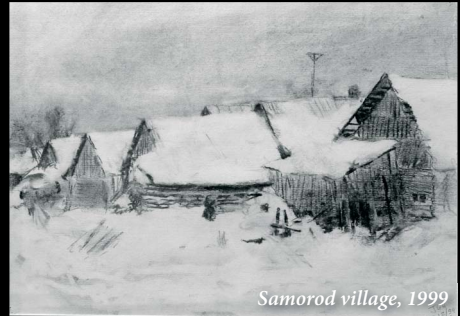
Geoffrey Cox OBE, 2008



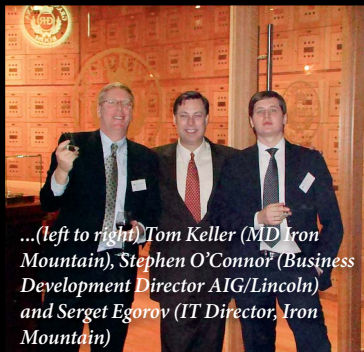
Gostiny Dvor, 1987



Gnezdnikovskiy Pereulok, 1992



Samorod village, 1999



... (left to right) Tom Keller (MD Iron Mountain), Stephen O'Connor (Business Development Director AIG/Lincoln) and Sergei Egorov (IT Director, Iron Mountain)

Moscow Big Legal Smoke

On December 8, Passport Magazine sponsored Moscow's first legal networking party, referred to as the "Moscow Big Legal Smoke". It was organized by Stephen O'Connor (AIG/Lincoln), Tom Keller (Iron Mountain) and Daniel Klein (Passport legal columnist and partner at Hellevig, Klein & Usov). The cigar evening was held at the Grand Havana Room and the turnout was so good that not only will they have further legal events but the organizers will be hosting Moscow's first CEO night (also sponsored by Passport) this month also in the Grand Havana Room; there shall be a whisky and cigar tasting along with presentation by a leading CEO about the current crisis. Invitations to this event shall be strictly limited to CEO's of Russian subsidiaries where the parent or group have revenues/market cap greater than \$2B and to CEO's of Russian companies that have revenues/market cap of at least \$15M. If you are a CEO of such a concern, or an attorney and want to attend the CEO or next legal event, respectively, please write dklein@passportmagazine.ru.

Turkish Art: Grand Vizier's Style Opening Night in the Kremlin.

On the 17th of December, the Kremlin Museums director Elena Gagarina invited honored guests to the opening of an exhibition dedicated to the art of the Ottoman Porte. Elena took guests round the gorgeous items of Turkish art on display such as arms, equestrian decorations, jewelry and fabrics. Among guests was the Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation Alexander Avdeev, Tatyana Metaxa - deputy director of the Oriental Arts Museum, gallery owner Dmitry Khankin and others. Turkey's Ambassador to Russia Halil Akinci came to congratulate the Museum on the opening and enjoy the unique collections that masters from his motherland had created.

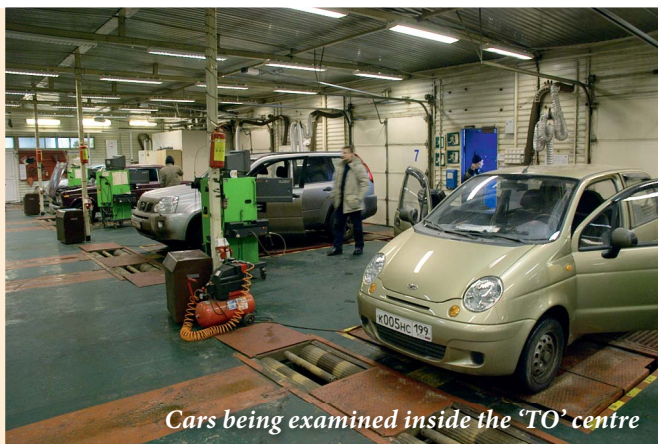


Registering a Car

text and photos: John Harrison and David Coti, a partner in LLC Teknilog, who John met in a queue at the GIBDD foreigners' registration building in Lobnenskaya Ulitsa, North Moscow.

There are several ways that you can register a car here, depending on your legal status. Firstly, on the strength of a visa, secondly, on the strength of a temporary residence permit (*временное разрешенное на жительство*), thirdly on the basis of a work permit (*разрешение на работу*), fourthly with a full residence permit (*вид на жительство*), and finally through the foreign or Russian company that you work for.

In all cases, foreigners without Russian passports can only register vehicles at one place in Moscow: The special foreigners' GIBDD (ГИБДД), or GAI registration centre on *Lobnenskaya Ulitsa*, Dom 20, telephone: +7 (495) 4833311 (*Лобненская ул., 20*). The building is quite hard to find as *Lobnenskaya Ulitsa* turns into a one way road, with the traffic coming against you; if you are driving from *Dmitrovskoe Shosse* (*Дмитровское Шоссе*). You turn right on to *Izhorskaya Ulitsa* (*Ижорская Улица*), follow the road round to the left and the GIBDD building is on the left.



Cars being examined inside the 'TO' centre

Documents you need:

1. If you have bought a new car, the whole packet of documents that you receive when you take delivery of your car: the "PTS" (*Паспорт Транспортного Средства*), sales contract, and any other documents they give you. Better safe than sorry, take all the documents with you.

If you have bought a secondhand car, then you need the "PTS" re-issued in your name. This can be done at GIBDD offices throughout Moscow. Easier still: buy a vehicle at one of the larger secondhand car dealers, such as *Avtocenter Moskva*, *Kashirskoe Shosse* 61, which have brokerage companies working within their company that can do the job for you. You should obviously check out before you buy the car that getting the "PTS" in your name is possible. Buying from a smaller second-hand car dealer, David Coti said is not advisable, as the brokers in such firms are not very solid, the can disappear if you need to return to get documents re-issued.

2. You need a notarized translation of your passport, and a photocopy of this, unless you hold a temporary or full residence permit. Friendly small businesses have set up just

across the road (as it happens) which can photocopy your documents.

3. Vehicle Insurance Certificate.

Registering a car on the basis of an ordinary visa issued for tourist or by invitation of an individual or company: You need to prove your address. This is done in Russia by showing a residence registration document which you can obtain without too much difficulty by going with your landlord/landlady to the local post office. Such registration documents are given for three months maximum at a time. At the end of these three months you have to repeat the procedure and re-register the car, which is easier than it sounds, as you will already have the car number plates, and be familiar with the procedure.

On the basis of a business visa: The same registration document is needed from the post office. The duration of the car registration depends on the duration of your visa and registration.

On the basis of a work permit: A work permit acts to all intense and purposes acts as registration (for you), so you just need to get a photocopy done of it.

Those holding a temporary and full residence permits: such foreigners are becoming a kind of elite foreign legion in Russia, and simply need to photocopy their document, as the residence permit is registration. Car registration will be valid for as long as the permit is valid. The same goes for the full residence permit, although you do need to get your local "ZHEK" (*ЖЭК*) to put a stamp in the permit showing where you live. This should be a simple task for those few bravadoes who have gone as far as getting such a permit.

Via your Russian or foreign company: If you work for a registered foreign company with an element of foreign capital, the company has the right to register a car; also only at *Lobnenskaya Ulitsa*. If you work for a Russian company, it can register cars at any local GIBDD registration centre. In both cases, the company can enable you to legally drive your car by giving you a "doverennost" (*доверенность*) or power of attorney. It is not advisable to hand your car over to a Russian company, or for that matter a foreign company to register for you (in the name of the company), as the car will technically become the property of the company. The company may fire you. The same sort of thing can happen if you give Russian friends or colleagues the right to handle registration of your car.

The procedure:

David Coti advises arriving at *Lobnenskaya Ulitsa* at the end of the working day; for example on a Tuesday when the offices close at 8pm, showing your documents and finding out what you still need, if anything. All being well, you should arrive the following day no later than 8.30am, although the queues are not too bad. Despite the fact that the *Lobnenskaya* centre is especially for foreigners, nobody speaks anything but Russian, so you do need to take an interpreter with you if you do not speak good Russian.

The registration procedure is simple. You hand in your documents, wait, are then called up to a window, told to pay the relevant tax and inspection fee, for which special paying-in slips are provided, then take your car round the back to an inspection ground, where *GIBDD* officers check out that the car is actually the same vehicle as in your “PTS” document. Then you return back to the same room in the main building, wait again and if all is well, receive your number plates.

Rarely is all the paperwork in order. In my case, it came to light that my new car was registered to be painted blue in its “PTS,” but in fact the car is a beige color, which demanded that the “PTS” be re-signed by a customs official. This meant I had to drive right across Moscow to the car dealership, who, as it happens, had a local customs officer on hand, and were able to re-issue the document. I then rushed back to *Lobnenskaya Ulitsa* before it closed. I received my plates that day. As a very rough estimate, the time you need to get your car registered, if you do it yourself, is about 2 days although if you are familiar with the procedure, you only need a couple of hours.

You will receive a car tax bill every year. According to hearsay, not a lot of people pay these taxes; however as David Coti pointed out: “this can be a problem, if you keep the car for a number of years and wish to sell it, because you have to de-register the vehicle [when the number plates are taken away] before the new owner can legally own it; although you can also sell it using the ‘*generalnaya doverennost’* system.”

***Tekhnicheski Osmotr* (Технический Осмотр)**

This is the Russian version of the British “MOT” or the French “*Contrôle Technique*” and is a document you are obliged by law, along with your car registration document, your driving license and insurance certificate, and technically your passport, to have with you when driving at all times. You have 10 working days after your car is registered to obtain a “*Tekhnicheski Osmotr*.” These documents are valid for three years for new cars and one year for older vehicles.

The only place foreigners can obtain a *Tekhnicheski Osmotr* is at the test centre on *Lipetskaya Ulitsa* (Липецкая Улица) in the Tsaritsina region of Moscow. The easiest way of getting there is to turn right onto MKAD from *Kashirskoe Shosse* (Каширское шоссе) and then left onto *Lipetskaya Ulitsa* at the next junction. Turn right off MKAD, there is sign for the centre on the right hand side, through one set of traffic lights.

Obviously your car needs to be in good working condition. Brakes, lights, windscreen wipers (ensure that you have windscreen wiper fluid), thread on tires, your horn may all be tested. Exhaust fumes will be sampled on older cars to ensure that the exhaust emissions pass the established norms. You need a medical kit, fire extinguisher and accident luminescent triangle, all of which should be Euro-standard certified (no cheap Chinese counterfeits). Tinted films on windows need to be removed to clear windows, as technically it is against the law to drive in Russia with windows. If you have to re-register your car every three months, this can present problems. The vehicle needs to be clean and, (as it happens), there is a convenient carwash right next door.

You need your driving license, insurance certificate, “PTS” and car registration document to get the *Tekhnicheski Osmotr*. You also need, as I found out at the last moment, a medical certificate, which is valid for three years, stating that you are fit to drive. This is not as problematic as it may appear. There are countless private medical clinics all over



The Technicheski Osmotr centre on Lipetskaya Ulitsa

Moscow where you can become medically certified fit. You can find out the location of the nearest one to you by entering in: *медицинская справка для ТО* into a search browser. The procedures involved can verge on the farcical, charge is 550 roubles at time of going to press; however if you go to such an establishment early in the morning, you should have your certificate in 45 minutes. In general, if your vehicle is in reasonable working order, obtaining a *Tekhnicheski Osmotr* is not a problem. Staff seem to be used to testing decent foreign cars in good working order. If you drive an old Russian vehicle, the *GIBDD* may make you come back several times before you pass all the tests.

The problem, at *Tsaritsina*, is purely bureaucratic: paying two fees; one for the actual *Tekhnicheski Osmotr* document of 30 rubles, and a tax fee of 350 rubles. When I arrived there after a 4 hour drive around MKAD from *Lobninskaya Ulitsa*, during which I had time to contemplate on the wisdom of driving in Moscow at all; no information of where and how to pay these sums was on public display. One Indian journalist mercifully gave me a photocopy of the paying-in slips that can be used to pay at the local *Sberbank*, which is in within walking distance. She told me that she only obtained the forms by begging for them from an official. Don't try to drive to the local *Sberbank*; because there is a vicious one-way system, whereas it only takes ten minutes to walk there if you don't get run over crossing the main road.

When I returned the next day, the *GIBDD* official explained to me why the information is not on display: “Here's the notice board.” The officer pointed towards an empty display case. “People come and force the case open and rip out the documents inside. I can't keep on putting new documents up every day.” I sympathized with him on that freezing winter morning, when I forgot to take my gloves with me, however only to a certain extent. There is a phone number on the form, which should be in the display case where you can book a time when your car will be examined. This is usually a few days later, but well worth the wait. You should arrive at least an hour before your appointment. Good luck! **P**

Web sources (in Russian, as we haven't found any English-language sites yet):

<http://www.gibdd.ru/registration/>

If you can understand Russian officialise, and are prepared to wade through pages of information, it is all here.

<http://www.sharkmotors.ru/pages/119.html>

This is a simplified explanation of how to register a car, in Russian, and not for foreigners, although most of the general rules are the same.

<http://www.autoexpres.ru/regnumbers.html>

Site listing different kinds of number plates

Daniel Klein's Legal Line

Each month Daniel Klein fields corporate legal questions posed by Passport's readers. Do you have a Russia-related legal question you'd like Daniel to address? Tell him about it at dklein@passportmagazine.ru.

Dear Daniel:

About four months ago we hired the Moscow office of a large multi-national law firm to assist my Western company with a somewhat straightforward tax legal issue. They indicated in writing that the estimate to resolve the issue by providing us with an advisory memo and that it would cost an "estimated" \$21,000 and we hence were asked to pay a retainer in that amount. They were late in providing us with bills and finally they sent us cumulated bills for three months. The total was a shocking \$58,000! I looked through the invoice with the lawyers' timesheets and found that there were many internal meetings where 5 or 6 of their mid-level lawyers were involved, each billing between \$400 and \$500 each, which seems very expensive to me. In some invoices there were 15 different staff who worked on the matter from various offices; I only recognized four names. I have had 3 relatively short meetings but behind the scenes apparently they spent collectively over 100 hours on this matter in the past four months with no resulting work product to show for it. Also, although I indicated that time was of the essence and they even promised me orally to come up with a proposed memorandum with a solution within two months, I am still waiting for it. However, I understand now that they don't have a memo nor any internal documents indicating the preliminary conclusions of their efforts. I was told that the memo won't be ready for at least two more months and are asking us for an additional \$61,000 which would also cover the amount that we have yet to pay. As they have originals of many of our valuable corporate documents we feel constrained by this and feel we need to pay the full amount. Also, headquarters is putting tremendous pressure on us to cut costs especially in view of the current economic crisis in Russia. Do you have any recommendations on this?

Dear Frustrated Client:

Unfortunately I am not sure there is much advice I can provide to you on this, other than you probably need to try to negotiate with them. You perhaps do not want to sue them as that could be costly and quite challenging especially since they are a law firm themselves. In your negotiations I would stress that as you are not

in the law business and you have no idea how much a firm's time is necessary to address a given legal issue. This is strictly their business and clients have no way of trying to second-guess a firm's internal practices and resource management. You might want to try to point out as well that the firm should be responsible to send you timely bills and that they should have let you know that your account exceeded the \$21,000 that you originally gave them. However, they may point out that the \$21,000 is only an "estimate" and not a guaranteed cap amount. However, unfortunately even if they are sending untimely bills, and even if you went to court I am not sure that your position would be a very strong one. It appears, unfortunately, that you really do owe them the \$58,000 less the \$21,000 you paid, but it would appear to me from what you indicated that you are not obligated to continue working with that firm. However, since they have already done a fair amount of work to date, perhaps you do not have much choice. If you like I can give you a few tips for dealing with law firms that may assist you when you give assignments in the future.

Hourly Rates in Moscow: First off, if you think they are overcharging for their rates, it is useful to know what international firms in Moscow charge. According to Gwilym Davies of Global White Pages which publishes a survey of hourly rates for Moscow firms, he has informed Passport Magazine that in 2007 (figures for 2008 where not available at time of publication) multi-national law firms in Moscow charged the following average rates:

- Average entry level associate billing rate (1st years) - \$312
- Average mid level associate billing rate (5th years) - \$421
- Average senior associate billing rate (10yrs +) - \$504

- Average salaried/local partner billing rate - \$636
- Average equity partner billing rate - \$748

Fixed Fees, Estimates and Billing Practices: It is quite common for firms to just charge on a purely hourly basis. This is especially the case for complex litigations, negotiations and other situations where it is difficult to predict the amount of time the law firm needs to spend on a matter. However, for more project based work it is common for firms to give estimates and even fixed fees. An estimate is only that and there is no guarantee that the final fee will correspond with the estimate: could be higher or lower. Fixed Fee assignments put the clients at risk in that even if the firm spends less time on matters they will still be entitled to the agreed to Fixed Fee. On the other hand, the law firm also takes a risk that if the assignment requires more resources than they originally estimated, they lose since they are only entitled to bill for the agreed to fixed amount, unless there is a later negotiation with the client where the client agrees to a higher fee or to put the assignment on an hourly basis. This frequently happens where unexpected issues are discovered during the course of executing the assignment. One other reason that bills may seem higher than they should be is that law firms charge not only for communications with clients and meetings with clients but also for internal communications and meetings. The rationale for this is that law firms' resources is their time, and time spent on a client no matter how the time is spent, is valuable billable time that could have been spent on other matters. Finally, I would like to point out that most firms charge a minimum quarter hour even if they only spend a minute or two, say reading an email.

Daniel Klein is a partner at Hellevig, Klein & Usov. His column is intended as commentary and not as legal advice.

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Hotels

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Hilton Leningradskaya
Iris Hotel
Katerina-City Hotel
Korsten
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Marriot Royal Aurora
Marriott Tverskaya
Metropol
Mezhdunarodnaya 2
Maxima Hotels
National
Novotel 1, 2
Proton
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Volga
Zavidovo
Zolotoye Koltso
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American Center
Business Center Degtyarny
Business Center Mokhovaya
Dayev Plaza
Ducat Place 2
Gogolevsky 11
Iris Business Center
Japan House
LG Electronics
Lotte Plaza
Meyerkhold House
Morskoi Dom
Mosalko Plaza
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Mosenka 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
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Moscow Train Stations

text Dominic Esler

Belorussky Vokzal, Opened 1870

Despite an imposing exterior, Belorussky vokzal's halls are generally small and quiet, with an atmosphere of faded Soviet glamour. In the long distance ticket hall look out for the network plan that plots the route all the way to London. Belorussky vokzal is also the only station in Moscow with the honour of hosting a Subway sandwich bar.

Serves Smolensk, Kaliningrad, Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, Germany, the Czech Republic and Latvia. Suburban trains to the west of Moscow leave from this station.

Metro: Belorusskaya

Rizhsky Vokzal, Opened 1901

Rizhsky vokzal, with its elegant sky-blue façade, is the quietest station in Moscow, serving primarily as the departure point for Latvia. If you are travelling to the station by metro, you need to walk under the Prospekt Mira fly-over to reach the station as the metro station is on the opposite side of the road.

Trains to Latvia and Kazakhstan leave from Rizhsky vokzal, as do suburban trains to the north west.

Metro: Rizhskaya

Savyolovsky Vokzal, Opened 1902

The effect of Savyolovsky vokzal's prim peach façade is marred by the unappealing pink and grey panelling inside. Savyolovsky vokzal is the sole station in Moscow to serve only suburban trains, although it also the departure point for the airport express to Sheremetyevo.

Suburban trains to the south of Moscow and the southern part of the Moscow oblast leave from here, as well as the Sheremetyevo airport express.

Metro: Savyolovskaya

Kazansky Vokzal, Opened 1864

It may be busy, dirty, and slightly seedy, but huge Kazansky vokzal is undoubtedly the king of Moscow train stations, as well as being one of the largest in Europe. Watch out for new arrivals hauling watermelons all the way from Central Asia. The red tower above the entrance hall is a copy of the leaning Syuyumbike Tower that stands in the Kazan kremlin.

This station serves Kazan, Ufa, Ryazan, Samara, Novorossiisk, the Caucasus, Siberia, and Central Asia. Suburban trains to the south east also leave here.

Metro: Komsomolskaya

Leningradsky Vokzal, Opened 1851

Leningradsky vokzal serves St. Petersburg and the north, and is therefore the busiest station in Moscow, although it's certainly not the largest. Surprisingly unostentatious, Leningradsky vokzal is clean and modern, with a severe shortage of chairs. The station is also an exact copy of its opposite number in St Petersburg, Moskovsky vokzal. Leningradsky vokzal is sometimes referred to by its former name of Oktyabrsky on tickets and timetables.

Serves St. Petersburg, north western Russia, Estonia, and Finland. Suburban trains to the north west.

Metro: Komsomolskaya

Yaroslavsky Vokzal, Opened 1862

With its fairytale-cottage exterior, elegant canary-yellow halls and airy modern extension, Yaroslavsky vokzal may be the most inviting station in Moscow. This station is the start of the longest stretch of railway in the world; to Valdivostok. The trans-Siberian to China route railway leaves from here.

Serves Yaroslavl, Archangelsk, Vorkuta, Siberia, Russian Far East, Mongolia, China, and North Korea. Suburban trains to the north east.

Metro: Komsomolskaya

Kursky Vokzal, Opened 1896

Although cursed with an extremely ugly glass exterior, Kursky vokzal is actually a very pleasant station. The front half – a large modern extension in the style of an airport – has a supermarket, branches of Shokoladnitsa and Planeta Sushi, and even signs translated into English; unusual for Moscow stations. Beyond lies a row of original, ornately decorated rooms, where you can find the plushiest station restaurant in Moscow – perhaps in the whole of Russia.

Kursky vokzal serves southern Russia, Caucasus nations, Eastern Ukraine, and the Crimea. Suburban trains to the east and south.

Metro: Kurskaya

Paveletsky Vokzal, Opened 1900

Paveletsky vokzal possesses a solid brown exterior and Soviet-era marble halls, and can be busy and confusing. The metro emerges within the station itself, although you need to be on the dark green line to come out in the right place. Near the metro exit is a special departure hall for the Aeroexpress to Domodedovo Airport. If you arrive at the station by car, the Aeroexpress departure lounge is on the left end of the station.

Airport express to Domodedovo Airport. Serves Voronezh, Tambor, Volgograd, Astrakhan, Baku and Kazakhstan. Suburban trains to the south east.

Metro: Paveletskaya

Kievsky Vokzal, Opened 1918

Kievsky vokzal fully compensates for its awkward layout with vast, ornate, pink and pea-green waiting rooms, classically decorated with pillars, vases and floral wreaths. The station is also the departure point for Vnukovo airport, and the airport express waiting lounge is another marvel in itself, with high arched ceiling, stained-glass window, and atmospheric lighting. The large new Evropeisky shopping mall is located next to the station.

Airport express to Vnukovo airport. Serves Bryansk, western Ukraine, south eastern Europe, Austria, Venice. Suburban trains to the south west.

Metro: Kievskaya

BUYING TICKETS

Tickets can be bought at any train station, although ordering them at the regular ticket booths can be a long and frustrating process. Many train stations have a "service centre," where you pay a small fee of around 100 roubles to buy your tickets in a more comfortable, relaxed environment. Travel agencies can also save you a lot time and effort, for only a small commission.

However, new ticket touch-screens are now located in all Moscow train stations. These provide all necessary information, such as ticket availability and pricing; simply note down the details of the desired train and take it to the ticket booth. Although still entirely in Russian these are incredibly useful, particularly as you rarely need to queue. And, while you can't pay for your tickets at these screens, a new model of automatic ticket dispenser is currently being trialled at Paveletsky vokzal.

Always have your passport number handy when buying tickets, even for journeys within Russia. Don't forget that it is not possible to buy an open or stopover ticket, so you will need to buy every leg of your route separately. It is also impossible to buy tickets more than 45 days in advance.