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Fan World Cup Not for Hooligans

BY LENA SMIRNOVA 🔰 @LEN_SMIRNOV



Ahead of the World Cup, fears of street fights with Russian football hooligans were rife in the international press.

A core group in the Russian fan movement decided to change that perception by organizing a football tournament between Russian and foreign players, set to take place over the coming two days in St. Petersburg

Generally referred to as the Fan World Cup, the competition is bringing together football supporters from 16 countries, who will play and even live together.

This is the first time a formally organized fan tournament – one that has a draw, group stage and elimination round – will be held during a

"The main goal of this tournament is to create an atmosphere of celebration and unity, based on the principle that football unites us," said Eduard Latypov, president of the Russia Unites fan organization which is hosting the Fan World Cup.

"We hope that these 200 people who are going to play with us go back to their countries and say that Russia is simply the land of hospitality," Latypov added. "We value every person who goes

back and says nice things about Russia."

The tournament will be battled out between teams of eight players, who are at least 25 years old.

Italian fans were the first to sign up for the fan tournament, even though their country is not represented at the World Cup for the first time in 60

"It is not just a football tragedy for all Italians, but a social tragedy. It is very hard for us to understand why we can't play in the World Cup," said Francesco Attolini, a St. Petersburg-based artist and member of the Italian fan team.

"We want to emphasize that we are here, that there are still Italians who want to say to the whole of Russia: 'There won't be a national team here, but there will be a team of Italian football fans.' This team will play to its full capacity and will make our country proud," Attolini added.

Other teams that are scheduled to participate include Australia, Senegal and Peru.

Mexico's Ramses Sanchez has been in Russia for a year and a half working on his masters degree in international relations. After hearing about the plans to host a Fan World Cup on social media, he worked to help get the Mexican team involved.

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Gulag Historian Slapped With New Charges

Investigators in northern Russia have launched a new case against a prominent historian famous for exposing mass killings from the Stalin era.

Yury Dmitriyev was detained by traffic police late on Wednesday in Russia's northern republic of Karelia. State prosecutors earlier accused the local head of the Memorial human rights group of child pornography in an ongoing case that human rights groups say is politically motivated.

Dmitriyev has been charged with committing violent acts of a sexual nature, the state-run TASS news agency reported on Thursday, citing a senior Investigative Committee official in Karelia. If found guilty, he could face up to 20 years in prison.

Prosecutors initially accused Dmitriyev of producing child pornography after finding naked pictures Dmitriyev's adopted daughter, which he maintained were made to monitor her health.

Experts during Dmitriyev's first trial said the pictures were non-pornographic and he was acquitted in April 2018. But the ruling was overturned in June after prosecutors reportedly presented new evidence.

Dmitriyev's older daughter, Yekaterina Klodt, told the Novaya Gazeta newspaper late on Wednesday that she and her father had been stopped by traffic police and taken to a detention center. A state-run television report alleged that Dmitriyev had been planning to flee to Poland. But Klodt said her father had been on his way to visit

Memorial has described Dmitriyev as a politi-

"The situation is really difficult, but we're not lowering our hands and will keep fighting for him," Klodt told The Moscow Times.

"I hope that justice will win out in the end. And that my dad will end up home without anything else like this ever happening again."

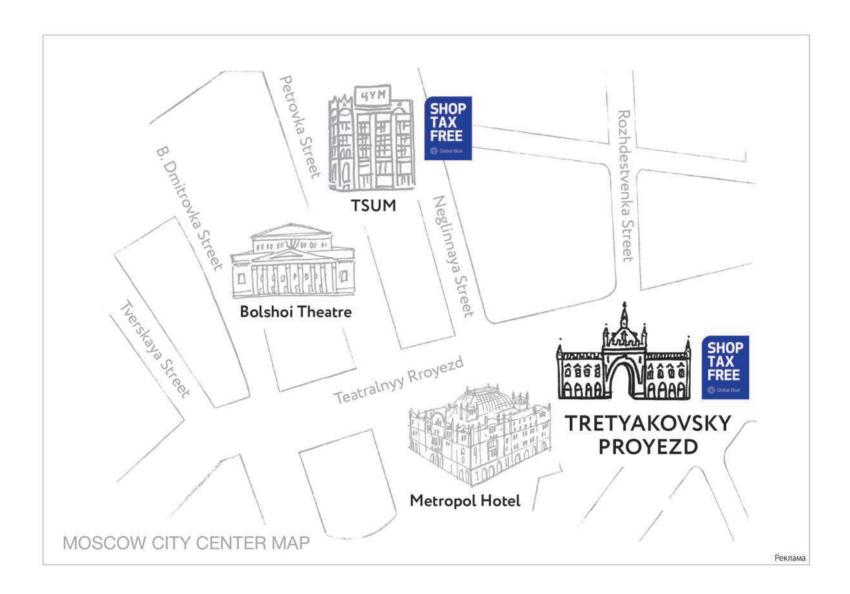




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Vladimir Pu-

John Bolton

(right) at a meeting in

the Kremlin

on Wednes-

tin (left) with

Trump-Putin Visit Doesn't Herald Thaw, Pundits Say

Ahead of a highly-anticipated meeting between U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin, pundits in Moscow caution that it is too soon to speak of a turning of the tide in bilateral relations.

After Putin on Wednesday met with U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton in Moscow, Kremlin foreign policy aide Yury Ushakov said a summit between the two leaders would be "the main international event of the summer."

"It has enormous importance for Russia and America, but it [also] has huge importance for the whole international situation," he was cited as saying by the state-run TASS news agency, adding the meeting would likely last "several hours."

Pundits in Russia, however, have little confidence that a summit will bring meaningful change.

One major reason is domestic U.S. politics, said Alexander Baunov of the Carnegie think tank. "The U.S. is divided," he told The Moscow Times. "We can't say that a meeting with Trump, whom half of the United States hates, would bring a normalization of relations."

More importantly, neither side of the divide is interested in changing their stance on major policy points, including Ukraine, Syria and alleged Russian electoral meddling, said political analyst



Mikhail Troitsky. "Relations can't improve when there is no agreement."

"The atmosphere is not ripe for a thaw," agreed Fyodor Lukyanov, a Russian foreign affairs expert. He said the meetings with Bolton and other top U.S. officials were likely the result of Trump and U.S. Ambassador to Russia Jon Huntsman's personal efforts. But, he added, with relations between the countries already at a low, any dialogue should be considered as progress.

"Results on certain issues aside, just understanding each other is the first step," he said.

OPINION

By Mark Galeotti



No Longer a Haven For Old Pariahs?

or a country that has seemed so eager to welcome and fête outcasts and fugitives of every kind in the past, Russia's treatment last week of disgraced FIFA monarch Sepp Blatter suggests it is now trying to pitch itself slightly differently.

Once the defiant haven of the world's deplorables, now the Kremlin wants Russia to be seen as neither part of the Western-dominated order, nor its foe.

The 82-year-old Blatter, seemingly unbowed by the continuing U.S. Department of Justice investigation into his affairs, nor the ban on football-related activities placed on him by FIFA itself, came to Moscow to make his presence known. With surely knowing brazenness, he even dined with Vitaly Mutko, the figure behind Russia's infamous Sochi Winter Olympics doping scandal.

For all this — and his own claims to be in Moscow as a personal guest of President Vladimir Putin's — Blatter was given less than the kind of public, formal welcome he might have expected. After some uncertainty, he did eventually meet Putin — who could hardly have said no, given Blatter's role in getting Russia the World Cup — but this was a low-key and private affair. There were no photo opportunities of the pariah and the president.

Is Blatter really more toxic than Assad? More dangerous than Libyan warlord Khalifa Haftar, who was given a very public welcome on a Russian aircraft carrier last January? More laughable than Gerard Depardieu taking a Russian passport to cut his tax bill?

Until recently, Russia's willingness to welcome all the West's marginalized, disgruntled and damned reflected, as much as anything, a forthright challenge to the global order it considered (not wholly without reason) as shaped by the West, and for the West's advantage.

Populists, nationalists, separatists and iconoclasts of every kind could be certain of a warm reception in

Moscow. If you were against the mainstream, you could find a platform and a welcome. Challenge the West's dogma. Say the unsayable. Question more.

This had several advantages. It generated a steady stream of "useful idiots" happy to whitewash the Kremlin and do their best to open up social and political divides in the West. It allowed the government to present itself not as being isolated, but as the champion of an alternate system of values. Indeed, as liberal, frustrating the censorship and groupthink of a West that had sacrificed its values on the altar of political correctness.

For all that, there has been a downside. Russia may pretend to have devilmay-care indifference about its place in the world, but there are political, economic and psychological costs to being treated variously as a bully, a gangster and a social retrogressive.

"Russophobia," the pathology Moscow perennially sees in its critics, is not wholly mythical. But its greatest source is the Kremlin's own actions. You cannot invade neighbors, assassinate enemies, loot your own economy, spread lies and rig sports contests without getting a bad name.

The World Cup was originally envisaged as a modern Russia's coming out party. The annexation of Crimea and its fallout changed all that. But the tournament is nonetheless being used as an opportunity to try some limited reinvention.

This doesn't just mean smiling railway attendants, glittering street lights and relaxed police. It also means scaling back some of the aggressive policies that have been behind this characterization of Russia.

There is a sharp limit to what the Kremlin can or will do. The bombings in Syria continue. There will be no withdrawal from eastern Ukraine for the fore-seeable future. Putin is not going to abandon his mission to "make Russia great again."

But if the Kremlin really is serious about wanting to try to gain some soft power and a more respectable place in the world on the back of what has so far been a friendly and well-organized football tournament, then it will have to modify its behavior so as not to waste it all, as it did after Sochi.

So, less of a haven for the world's pariahs. Fewer strident critiques of the West. The optics may get a little more rosy. After all, Russia does not have to try to present itself as the West's friend, simply not its active enemy. Will that really be so hard?

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Surviving Until Retirement



Men are set to retire at 65, instead of 60.

Ahead of nationwide protests this weekend against a government plan to raise the pension age, a study has said that up to 17 percent of Russian men may not live to see retirement.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev in mid-June announced a plan to progressively increase the pension age starting in 2019. The plan has touched a nerve among Russians and set off plans for nationwide protests organized by opposition figures and trade unions.

Under the proposal, by 2028, men would re-

tire at 65, five years later than they do now, while the pension age for women would increase from 55 to 63.

In a joint study with the Higher School of Economics' Institute of Demography, media outlet RBC reported Wednesday that up to 17.4 percent of men and 6.5 percent of women may not live to reach retirement by the time the reform is rolled out.

The study also found that as the pension age increases, the probability of surviving until retirement will steadily decrease.

For the first generation of men to be affected by the reform – those born in 1959-95.8 percent are projected to live to reach 61 years of age.

However, for those eligible to retire at 65, born in 1963, the statistic falls to 82.6 percent.

According to the study, women have a higher chance of reaching retirement: 93 percent of women are projected to live to retire at age 63 when the reforms will have gone through.

The study combines data from the Human Mortality Database and Russia's federal statistics agency, Rosstat.

Russia's Communist Party has announced it will push for a referendum on the widely unpopular pension reform.

Court Denies Syrians Refuge

Russia's Supreme Court has reportedly refused the appeals of 10 Syrian citizens who were denied temporary residency in Russia, the Kommersant business daily cited Irina Sokolova, a lawyer at the Memorial human rights NGO, as saying.

"The events in Syria have the characteristics of a counter-terrorism operation, rather than a traditional military confrontation," the Supreme Court said in its ruling, adding that the applicants were not in danger of "persecution or inhumane treatment" in their country. The court cited Syria's cease-fire agreement, humanitarian operations and international medical assistance to defend its description of the situation in the country.

The 10 Syrian citizens had

appealed to the Supreme Court after their applications for temporary residency in Russia were denied by a court in Ivanovo.

According to Interior Ministry figures for April 2018 cited by Kommersant, 1047 Syrian citizens have temporary residency in Russia.

"At least 5,000 more Syrian refugees live in Russia illegally," Svetlana Gannushkina, the head of the Civic Assistance NGO, told Kommersant.

Russia started military operations in the Syrian Civil War in 2015 on the side of the country's president, Bashar Assad.

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FIFA Flexes Its Trademark Muscle

Russia's top state lender Sberbank and the Russian branch of Austria's Raiffeisen Bank have been accused of improperly using FIFA World Cup trademarks in promotional material.

Sberbank launched a promotion offering higher interest rates for any deposits made around the time of Russia's victory over Saudi Arabia on June 14, opening almost 200,000 new accounts totaling \$1 billion in less than a week under the deal. Russia's Raiffeisen subsidiary offered discounts at bars and restaurants during the World Cup and gave some card holders travel miles for each goal scored by the national squad.

Both financial institutions were censured for their use of the World Cup to promote their banks — one by FIFA, the other by Russia's anti-monopoly watchdog.

FIFA asked Sberbank to remove the "2018 FIFA

World Cup" trademark from the deposit account's webpage late last week, two unnamed sources familiar with the matter told Russia's Vedomosti business daily on Wednesday.

Russia's federal anti-monopoly watchdog, meanwhile, opened proceedings against Raiffeisen for violating federal World Cup legislation on promotional material that creates a "false impression" of FIFA's affiliation.

Following attempts to find a solution to the dispute with FIFA, Sberbank on Wednesday reportedly agreed to remove references to the World Cup from its advertising.

Vedomosti reported that the webpage for Sberbank's deposit promotion removed trademarked phrases but kept references to the tournament with the phrase "Advancing From the Group is Not the Limit."



Rowdy England fans ahead of their team's clash with Belgium in Kaliningrad on Thursday

FAN

Continued from Page 1

"Sport is a really good way to build bridges," Sanchez said. "It's a way to tell people: 'We are here to play. We are here to have fun. Let's meet new friends."

Russia's international footballing reputation has been tainted in recent years by incidents of racism at matches and clashes with foreign fans.

One of the most prominent cases was the violent clash between Russian and English fans in Marseille at the Euro championship in 2016. However, not many people remember that Russian and English fans held a friendly match in a Marseille suburb just hours earlier.

"It was a wonderful day," Latypov said. "Before the match, the captains of the English and Russian teams not only exchanged flags, but also literature. We gave them a volume of Pushkin in English and they gave us a volume of Shakespeare in Russian. It was beautiful."

Latypov also fondly recalled the Russian

friendly against Wales fans at the championship, after which the two teams sat together and sang songs.

In addition to the Fan World Cup in late June, Russia Unites has organized welcome matches between Russian and foreign fans ahead of official matches in host cities.

On Tuesday, representatives of Nigeria, Argentina and Russia squared off in a mini-tournament, which the hosts won 3-0 in the final against the South American side.

Other fan teams, including Mexico, are also looking to the friendly games as a way to create a more positive image of their homeland. "The main point is to celebrate and have a good time here in Russia. But we also want to present an image that the Mexican fans are good," Sanchez said.

"There are many, many stereotypes, not only about Mexicans, but also about fans from different countries," he added. "I think that this World Cup is a huge opportunity to show not only Russia, but to show the world, that Mexico has friendly people."



The Fan World Cup fosters friendly competition and bonding among nations.

MEET THE FANS

Moscow is

an amazing city. But there is one thing that I don't like: Russian customer service. When they speak to you in the shops or in the metro, they don't look at you and they don't smile. But everything else is perfect.

Dale from England

Rising Price Tag

Russia has allocated an additional 815 million rubles (\$12.9 million) to the Sports Ministry for World Cup costs, according to a decree published on the government's legal portal.

Previous estimates said that Russia would spend up to \$13.2 billion on the World Cup, making it the most expensive football tournament in history.

The latest allocation, signed by Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, will go towards subsidizing the servicing costs of stadiums and training grounds in Volgograd, Yekaterinburg, Kaliningrad, Nizhny Novgorod, Rostov-on-Don, Samara and Saranansk, as well as temporary structures built for the World Cup.

The money will reportedly come from Russia's Reserve Fund.

Sports Blogger Defends Russian Women

One of Russia's most popular bloggers has called on his fellow countrymen to stop recriminating women for getting friendly with foreign World Cup fans.

Yury Dud, a sports journalist whose YouTube videos frequently gather millions of views, earlier this week posted a picture on Instagram alongside a heart emoji. The picture featured a girl dressed in Russian traditional gear holding hands with a man wearing a Mexico jersey and a sombrero.

The post sparked a barrage of critical reactions with one commenter accusing Russian women of "unacceptable behavior."

In a blog post on the Sports.ru site titled "Our girls are being told off for hanging out with foreigners. Leave them alone, ey," Dud hit back at what he said was a widespread tendency to criticize Russian women for fraternizing with foreigners.

Saying women had the right to decide who they slept



Dud defended Russian women's right to choose their partners.

with, he proceeded to list why "Foreigners are much more attractive than we are."

"They keep themselves fit, not just during their youth but far into old age. They're open [...] They smell nice," Dud wrote. "They don't mistake the word 'pedicure' for 'pedophilia."

He added that many Russians did not have the opportunity to travel, and therefore "for millions [of Russians, foreigners] are little different from aliens."

"Don't cry 'Shame!' at beautiful summer love or humiliate yourselves," he advised Russian men.

Germany Suffers Double Losses

Germany's economy suffered losses of up to 200 million euros (\$233 million) during a World Cup game against South Korea on Wednesday, according to Der Spiegel, citing research by the German Economic Institute (IW) in Cologne.

According to the institute, around 30 percent of employees remained at the workplace when the match began at 4 p.m. local time on Wednesday, causing companies to lose money over a downturn in productivity as workers watched the match.

Meanwhile, the researchers noted that watching football could also have its benefits.

"It isn't all about money, sometimes teambuilding is more important — and there's nothing better for that than watching an exciting football game with your colleagues," Christoph Shroder, an IW expert, was cited as saying.

Unfortunately for the researchers, Germany suffered a shock 0-2 loss and was knocked out of the tournament.



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A Russian Ex-Referee's Love for the Ball

All kids remember the thrill of receiving a new football, but former Russian referee Mikhail Koshelev has taken that feeling to the extreme by amassing a collection of 800 footballs.

Koshelev, 57, has built a museum to the unheralded sphere, displaying everything from vintage 19th century sheepskin balls to modern balls used in World Cup tournaments and Champions League finals.

"There isn't a single [football] museum anywhere in the world," Koshelev said in Sochi, where his museum is located.

"If there is no ball, there is no game. If there is no ball, there is no Pele, there is no [Cristiano] Ronaldo, there is no [Lionel] Messi."

Koshelev, who has been collecting the balls for 30 years, said many of the items in his collection are valuable because they are rare. But the ones he cherishes most are those with a story behind them

One of his prize exhibits is a ball from the 2008 Champions League final between Manchester United and Chelsea held in Moscow, the only time Europe's club showpiece was staged in Russia.

He also has a unique item: A ball specially pro-



duced for the 2003 Women's World Cup, which had originally been scheduled to be held in China before being moved to the U.S. after the outbreak of the SARS epidemic.

His dream is to open an interactive museum where visitors can follow the changes in design that the football has undergone over the past decades. (Reuters)

Mikhail Koshelev has collected 800 footballs in his museum.

I haven't seen six

them every day.

diabetics for over a week,

who need the insulin we give



Dejected German players stand amid the overjoyed South Korean team after a shock 0-2 defeat.

Room With a View

When Argentina takes up France on Saturday in Kazan, star striker Lionel Messi will reportedly be staying in a hotel looking out on a giant mural of his rival Cristiano Ronaldo.

The five-meter mural on a building next to the Ramada Hotel was commissioned by the city authorities last year when the Portugal team was in Kazan for the Confederations Cup, the BusinessOnline outlet reports.

"It's worth pointing out that the mural is not visible from every room," the outlet wrote. "So Leo still has a chance to book a room as far away [from the mural] as possible."

Kazan's Mayor Ilsur Metshin last year told journalists a similar mural would be painted for Messi if the Argentinian team were to come to Kazan.



Argentina will be greeted by a giant Ronaldo.



Putin and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Salman

A Royal Encounter?

President Vladimir Putin has said that he will watch Russia's next match against Spain in the knockout rounds of the World Cup on July 1 at Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium.

"I'll definitely watch it, I'll be supporting [the team], but I don't know if I'll go to the stadium yet," Putin told journalists on Wednesday.

Putin last attended Russia's opening game against Saudi Arabia on June 14, together with Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman and FIFA President Gianni Infantino. Russia won the match 5-0.

Meanwhile, King Felipe VI of Spain has said he will attend the match in Moscow in support of his

OPINION

By Evan Gershkovich



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Where Are All the Homeless People?

wo weeks into the World Cup, a phrase has been so oft-repeated by tourists in Moscow that it could be considered an unofficial motto of the tournament: "It's much nicer here than I thought it would be." One American correspondent covering the tournament even dedicated a column to the surprise. "Gray and unfriendly. Barren food shelves and shadowy figures," he wrote on what he'd imagined before arriving. "I was wrong."

That he was wrong is, of course, partly a question of preconceived notions. It also has to do with city authorities taking substantial measures to prepare for such a large influx of tourists (and for the mayoral elections that will follow the tournament in September). Since 2015, massive renovations have taken place each summer. Roads and squares and parks have been torn up and reshaped. Softer lighting has been installed. Outdoor cafés have sprouted up along the wider sidewalks and refurbished façades.

And just in case the renovations didn't go far enough, authorities have also spruced up the place with last-minute *zachistki*. Translated as "mop-up operations," they denote authorities cleaning up whatever may soil their effort to present a clean, safe and modern country to the world.

One of these operations, for instance, included the culling of thousands of stray cats and dogs in an effort to "minimize ecological risks," as Sports Minister Pavel Kolobkov put it. Activists reported that many of the animals were put down, an attitude perhaps best summed up by one of the business own-

ers awarded a government contract to carry out the work. "Why are we worrying about dogs when we should be worried about people?" he told me.

Because activists are generally used to this heavy-handed approach, they were wary in recent months about what officials might do with the homeless people that call the streets of central Moscow home. Would they be treated like strays, or would

they be treated like people? As the World Cup approached, rumors circulated that they would be picked up off the streets during the tournament. Even worse, that they would be swept out to who-knows-where, beyond city limits.

Then, several weeks ago, Moscow's Department of Labor and Social Protection officials met with activists. They agreed that the main tent in the city where the department and volunteer groups feed the homeless would be temporarily relocated for the duration of the World Cup. At the so-called *tryokh vokzalov* — the cluster of three train stations aimed for St. Petersburg, Kazan and Yaroslavl — the location was in plain view of tourists. (In a statement, a spokesman for the office cited a "preplanned sanitation" of the area.)

The interim location, in contrast, is far off the beaten track. Set between a train depot and a string of warehouses — both in use and abandoned — on the southeastern edge of the city, a tourist would not run into it. On a recent afternoon there, Max Groshev, 32, told me that he's now had to trek further to get a meal, but he is still grateful he is provided one. Out of work for a year, he said he's barely able to afford groceries.

At the former location, a department worker was patrolling nearby. I asked for her take on the relocation. "Would you want homeless people robbing or beating the tourists that are passing through this area?" she said. (One activist has claimed that, at the earlier meeting, he was told: "One month without food won't kill them.")

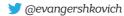
Earlier that day, I had met with Andrei Serykh, who works with the homeless at Moscow's Salvation Army. "It's very hard right now," he said. "There are more than 100 people I would usually feed at tryokh vokzalov, but I can't go because we were told not to volunteer at any train stations until after the World Cup. I'm worried we would lose our operating license if we went ahead with it."

Others say that they have lost track of the people they see regularly that require specialized help.

"I haven't seen six diabetics for over a week, who need the insulin we give them every day," Lana Zhurkina, director of Dom Druzei, told me, citing the closure of popular meeting points at train stations. "I'm worried that they're dead by now. Where could they be?"

It isn't difficult to sympathize with officials wanting to present the best of Russia. It is also heartening that, perhaps because of some of their efforts, stereotypes seem to be losing their stick. And yet, it is worth asking: Was every measure necessary?

Evan Gershkovich is a reporter at The Moscow Times.



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Faculty and students at Moscow State University who protested the location of FIFA's fan zone said they were pressured by the administration and city authorities.

Intellectual Pursuits

Students at Russia's most prestigious university didn't want FIFA's fan zone on the doorstep of their campus. No one listened.

BY EVAN GERSHKOVICH 🔰 @EVANGERSHKOVICH

n Monday afternoon in Samara, Russia was preparing to play Uruguay in its final World Cup group stage match. The stakes were high. The outcome would determine which team would finish first in the group, as well as the caliber of their opponents in the next round.

The match started at 5 p.m, but Russians across the country left work early and gathered to watch their home team. By the late afternoon in Moscow, tens of thousands of supporters had filled the FIFA Fan Fest zone.

The fan zone's main attractions include a large screen above a stage for performers and dozens of beer stalls. It is set on one of the capital's highest points and most scenic locations, Vorobyovy Gory, which looks out over the city center. But it is also located right next to one of the country's most prestigious academic institutions: Moscow State University.

In the months leading up to the tournament, a number of the university's students and pro-

fessors protested the choice of location. Hordes of bawdy fans would disrupt the end-of-semester exam period, they argued, produce transportation mayhem and cause environmental problems.

A week and a half into the tournament, the campus residents are divided over whether the zone has been an impediment. Those who actively took part in protests report having faced pressure from authorities. They say that the problems they predicted have materialized. Others now say they have barely noticed the fan zone.

Referring to the nearby noise, a student who asked to remain anonymous said he knew the score of every match. "But, honestly, the music coming from my neighbors down the hall bothers me more"

Reports of pressure

The fan zone was initially going to be on Red Square, not Vorobyovy Gory. That plan fell through, though, because the square could not

fit the required 40,000 fans and alcoholic drinks could not be sold there, in violation of FIFA's obligations to its sponsors.

In February, in what looked like an effort to placate students, the university administration announced that exams would be rescheduled so the campus would be empty before the tournament kicked off.

The 34-story building is home to several faculties, lecture halls, offices, private apartments and dormitories for 6,000 students — all just 300 meters from the fan zone.

But students protested against cutting the semester short by staging an "Occupy Rectorate" protest in the main university building. The university rector capitulated and agreed to move the exam schedule back. But the point, students say, is that their exam schedules should never have been disrupted to begin with.

Their pleas were ignored, so protesters collected signatures, staged pickets and applied for protest permits.

"There are plenty of other locations the World Cup fan zone could have been held," said Alexander Zamyatin, 26, a recent graduate who is now a municipal deputy in Moscow's Zyuzino neighborhood. "We were never against the event itself."

Students appealed to FIFA's Local Organizing Committee in Russia and proposed VDNKh as an alternative — a giant Soviet-era outdoor exhibition space covering over 13 square kilometers, originally built to host agricultural fairs.

Their pleas were ignored, so protesters collected signatures, staged pickets and applied for protest permits — all of which, Zamyatin said, were denied. Then, in April, when "our campaign had really gathered some traction," Zamyatin said, "the pressure began."

According to Zamyatin, students protesting would regularly be called into the administration's offices and told that they were "undermining operations." He also said the relatives of several students leading the protest received phone calls claiming that their sons, daughters, nieces or nephews were "now working for the CIA."

Some say authorities went so far as to track their movements

Artyom Yegorov, a second-year physics student, says that when he went out to collect signatures in front of the university's main building, he was stopped by a policeman and brought to a local precinct. That same policeman arrested him, he said, after he staged one-man pickets in front of the mayor's office and the presidential administration building.

Then, Yegorov says, "something strange happened."

One night this spring, around 4 a.m, Yegorov and several protesters returned to their dorms after studying. Yegorov says he did not shut his

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"I thought to myself, 'Sh-t, that's weird, I should record it because otherwise no one will believe it, it's so bizarre," Yegorov recounted. "I told the others, 'Take the elevator down and I'll stay around the corner and turn on a recorder."

In an audio recording reviewed by The Moscow Times, a man can be overheard saying, "They've gone somewhere." After a few moments he says, "They've gone down."

The problems

Beyond the pressure from authorities, protesters say their worst fears have come true. "From the first day of the fan zone's operation during the opening match, everything turned out worse than we'd anticipated," Zamyatin said.

That day, a Thursday evening, while Russia hammered Saudi Arabia at the nearby Luzhniki Stadium, students and professors say that science labs were evacuated. "For an hour and a half, I answered students' questions outside in rather cold weather," said Mikhail Lobanov, one of the university's mechanics professors.

Even before the World Cup started, however, strict safety codes were put in place for the tournament by a presidential decree from May last year. They included barring potentially dan-

I just think that a physics laboratory is much more important than having a fan zone over here.

gerous and radioactive chemicals from being brought near World Cup sites, forcing lab students to put their work on hold.

"Everyone in the chemistry faculty is tearing their hair out," Zamyatin told The Moscow Times last month. "Suddenly, they have to stop their work because of football.

The shuttering of labs would do "irreparable harm" to some students' careers, Yegorov, who works as a lab assistant, said last month. "And I just think that a laboratory is much more important than having a fan zone over here."

Before the tournament began, campus residents also worried that they would suffer from a transportation collapse due to the volume of football supporters coming to the campus. While



IN-DEPTH

In April, students formed a "human shield" around the main university building in protest.

they now say that it is manageable, they still say there are problems.

"I have to walk an extra 800 meters to reach the new bus location," said a 65-year-old woman who has lived in the university's main building her entire life. "For an elderly person, that's nothing to laugh at."

Others worry about environmental issues.

"As a zoologist, I'm scared for the birds that nest on Moscow State University grounds and on the Vorobyovy Gory," or Sparrow Hills, says Maria Romanovskaya, a student in the university's biology department. "For most birds, June-July is precisely when fledglings take flight. Constant noise from the fan zone and a practically uncontrollable flow of people on the territory of the park can harmfully affect the birds' lives.'

More immediately, hundreds of trees were torn down to make room for the fan fest. "It wasn't pedestrian here, like VDNKh, with this ready huge asphalt space," Zamyatin said. Lobanov, the professor, put it more bluntly: "Moscow authorities inflicted a great deal of damage on that unique forest park.

What now?

During the Russia-Uruguay match, sounds from the fan zone were a dull hum at the main university building. Pavel Ilyin, a fourth-year student whose room faces the zone, said that the noise was par for the course throughout the tournament. "It hasn't bothered me whatsoev-

In general, Ilyin said that he was "neutral" to the protests. He added, however, that the protesters had some positive victories, including getting authorities to block entrance to the campus for tourists. "That would have just led



The campus is home to some 6,000 students.

to drunken debauchery all over campus," he said.

Since the start of the tournament, authorities have had a difficult time managing the crowd at the fan zone. They have capped the number at 25,000, lowering it from the planned 40,000. And in advance of the Russia-Uruguay match, authorities asked supporters to consider going elsewhere.

For Zamyatin, the issue speaks to the poor choice of location. "It's a wonderful event that as many people as possible should attend, just in another place in the city."

In the end, he said, he cares most about shining a light on how the authorities acted to get their way.

"Throughout our campaign, the university administration and the administration of the city never once entered into a dialogue with us," he said. "They are silent, just silent — and that's outrageous

Lena Smirnova and Alina Shubina contributed reporting



University administrators told students who picketed that they were "undermining operations."

INFO FOR U.S. CITIZENS TRAVELING TO THE WORLD CUP IN RUSSIA

EMBASSY MOSCOW

Bolshoy Deviatinsky Pereulok 8

+ (7) (495) 728-5577 or + (7) (495) 728-5000 (after hours) moscowacs@state.gov

CONSULATE GENERAL YEKATERINBURG

Ulitza Gogolya 15

+ (7) (343) 379-3001 or + (7) 917-569-3549 (after hours) consulyekatacs@state.gov

CONSULATE GENERAL VLADIVOSTOK

Pushkinskaya Ulitza 32

+ (7) (4232) 300-070 or + (7) (914) 791-0067 (after hours) vladcons@state.gov

SERVICES FOR U.S. CITIZENS DURING THE WORLD CUP

- Replacing lost or stolen passports (only at a U.S. embassy or consulate)
- Providing information on medical resources
- Helping victims of crime
- · Assisting after an arrest or
- Locating a lost U.S. citizen
- Helping after the death of a U.S. citizen

EMERGENCY SERVICES IN RUSSIA

- All Emergency Services: Call 112 or 101
- · Police: Call 102 or 112 if using a mobile phone
- Fire: Call 101
- Medical: Call 103

USEFUL LINKS

- Official FIFA World Cup Russia 2018 Website www.fifa.com/worldcup/index.html
- Fan Guide Information welcome2018.com/en/fan_guide
- · Official ticket reseller www.fifa.com/worldcup/organisation/ ticketing/index.html

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Facebook.com/travelgov

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Sign up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at step.state.gov to receive important safety and security information.



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Maria Has Her Eye on the Ball

BY LENA SMIRNOVA > @LEN_SMIRNOV

hen the lights came on at the State Kremlin Palace in December last year, millions of eyes worldwide turned to a petite Russian journalist with a megawatt smile and an almost girlish giddiness.

Together with British sports presenter Gary Lineker, Maria Komandnaya held the world's attention over the next hour as co-host of the World Cup draw.

Unlike in previous years, she was not an actress or a model, but a sports journalist who had risen from a humble background to claim the spotlight.

Since Komandnaya took up presenting at the age of 17, she has undergone several transformations, apparently as at ease presenting for the opposition-leaning Dozhd TV as for state-run television channels — or the Kremlin stage.

A year ago she made yet another switch: to U.S. television, as a sideline reporter for Fox Sports at the 2017 Confederations Cup and now at the World Cup, becoming one of few Russian journalists to have made it big across the pond. The Moscow Times caught up with Komandnaya to talk about the glamour of the World Cup, the differences between working for U.S. and Russian television networks and her newfound fame

You've been working in sports television for more than a decade. Which of your professional achievements do you consider the most important?

The World Cup draw, of course. This is a moment that I will never forget and which will always stay with me.

In 1990, the World Cup was held in Italy and Sophia Loren hosted the draw. I love her very much — "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" is one of my favorite films. The chance to follow in Loren's footsteps brings me incredible joy and pride. And of course, to share the stage with Gary Lineker — the most famous sports presenter in the world — and Diego Maradona, Carles Puyol, Gordon Banks ... I will always be grateful to the people who believed in me and trusted me to host such an important event.

Another huge step for me is working with Fox Sports. I've dreamt of working on U.S. television since I was a child, especially sports television. It's a completely different level [than in Russia] and, more importantly, it's a chance for me to



Alongside former Russia coach Leonid Slutsky



Sports commentator Maria Komandnaya broke barriers when she co-hosted the World Cup draw, usually co-hosted by actresses or models.

learn. I spend each day with the top professionals in the field. $\,$

How did your life change after hosting the World Cup draw in the Kremlin?

The biggest change is not at all about the advertising offers, which became more numerous, of course. It's about something else. I see it this way: I don't need to prove anything to anyone anymore. I don't have to prove my professionalism, my right to be a sports journalist, a sports television presenter. This experience will stay with me forever.

What are the differences between working for Russian and U.S. television channels?

The approach is completely different. As strange as it may seem, presenters on Russian television have to be more creative.

The show starts and you don't have all the stories ready. You change plans on the fly, you have to improvise.

On U.S. television, you have to know your role precisely. If the camera is on you for 40 seconds, it should be exactly 40 seconds. Everything is very strict, but it is precisely for this reason that the end product is top-notch. It is so polished that it shines. On U.S. television, the picture looks brighter and I like that too. The cameraman takes slightly different angles. They are not afraid of getting close-up shots, or filming the reporter from a higher angle.

U.S. sports presenters are also more expres-

sive. They joke a lot and frequently poke fun at each other while on-air.

On a side note, I also felt free when I was at [Russia's] Match TV, where I worked for about a year and a half. The level of understanding between co-hosts was simply fantastic.

You've said you once lost consciousness, right in the Match TV studio. What are your working days like that you get so tired?

It was just a rather difficult week, though I am by no means complaining. I went on a business trip to Italy. Flight, work, flight, almost no sleep. I went home from the airport, took a shower and went to work on a morning show. That is, at 4 a.m.

The following day, I had to get up at 3 a.m. again. That's how it happened.

The schedule during the Confederations Cup

The show starts and you don't have all the stories ready. You change plans on the fly, you have to improvise.

last year was also very difficult. We were flying from one city to the next every day, arriving at our hotel near dawn, sleeping for a couple of hours and then preparing for the broadcasts. Then we went to the match, had dinner and took another flight.

It went on like that for two weeks. But it was so exciting that I didn't feel tired at all. We had an amazing team. I was so happy to show the guys at Fox what the real Russia is like — with terrific, open-hearted people, the most delicious cuising

What are the main qualities of a World Cup presenter?

A presenter needs to love football, that is all. The skills you need to work on television, now that's a different question.

The most important thing in our profession is experience. That's probably the case for any other profession

You need to love the camera. When the camera turns on, I simply grow wings. I don't know why that is, that's just the way it works.

If you had any advice to give, what would it he?

Believe in yourself under any circumstances and remember that you are unique. Everyone is capable of moving mountains — of this I am 100 percent sure.

This interview was redacted for length and clarity.





Unparalleled Excitement

TRAVEL 10 The Moscow Times June 29 - July 1, 2018



aransk is the World Cup host city that no one thought would be a World Cup host city. It has a population of only 330,000 and is known mainly for industry and prisons. When it was officially named as a venue in 2012, its locals expressed skepticism over their city's ability to step up to the plate. But having constructed new high rises, hotels and shopping centers, along with a new airport, train station and, of course, the Mordovia Arena (a \$250-million project designed to look like a hot air balloon), Saransk is ready to play ball. And

the locals have rallied their support, especially after they learned that Cristiano Ronaldo would be one of their visitors.

Saransk was officially established in 1641 as a Russian military stronghold, but the area's history stretches back much further. Saransk is the capital of the Mordovia region, the historic home of the Mordvin people. Ethnic Mordvins still make up about one-third of the region's population, and the local administration maintains efforts to protect the language and culture of both the Moksha and Erzya ethnic groups. Mordvins are a part of the Finno-Ugric group, which also

includes Finns, Estonians and Hungarians. The region has become a center for festivals dedicated to this ethnic identity and culture. Mordovia Arena is also influenced by the local culture, with a red, orange and white color scheme reminiscent of traditional Mordvin art.

Russians first encroached into Mordovia in

the 12th century, but it was not until Russia overthrew the Kazan Khanate and spread its borders in the 16th and 17th centuries that the region came under Russian control, leading to the founding of Saransk. Up until the Russian Revolution, Saransk and Mordovia remained a largely agricultural region. Crops grew in abundance in the area and continue to do so, along with the raising of livestock.

The emergence of the Soviet Union shook up the pastoral life in Saransk and Mordovia. In 1930 Mordovia was granted autonomous-region status, and in

1934 it was promoted to an autonomous republic, a status that it held until 1991. While autonomous republics did not have the right to disaffiliate themselves from the Soviet Union as union republics did, they enjoyed some level of political autonomy - although the extent varied throughout the Soviet period. Acknowledging Mordovia as an autonomous republic within the Russian Republic was a nod to its ethnic and cultural mi-

In Soviet memory, Saransk is largely associated with the gulag system. The first prison and labor camps were formed in the 1930s, and by the 1960s the camps in Mordovia were designated for the state's "most dangerous enemies." Some of the most high-profile political dissidents were housed there, and the camp complex included one of the country's only camps designated for high-security female political prisoners. The gulag legacy continues in the region today, as when Pussy Riot's Nadezhda Tolokonnikova went on a hunger strike while imprisoned in Mordovia to protest the prison's inhumane conditions.

In fact, it is from this prison history that Sa-



Saransk is a mix of past and present.

ransk's football culture formed. Gulag prison officers used sports as a productive distraction for the inmates. Football teams were organized according to the region and nationality of prisoners, and competitions became a major aspect of camp culture. This prison football legacy may be more prominent in Saransk than that of any professional league. The local team, FC Mordovia, played in the Russian football league's third tier until this year, and attracts an average audience of only 2,000 spectators. After the World Cup, the team will inherit the brand-new Mordovia Arena – which seats 44.000.

But there is more to Saransk than its history of high-security gulags and football. During World War II, industry boomed and the city became a major manufacturer of heavy machinery and penicillin. It is also a significant railway hub, with routes leading to Nizhny Novgorod, Samara and Kazan, also World Cup host cities. Despite Saransk's small size, modest legacy and sometimes-dark history, it is located squarely on the World Cup network. And it is prepared to welcome fans who take the train into their shiny new city.



Mordovia Arena's color scheme is inspired by local art.





Fish Solyanka: Moscow's 'Mixed Bag' Soup

By Jennifer Eremeeva | 🔰 @jweremeeva

Borshch's main rival for most beloved soup in the hearts and minds of Russians

he considerable contrasts between Russia's two capitals, Moscow and St. Petersburg, provide a major theme in Russian culture, a struggle often defined as that between the public and private. If Petersburg is Russia's impressive public square, then Moscow is her cozy kitchen, where a pot of soup is always bubbling on the stove. Whatever the season, no midday meal in Russia is considered complete without a bowl of hearty soup.

Moscow, Russia's landlocked capital, prides itself on being "the port of five seas." Thanks to Russia's natural river network and the Soviet-era canal system, Moscow can access the Baltic, Black, Barents, Azov and Caspian Seas.

Fish has always been an important part of the Russian diet. In pre-revolutionary Russia, fish was the default food during the rigorous liturgical fasts mandated by the Orthodox Church.

In addition to their impressive range of smoked, salted and pickled fish, Russians have also perfected the art of fish soups and stews, including creamy crayfish bisque and clear ukha, the doyenne of Russian soups, consisting of fresh river water and a shot of vodka.

Solyanka is a uniquely Russian creation that can be made with either fish or meat, and often a combination of both. While a non-Russian may balk at the seemingly inconsistent list of ingredients, one taste is enough to convert even the most skeptical. Salty is the dominant theme as the name suggests: sol' is the Russian word for salt. Sour and tangy elements of pickled vegetables and lemons are blended with briny fish and a hint of sweetness from the tomatoes.

Like all Russian soups, the list of ingredients for solyanka is not carved in stone, and in fact Russians use the phrase "sbornaya solyanka" or "mixed-up solyanka" as a synonym for "mixed bag" or "hotchpotch."

Jennifer Eremeeva is a long-time expatriate. She writes about Russian cuisine, culture, travel and history at jennifereremeeva.com.



Fish Solyanka

Ingredients

- 1 quart (1 liter) of fish stock
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 lb. (450 grams) of firm white fish such as cod, cut into 1-cm
 - 1 cup (240 ml) of hard salami or smoked ham, cut into a small dice

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- 3 whole pickled cucumbers
- 12-15 green olives
- 1/4-cup (60 ml) of capers
- 2 whole ripe tomatoes, seeded and cubed
- 1 Tbls of tomato paste
- 1/2-cup (100 ml) of white wine
- 1 medium-sized onion, chopped finely
- 3 cloves of garlic, mashed and chopped finely with salt Coarse sea salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 1 Tbls of smoked paprika
- 2 sprigs of fresh thyme
- 1/3-cup (80 ml) of "rassol" or juice from sauerkraut
- 1 Tbls of olive oil

4 Tbls of fresh dill and chives, chopped lemon wedges

- · Heat the olive oil in a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sauté until they are soft and translucent. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt and a few grinds of pepper. Add the tomato paste and stir to coat the onion mixture with the tomato
- · Add the wine and lower heat to simmer until the onion mixture absorbs the wine.
- · Add the fish stock, bay leaf, thyme, tomatoes, capers, salami cubes and pickles and bring to a gentle simmer. Cover and cook for 10
- · Reduce the heat and lower the fish cubes into the broth with a slotted spoon. Simmer on the lowest possible heat for 5-7 minutes.
- · Remove the bay leaf and thyme. Add the rassol and taste to adjust seasonings with additional salt and pepper.
- · Serve with a drizzle of best quality olive oil, a generous mound of fresh dill and chives and a squeeze of lemon juice.



Soup-café

If you've already had your fill of the classic borshch and shchi, Soup-café is the place to go. A cornucopia of flavors, the restaurant aims to collect every recipe under the sunand it's at 127 and counting. Visitors can let their worries drain away as they sip *kharcho* or Boston cheddar and enjoy Soup-café's cozy atmosphere. And if they want to experiment at home, the restaurant's got them covered: From Creole gumbo to the millennial favorite, avocado soup, Soup-café's website boasts a recipe for every taste.

17 Skakovaya Ulitsa. Metro Belorusskaya. soupcafe.ru



Located in Danilovsky market, one of the trendiest food spots in Moscow, Pho is a gem among the city's developing international food scene. Faithfully following Vietnamese culinary traditions, the restaurant offers Goi cuốn, fresh mangos and, of course, their namesake pho—a rich Vietnamese soup filled with herbs, rice noodles and meat for those who want it. Add the pepper if you dare, and come in hungry—the serving size is generous enough for two. And other tempting eats beckon from all over the market. 74 Mytnaya Ulitsa. Metro Tulskaya. facebook.com/pages/

B%C3%B4/421354388204497



Korchma Taras Bul'ba

As you enter the tavern—or korchma, as they call it in Ukranian—you find yourself enveloped in the warmth and hospitality of an old Ukrainian kitchen. Taras Bul'ba has it all: bright fabrics with traditional motifs, folk art, a soundtrack of Ukranian tunes and, most importantly, an extensive menu chock-full of beloved Ukrainian dishes, from smalets and draniki to vareniki and pampushki. Soups, naturally, are in pride of place as the core of every meal, and Taras Bul'ba is one of the best places to try real Ukrainian solyanka or sorrel borshch.

Multiple locations tarasbulba.ru



Have A Nice Day

It's not always easy to find vegetarian food in Moscow, but Have A Nice Day sets out to offer its customers plenty of creative veggie, raw and simply healthy options. The restaurant strives to promote a balanced, conscientious lifestyle, and its breezy, uncluttered interior and summer smoothies are enough to make visitors feel lighter and more at ease. If that doesn't tempt you, their vegetarian chowder, cauliflower cream soup and raw cold soup with asparagus and avocado should certainly put it on your radar.

15 Tsvetnoi Bulvar. Metro Tsvetnoi Bulvar. hndcafe.com

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Country Living: How to Rent a Dacha

efore you even begin your search for a dacha, you have to decide on a number of issues. Are you or is someone in your family going to live there full-time, or is this just for weekends? Do you have a car? Are you planning to always drive to the dacha or would you take a commuter train or bus? If you are a one-car family, will the car stay at the dacha or go into the city on most days?

Do you want to live in the heart of a community or away from other houses? Do you want to be near a swimming spot or woods? Do you want a wooded lot or open space? Do you want to grow flowers or vegetables? Do you want a lot of land or just a yard? Do you need it fenced in?

What level of comfort do you want? Do you want to get away from it all at a dacha with spotty or no electricity, no Wi-Fi, outdoor plumbing, a well and a "summer kitchen" (a separate structure with a stove and sometimes water)? Or do you want to rent a suburban house with all the modern amenities?

Once you have thought this through, you'll know what to look for, like a dacha that is walking distance from a train station and shops (if the family car will stay in the city), or reliable Wi-Fi and satellite television (if you are in business and need to stay in touch with the world).

The next issue is which direction from Moscow. If you live in the northeast of Moscow, you don't want a dacha 30 kilometers out of the city to the southwest — that would add one to three hours of driving time. Most people draw a "pizza slice" on a map with the center point at their apartment and the crust at their preferred maximum number of kilometers out of the city. That's their search zone.

And then — how much can you pay? The smallest house with no modern conveniences might cost 15,000 rubles (\$240) a month (or less); a modest dacha with some or all conveniences averages 25-60,000 rubles a month; a modern suburban-type house starts at about 100,000 rubles a month and goes up from there. The season is three to five months (May through September), and sometimes there is a

People are sentimental about their dachas, places that represent the joys and freedoms of summer.

security deposit (one half to one month's rent). If you go through a realtor, you will have to pay a commission (from a third to one month's rent).

All in the family

People are sentimental about their dachas, which for decades were the only approximation of private property and places that represent the joys and freedoms of summer. Many dacha owners prefer to rent to someone they know, even if it's a friend of a friend of a friend. In some cases, dachas are passed around at businesses — a dacha that is always rented by whoever heads a particular company, or that is passed around a group of foreign friends

So once you have a general idea of the region you want to be in, drive around and note any dacha communities you like. And then ask around. In fact, ask everyone you know, especially older folks. At the dacha villages you like, walk around and talk to the residents or local shop clerks, who tend to know everything about their customers (and be willing to share their information for a finder's fee).

The best person to help you is the dacha village's unofficial caretaker. There's always a man who lives nearby year round and keeps an eye on dachas in return for a few hundred rubles a month. He knows which dachas are empty, who is having financial problems, who is going to Crimea for the summer and so on. Offer a finder's fee and see what he turns up.

Search the web

If you aren't looking for a high-end property, forget agents and instead search on one of Moscow's many real estate web sites. The best sites for dachas are cian.ru,gdeetotdom.ru, avito.ru/rossiya/nedvizhimost, domofond.ru and irr.ru. The real estate forum on expat.ru has a few offerings (and is in English). Even if your Russian is poor, you can still figure out square footage, price and number of rooms. Ask a Russian friend to help with the calls and go check out the properties. Some bargaining is possible.

Do

- · Inspect the property (which may look quite different from the online photos). Check everything and make sure you understand what will be included in the price and what you can do on the property (like garden or set up a kiddie pool).
- Drive at rush hour. A dacha that is 35 minutes away at midnight might be three hours away on a weekday morning.
- Test the cell phone reception, Wi-Fi and other amenities. Check cell phone provider maps to find the best coverage (or to determine the provider to buy your plug-in modem from).
- Ask about the neighbors or talk to them; a group of rowdy party animals next door will ruin your country idyll.
 - · Sign a contract.

Don'

- Sign a contract or hand over money before you see the property.
 - \cdot Pay the entire summer's rent ahead of time.

Postscript

If you're not quite ready to commit — start easy. Airbnb.ru has plenty of offers for short-term dacha rentals starting at about 4,000 rubles (\$64) per night. Try a few places and then book a couple of weeks at your favorite spot. And while you're there, talk to your neighbors to set up a summer rental for next year.



Many dacha owners prefer to rent to people they know, even if it's to a friend of a friend.

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THE WORD'S WORTH

By Michele Berdy



Russia's Summer Folk Head Out of Town

Дача: country cottage

isitors to Moscow and other large Russian cities will notice two curious things in the summer: enormous traffic jams leading out of the cities on Thursday and Friday evenings, and empty cities on the weekends – with the exception of die-hard football fans, that is. This, ladies and gentlemen,

is the Grand Dacha Exodus

The дача (country cottage, more or less) арpeared as a word and concept in the 17th century. It first meant a gift (дар) and is related to the verb давать (to give). The tsar gave land outside the cities as a reward for service. It was only in the 20th century that the middle class started to rent дачи and the tradition of getting out into nature for Russia's three

short, glorious months of summer began.

In Soviet times the notion of getting a дача as a gift was revived: Most people were offered plots of land in communities set up by their employers. The standard plot of land for most folks was шесть соток (six hundred square meters — a сотка is 100 square meters), just enough for a little house and garden. But, like in pre-revolutionary years, the gift of land got bigger in accordance with the service to the nation. Ministers and their deputies, full professors and factory heads got up to a full hectare of land (about 2.5 acres) in picturesque settings, often with running water, gas and electricity.

These days if you are invited на дачу (out to the dacha) you might inquire politely about the mod cons. Some cottages are now like suburban houses, but others are not. Chances are there will be electricity. You might be told: Вода – из колодца, но прямо на участке (There's water, from a well, but it's right on the property!) Or: У нас большой дом и летняя кухня (We've got a big house and a summer kitchen, that is, a separate open structure with a stove and - sometimes - a source of water.)

Water, lights and gas made it to these communities before sewage lines, so even very nice houses have септик (a septic tank) which requires откачка (pumping out), performed with admirable speed by big trucks with hoses and a pumping system. How do дачники (summer folk, dacha owners) know it's time to call the pump truck? Подпахивает. (It's beginning to smell.) Пахнет. (It smells.) Воняет! (It stinks.)

But you might be told: Удобство на улице (The facilities are on the street), which is to say: У нас сортир на участке (We have an outhouse in our yard.) Don't panic. They are often clean, with electricity and no smell thanks to the wonders of modern science – порошок с микроорганизмами, которые разлагают содержимое и устраняют запах (microorganisms that decompose the contents and eliminate the odor). The drawback at night is that outhouses are always set far from the house. Возьми с собой фонарик (Bring a flashlight).

Most of the time you will get this kind of invitation: Приезжайте на шашлык! (Come out for shashlik - grilled meat!). This is as much of an event as a meal. First someone will hand you an axe. Once again, don't panic. Рубить дрова! (We have to chop up the firewood.) Once that is done, the next step is: Зажечь костёр (Light the fire). Of course, now you can buy charcoal, but a serious griller will say: Зачем? Лучше на дровах! (Why? It's better on a wood fire.)

All of this takes several hours, lubricated by something cold and alcoholic. Finally, the command comes: Накрываем стол! (Let's set the table.) This means squeezing dozens of dishes on the table: салаты, колбаса, пирожки, травки, сыр, морс, сок, хлеб и водка (salads, cold smoked meats, pies, greens, cheese, fresh fruit drink, juice, bread and vodka)

When the шашлык is brought to the table, you raise your glass and say: За хозяев! (To our hosts!) За тёплый приём! (To our warm welcome!) Or just: За Bac! (To you!).

And dig in.

Michele A. Berdy is a Moscow-based translator and interpreter, author of "The Russian Word's Worth," a collection of her columns. Follow her on Twitter @MicheleBerdy

Advertorial

Enormous traffic jams

ladies and gentlemen, is the

and empty cities – this,

Grand Dacha Exodus.

In partnership

Football capsule collection in TSUM

DOLCE & GABBANA

Dolce & Gabbana created an exclusive capsule collection of men's clothing and accessories, timed to the World Football Cup. The collection includes: a tracksuit, T-shirts, pullovers, sneakers, and capacious backpacks. All models are decorated with bright thematic prints with images of the Russian flag or landmark places of Moscow. The Kremlin, St. Basil's Cathedral or famous views of the stadium "Luzhniki" can be found among the prints. Key capsule models are decorated with the #DGlovesfootball

The collection is complemented by colorful baseball caps and sneakers, designed in a football theme with

The capsule collection is introduced in Moscow boutiques Dolce & Gabbana in Tretyakovskiy proezd, Barvikha Luxury Village, Central Department Store, Kutuzovsky Prospekt, and also in DLT.

ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA

Football capsule collection Ermenegildo Zegna includes a football made of red, blue and white leather, as well as blue Pelle TessutaTM braided leather sport shoes with red inserts and white laces.

The colors of the shoes supports the colors of the Russian flag, and the design is completed by logo "SOC-CER WORLD CUP - RUSSIA 2018". Both models demonstrate the stylistics of Zegna and the brand's ability to highlight an individuality of a modern man.

The limited collection is already available in Ermenegildo Zegna boutiques in Tretyakovsky Pass, Barvikha Luxury Village and TSUM.

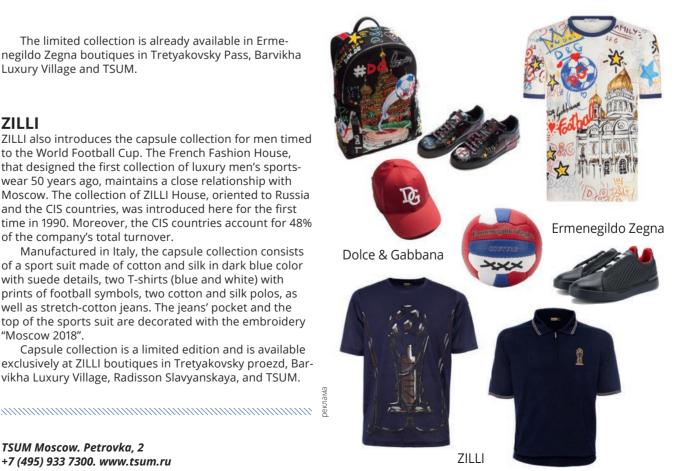
ZILLI

ZILLI also introduces the capsule collection for men timed to the World Football Cup. The French Fashion House, that designed the first collection of luxury men's sportswear 50 years ago, maintains a close relationship with Moscow. The collection of ZILLI House, oriented to Russia and the CIS countries, was introduced here for the first of the company's total turnover.

Manufactured in Italy, the capsule collection consists of a sport suit made of cotton and silk in dark blue color with suede details, two T-shirts (blue and white) with prints of football symbols, two cotton and silk polos, as well as stretch-cotton jeans. The jeans' pocket and the top of the sports suit are decorated with the embroidery "Moscow 2018".

Capsule collection is a limited edition and is available exclusively at ZILLI boutiques in Tretyakovsky proezd, Barvikha Luxury Village, Radisson Slavyanskaya, and TSUM.

TSUM Moscow. Petrovka, 2 +7 (495) 933 7300. www.tsum.ru



WHAT'S ON 14 The Moscow Times June 29 – July 1, 2018

Courtyard Bars

Dom 12

A bar for intellectuals

Located just off Ulitsa Ostozhenka, dubbed Moscow's golden mile, Dom 12 is a restaurant-cum-wine bar beloved by the city's intellectuals. Dom 12's schedule includes lectures, book presentations and film screenings, while in the summer time guests migrate to a lovely courtyard. The food is good and not too westernized, and the wine list is extensive.

12 Mansurovsky Pereulok. Metro Park Kultury. dom12cafe.ru



32.05

When a park becomes a courtyard

32.05 is one of Moscow's most popular bars with a patio. Try any of the classic cocktails and chill among the greenery while gazing at the visitors of the Hermitage Garden, one of Moscow's best parks. The menu is innovativebe sure to try the beef stroganoff with mashed potatoes squeezed into a drinking glass.

3 Ulitsa Karetny Ryad. Metro Trubnaya. veranda3205.ru



Entuziast

A Berlin-style bar

Nestled in one of the courtyards on the pedestrian Stoleshnikov Pereulok, Entuziast is a bar and motorbike repair shop. When the weather is warm, the bar spills into an expansive courtyard which fills up with people drinking beer and cider (the only alcohol served at Entuziast) or having a barbecue. The scene would not be out of place in Berlin's trendier neighborhoods. 7/5 Stoleshnikov Pereulok.

Metro Okhotny Ryad. facebook.com/enthusiastmoscow



Powerhouse

A 19th-century mansion with courtyard

This bar and club, located in a mid-19th century wooden mansion, is most famous for its funk and hip-hop nights. The food by its up-andcoming chef is more than just pub grub, and there's a separate whiskey-tasting bar for connoisseurs. When the weather is warm, Powerhouse opens its huge courtyard with a summer terrace, where markets and festivals are organized on a regular basis. 7/4 Goncharnaya Ulitsa.

Metro Taganskaya.

facebook.com/powerhousemoscow

Hidden Bars

Knock on an unmarked door, nod to the guy who opens it and slip into one of Moscow's secret nightspots. A night in one of Moscow's hidden bars will make you feel like you're in a speakeasy, and a true Moscow insider.

Korobok

Cocktails in the basement

Russian for "little box," Korobok is located in the basement of the Tekhnikum restaurant famous for its "auteur" cuisine. Don't be discouraged by the sign on the curtain saying "Staff Only." Behind it is a dimly lit and cozy interior with a huge lamp. There's a short cocktails menu, and the bartender can prepare something in accordance with your preferences. 7/5 Ulitsa Bolshaya Dmitrovka, Bldg. 2.

Metro Okhotny Ryad.

korobokmoscow.ru

Chainaya

One of the city's best

Chainaya is one of a few Moscow cocktail bars that occasionally make it to the international best-bar lists. Designed like a Chinese teahouse (hence the name), it specializes in customized cocktails. Call ahead to make sure you're expected behind an unmarked door in one of the courtyards facing the Belorusskaya train

29 1st Tverskaya-Yamskaya Ulitsa. Metro Belorusskaya.

+7 (495) 967 3052



Mendeleev

Beloved expat spot

Mendeleev is a bar in the basement of the small Chinese cafe Lucky Noodles. It's been around for a while, so it's a "secret" in name only. Exposed brick, antique furniture and customized cocktails are what people come here for. On any night there are plenty of Moscow expats here, and there's dancing on the weekend. 20/1 Ulitsa Petrovka.

Metro Kuznetsky Most. mendeleevbar.ru



Hangout for creatives

Hidden in one of the maze-like courtyards on Ulitsa Petrovka, Voda is a magnet for Moscow's

so-called "creative class." The décor is minimalist and you'll probably have to stand. Call ahead to reserve a spot; you can't just pop in unannounced. There's no menu: You tell the bartender your preferences and get one of the pink-colored cocktails that Voda specializes in. 17/7 Ulitsa Petrovka. Metro Okhotny Ryad.

+7 (495) 281 46 70



Antikvarny Boutique & Bar

Antique furniture and cocktails

You might be confused when you open the door to this quiet spot in central Moscow, because it does look like an antique shop. Most of the furniture and decorations are, in fact, for sale, but most people come here for the unique atmosphere and great cocktails. Sometimes theater performances are held here.

5 Zvonarsky Pereulok. Metro Lubyanka. facebook.com/antiquarny



Half Dub Theory

Half Dub Theory is one of the most interesting indie English-language bands that appeared in Moscow in the latter half of the 2000s. Featuring distinct female vocals, this music reminds listeners of Bristol's trip-hop wave. Their concert at Powerhouse will be the first one after a long leave of absence.

Powerhouse

7/4 Goncharnaya Ulitsa. Metro Taganskaya. facebook.com/powerhousemoscow



Concert Torba-na-Kruche

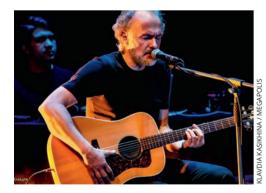
June 29

Torba-na-Kruche is a rock band from St. Petersburg that will be 20 years old this fall. Despite little media exposure, Torba-na-Kruche has developed a faithful fan base over the years and released several albums, the latest in 2014. Their unwieldy name is actually a Russian translation of "Bag End," the name of the Baggins' residence in "The Lord of the Rings." Their sound is similar to other Russian mainstream rock bands from the 1990s like Tantsy Minus or Splin, but a bit more low-key. Expect all the greatest hits at this gig

16 Tons

6/1 Ulitsa Presnensky Val. Metro Ulitsa 1905 Goda.

16tons.ru



wegapons

June 30

Megapolis has had an unusual history for a Russian rock band. They started out in the late 1980s and released several successful albums Their hits "Karl Marx Stadt" and "Volga" were in rotation on all of the country's major radio stations. Then the band's front man Oleg Nesterov shifted from making music to producing other artists at his own record label, Snegiri. He even published a science fiction novel. "Zerolines" is the latest Megapolis album to date, released in 2016. At their GlavClub concert, expect both old hits and their latest material.

GlavClub

11 Ulitsa Ordzhonikidze. Metro Leninsky Prospekt. glavclub.com



Concert Scooter

Scooter, perennial ravers from Germany, will pay Moscow a visit on Saturday. This band, which practically invented the genre of happy hardcore, needs little introduction. Their hit song "How Much is the Fish" is popular in Russia and often referred to by its Russian translation "Pochyom ryba." Last fall Scooter released their 19th album, entitled "Scooter Forever," and their concert at Adrenaline Stadium is part of the tour to support it.

Adrenaline Stadium

80 Leningradsky Prospekt, Bldg. 17. Metro

adrenaline-stadium.ru



Theater A Clockwork Orange

A new interpretation of the 20th century clas-

sic by Anthony Burgess, "A Clockwork Orange" is directed by Philip Grigoryan, who doesn't do straightforward productions. Known for his futuristic interdisciplinary projects, Grigoryan focuses his production around the figure of Burgess himself, whose wife was brutally attacked and raped. Blending the writer's own story with a story written by him, Grigoryan's version is a harrowing look at our society and the role of crime in it.

Theater of Nations

3 Petrovsky Pereulok. Metro Chekhovskaya. theatreofnations.ru

Ballet The Stone Flower

June 29

"The Stone Flower" was Sergei Prokofiev's final ballet, based on a Russian Ural folk tale by Pavel Bazhov and premiered after the composer's death. This version by the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater features the ballet's original choreography by Yuri Grigor-

The Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko **Moscow Music Theater**

17 Ulitsa Bolshaya Dmitrovka. Metro Pushkinskaya. stanmus.com



Exhibition Rodchenko and Stepanova. **Football**

Through July 15

This small exhibition includes paintings, graphic artworks and photographs related to football and sports by the great Soviet avant-garde constructivist artists Alexander Rodchenko and Varvara Stepanova. Both were advocates of the cult of athleticism, with sport motfs recurring in their works from the late 1920s until the early 1940s (with Stepanova supplying sketches for sports uniforms).

The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts

12 Ulitsa Volkhonka. Metro Kropotkinskaya. pushkinmuseum.art



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Exhibition Vik Muniz

Through Sept. 8

International artist and photographer Vik Muniz re-imagines the works of Van Gogh, Klimt, Malevich and others in postmodern form at this personal exhibition. Muniz began his career as a sculptor and returns to these roots in this exhibition, using non-traditional materials ranging from dust, to caviar, to children's toys in order to build copies of famous artworks. These innovative, short-lived pieces are meant to appeal to experienced museum-goers and young audiences alike. Gary Tatintsian Gallery

19 Serebryanicheskaya Naberezhnaya. Metro Chkalovskava, Kurskava. tatintsian.com



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