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LOOKING FORWARD

Savchenko

Fate of Ukrainian servicewoman moves from courtroom to negotiating table. → Page 4

LOOKING FORWARD

Stagnation

The worst thing about the economic crisis is that Russians are getting used to it. → Page 5

RUSSIAN TALES

Scientology

A secretive, closed, arbitrary movement comes up against the Kremlin. → Pages 12-13

18+

Battle In the Archives

Historians clash with officials over secrets and the Soviet legacy

→ Pages 6, 11



22%

rise in criminal cases opened on so-called economic rules of the Criminal Code in 2015.



"I constantly hear business and law enforcement representatives complaining about each other. This means, there's a conflict." Russian President Vladimir Putin

Business Under Pressure

By Mikhail Fishman m.fishman@imedia.ru

Putin offers to help entrepreneurs, but the bigger picture is grim.

When it comes to elections and politics, Russian businessmen usually remain tight-lipped.

Following the announcement made by party leadership that he and other prominent entrepreneurs would join the board of the Right Cause political party, Wimm Bill Dann founder and Petrocas Energy Group co-owner David Yakobashvili, claimed innocence. "I will come and listen, but I am far from politics. I'm not joining," Yakobashvili told The Moscow Times.

Metals tycoon and billionaire Oleg Deripaska has also denied reports that he would join the board of the Right Cause party.

There is a reason for this adamant lack of interest. Russian business has learned two major lessons over the past 15 years: political engagement is more trouble than it's worth and no pro-business political party has been a success.

Five years ago, billionaire entrepreneur Mikhail Prokhorov attempted to run for elections at the helm of a previous incarnation of the Right Cause party. He wound up expelled from it, on the orders of Kremlin officials.

On March 23, Russia's business ombudsman Boris Titov, the new leader of the latest incarnation of the Right Cause party, tried to persuade businessmen to join the party board. A formal successor to the liberal political movement, the Right Cause party now focuses on business interests, rather than democratic values.

The same day, Russian President Vladimir Putin sat in on the first session of a working group — formed in mid-February — to promote dialogue between businessmen and law enforcement. Analysts agree the main challenge businesses in Russia face is pressure from authorities and a lack of justice.



Boris Titov, business ombudsman and politician, is looking for the Kremlin's blessing.

Even Putin admits this. In December 2015 he referred to the following unflattering figures: In 2014, of 200,000 criminal cases involving businessmen, only 15 percent led to sentences, but 80 percent of defendants lost their businesses. "They were pressured, robbed and then let go," he said.

"You can clearly see a new wave of arrests on economic grounds over the last 15 months," says Olga Romanova, an activist specializing in unjust trials. Romanova's observations are confirmed by official numbers. In 2015 there was a 22 percent rise in criminal cases opened in regards so-called economic rules of the Criminal Code. The number of pretrial detentions, widely seen as a tool for extorting businessmen, grew by 50 percent, according to Sergei Taut of the Business Against Corruption center.

Putin has voiced support for plans to improve communication between business and law enforcement. Reports have indicated that the Kremlin is prepared to amnesty business-

men who commit economic crimes for the first time, among other liberalizing measures.

But it will hardly change the bigger picture. "Liberalization means you might now get seven years instead of 10," says Yana Yakovleva, head of the Solidarity with Business NGO. "It won't affect the investment climate. If Putin would at least publicly agree that the justice system is itself a tool of unlawful property redistribution, things would look different."

In 2015 the Russian economy showed a drop of 8.4 percent in investment (see Op-Ed, page 5).

The day after the business-law enforcement working group was formed, the owner of Domodedovo Airport Dmitry Kamenshik was arrested. The arrest has been interpreted as another attempt to seize private business through nefarious means.

Boris Titov hasn't risked commenting on the matter — as either a party leader or an ombudsman, and exactly in the same manner as big businessmen do when it comes to politics.

Titov has made no secret of the fact that he took control of the party with the Kremlin's blessing. He sees himself more as an officially approved lobbyist than a political figure. Some analysts have even assumed his honesty might be his trump card — from a business perspective, loyalty in Russia is seen as a significant asset. It's easier to accomplish things behind the curtain than through political process or even at working groups.

Loyalty might be enough to earn a place in the Duma, but only if it comes with support from above, which is questionable. A source close to the Kremlin expressed doubts that Titov's party will make it. And judging by recent data, the party base is shrinking rapidly. **TMT**



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Editor-in-Chief Mikhail Fishman
Production Manager Igor Grishin
Advertising Director Maria Kamenskaya
m.kamenskaya@imedia.ru
Director Elena Stepanova
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Founder and publisher
ООО Moscowtimes

Founder's, publisher's and editorial address
3 Polkovaya Ul., Bldg. 1, Moscow 127018
Editorial telephone +7 (495) 234 3223
Fax +7 (495) 232 6529
Advertising Sales telephone
+7 (495) 232 4774
Fax +7 (495) 232 1764
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BRUSSELS ATTACKS

When Tragedy Brings Opportunity, And Opportunity – Tragedy

By Mark Galeotti
Professor of Global Affairs at New York University and expert in Russian security services



These days, the Russian government seems to observe jihadist terrorist attacks in the West with a thinly-veiled satisfaction, as well as a chance once again to rehearse its talking points that petty details such as the invasion of Ukraine ought not to be ignored in the name of counter-terrorist partnership. Apart from the fact that the Kremlin is unlikely to get what it wants from any closer cooperation, it should not be lulled into thinking what happens in Istanbul and Brussels cannot happen again in Moscow.

This is being written the day after the attacks, when news is still breaking and disinformation, rumors and assumptions are flying thick and fast. Though too early to be certain of the causes of the attacks, one can already see patterns in the responses, both political and practical, and consider what this means for Russia.

Distasteful as it may be, Moscow has learned that every tragedy is a political opportunity. President Vladimir Putin gained early political capital with then-U.S. President George W. Bush by his prompt and generous response to the 9/11 attacks. By contrast, these days the Russians seem just as keen to score points.

In his official message of condolences, Putin also noted that "the fight against this evil calls for the most active international cooperation." He has built much of his post-Crimea, post-Donbass, post-sanctions foreign policy around the hope that the

West can be seduced into a "my enemy's enemy is my friend" relationship.

The implicit deal is Russian intelligence materials and trigger-pullers in return for a willingness to turn a blind eye to its wider disputes with Moscow. Of course, there is some sympathy for this perspective in Western quarters. However, a willingness to work more closely with the Russians against common enemies does not extend to granting them a free hand in Ukraine in return. Moscow cannot claim a reward for doing something that is in both Russia and the West's common interest.

Nor is this helped by the crass and clumsy antics of prominent figures within the Russian foreign policy community. Alexei Pushkov, the hawkish head of the State Duma foreign affairs committee leapt at the opportunity to take a swipe on Twitter at NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg for focusing on the "imaginary Russian threat" while ignoring terrorists "right under his nose." The equally shrill Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova, likewise felt the need to combine the sympathetic with the snide, combining condolences with critiques of Western "double standards in the sphere of terrorism."

Ironically, Ukrainian security agency chief Vasyl Hrytsak rode to the rescue. His seemingly baseless comment that he "would not be surprised" if the attacks were "part of Russia's hybrid war"

managed to distract some of the attention from the nakedly self-serving messages from Moscow.

It is a dangerous act of hubris for Moscow to be so comfortable trying to use terrorist attacks—first in France, then Turkey, now Belgium—for its own political ends. Russia has had its share of terrorist attacks and while its security apparatus is formidable, it is increasingly facing challenges for which it is less well suited.

Just as the Europeans are finding it difficult to identify, deter and detain radicalized members of their own communities, so too a Russian campaign which for two decades has focused on attackers from the North Caucasus is finding it harder to re-orient to a threat from other Russian Muslims, or from Central Asian migrant workers.

The overwhelming majority of Russia's Muslim population (13-20 million, depending how you count) and migrant workers (maybe 5 million) are law-abiding, loyal and abhor terrorism. But there have been a growing number of cases in which individuals have been connected with extremist movements.

This is a particular problem because the Russian security apparatus lacks contacts and legitimacy within these communities and analytic capacity to address the snippets of information it can gather within them. Let us hope that Western politicians will have no reason to tweet their condolences to Moscow. **TMT**

2021

Projected launch of a new
manned spacecraft by Roscosmos



"The new Federal Space Program should accomplish the failures of the FSP 2007-2015." **Pavel Luzin**, space industry expert

59%

of the original Federal
Space Program budget
request was cut.

Brought Back to Earth

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

Russian space program in limbo following budget revisions.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev tried to put a positive spin on it, but the numbers were hard to ignore. Just two years ago, in the emotional high that followed Crimea's annexation, Russia's 10-year space program was promised a full 3.4 trillion rubles (then around \$70 billion). By the time Medvedev got around to approving the program, the budget had been reduced to mere 1.4 trillion rubles (\$20.5 billion).

It was the latest reminder that Russia's finest days in space are long gone. The nation that launched Sputnik and Yuri Gagarin now, most likely, faces a future of uncertainty. Its former rival, the U.S. space agency NASA, is now its main partner. And against NASA's budget of \$19.3 billion in 2016 alone, Russia's space agency Roscosmos may fall so far behind over the next decade that avenues of future cooperation become hard to find.

Program 2025

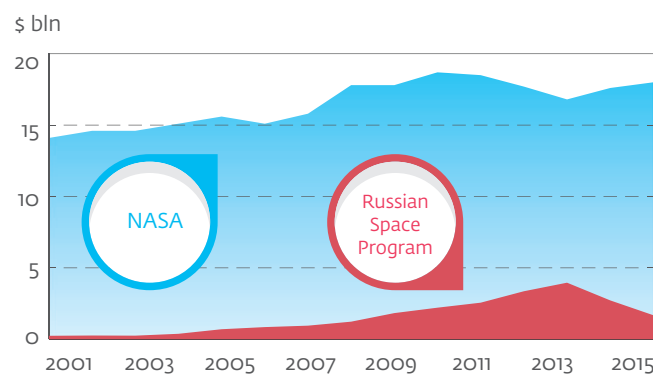
At a meeting of the Cabinet on March 17, Roscosmos head Igor Komarov outlined the broad terms of the new 10-year plan. No specific breakdown of the 1.4 trillion in funding was given, but the Komarov identified key strategic focus points "guaranteed to ensure the development of national cosmonautics and minimize risks and losses of position in this sphere of activity."

The first such point is the preservation and expansion of Russia's constellation of satellites in orbit, an area of space activity that has the most immediate commercial and political impact. Under the plan, Russia's satellite fleet will increase from 50 to 73 (this figure excludes satellites under Defense Ministry control).

Komarov said conservation of the satellite fleet is important to Russian national security, since it ensured independent earth observation information and communications capabilities. The value of independent satellites is greatly diminished without the ability to launch them, and Komarov said measures will be taken to ensure the health of the rocket production industry.

This mostly involves consolidation of the decaying space industry into a tighter organization of interrelated enterprises.

Space programs funding



Sources: Pavel Luzin via NASA and Roscosmos data

Rocket production will be streamlined — instead of building 12 different types of vehicles for similar missions, there will be just six key types. Further developmental work on Russian rockets will now focus on just two design families: the famous Soviet-designed Soyuz, and a new Angara family of launch vehicles.

These efforts fall well within Russia's already established areas of space activity. But it is an area where it is fast being out-classed by the likes of U.S. private space company SpaceX.

The disparity will only increase over the next two years, as SpaceX and U.S. aerospace giant Boeing begin flying new manned spacecraft for NASA. This will free NASA from reliance on Russia's Soyuz to launch astronauts into space — a loss of around \$500 million for Russia's space program.

Komarov says that Russia will, in 2021, begin testing a new manned spacecraft called Federation, a replacement for the Soviet-designed Soyuz. A manned flight will take place by 2023, he added. Taken as a whole, the 2025 program is supposed to lay the groundwork for "full-scale lunar exploration after 2025, and

landing a man on the moon by 2030."

It is less clear is how they can realistically accomplish that goal. Russia would need heavier rockets than it currently has. It is not known how much Roscosmos is investing in building such a rocket, but the original draft allocated some 700 billion rubles (\$10.35 billion). In a later draft, the number had been "optimized" to 60 billion rubles (\$887.4 million).

Such an amount is most likely insufficient. NASA estimates development costs for its own new rocket — the Space Launch System (SLS) — in the region of \$12 billion. Independent estimates put the number higher. It is, however, conceivable that Russia could cut costs by developing a super-heavy rocket based on the Angara design.

Komarov also promised that Russia will at last complete its segment of the International Space Station, a \$150 billion project with NASA. Russia has three space station modules still on the ground after years of delays.

Research Abandoned

Analysts were most disappointed by the low priority given to research in the program. Space research has suffered greatly since 1991: Funding has largely been focused on rockets and spacecraft that can be sold on the commercial market to attract funding from non-state sources. In the last 10-year program, Roscosmos tried to reverse this, but high-profile missions like the Phobos-Grunt probe in 2011 failed to even leave Low Earth Orbit.

In the 2025 program, Roscosmos is retrying a number of these projects, or rolling projects over from the 2015 program. But Dr. James Oberger, a former NASA engineer and commentator on the Russian space program, says these alone are insufficient to stimulate a revival of Russia's once pioneering space science program.

"Talented people will look elsewhere, both inside Russia and outside it," Oberger said. Young engineers won't want to work for an obviously struggling industry, no longer cutting edge. "Russia is becoming more and more of a sideshow," he said. **TMT**

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> 80 Days

spent by Nadezhda Savchenko on hunger strike while in a pretrial detention facility.

The Moscow Times
No. 5747



"Ukraine will never recognize either this show trial or their so-called sentence, absurdity and cruelty of which proves that Russian justice has returned to the period of Stalin-Vyshinsky."
Petro Poroshenko, Ukrainian president.



Former Ukrainian army pilot Nadezhda Savchenko laughing inside a glass-walled cage during a verdict hearing at a court in the southern border town of Donetsk in Russia's Rostov region on March 21.

The Waiting Game

By **Anton Naumlyuk** newsreporter@imedi.ru and **Daria Litvinova** d.litvinova@imedi.ru | Twitter: @dashalitvinovv

Western and Ukrainian officials demand the release of Nadezhda Savchenko, sentenced to 22 years in prison. So far the Kremlin has shown little sign of obliging.

DONETSK, Rostov Region / MOSCOW — In eight days, the Ukrainian servicewoman Nadezhda Savchenko will be transferred to a penal colony to begin serving a 22-year sentence. By that time, the stubborn Savchenko has promised to be back on a dry hunger strike, which, she says, she will “take to the end.” The deadline is therefore tight — perhaps just three weeks — for Russia, Ukraine and the West to agree to the conditions of her release.

Judge Leonid Stepanenko’s guilty verdict was in many ways a predictable finale for the highly contested trial. The story, however, has some way to run. The defiant Savchenko has become a national hero for Ukraine; for the West, she has become a political martyr; for Russia, she has become an annoyance.

Within minutes of the verdict, Ukrainian and Western officials demanded her release — at the very least, as part of a prisoner exchange as agreed under the Minsk agreements. So far, however, the Kremlin has expressed little sign that it is ready to support such a deal.

When Russian authorities arrested Savchenko in July 2014, she was an officer fighting in the Aidar paramilitary volunteer battalion near Luhansk, eastern Ukraine. In those frantic times, battle positions around Luhansk were in constant flux, with front lines changing on a daily basis. The entire future of Ukraine was under doubt.

Then, perhaps, the arrest of the officer might have made some sense to the anti-Kiev side. As the case evolved, however, its use to the Kremlin became less and less clear. On one level, it seems the Kremlin has refused to compromise on principle, and allowed the Russian legal system to follow the case through to its logical conclusion.

All 22 years of it.

Courtroom Drama

It took the judge two days to read the 200-page verdict. Finally, after several breaks, he declared that the “rehabilitation of Savchenko” was “only possible if she is isolated from society.” The Ukrainian officer responded to the guilty verdict by singing at the top of her voice, while some of her supporters broke out in applause.

Savchenko stood trial in Donetsk, a small town in southern Russia. There were requests from human rights advocates and politicians to move the proceedings to Moscow. These were ignored — an attempt, some speculated, to draw attention away from the high-profile case. If there was such an attempt, however, it failed: the trial gripped international attention from the

start, reaching a peak on March 21-22, when the verdict was read.

Security was tightened to exaggerated levels in and around the courtroom. Several dozen policemen were brought into town for the occasion, and the border with Ukraine was monitored by traffic police. As a result, the situation within the town began to heat up, and local residents — angered over the past few months of basement and attic searches, and the close attention of security officials — began to air some of their dissatisfactions at a meeting with journalists.

The residents also revealed that they had been warned the city would be visited by many foreigners. They were advised to monitor their children closely.

Police and security services expected mass demonstrations in support of Savchenko. In the end, the only demonstrators were from pro-Kremlin youth movements. These activists stood with picture placards of the killed journalists, and demanded the court “punish the murderer.” According to local residents, the demonstrators were students and state employees, specially bussed in from neighboring towns.

Unlike dozens of reporters who had great trouble gaining entry, the pro-Kremlin activists were allowed into the courtroom with little restriction. Once inside, the activists faced-off with a Ukrainian delegation, which subsequently found itself in trouble with bailiffs. “They forced us, an official delegation,” said Svyatoslav Tsegolko, President Petro Poroshenko’s spokesman.

Prisoner Exchange

Savchenko has on multiple occasions stated that she has no intention to appeal the sentence, no matter how harsh. Right now, the most likely way for her to get out of jail is prisoner exchange. For months, Russian and Ukrainian officials have been talking about the possibility of it, but so far the only detailed offer was voiced by Poroshenko. It provoked minimal reaction from the Kremlin.

In an online statement issued right after the verdict, Poroshenko said he would hand over “two Russian citizens” detained in Ukraine in exchange for Savchenko. He did not name the Russian detainees, but government sources in Kiev confirmed to The Moscow Times that he was referring to Yevgeny Yerofeyev and Alexander Alexandrov, the two “on leave” Russian servicemen captured fighting in eastern Ukraine.

According to Poroshenko, Russian President Vladimir Putin had promised to hand Savchenko over to Ukrainian authorities at the conclusion of her trial. Presidential spokesman Dmitry

Peskov, however, told reporters that he had no knowledge of any such agreement. Peskov added that only the president can make a decision regarding the exchange. “I can’t say now what his decision will be,” he said.

Russia may well place humiliating conditions on a deal. Earlier this month, Russia’s Justice Ministry told the Vedomosti newspaper Ukraine would have to recognize the legitimacy of the sentence before any deal is made. A government source in Kiev told The Moscow Times this was “difficult at the current time,” adding that Kiev was also concerned Savchenko may be obliged to apply for pardon to Putin. She will almost certainly reject such a condition.

It is likely Savchenko’s fate will be a major topic for conversation during talks between U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and President Putin. Speaking to Poroshenko over the phone on March 22, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden stressed that “signals regarding immediate release of the Ukrainian [citizen Savchenko] will be passed over to the Russian side.” Peskov, in turn, said the Kerry and Putin “might” discuss Savchenko’s case — but “only if there’s time for it.”

No New Sanctions

Savchenko’s defense team anticipated that the West would respond to a guilty verdict with a full set of new sanctions. Yet analysts believe these are not on the table at the moment.

“The question of prolonging current sanctions is much more important now, especially since Moscow is campaigning for lifting them,” says international affairs expert Vladimir Frolov. Convicting Savchenko, he adds, might lower the probability of lifting or softening the current sanctions. “It will be that much harder for the EU to do that following the conviction, and the United States isn’t even considering it,” he told The Moscow Times.

Poroshenko will likely step up his push for sanctions against Russian individuals involved in the prosecution. According to Taras Berezovets, a Kiev-based political analyst, the Ukrainian government has already compiled a “Savchenko list,” and passed it to the chair of the European Commission. “Savchenko’s case is an instrument with which Ukraine can apply pressure to Russia,” he says. “The fact that the West sympathizes with Savchenko’s story, helps Ukraine.”

At the same time, Poroshenko is under pressure to close the deal, Berezovets says: “He wants Savchenko released, that way it would count as his personal political victory.”

A source close to the Kremlin suggested it was unlikely Savchenko would be released any time soon. **TMT**

19%

growth of the poor in Russia, compared to 2014, a new record.



"We lost the global competition, we have to admit it. As an economy, we are a loser, a downshifter."
German Gref, head of Sberbank.

Every Man for Himself

Russia is experiencing its most profound economic crisis for a generation, and risks not just stagnation, but degradation.



Op-Ed by **Natalya Zubarevich**
 Professor at Moscow State University,
 regional program director at the Independent
 Institute for Social Policy

The Russian economy is locked in an especially bad crisis. It differs significantly from the crises of 1998 and 2008-2009, when rapid downturns were followed by equally rapid recoveries. If anything, the current crisis more closely resembles that of the early 1990s, when Russia was transitioning from a planned to a market economy. Although salaries fell further then — by more than 50 percent — the same institutional problems caused both crises. The norms and rules now in place in the Russian economy are blocking its further development, just as they did back then.

Budgets are in the worst condition. The federal budget deficit for 2015 totaled 2 trillion rubles (\$32.8 billion) or 2.5 percent of gross domestic product. The combined deficit for all regional and municipal budgets totaled 2.7 trillion rubles (\$44.3 billion), or 3.5 percent of GDP — 11 percent more than in 2014.

Industrial output fell by 5 percent by May 2015. Household personal incomes dropped last year by 4.7 percent (and by 6.9 percent this February when compared to February 2015). Consumption slumped sharply, causing a 10 percent decline in retail sales. Construction was down by 13 percent in September 2015, and by 7 percent for the year overall. Investment continues to fall for the third consecutive year, and each year the rate of decline increases. Last year alone investment dropped by 8.4 percent. That means the crisis is continuing, and even if this or that sector has already "hit bottom," there is no guarantee that investment will not fall even further — because there are no drivers of growth in the Russian economy.

What are drivers of growth? They include improvements to the business environment, more predictable policies and the absence of geopolitical adventurism. Businesses do not invest when they are uncertain what will happen tomorrow, next year or five years from now.

This crisis has geography of its own. Worst hit are the industrial regions that produce automobiles and train wagons. In those sectors, production is off by as much as 30-50 percent. That is the result of a sharp drop in buying power. The Russian car industry modernized over the last decade, but people do not have enough money to buy foreign cars assembled in Russian plants. They can't even afford the basic Lada automobile manufactured by AvtoVAZ. A sharp drop in foreign demand for Russian train wagons has led

to a steep decline in manufacturing by UralVagonZavod in Nizhny Tagil. Now that John Deere harvesters have become too expensive for Russian farmers, the only domestic industrial sector experiencing growth is agricultural machinery. But how long will that last?

Oil and gas regions are faring better, especially such relative newcomers as Sakhalin, eastern Siberia and the Yamal-Nenets autonomous district. Extraction continues and production is up in those regions thanks to investments made in past years. Agrarian regions in the south are also on the upswing, although growth is slow — at just 3 percent for agriculture and similar figures for food production. That is the result of import substitution caused by the devaluation of the ruble. However, import substitution is progressing slowly. For example, Russia was already producing 90 percent of its own poultry before the crisis, but now produces only 95 percent. It was meeting 70-80 percent of its pork needs, and now only close to 90 percent. However, the drop in demand and buying power will soon put a halt to such growth.

The same thing is happening in the pharmaceutical sector. Imported drugs have become more expensive and the government is purchasing fewer of them. Demand has therefore risen for cheaper and lower quality drugs produced in Russia.

And last, regions that are home to military-industrial complex facilities are also seeing growth. These include the Bryansk, Tula, Vladimir and parts of the Yaroslavl regions, along with some of the republics on the Volga. The federal budget finances the defense industry and increased defense spending by 28 percent in 2015. But that holiday is already over: The federal budget is in the red and maintaining that level of defense spending is no longer an option. In fact, defense spending accounts for more than 20 percent of all federal spending — 33 percent if one includes national security expenses. I anticipate spending to decrease in those areas in 2016.

But the greatest impact this crisis has is on major cities, where people earn the most and consume the most, where demand is most modernized and where people make the greatest use of services. These residents buy more, they spend more on culture, recreation, travel, education and healthcare. After becoming accustomed to modern lifestyles, metropolitan residents are now forced to gradually abandon them. The services sector is the main form of employment in major cities, and as resources become increasingly scarce, employment falls fastest in this area.

With the crisis hitting businesses that provide services that improve life, major cities are witnessing the greatest overall drop in the quality of life and standard of living. This is a very serious problem. Not only incomes are dropping; so

are people's work status, consumption patterns and standard of living. Every large city is also a huge labor market, and under crisis conditions, residents are forced to accept less desirable jobs that offer lower pay. Of course, people in the big cities feel frustrated and depressed, but they are adapting to their new lives.

The crisis will not cause an increase in unemployment in major cities, but it is reducing status and stifling ambitions.

Unemployment is rising slowly in the regions. Official statistics put it at only 5.7 percent in late 2015. That is negligible. The people of Spain and Italy would be happy with such an "unemployment problem."

Unemployment is not rising faster because, firstly, the effects of the crisis are felt slowly and factories are not generally closing down. Secondly, Russia has an unusual labor market. In place of layoffs, employees are given fewer work days per week, go on forced leave or simply stand idle. Business owners understand they can be punished for shutting down enterprises. They know it is better to keep their doors open.

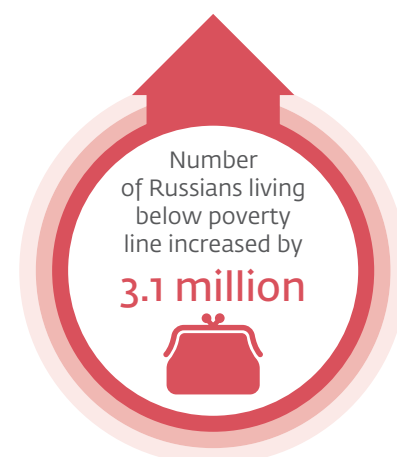
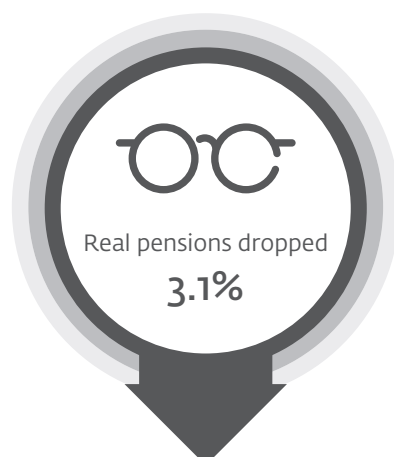
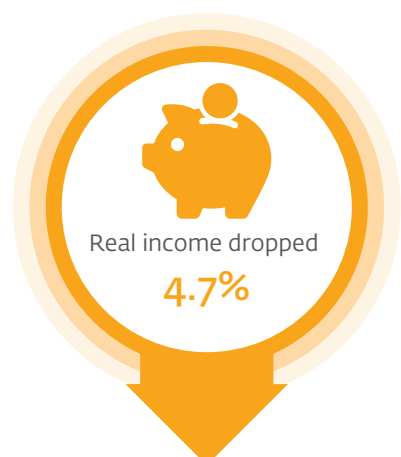
Demographic factors also influence unemployment statistics. For example, more people are reaching retirement age and leaving the labor market than there are young people coming of age and entering it. Also, with the decline in construction, migrant workers that composed the greater part of those work crews are returning home and, as non-Russian citizens, were never included in official employment statistics.

As Russians adapt to the crisis, a sense of individualism and "every man for himself" has begun to dominate. Some find a second job, others settle for a less desirable position and still others go "underground" and stop paying taxes. In the provinces, residents are raising more chickens and pigs and planting more potatoes — the traditional way that Russians have fed themselves throughout the ages. One's own labor does not cost anything. That is the classic Russian "survival mode."

This year Russia is once again facing the prospect of double-digit inflation — and that means a new decline in real wages and real incomes. Russia becomes a poor and low-cost country full of great deals for foreign hard currency tourists.

It is the protractedness of the current crisis that makes it particularly challenging. Russia will remain at a nadir for some time to come. But the worst part is that people are getting used to it. And when people grow accustomed to a crisis, their primary coping strategy is to tighten their belts. They eat more potatoes and bread and less meat and mandarins, vacation at their dachas rather than at the sea and modify their consumption to fit their shrinking incomes. That is the main survival strategy. And it leads to degradation. **TWTF**

What happened to the Russian economy in 2015



40%

of documents at the Russian State Archive in the early 1990s were classified.



"Medinsky is the perfectly expressed essence of the current official position to history. This position can be summarized as: We don't like the real history that we lived during the Soviet period, so we're going to make a different one." **Nikita Petrov**, historian.



Sergei Mironenko at his office in the Russian State Archive, which he has led since its founding in 1992.

History's Guardsman

By **Peter Hobson** p.hobson@imedia.ru, Twitter: @peterhobson15 | Photos by **Sergei Melikhov**

Part of Russian society does not want to know its own history, says former head of the State Archive.

The year is 1941, and hundreds of miles from Germany, Nazi armored divisions gather speed along newly-frosted soil. They are almost within striking distance of Moscow, the Soviet capital.

Eventually, the charge is halted before the city by a series of bloody, desperate battles. Famously, 28 members of the Red Army's 316th Rifle Division were reported wiped out as they blew up 18 German tanks to help scupper the Nazi advance.

The sacrifice of the 28 "Panfilov's guardsmen" became a Soviet symbol. Streets and monuments across the country were dedicated to the men. They were immortalized in Moscow's city anthem. In schools, children memorized the soldiers' names.

But last year, the story itself became a battleground. Sergei Mironenko, the longtime director of the Russian State Archive, denounced the tale as a fake, and published documents to prove it. The heroic 28 had been invented by a war journalist, the documents showed. Moreover, the Soviet authorities uncovered the fiction, but buried the evidence.

In the storm that followed the revelation, Vladimir Medinsky, the Russian culture minister, attacked Mironenko. A head archivist should confine himself to handling documents, he said, and leave the interpretations to others.

In mid-March, Mironenko was demoted. The 65-year-old historian told The Moscow Times in an interview that he had wanted to change positions. But many of his colleagues have bristled. They say that Mironenko fell victim to a new official approach to history, of which Medinsky is the chief advocate.

Whatever the truth, Mironenko's exit marks the end of an era. His 24 years in charge of the state archive spanned modern Russian history. He arrived as an explosion of openness swept away the Soviet Union; he leaves amid fears that an increasingly nationalistic and authoritarian Kremlin is seeking to suppress uncomfortable truths in Russian and Soviet history.

Freedom

Mironenko watched the U.S.S.R. start to unravel as a historian at the Soviet Academy of Sciences in Moscow.

He remembers being bored by most of his Marxist colleagues, who dogmatically stuck to outdated ideals. Mironenko could see that those ideals were crumbling. Dissident Soviet culture had used Mikhail Gorbachev's reform attempts to take over the mainstream and demand access to the secrets hoarded by the communist bureaucracy.

Slowly, Mironenko witnessed how the secretive apparatus loosened its grip. Books were published that had been censored for decades, and the nation learned the true extent of Joseph Stalin's repressions and prison camps.

In August 1991, following a failed coup by hard-line communists, things became electric. Boris Yeltsin seized power, and the new zeitgeist was total openness. The KGB and Communist Party were sidelined, and entire Soviet institutions were collapsing left and right, leaving mountains of papers. Meanwhile, the government passed laws that abolished blanket secrecy and guaranteed access to documents.

The public wanted knowledge, and Mironenko was on a mission to provide it. Appointed head of the new Russian State Archive in 1992, he rushed to get as much information as possible into the public sphere, working with journalists, arranging exhibitions and releasing catalogues. He made

hundreds of short television programs, each dedicated to a document. The point was to put Russians face-to-face with facts. "Less commentary, more document," Mironenko said. "Let the document speak for itself."

He began to oversee a mass declassification. In 1992, some 40 percent of the files in the state archive were marked "secret." In 1993 alone, more than 300,000 documents were to be declassified. It was "an archive revolution," Mironenko said.

Retrenchment

But ending secrecy was easier said than done.

One problem was that declassification was driven from the top. In the early 1990s, a law was passed that would declassify every document older than 30 years. But the process was not automatic. "Millions of documents had to be looked at and given expert opinions before they could be released," says Nikita Petrov, a historian.

However, the experts giving their opinions were from the very offices that had created and stored the documents in the first place. They were used to secrecy, and they received bonuses for working with classified information. "There was a constant war with those experts, who were simply unwilling to open all the documents," says Petrov.

Then the regulations began to tighten. In 1993, a complex new declassification procedure replaced the previous system, under which an archive could declassify a document on its own authority.

In 1996, a "commission for guarding state secrets" was put in charge of declassification. The name revealed the change in direction, says Petrov: "This commission had been responsible for keeping today's secrets, and then they were asked to reveal yesterday's. Mentally, they weren't ready for that."

Continued on Page 11 →



Out & About



March 24 – 30, 2016

7

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



LADURÉE



The sweet treats at the French patisserie are a feast for the eyes as well as the palate. The always popular macarons come in a veritable rainbow of colors and flavors.

Ladurée Arrives in Moscow

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

Stand in line for the most expensive desserts in the city

I only got into Ladurée on my second attempt more than two weeks after its opening. Ladurée Moscow is located in the largely expat neighborhood of Patriarch's Ponds, next to the Agent Provocateur lingerie store.

Last weekend macaron lovers stood in a line outside of the bakery in the freezing cold without any idea of how long the wait would be. As it turned out, there are only six tables in the café section of the store, so it is better to go on a weekday. Last Monday night I only had to wait for about ten minutes.

The waiter assured me that during the first few days the lines were as long as those outside McDonald's when it opened in 1990, but it looked like he probably was not even born then.

Compared to Ladurée in Paris, which serves full meals, the Moscow branch menu is limited to baked goods. Even then, not everything was available. Ladurée was out of French toast (650 or 750 rubles) but the waiter told me I might be luckier if I came in the morning. The 450-ruble lemon cake tasted like a typical lemon cake and was not

much different from something bought at the corner grocery store.

The macarons are, of course, delicious, but overpriced at 225 rubles. When it comes to macarons, the visual effect is almost as important as the taste, and the brightly-colored offerings here don't disappoint. Ladurée offers various flavors like orange blossom, salty caramel, rose or licorice. Ladurée branded teas start at 550 rubles for a teapot, but more interesting blends like Marie Antoinette and The Sun King cost 590 rubles. You can also have a coffee, but the latte at 250 rubles is

really café au lait served Parisian style in two small pots with espresso and steamed milk.

Ladurée is expensive compared to other alternatives in Moscow, but if you'd like to have a hot drink with macarons in a familiar Parisian interior or buy someone special a gift box with a design that is famous all over the world, go and get in line. **TMT**

+7 (999) 834 5673

[facebook.com/Laduree-](https://facebook.com/Laduree-Moscow-983815351707729)

[Moscow-983815351707729](https://facebook.com/Laduree-Moscow-983815351707729)

27/14 Malaya Bronnaya Ulitsa

Metro Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya, Mayakovskaya

NEWS & OPENINGS



15 KITCHEN+BAR

15 Kitchen+Bar

Great chef this month

15 Kitchen+Bar changes with the seasons — literally. Every three months a new world-class chef takes over the kitchen. Edward Delling Williams, best known for his Parisian restaurant Au Passage and his “tail to nose” approach to cooking, will be in the kitchen until April 8. Everything is beautiful, delicious and immaculately presented. Try the duck breast with pan-fried radicchio and crispy potato or the decadent chocolate mousse.

+7 (985) 767 1066

facebook.com/15KitchenBar

15 Pozharsky Pereulok. Metro Kropotkinskaya



PO-RUSSKI

Po-russki

Cheap thrills in a glam neighborhood

Po-russki (the Russian Way) is a new café opened by the Yolki Palki chain in glamorous Stoleshnikov Pereulok. The design is extremely kitsch, but the prices beat everything else on offer within a five-mile radius. The traditional “herring under a fur coat” salad is 160 rubles and chicken Kiev is 310 rubles. Pair with beer (from 100 rubles) or vodka infusion (from 90 rubles).

+7 (929) 642 3708

vk.com/po_russki_stoleshka

6/5 Stoleshnikov Pereulok

Metro Okhotny Ryad, Teatralnaya



NEMETS-PERETS. KOLBASA

Nemets-Perets. Kolbasa

Germany, Russian-style

This loft-style pub boasts 26 varieties of craft beer from around the world. Along with traditional beers, you can try beer drinks (like beer and coffee) and beer aged in rum barrels. Must try: Arbusen Sehr Gutten, the appetizer board and everything sausage. Sausages have their own section of the menu, and rightly so, with seven types from Munich to Tyrolean. Good, but nothing new.

+7 (499) 678 3191

facebook.com/nemetspub/?fref=ts

21A Savvinskaya Naberezhnaya, Bldg. 1

Metro Fruzenskaya



SYMPHONY

Symphony

Wine, tapas and a dash of hipster

Located in the Arma business quarter near Art-Play and Winzavod, Symphony offers fresh, simple food in a pared back setting. The business lunch deserves a special mention — pick from a tasty range of soups, salads and Mexican burritos and tacos. Friendly staff, a stylish but minimalist interior and glasses of wine from 200 rubles make this the perfect spot to grab a bite between galleries.

+7 (495) 983 3590

facebook.com/symposymoscow

5 Nizhny Susalny Pereulok, Bldg. 4

Metro Kurskaya

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!**



Anna Kachurovskaya, external relations specialist, MGPU (Moscow State Pedagogical University)

I think I know the **Moscow Zoo** better than any zoologist. My personal favorite is the “World of Amphibians” where you can see wood frogs sticking to the glass with their legs. They are cute, but one drop of their poison is enough to kill 50 men. I also like the 50-meter-long mosaic by Zurab Tsereteli at the children’s zoo.



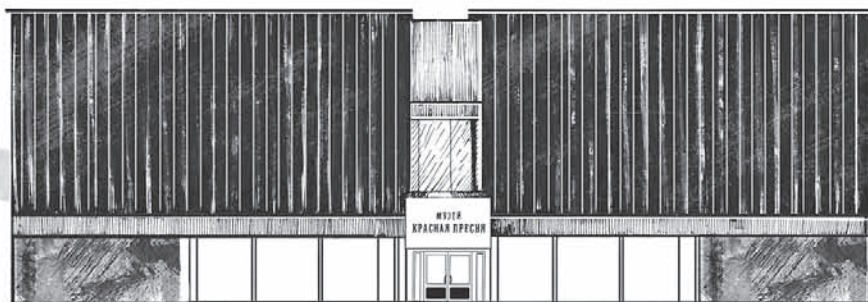
Maxim Semyonov, film critic

There’s a building known as **Bimman’s house** at 6 Bolshoi Tryokhgorny Pereulok. It’s hard to tell when it was built: the roof is flat, it has three square bay windows and some constructivist elements. The windows are supported by rails, which are stamped with the seal of Demidov’s factory in 1876, while in fact the building was constructed in 1912 by Semyon Bimman, a middle class man from Kiev.

3. Krasnaya Presnya Historical Memorial Museum

Directly across the street from the church is a late Soviet period building attached to a little pale green house. This is the Krasnaya Presnya Historical Memorial Museum, one of Moscow’s unsung treasures. The museum first opened in 1924 in the little house to honor the revolutionaries who met there in 1905 — and were the reason that “krasnaya” (red) was added to Presnya. The big building opened in 1982 and has been recently revamped. It has fascinating exhibitions of daily life from 1905 to the present, lots of revolutionary banners, photographs, and artifacts; a machine in the basement that plays recordings of Soviet leaders and celebrities — want to hear Krupskaya? — and the largest, most amazing diorama in Europe. The diorama depicts a fateful battle of 1905, with workers on barricades — standing where today’s entrance to the zoo is — and an exact depiction of Moscow on that day painted on the backdrop. It is like being in a time machine. The curator presses a button, and you see the battle between the tsar’s troops and workers play out with lighting and sound effects. Come with three people (or buy four tickets) to see the diorama.

4 Bolshoi Predtechensky Pereulok, Bldg. 2



3



2

2. Church of the Nativity of St. John the Forerunner

With your back to the river, walk to the left of the White House to start a twisting walk up the hill. Turn right on Cluboky Pereulok until it ends, cut through the children’s park and exit onto Pereulok Kapranova going up the hill to the left; turn left again on Verkhny Predtechensky Pereulok and then right on Maly Predtechensky Pereulok. Stop to catch your breath and gaze at the Church of the Nativity of St. John the Forerunner (Predtecha) whom Westerners usually call St. John the Baptist. Although this is a rather simple church, it is astonishing for its longevity: it was built in the early 18th century and managed to mostly survive intact, albeit with a new bell tower. And in the late 19th century, frescoes were painted by the artist Viktor Vasnetsov. Although during the early Soviet period they were covered by paint and the church was stripped of its gold, silver, precious stones and even its bells, it was never closed. Look inside at the ornate gilded iconostasis and the magnificent frescoes, now mostly restored.

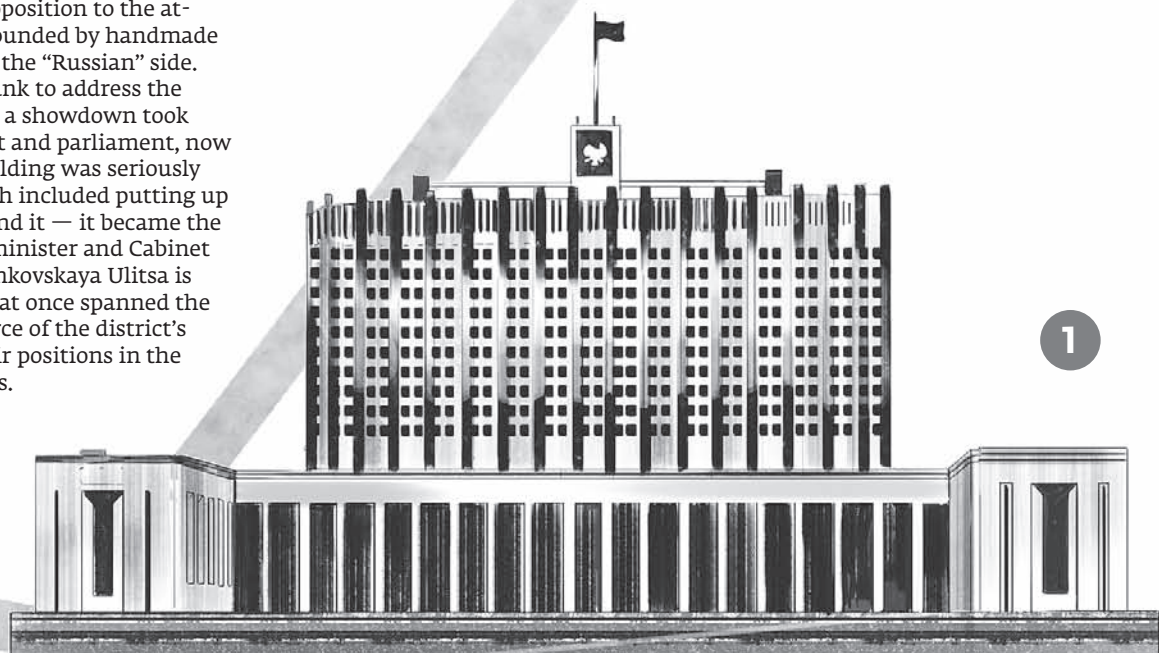
2 Maly Predtechensky Pereulok

Gluboky Pereulok

1. White House

This walk begins at the Government House, aka the Russian White House. It took 15 years to build and was finished in 1979 as the House of Soviets of the Russian republic (within the U.S.S.R.), and later as the Russian republic parliament building. In 1991 it was the center of opposition to the attempt to oust Mikhail Gorbachev, surrounded by handmade barricades and tanks that went over to the “Russian” side. Here Boris Yeltsin scrambled up on a tank to address the protesters. And it was here in 1993 that a showdown took place between the Russian government and parliament, now against the Russian leader, and the building was seriously damaged. After reconstruction — which included putting up an enormous wrought-iron fence around it — it became the Government House, where the prime minister and Cabinet have their offices. Behind it by Konyushkovskaya Ulitsa is the historical “Humpbacked Bridge” that once spanned the Presnya (Fresh Water) River — the source of the district’s name. On this bridge workers held their positions in the battles of 1905 against the tsarist troops.

2 Krasnopresnenskaya Naberezhnaya



1



Ulitsa Krasnaya Presnya



Pyotr Favorov, editor-in-chief at Prime Russian Magazine

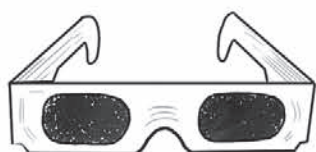
There's a group of wooden buildings on Novovogankovskiy Pereulok — the **historical observatory of Moscow State University (MGU)**, the first astronomical institution in Moscow, founded in 1831. The scientists needed a dark and quiet place on a hill, and Presnya used to be practically in the countryside at that time. If you peek through the crack in the gates, you can see the dome of an old telescope drowning in greenery.



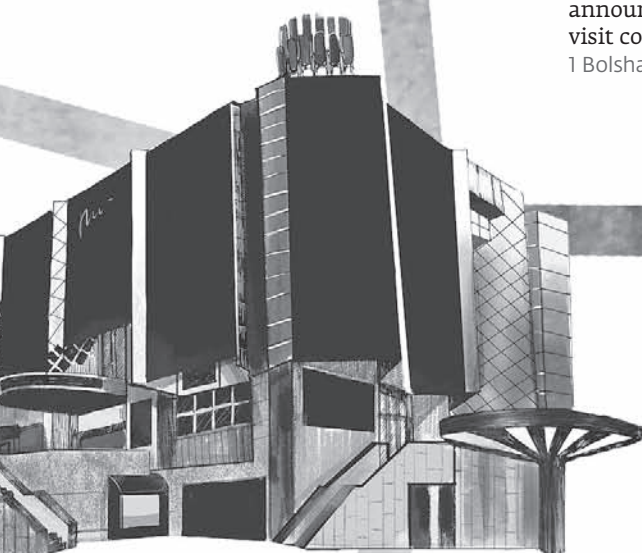
5. Moscow Zoo

Follow Druzhinnikovskaya Ulitsa to Ulitsa Krasnaya Presnya, and cross over to the entrance to the Moscow Zoo. The original zoo was founded with less than 300 animals on 25 acres by zoologists and biologists in 1864. It has expanded over the decades to more than twice its original size and now houses more than 6,500 animals. Like all city zoos, the enclosures are not as large and natural as visitors might wish, but the modernized facilities are visitor-friendly and as animal-friendly as possible in the center of Moscow. The zoo takes its mission to study various species and try to save endangered animals seriously. It has terrific special tours and programs, announces its feeding schedule ahead of time, and makes a visit comfortable in almost any weather.

1 Bolshaya Gruzinskaya Ulitsa, Bldg. 1



4



4. Solovei Cinema Center

Leave the battlegrounds of Krasnaya Presnya and walk back to Maly Predtechensky Pereulok, turn left and then right on Ulitsa Zamoryonova. After a block, on the left is the Solovei Cinema Center, which touts itself as the biggest (24-theater) independent movie complex in Moscow showing blockbuster films — 50 or more a day. It has the gaudiest decorations, a bathroom that is supposedly the most photographed in Moscow, and a trendy café. The films are almost all dubbed, but the place is fun. Stop in at least for a snack.

15 Druzhinnikovskaya Ulitsa

Ulitsa Zamoryonova

Konyushkovskaya Ulitsa



6

6. Kudrinskaya Ploshchad Skyscraper

After the zoo, walk up the cobblestoned Barrikadnaya Ulitsa — left unpaved and almost unchanged in honor of the 1905 revolutionary events, the bane of drivers in sleety weather — toward the Seven Sister skyscraper on Kudrinskaya Ploshchad. Finished in 1954, this 24-story building has 450 apartments, originally meant for aviation engineers, test pilots, and Communist Party officials. At the top there was once a small weather observatory, but now the space is rented out to communications companies. The small, pleasant square in front of the building was the site of one of the Occupy sit-in demonstrations in 2012. Rebellion is, after all, a Presnya tradition.

1 Kudrinskaya Ploshchad



Moscow's Cradle of Revolution Following History's Footsteps

By **Michele A. Berdy** m.berdy@imedia.ru | Illustration by **Yelena Rasputina**

A walk around the Presnya district, where rebellion and recreation meet on the cobblestone streets



Raychel Schwartz, English teacher

"I love the **Tsiferblat** anti-cafes, where you pay for the time you stay instead of your coffee or snacks. I go for the environment — the people are always friendly, and the place is cozy and beautiful. I sit and work for hours over many cups of tea. Highly recommended!"



45 BAR AND CAFE

Save Water, Drink Wine

It used to be that the wine selection in Moscow was extremely limited, with an emphasis on the sweet end of the spectrum. Fortunately, the capital now abounds with wine bars offering talented sommeliers, world-class wines and home-grown offerings from Russia's best wineries. Oenophiles, look no further.



45 BAR AND CAFE

45 Bar and Cafe

Neighborhood secret

45 Bar and Cafe is tucked away inside a courtyard off Gogolevsky Bulvar. It's the kind of place that takes wine seriously without being overly pretentious about it — pontificating over the berry notes in your red is entirely optional. There is no wine list. Instead, talk to the knowledgeable sommelier who will suggest bottles depending on your grape or regional preferences. You can buy by the glass, but when the wine and ambience are this good most settle down for the evening over a bottle. Simple but tasty bar snacks accompany your tipple of choice.

+7 (495) 953 1564

facebook.com/winebar45

17 Gogolevsky Bulvar

Metro Kropotkinskaya, Arbatskaya



I LIKE WINE

I Like Wine

Youthful, upbeat wine bar

I Like Wine buzzes even on weeknights with a trendy crowd of young professionals. Wines on the menu are categorized according to their characteristics, for instance "fresh and light" or "rich and full-bodied." This clever concept encourages you to try new varieties but saves embarrassment if all you know about wine is that you like to drink it. The menu features light bites from around the world including charcuterie, seafood and mini-burgers. The brainchild of Vladimir Perelman, formerly of I Like Bar, this bistro has achieved its goal of being lively and not at all fussy.

+7 (495) 928 8859

facebook.com/ilikewine.ru

16 Ulitsa Pokrovka. Metro Chistiye Prudy



WINE RELIGION

Wine Religion

Upmarket wine merchant and gastropub

Boasting a staggering 400 labels, this delightful gastropub certainly takes a reverential approach to its wine. In fact, watching sommelier Ksenia Karpenko pour and handle your bottle is almost like being privy to a devout religious ceremony. As you enter Wine Religion you're greeted by floor-to-ceiling shelves of wine. Pick your favorite bottle to enjoy at home or pay the corkage fee to drink in. A well-considered European-inspired menu of salads, seafood and steaks compliments the drinks list. Prices are towards the upper end of the scale but considering the quality of the wines and the ambience of the place, you won't be disappointed.

+7 (499) 753 2340

winereligion.ru

16 Michurinsky Prospekt. Metro Universitet

La Bottega

A taste of Italy

As its name would suggest, La Bottega specializes in Italian wines. There are over 170 labels available — enough to satisfy even Mediterranean grape connoisseurs among you. If choosing a bottle is too much of an undertaking, the good news is that La Bottega is one of the few places in Moscow with a Eurocave wine storage room that keeps 24

wines ready to pour by the glass at any time. Perfect if you'd like to try something special but don't want to splash out on the bottle. A simple but elegant interior with tiled floors and deep red walls leaves you to appreciate the great wine and crunchy bruschetta while you dream of Italy.

+7 (495) 213 3088

labottega.ru

5 Lesnaya Ulitsa. Metro Belorusskaya



GRAPE

GRAPE

Wine and dine in style

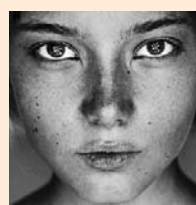
So extensive are the shelves of wine at GRAPE you'd be forgiven for thinking you'd entered a monumental wine library rather than a restaurant. Most of the seating is in the cellar, where tables nestle between mammoth wine cabinets. With more than 1,400 bottles on offer — many of which are extremely rare speciality wines — you could easily spend most of the evening perusing the shelves. Drink in or take a bottle home at a 10-percent discount. If you're tired of the current trend of exposed brick and industrial-chic interiors, this should be up right your street. The venue seats just 25 and takes an old-fashioned, high-end approach to wining and dining.

+7 (495) 691 4080

facebook.com/grapemoscow

16 Malaya Nikitskaya Ulitsa. Metro Tverskaya

3 Photography Exhibits



DMITRY AGEYEV

Best of Russia 2015

A panoramic view of the year

Best of Russia 2015, an exhibition covering the people, places and events of the past year, has opened at the Winzavod Center for Contemporary Art. The best 294 photographs from the project are currently on show, split across the categories: "People. Events. Everyday life"; "Nature"; "Architecture"; "Style" and "War and Peace Inside of us." Images on display capture everything from the Nemstov memorial march to war veterans in Tayga and rare wildlife in Russia's Far East. Photographs are accompanied by explanations in English. Until May 1.

Winzavod Center for Contemporary Art

www.winzavod.ru

1 4th Syromyatnichesky Pereulok, Bldg. 6

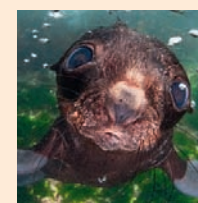
Metro Chkalovskaya, Kurskaya

Primordial Russia

Uncharted territories

A new exhibition at the Gallery of Classical Photography displays images from Russia's leading wildlife photographers. Over 70 photographs are on show, featuring images of the country's most remote landscapes, beautiful scenery and extraordinary wildlife. Photogra-

phers include Michael Korostev, who spent three months in the Far East of Russia photographing brown bears, orcas and walruses, as well as 360 aerial panoramas from AirPano, a non-profit project which specializes in photographing the most uninhabited areas of the world. The stunning photographs will wow kids and adults alike. Until May 8.



ANDREI NARCHUK

Sony World Photography Awards 2016

Digital exhibit from London

Before you leave The Gallery of Classical Photography, be sure to pause by the digital monitors showing the short-listed photographs in the Sony World Photography Awards contest, organized by the World Photo Organization. Almost 300 photographs from 60 countries are on display, including a short-listed photo called Sea Baby taken by Russian Andrei Narchuk, the editor of Wild Magazine. This year the organizers added categories of art and documentary photography. The world in all its variety, horror, and majesty is on display. Winners will be announced on April 21. Until March 27.

The Gallery of Classical Photography

classic-gallery.ru

23/1 Savvinskaya Naberezhnaya

Metro Sportivnaya, Fruzenskaya

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7 million

files are held in the Russian State Archive.



*"It is immoral and false from a professional point of view." Culture Minister **Vladimir Medinsky** on the debunking by archivist Sergei Mironenko of the Soviet legend of Panfilov's 28 guardsmen who perished defending Moscow in 1941.*

← Continued from Page 6

Meanwhile, some state agencies refused to play ball. Yeltsin had corralled all the country's archives under the umbrella of Mironenko and the Russian State Archive, but the Foreign and Defense Ministries, along with the Federal Security Service (FSB), the successor agency to the KGB, decided not to cede control. After handing over a trickle of files early in the decade, by the mid-1990s they stopped.

As resistance to declassification solidified, an ideological basis appeared to support it. Officials began asking questions: What sort of history do we want to see? A heroic one or one that is full of crimes?

Ideology

This was a kind of question for which the Yeltsin government was unprepared. The liberals who ascended to power in the 1990s thought they had won the argument, says Petrov. They thought their conclusions about the value of freedom and openness were self-evident.

They turned out to be wrong. The chaos and poverty of the Yeltsin period bred distrust in democracy and the government. Demand for history was largely sated in the early 1990s, says historian Alexei Makarov. Journalists — the buffer between historians and the public — gradually stopped writing about the past. Reconciliation with the crimes of the communist period had only been skin deep. As the reality of the Soviet past receded into history, myths and nostalgia reasserted themselves.

When Vladimir Putin became president in 2000, he quickly articulated the changing mood. "The Kremlin suddenly began to announce that Russia (and the U.S.S.R.) had had bright periods of history and dark ones, and there was no need to focus only on the dark," says Petrov. The call for bright spots was quickly answered, and the heroic battle against the Nazis was reenergized as a symbol of Russia and a justification of Soviet rule.

Tales such as that of Panfilov's guardsmen were stressed. Things like Stalin's failure to anticipate the Nazi attack, the secret pact with Hitler in 1939 and violence committed by the Red Army in eastern Europe were not.

Vladimir Medinsky, an amateur historian appointed culture minister in 2012, is the apogee of this obscurantism, says Petrov. Historian Askold Ivanchik summed up Medinsky's attitude to history in a talk hosted by Open Russia, a non-government organization: "Historical truth isn't important ... We should relate to heroic feats during the war in the same way the church relates to the lives of saints."

Medinsky has huge influence over Russian arts, culture and



An archivist sorts some of the 7 million files stacked in the Russian State Archive.

The result is that Soviet history remains partially obscured. Full details of communist foreign policy are still secret, including efforts to sabotage and subvert the Western imperialist order in the early and mid 20th century, according to Petrov, a specialist in the Soviet security services. A blackout has been imposed on the Communist Party's secret support for terrorist groups in the Middle East and Latin America, he adds, and some evidence of how the Red Army consolidated its control over Eastern Europe during its defeat of the Nazis is hidden.

Historians still cannot draw a line under the murders of 20,000 Polish officers in 1940 at Katyn — the government in 2004 classified the results of its 1990s probe into the massacre and

stopped providing official confirmations of individual deaths.

Whether for propaganda reasons or to avoid precise allocation of blame, authorities don't seem interested in full disclosure.

All of this made the argument over Panfilov's 28 guardsmen inevitable, says Petrov: "The country is changing. The views of the ruling elite are changing. Mironenko isn't changing."

Mironenko is now head of research at the Russian State Archive. His verve to widen access to historical documents is undimmed. In fact, within the archives under his control, the number of available documents continues to expand, and recent publications include tomes on subjects including Stalin and Russian collaborators with the Nazis.

"The picture is varied," he says. "It shouldn't all be painted in this depressing light."

And yet, part of Russian society simply does not want to know its own history. Mironenko offers his analysis of the problem. "Why, for example, is there such fondness for Stalin? The point is that people don't understand what Stalin is. They have forgotten those times. A vote for Stalin is just a protest. It's a protest against corruption, unjust courts, bureaucratization. People naively think: If only Stalin were here! He'd show you cursed blood-suckers what for!"

He is ruthlessly indifferent to any damage he inflicts on misguided world views. When an interviewer from the Kommersant newspaper said he had grown up thinking of Panfilov's guardsmen as heroes and did not want to change his opinion, Mironenko replied simply.

"I don't care what you want," he said. "There are historical facts backed by documentary evidence, and let psychologists deal with the rest." **TMT**

history, distributing funding and setting the tone. Under him, the Culture Ministry has financed and promoted a steady output of patriotic films and exhibitions, many centered on World War II. One of these, due for release later this year, is about Panfilov's 28 guardsmen.

Makarov is scathing about the strategy: "The authorities are relying on a glorious version of history because there's nothing else to rely on."

Guarding the Past

Apathy toward history suited the guardians of secret information perfectly. Without real public pressure, they continued to block attempts at openness.

Now, only around 5 percent of documents in the Russian State Archive are "secret" — roughly in line with a global norm of about 4-5 percent, according to Mironenko. But that doesn't include the classified storehouses of the security, defense and diplomatic services. It is unclear how many documents they hold.

The 30-year declassification rule is routinely ignored. The fight for openness has moved to the courts, but they often refuse to release documents. Petrov in 2010 lost a court battle to access papers from the late 1940s that held neither state secrets nor names. He thinks the authorities don't want to set a precedent that would limit their control over their information.

The security services have claimed that those named in historical documents might be at risk of reprisal attacks — despite a lack of such cases. They have also said, according to Makarov, that the papers could reveal methods that are still in use — an odd argument, as it seems to suggest that the Russian security services still work like Stalin's secret police, the NKVD.

The Moscow Times CONFERENCES

25 MARCH
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Partner



Nikolai Andreev
CEO, Sberbank-AST



Ilya Dimitrov
Business Ombudsman for E-commerce and E-government Service Providers



Anton Emelyanov
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46%

of Scientologists in Russia are between 30 and 45 years old.

THE WORD'S WORTH

Putin to Trump: You're — What?

Яркий: what Donald Trump is



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

Now that we know a little bit about Barack Obama's views on the Russian president, what does Vladimir Putin think about the possible next American president? Of course, American presidents come and go while the Russian president is eternal ... but still. They might be sitting across the negotiating table for eight years.

So far we only have an indication of Putin's opinion of just one candidate, Donald Trump — and that opinion was slightly confused by the difficulties of translation.

What Putin said last December was this: "Он яркий очень человек, талантливый, без всяких сомнений. (He's a very something-or-other person, and he's talented — no question about that.) The translation issue was the word яркий, one of those words that is just so clear and obvious in Russian and just so confusing and ambiguous in translation.

The primary meaning of яркий is shining. It describes something — like the sun or a light — that is bright. Прекрасный день! Яркое солнце, мягкий ветер... (It's a wonderful day! Bright sunlight and a gentle breeze...)

But then яркий can be used in different contexts with different meanings and connotations. It can describe anything that is brightly colored or noticeable. For example, here's what someone said about a kid's party: Яркие костюмы, громкая музыка, дети в восторге (Brightly colored costumes, loud music, and kids in ecstasy.) It can be advice on makeup: Вечером надо обязательно сделать макияж ярче (For the evening you must make your makeup more dramatic.) Or tips for a garden: Немного ярких красок можно добавить, посадив несколько растений настурции (You might add some vibrant colors by planting several nasturtiums.)

In English, we sometimes describe this as sound: Он любит носить яркие галстуки (He loves to wear loud ties.) Этой розе место там, где необходимо декоративное яркое пятно. (This rose is good wherever you need a pop of color.)

And of course, sometimes яркий goes too far: Она слишком ярко одевается (She dresses too garishly.)

Figuratively, яркий refers to anything that stands out, like an example: Он — яркий пример человека, который сам себя сделал (He's a striking example of a self-made man.) Or like impressions: От визита у нас остались самые яркие впечатления (We still have such vivid impressions from our visit.)

The negative connotations of яркий — like those garish or flamboyant ties — seem to be reserved for things, not people. When used to describe people, яркий is generally positive — or in any case, after lots of searching, I couldn't find any examples with clearly negative connotations, and everyone I polled said they'd only use it in a positive sense. So яркий is used to describe someone who has a vivid personality, someone who is a showstopper, someone with charisma. You often hear: Он очень яркая личность! (He's larger than life!) Она одна из самых ярких художников своего поколения (She's one of the most remarkable artists of her generation.)

So when Putin called Trump "очень яркий человек," he was calling him larger than life, a vivid personality, someone who is impressive and commands attention.

The problems of translation had to do with connotation. Did Putin call Trump "brilliant"? Well, yes in the sense of vibrancy of character, not smarts. Did he call him "colorful"? Well, sort of — but in a good way.

Basically, Putin called Trump a standout kinda guy. ТМТ

The Moscow Times
No. 5747



"You don't get rich writing science fiction. If you want to get rich, you start a religion," **L. Ron Hubbard**, founder of the Church of Scientology. The church denies he said this.



Russia vs. Scientology

By **Eva Hartog** e.hartog@imedia.ru, Twitter: @EvaHartog

Scientology has attracted controversy worldwide, but even its critics say a Kremlin crackdown may have gone too far.

A team of police officers stands by a yellow, colonnaded building in central Moscow. Close on their heels is a camera crew from the Kremlin-controlled NTV station. As the officers move into the building, the NTV reporter turns to the camera. "There are many corridors here, lots of rooms," he says in conspiratorial tone. "The doors are almost all locked, so the officers will have to break them down."

On cue, one of the balaclava-wearing officer revs up a chain saw. With the roaring sound in the background, the shot switches to another man breaking down several doors with a large sledgehammer. The viewer never sees behind the doors.

The Moscow Church of Scientology has become used to such visits from law enforcement. This particular visit took place in 2011. More recently in August 2015, police raided the venue in search of hidden cameras and microphones allegedly used by Scientology to spy on its members. And several months ago, the venue was searched again in connection to an investigation into the illegal sale of land.

"It is part of a media show to blacken our name," says the founder of Scientology's Moscow branch Vladimir Kuropyatnik. He sees the raids as part of the authorities' attempt to take down his church.

A New Religion

It was the early days of post-Soviet capitalism when Kuropyatnik, then a radio engineer, interviewed for a job at a joint venture.

One of the recruiters was a Swedish businessman and, as Kuropyatnik learned from corridor gossip, a Scientologist. "That man stood out from his Russian colleagues," he says. "He was impeccably dressed, friendly, competent and open."

The Scientology movement, founded in 1954 by American science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard, was in rapid growth stage at that moment, attracting followers around the world. And wherever it went, controversy, rumors of human rights abuses and allegations of tax evasion practices followed.

Kuropyatnik ended up not taking the job, but he was sufficiently intrigued by Scientology to join a seminar at Moscow

State University on Dianetics, the self-help treatment system devised by Hubbard that forms the basis of Scientological practice. Kuropyatnik continued his Scientology studies in Copenhagen.

In 1994, a year after Scientology was recognized as a religion in the United States following a protracted legal battle, Kuropyatnik registered Russia's first Church of Scientology in Moscow.

"It was a difficult time," says Kuropyatnik. "I saw people's gloomy, tired faces on the metro every day. Russia needed Scientology. Instead of providing the hungry with fish, it gave them a fishing rod to help them feed themselves."

After decades of forced atheism under Stalin, Russians were initially suspicious of indulging in the spiritual. But with perestroika also came a renewed openness towards new movements as the new generation of reformers embraced the idea of religious plurality.

Scientology quickly expanded. Today there are several thousand members in Moscow and several tens of thousands of active members across the country, according to Kuropyatnik's estimates. The Church of Scientology in Moscow had three employees upon its launch — it now has more than 300 people on staff and is a place bustling with activity.

Daily Miracles

Sunday service begins at 11 a.m. sharp. It is led by a middle-aged woman with short hair, dressed in a long black robe with a golden V-shaped collar. Around her neck hangs an eight-corner cross, the symbol of Scientology.

"Miracles happen around me on a daily basis," she says. "I have cured people while they were sitting right in front of me in their chairs. I've even heard of a man who walked over glowing embers."

During the hour-long sermon, the woman reads from a "holy" book, and speaks of "salvation" and "sin." The service ends with a prayer for human rights and religious freedom and a standing ovation to a bronze bust in the corner of the room — a bust of Scientology founder Hubbard.

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“Most people now know that Scientology is totally evil.” **Alexander Dvorkin**, leader of Russia’s “anti-cult movement.”

No mention is made of Xenu, the galactic dictator who, according to one of Hubbard’s more notorious and secretive theories circulating in the media, dropped billions of creatures into volcanoes on Earth and killed them with hydrogen bombs 75 million years ago.

Scientology has often been accused by critics of using a strategy of “religious cloaking” to bypass state control over what is going on inside its walls. A former member of the Moscow Church of Scientology told *The Moscow Times* he had not attended service a single time during more than 10 years at the church. He said: “Even staff members of the church don’t fully understand why Scientology is a religion.”

Rivalry

According to Russia’s dominant religion, the Russian Orthodox Church, whether Scientology is or isn’t a religion is not a subject for debate.

When the Church resurfaced after decades of being forced underground under the Soviet regime, it was less than pleased to find itself surrounded by “new religions” such as Scientology. In 1994, the Council of Russian Orthodox Bishops declared Scientology a “pseudo-religion imported from the West.”

Alexander Dvorkin, a former Soviet émigré and member of the Orthodox Church, in 1993 set up an NGO to research “totalitarian sects and destructive cults.” He says he was prompted to action after witnessing the distress of churchgoers who had relatives in Scientology. “Their families had been torn apart,” he says.

Dvorkin became a leader of a virulent “anti-cult movement” and a prominent figure in the Russian media, where he has consistently warned of the dangers of the so-called new religions. “Scientology is totally evil,” he says. “It oppresses people and draws more and more money out of them.”

As Russia’s relations with the West soured over conflict in Ukraine, the battle against Scientology as a distinctly “foreign” movement intensified.

“Religious identity has become an important way of showing patriotism,” says Veronika Kravchuk, a religious scholar. “It is set in a context of trying to oppose the European Union and the United States.”

Dvorkin himself has fed that narrative. He publicly warns of supposed ties between Scientology and the U.S. secret services.



MOSCOW CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY

The Moscow branch of the Church of Scientology boasts “several thousand members,” according to its founder Vladimir Kuropyatnik

Concerned with the ferocity of the clampdown, some religious scholars are worried that the new rules of engagement undermine the atmosphere of religious freedom of the 1990s — to the benefit of Russia’s dominant religion.

“The Russian Orthodox Church is trying to root out its ‘competitors’ with the help of the authorities,” says religious scholar Yekaterina Elbakyan. “By doing so, it is also making itself part of the government apparatus and making itself dependent on the state,” she says.

Lawlessness

With little trust in the Russian courts, Scientology groups have taken their cause directly

to the European Court of Human Rights. In all three cases, the ECHR said Russia had tried to use a new law requiring movements to be older than 15 years to be eligible for registration as a religion to discriminate against Scientology groups in Russia.

That has made even critics of Scientology wary of celebrating the demise of the movement in Russia. They argue that governments should concentrate on building strong cases against Scientology on grounds of widely reported malpractice within the organization itself and use, rather than bend, the law.

“They still deserve fair treatment and I am not convinced they are getting it in Russia,” says Jonny Jacobsen, a Paris-based journalist who has been studying Scientology since the early 1990s.

“In Russia, Scientology has come face-to-face with an arbitrary system steeped in bad faith, changing the rules whenever expedient: savor that irony,” he wrote.

The standoff between Russia and the West also means that the ECHR can no longer fulfill its role as a watchdog, after a new law was passed giving Russian courts the right to overrule international courts’ decisions.

Kuropyatnik, meanwhile, is certain the church will survive, even if it loses its status as a religion “The political atmosphere, and rabid fights against religious freedoms come and go. But the church will stay,” he says. **TMT**

Political Backing

Dvorkin says his work has triggered a “typical counter reaction” from the Church of Scientology. His mail has been hacked, he says, acquaintances from his past have been harassed, he has been sued, unsuccessfully, for slander and received threats.

His center is not officially connected to the Orthodox Church or the Kremlin, but it has the implicit backing of both powerful allies. Dvorkin is also a member of an advisory panel on religious affairs to Russia’s Justice Ministry — a body he chaired for five years. “Politicians by now know that any connection to Scientology is a liability,” he says.

Several books written by Hubbard and Scientology teaching materials have been labelled extremist literature, and banned. Scientology groups across Russia have not been allowed to register as religious organizations.

In a final blow to the movement in November, a Moscow court ruled that the Moscow Church of Scientology cannot call itself a religious organization since Scientology is a registered U.S. trademark. The verdict, which Scientology has appealed, could have far-reaching legal implications. The church would no longer be allowed to employ staff, hold a bank account or act as a headquarters for the movement. It would be the end of the Moscow Church of Scientology as it exists today.

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Producer
Olga Ponamareva
o.ponamareva@vedomosti.ru

Sponsorship opportunities
Yana Zimina
y.zimina@vedomosti.ru

Participation in the project
Julia Lemasova
j.lemasova@vedomosti.ru

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HOME

Why do my friends open the door and step back?

TMT: When did you last shower? If the answer is recently, our best guess is that they are trying to give you a not-so-subtle hint to enter their apartment before greeting them. In Russia, if you try to kiss or shake hands with someone over a threshold, you may as well be giving them a slap in the face.

According to Russian folklore, a house spirit lives on the threshold of each home and any interference of hand-shaking nature will result in their wrath/bad luck/a potential plague. In the future either gently away — allowing your host to exit their home — or follow them a couple of paces into the room and away from the danger zone. Then shake hands, kiss, hug or perform whatever greeting you desire. The house spirits won't mind.



OFFICIALS

Are there telephone books in Moscow?

TMT: Nope. In the Soviet period there were little stands by metro stations where you could get information about phone numbers and addresses of organizations and individuals for five kopeks. Now there is the same service, only it's by phone and it costs a bit more. But if you've ever found yourself without an Internet connection, or thrown your phone across the street when you realized the Internet listing for that chic cafe was five years out of date — this is a real time saver.

The number is 009. If you call it from a landline, it costs 49 rubles a minute. If you call from a mobile phone, the provider sets the fee, which is usually a bit more (on MTS it's 66.50 rubles a minute). It operates 24/7 and the nice men and women will answer

just about any question. Where's the nearest all-night pharmacy? When is that new museum open? What's the phone number of a restaurant, city government office, or acquaintance? There's just one possible drawback: They only speak Russian. But otherwise, they are close to perfect.



HOME

How do I keep my shoes clean in the winter?

TMT: Wear plastic bags over your feet? Don't leave the house until pavement conditions are less perilous?

In the Russian book of etiquette, clean shoes are near the top of the must-maintain list. So to fit in, pay attention to your footwear.

First off, if you're wearing suede shoes, please put them away immediately until drier

spring weather. It's just not worth it, take it from us.

But leather has its own problems. Like the disgusting tide mark from a scum-filled ocean, your shoes will carry a salt mark by the end of the day. This happens because leather soaks up water, and salt gathers at the high-water mark. If this happens day in and day out (as it is apt to in Moscow) you will eventually have permanently damaged shoes.

The trick with cleaning is little and often. While leather treatments that you rub or spray on when you first buy shoes are a good idea, you're going to need to give your shoes a bit of TLC at the end of each day to keep them ship-shape.

Stuff wet shoes with newspaper to help them dry and maintain their shape. Once dry, mix a solution of half warm water, half vinegar. Take a damp cloth and rub gently but firmly along the tide mark. Once all salt traces have disappeared, brush the shoes again with a soft cloth and leave them for half an hour or until all residual dampness has gone. Come back and give them a quick nourishing polish and then gaze indulgently at your new twinkle toes.

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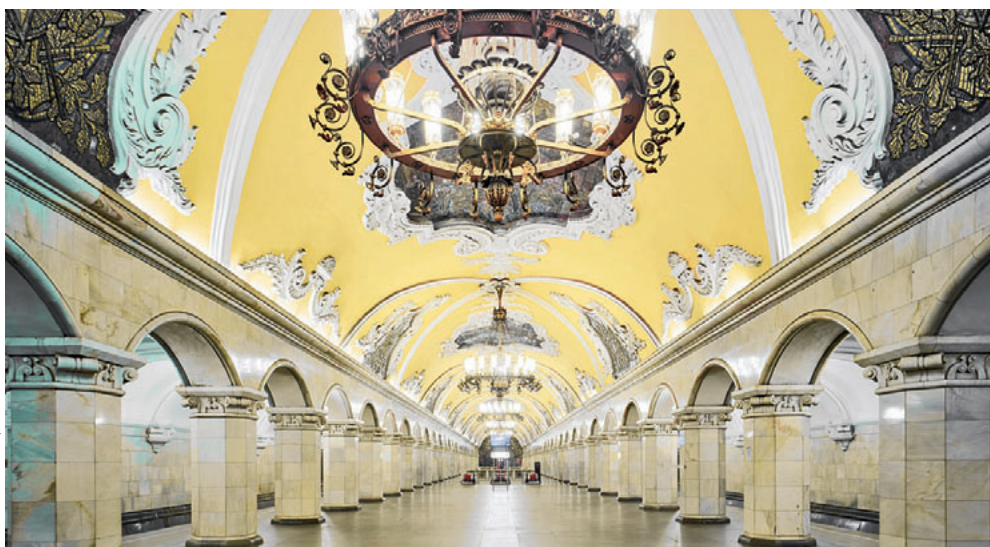
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DAVID BURDENEY / FOR MT

The Moscow Metro Celebrated in All Its Glory at Moscow Architecture Museum

By **Maria Michela D'Alessandro** artsreporter@imedia.ru

On May 15, 1935, the most beautiful metro in the world opened. And today, nearly 81 years to the day later, the Shchusev Architecture Museum is celebrating the magnificent Moscow underground system with an exhibition called "Moscow Metro. Subterranean Monument." Until mid-July, visitors can retrace the history of this symbol of Moscow in the exhibition halls of the Architecture Museum and be convinced once again that the metro system is not just public transportation, but a living museum beneath the earth.

The Moscow metro was one of the most grandiose construction projects of the Soviet era. Today it is considered a unique achievement of architecture and engineering that draws millions of tourists every year who want to

discover the beauty of every single station.

Maria Kostyuk, one of the curators of the exhibition, told The Moscow Times that the project began last year on the metro's 80th anniversary, since the Architecture Museum holds a huge collection of drawings and blueprints of the first stations. "The exhibition was the result of our research," she said. And because it came out of research in their archives, "Moscow Metro. Subterranean Monument" focuses on the first four stages of metro construction, between 1935 and 1954.

The drawings of such renowned architects as Ivan Fomin, Alexei Dushkin, Dmitry Chechulin, Alexei Shchusev and Vladimir Gelfreikh are exhibited alongside photo chronicles from the TASS news agency, photographs and

documents from the Shchusev Museum and the Moscow Metro Museum, texts of curators, researchers, architects, and some other graphic and archival exhibits given by the heir of the architect I. G. Taranov. Here you can see sketches of the famous tulip-shaped columns, carved marble, elegant chandeliers and all the extraordinary ornamentation that make the Moscow metro an underground museum. Other sketches and blueprints on display remained only beautiful ideas that were ultimately not brought to life.

"With this exhibition our main goal was to show the architectural significance of the Moscow metro, the originality of the planning process and the unique way that the plans were implemented," Maria Kostyuk said. "We want to draw people's attention to unrealized plans and the many variations of architectural design, and we hope that Muscovites and visitors to the city will appreciate our exhibition and see its value."

Stations such as Sokolniki, Teatralnaya, Mayakovskaya, Kropotkinskaya, and Komsomolskaya are presented in their first paper incarnations, and you can compare the original ideas to what was eventually constructed. You can also see structures and details that were torn down and lost. Through the exhibition you move from the time when there were just 13 stations to today's 200, from a small system to the busiest underground outside Asia and fifth longest in the world, with over 300 kilometers of track. The exhibition presents the Moscow metro as an architectural and artistic wonder, an important part of Russia's history and development. The curators hope that the exhibition will aid them in their efforts to include the main stations on the list of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites.

Shchusev Architecture Museum

muar.ru

5/25 Ulitsa Vozdvizhenka.

Metro Biblioteka Imeni Lenina, Arbatskaya

March 24 – 30

EVENT Art Weekend

An art fair offering unique and unusual handmade gifts to celebrate spring

Artplay Center of Art and Design

artplay.ru

10 Nizhnaya Syromyatnicheskaya Ulitsa.

Metro Kurskaya.

March 26-27

THEATER The Human Use of Human Beings

A play by cult avant-gardist Romeo Castellucci about whether today's world is worth living in

Stanislavsky Electrotheater

electrotheatre.ru

23 Tverskaya Ulitsa. Metro Tverskaya.

March 24 at 8 p.m.

FESTIVAL Oscar Shorts. Animation

KARO. Art presents short animated films; various languages and Russian subtitles

karofilm.ru/art/film/993

Various theaters, March 24-30

FESTIVAL Guitar Virtuosos

A festival bringing together the best guitarists from around the world.

Tchaikovsky Concert Hall

meloman.ru

4/31 Triumfalnaya Ploshchad.

Metro Mayakovskaya.

Until March 26

CONCERT International Mstislav

Rostropovich Festival

Opening night features Mozart's Requiem, performed by the Russian National Orchestra and the Yurlov Capella

Conservatory Great Hall

mosconsv.ru

13 Bolshaya Nikitskaya Ulitsa.

Metro Pushkinskaya, Biblioteka Imeni Lenina.

March 27 at 7 p.m.

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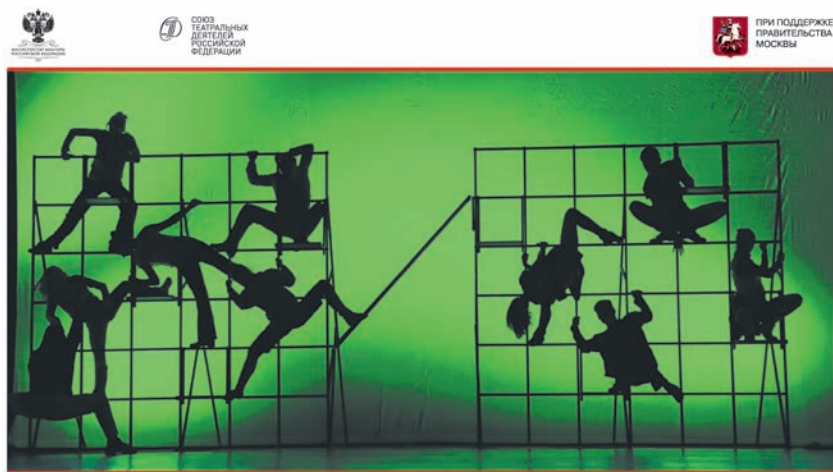
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