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"It's very easy to catch mayors taking bribes." **Yevgeny Minchenko**, political analyst

70%

of Yaroslavl's votes in 2011 went to Urlashov.

More than 25

mayors have been arrested, detained or interrogated in Putin's third term.



At the time of his arrest, **Yevgeny Urlashov** was the only opposition mayor of a large Russian city.

A Warning Shot

By **Mikhail Fishman** m.fishman@imedia.ru



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Harsh sentencing of ex-mayor designed to send out message.

Yevgeny Urlashov, the one-time mayor of Yaroslavl yelled out as he was pulled from the court room. "This is a political set-up," he shouted. "All revolutionaries were sent to jail, it always has been like this."

Urlashov's words were an understandable reaction to the extraordinarily harsh sentence handed down to him by the local judge on Wednesday, Aug. 3. "Quite special cruelty" was how Urlashov's lawyer Ksenia Karpinskaya described the 12½ year jail term, issued for supposedly of extorting a 17 million ruble bribe (\$2.5 million) from a local businessman. "Criminals charged with real violence usually get less," said Karpinskaya.

Situated some 200 kilometers north of Moscow, Yaroslavl is known as being part of a famous "Golden Ring" of ancient and tourist-friendly cities around the capital. Other than that, Yaroslavl is not a particularly notable city. There are dozens of cities like it; many of whom have seen their mayors jailed too.

During the past four years, the mayors of more than 25 cities have been arrested. In today's Russia, elected city heads are the most vulnerable and defenseless part of Russia's bureaucracy. They have huge financial responsibilities and it is often hard to do business without formally breaking the criminal code.

Unlike governors, mayors do not enjoy the status of political figures. Going after them doesn't usually require the Kremlin's permission, and this makes them easy prey for their influential competitors as well as for law enforcement.

Nonetheless, the former mayor's downfall is special and stands quite separate from national trends.



Yevgeny Urlashov rose to prominence in 2012 during a short window of political activism.

Urlashov's story began in 2012, when he rose to prominence during a short window of Russian political activism following 2011's disputed parliamentary elections. A former businessman and mainstream politician turned oppositioner, Urlashov won a landslide mayor election in Yaroslavl. For the protest movement at that time, his victory was a big deal.

Urlashov's popularity grew. One year later, in 2013, as a head of Grazhdanskaya Platforma opposition party, he was a footstep away from defeating the ruling United Russia party at a local parliamentary election. His political rallies drew big crowds and Yaroslavl political life became a national phenomenon.

During all this time Urlashov behaved as an elected public figure, acting as if he was safe under the shelter of public trust. He rode the

oppositional wave, strong at that time, but he broke the invisible boundaries of self censorship, a necessary key to political success.

In June 2013, during the largest campaign rally Yaroslavl had seen in decades, Urlashov announced he would run for governor. A few days later he was arrested and then charged with attempted bribery. At the time, he was the only opposition mayor of a large Russian city.

During all three years of the trial, Urlashov claimed innocence and insisted the case was politically motivated. His defense always stressed the absence of smoking-gun evidence. "The only grounds for the sentence is the judge's interpretation of intercepted phone calls," says Karpinskaya.

The sentence itself sets a clear warning. In addition to 12½ years in jail, which one of the longest terms in recent Russia's history for such charges, Urlashov was sentenced to pay some 60 million rubles (\$900,000) of damages.

There are two possible interpretations behind the harsh sentence.

First, that it is a signal to abstain from independent political action; that the romantic times of 2011 and Bolotnaya are long over.

Second, that federal authorities are pushing a selective, anti-corruption campaign, and that they requires their victims to be cooperative. Over the last few months, several prominent figures — governors, government officials, top investigators — have been jailed and charged with corruption. Most claim innocence.

"It's a clear message to them: 'Repent. Beg for mercy,'" says political analyst Alexei Markin. **TMT**

LOCAL OBSERVATIONS

Of Celestials and Locusts: A Tale of Connections in Russia's Capital

By **Andrei Babitsky**
Independent journalist



Life often has a way of showing just how insipid things are in Moscow. The most recent vivid example happened at Patriarch's Ponds, the elite central district perhaps best known abroad for its starring role in Mikhail Bulgakov's "The Master and Margarita."

A long-running conflict there speaks volumes about how things work in the capital city.

The plot of this story is simple: the residents of Patriarch's Ponds wanted peace and quiet. Dozens of small cafés and eateries had opened in the area over the previous couple of years, and all were vying for popularity. The place was bustling with activity every night and weekend. At some point, the locals got fed up and decided to do something about it.

Ordinary folk would have quietly thrown in the table napkin in a war with local restaurateurs. But the good people of Patriarch's Ponds are made of tougher stuff. Several years ago, Russian media reported that Deputy Mayor Pyotr Biryukov brought in submachine gun-wielding men to force café owners to remove tables on the sidewalk under his apartment window to reduce the noise.

This spring, Biryukov gave local residents an opportunity to hold an informal meeting with Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin, three of his deputy mayors and the neighborhood prefect.

Former Alfa Bank vice president and local do-gooder Alexander Gafin agreed to organize it. The seasoned communicator chose not to run straight to the mayor with his problems. He first approached the City Duma, but beat a hasty retreat. "I took one look at those deputies and immediately understood what sort of people we had voted into office," he said.

That meeting with municipal leaders paid off. Soon, the Patriarch's Ponds neighborhood was pulled from the "My Street" program that had paralyzed other neighborhoods around Moscow.

But that did nothing to stop the constant noise from café patrons. Finally, one local resident resorted to extreme measures, hanging a banner across Malaya Bronnaya Ulitsa that read: "Mayor Sobyanin! Residents demand quiet!" Police quickly removed the offending missive, but not before city deputy Yelena Tkach managed to photograph and post it on social networks. Within 10 days, the Central District prefect and prosecutor "reached an agreement" with café owners to close their establishments by 11 p.m.

This story of one little borough's victory over City Hall beautifully illustrates the reality of life in Moscow — or in any Russian city for that matter. The residents of Patriarch's Ponds are what Russians like to call "shishki" — big wigs, people with

influence — and they had a perfectly legitimate complaint. Like people everywhere, they wanted only to get a good night's sleep and they were ready to battle anyone who violated that right.

The difference was that they had government connections on their side, and they could not have prevailed in their struggle without it. Even those celestial beings realized that city deputies could do nothing to help them because no mechanism existed for righting injustices, and no uniform set of rules existed for enforcing order.

Could they have resolved their complaints through private negotiations? Unlikely. During a conversation with reporters after their victory, three of the seven locals present — that is, 43 percent of this sampling of the Ponds' finest — managed to insult Muscovites who live in less affluent neighborhoods beyond the Third Transport Ring, calling them first "locusts," then "good-for-nothings," and, finally, "people of a different level."

When the mayor is the only political entity empowered to make changes, there are actually two kinds of good-for-nothings.

Those who live next to the deputy mayor, and those who don't. **TMT**



“Russians may have no choice but to retake Aleppo to avoid getting stuck there.” **Yury Barmin**, Russian Middle East expert.

8

times in its history Aleppo has fallen under siege.

“Activists on the ground are saying nobody wants to cross the corridors.” **Hadeel Al-Salchi**, Human Rights Watch.



300,000

civilians estimated to be trapped in rebel-held eastern Aleppo.

Aleppo's Last Stand

By **Matthew Bodner** m.bodner@imedia.ru Twitter: mattb0401

As Russian-backed regime troops encircle rebel forces in eastern Aleppo, a humanitarian catastrophe looms.



The final offensive began on June 25. After more than two years of fighting to retake the opposition stronghold of Aleppo, once Syria's largest city, troops loyal to Syrian President Bashar Assad stood ready to encircle their forces in the city's east. The objective was Castello Road, the last remaining supply line connecting Syrian opposition forces in Aleppo to their allies outside the city.

The siege operation can, in fact, be traced back to October 2015, shortly after Russian President Vladimir Putin deployed air support to Assad's embattled regime. Those military operations focused on retaking territory to the south and east of Aleppo, and cutting opposition forces off from reinforcements via the M5 highway, which veers toward rebel territory to the southwest.

In February, concurrent to attempts by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry to negotiate a cease-fire in Syria, pro-government forces began to fight for control of territory north of Aleppo. The process has drawn out over the course of the year, as both sides engaged in pitched battles for the north, especially the vital Castello Road, through which opposition forces received supplies and reinforcements.

Only by June 25 did regime troops find themselves in a position to finish their encirclement of the city. On July 7, backed by Russian air power and Syrian Kurds within Aleppo, the Syrian army was within one kilometer of Castello Road. By July 17, they had overtaken the highway, and began tightening their grip around the rebel position. On July 27, regime forces declared all supply lines had been cut.

After more than five years of war, east Aleppo is still home to some 300,000 people. When government forces took Castello Road, these civilians found themselves trapped in one of the most frightening situations imaginable. Cut off from supplies, the Aleppo civilian population depend on the mercy of Syrian President Bashar Assad and his Russian backers.

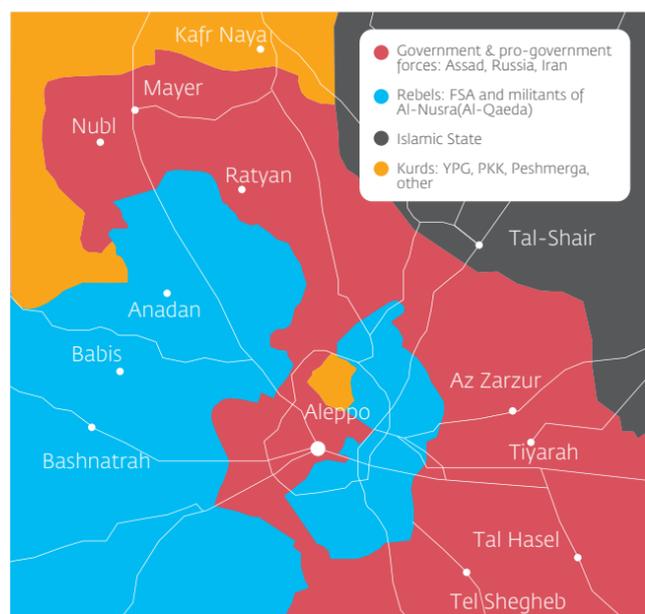
On July 28, the citizens of Aleppo appeared to have been offered respite. Speaking in a televised address, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu announced that Russia and Assad's regime would open three "humanitarian corridors" for civilians and "fighters who want to lay down their arms."

But, hardened by civil war, the remaining residents of Aleppo have little faith in their opponent's sincerity.

Breakout or Siege

Few within east Aleppo believe the government and its allies are coming to help. Civilians in Aleppo are collecting tires

A City Surrounded



Source: liveuamap.com



ABDALRHMAN ISMAIL / REUTERS

As air bombardment intensifies and the prospect of a siege becomes real, residents of eastern Aleppo have taken to setting fire to tires to disrupt Russian and Syrian targeting.

and burning them in the streets to create dense smoke they believe might protect them from air strikes. Meanwhile, the opposition is fighting to reestablish a supply corridor in the southwest of the city.

On July 31, militants from Jabhat Fatah al Sham — formerly the al-Qaida affiliated Nusra Front — alongside the Free Syrian Army and Islamist group Ahrar al Sham launched an offensive driving northeast toward the opposition holdout. On Aug. 1, the force claimed to have made modest progress toward their goal.

To link up with trapped opposition forces, however, this group needs to take one of Assad's largest artillery bases, and cross 2.5 kilometers of enemy-held territory. This is no easy task.

If the breakout attempts fail, some anticipate the Syrian and Russian militaries will attempt to bomb the opposition areas into submission. With supplies waning, the residents of Aleppo may truly have only one way out: the Russian and Syrian humanitarian exit corridors. Thus far, according to Hadeel Al-Salchi of Human Rights Watch, the corridors have remained empty.

“Those on the ground say the mood in Aleppo is that no one wants to cross,” says Al-Salchi. “They fear it is just a plot to change the demographics in Aleppo,” she says.

Others wonder if the Russian-Syrian humanitarian corridor is a scheme to legitimize the eventual leveling of Aleppo, by claiming all who stayed are combatants. This, after all, is a tactic Russia employed in Grozny during the Second Chechen War of 1999-2000.

Some activists in Aleppo have reported that regime snipers are currently targeting the safe corridors and shooting at those attempting to escape. The information was considered unverified by both Human Rights Watch and the Syrian-American Medical Society.

“There is a lot of confusion about what is going to happen with these corridors,” Al-Salchi says. “If people want to stay in Aleppo, they have a right to stay. You can't just flatten it with air strikes, assuming everyone who remained is a combatant.”

Russia has denied it's planning an offensive on the city. Indeed, Russian Middle East expert Yury Barmin doubts this is Russia's primary intent. “Russia is preparing the ground to retake Aleppo if necessary, but Aleppo is more valuable to Russia encircled but not captured, a perfect bargaining

chip in talks with the U.S. over Syria's future,” he says. “Then again, Assad clearly wants to retake the city and this may be a source of conflict between Moscow and Damascus.”

Supply Concerns

Access for international aid organizations and medical professionals within eastern Aleppo remains highly problematic. One of the only groups working still operating there is the Syrian-American Medical Society (SAMS). According to representative Dr. Majed Mohamed Katoub, the group are keeping a minimum of 35 doctors inside eastern Aleppo, to provide what he calls “basic service.”

Katoub warns supplies will be quickly exhausted in the event of a siege. The most important resource is fuel, which is used to run crucial siege infrastructure such as bakeries and hospitals. “The bakeries will run out of fuel in just a few weeks, and the hospitals can hold out for a bit longer, perhaps three to four months,” he says. “We initially estimated six months.”

This may turn out to be an ambitious estimate. When asked if SAMS believed it was being intentionally targeted by Syrian and Russian forces, Katoub answered affirmatively. “Attacks on our hospitals have been systematic,” he says. According to the doctor, shelling across the city intensified in July, and casualties treated in SAMS clinics increased by at least 30 percent over June.

“People can live with the bombing, but they cannot live without health care services,” he says. “We know this is why they are attacking hospitals, because people will be forced to flee.”

For those who remain inside eastern Aleppo, there are no good options — the prospect of living under siege or a hazardous journey into an unknown future in enemy territory. Many fear the latter more than the former, with tales of torture or execution doing the rounds within the city.

“We have been trying to collect information on patients who need urgent medical evacuation from Aleppo,” says Katoub. “But all of them — the patients and the doctors — said if the UN is not involved in the corridors, that they would prefer to die in Aleppo. If Putin and Assad really want to help, they need to bring treatment into the city, instead of asking them to flee.” **TMT**

* Jabhat Fatah al Sham, al-Qaida, Ahrar al Sham, Nusra Front and the Islamic State are all terrorist organizations banned in Russia.

4 Looking Forward



"The U.S. is an ideological nation, like the U.S.S.R. I tell my students this is why they try to spread democracy." Prof. **Dmitry Suslov**, Higher School of Economics

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1967

year Russia's first America think-tank was founded

2009

the first time Russia signed an arms control deal with an American Democrat



"My students have a terrible attitude about the U.S.; they think its wants to become a world hegemon." **Pavel Sharikov**, Institute for American and Canadian Studies

The America Watchers

By **Matthew Bodner** m.bodner@imedia.ru, Twitter @mattb0401 | Illustration by **Ilya Kutoboy**

What do Russia's experts say about the U.S. elections?



With the U.S. presidential elections entering their final stretch, observers in America and abroad are scrambling to forecast what a post-Obama U.S. domestic and foreign policy would look like.

Russia appears to have a keen interest in the outcome of this election. Heading into November, the Kremlin is faced with two very different visions of America's future role in the world. On the one hand, there is Hillary Clinton's assumed doubling down on Obama's foreign policy platform. On another: Donald Trump's blend of transactional neo-isolationist populism, which would seem to fit better with Putin's desire for reduced U.S. presence on the international arena.

The Moscow Times polled several of Russia's leading experts on American politics to get the perspective from Moscow on what promises to be the most consequential presidential election in decades.

1. Who will win the election?

Dmitry Suslov, professor of American Politics at Moscow's Higher School of Economics

Hillary Clinton will win, I predict. Election results in the United States are usually determined by swing states, and independent voters who are more or less moderate and centrist. For these kinds of people, Donald Trump is just too radical. He succeeded in winning the Republican nomination because of his extreme and populist viewpoints. But, given the choice between him and Hillary Clinton, the conventional moderate American voter would vote for continuity and stability, rather than the kind of revolution that Trump brings with him.

Mikhail Troitskiy, professor of international relations at MGIMO, expert on American foreign policy.

I would certainly bet on Clinton's victory. But I wouldn't put all my money on Hillary becoming the next president. We will see what unfolds between now and November; see which issues pop up. For the moment, however, Clinton does have a better chance of winning than Trump.

Pavel Sharikov, head of the center of applied research at the Academy of Science's Institute for American and Canadian Studies — Russia's oldest U.S. research outfit.

As has been the case since I started observing U.S. elections in 2000, it's really hard to say anything before November. The victory of an experienced politician like Clinton still seems more probable, but Trump's campaign style is very aggressive. He might have a few aces up his sleeve. Already, Clinton almost lost several times to Bernie Sanders — a politician who is basically considered to be a Communist by American standards — so her chances of winning are not entirely persuasive.

Andrei Sushentsov, program director at the Valdai Discussion Club and head of the Foreign Policy Advisory Group:

I think Trump has a better sense of the zeitgeist in the American majority right now. That said, I think the Clinton campaign has better organization and greater capacity to get out the vote in decisive states. So, I think in the end Clinton will win.

2. This has been a very unorthodox election. How do you explain it to Russians?

D.S.: The American political system is in a process of unstoppable change, and both Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders are proof of this. Together, they showed that the American public is generally not okay with globalization. Today, people are basically saying 'We don't want that kind of tomorrow, so give us back our comfortable yesterday.' Trump is exploiting those feelings.



The election of 2024 will most likely be decisive in terms of American domestic politics. Clinton is the white knight of the Washington elite, and the Trump and Sanders phenomena show the American people are becoming increasingly opposed to it. A Clinton victory will not stop the overall changes happening in the American electorate.

A.S.: The American elite has lost touch with the electorate. People have fewer economic opportunities, and this provokes all kind of conflicts in American society. Domestic and international security has once again become an important issue driving the election.

M.T.: The U.S. is engaged in an overdue experiment in populist politics. What Trump is doing is a very shrewdly timed attempt to harness populism — in this case, anger at the impact of globalization on U.S. society and economy — and to marry it with the democratic ideal of one person, one vote.

He has succeeded in doing this because he comes from outside the political class, and can therefore afford to shrug off political correctness. He can afford to appeal to racial divides, ethnic tensions, and pent-up angers existing in American society.

Given the demographic changes taking place within the American electorate, this is probably the last time someone can play with such populist political tactics. Trump is betting on the white majority — of whom I guess less than 50 percent have college degrees — and it might be someone's last chance to run on a divisive, sexist, ethno-centric platform in America. The demographics are shifting away from the white majority.

P.S.: For many years, U.S. politics was logical and explainable. Even with the really bad decisions, there was a certain logic at play. Trump, on the other hand, addresses those Americans who want to hear 'Make America Great Again.'

That said, I still cannot understand Trump's own motivations. He's a businessman. Unlike in Russia, you don't go into politics to make money. In Russia, certain politicians manage to use their powers to benefit their business, and thus make big money. Maybe I'm an idealist, but it's a different system in America.

3. What would a Hillary Clinton victory mean for Russia?

D.S.: A Clinton victory would be very bad for U.S.-Russia relations. Under her administration, American foreign policy will become even more ideological and even more anti-Russian. This is not the end of the world, because this kind of foreign policy will become less and less supported by the American public. A fundamental change, a revolutionary change in American foreign policy is unavoidable. Either in 2020 or 2024, the U.S. will put an end to the foreign policy consensus first established by Harry Truman in the 1940s [about the United States maintaining an active leadership role in world affairs]. This will be good for Russia.

M.T.: I think we have a better shot working with her. Trump is unpredictable, and it is better to stick with the 'known evil,' so to speak. Russia would have a chance of engaging in some substantive negotiations with a Clinton administration. Basically, with any new administration — or at least a predictable one — there is a chance to try some blank-slate negotiations.

P.S.: There's a weird relationship between Russian politicians and American parties. The general thinking is that Russian politicians work well with American Democrats. But if we look at the history of the Cold War, it started under a Democratic president, Harry Truman. The first arms control treaty signed with a Democrat was in 2009, with Obama. All previous arms control treaties were

signed with Republican presidents. The Republican party — I'm talking about the GOP of the 1970s, with Kissinger and realpolitik — they were always very pragmatic. They had few ideological components.

Under President Hillary Clinton, bilateral relations are not likely to improve. But there are very few opportunities for relations to get worse. There are rumors about potential members of her cabinet and administration that would be promising for Russia — names like Bill Burns, the head of the Carnegie Endowment and a former U.S. Ambassador to Russia. He's very smart, and well respected in Moscow. But then there are others, for example [Obama's former Ambassador to Russia] Michael McFaul, who is still blamed in Russia for the general deterioration of bilateral relations.

And one thing is certain: Hillary Clinton and Putin will never understand each other.

4. What would a Trump presidency mean for Russia?

D.S.: The majority of problems in U.S.-Russia relations are driven not by bilateral relations, but the fundamental difference in the way international order is understood.

If Trump prevails, the overwhelming majority of these problems will disappear by themselves. Trump will most likely be indifferent toward Russian policies in the neighborhood, and will likely not engage in democracy promotion and regime change.

On the other hand, Trump is the embodiment of unpredictability. George W. Bush also turned out to be completely different than we expected. For example, he campaigned against Clinton's liberal foreign policy, but after 9/11 he turned out to be much more ideological and interventionist than Clinton. A similar thing could happen with Trump.

M.T.: From what we are hearing, Trump is Russia's favored candidate. He talks about reneging on NATO commitments, recognizing Crimea as part of Russia, he seems pro-Russian and wants to do business with Russia, and so on. But I would advise Putin to be cautious with Trump. He is extremely unpredictable, and we don't know who, for example, his national security advisor might be. What if he goes for someone really hawkish to prove to the bureaucracy he's a mainstream guy? In that case, we might get a policy even more adversarial toward Russia than Clinton's.

P.S.: Trump is controversial when it comes to Russia. Here he is perceived as a good dealer who will try to work with Putin, so this makes him a better option than anyone else. But he is hard to understand. The litmus test for Russian politicians is what each candidate says about Russia's actions in Ukraine — whether they were aggressive or defensive, basically.

Trump has said both things. But recently, he's been very positive about Russia and Putin. Naturally enough, Russian politicians and pundits are gravitating toward him. **TMT**



"The Kremlin has been sacred, closed, secret and locked for most of the last 150 years." **Catherine Merridale**, a British historian.

20

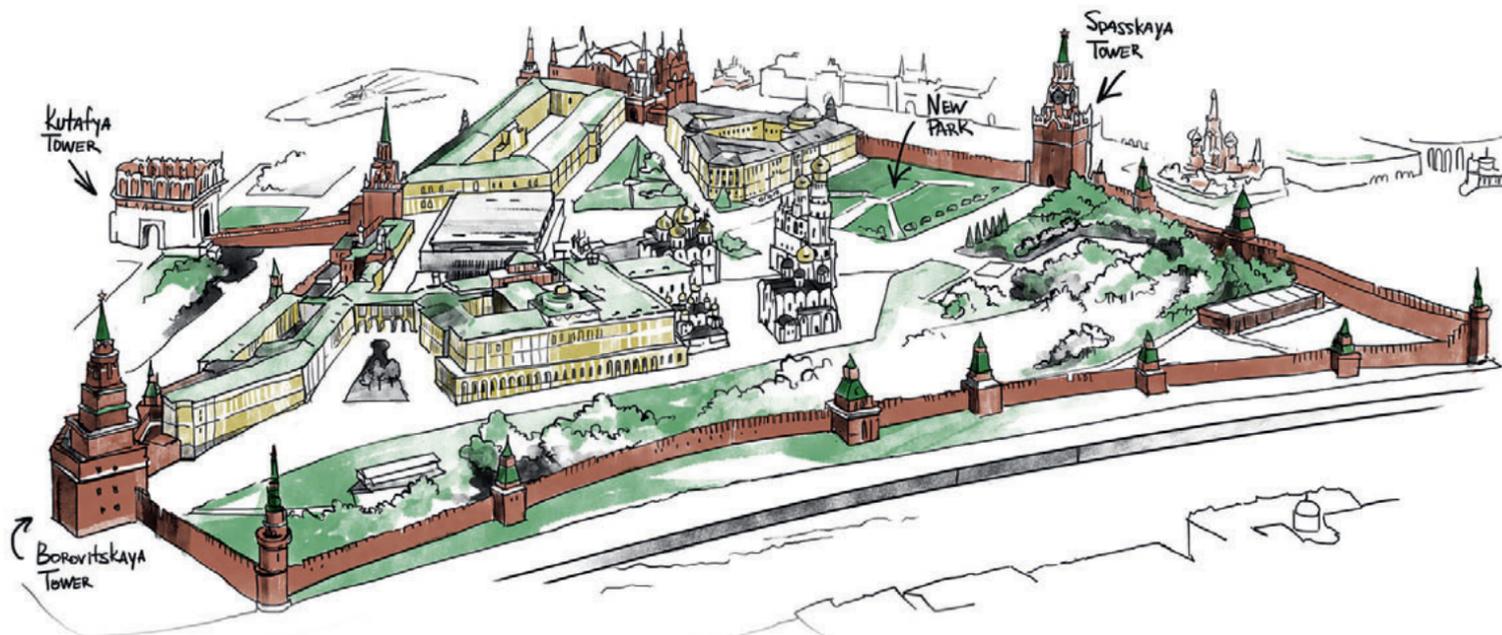
towers attached to the Kremlin's defensive wall.



Members of the public are likely to be able to enter the Kremlin via the Spasskaya Tower on Red Square from next year.

1147

the year Moscow's Kremlin is first mentioned in written sources.



Open the Gates!

By **Howard Amos** newsreporter@imedia.ru | Illustration by **Sofia Miroyedova**

Putin orders expansion of public access to the Kremlin

For much of the Soviet period, Moscow's Kremlin was heavily guarded and shrouded in mystery. Few people apart from high-ranking officials or foreign dignitaries ever got the chance to pass through the gates built into the towers along its redbrick walls. The rare visitors that made it inside were struck by its "terrifying emptiness."

Some restrictions were lifted with the fall of the Soviet Union. But a set of eight new decrees signed by President Vladimir Putin earlier this week means previously off-limit areas of the seat of Russian political power are likely to be opened to the public in 2017.

"The Kremlin has been sacred, closed, secret and locked for most of the last 150 years," says Catherine Merridale, a British author who has written a history of the buildings and their inhabitants. "Opening up the Kremlin has a huge psychological impact."

The decision by Putin is expected to be popular among ordinary Russians and is likely to fuel an increase in the number of tourists visiting the already busy site, which is the official residence of the Russian president.

According to decrees published Aug. 1 there will be an extra tourist route through the Kremlin including access to a new archaeological museum where visitors can see the remains of the Chudov Monastery and Ascension Convent, which were destroyed by the Communists in 1929. Public access points are also slated to be installed in the Spasskaya Tower on Red Square, which houses the famous Kremlin clock, and the Borovitskaya Tower on the complex's opposite side.

An ambitious 2014 plan to rebuild the Chudov Monastery and Ascension Convent — two of Orthodoxy's most important sites — has apparently been abandoned. UNESCO ranks the Kremlin as a world heritage site, and may have objected to new construction. The remains of the two holy buildings were uncovered earlier this year after the dismantlement of the Presidium building, which was built in the 1930s and formerly housed the Supreme Soviet.

"There have been some very valuable archaeological finds ... people assumed that these things had been destroyed forever," says Konstantin Mikhailov, the founder and head of Archnadzor, an activist organization that helps preserve and safeguard historical monuments.

The exact timeframe for the implementation of the changes is unclear, but Putin ordered officials to prepare logistical plans by the end of this year.

Apart from two centuries when St. Petersburg was the capital, the Kremlin has been the heart of religious and state power in Russia — and provided the living quarters for Russian leaders. Many of them have sought to leave their mark on the geography of the Kremlin and highlight the more politically expedient

aspects of its history. The latest plans are likely to be personally associated with Putin and his 16 years at the top of Russian politics.

"There is an interest in history among the leadership of the country and, in particular, the history of the Kremlin," according to Mikhailov.

Soviet leader Josef Stalin ejected most senior officials from the Kremlin after the 1934 assassination of high-ranking Communist party official Sergei Kirov, which ushered in a period of official paranoia and mass killings. Stalin's successor, Nikita Khrushchev, opened the complex to the public in 1955 as he pushed back against heavy-handed repression. But restrictions on access were re-introduced under Leonid Brezhnev less than 20 years later.

"People remember the Kremlin as terrifying and empty," says Merridale of the later Soviet period.

Before the 20th century public access was much freer, and the Kremlin was traditionally considered something of a thoroughfare; this was lost after the 1917 revolution. "People love the Kremlin in the sense that they love the sight of the golden towers. But at the same time you can't love it because you can't have it. Their sense of the Kremlin is more abstract," Merridale says.

The latest plans also continue a post-Soviet push to restore buildings and objects in the Kremlin, often linked to

Orthodoxy, which were destroyed under the Soviets.

As well as creating a museum out of the remains of the Chudov Monastery and Ascension Convent, Putin has ordered experts to look into re-erecting a large cross installed on the site where Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, the Governor-General of Moscow and the uncle of Tsar Nicholas II, was assassinated by the bomb of a terrorist revolutionary, Ivan Kalyaev, in 1905.

Putin's predecessor, Boris Yeltsin, rebuilt the Red Staircase, the royal entrance to the Kremlin's Faceted Palace, where the coronation ceremony for new tsars traditionally began, in the 1990s. It had been destroyed under Stalin in the 1930s to make way for a canteen. In 2010, a lost icon of Jesus, embedded in the Spasskaya Tower and bricked over in Soviet times, was unveiled during a ceremony attended by the president and the head of the Russian Orthodox Church.

More modern additions to the Kremlin's ensemble of churches and official buildings include a helipad. Built in 2013, it allows the president to fly in and out of central Moscow without the need for a large motorcade.

Putin's Monday decrees also contained an order to look into the possibility of conducting extensive archaeological research in the eastern part of the Kremlin in 2017 and 2018. Mikhailov said that if the plans are realized they will be the most significant excavations in the Kremlin since the 1960s. **TMT**

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Every 40 minutes one woman dies in Russia as a result of domestic abuse.

36,000

women in Russia are beaten by their husbands every day.



"In a traditional family there is no equality of parents' and children's rights — instead, there are different roles. It is Russian tradition, it is our value, and we will fight for it."
Yelena Mizulina, ultraconservative senator



ARMAN ZHENIKEV / TASS

Every year, tens of thousands of Russian women and children suffer every possible kind of familial abuse — be it battery, rape or even attempted murder.

When 'Family Values' Leave Bruises

By [Daria Litvinova](#) d.litvinova@lmedia.ru, Twitter @dashalitvinovv

The issue of domestic violence is once again the agenda in Russia, as ultraconservative lawmakers and religious leaders call for the decriminalization of battery within families.

Tatyana's (not her real name) stepfather started small. At first, he'd get annoyed by things she did. He criticized and he lectured her. Later, the lectures would stop, and this is when the outrage began. And when the outrage stopped, the spanking and face-slaps started.

"He just went mad," Tatyana says. "For five years, he beat me and my mother senseless."

Tatyana's story is far from unique. Every year, tens of thousands of Russian women and children suffer every possible kind of familial abuse — be it battery, rape, or even attempted murder. Years after escaping with her mother, Tatyana, now 29, says domestic violence must be tackled and punished before it gets out of control.

But not everyone agrees with her.

Ultraconservative Federation Council senator Yelena Mizulina, best known for her "gay propaganda" law, introduced a new bill to the State Duma on July 27 that proposed the decriminalization of battery within families. "Battery carried out toward family members should be an administrative offense," Mizulina said. "You don't want people to be imprisoned for two years and labeled a criminal for the rest of their lives for a slap."

What Mizulina failed to acknowledge was that domestic violence in Russia is a serious problem, and not limited to parents spanking their children for misbehaving.

According to official Russian government statistics that undoubtedly under-report the situation, a massive 40 percent of all violent crimes are committed within the family. This correlates to 36,000 women being beaten by their partners every day and 26,000 children being assaulted by their parents every year.

Larisa Ponarina, deputy director of the Anna Center, an NGO

helping victims of domestic violence, suggests that more than 14,000 women die every year as a result of domestic abuse.

She does not believe the situation is improving.

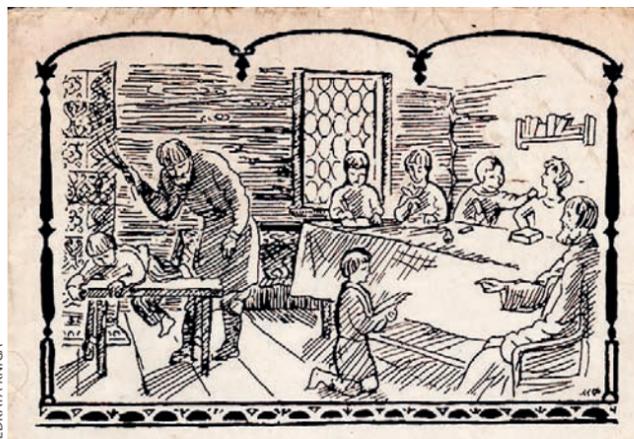
A Battle of Values

Mizulina's bill comes on the heels of a recent amendment to the Criminal Code, introduced by the Supreme Court and signed into law by president Vladimir Putin. According to the amendment — one of the rare progressive legislative moves in fighting domestic violence — battery of family members was put on an equal footing with hooliganism and hate assaults as a criminal offense to be investigated and prosecuted by the state. It came into force in early July.

Traditional family values crusaders supported Mizulina's attempts to undo the amendment. The Russian Orthodox Church issued a statement saying that "if reasonable and carried out with love, corporal punishment is an essential right given to parents by God."

The All-Russian Parents' Resistance, a

Continued on Page 11 →



REDKAYA KNIGA

Out & About



August 4 – 10, 2016

7

Weekly round-up of all that's new, delicious and fun in Moscow.



CENTRAL HOUSE OF WRITERS



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A Feast Fit for a Tsar at TsDL

By **Andrei Muchnik** artsreporter@lmedia.ru

Traditional Russian dining in a Slavic fairytale interior

The Central House of Writers, known by its Russian name "Tsentralny Dom Literatorov" (TsDL), has witnessed a whole lot of history. It's therefore only fitting that the Art Nouveau mansion's new restaurant offers an elegant nod to the past.

Located on Povarskaya Ulitsa — considered to be one of the most aristocratic streets in the city before the 1917 revolution — TsDL was built at the end of the 19th century by the famous architect Pyotr Boytsov. After several reincarnations, including as a masonic lodge and a poor house, in 1932 the venue became the administrative build-

ing for the union of writers. There was an attempt to modernize the interior by the trendy architecture firm Wowhaus a couple of years ago, but the ambiguous results saw a return to TsDL's original stark neo-Gothic beauty.

When you enter you'll see why that's a good thing. The airy main room is two storeys high and features intricately carved wooden balusters, stained glass windows and a wooden staircase built without a single nail. Your attention is immediately drawn to a staggering chandelier — a gift from Stalin to the writer Maxim Gorky — which used to hang at one of the city's metro stations.

The restaurant's menu has been inspired by the opulently Slavic surroundings. TsDL's new chef is Sergei Lobachyov, a man of impressive culinary lineage — his grandfather is Alexander Filin, the head of Russia's National Guild of Chefs.

Start with pirozhki (small traditional Russian pies). If you're feeling brave, the one with beef brains is particularly good. The guinea fowl pate served inside a glazed apple is excellent (550 rubles), as is botvinya, a cold beetroot-based soup with vegetables and cured salmon (600 rubles).

For your main try the grilled rock fish with zucchini (950 rubles) or beef cheeks with hot rice

pudding and pine cone jam (800 rubles). The rice pudding is served onto your plate by the waitstaff via a high-tech siphon. Smaller portions can be ordered as part of a tasting menu (1500 rubles).

If you still have space for dessert after all that, go for the traditional black bread ice cream (150 rubles). Pair your meal with traditional Russian kvas — a bread-based fermented drink (100 rubles) — or berry mors (150 rubles). **TMT**

+7 (495) 663 3003

restcdl.ru

50/53 Povarskaya Ulitsa
Metro Barrikadnaya

NEWS & OPENINGS



NATALYA PAVLOVA / TIN WOODMAN

Tin Woodman

All-day breakfast and a botanical garden

Tin Woodman is the little brother of Lumberjack — a grill and bar joint off Pokrovka. The new eatery stands out for its stunning location on the edge of the botanical Aptekarsky Ogorod and delicious all-day breakfasts. Kick start your weekend with three eggs sunny side up, a burger and crispy potato croquettes (280 rubles) and then head for a stroll around the garden to work it off.

+7 (966) 312 5498

facebook.com/lumberjackbarmoscow
26/1 Prospekt Mira
Metro Prospekt Mira



BEERMOOD

Beerhood

Craft beer in Chistiye Prudy

A new craft bar has opened just a block away from one of the pioneers of the craft beer movement — Glavpivmag. The knowledgeable bartenders will help you choose a drink from the carefully curated beer menu, which features mostly Russian brews plus some exports (from 260 rubles). The bar snacks are worth a mention, particularly the formidable cheese platter (350 rubles).

+7 (962) 365 3999

facebook.com/barbeerhood
21 Chistoprudny Bulvar
Metro Chistiye Prudy, Turgenevskaya



FANTAZYORY

Fantazyory

Retro burgers at VDNKh

The next time you're ambling around this expansive park, take a break at quirky new cafe Fantazyory. Another burger place we hear you cry? For those looking to shake things up a bit try the pineapple chicken sandwich (400 rubles) with the spiral potatoes on a stick (150 rubles) — the hippest new way to eat fries. Pair your treats with a homemade lemonade for the perfect pit stop.

+7 (916) 265-85-84

facebook.com/fantazyoryburgers
Behind the «Земледелие» pavilion at VDNKh
Metro VDNKh



SOS CAFE

SOS Cafe

Sausages in the center

Tired from sightseeing and looking for a quick lunch that won't break the bank? SOS Cafe, from the owners of Georgian fast food cafe Vai Me, has just opened on Myasnitskaya Ulitsa. The menu is all about sausages. Pick your variety (spicy, herby, chicken, beef or pork), choose a side and add your sauce of choice for 320 rubles. While nothing inspirational, it's cheap, cheerful and filling.

+7 495 798 8330

facebook.com/soscafemoscow
11 Myasnitskaya Ulitsa
Metro Lubyanka

Take it and go!

Four pages packed with the best places in Moscow to eat, drink, walk, shop, listen, watch, dance and sightsee. A new walking route and listings every week! **Take it, use it, save it!**



3. Fyodor Dostoevsky Apartment Museum

Walk around the theater to the left on Ulitsa Dostoevskogo until you see a gate with two white plaster lions on top on your right. This is the entrance to the flat where the writer Fyodor Dostoevsky grew up, in housing provided for his father, a doctor at St. Mary's Hospital for the Poor. The small apartment has been recreated to look the way it did when Dostoevsky was growing up here, with two brightly painted and light rooms and two partitioned spaces for sleeping. The space is furnished with family possessions, and you can see the author's scribbled work plans and drafts of his novels.

2 Ulitsa Dostoevskogo



3

2. Russian Army Theater

Walk across the street and back toward the square, and pause to admire one of the city's most unusual and impressive structures, the Russian Army Theater, built in the form of an enormous 5-pointed star. Although the Red Army Theater was founded in 1930, this theater was opened in 1940 after six years of construction, with interiors decorated by such famous artists as Lev Bruni, Alexander Deineka, and Ilya Feinberg. The theater has one of the largest stages in Europe and can accommodate tanks, horses and other large-scale props and players. Although it specializes in military-themed dramas and musical performances, the enormous space is a great venue for musicals and other special productions.

2 Suvorov Square



5. Museum of Decorative and Applied Art

When you come out of the Gulag Museum, walk to the right down the hill, and then right on Delegatskaya Ulitsa to the 19th century manor house that now is home to the Museum of Decorative and Applied Art. Here you will find some beauty to clear your mental palate. Be amazed by the minuscule fine work on lacquered boxes, sigh over the lace exhibit, see how peasants lived — more beautifully and colorfully than you might imagine — and stand in a room filled with early Soviet porcelain and ceramics. The museum's permanent collection of furniture, glass, and crafts is superb. At the end, stop in to learn about amber and do a bit of shopping here and in the museum gift shop. There is also a pleasant café.

3 Delegatskaya Ulitsa



5

Where the Samotyoka Flowed Museum-Hopping North of the Garden Ring

By Michele A. Berdy m.berdy@imedia.ru | Illustration by Oleg Borodin

Museums on every subject and theaters of very different kinds in a quiet residential neighborhood

Sadovaya-Samotyochnaya Ulitsa



1



Ulitsa Sovetskoi Armii

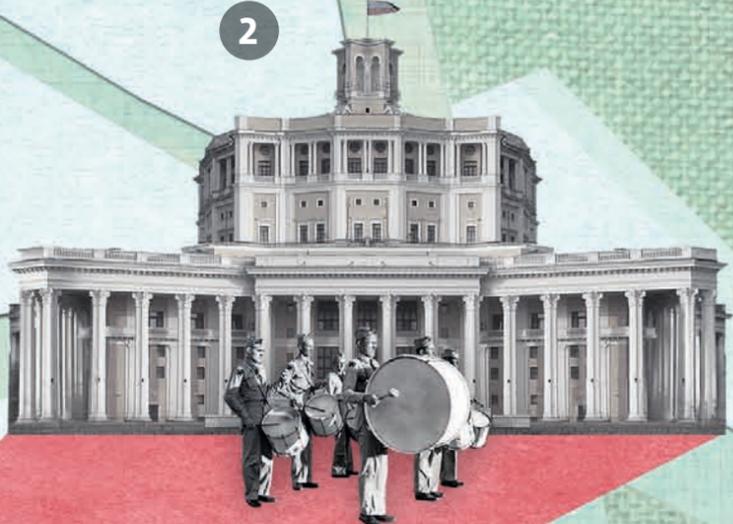


1. Central Armed Forces Museum

Take the metro to the Dostoevskaya station and walk across the square and to the left on Ulitsa Sovetskoi Armii. Your guiding star is the large missile standing in front of the first stop on this tour, the Central Museum of the Armed Forces. Built in 1965, this is an essential stop for anyone interested in military history. Inside there is room after room packed with uniforms, weapons, planes and banners dangling from the ceiling, wall paintings of battles, newspaper clippings, films, documents, and much more. Your kids can try on medieval armor and test a World War II revolver or climb on tanks outside where the planes and vehicles are on display. An enormous bust of Vladimir Lenin and a 1960s red and gold mosaic of warriors and soldiers preside over it all.

2 Ulitsa Sovetskoi Armii, Bldg. 1

2



4. Gulag History Museum

The second museum hub of this walk is at the end of a stroll through a surprisingly pretty neighborhood. Outside the museum cross the street and walk to the right to Pereulok Chernyshevskogo; turn left and go a block; turn left again to walk past little 19th-century wooden houses. At the end of the street, turn right and follow the tram line past a little park on your left. Turn right on Nikonovskiy Pereulok and then left again on 1st Samotyochny Pereulok. The sternly imposing building on your right is the Gulag History Museum, founded in 2001 and opened in this new space in 2015. In somberly lit, cavernous spaces with rough brick walls you can learn about the country's history of repression through artifacts, texts, photographs, films and stories. The subject is grim, a wall of cell doors is horrifying, and the lists of names of innocent victims are heartbreaking. But the filmed stories of survivors are remarkably uplifting. Everything is in English and Russian.

9 1st Samotyochny Pereulok, Bldg. 1

4



Delegatskaya Ulitsa

6



6. Obraztsov Puppet Theater

When you emerge from the museum courtyard, brave the noise and walk out to the Ring Road. Turn left and walk past the traffic police building down to the boxy 1970s building with a wild metal clock on the façade. This is one of the city's most beloved places, where virtually every child comes at least once, and sometimes even once a month — the Obraztsov Puppet Theater. If you think you don't like puppets, come here to have your prejudices shattered. Until the season opens in September, just stand in front and watch puppet figures pop out of the clock's puppet boxes on the hour. At noon and midnight the whole gang emerges to oink, squawk, chirp and generally make a lovely racket.

3 Sadovaya-Samotyochnaya Ulitsa





Martin Espley, Educational Consultant at EED Learning
"15 Kitchen + Bar's superb cocktails, seasonal menu and attentive staff guarantee a great evening. After dinner head toward Bar 45 on Gogolevsky Bulvar. You won't be disappointed by the laid back atmosphere and expert sommelier."



LES

Know Your Beans: Moscow's Best Coffee Shops

Dreaming of smooth espressos, quality roasts and the perfect flat white? Caffeine addicts, right this way. With coffee now a booming business in the capital you need never subject yourself to one of the under-caffeinated, overpriced chains again — we won't name names. Here's where you can find us for our morning fix, the 4 p.m. slump and late night inspiration brew.



COOPERATIVE CHERNY

Cooperative Cherny An alternative brew

Cooperative Cherny moved around the city quite a bit before finding a permanent home at a craft beer bar on Pokrovka. One of the pioneers of speciality coffee, Cooperative first served only coffee brewed by alternative methods — for the tech geeks among you that's things like V60, Chemex and AeroPress. Now they serve a full range of espresso-based drinks as well. Cooperative was also one of the first coffee shops in Moscow to serve cold brew — coffee brewed in cold water for twelve hours. Try it, you might even like it.

facebook.com/chernyicooperative
31 Ulitsa Pokrovka
Metro Kurskaya



WEST 4

West 4 Your pit stop in the museum district

West 4, located at Ulitsa Ostozhenka, offers up impeccable espresso-based drinks and several alternative brewing methods, including Chemex and AeroPress. Their flat white is as good as any you'll find in London. A short walk away from three major museums and several galleries, it's the perfect spot to relax between admiring Picasso paintings at the Pushkin Museum and checking out some new art at Kultproekt. West 4 also occasionally organizes exhibitions and live concerts.

+7 (495) 695 2729
facebook.com/west4coffee
3/14 Ulitsa Ostozhenka
Metro Kropotkinskaya

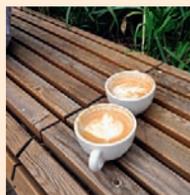


LES

LES Strong and beautifully bitter

On the success of its main venue tucked behind Rozhdestvensky monastery LES recently opened three new outposts in places with a lot of foot traffic — at the Muzeon park embankment, in the courtyard of the Museum of Moscow and on Pokrovka Ulitsa. The menu is focused on simple espresso-based drinks, but they are made to perfection and really strong — a true blessing in a city that loves to serve up lattes heavy on the milk and sugar. AeroPress and lesser-known alternative methods are available, as well as some teas including the traditional Russian herbal Ivan tea and desserts.

+7 (986) 177 5113
facebook.com/pvles
10/7 Rozhdestvensky Bulvar
Metro Trubnaya



KAFFEBROD

Kaffebrod A dash of Scandinavian style

Kaffebrod in Swedish means a bun that comes with a coffee. In Moscow it's a moderately priced coffee shop, with the main outpost on the Moscow river embankment behind the Central House of Artists, where it provides a considerably cheaper alternative to LES. There's also a stall at Rybny Rynok (Fish Market) on Novokuznetskaya with cappuccinos that start from 100 rubles. Apart from sandwiches and desserts, you can try havredrikke — a traditional Scandinavian drink based on oatmeal and milk.

+7 (916) 097 4270
facebook.com/kaffebrod
2 Krymskaya Naberezhnaya
Metro Park Kultury



KOF

KOF A speciality caffeine fix

KOF stands for Knowledge of Coffee, which is certainly something this company has. KOF has been quietly been making a name through selling their own speciality coffee blend online, running barista workshops and appearing at food fairs. A few months ago they firmly entered the real world with a small coffee counter in the Danilovsky business center. It's absolutely tiny, but perfect for grabbing something to go on the way to browse the food markets in the area.

+7 (985) 786 6087
facebook.com/knowledgeofcoffee
7/1 Varshavskoye Shosse
Metro Tulskeya



SURF COFFEE / INSTAGRAM

Surf Coffee California cool

Surf already has several outlets across Russia and its latest outlet on Myasnitskaya Ulitsa is a trendy newcomer to the landlocked capital. Surf's coffee is sourced from the surfing paradise of Central America (70 percent Costa Rican beans, 30 percent Guatemalan), providing a rich yet smooth taste. The small interior is filled with beach-babe wannabes and decorated with bamboo and surf boards. Surf likes to think of itself as a lifestyle brand rather than a simple coffee shop — as such you can order yourself t-shirts and sweat-shirts from their website so that you match your coffee cup.

surfcoffee.ru
16 Ulitsa Myasnitskaya
Metro Lubyanka



ROAST & CROSBY

Roast & Crosby Coffee from a latte art pro

Roast & Crosby is a small counter in a business center on Strastnoi Bulvar. It might not look like much but the venture was spearheaded by Polina Notik, winner of the 2014 Russian Latte Art Championship, so you can bank on your coffee being tasty and beautifully presented to boot. The brand is recognizable by the signature bee logo. This summer they have a delicious "house" mint latte for sale which provides the perfect pick-me-up for your wanderers around the city.

+7 (965) 183 9958
facebook.com/CoffeeCrosby
9 Strastnoi Bulvar
Metro Chekhovskaya, Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya



CHELOVEK I PAROKHOD

Chelovek i Parokhod Great value, great flat white

Chelovek i Parokhod (The man and the steamship) is a phrase penned by Russian avant-garde poet Vladimir Mayakovsky. It also happens to be the name of a coffee shop at the trendy Danilovsky market. They serve a nearly perfect espresso and one of the cheapest flat whites in the city (150 rubles). Coffee is brewed from the beans Chelovek i Parokhod roast themselves. This summer they introduced their own brand of cold brew. You can also get a dessert by Injir from them — a popular stall at street food markets.

+7 (919) 770 3268
facebook.com/cheandpa
74 Mytnaya Ulitsa
Metro Tulskeya

The Moscow Times
CONFERENCES

SEPTEMBER 20
MARRIOTT ROYAL AURORA

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- Standards in the field of administrative quality management: assessment, improvement, focus.
- The role of administrative supply departments in raising employee involvement.
- Organization of business trips and off-site training for employees: reducing costs.
- Corporate restaurant: performance control and objective quality assessment.



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Participation in the project **Ekaterina Zorkova**,
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Restraining orders, issued by courts and preventing abusers from approaching or communicating with the victim, exist in 140 countries — but not in Russia.

60-70%

of domestic abuse victims never report their attackers.



Both physical punishment and harsh psychological discipline can damage a child's physical, mental and emotional health, according to UNICEF.

2,000

children and teenagers commit suicide every year because of domestic abuse.

← Continued from Page 6

movement fighting against the juvenile justice system, has warned that criminalization of familial battery will lead to prosecution of parents who were acting in their children's best interests. "A mother spanked her son for watching porn ... but his teachers in school noticed bruises, complained, and the court made the mother pay a 8,000-ruble (\$120) fine ... Parents no longer have the right to choose methods of upbringing," a statement on their website says.

"Traditional, or rather archaic values have become popular again," says Alyona Popova, activist and women's rights advocate. High-profile stories of abuse — movie stars beating their wives into a coma, female journalists posting pictures of bruised faces after fighting with their significant others — have done little to change the situation. Indeed, commentators — both male and female — have even intimated that the victims "most probably provoked" incidents, "were asking for it with frivolous behavior," or "knew who they were marrying and should have known better."

"Women aren't supposed to be able to do and achieve things on their own," says Popova. "Society tells women to get married in order to let their husbands decide things for them. If a man beats you, it is because he is stronger and has the right to beat you, and you should consider yourself lucky to be married in the first place."

It Runs in the History

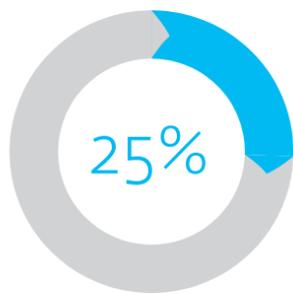
"If he beats you, it means he loves you," as one famous Russian saying has it. According to some studies, the phrase first appeared in the late 16th century, after a book called "Domostroy" ("Household") was published. This book, a guide for families, carried a strong Orthodox Christian message. It outlined women's obedience as the key to a strong, lasting family, and described corporal punishment — for women and children — as a "mere blessing" that can help "avoid death of the soul."

The Domostroy mentality was rejected for a short period in post-revolutionary Soviet Russia in favor of equality. But it made a triumphant return during the late Soviet period, although without previous religious undertones, before embedding in the social norms of 21st century Russia. Today, police stations rarely take reports of familial battery seriously — they often dismiss victims' complaints, citing the problem as one's "internal family matter." Some say that they can only intervene when a murder is committed.

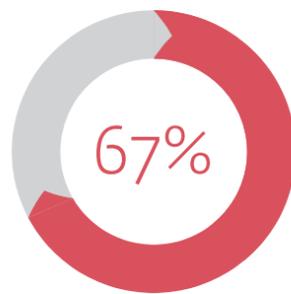
Such abnegation of duty is hardly surprising, given the fact that the Russian government has never properly addressed the issue either. The UN, on the other hand, commissioned several worrying reports about the state of women's rights in Russia in the past 10 years. Some of the earlier reports contained recommendations, such as adoption of specific legislation on domestic violence, establishment of shelters and other support for women victims of violence. Later, it became clear to the report writers that Russia had done little to implement the measures.

One of the few countries still to adopt a domestic violence law, Russia hasn't signed or ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against

At a Glance: Domestic Violence in Russia



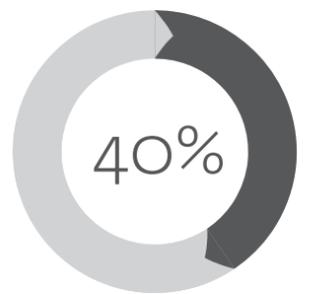
Abuse of any form takes place in 1 in 4 families.



Two-thirds of all homicides are linked to domestic and family issues.



The number of domestic assaults on women and children has grown by 20% in 2015, compared to 2010.



40% of all violent crimes are committed in families.

Source: Anna Center

women and domestic violence; this came into force exactly two years ago, in August 2014. All attempts to pass a domestic violence law in the past ten years have been unsuccessful. The most recent bill, drafted by human rights advocates and specialized NGOs, is now ready for the first reading.

But it has been sitting on a shelf in the State Duma for a year.

Baby Steps

Supporters of "traditional values" explain their lack of enthusiasm for a new domestic violence law in terms of protecting the unity of the family. This is same logic Mizulina uses in her attempts to abolish already existing legislation that makes familial battery a criminal offense.

"They argue children will start complaining about parents spanking them, and thousands of mothers and fathers will be subject to criminal prosecution," Popova says.

Yet such worries are mostly groundless. According to Mari Davtyan, a lawyer dedicated to defending victims of violence, the number of cases against parents beating their children is unlikely to change: "Attackers of several social groups — children, the disabled and the elderly — have always been subject to criminal prosecution initiated by law enforcement."

What the new legislation has done, however, is protect many vulnerable women. For the first time, law enforcement bodies can initiate prosecution of an offender. Before, prosecution was subject to private charges. Not only had the victim to sue the offender herself, she also had to collect necessary evidence, ensure witnesses would come to court hearings and so on.

Moreover, the mere fact of domestic violence staying in criminal jurisdiction sends the right message: beating your wife and children is wrong, and for that you will be punished.

Today, the Russian old-world mindset still remains the biggest obstacle for victims of domestic violence.

If a woman decides to leave her abusive husband or report him to the police, often her own relatives will disown her. "They would say that keeping the family together and standing behind the father of her children is more important," says Anna Center's Larisa Ponarina.

Sometimes, women themselves will refuse help. "I often hear my neighbors, a middle aged couple, fighting," says a Moscow resident speaking on the condition of anonymity. "Every time I call the police, the wife, with bruises all over her face, shouts at officers, saying it is none of their — or my — business. Once they tried to arrest the husband, and she went in fists first." Such incidents clearly demotivate police from making crucial interventions.

When it comes to child abuse, the same logic works, says Anna Mezkhova, head of Saving Life, a foundation that deals with violence against children. "When a child is being regularly beaten up or sexually assaulted by his father, the mother often covers it up, thinking that there is no need to air the dirty laundry in public," says Mezkhova. "But the behavior makes it almost impossible to protect the child."

According to Popova, however, the Russian mentality is slowly beginning to change. Women are now taking offenders to court, she says: "They support each other in court, and they feel confident enough to demand actions from law enforcement."

So far at least, the statistics tell a discouraging story. According to a report by the UN Committee for Human Rights, the incidence of domestic violence is, in fact, on its way up. In 2015, the number of domestic assaults on women and children grew by 20 percent compared to a similar reporting period in 2010. TMT

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KAZAKHSTAN - THE COUNTRY OF THE GREAT STEPPE

More than 60 striking photographs devoted to the nature of Kazakhstan and the upcoming events - Winter Universiade-2017 in Almaty and the EXPO-2017 international exhibition in Astana.

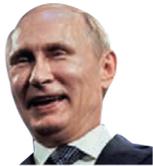
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"Russians joke about the elites but rarely about Putin directly."

Alexandra Arkhipova, humor historian



3 days

average lifespan of a political joke.

15%

of Russians watched Vecherny Urgant's first series.



"People have lost their sense of humor."

Sasha Filippenko, sketch writer



YELENA RASPUTINA

No Laughing Matter

By [Ola Cichowlas](#) o.cichowlas@lmedia.ru, Twitter @olacicho

In today's Russia, there are limits to what you can and can't joke about.

An angel and two demons live inside President Vladimir Putin's brain. Every day, they decide how to rule Russia. The angel, being outnumbered, always loses, and the demons are left to do as they please.

Such is the repeating motif of "God, How Embarrassing," a pilot animation series that never, in the end, reached Russia's television screens. The show proved too provocative even for Dozhd, Russia's only independent television channel.

"They told us it was a step too far," says the series' author, Belarussian sketch writer Sasha Filippenko.

Having previously worked in state television, Filippenko was excited by the prospect of doing comedy without being censored. But, as he soon found out, in Putin's Russia, there are always limits on what you can and can't write about.

Political satire comes under particular scrutiny in Russia. In the 16 years of Putin's rule, many Russian comedy shows have suddenly been axed; others have been subject to restrictions. Perhaps the first prominent victim of the new rules was the "Kukly" puppet satire show, which featured an unflattering puppet of the president, and was pulled early in Putin's reign.

At the same time, Filippenko says Russia still offers more breathing space than back home. "At least you can still make political jokes on television in Russia," he says. "In Belarus it only happens online."

Changing Rules

Slowly but surely, Russia seems to be heading that way too. During Putin's time in the Kremlin, the very nature of jokes have changed. At the beginning of the Putin era, Russian comedians were relatively free to joke about anything. When

he first came to power in 2000, Russians loved to laugh about their president's KGB past. "There used to be loads of jokes about Putin and the way he carries himself," says Alexandra Arkhipova, a folklore historian specializing in Russian humor.

She cites one: "A hungry Vladimir Putin woke up at night and made his way to the fridge. Inside, there was a portion of meat jelly. 'Stop trembling,' he said. 'I'm coming for the yogurt.'"

When Putin began to fight the oligarchs in the mid-2000s, sketch artists began to present him as a cynical and power-hungry leader. The longer he stayed in the Kremlin, the more Russian comedians recycled old Stalin jokes. But today, Arkhipova says, Putin is almost never the butt of a joke.

Instead, the overwhelming majority of political jokes in Russia today are about the people who surround Putin — never the president himself. "Russians laugh at the elites but not directly at Putin," says Arkhipova. The Russian president himself is never seriously exposed for any gaffes he might make, whereas the same protection is not afforded to ministers.

Most recently, those opportunities came from Russia's former Children's Ombudsman Pavel Astakhov and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev. Astakhov, who has since stepped down, had asked children who survived the sinking of a boat in northern Russia in which 14 people drowned, "How was your swim?" The Russian Internet immediately reacted to the untactful question. "How was your dinner?" said one meme that depicted a photograph of Holocaust survivors.

But the gaffe of the year went to Medvedev, who told angry Crimean pensioners "There's no money but you hang in there." It kept Russia laughing (and crying) for weeks. On av-

erage, Arkhipova says, jokes that follow a political event have a life span of three days; more significant events will keep people laughing for seven to twelve days. "The Medvedev joke lasted over three weeks," she says.

The Censors

The Crimean annexation and the war in Ukraine was a turning point for Russian political satire. Every sketch writer and comedian in Moscow knew that joking about this was a risky business.

"There are people who are paid to go through your jokes and cut what they think is too much," says Filippenko, who worked on a popular satirical show on state television called "Spotlight of Paris Hilton," a parody of a 1980s news program called "Spotlight of Perestroika." The sketch writers, Filippenko says, are often surprised at what the censors decide to cut and what they deem harmless. "Nobody tells you where the boundaries are," he says. "It is all based on unwritten rules."

Paradoxically, Filippenko says, censorship made his jokes funnier. Russian political satire has historically been an art of who can make the most poignant joke while staying within the rules of the game.

Censorship has forced sketch writers to draw on the Soviet tradition of joking "between the lines." When he left state television in 2012, he found it harder to make people laugh. "When I came to Dozhd and they told me I could joke about anything, I was less creative," he says, adding that sketch writers need to make their jokes sharper in order to bypass the censors. When that limit is no longer there, he says, you lose the sophistication of the joke.

Filippenko fell into the business by chance: a television



KVN aka “The Club for Funny and Witty People” is one of the longest-running comedy shows on Russian television.

Nov. 8

KVN even has its own unofficial national holiday.

1961

KVN’s first broadcast. Soviet authorities shut it down in 1971.



Revived during Perestroika, KVN has had the same host — 74-year-old **Alexander Maslyakov** — since 1986



← Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of Russia’s LDPR party, appearing on the Vechny Urgan program as a guest.

↓ Dmitry Grachyov impersonating Putin on the Comedy Club program. The popular program is aired on the TNT channel.

THE WORD’S WORTH

Human or Humane?

Язык: tongue, language, ethnos

By **Michele A. Berdy**
Moscow-based translator and interpreter, author of “The Russian Word’s Worth” (Glas), a collection of her columns.



← Comedian Sergei Svetlakov, who appeared on KVN from 2000-2009. Putin himself is a big fan of the program and came to the opening of the show’s new Moscow arena.



COMEDY CLUB / YOUTUBE

producer overheard his jokes while he was out with friends at a St. Petersburg restaurant. Soon, he was invited to Moscow for an interview at Channel One’s glossy office. A shy performer, he was recruited as part of a team of 20 sketch writers. “Not everyone there is for or against Putin,” he says. “The producers actually want plurality to make the jokes better.”

Servile Satire

Most of the writers and stand up artists working in Russian comedy are veterans of the “Club of the Funny and Witty People,” the longest-running comedy show on television. The Club, known in Russian by the acronym KVN, has had the same host, 74 year-old Alexander Maslyakov, since 1986. It even has its own unofficial national holiday on Nov. 8.

During Perestroika, the show produced some of the best political satire in Russia, often irritating Soviet authorities. Today, however, KVN has turned into just another branch of the Kremlin’s propaganda.

“KVN is dead — it’s only interested in songs about the great leader,” says Filippenko, adding that comedy should be “fearless.” Putin himself is a big fan of the program and even came to the opening of the show’s new arena in Moscow.

Xenophobic and sexist sketches have replaced KVN’s witty

political past. “Jokes about racial and gender stereotypes dominate the show,” says Arkhipova. Almost no KVN episode takes place without a racial joke about U.S. President Barack Obama. If there are any political sketches at all, they are inherently anti-Western and in praise of the Kremlin. One recent sketch about Russia’s economic crisis, showed Putin and the Russian ruble defeating the euro and the dollar. “You don’t know where the boundary is between what is serious and what is a joke,” says Arkhipova.

Still, some KVN stars have succeeded in mass producing comedy on surprisingly sensitive topics. One of them is comedian Semyon Slepakov, whose songs break many unwritten rules. His latest song lampooning Medvedev went viral on the Russian Internet.

But even Russia’s celebrity jokers know their limits. Slepakov never touches Putin and his songs are strongly anti-Western. In many cases, censorship comes from the comedians’ sponsors, afraid of losing their television contracts.

Filippenko, who now spends most of his time writing short stories, believes the doors are closing for Russian comedians. A powerful propaganda machine has made political satire a dying business in Russia.

“People have lost their sense of humor,” says the sketch writer. **TMT**

Select Jokes

Jokes about the Crimean annexation were only available on social media:

- What does cognitive dissonance mean?
- It’s when you go to a rally in favour of a referendum to join a country in which referendums are banned.

The Internet was also full of jokes on the crackdown on critical media in Russia:

- Why did they shut down TV Rain?
- Because Putin’s spokesperson misunderstood Putin when he asked if rain would disrupt the Sochi Olympics.

A popular Soviet-era folk joke, mocking censorship in Russia:

An American and a Russian are arguing over freedom of speech. “I can stand outside the White House and shout ‘Reagan is an idiot!’ and nothing will happen to me,” says the

American. “I can also go to the Kremlin and shout ‘Reagan is an idiot’ and nothing will happen to me either,” the Russian replies.

Official satire common on Russian television feeds on jokes that exploit Putin’s macho image: A hungry Vladimir Putin woke up at night and made his way to the fridge. Inside, there was a portion of meat jelly. “Stop trembling,” he said. “I’m coming for the yoghurt.”

Today, comedy shows on Russian state TV are dominated by anti-Western and xenophobic jokes and work as a branch of state propaganda: “They create problems from night to dawn — apparently they’re not from Africa but they act like savages!” said one comedian on KVN holding portraits of Barack Obama and Angela Merkel.

Judging by the huge batch of reader letters in my inbox, paronyms — words with the same root but different meanings — are one of the toughest parts of the Russian language to master.

So to continue your education, I’ve come up with more. Let’s start with an easy pair of Russian paronyms — easy because English has the same kind of pair: *человеческий* and *человечный*, both adjectives from the noun *человек* (human being). The first, *человеческий*, means human, like *человеческие голоса* (human voices) or *человеческая натура* (human nature). Согласно теории человеческого капитала, поток мигрантов зависит от получения информации о возможностях трудоустройства в других местах (According to the theory of human capital, the flow of migrants depends on having information about finding work in other places.)

Человечный means humane, the best quality of human beings: *человечное отношение* (humane attitude). Он считал, что чем дальше от Москвы, тем люди человечнее (He thought that the further you go from Moscow, the more humane people are.) Царь Пётр был достаточно велик, но недостаточно человечен (Tsar Peter was great enough, but not humane enough.)

You’ll have noticed something about the suffixes — the endings attached to nouns to make them adjectives. In general, *-ский* turns the noun into an adjective: *человек-человеческий* (human as a noun and adjective). But the *-чный* ending describes some kind of quality connected with the noun: *человек-человечный* (human-humane). The *-чный* ending often indicates a tendency. So *человеческий* refers to everything that is human, but *человечный* refers only to one quality. Sometimes you can think of *-чный* as the English ending *-like*: human-like (humane).

Here’s a fun one: *язычный*, *языческий*, *языковой*, *языковой*. As you all know, *язык* means tongue in the sense of what’s in your mouth and in the sense of language. You know this if you’ve ever been in a Russian restaurant that decided to save money by using Google Translate and offered jellied language as a starter. That’s *язык заливной* (tongue in aspic).

But there is a third meaning of *язык* that is now largely obsolete: nation, ethnic group. In the first translations of the Bible from Greek, *язык* was the translation of the Greek word *ethnos*, itself a translation of the Hebrew word *goy*, a non-Jew. Since in ancient times most non-Jews were pagans, that meaning carried into Russian via Greek and stuck. Hence: *язычник* (pagan).

So now we have three meanings of a word and a bunch of adjectives. *Языческий* is the adjective for anything pagan: Все ритуалы говорят о принадлежности их к языческому празднику огня и воды (All of the rituals indicate that they are part of the pagan festival or fire and water.) *Язычный* has to do with the tongue in medical language, like *язычная артерия* (lingual artery). You also find it in compound words to mean language, speaking: *англоязычный* (English speaking).

Confused? Hold on: *языковой* — stress on last syllable — is the adjective for language: На протяжении многих лет она проводила летние языковые курсы (Over the course of many years she ran summer language classes.) But *языковый* — stress on the third syllable — is the adjective for tongue: *языковые блюда* (dishes made with tongue).

Got it? Great. Next week: irregular verb declensions. More fun in the sun. **TMT**

Tips for Life

The Moscow Times
No. 5766

Advice, answers and
lifehacks to help you
enjoy Moscow.



HOME

When will I get hot water again?

TMT: When the gods of hot water are appeased or Moscow gets a water system overhaul, whichever comes first.

Actually, if you were paying attention, you would have remembered our previous tip on this — but because The Moscow Times tip department is generous, here is the information again:

To find out when your hot water goes off and on, see pgu.mos.ru/ru/hotwater. Type in your address and house number, and see the date when your hot water disappears and the joyful date when it reappears.



HOME

How do I survive in the meantime?

TMT: Now that's something we're experts at. First, be happy that the weather is very hot.

For a quick, bearable shower, turn on the water and jump in right away. The water in the pipes is warmed by the sun, so if you're fast, you can catch a quick shower.

If that doesn't suit, try one of these tried and true options:

1. Go to a bath house. This is a great opportunity to check out one of the city's public bath houses, like the elegant Sandunovsky (sandunoy.ru) or the authentic Bani na Presne (baninapresne.ru). If you want a bit more privacy, rent a bath house for an evening, like at expedicia-banya.ru or banya-zhivica.ru. Ask Russian friends for their recommendations in your neighborhood.

2. Go to a health club. If your fitness club is in your home neighborhood, chances are that it won't have hot water either. But ask if they have branches in other parts of the city — and then beg to use one of them. If you don't have membership in a club, here are some of our favorites for one-off visits: themoscowtimes.com/articles/top-4-moscow-spots-for-an-ad-hoc-workout-51699.

3. Go to a pool. Indoors or outdoors, you'll have access to full bathing facilities — and you'll get some exercise. Here's where you'll find us: themoscowtimes.com/articles/fancy-a-dip-moscows-best-open-air-pools-54510.

4. Go to a spa. All good day spas have pools, saunas and shower facilities for freshening up after your massage. And you don't have to haul in supplies; you can use the spa's bathing products.

5. Visit a friend with hot water. Russians are very used to friends, acquaintances and co-workers showing up with a backpack filled with towels, soap, hair-care products, hair dryers, and whatever other health and beauty aids you use. Just don't forget to make your place available when their hot water is turned off.

6. Boiling Water Method #1: Put two or three large pots of water on the stove. When they come to the boil, pour them in the bathtub and add cold water until it's a bearable temperature. Depending on the size of your pots — and how many times you boil water — you might be able to have a decent bath.

7. Boiling Water Method #2: Boil water in a kettle and pour it into a large pot or basin in the bath tub. Add cold water until the temperature is right. Use a ladle or cup to wash your hair. Use a sponge to soap up. Climb in the tub and pour the remaining water over yourself to rinse.



CULTURE

I've been invited to a Russian wedding. What can I expect?

TMT: Tears, a brawl and the resurgence of old family feuds? Oh, sorry that's not spe-

cific to a Russian wedding is it?

We'll try again. Before the ceremony the groom must head to the bride's house and complete a series of challenges set by her family and friends. Mission accomplished, they'll head to the registry office and get the official bit over with. Then the fun really begins.

You know how you can't walk two steps in Red Square without ruining the photo shoot of some loved-up newlyweds? That's the next thing on the agenda. If you're not invited in the limousine, rest up for the reception. Here there'll be a tamada — a toastmaker whose job it is to keep everyone's spirits up by, well, encouraging them to drink spirits.

A warning: you're going to be shouting "Gorko!" a lot. Translated as "bitter" this is the phrase guests will chant, scream and shout when they want the newlyweds to kiss. The thinking is that the sweet kiss will dispel bitterness of the vodka toast. The longer the kiss, the sweeter the marriage.

If you see the bride being kidnapped by the groom's friends, don't panic. This is another old tradition in which the groom will be required to pay a bribe for the return of his beloved as a show of his affection.

Have fun and remember to drink those vodka shots interspersed with mors. Otherwise you're going to want to check out our tip on charcoal tablets.

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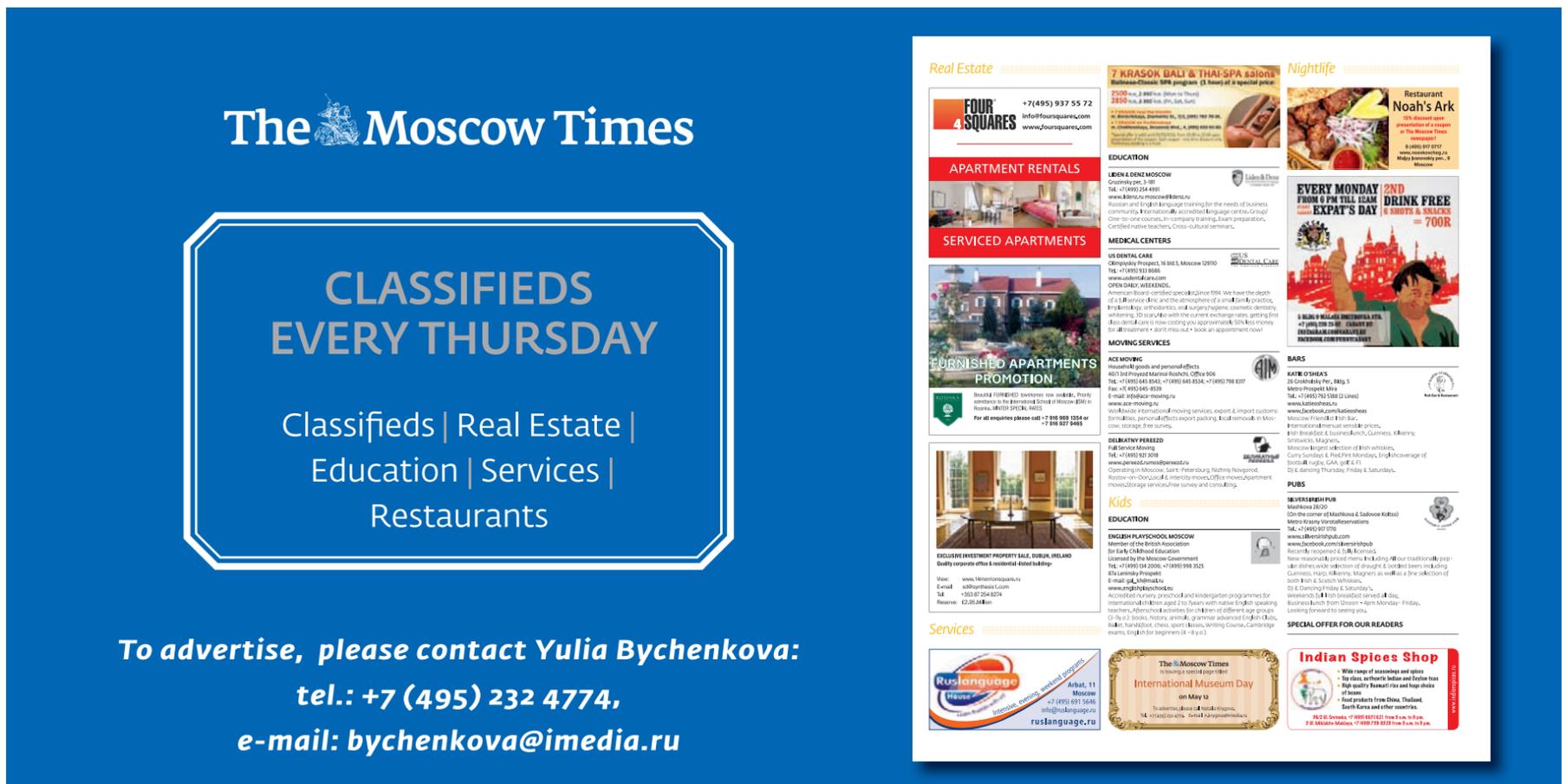
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August 4 – 10

FESTIVAL Faces and Laces

Street art and culture in the park

Love skateboarding, street art and funky clothing? This weekend the 10th annual Faces and Laces festival will take over Gorky Park. Catch music from British musician Kevin Martin — known by his alias The Bug — and Israeli artist Miss Red, listen to entries at the World DJ Competition and then gawk at the fancy footwork of professional BMX riders. You can also watch Italian graffiti artist Nemco at work and kit yourself out in the latest street styles at a variety of clothes stalls.

Gorky Park

faceslaces.com
9 Krymsky Val
Metro Oktyabrskaya, Park Kultury
Aug. 6-7

CONCERT Jessy Lanza

Beautiful, weird electronic pop

Jessy Lanza is a quirky electronic artist hailing from a small town called Hamilton in Ontario. She blends pop melodies, R&B elements and experimental electronic flourishes to create compelling tracks that just beg to be danced to on a summer evening with a cocktail in hand. Which is fortunate as this weekend she'll be performing at Strelka. Her second album was released this spring and it has already achieved widely positive reviews. Other artists on Friday include the electronic group Ne Tvoje Delo (Not Your Business) and Shiny Boots&Krlow.

Strelka

strelka.com
4 Bersenevskaya Naberezhnaya, Bldg. 5
Metro Kropotkinskaya
Aug. 5 at 10 p.m.

EXHIBITION The Alphabet of the Museum Celebrating 120 Years of the Museum of Moscow

The Museum of Moscow has experienced a lot of changes in its 120 year history — from its name, to its location and even its concept. This evolution and heritage is celebrated at a new jubilee exhibition set to showcase the encyclopedic collection of culturally, socially and architecturally significant objects, photos and documents the venue has gathered over the years. From “A” (Archaeology) to “L” (Moscow Legends) and “K” (Red Square) this significant collection invites you to delve into Moscow's history and discover more about the city and its namesake museum.

Museum of Moscow

mosmuseum.ru
2 Zubovskiy Bulvar
Metro Park Kultury
Aug. 3 — Nov. 13

FESTIVAL Icelandic Film Festival

Films from the land of ice and volcanoes

You may know little about this obscure northern nation aside from its recent footballing triumphs and beautiful, otherworldly landscape, but rest assured, Icelandic cinema punches above its weight in warmth, wit and humor. The highlight of the program is “Rams” — the winner of the Un Certain Regard category at the Cannes Film Festival last year. Not all of the films will have English subtitles but with scenery as beautiful as Iceland's it should be an enjoyable evening regardless.

Muzeon park

coolconnections.ru/ru/projects/631
Ulitsa Krymsky Val, Bldg. 2
Metro Oktyabrskaya, Park Kultury
Aug. 3-7

Ivan Aivazovsky's Seascapes on Display at the Tretyakov Gallery

The Moscow Times

The show of the summer has arrived. Moscow's New Tretyakov Gallery has gathered together 150 works by Ivan Aivazovsky, Russia's most famous and beloved painter of seascapes, in a wide-scale exhibition to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the artist's birth. The capital may be landlocked and stuffy, but marveling at the limitless horizons, crashing waves, and raging tempests Aivazovsky so masterfully recreated, you can practically feel a cool sea breeze in the air.

Aivazovsky was a prolific painter — he completed over 6,000 artworks before his death in 1900. Whittling down the exhibited paintings from the thousands was unsurprisingly no easy task for the organizers: “It involved many hours

of discussion about how we want to showcase the painter and what we want to disclose about him, to reveal,” said Zelfira Tregulova, director of the Tretyakov Gallery, in an interview with The Moscow Times.

Since the painter is one of the country's most popular artists, the Tretyakov managed to pre-sell 20,000 e-tickets before the exhibition's doors had even opened to the public. This figure is hardly surprising when you remember that Chekhov's phrase “a sight worthy of Aivazovsky's brush” became popularized as the way of describing something “ineffably lovely.” The exhibition is not chronological, but rather laid out according to themes such as “Sea Symphonies,” “The World at Large Was Much

Too Small For Him,” and “But Day is Fading — Night Had Come,” to outline the artist's dimensions. Changing preconceptions about Aivazovsky — that he did more than paint the ocean — was the main aim of the Tretyakov's curators.

Aivazovsky traveled the oceans, often aboard military ships as the main painter of the Russian navy, and was almost killed by a fierce storm in the Bay of Biscay. He was both a romanticist and realist: he had experienced the ocean's savagery and man's futile struggle on its surface, but also its salvation. Of the paintings on show, “The Ninth Wave” is his best known. The giant canvas is a fusion of hope and desperation, the fraught faces of the stranded sailors warmed by a hopeful sunrise. The bulk of the audience viewing these huge works at the time of their conception had no experience of the high seas, so paintings like “The Rainbow” and “The Wave” offered rare, romanticized glimpses into nautical life. But the scale and energy generated by Aivazovsky is equally impressive for contemporary viewers. Aivazovsky's dramatic seascapes are sometimes spoken of with reference to J.M.W. Turner — the English romanticist painter who elevated landscape painting to a higher level of recognition in the 19th century. The pair are even alleged to have met on one of Aivazovsky's visits to Britain while Turner is credited with having penned a rhymed eulogy after witnessing the Russian's “The Bay of Naples on a Moonlit Night.” Tregulova commented on the ties between the artists at the exhibition's press opening. “It's true both were obsessed by the natural elements but Turner is more figurative. He was a creator, Aivazovsky was a re-creator.” Whatever your opinion on the similarities between the two painters, there's no doubt about Aivazovsky's place in Russia's artistic history. This exhibition is about decoding the messages behind the canvases of Russia's greatest marine artist, who seamlessly blended natural topography with a narrative expressiveness. It's a chance to finally portray Aivazovsky as the “philosopher” who didn't simply paint the watery wild wilderness, but explored its depths. **TMT**

“Ivan Aivazovsky. For the 200th anniversary” runs through Nov. 20. New Tretyakov Gallery. 10 Krymsky Val. Metro Oktyabrskaya, Park Kultury. tretakovgallery.ru

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