

# PASSPORT

MOSCOW

AUGUST 2011

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**John Ortega**  
Owner and Publisher

The short summer is in full swing, and for many, this issue will probably only be read in deep August when you get back from holiday. For those still in Moscow, there is plenty going on, and our arts pages will hopefully be of use in browsing through the multitude of shows, exhibitions and concerts on now. I personally thoroughly recommend the "JapanCongo" extravaganza on at Garage for something completely different. If you can get out of Moscow for a long weekend or longer but don't want to travel abroad, our articles on Tula and St. Petersburg may be of interest.

Taking a step back, we publish an article on ourselves: expatriates. Jay Morley attempts to categorise the phenomenon of an expatriate into eight different types. I am not sure that I personally fit into any of them, but nevertheless, it is perhaps useful to try to analyse why we are here. In this issue, Luc Jones asks whether or not Moscow really is as expensive a city for us to live in as it is made out to be. Ian Mitchell writes about the Russian banking system, and the exodus of foreign retail banks. In this context, it is perhaps relevant that there are four ostriches on the cover, although the birds relate directly to a children's story written by Ross Hunter. Charles Borden writes about Roni, Glen Ballis's new joint and Tinatin, whilst Len Nebons fills us in about Shooters. Enjoy!

## **bmi announces new service to Amritsar, India**



bmi, British Midland International, Heathrow's second largest airline, has announced a new route to Amritsar in Northern India, starting on 13 October 2011.

Flights will operate three times weekly from London Heathrow and will be via Almaty in Kazakhstan. bmi will be the only airline to offer a direct route to Amritsar from the UK. Services will be operated on a wide-bodied Airbus A330 aircraft and will offer a full service Business Class and Economy cabin. The aircraft offers 36 Business and 196 Economy seats. Business Class customers will benefit from a 60" seat pitch and seat recline of 50 degrees, electronic seat controls, in-seat power, a 15" personal video screen and comfortable noise cancelling headphones. Economy passengers will also benefit from 32" seat pitch with a recline of six degrees and a personal 15" seat back video screen. A wide range of blockbuster films, TV programmes, music and games channels will be offered throughout both cabins on the in-flight entertainment system.

For more information visit [flybmi.com](http://flybmi.com)  
Book now using your smartphone:  
<http://mobile.flybmi.com>

## **One more Cuba Libre! More freedom!**



In July 2011 a Cuba Libre bar was opened on Kuznetsky Most. The popularity of Cuba Libre on Pokrovka has been boosted by the new bar on Kuznetsky Most. All the special offers that are available at the Pokrovka Cuba Libre are available in the Kuznetsky bar, but there is a special opening offer here whereby you can buy two Cuba Libre cocktails for 1 rouble, if you download a coupon from a site [www.barbook.ru](http://www.barbook.ru). So what is the Cuba Libre bar and why should you drop in?

Cuba Libre bar is an island of freedom in the suffocating space of a crowded city. At lunch-times and in the afternoons, you can do business deals here, but at night you are entitled to forget about all that and enjoy freedom, real emotions, passionate dances and democratic prices for cocktails. This is no place for restrictions and prejudices. This is a zone of free prices and good moods. It is a musical euphoria of rhythms: an incendiary salsa, bachata and a meringue interspersed with reggitone and classical rock. It is the taste and aroma of the Cuban cigars, and the honey aftertaste of rum. It is not accepted to ask about what you cannot do in Cuba Libre bar, because here everything is possible!

Cuba Libre Bar  
Kuznetsky Most, 4 [www.cubalibrebar.ru](http://www.cubalibrebar.ru)

## **The Queen's English Theatre Studio presents:**



melodeclamation and other anglo russian entertainment at [www.shootersbar.ru](http://www.shootersbar.ru) every Thursday and Sunday throughout the summer from 7 pm til 10 pm. Physical theatre and contact improvisation courses from July 21st. Roll around on the floor with a nice Swedish girl for as little as 500 roubles an hour, every Sunday at Shooters 3pm.

Information about adult and children's drama courses available on request. [martijncooke@gmail.com](mailto:martijncooke@gmail.com)



The ostriches drawing on the cover, which relates directly to the story for children, 'Clarice and the Tea Leaf', and indirectly to various other stories including 'Can you Bank on Russian Banks', is by artist Catherine Hunter.

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## Strelka Sound

There is no need to introduce Strelka, the location of so many ideas concentrated in one place on the bank of the Moskva river. Strelka Sound is another musical component that came quite logically and naturally this summer. According to Roman Mazurenko, Strelka's director for special projects, they have been thinking about putting on a music event for over a year, but only this summer could they organize an event. There are four days of festivals, two of which take place in August and two on the first day of September. Taking part in the festival are Manicure, Midnight Juggernauts, Tesla Boy and Zola Jesus. The yard is turned into a green field with artificial but yet green and comfortable grass which makes this artistic area a small European festival with good music and a nice view onto the river. August 13 is given to two bands from Russia: Manicure and Music Zola Jesus. Born from



an experimental noise-rock project, Manicure is now one of the most original new bands in Russia. The band will play tracks from their new album *Grow Up* that was released in June. The concert of Nika Roza Danilova, known by the stage name of Zola Jesus, will start at 9.30 p.m. Her tracks: *Poor Animal*, *Sea Talk* and *I Can't Stand It* were listed among the best singles of 2010 by *The New York Times* and *Pitchfork*. Her tour plans this year are impressive: she will play at Pitchfork, Bestival, Electric Pink, Bill Chill, Hollywood Bowl and others. The first day of the autumn will be celebrated with a

concert by Tesla Boy, the first Russian self-produced band popular in Russia as well as abroad. This year the band have toured Russia and Europe and played with Hurts during their Russian tour. At Strelka Sound, Tesla Boy will play new tracks from their new album. Australian electronic band Midnight Juggernauts, that will start playing at 9 p.m., gained prominence in 2006. Since then the band has released two LPs and many singles. Midnight Juggernauts headlined such festivals as Big Day Out, Electric Picnic, Lowlands, Pukkelpop, Lovebox and Rockness.

Strelka Sound at Strelka Institute for Media, Architecture and Design **P**

*Music Zola Jesus/Manicure*

**August 13, 2011, Saturday, 18:00-22:00**

*Music Midnight Juggernauts/Tesla Boy*

**September 1, 2011,**

**Thursday, 18:00-23:00**

*Red October chocolate factory*

*Bersenevskaya embankment 14, building 5*

## Dali Retrospective

The Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts presents Salvador Dali's retrospective. The exhibition is provided by the Dali Theatre-Museum in Figueres, which is itself, undoubtedly the largest surrealist object in the world. It was initiated in the building of the former Municipal Theatre or rather its ruins as the 19th century edifice was destroyed at the end of the Spanish Civil War. Here Dali decided to create his museum. The curators bring to Moscow twenty-five pictures and also about ninety graphic works along with archive photographs and other items. Dali's major artistic periods are all reflected in the exhibition, from his earliest years when he



was looking for his own way forward, and his life in Paris when he became acquainted with surrealism. This is followed by his mature years when Dali became Dali, and certainly his later experimental paintings are on the verge of traditional painting and optical illusions. One of the leitmotifs

of the exposition is the figure of the legendary Gala-Dali's wife Elena Dyakova, who united the art of Dali with Russia. Elena was Dali's muse, co-thinker and model. The current retrospective is curated by specialists from the Pushkin Fine Arts, Dali Theatre-Museum and Gala-Salvador Dali Foundation and brings you the unforgettable atmosphere of the museum in Figueres-Dali's largest. The famous muscovite, Boris Messerer, created the scenography for the exhibition. **P**

**August 19-November 6**

*Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts,  
Main building*

*12, Volkonka street. 10:00-19:00,  
except Monday*

## James Turrell at Garage

Garage Center for Contemporary Culture presents the first solo exhibition in Russia by one of the world's most important contemporary artists—James Turrell. The American artist will be the subject of a retrospective spanning 40 years, including early experiments with light projections from the 1960s, a specially commissioned Ganzfeld installation (*Purusa*) and Perceptual Cell (*Light Rainfall*), presented here for the first time. James Turrell has been creating art from light and space since the 1960s. Over nearly five decades, he has developed an extensive body of work that includes sculptures, holograms, installations, and architecture. His carefully constructed environments are cata-



lysts for viewers to explore the phenomena of perception. By capturing and emphasizing the evanescent and refractory qualities of light, Turrell engineers works of art that must be experienced

rather than just viewed. At Garage, 15 light works, including the horizonless and imageless landscape of *Purusa* (2011), are on view. This newly commissioned work invites visitors to enter a completely immersive light landscape, engulfing them in a "sublime bath of light" that produces a sense of perceptual disorientation. Turrell describes this effect as "feeling with your eyes", an experience he regards as not just aesthetic but also spiritual. **P**

**August 1 - 21**

*Garage Centre for  
Contemporary Culture*

*19a Obraztsova Street, 11:00-21:00*

## Russian National Orchestra: summer music season

The Grand Festival of the Russian National Orchestra is an annual cultural event which takes place in Moscow every September. The festival has gained fame as the best beginning of the musical season in Moscow. This year the festival is held from September 8 and features quite a variety of genres: from symphonic music, ballet, opera to jazz and more. Along with the RNO stars, the festival also includes performances of such international soloists as Sarah Chang, Eduard Radzinsky (violinist), Maxim Mogilevsky, Nino Machaidze and others. The Russian National Orchestra was started in 1990 in Moscow and for these twenty years has been listed as

one of the twenty leading orchestras in the world. The first Russian orchestra to perform at the Vatican and in Israel, the RNO maintains an active international tour schedule, appearing in Europe, Asia and the Americas. Guest artists performing with the RNO on tour include conductors Vladimir Jurowski, Nicola Luisotti, Antonio Pappano, Alan Gilbert, Carlo Ponti and Patrick Summers, and soloists Martha Argerich, Yefim Bronfman, Lang Lang, Pinchas Zukerman, Sir James Galway, Joshua Bell, Itzhak Perlman, Steven Isserlis, Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Simone Kermes and Renée Fleming, among many others. Popular with radio audiences world-



wide, RNO concerts are regularly aired by National Public Radio in the United States and by the European Broadcasting Union. The festival takes place in the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall. **P**

*For schedule and tickets see [www.RNO.ru](http://www.RNO.ru)*

*Tchaikovsky Concert Hall  
4/31 Triumfalnaya Square*

## Natura Morta—classical compositions in photography

Pobeda Gallery presents its new project Natura Morta, which unites the works of seven Russian and American photographers of the still life genre. The authors are Jefferson Hayman, Paulette Tavormina, Charles Grogg, Michael Huey, Irina Polin, Vadim Gushchin, Aleksei Kiselev. The photographers instinctively try to overcome the static and "statuary" nature of such objects, not contenting themselves with the fixation of reality, but divining the vibrations of secret and invisible life. The artists rehabilitate the most common things (like tableware in Irina Polin and Michael Huey's works or bread in Vadim Gushchin's series). For in-

stance, still life photographs by Paulette Tavormina, inspired by Dutch painting of the XVIIth century, are carefully composed, have every element rigorously put into its place. On the other hand, these works ironically use baroque fancy for allegory, referring not to universal categories, but to images from the personal experience of the artist (like the fig tree, which grew in her family garden). Another baroque technique used is trompe-l'œil. Fruits and vegetables, looking like some decorations of an invisible counter, seem to fall out of the frame, making the compositions even more unstable. **P**



©Paulette Tavormina. Strawberries

**August 1-September 30**

*Pobeda Gallery, 12:00 - 20:00*

*Red October Chocolate Factory*

*Bolotnaya embankment 3, building 4*

## Young Art at the Moscow Museum of Modern Art

Moscow Museum of Modern Art and Free Workshops Contemporary Art School present the annual international competition and exhibition of young art, Workshop 2011: Today/Tomorrow. The project is about time and relativity. The participants of the project show their perception of the past, present and future. The curators have realized that the younger a person is, the longer time stretches in his mind. Besides young people typically look ahead, to the future, to tomorrow. As time goes by, it shrinks and eventually disappears together with a person. The art for the project were selected by the curators of Independent Workshops of the Moscow Museum of Modern

Art. More than 500 people took part in the competition, and eventually 100 works representing all kinds contemporary art media (sculpture, video art, collage, photo, painting, graphics and interactive installations) were selected. The project includes the best works of the participants of the first open regional festival of young art in Kaluga The Festival of Discoveries 2011. The Workshop also presents the project, Art House Short Films, by the curator Tatyana Daniliants. For the first time, the video art festival, Now & After, is held within the Workshop exhibition. The works for this project were also selected in a competition. The selected works will be presented in the form of a video instal-



lation. Now & After is both the real and the imaginary world, where dreams come true. Within the framework of this project, the artists visualize their perception of time and space, they reflect on the past and make projections into the future. **P**

*Moscow Museum of Modern Art*

*17, Ermolaevsky lane*

*Open: 11:00 - 19:00*

*Except Monday*

# “The Summer Ballet Seasons 2011” Festival in Moscow

Marina Lukanina

Summer is usually a bit quiet for the Moscow theatres. A lot of the companies go on tour and avid theatre fans have to wait until the fall opening of a new season. Therefore, such events as The Summer Ballet Seasons Festival come just in time to contribute to bustling summer life.

The Festival was originally planned for tourists who visit Moscow in summer. Its purpose was to introduce foreigners to Russian classical ballet. However, the Festival has also become quite popular among Moscow residents, and currently it is an integral part of summer cultural life and has already become a tradition. This year, from June 30 to August 28,

prominent classical ballets are performing on the stage of the Russian Academic Youth Theatre (RAMT) for 11th time.

This is the second year the Summer Ballet Seasons have been organized in partnership with the state enterprise MosKonsert with support from the Department of Culture of the city of Moscow. Participants include the Moscow troupes: La Classique Moscow Ballet run by Elik Melikov and the Russian National Ballet Theatre run by Vladimir Moiseev and Evgeny Amosov. For the first time, the festival has opened up their stage to the Russian Classical Ballet troupe headed by Oksana Usacheva.



The Festival program features such world famous ballets as Swan Lake, The Nutcracker, Romeo and Juliet, Sleeping Beauty, Giselle and Don Quixote.

Swan Lake was Tchaikovsky's first ballet and is considered by many to be one of the greatest classical ballets of all time. Although several versions exist, most ballet companies stage the ballet according to the choreography of Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov for their St. Petersburg performance of 1895. The first American production was performed by the San Francisco Ballet. Swan Lake is traditionally presented in four acts.

The Nutcracker has been a Christmas holiday tradition for many years. The 1892 premiere failed with both the public and critics. Unfortunately, Tchaikovsky never knew what a huge success the ballet would become, as he died less than a year later. The Sugar Plum Fairy's dance with the Prince is probably the most famous *pas de deux* in all ballet. The Nutcracker has many interpretations, resulting in several different plots and character names.

Romeo and Juliet is a ballet by Sergei Prokofiev based on Shakespeare's tragic love story. Prokofiev composed the mu-

The following is a letter from a recent graduate of the British International School, Tanya Gujral:

Dear BIS

*Being at BIS has been a memorable journey; one that I actually never thought would last 15 years for me. I've grown up with people here; some of us have known each other for 13 years. Finishing school is the first big step in our lives and I hope that the effort we've put in, especially over the last 2 years, gives us all the opportunity to achieve what we each strive for. We're about to embark upon a new journey, which I think the IB has prepared us very well for.*

*On behalf of all of year 13, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the teachers of school 3, whose constant support and encouragement have enabled us to receive equal opportunity to be successful, not just in school, but also in future. Thank you for providing us with the educational experience that some children would only dream of having, and we would like you to know that we don't take this for granted and that we appreciate the advice and guidance that you have given over the years.*

*I personally, would also like to thank all of you, my friends, who have played a huge role in making my school life enjoyable and memorable. I have found the best of friends right here, and I really hope that distance does not become an excuse for us to lose touch with each other. Part of the IB involves being perseverant and working collaboratively with each other to be successful, and it's very important that you find people who you can get along with easily. I was lucky enough to have friends like you, and thank you for being there for me. I have always and will always try my best to be there for you. Thank you.*

*And of course, thank you to all of you, the BIS family, for joining us here today for our farewell. This is the first time it's happening in our school, and we're very grateful that you're all here so we can say goodbye to you. This school has made my life and been my life. This school's slogan: 'Excellence in education', it's so much more than just words. Education isn't just about sitting in front of your books all day and memorising big chunks of information...it describes the whole experience of learning, and I have grown to respect the effort that each and every member of this school puts into making 'Excellence in Education' possible for us. Here, I've found myself a platform to show my talents and develop them. The fact that we have so many cultures and religions under this very roof makes this school unique and I'm very proud to have been a part of BIS Moscow.*

*So keeping all of this in mind, a little message I'd like to convey to all of you is that: Never underestimate what this school can do for you, and more importantly, what you can do for this school.*

Thank you,  
Tanya Gujral

## Ballet Review

sic in 1935 or 1936 for the Kirov Ballet. The incredible ballet score has inspired many great choreographers to try their hand at Shakespeare's story. The ballet consists of four acts and ten scenes, with a total of 52 separate dance numbers. The version most well-known today was first presented in 1940 at the Kirov Theatre in Leningrad, with choreography by Leonid Lavrovsky.

The Sleeping Beauty is widely regarded as Tchaikovsky's finest ballet score, and has become one of the classical repertoire's most famous ballets. The premiere

performance took place at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg in 1890.

Considered one of the great Romantic ballets, Giselle was first performed in Paris in 1841. Originally choreographed by Jean Coralli and Jules Perrot, the production seen today was choreographed by Marius Petipa for the Imperial Ballet. Giselle revolves around the themes of forest spirits, forces of nature, and death. The second act of the ballet, in which everyone is wearing white, is known as "the white act".

My personal favorite is Don Quixote, which is based on an episode taken from the famous novel, *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, by Miguel de Cervantes. The most successful choreography for the ballet was created by Marius Petipa at the height of his career.

It was first presented by the Ballet of the Imperial Bolshoi Theatre of Moscow, Russia in 1869. Don Quixote and Sancho Panza are not heavily involved in the storyline. The ballet's best dance is a wonderful wedding *pas de deux*, performed by young lovers Kitri and Basilio. These roles have the best dance of the ballet.


The Festival participants also include foreign ballet troupes that are known both for their artistic interpretations of classical story-lines and for their innovative mod-

ern production. This year, which marks the Year of Italy in Russia, with the help the Russian and Italian Ministries of Culture Balletto di Milano, headed by Carlo Pesto, was part of the Festival program. The troupe performed Romeo and Juliet and a choreographic production titled Chanson.

The performances of the Summer Ballet Seasons Festival traditionally take place in the Russian Academic Youth Theatre (RAMT) located in the downtown area of Moscow, at Teatralnaya Square, next to the Bolshoi and Maly theatres, in the beautiful old mansion built in the 19th century.

Each year the theatre's lobby hosts exhibitions organized within the framework of the Summer Ballet Seasons Festival. This year there is mosaic works of art, which are a part of the exhibition dedicated to the 170th anniversary of the French Impressionist painter Claude Monet.

The Summer Ballet Seasons Festival strives to preserve and promote Russian cultural heritage and introduce to the audience world-famous classical Russian ballet. Over 300,000 people have visited the Festival in the past eleven years.

To find out the repertoire and order tickets please visit [www.ballet-letom.ru](http://www.ballet-letom.ru) 





Compiled  
by Ross Hunter

PASSPORT's summer education briefing comes just before the clock starts ticking for 2012 applications. If this is your target, you need to be getting good advice, talking to Universities and if at all possible visiting some. Potential students should devote a good part of August to working on their "personal statements", CV (*curriculum vitae/resumé*) and art portfolios. The personal statement needs several drafts, with school help. CVs need to show how diverse, interesting and well-rounded you are. Improve your guitar playing, read those books you always meant to READ (NOT just set texts), develop that hobby or skill, from archery to ornithology to photography to the xylophone...

This month we offer advice on how UCAS works.

## UCAS

by Rebecca Blake, Kingston University London  
r.blake@kingston.ac.uk

The Universities & Colleges Admissions Service is the organisation responsible for processing applications to full-time undergraduate degree courses at UK universities and colleges. Most UK universities require applications via UCAS for undergraduate courses.

Students can apply to up to five courses via UCAS online [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com), and it costs £21. Applications start in September, with courses such as medicine, dentistry and veterinary sciences usually closing in mid-October. For all other courses the deadline is 15 January, but it is better to apply by November. The UCAS website has full listings of course specific deadlines. UCAS expect most decisions on applications by the end of March and no later than mid May.

As part of the application process students provide their personal details including information about their current qualifications and employment history. They must also write a personal statement and provide an academic reference

to support their application. The personal statement is a vital part of the application: an opportunity to explain in 500 words why they have chosen that particular course, what skills and achievements they have and their future career hopes.

Decisions will either be unconditional or conditional upon gaining certain grades in their exams, such as BBC/220 points at A-level or 24 points at IB. Once all the decisions have been made applicants accept up to two offers, one as a firm acceptance and the other as an insurance acceptance. Any remaining offers are automatically declined by UCAS. Final confirmation is usually completed by August.

If a student does not meet the conditions of their offers or does not have a place they can enter "UCAS Clearing". Clearing happens between mid-July and September, but especially in the days following A-level results, in mid August. It is a process where students without offers can approach universities that still have places available. A list of which universities have Clearing vacancies is published on the UCAS website from mid-August as well as on individual university websites and in the national press.

[www.kingston.ac.uk/international](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/international)

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John Harrison

The JAPANCONGO exhibition at Garage, which runs until August the 15th, is German artist, Carsten Holler's, take on Jean Pigozzi's collection of Congolese and Japanese contemporary art. Holler has chosen work by 16 Congolese artists which is shown to a counterpoint to works by 47 Japanese artists. The idea of presenting a double exhibition within one exhibition is not new, but usually the term refers to two aspects of one culture, not aspects of completely different cultures, which JAPANCONGO is all about.

The exhibition's design and installation presents Japan on one side and the Congo on the other, with the walls on which the Japanese pictures are mounted being straight and rectangular, while the Congolese walls are rounded like the breasts of women from that country, as we are reminded of in so many paintings from that ample country. The walls form a spiral at one end. At the narrowest point, the visitor acts as a missing link between the two walls, although really what happens is that the corridor abruptly ends and the visitor is left staring at the non-plussed security guard.



# JAPANCONGO

The official blurb says that "there are some astonishing similarities between the Congolese and Japanese works on display". This is true. The similarities are not on the technique level, that's for sure. The Japanese are expert technicians, with fine painting and print-making being their hallmark, whereas the Congolese are big at 'bs': burlesque, bold, brash and bright, with paintings professionally done to appear to be half-naïve, and half political-poster in style. The exhibition, space, with its twisting walls thus becomes an artwork in itself, with curvy rooms full of trippy Congolese architectural; models and moody photographs.

The Japanese work on display is also full of protest, but it is subtle and, as with all things Japanese, exquisitely performed. There is a print on display showing a Japanese girl revealing her upper leg whilst another girl looks on. Pure pornography! The Japanese try to do expressionism and Hamilton-like collages, but it doesn't really work; their strongest pieces are their most subtle. Here the Japanese artists show the collapse of Japanese traditional society, and "coming out" from inhibited sexuality is one good way to do that, as Japanese society and inherent sexual inhibitions are one and the same thing.

The Congolese show the regeneration of deep-rooted folk art in strong physical, emotional, almost pagan, works mixed with good-natured anarchism and alcoholism. All of this made me think what a collection of Russian and Irish art might look like? Very drunk, that's for sure. Perhaps it is easier to come up with a national identity when far from home and viewed by people who don't understand a hell of a lot about either culture, hmm. Perhaps such an exhibition should be suggested to the curator of the ICA?

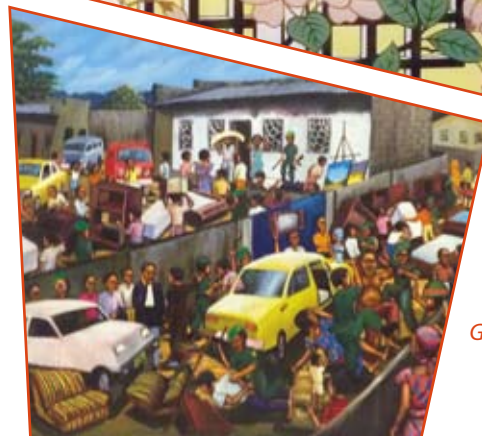
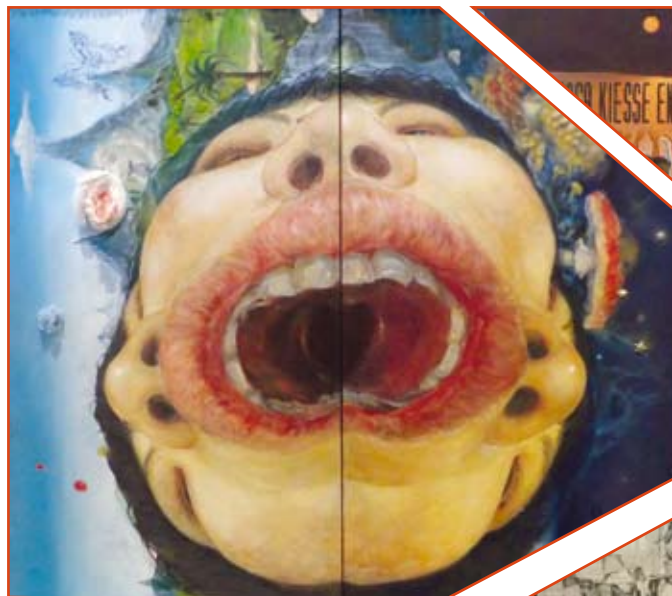
As the exhibition space is an exhibition, there is no need to display individual artists' names alongside each work. This is very irritating. Even the official guide is difficult to interpret to the extent of understanding who did what. But it doesn't really matter, as most visitors don't remember artists' names anyway, unless they are "famous", and there's not much chance of that happening with these artists, although the work is great.

On the way in to the vast cavernous space of the Garage, you pass through the large exhibition space of James Turrell. I couldn't see any of James's works as this exhibition was closed, apart from a marble boat with an outboard motor attached, floating on an artificial pond with floating fairy lights around it—which did make me think a bit. I am not quite sure what about; my thoughts were abstract. I shall reserve judgement on James's work until I return and see the whole show.

I thoroughly recommend a visit to JAPANCONGO, if only for a chance of getting blown out of Russian culture for few hours, by a double whammy of Japanese and Congolese art. Really!

Fifteen Congolese artists are displayed including the talents of Peter Bodo, Chéri Samba, Pathy Tshindele, Jean Depara, Cheik Ledy and Bodys Isek Kingelez. An equal number of Japanese artists will also be displayed with works from Natsumi Nagao, Nobuyoshi Araki, Akihiro Higuchi, Kazuna Taguchi, Kaneuji Teppei, Hiroki Tsukuda and Keiichi Tanaami. **P**

*JAPANCONGO was first exhibited in France at Le Magasin in Grenoble. It will travel to Russia at The Garage Centre for Contemporary Culture of Moscow in summer 2011 and Italy at the Palazzo Reale-CIMAC of Milan in September 2011.*



**The exhibition runs to the  
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## The Esenin house in Moscow



Text and photos by Marina Kashpar

In Bolshoi Strichenovski Pereulok in Moscow, surrounded by modern buildings, there is a two-storey wooden house in which poet Sergei Esenin lived in from 1911-1918. He began his close observations of Moscow from there, something that he undertook on foot. "I love this elm tree town," he once proclaimed. There aren't so many elm trees around in Moscow boulevards today, they have been replaced by large maple trees, poplars and of course birches. The Esenin Museum opened in this house on the 100th anniversary of his birth.

Life in Moscow was not very kind to Sergei Esenin. He started work in the office of the merchant N.V. Krulov, where his father worked as a shop assistant. But trade and poetry were not compatible in Esenin's mind, and he gave up this work. Looking for anything a bit closer to his interests, Esenin worked in a book shop, then as a senior proof-reader in the Sutin printing house.

The first publication of Esenin's poem, *The Birch*, was in the January 1914, in the children's magazine, *Mirok*. This event inspired him greatly, and Esenin decided to give up work and devote himself to poetry.

In 1915, he went to St. Petersburg, where he met such great Russian poets as Alexander Blok, Sergey Gorodetsky, and Nikolai Kluev. The next year he published his first book, *Raduniza*.

In early 1917, Esenin married actress Zinaida Raikh. Two children were born, a daughter Tanya and son Kostya, before they split up, after only a year together.

In the autumn of 1921, Sergei Esenin met the famous American dancer, Isadora Duncan, and married her. They spent the following year travelling abroad, visiting Germany, Belgium and America.

Returning to Russia, Esenin started to write the cycle of verses: *Hooligan*, *The Confession of the Hooligan*, and *The Love*

of the Hooligan. In 1924 Esenin's collection, *Moscow Joint* (Moskva Kabachkaya) was published, and he started to work on the poem, *Anna Snegina* (published in January 1925).

After parting from Isadora Duncan, Esenin married Sofya Andreevna Tolstaya, the granddaughter of Lev Tolstoy. But this marriage did not last long either, even for Esenin: just a couple of months.

Esenin lived in the house with his father, Aleksander Nikitich. His father worked as an assistant in the butcher's shop of the merchant N.V. Krulov, who was the owner of the house.

When you enter the museum, right in front of the door a pre-recorded guide's voice welcomes you in an eerie way. Then you come face to face with a plaster statue of the poet standing right behind the front door.

Under your feet there is a floor that feels like a lawn, the ceiling looks like the wooden trussing of a village hayloft. And in the next room these wooden logs form a cross and something like an iconostasis.

A portrait of the young Esenin drawn on thin glass looks like a border between centuries, and behind it one can see a common apartment, a small room from the beginning of the XXth century.

It is difficult to say how the room might have looked when Esenin actually lived in it, but all the objects collected here are typical for that time and reflect the atmosphere of the poet. There is a lot to see here, and the visitor will be submerged not only in the life of Sergey Esenin, but of Moscow at that time.

*Esenin House Museum: Bolshoi Strichenovski pereulok, 24, building #2 (Metro Serpuhovskaya or Paveletskaya)*

*Working hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday from 11:00-18:00, Wednesday from 14:00-21:00.*

*The museum is situated on the enclosed area, and to get there one should pass through a check point from the side of Bolshoi Strochevskiy pereulok. No documents are needed, just say you are going to the Esenin museum.* **P**

# Summer Nightlife Update

## Miguel Francis

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, no matter how much some of us may be tired of the glitz and glamour that surrounds Moscow nightlife, there are alternatives out there, as mentioned in the last issue. But for the average newcomer within the ex-pat community it is our duty as PASSPORT magazine, Moscow, to bring you the latest in the commercial Moscow nightlife scene.

Barbados has been slamming this summer led by a funky DJ-investor and old-time promoter duo, Vengerov&Fedoroff. Dmitry Fedoroff and Mikhail Vengerov were members at the Titanic Club (one of the first and the biggest electronic music clubs in Moscow) promo team led by Alexei Gorobiy, the number one guru behind Moscow nightlife. Since that time back in the 80s and 90s, Vengerov&Fedoroff have grown to become successful event producers, club owners, heading projects like Opera Club, Famous Club, W-Bar. They do well by remixing old-time Russian rock and pop music into house remixes.

I had a chance to work with them on the infamous Russian national song, Katyusha, remixed by DJ Vengerov&Fedoroff, headlining Dynamite FM last summer 2010. Barbados encompasses all their talent and energy into their latest venue venture. Being located on Bolshoi Putinkovskii Pereulok House 5, next to Chekhovskaya Metro, is an accessible, central location. Together with Chris Helmbrecht and LBLFCKR productions, this place tunes down the glamour and brings back the fun. Sometimes I feel that being in Moscow for sometime definitely turns you anti-glam, and I love it. Put on your Vans or Converse shoes and lets LBLFCKR together with Vengerov&Fedoroff!

The infamous Imperia Lounge, which brought the western posh and

glamour in proper portions into Moscow thanks to none other than Alexey Gorobiy himself, has revamped itself with its latest design addition, The Summer Terrace. If you haven't been to Imperia's outside summer patio then you're definitely missing out. Imperia continues holding its designated nightlife stop position through Summer 2011. The acts and DJs they're bringing keep getting better and better, the vibe is fun and smooth. Remember now, Imperia has a Mash-Up room as its main bar, where you can grove to things like the Rolling Stones and Black Eyed Peas, while the two harder house rooms indulge you into Ibiza, and now with the summer terrace you can give yourself a little bit of St. Tropez! Mantulinskaya House, 5.

Sati Kazanova, a Russian Kelly Rowland perhaps? Maybe so, but she's also into opening her own restaurants. Sati opened a summer terrace called Kilim along with Ginza Project. This seems to be the new trend for clever Ginza Project masterminds, they open restaurants by using names of famous celebrities, like the recent Kseniya Sobchak and Tina Kandelaki opening parties for Tver-bull and Bublik. Kilim is an Eastern affair in the middle of Moscow. The spot features singing, dancing, eating and having fun. All of this comes with a slight eastern spice on top of it. The interior is perhaps reminiscent of Prado Café, the ambience is very soft and fun. If you're in for checking new places don't miss this one out, located in same square with Barbados, Bolshoi Putinkovskii Pereulok, House 5.

There is only one place which can bring you closer to a real summer out of the city party experience: Super Beach located between Shukinskaya and Strogino, on Stroginovskoe Shosse, Vlodnie #1, this place is a semi-Moscow Ibiza. Featuring bubble parties, real



beach experience, and simply a great way to enjoy summer here in Moscow. The mega club features different events every week, so there is a surprise waiting for you on a regular basis. Google Super Beach Moscow and enjoy. Great cocktails, seductive atmosphere and pretty decent international acts are all the components of having fun at the Moscow Beach Club.

Summer is after all the time when most Muscovites leave for vacations anywhere but the city. So I suggest you do the same, time for a little nightlife break! See you soon. **P**



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# “Who is that fellow up there?” - a trip to St. Petersburg

Marina Lukanina, photos Maxim Barkov

St. Petersburg, often called “the Northern capital of Russia”, has always attracted tourists from all over the world. Generally foreigners like it more than Moscow, at least judging by the majority of comments I get from my foreign friends. Since it can be accessed from the sea, a lot of cruise companies plan their itineraries around this city, therefore especially in the summer it is flooded with international guests.

St. Petersburg is a popular escape for Moscow residents as well. Depending how much money you are willing to spend you can get there by overnight train, zoom there in 4 hours by express train, or in approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes if you'd rather fly. There are plenty of flights between Moscow and St. Petersburg, from both Sheremetyevo and Domodedovo airports, that leave almost every hour so you can be there in no time, but the journey to and from the airports may add an hour or two to the flight time; cancelling out the whole point of flying. With a bottle of beer or some other suitable beverage, a book or video viewer, the journey from city centre to centre passes quickly, at least on the express.

Summer is not only “white nights” season, it is also the time to get in one of the countless river boats and see St. Petersburg from the water, from one of the 90 or so different canals and small rivers. No wonder this place is called the Venice of the North. The bridges open up at night, perhaps to protect the city from the darkness that surrounds it, and each bridge has its own timetable, so you need to make sure you get to the right side of the river, meaning to where you are staying, in time. If you are



a bridge-watcher, I recommend Palace Bridge. Over the years it has become a symbol of the city. Its total length is 260.1 meters, width 27.8 meters. It has five spans, the southernmost joining Palace Embankment between Winter Palace and Admiralty and leading to Palace Square. Dress warmly, the wind can be brutal in the evening, even if it's been a hot summer day.

St. Petersburg houses some fine examples of cathedrals and churches: St Isaac's Cathedral, the Kazan Cathedral, Smolny Cathedral, etc. My two favourites are the Church of the Saviour on Blood situated just couple of blocks away from the Nevsky Prospect, the main shopping street and north-south artery of the city. It is inside this church that I heard this funny phrase of one of



the tourists on a guided tour who looked up to enjoy the beautifully painted ceiling: "Who is that fellow up there?" So I thought I would clarify that the Church is full of different mosaics, the main pictures being biblical scenes or figures. The particular scene that spurred this question is called "Christ Pantocrator," created by the famous Russian painter N. Khalramov.

This Church was built on the site where Tsar Alexander II was assassinated and was dedicated to his memory. It intentionally resembles a 17th century Yaroslavl church and the celebrated St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow.

The Peter and Paul Fortress is another place not to be missed while in St. Petersburg. The fortress was founded on a small island in the Neva delta on May 27, 1703, the day that became the birthday of the city of St Petersburg. Right in the middle of the fortress stands the impressive Peter and Paul Cathedral, the burial place of all the Russian Emperors and Empresses from Peter the Great to Alexander III. The cathedral was the first church in the city to be built of stone. On top of the cathedral's gilded spire stands a magnificent golden angel holding a cross. It is 123 metres tall and the highest building in the city.

You can watch a breath-taking ballet at the Mariinsky Theatre. The repertoire is available at [www.mariinsky.ru/en](http://www.mariinsky.ru/en). The only upsetting thing about this theatre is that it has different prices for foreign and Russian citizens. It is quite a shame and hopefully this will change sooner or later.

Right next to the Mariinsky is a brilliant steak-house restaurant, called Stroganoff Steakhouse, situated at 4 Konnogvardeysky Boulevard [www.stroganoffsteakhouse.ru](http://www.stroganoffsteakhouse.ru). The menu includes a variety of different steaks as well as salads, desserts, drinks, etc. The interior is very stylish; the staff is friendly and, most importantly, the food is delicious. Definitely a good place to discuss the recently-watched Romeo and Juliet or Swan Lake.

A little further away, yet still within walking distance, (you do have to have a map, however) there is an extraordinary restaurant called Teplo, which means Warmth in Russia. When you call to reserve a table there they greet you saying, "Hello, you have reached Teplo", which can be translated into English as "Hello, you are in the warmth now." This is exactly how you feel when you walk into this restaurant.

The interior resembles a lovely living-room with sofas, arm-chairs, little pieces of home décor. Every detail of the restaurant is meant to reinforce this cosy atmosphere and make you want to stay for a long time. The staff are friendly. See the menu in English [www.v-teple.ru/cafe/menuenglish/](http://www.v-teple.ru/cafe/menuenglish/) and also the interior: [www.v-teple.ru/photogallery/interior/](http://www.v-teple.ru/photogallery/interior/) The last time I was in St. Petersburg, I went here for both lunch and dinner. After maybe my third visit, one of the staff asked me if I lived nearby. I had to confess that I actually flew all the way from Moscow to enjoy one of the best restaurants I have ever been to, and to do some sightseeing of course.

There are plenty of museums in St. Petersburg. Among the most popular are the Hermitage and the Russian Museum. No need to say much about either, as plenty of guide-books and internet sites are devoted to them. My only advice would be to choose specific exhibitions that you would like to see. It's not enough to just "wander around" these museums as they are huge and without a structured approach you will end up being totally exhausted at the end of the day without remembering much of what you've actually seen.

The museum that caught my attention on my last visit was the Universe of Water, [www.vodokanal-museum.ru/eng/](http://www.vodokanal-museum.ru/eng/) It operates as a part of the "Information and Training Centre" of "Vodokanal, Saint Petersburg". It is situated on 56 Shpalernaya street, opposite the Tavrichesky Palace. Today the museum complex comprises three exhibitions: "The Water World of Saint-Petersburg"; "The Underground of Petersburg" and "The Universe of Water". Everything is dedicated to water. Multimedia technologies and effects are combined with those exhibits that can be touched. The space surrounding visitors is as changeable as the water itself: sounds, pictures, light are changing. This is a great experience that is not to be missed!

So whether you are an avid theatre-goer or just like to wander along the beautiful waterfront, St. Petersburg is well worth a visit. **P**



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# Welcome to Tula!



Marina Lukanina, photos Anna Stepanova and Tatyana Shorova

I am the kind of a person who rarely likes to travel within Russia. I never get tired of being in Moscow. I am not usually looking for a “week-end getaway place” since I am not a big fan of these small towns outside of the city of all cities. At school, I had to travel to several towns on the Golden Ring, such as Vladimir, Suzdal, etc. Visiting these towns was among the most boring experiences in my childhood. However, a recent week-end in Tula will definitely remain one of the most fun and entertaining times that I have ever spent in Russia.

I have passed through Tula many times over the past couple of years as my company has a tissue factory in that region. But always being in a hurry, I never got a chance to see this town properly. Then a couple of weeks ago, my friend and I decided to go to a concert held in one of the night clubs in Tula. Since we were going all the way there we thought it would be a good idea to do some sightseeing as well. What made the trip even better was the fact that my colleague kindly offered to host us for a week-end at her house and to organize a private tour for us around the town and its surroundings.

The town of Tula is located approximately 190 kilometres (120 miles) south of Moscow, on the Upa River. Half a million people live there. It was founded in 1146 so it is one year older than Moscow. Just as in Moscow, in the heart of the city there is a Kremlin which is over 500 years old. In ancient times it served to protect the town from invaders, and consists of nine towers, four of them on the gates, and a wall with crenellations in the Italian style in a form of swallow tails. Unlike the Moscow Kremlin, there are only two cathedrals inside the Tula Kremlin:



the Uspenski Cathedral (1762) with golden domes, built in Russian baroque, and the Bogoyavlenski Cathedral (1855-1862) which was built in the memory of soldiers who died in the Patriotic War of 1812 against Napoleon. The Bogoyavlenski Cathedral is also houses the Tula Armory Museum.

On orders issued by Peter the Great in 1724, a collection of old and antique guns was started at the Tula arms factory, which later became the basis of the Armory Museum, which currently houses a unique collection of weaponry from the late 16th century onwards. A cross-section of Russian, European (Belgium, Germany, France, England, Italy) and Oriental (Turkey, Iran, Japan) weapons gives the visitor the chance to compare the achievements of Russian and foreign gunsmiths.





The Museum also has a large collection of sporting, hunting and decorated arms.

Among the most famous exhibits is "Levsha's flea shoe". A legend about Levsha says that he was a very talented man, so skillful indeed that he managed to create a steel flea during Tsarist times. Contemporary Tula masters have re-created such a steel flea in memory of Levsha, although nobody knows if Levsha actually existed.

Tula is well-known for its samovars, and a samovar factory was opened in the town in 1778. There is a proverb that says: "Do not go to Tula with your own samovar". It has the same meaning as "carrying coals to Newcastle". Tula samovars received lots of awards at the different Russian and foreign exhibitions in Paris (1889), Chicago (1893), London (1909) and all-Russian exhibitions in Moscow. The town now boasts a Samovar Museum.

Of course Tula people had to have something to drink their delicious tea from samovar with: traditional Russian pryaniki (gingerbread), cookies made of honey and spices. At the eponymous Pryaniki Museum, you can see, and buy, the smallest one (the size of coin) and the largest, (about 16 kg).

There are couple of churches within the city limits that are worth visiting: the Church of Annunciation (the oldest Orthodox church in Tula from 17th century) and the Cheglovsky Men Monastery.

Perhaps the most popular tourist attraction in the Tula region is Yasnaya Polyana, the home and burial place of Leo Tolstoy. This is located 12 kilometers south-west of the town. It was here that Tolstoy wrote *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*. The grounds and park are open to the public, and it is pleasant to stroll around the beautiful apple orchards. However I would highly recommend you go on a guided tour through the house and the wing where Tolstoy organized his famous school for the peasants.

Tolstoy lived here for most of his life, and it became a museum in 1928. The authenticity of the furnishings and the works of art, the library, which belonged to the writer's family, makes it one of the most atmospheric museums in the world. The library contains 22,000 books and periodicals in 39 languages. The interior of the house has been kept as it was in 1910 so it is not too difficult to envisage Tolstoy having dinner or writing in his study.

If you are not so lucky as I to be put up for a night, there are a couple of hotels to consider. One of the most convenient, and expensive, is called the Ind-Garnik hotel: [www.ind-garnik.ru/](http://www.ind-garnik.ru/) This is within walking distance of the Kremlin and offers over 60 recently renovated rooms along with sauna, swim-



ming-pool, billiard and a very good Armenian restaurant. A less expensive, smaller, but nevertheless nice hotel is called Profit, also located in the downtown area of Tula.

There is a plethora of cafes and restaurants in town. My favorite one is called Beerlin situated on Krasnoarmeiski prospect [www.nighttula.ru/article/beerlin/](http://www.nighttula.ru/article/beerlin/). This is a very refined place with good service and delicious food.

If you fancy a party, then Premier Club is for you: [www.krk-premier.ru/](http://www.krk-premier.ru/) Not really liking this kind of venue, I was surprised to find that I really enjoyed a concert there given by a Russian singer, along with the club environment, music and the public. It is situated right next to the huge town park.

So, if you're looking for something to do next weekend, go to Tula and you will be pleasantly surprised! **P**

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# A Day Out from Moscow by Bicycle

## Part 3: Off to See the Boss

Text and photos by Ian Mitchell

For some people “the Boss” is Bruce Springsteen; for others it was Margaret Thatcher. For me, that title belongs to John Harrison, who graciously invited me out to his country seat recently, for a head-shaking session and demonstration of his shashlik-cooking prowess. The last time I visited, it was in the depths of winter and I was completely uninformed of the nature of the countryside due to the uniform white everywhere at ground-level and the equally uniform grey up above. This time I wanted to see everything in the riotous greens and sky-blue of high summer, and there is no better way of doing that in Russia than from the saddle of a bicycle.

I planned to cover the first stage of the journey by taking the train from the Kiev station to a tiny halt called Vorsino, near Borovsk (which the train does not reach). Since I lost my hat at the Aleksandrovskaya Sloboda last time, and it was a very hot and sunny weekend, I stopped at the market near Planernaya Metro station to buy a replacement. This took longer than expected with the result that I began to doubt that I had enough time to cycle to Kievskaya and be sure to be in time for my train. So I decided to hop on the Metro. Big mistake. “Nelzya!” said the unsmiling Michelin-lady at the “tourniket”. I told her that I had taken a bike on the Metro before, and believed it to be allowed. “Nelzya,” she said again, more loudly. “The regulations forbid this.”

A long argument ensued. Now I really thought that I would miss the train unless I took the Metro, so I waited until she was distracted and walked through the barrier to the sound of half-hearted curses from behind me. I got off at Barrikadnaya where I asked at the ticket office if bicycles were really forbidden on the Metro system. Neither of the ladies knew. After conferring, they said, “It depends on who is at the tourniket.” I persisted, since I now had plenty of time and, for future reference (not to mention the information of my readers), I really wanted to know.



Ultimately, it turned out that it really is “nelzya”. Though since there was no-one at all watching the tourniket at Barrikadnaya at the time, I leave the reader to infer the reality of this hideously inconvenient rule for any cyclist who wants to cross town. It is understandable on weekdays when the trains are crowded, but on weekends and holidays when the station as are deserted it is wholly unnecessary.

The journey out from Kievskaya was pleasantly uneventful, and two hours later, I alighted at one of the most primitive stations I have ever seen in Russia. There was no way of getting a vehicle within a hundred yards of the platform, or not that I could see. But that is the delight of Russia—expect the unexpected. The next unexpected encounter I had was with a bear, a wolf, a lynx an eagle and a host of other forms of stuffed animal, on display by the roadside outside Borovsk—for sale naturally: once again, this is Russia.

Borovsk is an attractive town with an interesting history, but it was well described by John Bonar in PASSPORT in July 2006, so I will merely remind readers why they should visit it: because





the railway does not go there. The result of that is that Soviet industrialisation largely passed it by. There are many other reasons to visit, including the amazing *trompe l'oeil* art on the walls of so many of the buildings in the centre. Napoleon spent a night here, after the battle of Malo Yaroslavets forced him to retreat by the route he came into Russia on, rather on the southern one he originally favoured. Of the nine major battles fought in that campaign, this was—ironically in the light of the overall, strategic outcome—the only one which was a clear Russian victory.

Borovsk is in the Kaluga Oblast, and John's dacha is in the Moscow Oblast, perhaps twenty kilometres away as the crow flies. But herein lies another trap for the unwary cyclist: between the various oblasti, the road connections are often few and far between. It seems Russia has no national road plan. Apart from the trunk routes, each oblast administration builds for its own convenience rather than for the convenience of the general traveller. Had I wished to go from Borovsk to John's place by road, I would have had to cycle about seventy kilometres to cover that twenty.

Here is where another invaluable book for the Moscow cyclist needs to be mentioned. Unfortunately, unlike Kathleen Berton Morrell's wonderful book (see Part 1) this one is only in Russian. It is called *Велотуризм*, and comes in two volumes, *Подмосковье* and *Большое кольцо Подмосковья*. The first one covers the outer areas of the Moscow Oblast, and a bit beyond, and the second the areas on and within the Outer Ring road that runs through Dmitrov, Klin, Naro-Fominsk etc. Between them they describe 64 different routes which a cyclist might like to explore, most of them less than a 100 kilometers, which the authors think is the sensible maximum for a day's leisure cycling (I agree). They are full of useful information, including details of the road or track conditions you can expect, and can be bought at most major bookshops in Moscow.

The first one showed me a way from the Kaluga Oblast through to the Moscow Oblast which reduced the detour from fifty ki-

lometres to about twenty—so that my whole journey from the station to John's house was about sixty kilometres in all.

This involved five or six kilometres on a gravel road, and then three on a farm track which was not on my road map. It ran through a field then a forest and finally across a meadow which seemed to stretch right to the next forest far beyond—at least until I noticed a bus crossing the meadow not far ahead and was able to infer that I was about to reach the road which led back to civilization.

From there it was a beautiful run on good roads in the cool of the evening. There was just enough breeze to keep the mosquitoes at bay and the silent countryside was lush and green, and almost completely deserted. This area is an undiscovered jewel in the south-western recesses of the Moscow Oblast.

The night at Harrison Towers proved as entertaining as expected, so I spent a further day relaxing and making ready for the second leg of the trip, which was to take me to Mozhaik, from where I intended catching the train back to Moscow. I traveled through the lovely little town of Vereya, which was also by-passed by the railway and therefore retains much of its residual Russian charm. It has a tiny kremlin, a museum and a "lower town" with wooden houses and a functioning Old Believer church, all situated on the banks of a little river that looked so clean that I would have had a swim if I had had the time. Amazingly, even though Vereya only has a population of 5,000, it fields a rugby team.

The train from Mozhaik ends at Byelorusskaya station, but I got off at Begovaya as that is closer to Khimki. I thought I'd try the Metro with the bike. I went through the tourniket at the opposite end from where the guard was sitting in her little glass cabin. No-one noticed or bothered, and so I was able to get home slightly less fatigued than otherwise, having covered, all told, about 140 kilometers, which was enough for an old man like me on a weekend that early in the season. **P**



Jay Morley

An "expatriate" (ex-pat) is defined as a person temporarily or permanently residing in a country and culture other than that of the person's upbringing or legal residence.

According to an HSBC report, over one-third (36%) of ex-pats in Russia earn over \$250,000 per annum, over three-quarters (85%) say they have more disposable income since moving and over three-quarters (76%) are able to save more since relocating.

The country is seen as a good choice for those looking for financial gain or to progress their career, with 76% of ex-pats moving here for this reason, and just under a quarter (24%) working in the finance and banking industry. The types of occupation as surveyed by HSBC are found in Finance (24%); Construction/ Manufacturing/Utilities (15%); Not stated (12%); Marketing (9%); IT (6%); Architecture/ Engineering (6%); Telecommunications (6%); Other (22%). I believe these types to be too narrow and the survey only asked 33 ex-pats.

We can generalize and easily stereotype the expatriate into roughly eight types. The reasons for becoming an expatriate abroad differ from person to person. Some move abroad to get rich, some move abroad for love and some move abroad to save the world. What type are you? Or what type would you like to be? Maybe one of these or none of these? Read below.

## Type 1: Economic & lucky bastard

This type of ex-pat is living abroad for financial gain or for reasons of career advancement or opportunity. These kinds of ex-pats are usually on a contract for a set period, working abroad for a high-profile international company. Usual types are to be found in accounting, construction, consulting, hospitality, media, design, medical, banking, industry, law, advertising, oil, geology and scientific areas.

They usually have generous benefits including free or cheap rent, free schooling for the kids, free flights and a company driver. If young and single, they do the minimum work and party hard. They can do this as they are "specialists" and know how to play the system. Office rules that would apply back home, don't usually apply abroad.

If single and male, they enjoy the bountiful fruits of many women and have a great time abroad. They have generous expenses and know how to do creative accounting. The economic type also includes civil servants (state employees) from many countries employed at embassies on set contracts working for the foreign office, visa office or in economic development. These types are abroad as the job requires relocation and regular country moves.

On the other hand, many other ex-pats work very long hours and although they receive good benefits, they earn their pay and have little free time as their jobs are highly demanding and very deadline-driven. Roots are hard to impossible to put

# The expatriate –



Type 1



Type 2



Type 3



Type 4



Type 5



Type 6



Type 7



Type 8



down and life as an international gypsy is the norm for these types of expats.

## Type 2: The gambler & business opportunist

This type mainly includes men who arrived in the country ten to twenty years ago in order to make money, legitimately or illegitimately and to make money via gambling prior to the change in gambling laws in Moscow. These types are often intelligent and financially smart. They move abroad and invest wisely at the right time and in the right market, making money by good luck, arrogance, good connections and by careful planning. They adapt and integrate well into the local society learning the language, setting up permanent home and often marrying a local woman, sometimes getting through several marriages.

## Type 3: Trailing spouse.

This type can include a wife or husband following their partner abroad. This type does not work either because they have taken on the full-time child caring role or don't want to work and don't need to work. The kids are their "career" and full-time job. They give up their careers back home to follow their partner abroad. Their husband or wife is on big money with full or partial benefits. They have a nanny full-time or part-time and stay at home.

They either love their role in this situation abroad or totally hate it, especially in relation to moving to Moscow. They join woman's clubs and embrace their domestic roles as a full-time job. Some are able to work part-time in between looking after their child or children. Countries of origin are various. This type is usually female, but there are some males in this position known as SAHD's (Stay At Home Dads).

There are some trailing spouses who want to work but cannot. This may be because of difficulty in getting a work visa, lack of suitable vacancies for foreigners or due to childcare issues. For these people, being stuck at home every day in a strange big city can be life-changing and life-destroying in terms of self-respect and self-esteem.

## Type 4: Love hunter

This type has moved abroad to be with a female or male partner. This type is usually a guy who has either met his girl abroad or who found her on an online dating site. The pull of the panty elastic has sucked many guys of all ages into its deep vortex, gripping onto him and never releasing him. He is like a ship lost at sea. Russian women can lock onto many a man with their beauty, reeling them in like helpless fish on a hook.

These guys give up their homes, families and countries to be with their lady. The relationship sometimes begins as lust and becomes love or is a confused combination of the two. Sometimes, these relationships work out, but many fail badly due to an inability to accept and adapt to the new country, loneliness, culture conflict or relationship failure. These types are often romantic, devil-may-care guys and brave at hearts.

## Type 5: The drop-out

The drop-out can be a guy who could not make it in his own country or who fled his own country for personal reasons or for a new fresh start. Often this group of ex-pats move abroad because of a criminal record making it hard to find work back home or they move when they were released from prison for certain taboo "offenses". They set up a new life abroad and often carry on abroad as they did back home where checks and

controls abroad are less strict than in their own country. This group could be sexual predators, political activists, medical fraudsters or financial criminals for example. They work and move abroad undetected with a fresh history often with a new name and an invented past.

## Type 6: The traveler

This type is often aged under 30, has itchy feet and is looking for new life experience, adventure and fun. He or she (often he) moves abroad to non-English-speaking countries to work as a teacher, legally or illegally, qualified or unqualified. They work hard and make a good living teaching. Some work as volunteers. Many meet girls/guys and settle down in their host country. This group also includes student exchanges in areas such as language and medical students. Often the country of origin is the US, UK and Canada, but it can be almost any country. Gender types: Male and female, but mostly male.

## Type 7: Sandals & bible

This type is motivated to move abroad to do good rather than for financial gain. They move abroad to work for an NGO or international charitable organization. They believe in holistic medicine, home schooling for the kids and are often vegetarian and religious. They work abroad for a set period of time with set targets and set missions.

## Type 8: Other

This type of ex-pat can be a person who moved abroad for a few months for an experience and who liked the country so much that they settled abroad, often marrying a local and staying full time. These people are happy in their new countries, do well and embrace their new country, giving it 100% commitment. They learn the language and speak it fluently often helping other ex-pats with a service or advice free or as a business.

Many of these types have country national links via grandparents or older generations to their host ex-pat country in that they have it in their "blood" as being half or a quarter Russian, Italian, Slovak, Polish for example.

Of course, some people become ex-pats for all of the reasons above and more, there is often no single reason. They move abroad for a few months, years or for good. However, some return home very disappointed from their experience abroad.

Many move abroad simply because they are disappointed by their country and they need a new start and a new life abroad. The *Daily Telegraph* has reported new figures coming out of the UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS). The headline figure is a new estimate that 2 million British citizens have emigrated in the last 10 years. Over the same period, the figures show 1.58 million foreign nationals left the UK. In 2006, it is estimated 200,000 Britons left. Although there is some argument over the statistics, this level of emigration is historically high and highlights the fact that moving country has become a reality for an increasingly significant percentage of Britons. **P**

*For more information and further thoughts on this and on other expat and life topics see English Dad In Moscow at: [www.englishdadinmoscow.com](http://www.englishdadinmoscow.com)*

# Can you bank on Russian Banks?



There have been many stories in the news recently saying this or that foreign consumer bank is shutting up shop in Russia. Is this part of a general plan, or is it just that retail banking is one of the few industries in which Western firms are not competitive with Russian ones? Since few Russian banks operate outside Russia, that seems unlikely. Perhaps there is some hidden agenda? Ian Mitchell fills in some of the background to this very important question.

Ian Mitchell

In any meaningfully modern sense of the word—as something which makes the world go round—money came to Russia with Peter the Great, when he forbade nobles and the few merchants the country possessed from keeping their money hidden in chests or, as many did, buried in the ground. They had to use it, to put it into circulation.

Of course, Russia had coin and cash before that, but the main asset the country possessed, land, was worthless without serfs, and serfs had no income except in kind. For the few merchants in the towns who traded furs between Siberia and Europe, there was a law of usury through much of the early modern period, which prevented the development of bank-

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ing. The country had a basically non-monetary economy, and the little money there was could not be bought and sold. There was nothing on which to build a system of credit or debit, which is why all foreign trade was financed by foreigners until well into the eighteenth century.

Europe had known credit banking for long-distance trade since the eleventh century. A necessary parallel growth was that of law and courts for arbitration of disputes between merchants. Insurance grew out of the non-justiciable risks, such as brigandage or storms at sea. By the time the Medicis founded their bank in Florence, Europe had a highly sophisticated system of financial services. But Russia was still under the Tatar yoke. For the next five centuries, banking was to all intents and purposes unknown in Russia.

It was only in the 1860s, after the emancipation of the serfs, who comprised 90% of the population, that the generality of the country could participate in the money economy. The first privately-owned commercial bank was founded in 1866, but even then, the main banking function was undertaken by the state, which saw its role as facilitating national economic development by command, usually through state-licensed concessions, rather than assisting the people at large to work independently and productively so that the economy might grow of its own accord.

Russian financial services grew rapidly during the hectic industrialisation of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but were still very unsophisticated by comparison with other European countries when, in 1917, the entire system was abolished by the Bolsheviks.

The day after Lenin seized power, he sent an armed detachment to the State Bank in Petrograd to get hold of the gold and the roubles there, which of course instantly became worthless without a bank to back them. The Bolsheviks' understanding of finance was, for a Party which claimed to base its ideas on materialism and economics, almost unbelievably primitive. The history of Soviet banking is the history of the dawning realisation, on reluctant minds, that banking is to an economy what the operating system is to a computer: it does not do anything much of itself, but without it none of the more directly productive functions are possible.

By the 1960s, when the crude shortages of the Stalin period had been overcome, the Soviet emphasis on physical production rather than consumer satisfaction meant that money piled up in Soviet banks because the account-holders had nothing to spend it on. It could not be used abroad—that was currency speculation, which was a serious crime—and it could not be spent at home on anything productive—because that was either pure speculation, if you were passive, or “bourgeois adventurism”, if you were active and entrepreneurial. Both were also serious crimes. The money could be wasted, of course, and often was. But the only sensible thing the citizen could do was to convert it into desirable goods, like nylons, LPs, Teddy-Boy suits or other illegally-imported “luxuries” at exorbitant prices. The middle-men and profiteers in all these transactions were criminals who played a role that was part trader and part proto-merchant banker.

The result of this artificial, distorted situation was that when the Soviet system began to come apart at the seams in the late 1980s, and certain aspects of trade were liberalised, the only people in town with any of the skills needed to provide some form of banking services were those operating at or beyond the edge of the law. It is hardly surprising that the first Russian banks were founded mostly by people with an unsavoury past. It is

also not surprising that these people took a short-term, highly personal view of the purpose of their banks: which was to make money for them personally and usually nothing more.

This is not the place to go into the history of post-Soviet banking, except to observe that the industry is highly fragmented—Russia has about 1000 licensed banks—and that most banks do not serve the public, only the owners and their related businesses. The few that do normal retail business charge rates of interest for loans that are astronomical by world standards, while paying low returns to depositors. Their spreads are huge.

Despite their healthy domestic cash flow, even the largest banks in Russia seem unable to compete on the world market, or perhaps they are simply unwilling to try when there are such enormous profits to be made at home.

The natural question which arises from this is: why do Western banks not come in and clean up by offering more competitive lending rates? There are several reasons for this, possibly the most obvious being the poor state of the Russian judicial system, which means that recovering money lent can be costly, or even impossible. However, there are less obvious reasons, one of which is that all foreign banks are required to register as Russian companies. Volkswagen can come and build its cars here without starting up a separate company, and Ikea can operate in Russia as a subsidiary of the global operation. But banks are subject to special rules. The nett effect of this is that banking is one of the most highly protected parts of the Russian economy. Why might that be?

Last summer, I visited Estonia and talked at length to Mart Laar, who had been Prime Minister there at the time the country achieved independence and also for a further period, in the early 2000s, when Estonia joined the EU and NATO. We were discussing the reason why Latvia is so different from Estonia, and he mentioned corruption. I asked him if he did not think that was common to all ex-Soviet republics and he said that Estonia had got rid of it. “How?” I asked. “By cleaning out our banks,” he said. “We understood clearly that the centre of all corruption is in the banking system. If that is clean, you have a reasonable chance of running a relatively uncorrupt economy; if your banks are corrupt, you have no chance.”

When I asked how they had gone about cleaning out the banks, he said they had started by identifying the corrupt ones, which were mostly laundering Russian criminal money that was looking for safe-havens. Then, when one of these banks needed a short-term loan, and asked the government to help, they would be turned down out of hand. Since the government was the lender of last resort, this usually meant that they were forced by the refusal into bankruptcy, or to be sold to a foreign bank, a measure which the government, as ultimate licensee, had a right to insist on.

But what if they never asked for money? In that case, Laar told me, the government acted more aggressively. It would put funds on short-term deposit with the bank on a large scale over a long period, until it had accumulated a huge balance. Then one morning, without any warning, it would withdraw the whole lot. When the bank could not find the money by close of business that day, it was declared in default and put out of business. Today most of the banks in Estonia are subsidiaries of either Swedish or Finnish banks and the country has one of the lowest levels of corruption in Europe.

Contrast that with Russia, where so far from inviting foreign banks in to wage war on corruption, the country appears to be forcing them to leave. Though none will give a candid reason for their departure, the facts are suggestive. The most recent

departures have been GE Money Bank and Svenska Handelsbanken. HSBC, the largest bank in Europe and second-largest in the world, is mysteriously unable to compete in retail banking in Russia. It invested \$200 million in the Russian market three years ago, but is now selling its assets here for \$11 million. Barclays announced shortly before PASSPORT went to press that it is selling its 32-branch retail operation in Russia. It paid \$500 million for it in 2008 and is expected to realise no more than a tenth of that. Santander has already gone, selling its business to the Orient Express bank from Blagoveshchensk, not a place hitherto noted for its financial expertise. All these Western banks are well-established internationally, yet they seem unable to compete in Russia. Why?

My unofficial information is that all except two or three foreign banks—Raiffeisen and Citigroup have been mentioned—have been told they may continue to operate in Russia as investment banks for corporate customers but not the private sector. Since the Russian corporate elite is able to use banks abroad anyway, that is perhaps a concession without cost. But more importantly, due to the international mobility of the elite, they are not a captive market, whereas the ordinary Russian who saves his money in a tin safe under the bed, like the merchants in pre-Petrine Russia, is very much a captive customer of any domestic cartel.

Such people often pay up to 30% interest on a personal loan to buy a car, and nearly that for a mortgage. They are terrified of losing their jobs because of the cost of financing a roof over their heads, and so become docile in the work place. It is hard to resist the conclusion that this situation suits the people who own the commanding heights of the economy, which include the banks. But more than that, it must be very

profitable for the lenders, unless the Russian banking system is so inefficient that it cannot make money on the huge margins it makes on domestic retail business.

I have also been told, off the record, that one of the main reasons why the World Trade Organisation negotiations have dragged on for so long is that Russia is unwilling to open its financial services industry to foreign competition. If Mart Laar is right about the essential locus of corruption, that might explain a lot.

But one thing which is not speculation is the current Bank of Moscow scandal. VTB, which is 75% owned by the Russian government, recently took over what was Russia's fifth biggest bank. Now it turns out that there are billions of dollars of assets which are "doubtful". The state has had to provide \$14 billion to VTB to cover this unexpected "black hole" in the balance sheet. Did VTB know the Bank of Moscow was insolvent when it bought it? Apparently not, despite all the due diligence which one presumes it would have carried out. No-one seems to know how the money disappeared. Was it due to theft, incompetence, or a computer glitch of the sort that can happen to anyone, especially in a bull market when the rouble is strong and everyone feeling happy? Or is it just another example of the sort of pre-Petrine banking practices that Mart Laar wanted to stamp out in Estonia?

If corruption really is rooted in a country's banking system, and the Russian state really is systematically excluding foreign retail banks, then the rational observer is forced to conclude that the powers-that-be want the current system to continue. If that is the case, then it is a fact of the highest possible importance for the future of the country. Corruption is here to stay. That is one thing you *can* bank on. **P**



## People and Solutions

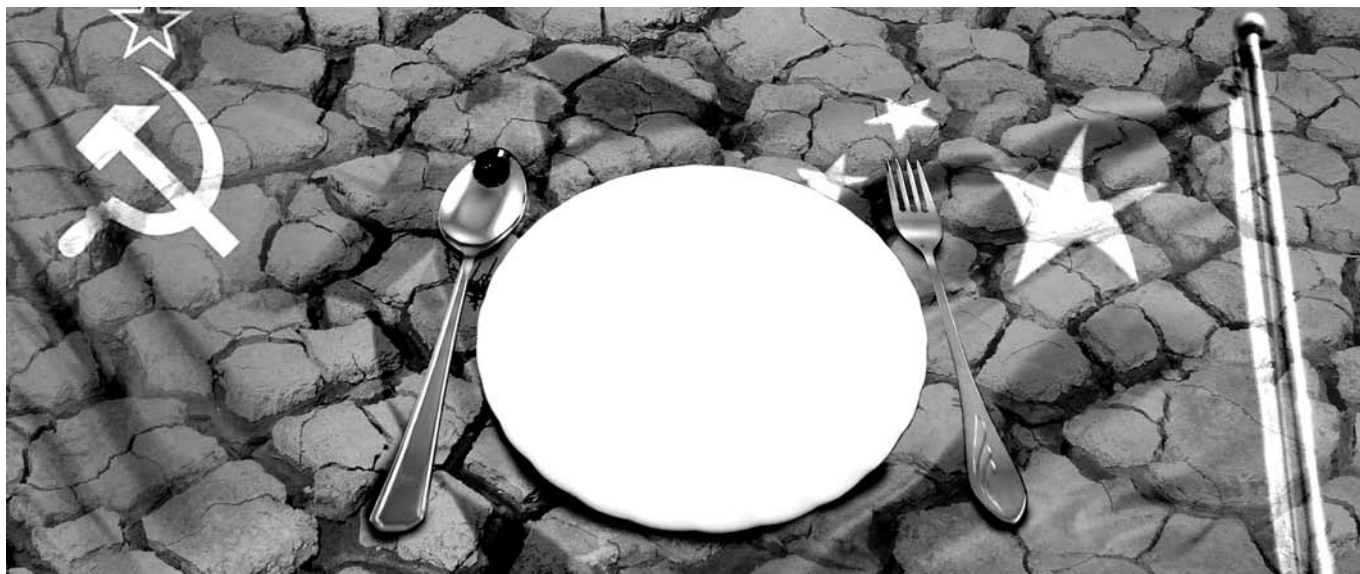
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## Should we try to defeat nature, and win?

Dr. Edward Duca

In 1932–1933, 5 to 10 million people died throughout the USSR. The dignity of people was destroyed when they ate dogs, cats, field mice, birds, tree bark and each other. This was not caused by the greatest drought man has ever seen but by Stalin, Lysenko and the policies of the USSR.

Unfortunately history has a habit of repeating itself, and humanity's drive to bend nature to its will has resulted in the suffering of countless millions to this day. But let us cast our minds back to the late 1950s–early 1960s; to China as a case study on why humanity needs a new political system that takes into account flower-power ideology like zero growth and sustainability.

In the 1950s China had just emerged from a brutal civil war that killed over 3 million people. This was preceded by an even more atrocious Japanese invasion during World War II leaving around 10 to 20 million dead. A century before, China was humiliated by the colonial west when it piecemealed imperial China. At the start of the 1950s, this history left China bankrupt and humiliated but reunified by Chairman Mao Zedong and the Communist Party. Reunification and the idealism of Chairman Mao made the future seem limitless, and millions of Chinese from overseas migrated back to rebuild China. So how did this lead to the greatest man-made famine ever seen?

Chairman Mao was brilliant as a military leader and helped to industrialise and modernise China. In 1951 Mao he advanced the creative arts with the campaign, "Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom", followed by an emphasis on academic debate through, "Let a Hundred Schools of Thought Contend". This brief renaissance was cut short by the anti-rightist movement (1957–1958). Over half a million intellectuals were affected. They were publicly criticised by students and peers, forced to self-criticise, and either kept under house arrest, or re-educated through labour. Many committed suicide. China had suffered one of the greatest brain drains in history in just two years.

Mao's next grand plan, The Great Leap Forward, 1958–1961, followed. Mao's critics link him with legalism. Legalism was expounded by Qin Sin Huangdi (221–207BC), the first to unify China and who also burned countless books, built the Great Wall and was buried with the Terracotta Army. Legalism places the state above individual needs. The ruler is also meant to be charismatic, his thoughts mysterious and most importantly revered.

The Great Leap Forward brought a plethora of slogans meant to achieve a great social mobilisation to modernize China. Mao Zedong Thought held that socialism could reshape the material world by sheer willpower. The masses of China (over 600 million at this point due to the over-populating policy of "with many people, strength is great") would unleash raw labour with the slogan "Man Must Conquer Nature".

China silenced its own intellectuals, but revered Soviet ideology. The Soviet biologist Trofim Lysenko—who used Stalin's favour to cause the death of numerous scientists—forced socialist ideas on biology that were partly to blame for the devastating famines of the USSR.

The first campaign was, "Wipe out the Four Pests", started in May 18, 1958, with the declaration by Chairman Mao: "The whole people, including five-year old children, must be mobilised to eliminate the four pests." The four pests were rats, sparrows, flies and mosquitoes. Sparrows were thought to eat grain, so a synchronized "shock attack" was launched with people banging gongs, using ladders to knock them out of nests, breaking eggs or simply whacking them with a stick. By 1959 sparrows were not found in local markets, whilst more insects, which the sparrows ate, resulted in more grain infestations. The Four Pests campaign is still used to this day; cockroaches have replaced sparrows.

August 1958, a few months after the Four Pests campaign, and Mao declared that within 15 years China's steel production

would surpass that of the U.K. To achieve this aim, 100 million people, or 1 in 6 Chinese, were diverted from farming to smelt iron and steel. Useful pots, pans, farming equipment and any iron object or materials, were melted down to try and achieve this quota providing raw material to make identical (mass manufactured) items. Adults and children alike smelted iron day and night in backyard furnaces, but these furnaces were not hot enough to produce high quality steel. So although production was doubled in one year, half of that steel was of unusable quality. When coal was unavailable, furnaces burned wood. In Yunnan province alone, this resulted in the loss of 30,000-40,000 square kilometres of forest cover. This was greater than the amount of forest cleared throughout the Amazon basin in a single year.

A modern reinterpretation of Daoism could lead to ideas of recycling, zero-growth, no-till and organic farming.

China silenced its own intellectuals, but revered Soviet ideology. The Soviet biologist Trofim Lysenko—who used Stalin's favour to cause the death of numerous scientists—forced socialist ideas on biologists, which contributed to the devastating famines the USSR suffered. His ideas became sacrosanct in China. He emphasised deep ploughing, up to 10 feet deep, and close planting. In China, close planting was taken to an extreme when up to 5,000 cotton, 20,000 sweet potato or 12,000 corn seeds were sowed per sixth of an acre. Such practices lead to widespread decay of plants and subsequent infertility of the soil. Infamous pictures of plump children were shown supported by rice plants where, officials claimed, one sixth of an acre could produce 27.8 tons of rice. These children were later revealed to have been sitting on a bench. Such fabrications were performed to out-compete other officials, to please Chairman Mao, and to avoid persecution. Distorting facts had become common practice.

Even under Mao's draconian regime, some Chinese intellectuals still opposed each one of these great leaps. For example, Professor Hou Guangjun had managed to increase agricultural yield through "no-till" agriculture. However, each time Mao's anti-science stance silenced them. These policies resulted in people being pulled off collective farms to forge inferior iron. The farmers who remained had to deep plough and close plant the land to the point of infertility. The nail in the coffin was that harvested grain became infested. Hindsight makes the greatest famine the world has ever seen—with deaths estimated at 36 million—seem so easily avoidable.

There are further examples of how Mao's war on nature led to a loss for all, but this situation has now changed. China is currently the largest investor in green technology. However it also happens to be the largest emitter of carbon dioxide, has hundreds of so called cancer villages, and the largest number of polluted cities worldwide. China's future is bright but faces many challenges. How can China use the lessons in its history to build a better future for itself and the rest of the World, including Russia?

China has three pillars of thought. Mao is linked with extreme legalist ideas. The current government, whilst still evoking the legalists also has a strong dose of Confucianism that promotes a patriarchal society. Yet it holds education, self-improvement and a strict moral code as its shining lights. Its view on nature is condescending, accentuating how the ruler needs to take care of the environment since it is very useful for mankind, in China's case, to maintain natural ingredients for traditional Chinese medicine.

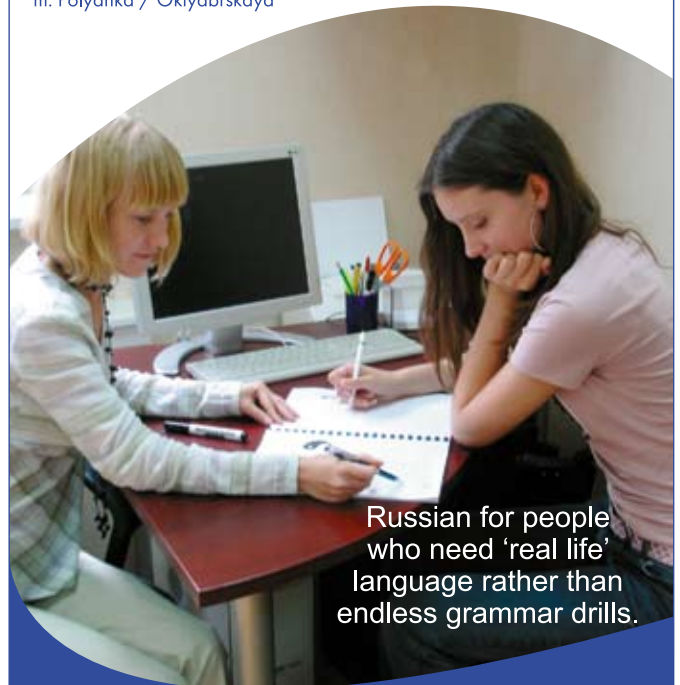
The current Chinese government's treatment of nature seems highly in line with this practical human-first ideology. However there is a third pillar of Chinese thought, Daoism. Daoism describes harmony among man, society and nature. Humans and nature are linked, therefore it is wrong to exploit nature to satisfy oneself and everything has to be done in deference to natural laws. Since the Way (every Daoist's ideal) imitates nature and people are part of nature, harming a blade of grass is a grave offence. Needless to say, this viewpoint is extreme, although it wasn't all so far fetched. For example, there were clear prohibitions against hunting animals that were rearing their young.

A modern and less extreme reinterpretation of Daoism could lead to ideas of recycling, zero-growth, "no-till" and organic farming. Humanity would seek not to over-exploit and plunder nature's riches, but to work with nature. Conversely, capitalism emphasises that economies must be in constant growth, relentlessly exploiting the environment. This is the essence of the consumption-oriented society we live in today. It is impossible for the world to sustain this. Economic growth cannot occur at the expense of the environment indefinitely.

Economic growth is vital for a country's well-being, which forces upon humanity a need to incorporate a Daoist ideology within our current state of capitalism. Greater scientific knowledge and technological advances need to be coupled to political will to create sustainable economies that are prosperous but do not need constant exploitative growth. This demand applies not only to China, but also to Russia to prevent the horrors of their shared history. **P**

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# The True Cost of Russia



Luc Jones

Moscow rarely makes the international headlines for any positive reasons; for every snippet of information about a Russian company successfully being listed on the LSE, you are likely to read a dozen about how undemocratic Russia is, that there's no freedom of the press and it's a *de facto* mafia state. Woe betide should you actually decide to visit Russia, then you'll almost certainly be murdered, mugged and raped upon arrival at Sheremetyevo (probably all three at the same time if you're really lucky). And that's after having had to pay a huge bribe to secure a visa and then endure a six hour wait at the airport.

The Russian Federation could certainly do with a serious make-over, a task that even the most experienced PR agency would gasp at. However, when a few years ago Moscow was ranked the world's most expensive city in a survey conducted by Mercer, it sparked debate amongst Russians, visiting businessmen and expatriates alike as to whether this really was the case.

Before diving in and analyzing how pricey and dangerous Moscow really is, let's take a quick look at these studies on the world's key cities and what they're all about. Mercer are a global HR consultancy who focus on personnel issues to advise their clients' HR functions when sending senior executives around the globe. Amongst their many products are surveys on the cost of living for ex-pats in some of the world's key cities, based largely on a standard of living that the overwhelming majority of locals could only dream about, even in western countries. Taking things a step further is a recently published "most liveable cities" report by Monocle, a highbrow magazine for men either in, or approaching, their mid-life crisis, for whom money is no object, have ample time in which to spend it but need to refer to a magazine to ensure that they stay abreast of the latest trends after feeling that GQ had become beneath them.



Obviously the amount of information that Mercer will actually reveal in these reports is rather limited, and intentionally so. It's done purely for PR purposes, rather than for the benefit of mankind (well, global HR departments at least) as the main aim is to bring attention to their firm and product in the hope that you will then order a bespoke survey at vast expense. Monocle's goal might be slightly different, to write articles that will interest their readership and attract advertisers but bottom-line revenue is the name of the game here.

Unlike the *Economist's* Big Mac index, which endeavours to measure the purchasing power of nations based on an identical product, the Mercer surveys weigh up a basket of goods and services that an expatriate might require when relocating to, or visiting, a new city, such as renting a decent apartment or staying in a hotel, travelling on local transport, buying food and eating in a nice restaurant. Obviously these categories are extremely hard to measure as accommodation and dining vary so wildly within each particular city, and are therefore extremely subjective. Sure, if you're an HR Manager based in the west with an international remit, tasked with working out how much your corporate execs will blow on their next business trips (in places you'd struggle to find on a map) then naturally this information is a godsend, and in the worst case it's better than relying on stereotypes. Angola's capital Luanda tops the list this year. The fact that they've just come out of a generation-long civil war and subsequently found oil results in an influx of speculators with big budgets and loose belts, driving up prices since the demand of anything above-average heavily outweighs the supply. Chad's N'Djamena is third for similar reasons, with Moscow coming in one place behind at number four.

Whilst we could spend the entire magazine discussing how expensive Moscow is when compared to other major world cities, my simple conclusion is that if you're a first timer to the Big

Kapusta then you're likely to blow huge wads of cash on even the basics so as to remain in the comfort zone.

In the first year when Moscow gained notoriety as Mercer's most expensive city, the trusty Metro wasn't even included as a form of transport on the basis that "foreigners wouldn't use the Metro". Oh really? Well, pretty much everyone I know here does. Get a map, work out where you're going and you'll get much more of a feel for the city, and you might even learn the Cyrillic alphabet on the go.

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As for the "quality of living" survey, Vienna comes out top with Geneva in second place and Moscow presumably somewhere down in the lower 700s. Actually that's not strictly true, but Moscow most definitely doesn't make it into the top 50. I made a quick count and it turns out that I've been to sixteen in the top twenty, one of which is Luxembourg. Granted there's nothing actually wrong with these cities but they can hardly be described as the most exciting, dynamic places to be living in, unless you're a corporate VP relocating with your wife and three kids looking for an English language school, medical clinic, safe, pollution-free environment and daily activities to keep your trailing spouse occupied during the day-time while you're away on business trips. But what if you don't fall

into this category? Perhaps you're a single guy in his thirties or forties looking for a job in a booming market, ready to forsake a few creature comforts to spend a few years in a dynamic city with great nightlife. Monocle this year voted for Helsinki as their best city (and even admitted to having visited it in the winter). On my last visit to the Finnish capital we had a fantastic time (hey, we were on a stag night!) but apart from a handful of venues, on the whole it's a pretty dull place to be.

Ronald Reagan famously said that there is no word for fun in the Russian language (and technically he's correct on that point; actually there's no word for ambidextrous either). But why isn't "fun" one of the criteria used when these so called experts compile these lists. What is the *après-work* scene like? How easy is it to become integrated into the ex-pat circles here? Do locals and foreigners mix, or keep themselves to themselves? How late do the bars stay open, and how fit are the birds (or "how cute are the chicks" if you're from across the pond)? Am I gonna get laid here?!

Where's the survey for us? I'm not claiming that Moscow would definitely top the list but you don't have to remember the days of the Hungry Duck to still enjoy yourself in Europe's largest city.

I'll be the first to admit that there's still a lot wrong with Moscow. The traffic is terrible; it's polluted; there are almost no signs in English and even fewer people speak it; the militsya are an occupational hazard; smiles are rare as honest bankers; and the bureaucracy is a joke—except one that isn't funny. However, it's a city that's moved on considerably since the wild days of the 1990s, with decent supermarkets, better restaurants/bars/clubs/shops and even the aerexpress if you need to make a sharp exit. It's more than just an image problem but surely we're not all here thanks to the low rate of income tax? Come on journos, give MOCKBA a break! **P**

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## Irina Yulmetieva, Head of Residential Real Estate at Four Squares, spoke with PASSPORT about recent trends and prospects in Moscow's residential rental market



### ***What is the biggest difference between Moscow's residential rental market before the crisis and now?***

The Moscow residential market changed significantly due to the 2008 crisis. The immediate effect was that the rental bubble that had been growing since 2003 popped and a small bit of sanity returned to the market. The main reason for this, and the main long term driver for change, was the large exodus of ex-pats renters in Q4, 2008/Q1, 2009 and the reduced financial ability of Russian renters to fill the vacuum left. We estimate that demand in total is still 20% lower than at the peak of the market.

### ***What is the current situation in different segments—economy, business, elite—as opposed to the pre-crisis situation? In what segments is the current situation closer to what it was before 2009?***

To give the reader an understanding of what each segment stands for, we will assume that "economy" implies rental prices up to \$3000 per month, "business" \$3000-\$7000 per month and "elite" anything above \$7000 per month (this can stretch up to \$40,000 per month).

The market is most active in the economy sector. As the economy stabilised and new recruitment started again, demand, especially from Russian renters, improved relatively quickly in 2010. Current rental prices are close to their pre-crisis level. Interestingly, many of the expatriates, who moved to Moscow since the crisis, are young and without families, and they are more active in economy and business segments. This is clearly part of a general cost-cutting trend for Russian companies.

Demand in the business sector has also improved, but at a less impressive rate. We estimate that demand is currently 10-15% below the pre-crisis level. The elite sector has been the slowest to recover; we estimate that demand is still 20-25% below the market peak. We recently placed a client into an apartment on Ostozhenka with a monthly rental of \$25,500, however these types of lettings are rarer, and the pre-crisis rental price for such a property would have been higher.

### ***What is the main lesson learnt from the crisis by landlords and end users? Is there something the crisis could have taught people but didn't?***

The crisis was a breath of fresh air for renters. The market had become pretty crazy, ridiculous prices, inflexible landlords and a take-it-or-leave-it attitude. Let's not forget that the Russian rental market is still relatively immature, a lot of landlords simply didn't know any better. The crisis has improved client service standards and partly redefined the relationship between the tenant and the landlord. The Moscow rental market has now moved to the next stage of development and maturity.

The biggest visible change is the improved attitude of landlords. They are more likely to listen to tenant requests, for example agreeing to include internet, satellite-tv and the electricity bills in the cost of the rent. Landlords are also more likely to agree to longer lease periods, with some contract rates fixed for 2-3 years. Previously this was very difficult to achieve. There will always be exceptions, some landlords still have long vacancy periods as they refuse to negotiate on price, but they are the minority. I think the biggest learning for everyone is that prices in Moscow don't always have to go up!

At the same time, this doesn't translate into a flood of available properties at the right price. There is still a deficit of well renovated properties, especially in the elite segment, and tenants may find choice is restricted. Apartments which are well renovated with the right price/quality ratio will be rented quickly. Some tenants still don't understand this and are disappointed to find out that their preferred choice was rented by someone else whilst they were looking at more properties.

### ***Is it possible to single out any current trends in the Moscow residential rental market?***

The market is clearly less stable than previously, for agencies, landlords and the renters. The Russian economy is improving against a backdrop of global economic uncertainty, and this is clearly affecting company's abilities to plan invest-

ment decisions and longer-term HR recruitment. This means that a pricing bubble is unlikely in the near future.

One gradual trend is the increasing use of relocation companies. A relocation company, as opposed to an agency, provides a wider range of destination services and works just on behalf of the client. Four Squares works as a relocation company in Moscow, we are in contact with all the main real estate agencies to ensure that our clients get the widest choice of residential properties. Often HR decisions about ex-pat residential packages are taken at head office, and in the more mature western markets relocation companies are the preferred choice. I am sure that this trend will continue in Moscow.

**What are the prospects of the rental sector? What is your prediction regarding the prices in its different segments?**

Ah, I wondered when you would ask that question. Some clients have told me that they have heard that rental rates will increase across the board by 20% in the next 12 months, but I think that to be excessive.

Prices within the sub-sectors will increase, but at different rates. Prices in the most active "economy" sector may indeed increase 10%-15%, but in the "business" and "elite" sectors I don't see prices rising as much.

Pricing is also affected by choice of currency in which the contract is signed. For example, over the last six months the dollar has fallen 8% against the rouble, allowing tenants whose contracts are fixed in dollars to pay less for the property (assuming they receive a rouble salary). All currencies fluctuate though, this forex gain may change in the future.

In the longer term, the housing stock is still restricted in central Moscow, and as the Russian economy grows on the back of a recovering world economy we will again see rising rental prices. Moscow is set to remain a very expensive city for renters for many years to come.

**In what way did the replacement of Moscow's mayor have an impact on the rental market? Are there any longer-term ramifications to be expected?**

There were no short-term effects due to a change in the Moscow mayor, regulations didn't change and neither did supply and demand. What will have an impact further down the line though is the knock-on effect of the partial freeze in real estate development that is taking place as the new team settles into city hall. Any reduction in commercial activity dampens rental demand.

The new mayor is implementing a number of plans to restrict more commercial development in central Moscow, this should mean more emphasis on residential stock and social infrastructure for Moscow residents. This can only be seen as positive for renters and landlords alike. The mayor has also announced plans to push office development outside the centre of Moscow and improve traffic flows in the city. If this happens we will see less need to rent within the crowded garden ring and more emphasis on developing a suburban rental market. These are long term projects though and we can only judge their success when we see the results. On behalf of all our rental clients I do certainly hope that the rental market does continue to grow in quality and service. Our clients deserve it. **P**



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Vladimir Kozlov



## Sale of abandoned buildings could rake in up to \$800 mln

The Moscow government has discovered 179 unoccupied buildings within the limits of the Garden Ring that are supposed to be under renovation, but no works are actually in progress, the business daily *Vedomosti* reported. Among them, 21 buildings have the status of architectural monuments. 120 buildings are owned by the city, nine more by the federal government, and the rest are in private hands. Meanwhile, City Hall was unable to find out who the owners of some of the buildings are. Even though investment contracts for the renovation of most buildings are in place, the city government technically has the right to annul them if no renovation works have been started, and a number of contracts are currently being revised. Among the buildings in question are those located in Pyatnitskaya Street, Dayev Lane, Taganskaya Street and even on Sofiyaskaya and Bolotnaya Embankments, which belong to the so called "golden island." *Vedomosti* quoted a source in the development business as saying that it is very difficult to obtain all applicable permissions for construction/renovation works in the heart of Moscow, which may be a reason why lucrative property isn't in use. Konstantin Kovalyov, managing partner at Blackwood, told *Vedomosti* that the sale of 120 buildings owned by the city could rake in \$720 million to \$800 million.

## Average Moscow apartment sells at 8.1 million roubles

An average budget for the purchase of an apartment in Moscow's secondary market is 8.1 million roubles, while about one half of all deals have a value under 8 million roubles, according to a report by the realtor Inkom-Nedvizhimost. "In the past, buyers were ready to pay more to become owners of extra square meters, but now the main criterion is modesty," reads the report. The realtor's experts said that 8 million roubles could buy a decent two- or three- room apartment with an area of around 60 sq. meters in a block building

located in one of Moscow's residential neighbourhoods. "In June, the average price of residential property in the secondary market was 196,500 roubles, per sq. meter, which is a 0.5% decline from the previous month," reads the report.

## Moving state agencies to Moscow region could improve traffic situation

The transfer of state agencies from the city to the Moscow region could help improve the traffic situation in the capital, Valery Aksakov, Moscow region дума speaker, was quoted as saying by RIA Novosti wire service. The idea of expanding Moscow's limits into the region and creating a "capital federal district", as earlier voiced by President Dmitry Medvedev, implies that a large number of state institutions should be moved beyond current city limits. "I think it would be right to move state agencies out of Moscow," Aksakov said. "That would help to resolve the issue of traffic jams." He added that good quality roads and junctions are other factors that could have a positive impact on the traffic situation.

## Foreign investors return to office property market

The main trend in the Moscow office property market in the first half of the year was the return of foreign investors, said experts at Penny Lane Realty. "The return of foreign investors testifies to the improvement of the business climate in the country," commented Maxim Zhulikov, the company's development director of the office property department. "But the office property market will return to pre-crisis figures only by 2012 or 2013. A number of political, economic and administrative factors have an impact on the increase in market activity. The upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections are to determine the vector of the overall economic development, and Moscow authorities' prohibitive policies are likely to deter the development of the office market for a long time." **P**

## Clothes shopping

### In the shop

Какая скидка на этот джемпер?  
*What's the discount on this jumper?*

"Вам подсказать что-нибудь?"  
– Спасибо, я пока просто смотрю.

"Can I help you with anything?"  
– Thanks, I'm just looking at the moment.

Скажите, пожалуйста, где примерочные?

*Can you tell me where the fitting room is please?*

Подскажите, какой это размер? Мне нужен М.

*Can you tell me what size this is? I need M.*

Скажите, у вас есть 44-ый размер? Вот эти туфли.

*Can you tell me if you have size 44? These shoes.*

### In the fitting room

"Сколько у вас вещей?" – Пять.

"How many items do you have?"  
– Five.

У вас есть это платье, но голубое?

*Do you have this dress in light blue?*

Можно другой размер? Этот очень маленький.

*Can I have a different size? This one is very small.*

"Что-нибудь подошло?"

– Спасибо, да. Этот сарафан.

"Was anything suitable?" – Thank you, yes: this scarf.

### In the queue

Кто последний?

*Who's last?*

За кем вы занимали?

*Who were you behind? (in case someone tries to get back in the queue)*

### At the checkout

Вы принимаете кредитные карты?

*Do you take credit cards?*

У вас есть сдача? У меня 5 тысяч рублей.

*Do you have change? I have 5 thousand roubles.*

На эти вещи есть скидка? Какая?  
*Is there a discount on these items? What's the discount?*

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## JAPANESE

### KINKI

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11, Osennaya Str., (495) 781-1697

**M. Krylatskoye**  
www.kinkigrill.ru

### MEGU

The best Sushi in town is served here according to PASSPORT's publisher John Ortega. Funky Korean décor and ambience.

Lotte Plaza Hotel Novinsky Bulvar 8

**M. Smolenskaya**  
+7 495 745 1000

### NOBU

The Moscow branch of the legendary Nobu is now open on Bolshaya Dmitrovka. Nobu moves directly to PASSPORT's Moscow Top 10 list.

20 Bolshaya Dmitrovka, 645-3191

**M. Okhotny Ryad**

www.noburestaurants.ru

### ICHIBAN BOSHI

High-quality, affordable Japanese with cool ambience. Several locations.

22 Krasnaya Presnya Ulitsa, (499) 255-0909

**M. Krasnopresnenskaya**

50 Ulitsa Bolshaya Yakimanka

**M. Polyanka**

www.ichiban.ru

### SEIJI

One of the few Moscow sushi restaurants that actually has a Japanese chef, even a celebrity chef – Seiji Kusano, who also set up the O2 Lounge at the Ritz-Carlton.

5/2 Komsomolsky Prospekt, 246-7624

**M. Park Kultury**

## CAUCASUS

### BAGRATIONI

Great Georgian food and entertainment in a stylish mansion near Novodevichy Monastery and the Korean Embassy.

1/7 Spartakovskaya Plushchad, 267-6881, 266-0531

**M. Baumanskaya**

### BARASHKA

Our Azerbaijanian friends swear it's the best Azeri restaurant in town.

20/1 Petrovka Ulitsa, 200-4714, **M. Kuznetsky Most**

21/1 Novy Arbat, **M. Arbatskaya**

http://eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/

### BELOYE SOLNTSE PUSTYNI

Named after White Desert Sun, one of the USSR's favorite films. An eclectic Central Asian menu that includes Azerbaijan and Uzbek cuisine.

29 Ul. Neglinnaya, 625-2596, 200-6836

**M. Kuznetsky Most, Teatralnaya**

http://eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/

## RUSSIAN

### CAFE PUSHKIN

A Moscow classic serving upmarket Russian cuisine in a lavish, 19th century setting. Bustling, ground-floor dining hall and a more sophisticated (and pricier) experience upstairs. Reservation essential.

26a Tverskoi Bulvar, 739-0033

**M. Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya, Chekhovskaya**

### GODUNOV

For real lovers of all things Russian, including traditional Russian dancing, rivers of vodka and plates stacked with food in the Tsar's chambers from the time of Boris Godunov.

5 Teatralnaya Plushchad, 698-5609

**M. Teatralnaya**

### OBLMOV

Authentic Russian cuisine in a restored 19th century mansion.

5 Monetchikovskiy Pereulok, 953-6828

**M. Dobryninskaya**

### YOLKI-PALKI

A Russian chain that serves a great selection of typical Russian specialties at modest prices. Many locations.

23 Bolshaya Dmitrovka, 200-0965

**M. Okhotny Ryad, Teatralnaya**

http://eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/

## SEAFOOD

### FILIMONOVA & YANKEL

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23 Tverskaya Ulitsa, 223-0707

**M. Tverskaya, Pushkinskaya**

www.fishhouse.ru

### LA MAREE

La Maree is Moscow's number one seafood restaurant, built by Tunisian Mehdi Douss, owner of Moscow's leading fresh seafood importer.

28/2 Ulitsa Petrovka, 694-0930

www.la-maree.ru

## STEAKS

### EL GAUCHO

True Argentine menu. The place for charcoal-grilled meats and fish.

4 Ul. Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya, 699-7974

**M. Mayakovskaya**

6/13 Ul. Zatseskiy Val, 953-2876

**M. Paveletskaya**

3 Bolshoi Kozlovsky Pereulok, 623-1098

**M. Krasniye Vorota**

www.elgaucho.ru

### CHICAGO PRIME

#### Steakhouse & Bar

Chicago Prime Steakhouse, is the best of Chicago in downtown Moscow. U.S.D.A Prime steaks, a wide choice of seafood, valued priced wines, unique specialty cocktails and stylish interior will take you into an atmosphere of casual elegance and exceptional cuisine. Happy Hours daily from 5 pm till 8 pm

Strastnoy Blvd. 8a, 988 17 17

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**M. Kuznetsky Most**

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6 Prospekt Vernadskogo, 775-4503

**M. Universitet**

www.torrogrill.ru

## BARS AND CLUBS

### CUBA LIBRE BAR

The real island of freedom in suffocating space of a dependent city. In the afternoon, at lunch-time, here it is possible to deal business, but at night you forget about all and enjoy freedom, the real emotions, passionate dances and democratic prices for cocktails.

**M. Chistye Prudy**; 17 Ulitsa Pokrovka, 624-07-18

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www.cubalibrebar.ru

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Martinez Bar offers its guests a chamber setting and a cozy atmosphere without tobacco smoke and the city hustle. During the day, Martinez Bar is a comfortable location for a meeting (from 12:00 till 17:00 30% discount for the hole menu); during the evenings, the Bar is an ideal place for cocktails.

**M. Chistye Prudy**; 1 Ulitsa Sretenka, 760 81 92

www.martinezbar.ru

### NIGHT FLIGHT

If you don't know about Night Flight, ask somebody! Open 18:00-05:00

**M. Tverskaya**; 17 Tverskaya Ulitsa, 629-4165

www.nightflight.ru

### PAPA'S

Master night spot host Doug Steele is back, at Papa's tucked in the basement below Johnny the Fat Boy Pizzeria. Papa's features live music and lots of sweaty young bodies and sweaty older men.

**M. Kitai-Gorod**; 2 Myasnitskaya Ulitsa, 755-9554

### ROCK'NROLL

Rock'n'Roll bar offering visitors all popular dishes and drinks, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In the afternoons we are a quiet place for business lunch, and at night we are a cheerful and rampant bar where it is possible to take pleasure with freshening cocktails while listening to dj sets.

**M. Chistye Prudy**; 1 Ulitsa Sretenka, 233 76 97

www.rocknrollbar.ru

### SECRET BAR

In July Secret bar has slightly opened the doors and has ceased to be one of the most secret places of Moscow.

Cosy atmosphere of house parties, tasty meal, good drinks and the pleasant prices remain at former level, and here possibility to get to a bar is received by all interesting inhabitants of capital.

6 bld. 3 Pereulok Stoleshnikov, 921-07-50

**M. Teatralnaya**

www.secretbar.ru

**NOTE:** For restaurants with multiple locations the most popular location is given – see the website for others. All phone numbers have city code 495 unless otherwise indicated. Reservations suggested for most restaurants.



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# Tinatin



Text and photos Charles Borden

Tinatin is the new Georgian spirit that replaced Bagration in the sprawling three-story building just south of the South Korean embassy. The dark heavy wood that characterized the previous incarnation has been lightened up with a whitewash, and light fabrics that cover the seating and trim the windows. The Georgian musicians who livened the central dance floor with traditional tunes and renditions of pop classics are gone, replaced by soft jazz. Although the menu is still



Georgian, Tinatin attracts a modern mixed, and wealthy crowd rather than the Caucasian family celebrations at Bagration.

Chef Maya Patsatsiya has been updated the kitchen as well. While the Georgian fare at Bagration was very good, recent repeat outings to Tinatin revealed superior craft, in style as well as substance. Caucasian menus are typically voluminous, and Tinatin's is more accessible with many typical Georgian dishes, and many creative updates. Tinatin is also Moscow's first fine dining

restaurant to feature a well-selected list of the few very good wines that are made in Russia's wine country along the northern Black Sea coast.

We had a poor start: the favorable impression that came when the hostess asked if we would like "non-smoking" faded quickly when we were shown to the tables on the second floor balcony overlooking the dance floor. Duh! Smoke rises, and not just tobacco, but also the heavy smell of grilled meat, and both permeated the area. Fortunately, Tinatin has at least one more floor, so we ascended to a table on the open third with ample, though fading daylight and fresh air.

We started with a generous plate of very fresh Seasonal Vegetables and Greens (480r)—sweet Bakinsky tomatoes, crisp Bakinsky cucumbers and radishes, sweet onion, and parsley—to which we added a helping of Four Caucasus Cheeses (750r). We also took two red

bean starters: Mingrelian Lobio (300r), stewed strained red beans, and Lobio Kharkalia (320r) both with roasted with onion, aromatic spices and greens, and Spinach Pkhali (280r), a handsome presentation of three delightful soft spinach and beet patties flavored with ground walnuts, spices and other greens.

For meat we took a large grill plate—Chicken Shashlik(520r), Lamb Brisket Shashlik (930r), and Lamb Meat Shashlik (840r), Chicken Lyulya Kebab (500r), and Lamb Lyulya Kebab (610r) accompanied by several portions of grilled tomatoes(270r) and eggplant(210r).

The plusses for wine at Tinatin are a relatively low markup, the Spiegelau glasses used for service, and the knowledgeable and enthusiastic sommelier who knows his Russian wines.

Some weeks before, our host, John Ortega, had called me from Tinatin

about a Myskhako Chardonnay Grand Reserve that he found on the wine list. The wine impressed him, but the price surprised him; me too.

Myskhako is a Soviet-era winery in the hills above Russia's Black Sea resort city Novorossiysk, a favorite of Soviet leader Brezhnev. In recent years Australian flying wine-maker John Worontschak has worked to improve Myskhako's wines, with mixed success. The whites are better than the reds, clearly demonstrated by the two we sampled this evening, the Chardonnay Grand Reserve (2800r) and a Cabernet Sauvignon (3300r). And notice the prices: the Chard, though very good, is no match for imports at that price, or even half that price. While some recognition is deserved, the price is not.

We've been to the best Georgian restaurants in Moscow, Suliko, Genatsvale, Bagration, all very good, but in our

humble opinion, Tinatin has found a place among Moscow's very best, irrespective of cuisine. **P**

## Our Next Dinner for Two:

Seasonal Vegetables and Greens	480r
Kutabi with Greens	200r
Lobio Kharkalia	320r
Spinach Pkhali	280r
Chakhikbili (roast chicken)	480r
	1760r

## Wine

Gai-Kodzor (Kuban, Russia)	
Viognier	1800r
<b>Total</b>	<b>3560r</b>

## Tinatin

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[www.restoran-Tinatin.ru](http://www.restoran-Tinatin.ru)

# Foreign Citizens and Living Accommodations in Russia

Alexander Ksenofontov,  
Senior Lawyer, LEVINE Bridge

According to Russian Civil and Housing Legislation, renting in Russia is made by agreement; the first party (landlord) agrees to provide to the second party (lessee) housing for rent.

Under article 2 of the civil code (CC RF) and article 4 of the housing code of Russia (HC RF) foreign citizens are obligated to follow established rules governing civil and housing legislation, except as otherwise provided by federal law. Therefore, foreign citizens wishing to rent housing in Russia can enter into renting agreements.

The object of a renting agreement may be separate living quarters, one which is suitable for permanent living (apartment, house, parts of an apartment or house).

Foreign citizens are not permitted to rent accommodation that is part of state or municipal housing intended for the social needs of Russian citizens. Foreigners may rent such accommodations by entering into a sublease agreement with the tenant of the property. In concluding such an agreement the renter should consider its particular features. A tenant of such a property may sublet only with the written consent of the landlord (state or municipal authority) and the members

of his family who are living with him. The transfer of a property by sublet will not be permitted if there is living in that property a tenant who suffers from a chronic illness identified by the government of Russia.

Foreign citizens can conclude renting agreements with an owner of private housing or by sublease agreement provided the current lessee has the consent of the owner to sublease this property.

Before signing a renting agreement you must ensure that the person from whom you are renting is the authorized person, owner, agent or lessee who is authorized to sublease the property. Remember to check all relevant documents (proof of ownership, power of attorney).

Lease/sublease agreements are to be in writing. Failure to comply with forms of the agreements prevents their being used as testimonial evidence as a proof of a valid agreement.

Entering into a renting agreement we recommend include the following:

The object of the lease, exact address/ other data as identification of the leased housing;

Lease period (not longer than 5 years);

Rental amount, procedures for payment/procedures for making changes in the amount of rent;

Procedures for making utility payments (included in rental amount, addi-



tional payments of lessee, to be paid by the landlord);

Allocation of responsibilities/shared costs for running/heavy repair;

Include a list of the property's contents/its condition (furniture, appliances, etc);

Also, when you pay for rent, we recommend obtaining a receipt which is proof of your payment.

In conclusion, the lessee must use the housing only for living, ensure the upkeep of the property and respect the rights of neighbours. Otherwise the renting agreement can be terminated by request of the landlord. **P**

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# RONI Nedalny Light



## Charles Borden

We've known for months that Glen Ballis, the chef that made Nedalny Vostok such a sensation, planned to open a new restaurant with Arkady Novikov. Where, when and what were answered this month when he opened RONI, best described as an Asian urban brasserie, more democratic and quiet than its big brother. RONI is just off Petrovka next to Barashka, which is owned by Glen's other partner in RONI, Rudy Movsumov. Don't expect the Nedalny favorites at RONI—Glen has a new line-up of small plates, new-style sushi and sashimi and grilled meats, fish and veggies off a big robata grill. He brought a Nedalny apprentice, Rashid Abd Rashid (pictured below), to run the RONI kitchen.

Glen was in the kitchen on the two consecutive nights we sat at RONI's centerpiece, a huge, heavy, and fat slice out of what must have been a magnificent tree. Dark and fissured, coated with dozens of coats of poly, it comfortably seats eight, surrounded by another ten or so tables that together with the monster accommodate about 50 guests. There is a private room just off the entrance. A long bar stretches across the back separating guests and bar stools from the open kitchen and robata grill—looks like a nice place for bar dining, and to watch the action. The robata grill, fed with charcoal from buckets underneath the construction, prepares meat, fish and veggies for much of the menu.





The menu is a simple, single place-mat size page with headings that include Salads, Small Dishes, Tempura, Dim Sum, Teppanyaki, Robata Grill and New Style Sashimi and Maki. Plates of puffy rice chips with a spicy, sweet dip came out just after the menu. Glen refused to recommend anything saying, "Everything is good, and I like to get feedback from guests. I like to know what appeals to them."

To start, we took the Robata Tomato and Spinach Salad (490r), Robata Grilled Shishito Peppers (490r), Tuna Tataki (890r), and Deep Fried Tofu Hoisin (390r). The spinach salad, served with a bit of feta, dried miso, onion and a dill dressing was a table pleaser. Guests hesitated over the small green, grilled Shishito peppers—they look like fire, but in fact are quite mild and flavourful. The tuna tataki, slightly grilled, and then thinly sliced, rolled, was topped with a light ginger chili dressing—also a hit. The tofu had been my choice—it's difficult to find tofu at all in Moscow—and most meat eaters find it bland and wonder why anyone would dream of eating it. Not me, Roni's soft but firm tofu had a stiff caramelized Hoisin pepper sauce that was delightful.

Other favourites these two nights were the Robata Smoked Eel (590r) served with BBQ and sesame seeds, Robata Char-Su Duck Breast (690r) with wasabi yuzo dressing, and the Portobello Mushroom (390r) with sweet soy sauce. We managed a delightful dessert helping of Green Tea Tiramisu (490r).

As of this visit, Roni did not yet have an alcohol license so wine and drinks had to be ordered from neighbouring Barashka. It is early yet to make a judgment, but Roni certainly has a great heritage, and the Moscow market now favours the modest prices and comfortable environment. We will be happy to go back. **P**

## Next Dinner for Two

Robata Tomato and Spinach Salad	490r
Robata Grilled Shishito Peppers	490r
Deep Fried Tofu Hoisin	390r
Portobello Mushroom	390r
Robata Char-Su Duck Breast	690r
<b>Total</b>	<b>2450r</b>

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# Shooters Bar and Grill



## Len Nebons

Shooters Bar & Grill is a great new pub located at 46 Novoslobodskaya, 10 minutes from Mendelevskaya or Novoslobodskaya Metro station.

The Bar and Grill are located downstairs, but also has a small summer terrace, which is conveniently away from the street. The crowd is largely mixed with a good proportion of ex-pats, the younger Russian crowd (students from the local universities) and professional Russian upwardly-mobiles.

The food is superb pub, with the best burgers in Moscow. We started out with nachos (250 r.) they were great with generous toppings of cheese and guacamole. The crispy black garlic bread (110 r.) melts in your mouth, and cheese sticks (210 r.) and chicken nuggets are done just right.

Salads are fresh, we tasted the Caesar with chicken ((290 r.), and the Shooters bacon salad (210 r.). Both were excellent.

All sandwiches come with fries, and our favorite was the BLT (170 r.).

A main dish sampled was the Beef Osso Bucco burgundy style (490 r.) which was tender and tasty. The fish dishes were fresh, and presented well, especially liked were the fish and chips (590 r.) and the sea bass (450 r.) which is prepared with extra virgin olive oil and thyme.

Burgers are tops here, with the shooters burger (240 r.) an excellent choice, all fresh ingredients. The huge bacon burger choice is the Super burger with 8 slices of bacon, 8 slice of Swiss cheese, 2 patties, with all the sauces and onions, lettuce tomatoes and pickles. For 850 roubles you'll be satiated!

Desserts range from 140–290 roubles; we tried the cheesecake, which was as good as any in New York.

Wednesday nights are Social Networking nights, some say it is taking over from the long lost ex-pat night, often the evening is sponsored with free Shooters Beer and Champagne and snacks, in its 6th week more than 100 people show up to mix and chat and then often dance

There are many events at Shooters and it will shortly host a new phenomenon in Moscow: Pub Theatre. Pub Theatre in England is very common and completely respectable; Sunday nights will show alternative entertainment and interesting ways to spend a Sunday evening, something different.

Shooters is breaking the mould for Moscow, offering quality food, drink and service at reasonable prices—well actually much cheaper than most places in Moscow. It is a neighborhood bar you will feel comfortable in. And they also show most sporting events. On other nights Shooters has a DJ or musicians. Check out their website ([www.shootersbar.ru](http://www.shootersbar.ru)) for their entertainment schedule. **P**

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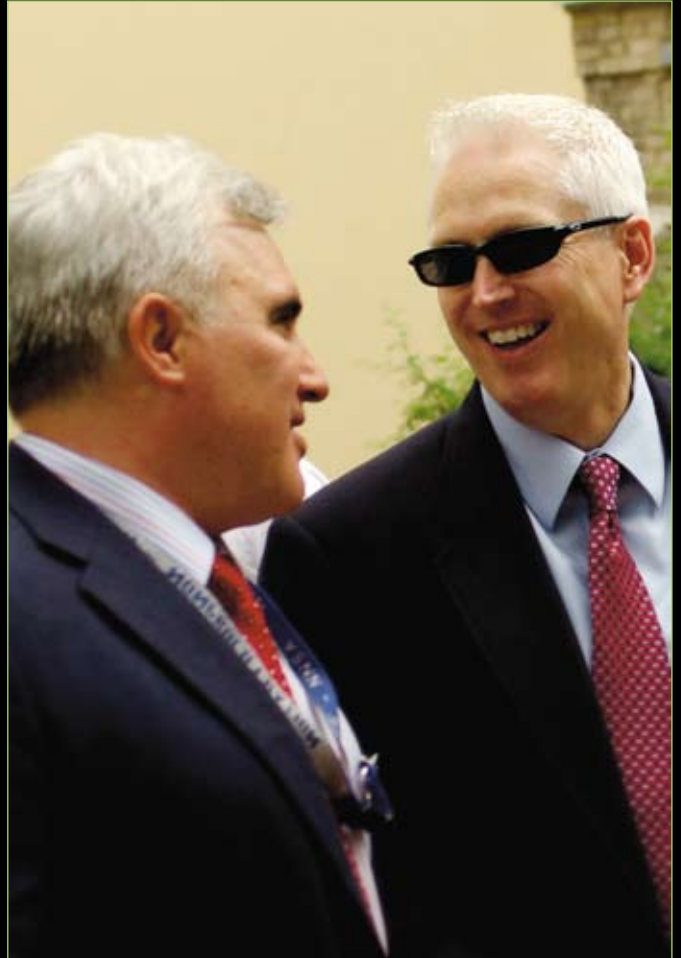
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## The 4th of July

On 4th July the United States Ambassador to the Russian Federation, Mr John Beyrle (pictured right), and Ms Jocelyn Green hosted a party at the Ambassador's Residence, Spaso House in Spasopesovskaya Square, to celebrate the 235th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence by the thirteen rebel states of north American from the Kingdom of Great Britain. That event, one of the most significant unlawful acts of modern history, was first marked two years later by General George Washington, who gave his troops a double ration of rum. Perhaps it was therefore fitting that your correspondent celebrated the day, which has been a public holiday in the United States since 1938, by gratefully accepting the generous helpings of "Gentleman Jack" whiskey which Ambassador Beyrle offered him indirectly through his large team of Russian barmen. Like the original, it was a day to remember. *Ian Mitchell* **P**





photos by Ian Mitchell



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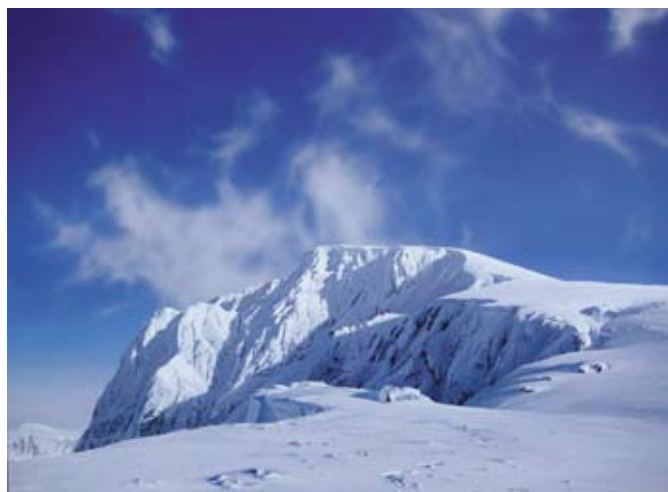
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Compiled by Ross Hunter

## The Summer holiday travel quiz

Where are you going for your holidays? Relax with PASSPORT and enjoy the world's great sights: London Bridge, The Great Wall of China, Sydney Harbour Bridge, Big Sur in California, The Eiffel Tower in Paris and The Alps! Enjoy the photos. Something wrong?

They photos are not what they might seem. A clue: all are in the same country, except the one that should be in that country, which is somewhere else. Where are these actual places? Answers at the end of the puzzle page.



## Holiday Sudoku

Fill every row, column and box with 1-9. Rating: Easy-medium.

					5	7		3
2			1	8				
3								6
			8			5	1	
4	3							
						4		
8	7			9				
		5		6			4	1
	1		3					7

Answers at [www.englishedmoscow.com/passport](http://www.englishedmoscow.com/passport)

## Seaside Word Search

Here are 36 things to see or do near the beach, including games, creatures, natural and man made objects. Look at the coloured boxes—you might even see the seaside! Hint: every square is used at least once, and one word happens twice (every 13 hours).

S	A	N	D	C	A	S	T	L	E
A	L	P	U	F	F	I	N	I	A
L	E	E	S	S	L	L	U	G	L
T	I	D	E	S	I	N	G	H	B
E	W	A	V	E	P	O	R	T	A
J	E	L	L	Y	F	I	S	H	T
E	L	O	B	A	L	L	T	O	R
T	L	A	B	C	O	A	O	U	O
T	I	D	E	H	P	B	A	S	S
Y	E	N	O	T	S	L	A	E	S



## Mini Sudoku – August 2011

Usual rules: 1-6 in each row, column and box.

1					
		2		1	
2			3		
	5			6	2
	1		5		
		5			4

## Answers to July puzzles

### Moscow word search (1)

Kropotkin Kremlin Kievskaya Taganska Bolshoi Niva Mila  
Ana Lenin Metro Voksal OMON; sok gate ruin tank red  
snow smog dog pivo pub blini VIP pereleuk oil

### Summer Pairs

Bereg & plage, sever & yug, gorod & paysage,  
zagar & solnitsye

## August answers

The tower is in Blackpool, it is Hadrian's Wall, the bridge  
is across the Tyne, in Newcastle, the cliffs are at Perren-  
porth, Cornwall and the mountain is Ben Nevis, Scotland.  
All are in Britain ... except London Bridge, which is genu-  
ine, but now lives in Arizona.

Full answers at [www.englishmoscow.com](http://www.englishmoscow.com)



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# Clarice and the Tea Leaf

## A Brainy Bird Tall Tale (no.1)

Text by Ross Hunter, illustrated  
by Catherine Hunter





"Now listen up, Clara and Celia! Drop everything, we are going into town. Get your plushest plumage on!"

Clarice was on the phone to "her Gals", although you would not be alone in wondering if she needed the phone at all: an Ostrich's screech carries, and Clarice had a bird bugle.

"Where was I? Ah, yes. There is a new tea shop at the better end of town, the sort of place where gals like us should—deserve—to be seen. The owner is a positively scrummy young chap, a real live Lordship they say. I have my beady eye on him, but that's bye the bye. We are going to check it out. Dress to impress, Gals. Hats and boas are *de rigeur, d'accord?!'*" Clarice loves to splatter her speech with classy clips of French, some of which she understands. As an afterthought, she phoned cousin Emma Emu, too.

An hour later, we find ourselves on the veranda of the Earl Grey Tea Emporium. The gals are preening and gossiping. Or, rather, Clarice is chatting like a machine gun, and Clara, Celia and Emma are listening.

"Ladies you look lovely! Super peacock hat Celia: as I always say, where there's a quill there's a way! Clara: those leggings really suit you! Emma, dahling, when we say 'boa', we mean a feathered neck warmer, and we ostriches need good throat-wear, not a live constrictor type snake. I don't mean to be unkind, but is he a friend, a decoration or your lunch? Does it have a name?"

"Her name is Cyd, thank you", replied Emma with a tear in her eye, despite being used to years of insults like this.

*Cheer up, Emma, your moment is coming soon!*

The cafe was heaving and even outrageous ostriches didn't attract too much attention.



"That's fine by me", boomed Clarice, just a little louder than necessary, "If there's one thing I cannot stand, it's people who insist on being the centre of attention!"

Clara, Celia and Emma choked on their tea. Clarice carried on, craning her neck the better to see everything and everyone. She may not have been head and shoulders above the crowd, but head, hat and boa stood well clear of the herd.



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She caught the eye of the owner who sidled across to meet our folks' flock.

"Well, hello laydiees! Sooo pleased to have you heeere! I am Cuthbert Jenkins, your *propriateur* todaey," said the owner in a voice that waxed more oil than polish, and anything but lordly, with the wrong syllables strained more than a second-hand tea-bag. Clarice smiled a thin grimace, as she tried and failed to hide her disappointment. Celia and Clara suddenly found the bottom of their tea cups incredibly interesting. Emma blushed. Not from embarrassment but because Cyd stiffened up to stop herself shaking with giggles. This didn't help Emma's neck. Clarice gave them a filthy look.

Just then, an argument seemed to break out over by the serving counter.

"Scuse meee..." wailed Cuthbert and he slid over to see what the row was about. A large man was making a larger fuss about something small, but it caused a bit of a throng to gather. It all looked trivial, unless one has an eye as beady as Clarice's and a neck as long as ... Clarice's.

"Gals," she hissed in a loud but subtle whisper, without moving her beak, "look! Behind the clutter, there's a little man with his fingers in the till! It's daylight robbery!"

"A robbery, how exciting!" clucked the gals.

"Yes, but we are part of it now. Be ready!"

And she was right. The little man darted through the shop taking all the day's takings with him. Everybody froze, except Emma who stuck out a telescopic leg and tripped him up. Clara was next, and leapt over the table, big pink toes spread miraculously among the tea cups without spilling even one of them, just squelching a quince jam covered scone. With a piercing squawk, she landed on the robber, and pinned him down.

The fat man who had started the argument stopped it, and casually eased his way out of the shop and down the street, equally casually snaffling the money bag, unseen by everyone—except Clarice, who sees everything.

"He's a tea-leaf too! If there's one thing I cannot stand, it's tea-leafs! Stop him!"

Too late to trip him, and too many people in the way to chase him, he was escaping. Emma said sorry to Cyd, unwrapped her and flung the startled snake like a boomerang after him. Cyd looked a bit upset, but then realised what was needed. She wrapped the front half of her body round his neck; and her rear end round a lamp post. With a nasty jerk, the nasty jerk was flat on his padded backside, anchored by an anaconda. The money bag flew off. Gotcha!

"Let – me – go," he hissed, "I am innocent. I will sue you! You'll go to prison, not me."

Cyd loosened her grip, and the failed criminal genius wriggled free, straight into Clarice and Celia, who marched him back to the shop.

"You'll pay for this. Wrongful arrest! I'll have every penny you've got. Better than robbing shops. Oops."

"Ladies, thank you! Your bravery saved the day," said Cuthbert in a normal voice. "Don't worry about these two; we have it all on the shop security camera, including them plotting their plan outside."

Clarice was thrilled, and ruffled up her best feathers: "You mean we are stars of CCC-TV!"

"What about me", wailed Emma.

"Sorry, but you are not as alliterate as Clarice, Clara, Celia", but you and Cyd can split the reward," she said, with new respect for her under-rated cousin.

The four birds purred proudly as they basked in their fame and scoffed a free tea. Do birds purr? I am not sure if I am allowed to write that, but you know what I mean.

"Just one thing," asked Celia, "why did you call him a tea leaf? It confused us."

"Tea leaf equals thief!" exclaimed Clarice: "Don't you know your Cockerel rhyming slang?! I'll show you some more in the next story." **P**

# The Green Greenie

Ian Mitchell

There are surprisingly few books published about dachas. Last year I reviewed the only historical study in English (*Summerfolk*, by Stephen Lovell, see PASSPORT May 2010). The book under review, by a Californian anthropologist, deals with dachas as they are today, or at least as they seem to be to an enthusiast for "slow time", green living and other causes. I suspect a Russian account would be substantially different.

In Britain, we are accustomed to thinking of green ideas as right in principle, but often over-emphasised by faddish suburbanites whose only way of going back to nature is by making informed supermarket purchases, or by sending guilt-money to commercial charities, like the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), which many people now think are more effective at keeping their staff employed than protecting wildlife. The prevailing attitude in America is not dissimilar and it is that which informs this book, which is of great interest if you want to find out why the West misunderstands Russia in so many ways.

Ms Caldwell calls her research in Russia "fieldwork", which firmly situates her as an outsider. But this does have its merits. For one thing, she is able to ask a question which troubles many Westerners: Russians maintain that they love nature dearly, and often talk of their native land as "sacred". If so, why do they dump household rubbish in the nearest forest or pond so regularly? Ms Caldwell's answer is very interesting.

She argues that Russians see nature as bigger and more powerful than humanity, which is logical in a country where civilisation is represented by smallish islands in a sea of uncultivated nature. In Britain, by contrast, we see ourselves as more powerful than nature since we live in a country where wild places are islands in a sea of cultivation. Russians do not have our sense of stewardship for nature since it is nature which dominates them, rather than the other way round.

In the larger, "global" sense, Russians are right. Nature will be here long after we are gone, even if that nature does

not provide an environment that is hospitable to human life.

Where we are right, is to point out that if we want to live successfully in nature, we have to take care of the tiny part of it which surrounds us. This is where the argument gets interesting. It forces us to recognise a distinction between nature and the environment. Nature is what God or the Big Bang gave us 15 billion years ago, whereas "the environment" is the form which nature takes on this planet at this moment in history. To survive, we need to protect that environment only. Nature can look after itself. It is not within our power protect the cosmos. The RSPB cannot even save the cornflake on its own reserves.

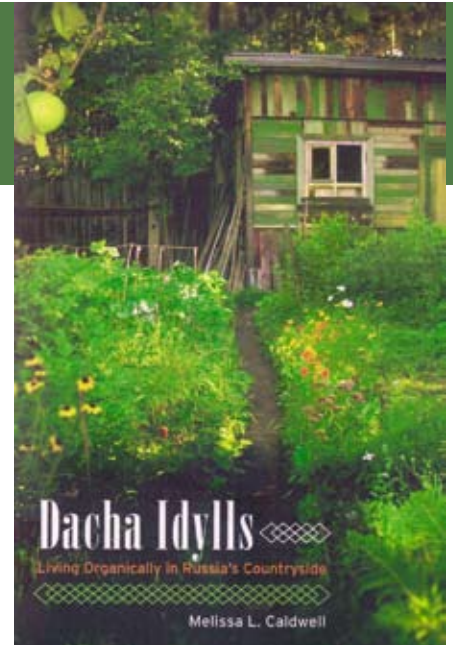
In that sense, Russians appear to have confused the two terms. When they throw rubbish in the local forest, they may be acknowledging the primacy of nature over humanity, but they are wrong if they think that nature will look after their environment for them. Nature may be more powerful, but it is completely uncaring as, for example, anyone who has experienced a storm at sea knows, or been confronted by a frightened cobra.

Another thought-provoking aspect of Ms Caldwell's book is her observation that this kind of almost philosophical discussion takes place naturally in a dacha "environment", with its complete peace and quiet. There people can address subjects as unmediated yet important as the distinction between nature and the environment.

Perhaps that is why, for all their short-term carelessness, Russians produce so many deep thinkers. If Ms Caldwell is right—she does not say this explicitly; I am extrapolating from her argument—then the institution of the dacha should be credited with many of the more fundamental insights that Russia has given the world.

One of the greatest insights of modern Russia is the old school-boy one, now totally out of favour in suburban Britain and America, namely that rules are there to be broken. Let me end by quoting what she says on this subject:

"Unlike in rule-bound countries such as the United States and Ger-



## Dacha Idylls: Living Organically in Russia's Countryside

Melissa Caldwell  
University of California  
Press £16.95

many, where regulations and formal plans are imposed everywhere, in Russia there was a sharp distinction between the hyper-ordered reality of planned settings, whether they were cities or villages, and the unregulated spaces of nature.... The insistence that natural spaces feel completely free disguises the fact that these settings are very much subject to formal and informal rules and restrictions. For instance, signs posted at the entrance to Filievsky Park in Moscow inform visitors that they are forbidden from lighting fires, letting their dogs run free, driving cars, camping, picking flowers, and chopping down trees. Along the river, another set of signs forbids swimming. Despite these warnings, however, on any given day the park is filled with people tending campfires, running their dogs, wading, fishing, swimming, and even riding JetSkis... What this creative circumvention and sometimes outright dismissal of rules exposes is the extent to which Russians envision and experience natural spaces as intensely private and personal settings that are outside, and thus immune to, formal order... [Russians] treat nature as their private living space."

Is that why the forests are full of rubbish? **P**

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Starlight Diner, Bolotny Ploschad 16/5  
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T.G.I. Friday's, Novoslovobodskaya 3  
T.G.I. Friday's, Zemlyanoi Val 33  
T.G.I. Friday's, Komsomoloski  
Propsect 28  
T.G.I. Friday's, Kievski Vokzal 2  
T.G.I. Friday's, Bolshaya Tulskaaya 13  
T.G.I. Friday's, Novy Arbat 14  
Tapa de Comida  
Tiflis  
Uzbekistan  
Uley / Correas  
Vanilla Sky  
Vesna  
Yapona Mama  
АИСТ (Stork)  
Цветение Сакуры

## Hotels

Akvarel Hotel Moscow  
Ararat Park Hyatt  
Balchug Keminski Moscow  
East-West  
Holiday Inn, Lesnaya 15  
Holiday Inn, Sushevski Val 26  
Iris Business Centre  
Katerina-City Hotel  
Lotte Hotel  
Marriott Hotels / Марриотт Аврора  
Marriott Hotels / Марриотт Гранд  
Marriott Hotels / Марриотт Тверская  
Maxima Irbis Maxima Zarya

Metropol  
Mezhdunarodnaya 2  
National Hotel  
Novotel Moscow Centre  
Pokrovky Hills  
Radisson Slavyanskaya, + sport club  
Sheraton Palace  
Swissotel Krasnye HOLMY  
Zolotoye Koltso

## Embassies

Australia  
Austria  
Brazil  
Delegation of the European Commission to Russia  
Embassy of Canada  
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Finland  
Germany  
Hungary  
Ireland  
Indonesia  
Italy  
Japan  
Kuwait  
Malaysia  
Mexico  
New Zealand  
Peru  
Philippines  
Poland  
Portugal  
Slovakia  
South Africa  
South Korea  
Spain  
The Netherlands  
Singapore  
Sweden  
Thailand  
Tunisia  
UAE  
USA  
UK

## Business Centres

Business Center Degtyarny  
Business Center Mokhovaya  
Business Center Znamenskoe  
Daev Plaza  
Ducat Place 2  
Japan House  
Meyerhold House  
Mosalko Plaza  
Moscow Business Center  
Mosenka JSC  
Novinsky Passazh  
Olympic Plaza  
Park Place  
Romanov Dvor  
Samsung Centre  
**Companies/Associations**  
7 Kpacok  
American Center  
American Chamber of Commerce  
American Express  
AEB  
Astravel  
British Council  
Citi Bank

Coca Cola  
Crown  
DHL  
Direct Approach  
Dr Loder  
Ernst & Young  
Est A Tet Agency  
Expat Salon 1 & 2  
Four Squares  
General Electric  
General Motors CIS  
Halliburton International, Inc.  
HSBC  
IBM  
Initiative Media  
International SOS  
Jack's ZAO  
JAL Tverskaya Yamskaya  
JCC Jewish Community  
Jones Lang LaSalle  
Le Meridian Moscow Country Club  
Levine Bridge  
LG Electronics  
Nestle Rossiya LLC  
P&G  
Penny Lane Realty  
Philips Russia  
PricewaterhouseCoopers / PWC  
Pulford  
Renaissance Capital  
Reuters Ltd  
Royal Bank of Scotland ZAO  
Ruslingua  
Russo-British Chamber of Commerce  
SCANDINAVIA Restaurant  
Sport Line Club  
Sportland  
United Airlines  
Wimm Bill Dann  
Schwartzkopf & Henkel  
Усадьба Агентство Недвижимости  
Work Service  
OOO Checkpoint Russia

## Medical Centres

American Clinic  
American Dental Center  
American Medical Center  
European Dental Center  
EMC, Spiridonevsky 5  
EMC, Orlovsky Per. 7  
Medincentre  
Tibet Clinic

## Education

American Inst. of Business and Economics  
Anglo-American School of Moscow / Англо-Американская школа  
British Higher School of Design  
British International School, B. Academicheskaya 24  
British International School, Nakhimovsky Prospect 35  
English International School  
Little Angels Kindergarten  
Montessori School  
The International School of Moscow

## Others

Anglican Church  
Golds Gym  
NB Gallery



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