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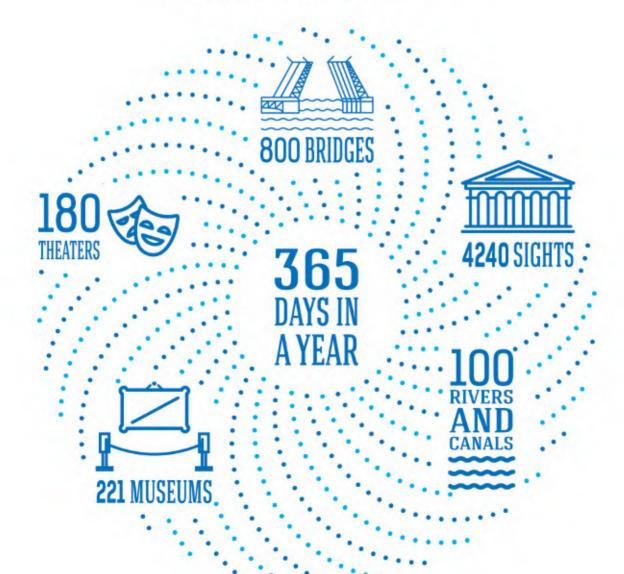
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On the Cover

Foreigners who insist that Russians rarely smile have never been to Russia. If you say "hello" to someone in the remote Russian countryside you will see that Russians are an open, curious and humorous people. You'll meet people like Tatiana Goleva, a Sochi resident, whose picture is on the cover of our magazine. Tatiana is 19 years old: she is studying to become a landscape designer and she is passionate about fitness, cooking and music.

Photo: Alexander Dmitriev

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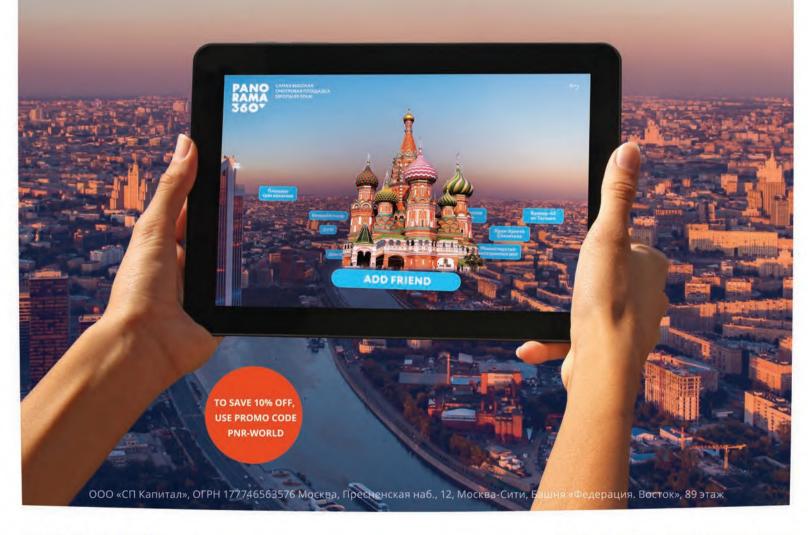
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REASON #148

EXPLORE MOSCOW ATTHE VIEWPOINT



360 REASONS TO SPEND THE DAY AT THE VIEWPOINT Observation deck, 89th floor of Federation East Tower, Moscow City Business Center



In Russian, the words for "year" and "summer" are the same

"Our country is not just very large in its territory, but also very beautiful. Its beauty is not only in the riches of its nature; most of all, its beauty is in its people. They are our main treasure. Our people are very open-hearted, especially in the regions. Very radiant people..." These are the words of someone who knows Russia and its residents very well: Vladimir Putin.

We all know that when we travel, we don't just remember things like rivers and mountains, museums and statues. Most of all we remember the people we meet, the way they talk, light a bonfire or pour wine, how they laugh or sing and play the guitar. Their thoughts also stay with you forever: they may not be all that original, you may have heard or read them somewhere before, but only after a chance encounter do you suddenly realize their wisdom.

Russia is vast, with her "many forests, fields and rivers", as a well-known Russian song says. But foreign visitors for some reason are reluctant to go beyond St. Petersburg, Moscow and the Golden Ring. So they don't get to encounter the many beautiful and open-hearted people of Russia's boundless regions.

Summer is in full swing. Don't miss this most essential time of year. You

can stray from your bride on your wedding day, they say, but never stray from your summer trip!

Believe me, the best place to spend your summer vacation is Russia. In this issue, you'll discover many destinations that take you beyond the standard tours of the two Russian capitals. The further you go from Red Square, the more interesting the places and the people you will meet... It couldn't be any other way in a country that spreads across half the globe. You'll be certain to have interesting travels and meet unique people in Russia.

And the remote areas of Russia are especially good in the summer. In Russian, the word for "year" is synonymous with the word for "summer." You are as many years old as you've spent summers on earth. If you've ever smelled a haystack in a Siberian village, if you've fished from a wooden rowboat and cooked fish chowder on the fire instead of ordering some fish delicacy in Cafe Pushkin on Tverskaya in Moscow, you've spent your summer the right way. It means you have visited Russia for real.

Alexander Krestnikov, Editor-in-Chief



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Convention

Bureau

of the oldest crafts of Russia which emerged in the 15-16th centuries.

Russia is the largest producer of diamonds in the world.

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Bright life of St. Petersburg 18

More than eight million guests visit the city every year to see its unique cultural and historic heritage, and enjoy theatre and musical events.

24 Stars Awarded to Regions

Our magazine has conducted new research into inbound tourism, the relative tourism appeal of Russia's regions, and their popularity with foreign tourists.

38 A sea of **Impressions**

The name Primorsky Krai roughly translates as "seaside territory", and the sea dominates everything here. It is the main resource of the region, attracting legions of tourists.

42 Amazing Kamchatka

> Indescribable emotions, impressions that will stay with you all your life — these are the words of tourists from all corners of the world who have visited Kamchatka at least once.

Enigmatic Buryatia 44

> this remote region in the Russian Far East? Where did President Putin and Prime Minister Medvedev stay when they visited, and what did the

52 Mystical North

The Republic of Karelia, the land of the lakes, such as Ladoga and Onega, and hundreds of small ones.

56 Medieval charm

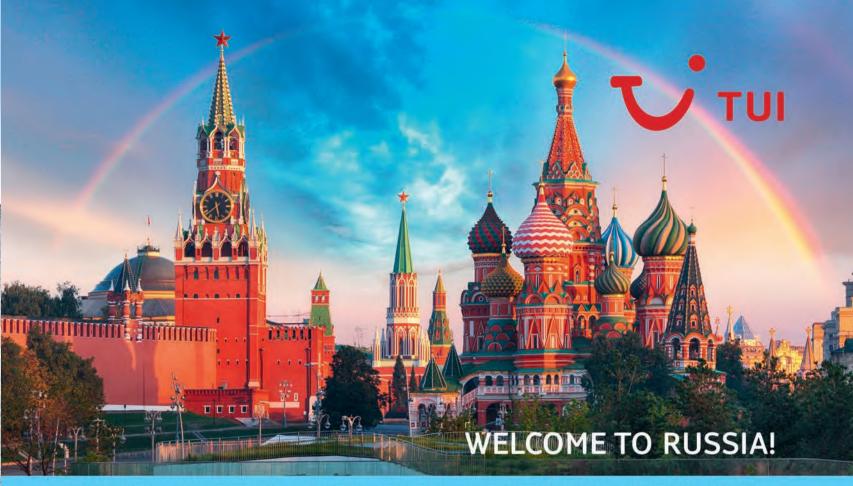
In Pskov, you can see the walls of mighty ancient fortresses that withstood siege by the greatest armies of Europe.

60 In the Birthplace of Russia

> That's what the locals — who are proud of their history and guard it carefully — call Veliky Novgorod.

What's so remarkable about local chefs cook for them?





CULTURE = ADVENTURE = SPORT = CRUISES = INDUSTRIAL AND MILITARY TOURS = ECO TOURS = GASTRO TOURS = LOCAL EXPERIENCE



- Moscow & the Golden Ring
- Saint Petersburg
- · Soch
- Kaliningrad
- Kazar
- Karali:
- Murmansk and the Northern Lights

- Raik:
- Alta
- Vladivostok
- Sakhalin Islands
- Kamchatka
- Taymyr Peninsula
- Putorana Plateau
- CIS countries
- and much more

TUI Russia is pleased to invite you on an exciting journey around our beautiful and hospitable country!

You will find everything you can imagine. Fancy medieval or military history? Mountain hiking or rafting? Wild nature and undiscovered corners of our planet? Or maybe you're attracted by the size and scale of capital cities that promise endless entertainment, amusement and curiosities? Would you like to spend some fascinating time getting to know interesting people, cultures and traditions of distant areas, while travelling around the biggest country in the world? Are you eager to discover mysteries that have preoccupied curious minds for centuries? Or maybe you prefer the luxury of sun & sea or ski resorts? Keen on the arts or archaeology? Sports and nature? Or do you just want to add another pearl to your collection of stories to tell? You name it!

Take a trip to Russia and enjoy a wonderful time!

TUI RUSSIA & CIS is a leading Russian tourism company, which includes a tour operator and over 300 owned and franchising travel agencies. The main shareholders of the international tour operator TUI Russia & CIS are the Russian investment company Severgroup and the world's leading tourism holding TUI Group. TUI Russia & CIS provides high-quality travel services for over 1,300,000 customers a year. We focus on providing them with a uniquely varied product, vacation concepts for different categories of clients, including special offers for families, youth etc. Our core values are: **«TRUSTED, RESPONSIBLE, INSPIRING»**

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Its rich history and amazing natural surroundings make Sevastopol an attractive destination for travellers.

74 Cards, mountains, and casino

Can you combine downhill skiing and casino gaming? Sochi has been offering just such an opportunity for the last two years, and it has become very popular.



80 Land of the Nightingale

Kursk natives have been known throughout the centuries as hospitable with a number of culinary specialities. We present you a new culinary tour.

84 Literary tour

It's an opportunity no writer or book lover can afford to miss, the chance to visit places where some of the greatest figures of Russian culture and science once lived and worked.

86 Blessed Bryansk Region

In Bryansk Region, great efforts are committed to the promotion of the famous local brands, Dyatkovsky Crystal and Karachayevo Toys.

88 Open Heart of Bashkiria

The Republic of Bashkortostan is a land of thick forests and endless steppes, steep hills and deep lakes, where people harvest honey and drink kumis — mare's milk.



Novosibirsk Region is the business and cultural centre of Siberia. There's always something to do for locals and visitors alike, with a huge number of festivals and celebrations.

102 Dinner is served!

Almost 200 ethnicities live in Russia, and the number of ethnic dishes is many times greater. Some are well-known, others much less so.

106 Calendar of Events

Every year, hundreds of festivals and special events take place all around Russia. If you missed them this year, make sure to plan a trip for 2020.





Kudykina Gora

is an area of natural beauty and amazing magic!

- Cozy guest cottages and a bath-house with a panoramic view of the Kamenka River
- Fully equipped camping site in a quiet scenic area
- Beach area with lounge-recliners by the Don River
- Safari zone with its many inhabitants
- Riding purebred horses across the beauty of the park
- Restaurant and a food track with bogatyrskaya bula (flatbread with vegetables, chicken, meatballs or steaks)
- Corporate events and catering





PSKOV JOINS UNESCO

PHOTOS: MAX SILANTJEV / PINTEREST.COM /

The historical and architectural monuments of Pskov have been included in UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites. This decision was adopted at the 43rd session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Baku. The final list includes 10 of the most ancient churches of the Pskov school of architecture: the Cathedral of St. John the Forerunner at St. John's Monastery, the Holy Transfiguration Cathedral at Holy Transfiguration-Mirozhsky Monastery, the Cathedral of Nativity of the Theotokos at the Snetogorsky Monastery, the Church of the Archangel Michael with its bell tower, the Church of the Holy Protection from Proloma and many others.



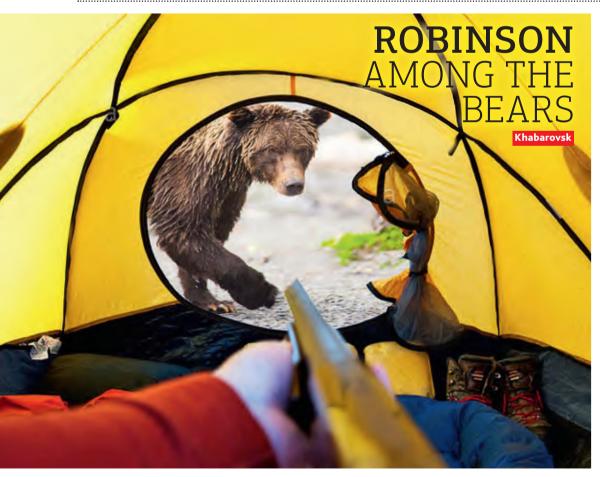
Kostroma ANCIENT MOLLUSCS

In the Sudislavsky district of Kostroma Region, scientists have discovered marine fauna fossils of the Cretaceous period of the Mesozoic era, dating back about 80 million years BCE. Among them are ammonite molluscs (genus Polyptychites), bivalve molluscs, brachiopods, belemnites and the bones of marine vertebrates. All the molluscs have been sent for detailed studies, after which they will find a place in Kostroma's museums.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ANCIENT HEROES

The Golden Ring of the Bosporan Kingdom, a new tourist route, has become increasingly popular in Russia. It follows the archaeological sites of ancient cities: the route includes more than 30 objects of cultural and historical heritage, archaeological and historical sites, as well as modern tourist sites related to antiquity in 10 cities in the Krasnodar region, the Republic of Crimea, the Rostov region and the city of Sevastopol.





he experienced explorer and archaeologist Nikolai Spizhevoi has tried out the role of Robinson Crusoe: he lived for several days among the bears on an uninhabited island, Chakmut, in the Amur Estuary on the shores of the Khabarovsk Region. The land belongs to a Moscow entrepreneur who is going to develop ecotourism and "Robinson Crusoe Tourism" here — offering the opportunity to live on an uninhabited island and try the role of Robinson Crusoe. The first to try it was 72-year-old Nikolai Spizhevoi, living in a tent for almost a week, next to bears who came to feast on seals. It turned out that the island's huge cliff is connected to the mainland by a shallow rocky beach. When the tide is low, it is possible to get to the island almost without getting wet, something that the bears take advantage of. Nikolai kept scaring off the bears with firecrackers, so they didn't approach him. The extreme element notwithstanding, this "Robinson Crusoe" remained very pleased with his adventure: the local landscape is almost indistinguishable from the famous Shantar Islands, he said.





SUBSIDIES FOR TOURISTS

A pilot project for subsidizing travel companies that ensure an influx of foreign tourists to Russia from Germany, Israel, the United States, Japan, Korea, India, Great Britain, Spain, Italy and France will be launched this autumn. The payments will partially reimburse the expenses that Russian organizations spend on receiving foreign guests. In 2019, about \$9 million was allocated for the programme.



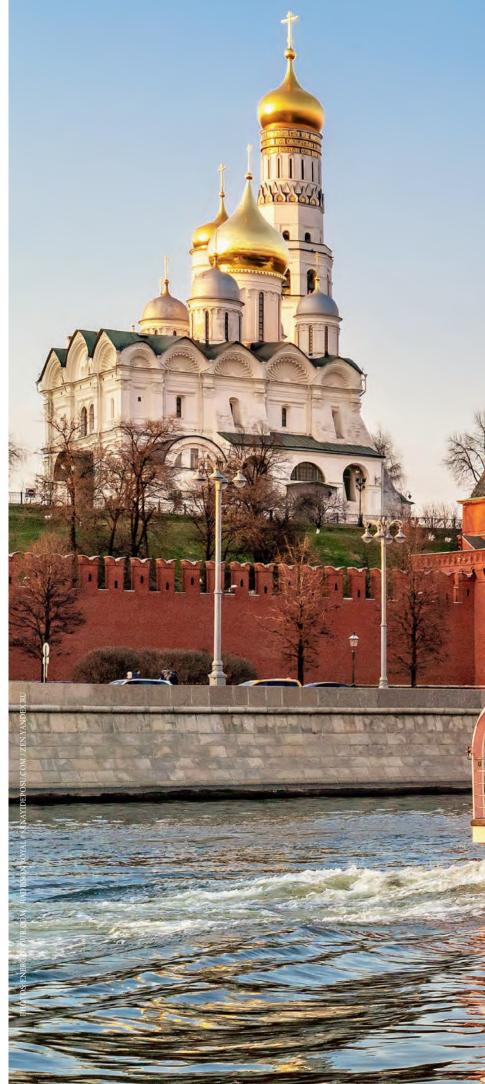
RECREATION FOR THE RICH

Experts from the online booking service Aviasales have highlighted the most expensive Russian hotels this summer. The Crimean Breeze residence, located 30 kilometers from Yalta, was ranked at number one: a night in its four-room villa will cost \$5,150, including breakfast, free Wi-Fi, a coffeemaker and a view of the sea and the park. Another resort, Mriya Resort & Spa, came in second: to stay in a two-story villa there, with a terrace and private heated pool, tourists pay \$3,970 per day. The Rodina Grand Hotel & SPA in Sochi ranked third, with a junior suite with garden view costing \$2,900 per night.

Magnitogorsk STEEL ROUTE

Interested in seeing a gigantic cauldron with molten metal rotate just a few feet away from you? Or keen to watch the control panel of a rolling mill machine, which looks just like a spaceship's control panel? You can now take a tour of

the Magnitogorsk Iron and Steel Works, where several themed itineraries have been developed. One is "Taming the Fire", a tour of the blast furnace, the largest in Russia, and its heavy-duty hot mill. Visitors have to go through introductory safety training, use individual protective gear, and follow simple but compulsory rules. Tours cost from \$11 per person.









WALKING OVER THE ABYSS

Ski resorts in Sochi are becoming more and more popular in the summer season as their owners think up new forms of entertainment for tourists. For example, the Rosa Khutor resort now offers rodelbahn, or summer sledding, Alpine swings and a wooden suspension bridge at a height of 2,320 meters.





A NEW PORT ON THE VOLGA

An unprecedented passenger transfer hub for Russia is being created at the Zavidovo resort in the Tver Region, connecting waterways with the train and road system. A new port will be built to dock cruise ships at the confluence of the Shosha and Volga rivers. The average travel time from Leningrad station to Zavidovo is currently about an hour by the Lastochka electric train, and it will now take the same time to travel by car from Moscow on the newly opened highway.



FIVE-STAR ALTAI

The founder of the international company 2GIS, which develops maps and guide services, has opened a five-star hotel in the Altai Republic, with a total investment of \$4.7 million, which it is planned will be recouped over eight years. Klever Resort & Spa will be the third hotel of this level in the region. The new 160-room hotel was created at the Solnechnaya Dolina resort, including reconstruction of the existing facility and creation of 12 new buildings.







BRIGHT LIFE OF ST. PETERSBURG

IT'S LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT WITH ST. PETERSBURG — THIS IS THE CITY OF DAYDREAMING, A PLACE THAT STIMULATES THE CREATIVITY! AS THE MARQUIS DE CUSTINE, THE FRENCH TRAVELLER AND WRITER, WROTE IN AMAZEMENT: "ST. PETERSBURG OVERWHELMS YOUR MIND MORE THAN YOUR EYE!" THE CITY OF PETER THE GREAT HAS ALWAYS ATTRACTED VISITORS FOR ITS GRANDEUR, HISTORY AND VIBRANT, EVENTFUL LIFE. THOSE WHO COME HERE WILL NEVER FEEL BORED.

TEXT: NIKITA BELOV



EVENTS St. Petersburg



he city is famous not only for its rich cultural life, museums and theatres, but also for large colourful festivals and parades. It regularly hosts major sporting and business events.

Start from St. Petersburg

St. Petersburg is widely thought of as the best city to start getting to know Russia.

Answering the question, "Which Russian city do you recommend travellers to visit first in Russia?", 56 percent of respondents on Aviasales, the popular booking website, voted for St. Petersburg. Only 32 percent recommended foreign visitors to start with Moscow, While Kazan ranked third with 7 percent of votes, and Sochi came fifth with just 5 percent.

Tourist Police

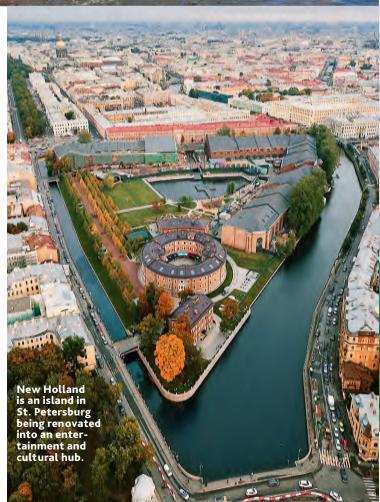
The city's tourist police, established ahead of the World Cup 2018, continues to operate as a regular law enforcement unit.

According to Yevgeny Pankevich, the head of St. Petersburg's Tourism Development Committee, the City Tourism and Information Bureau was involved in recruiting and training the unit's officers: they are a well-trained and professional team, who speak English and are always available to help travellers.

The tourist police patrol Palace Square, Vosstaniya Square, St. Isaac's Square, and the Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood from 11:00 to 21:30, and can give directions or provide help to travellers in any emergency.

Ask Me

AskMeSPb is another tourist assistance service. AskMeSPb personnel wear a distinctive



uniform that can immediately be spotted on the street. They carry bags with booklets and city maps, which they hand out to tourists free of charge. Using Segway scooters to move around the city, the team patrols the Admiralty and Central Districts. The service cooperates with the tourist police and can show visitors to a police station if needed.

Film Debuts on New Holland Island

The "New Holland: Cultural Urbanization" project is launching an International Festival of Debut Films on New Holland Island, which will run for the first time in 2020.

The festival's mission is to support original and authentic talents and projects and introduce new names to world cinema. The international competition will include short and full-length features, the full-length category including only feature films, while the shorts programme includes documentaries, experimental works and feature films on an equal basis.

A three-day preview in July premiered Russian and international films, held discussions with directors, and presented video art and lectures by teachers at top international film schools, as well as a round-table

St. Petersburg unveils Bank Bridge after renovation, the first in its 190-year history.

The Football
Park dedicated
to the forthcoming Euro
2020 opens on
Zayachy Island
by the walls of
the Peter and
Paul Fortress.







Dear friends,

We are delighted to welcome you to St. Petersburg!

In 2019, the city is honoured to be hosting the 23rd UN General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). This is a historic event for our country and its Northern capital. We value the attention of world tourism professionals towards our city, and are therefore preparing to host the event at the highest level.

Tourism is one of the top priorities in the socio-economic development of the city. More than eight million guests visit St. Petersburg every year to see its unique cultural and historic heritage, and enjoy theatre and musical events.

Every year the city receives one of the prestigious World Travel Awards. In the St. Petersburg region, the development of business tourism, congress tourism, and exhibition activities is a high priority: such fields offer considerable economic potential. The number of major international business events held in the city is growing annually. The "Ambassador of St. Petersburg" programme has been a success.

The government of St. Petersburg pays serious attention to promoting the city's tourism potential both in Russia and abroad. We are developing business and event tourism and creating an infrastructure that will open new opportunities for visitors to become acquainted with our city. Our plans include expanding yachting and nautical tourism, as well as culinary, medical and other fields of tourism.

We wish the magazine's readers bright impressions of St. Petersburg.

Yevgeny Pankevich, Chairman of the St. Petersburg Committee for Tourism Development



In 2019, the city is honoured to be hosting the 23rd UN General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization. This is a historic event for our country and its Northern capital.

discussion of challenges facing Russian debut films.

"Scarlet Sails" Sets a New Record

The "Scarlet Sails" festival, held in St. Petersburg on the night of June 23/24, brought together 1.4 million people — 200,000 more than in 2018.

"Scarlet Sails" is a public event that marks the end of the school year, and is held annually in late June. The spectacular show has long a tourist highlight of St. Petersburg, widely popular with European visitors. It begins with a staged theatre show on Palace Square and continues with concerts and fireworks on the Neva and the Peter and Paul Fortress. Its climax is the appearance of a tall ship sporting spectacular scarlet sails, accompanied by fireworks and special musical accompaniment.

Yachting on the Baltic

More than 100,000 people took part in "Baltic Yachting Week",

held on the beach at the Peter and Paul Fortress in mid-June.

For three days, the location on the Neva hosted events where guests could meet well-known sailors, try their hand at shipbuilding classes, learn to tie knots in

The "Poltava" sailing ship at "Baltic Yacht Week".

St. Petersburg is one of the best locations for yachting tourism. the Sea Village, explore different classes of yachts, and enroll in the St. Petersburg yachting school. They could also try windsurfing and ship out on a captain's galley, but the most popular events were the presentations by veteran navigators and the workshops for kids. About 15,000 people visited Sea Village during the event.

Simultaneously, St. Petersburg hosted the fifth stage of the Russian National Sailing League's regatta with 20 toprated teams.

Another spectacular event featured some of Russia's top windsurfers, who made a great show at the beach.

Russian and foreign musicians appeared in the evening's concert performance, which was opened by the Chest cover band and Yoel Gonzalez's PHILORITMICA sextet from Cuba. Maxim Leonidov was the concert's headliner, and the show had a grand finale in the form of the "Sails Ballet" show, which had sailboats waltzing on the water in neon lights to Vivaldi, followed by the closing festival fireworks. TLR







STARS AWARDED TO REGISTANCE OF THE STARS AWARDED TO

TOURISM & LEISURE IN RUSSIA MAGAZINE AND THE RATING CENTRE FOR INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS HAVE CONDUCTED NEW RESEARCH INTO INBOUND TOURISM, THE RELATIVE TOURISM APPEAL OF RUSSIA'S REGIONS, AND THEIR POPULARITY WITH FOREIGN TOURISTS.



Ratings SPECIAL PROJECT

Red Square in Moscow is Russia's most visited and popular attraction. Apart from the Kremlin, it is home to Saint Basil's Cathedral, the Lenin Mausoleum. and numerous museums.

tball fans

n Russia an

For a number of years now the number of foreign tourists coming to Russia has been steadily increasing. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Russia ranks as #16 in the world and #9 in Europe by number of foreign tourists (24.3 million foreign tourists visited in 2017). The next, 23rd General Assembly of the World Tourist Organization will be held in St. Petersburg from 9-13 September 2019, and 156 countries will be represented.

In the near future the Russian Ministry of Economic Development in cooperation with the Federal Agency for Tourism (Rosturizm) will be issuing the new Strategy for Tourism Development in the Russian Federation up to the year 2035. According to the developers' plan, by 2035 there will be a twofold increase in the number of domestic tourist trips for each resident of the Russian Federation (currently 0.4 trips per resident). At the same time, by 2035 tourism's share in the country's GDP will grow from the current 3.8 % to 6 %. Export of tourism services will grow to 28.6 billion US dollars (compared to 8.9 billion in 2017.) According to the UNWTO report, by 2035 Russia will join the top ten world tourist destinations.

The Russian Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat) maintains records of foreign tourists by region, exclusively based on the number of stays at collective accommodation facilities, such as hotels. Preliminary records indicate that the number of foreign nationals who stayed in collective accommodation facilities in Russia in 2018, irrespective of the purpose and







Sculptures on the roofs of old buildings in St. Petersburg attract both photographers and ordinary tourists.

A boat trip along St. Petersburg's canals.

length of stay, was 10.2 million; while in 2017 the number was slightly above 8 million.

There is also information from the Border Service of the FSB regarding the number of foreign nationals entering Russia, according to which, 4.19 million foreign visitors came to Russia in 2018 as tourists. The largest numbers came from the following countries: China (1,256,515 people), Germany (451,467), the Republic of Korea (324,308), the USA (227,656), Israel (163,664), Italy (126,875), Great Britain (125,710), France (116,513), Spain (85,314), and Japan (61,222).

The following criteria were used to determine a region's place in the rankings in terms of inbound tourism:

- The total number of foreign tourists who stayed in collective accommodation facilities according to the Russian Federal State Statistics Service records for 2018.
- The yearly number of foreign tourists per 1,000 permanent residents of the region.
- The increase or decrease in the number of foreign tourists compared to the previous calendar year.

A table was prepared for each of the criteria with a corresponding ranking from 1st to 85th place. First place in each ranking was awarded 8.5 points. For each subsequent place, 0.1 points were deducted. Then, the three preliminary tables were combined, and the frontrunners and outsiders of the 2019 National Rating for Inbound Tourism were identified according to the total sum of the points they had received.

The regions were separated into groups that were given informal names, chosen to reflect the accepted worldwide classification of hotels and services: "five-star", "four-star", and "three-star".

2019 NATIONAL RATING FOR INBOUND TOURISM

Group 1: Five Stars

Moscow is the undisputed favorite with foreign tourists. St. Petersburg, Russia's northern capital, is the second most popular destination. It is no surprise that

Group 1: FIVE STARS

Place	Region (Russian Federation)	Total Points
1	Moscow	25.5
2	St. Petersburg	25.2
3	Primorsky Territory	24.8
4	Moscow Region	24
5	Krasnodar Territory	23.5
6	Kaliningrad Region	23.4
7	Nizhny Novgorod Region	23.3
8	The Republic of Tatarstan	22.5
9	Novgorod Region	22.4
10	Sverdlovsk Region	21.8
11	Leningrad Region	21.2
12	The Republic of Crimea	21.1
13	Yaroslavl Region	20.7
14	Pskov Region	20.6
15	Rostov Region	20.5
16	Volgograd Region	20.4
17	The Republic of Karelia	20.3
18	Murmansk Region	20.2
19	Novosibirsk Region	19.7
20	Voronezh Region	18.8



Primorye is listed in third place: for a number of years now it has experienced a significant rise in the number of foreign tourists, especially from its Asian neighbors. Primorye showed better results than Moscow Region, which is listed in fourth place, both in the number of foreign tourists per 1,000 residents and the increase in the total number of foreign tourists. It is the only region of the Russian Far East that made it into the "five-star" category.

Krasnodar Territory, listed in 5th place, is one of the nine regions of the top 20 that hosted games of the 2018 FIFA World Cup. The increase in the number of tourists compared with the previous year allowed them to take leading positions in the ranking. Thus, Sverdlovsk Region, where the capital city Ekaterinburg hosted World Cup matches, was the only one of the Ural Federal Okrug regions to make it into the top







Vladivostok is the centre of cruise travel in Russia's Far East.

Pavlovsky
Posad shawls
from the
Moscow Region
are famous
around the
globe.

Inal Bay in
Tuapse on the
Black Sea coast,
130 km from
Krasnodar, is
home to about
a hundred
recreation
centres.

group. However, it would be wrong to explain these regions' high ranking solely by their participation in the 2018 World Cup. Ekaterinburg, for example, is the most important commercial center in the Ural Region. Krasnodar Territory offers sea, beaches and health resorts that are all very popular with tourists from the neighboring CIS countries.

The fact that Murmansk Region made it into the Top 20 is explained by its geography: most of its territory →

VERBATIM

SERGEY LAVROV,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the
Russian Federation:
"Russia is incredibly rich in culture, history,

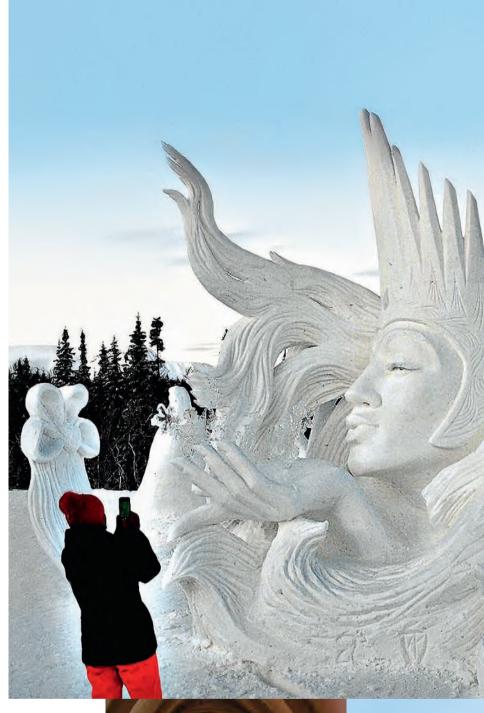
and natural beauty. There are 29 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in our country, 26 resorts and federal resort regions, and more

than 140,000 tourist attractions, with 150 of them rated as of special significance. Last year, the FIFA World Cup proved to be an extraordinary event — it would be no exaggeration to call it a true pinnacle of people's diplomacy. Millions of foreign guest came to our country and saw modern Russia and its open, friendly and hospitable people with their own eyes.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs makes a significant contribution to overall efforts to developing the tourist industry. We have visafree entry agreements with many countries, and we are planning to add more nations to this group. As we continue to develop our electronic visa system in this country, we will consider the possibility of simplifying the visa requirements for foreign nationals who arrive to Moscow and the Moscow Region via international airports. Our colleagues in St. Petersburg and Leningrad Region are also interested in such a system."

Group 2: **FOUR STARS**

Place	Region (Russian Federation)	Total Points
21	Samara Region	18.7
22	Stavropol Territory	18.1
23	Kaluga Region	17.9
24	Perm Territory	16.6
25	Sakhalin Region	16.5
26	Astrakhan Region	16.4
27	Lipetsk Region	16.3
28	Tula Region	16.1
29	Irkutsk Region	15.9
30	Vladimir Region	15.8
31	Smolensk Region	15.7
32	The Republic of Mordovia	15.1
33	Belgorod Region	14.8
34	Khabarovsk Territory	14.7
35	Chelyabinsk Region	14.6
36	The Republic of Bashkortostan	14.3
37	Tyumen Region	14.1
38	The Republic of Buryatia	14
39	Kamchatka Territory	13.8
40	The Komi Republic	13.5
41	Altai Territory	12.5
42	Magadan Region	11.8
43	Amur Region	11.7
44	Krasnoyarsk Territory	11.3
45	Kursk Region	11.2
46	The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	11.1
47	The Republic of Udmurtia	11
48	Ryazan Region	10.7
49	Tver Region	10.6
50	Orenburg Region	10.5
51	The Jewish Autonomous Region	10.3
52	Tomsk Region	10.2
53	Ulyanovsk Region	9.9
54	Omsk Region	9.8
55	Oryol Region	9.5
56	Vologda Region	9.2
57	The Republic of Khakassia	8.7
58	Zabaikalsky Territory	8.6
59	Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug	8.5
60	Bryansk Region	8.4
61	Ivanovo Region	8.3
62	Kemerovo Region	8.2
63	Saratov Region	8.1
64	The Republic of Chechnya	8
65	The Republic of Chuvashia	7.6
66	Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Yugra	7.5
67	The Kabardino-Balkar Republic	7.1
68	Kirov Region	6.5
69	Archangelsk Region	6.4



Snow Village in the Murmansk Region is a true work of art. Sculptors make all the works out of large blocks of snow.

Elaborate stained-glass windows in Kaliningrad Cathedral, which houses Russia's largest organ complex and the Immanuel Kant Museum.



VERBATIM

KONSTANTIN SHESTAKOV,
Director, Primorye Department of
Tourism (Vladivostok):

"Every year more and more tourists come to Vladivostok and Primorye. In 2018, inbound tourism broke all historical records and exceeded 4.5 million people, a number that included 651,000

foreigners. This in itself is a ten-year record; over the past year the number of foreign visitors increased by 25 %. Indeed, this pattern remains strong: in the first quarter of this year we have seen an over 25 % increase in the number of foreign tourists, which reflects a 34 % increase in tourism from Korea and an 82 % increase in tourism from Japan. It is quite easy to visit Primorye, due to the electronic visa processing mechanisms and a large — and increasing annually - number of incoming flights.

Weekend tours are very popular: couples from Asian countries come to us to visit a European city. Gastronomic tourism is also in high demand, and the Primorye gambling zone is making progress as well."

Fishing on Sakhalin is an amazing experi-

A helicopter picks up tourists in Tomtor village in eastern Yakutia. Here at the so-called "Cold Pole", the average annual temperature is 16 degrees below zero.

The charm and beauty of Tuva's girls attracts travellers from all over the world.



Group 3: Three Stars

The third group in this ranking is comprised of regions that to date cannot claim significant achievements in inbound tourism. That said, there are destinations on this list that are practically designed for tourism: the Altai Republic, with its mountains and amazing natural beauty, the Kostroma Region, part of the Golden Ring of Russia, the city of Sevastopol on the Black Sea, Dagestan, located on the Caspian Sea coast, Tyva and Adygea, both ideal locations for eco-tourism, and the Karachay-Cherkess Republic, perfect for mountain skiing. Each and every one of these "three-star" regions deserves a description of hundreds or even thousands of beautiful words. All that remains is to create high-quality holiday experiences. TLR



Place	Region (Russian Federation)	Total Points
70	The Altai Republic	6.3
71	Kostroma Region	6.2
72	Kurgan Region	5.8
73	Penza Region	5.5
74	Sevastopol	5.3
75	The Mari El Republic	5.2
76	The Republic of Tyva	5.1
77	The Republic of Kalmykia	4.9
78	Chukotka Autonomous Okrug	4.8
79	Nenets Autonomous Okrug	4.1
80	The Karachay-Cherkess Republic	3.9
81	The Republic of Ingushetia	3.1
82	The Republic of Adygea	3
83	Tambov Region	2.6
84	The Republic of North Ossetia – Alania	2.2
85	The Republic of Dagestan	1.7





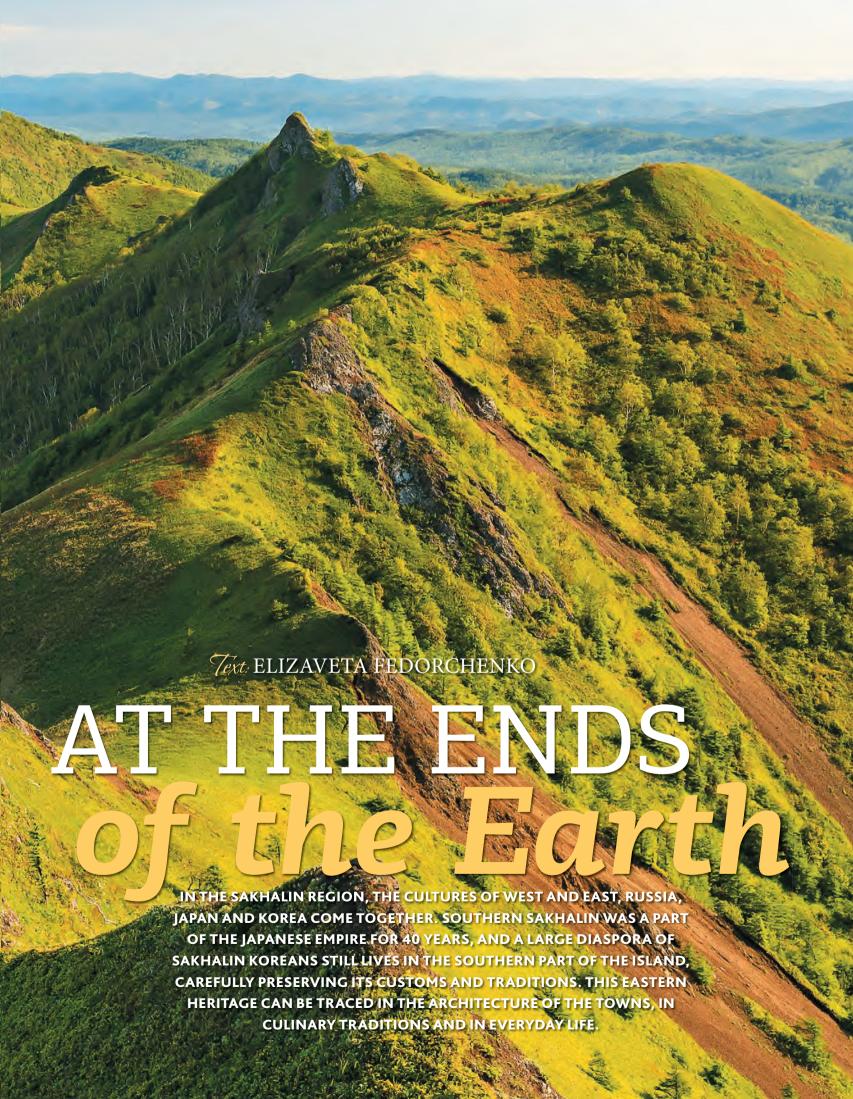
lies north of the Arctic Circle, and tourists from all over the world come here to see the famous Northern Lights.

Novosibirsk Region, which took 19th place in our ranking, is the only one of the Siberian Federal Districts to make it into the Top 20. Novosibirsk, the capital of Siberia, is a major commercial and cultural center, as well as the site of one of Russia's largest airports, with passenger traffic of about six million people a year.

Group 2: Four Stars

The "four-star" category, the second and largest group in our ranking, includes regions from all Federal Districts of Russia. Throughout the year, these 49 regions hosted more than a million foreign tourists, with an average of about 22 thousand people per region.







ELEVEN REASONS TO VISIT SAKHALIN

ISLAND EXOTICA

Sakhalin is the only region of Russia that consists entirely of islands. There are 59 islands in the region, including Sakhalin, Moneron, Ush Island, Kamen Opasnosti, Tuleniy, and the Kuril Islands.

ORIENTAL FLAVOR
The Southern part of Sakhalin was part of Japan from 1905 to 1945.
Japanese heritage can still be seen in the architecture, culture and people's daily lives.

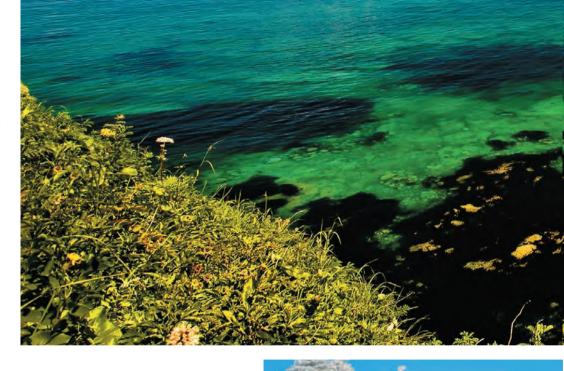
REGIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY MUSEUM

This Sakhalin museum is considered one of the most interesting in Russia both for its exhibitions and its architecture. It is housed in the building of the Karafuto Prefecture, built in 1937 during Japanese imperial rule.

ASTONISHING NATURE
The Sakhalin Region has a great
number of amazing places: some
easy to access and others that are
completely isolated from civilization.

TEXCELLENT FISHING

You can enjoy both river and sea fishing in Sakhalin. More than that, you can learn about crab and sea urchin fishing, and give ice fishing a try. During the winter season, fishermen prefer to go out to sea for wolffish and saffron cod. In early summer, the catch is white-spotted char and masu salmon. In July, humpback salmon, and in the north of the island, in the bays and the sea close to river estuaries, you can catch and release endangered taimen. The fishing season continues until mid-November.



Red caviar ("five-minute caviar"), crab, shrimp, oysters, sea urchin, various red fish, smelts and much more will delight any foodie!



There are 16 ski trails with a total length of 25 kilometers at Gornyi Vozdukh resort.



CINEMA FOR EVERYONE
Each year in late August and early
September, the International Krai
Sveta Film Festival takes place in
Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. The festival draws
film fans and industry professionals from

burdock, and the freshest sashimi and

sushi.



all over the world. The screenings are free, and professionals offer master classes and workshops during the festival.

THE MYSTERIOUS KURILS
This region offers what millions of people dream about: to visit the islands of inspiration and wonderful nature.

GORNYI VOZDUKH

RESORT
The largest ski resort in the Russian Far East,
Gornyi Vozdukh, is located in the very center of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. Here there are 16 ski trails 25 kilometers long, gondola and chair lifts, two chair and T-bar lifts, and four world-class ski zones. The middle and upper areas of the Gornyi Vozdukh resort are excellent observation points, from which you can see the region's capital spread out before you.

ANIVA LIGHTHOUSE
While on a boat trip
along the west coast
of Tonino Aniva Peninsula, you can see and visit this
historical monument and miracle of
engineering.

It was built in 1939, on the small Sivuchya Cliff, near the rocky, hardto-reach Aniva Cape. It was extremely difficult to build the lighthouse here because all the materials had to be brought in by boat under rough sea conditions. The project's designer was a Japanese engineer, Miura Sinobu, a graduate of the technical college in Kanagava. The tower is 31 meters high, and the light is at 40 meters above sea level. The tower had nine floors. The basement housed a diesel engine and accumulator room. A kitchen and a storeroom occupied the first floor and an extension to the main building; on the second floor were a radio cabin, the watchman's living quarters and an operator's room. The tower's third, fourth and fifth floors had rooms with enough living space for 12 people. In the central part of the tower was a tube encasing a pendulum — 270 kg weight — which was wound every three hours to make the optical system move. The range of the lighthouse was 17.5 miles. In the 1990s, the lighthouse was powered by an autonomous isotope generator. Today, it works on a simple accumulator charged by solar batteries. TLR





DIRECTIONS Sakhalin Region



GASTRONOMIC **ABUNDANCE**

SAKHALIN CUISINE IS UNIQUE. IT COMBINES ELE-MENTS OF RUSSIAN, KOREAN, JAPANESE AND EVEN MANCHURIAN-CHINESE CUISINE. THE LOCALS MOSTLY EAT SEA FOOD, VARIOUS FISH, WILD HERBS, AND TRADITIONAL JAPANESE AND KOREAN DISHES. HEMULTAN (SPICY SEAFOOD SOUP) AND PYANSE (STEAMED BUNS WITH CABBAGE OR MEAT FILLING) ARE STAPLE FOOD IN SAKHALIN, JUST LIKE BORSCHT OR PIROZHKI ARE ELSEWHERE IN RUSSIA.

n Sakhalin, traditional Russian dishes are replaced by Korean cuisine. The culinary traditions came to Sakhalin in the 20th century, when Korean settlers arrived on the island during the Japanese mobilization.

People love to cook Korean dishes here, and they do it well, in restaurants and homes alike. And yet, Sakhalin cuisine differs from the dishes served in Korea. Sakhalin Korean food is considered to be the real food of peasants, that has maintained its authenticity due to the way the island acts as a kind of reserve.

It is fairly simple to cook such dishes because you can find many ingredients in the sea and right under your feet: *orlyak* fern, wild leek, burdock, seaweed, and grapes. In addition, there is a great variety of seafood, meat, and rice (which is the staple).

The main difference between Sakhalin and Korean cuisine is *panchan*. These are snacks that are served as side dishes. The Sakhalin panchan is unique, and such snacks and salads can be found nowhere else in



Oysters don't have to be French.

Scallops are best eaten raw or with soy sauce. The unusual combination will impress any foodie.

You can buy tubukimchi and chaltok in grocery stores.

When chum salmon and humpback salmon are in season, the locals make five-minute caviar. Fresh, washed roe is doused in strong brine (tuzluk) and stirred for five minutes.

The Asian style of service is to have numerous dishes on the table simultaneously.



The culinary traditions of Korea came to Sakhalin in the 20th century, when Korean settlers arrived on the island during the Japanese mobilization.



the world. For instance, you can find the following at the Sakhalin market and stores: snails and cucumbers in spicy sauce, *khe* made with pollock, roasted fern with sesame oil and fried onion dressing, sweet seaweed, dried spicy pollock, sprouted soy (*mash-mash*), burdock salad, dried spicy anchovy, *combu maki* (fish wrapped in sweet seaweed leaves), and many other salads and side dishes. In specialized departments, there are homemade *tubu* (the same as tofu), *chaltok* (soft balls made of rice flour with red bean filling), yellow marinated radish, takuan, and various Korean sauces and dressings, such as soy pastes, *kochudyan* and *samdyan*.

You can also find a lot of produce from Japan and Korea at supermarkets and street markets. Among them are all sorts of sweets: candy, cookies, ice cream and dozens of sauces, tasty instant noodles of great quality, and other snacks and drinks. At fish markets, you can buy caviar, red and white fish, octopus, calamari, whole crabs, whelk, shrimp and dried smelt. You must buy and try bilberry syrup, as well — you won't forget its tangy, bright flavor and smell.

This, of course, doesn't mean that people don't like the usual Russian and European dishes on Sakhalin. But even traditional recipes have a local island zest. For instance, one of the restaurants in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk offers black pelmeni with Kamchatka crab filling or pelmeni filled with pork and kimchi. Another Sakhalin establishment serves pizza called Kimchizhar, with pork and kimchi toppings instead of traditional Italian pepperoni. TLR







TEXT: EVGENY KONOVALOV, **EVGENY ARTEMCHUK**

A SEA OF **IMPRESS**

THE NAME "PRIMORSKY KRAI" ROUGHLY TRANSLATES AS THE "SEASIDE TER-RITORY", AND THE SEA DOMINATES EVERYTHING HERE.

including paddling on a dragon boat, catching the waves on a surfboard or SUP, canoeing or kayaking, or taking a sea cruise.

Boat trips

Two cable-stayed bridges, the Golden Bridge over the Golden Horn Bay and the Russian Bridge over the Eastern Bosphorus, are the main landmarks and sights of Vladivostok. On the "Vladivostok Bridges" boat trip, you will see them from the sea in all their glory, learn the history of their construction and admire unique panoramic views of the capital of Primorye, accompanied by the crash of waves and the cry of seagulls.

Comfortable boats depart from Pier 36 on Korabelnaya Naberezhnaya

f Vladivostok boat two cable-stayed bridges: the Golden Bridge across the olden Horn Bay and the Russian Bridge across the Eastern Bosphorus Strait

SEA HOLIDAYS Primorye

every hour from 12:00 to 18:00. The trip lasts for one hour.

In the summer months, there are also two-hour trips available entitled "Sea Panorama" and "Sea Sunset".

SUP trips

Vladivostok can be called the SUP-capital of Russia without exaggeration. The SUP (Stand Up Paddle Board) has become an indispensable part of seaside holidays. And, even if you don't have your own board, you can easily join the ranks of SUP-surfers. With the oneset of summer weather, organized SUP trips are offered in Vladivostok, and anyone who wants to can take part, regardless of age or physical fitness. Kids from 9 years old can paddle a board by themselves. Younger kids can share a board with a parent or instructor.

The most popular routes are to: the Basargin Lighthouse (starting from Patrokl Bay), the Primorsky Aquarium (starting from Paris Bay), Truda Bay, Helena Island (starting from the Canal), Tobizin Peninsula (starting from Karpinsky Bay) and Shkot Island (starting from New Dzhigit Bay). The route is chosen depending on the direction and strength of the wind.

Rowing on dragon boats

Racing on dragon class boat is a very popular sport in Asia. And dragon boats have also gained recognition and became popular in Primorye as well. Vladivostok annually hosts dragon boat racing in a competition

that welcomes not only teams of professional athletes, but also crews of schoolchildren, students, military personnel and company employees.

But if you just want to paddle on a dragon boat, you don't have to pick a crew and wait for the next competition. The club Eastern Dragons arranges dragon boat trips at weekends. It couldn't be easier: you gather by the shore, go through a short briefing, join one of the crews in a boat and off you paddle. The route is determined by the prevailing winds. Today, there are three routes from Sanatornaya Station - to Lotos Lake (Okeanskaya Station), Skrebtsov Island (Kovrizhka) and De-Friz Peninsula. The trips take 3 to 4 hours depending on the route.

Surfing

You can catch a wave without going out of town in Vladivostok. From May to October, the Swell surf camp and surf school are open on Russky Island on Akhlestyshev Peninsula. This is the only school of surfing in







the capital of Primorye that has its stationary base within the city limits.

At the school, you learn the basics of safe surfing and discover how to ride through the surf, catch waves, jump up on your board, riding along a wave, and make simple turns.

You can come to the camp at any time to relax, sunbathe, chat, sing songs with a guitar or just lie in a hammock under the stars. You are also welcome to stay with your own tent (or rent one on-site), or live comfortably in a yurt or large tent. The camp has showers, WCs, kitchen, laundry facilities and electricity.

Kayaking

The waters around Vladivostok are great for sea kayaking. You will find rugged coastline, calm and warm

sea and rich wildlife: sea urchins, starfish, sea anemones, and a variety of crabs, birds and fish. On the nearby islands, there are colonies of spotted seals. In spring and autumn, whales come to Peter the Great Bay, and you can even see them within the city limits. A kayak allows you to move along the very edge of the water, sliding by so quietly you won't frighten even the most cautious inhabitants.

The main kayaking spots are the coasts of Russky Island, from the rocky capes of Tobizin, and Shkot Island to the serene Novik Bay. You can spend a weekend not far from Vladivostok on the islands Popov and Reyneke as well. Resorts in the Khasansky District also offer kayaking tours.

Cliff diving

This fashionable term means jumping into the sea from rocks of different heights, the favorite and familiar fun of many seaside boys. Today, cliff diving is officially recognized as a sport, and there are even cliff diving world championships.

The jumping spot is chosen based on several parameters: the height and steepness of the cliff, and the depth and size of the bay. The Sun Keepers have travelled all around the coast to make up a list of the TOP-10 cliff diving spots in Primorye: Edelstein Cape (Vladivostok), Tobizin Cape (Russky Island), Malenkiy Peninsula (Popov Island), Vikenta Island (Reyneke Island), Red Cliffs (Rikord Island), Alekseev Bay (Gamov Peninsula), Stenin Cape (Trinity Bay), Polosatik Cape (Podjapolskoye), Silin Cape (Valentin) and Tasovaya Bay (Preobrazheniye).

Snorkeling

You don't have to take diving courses and buy expensive equipment to see the underwater world of the Sea of Japan with your own eyes. If you are clever about it, snorkeling will give you plenty of vivid impressions.

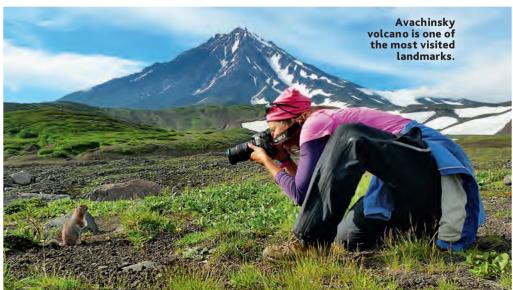
Remember, if you are swimming without a wetsuit, the comfortable temperature for snorkeling should be at least 20°C. But you should not swim for more than thirty minutes even in warm water. Otherwise you can get hypothermia. That's why a wetsuit, even the simplest 2-3 millimeters thick "shorty" (with short sleeves and trouser-legs) will significantly increase your possibilities.

The bays of Russky Island, as well as anywhere along the "wild" coast of southern Primorye, are ideal for snorkeling. Opt for places away from river estuaries and large sandy beaches to enjoy swimming in clear waters. TLR tour.primorsky.ru



An amazing place, indescribable emotions, stunningly beautiful nature, impressions that will stay with you all your life — these are the words of tourists from all corners of the world who have visited Kamchatka at least once.

ocated in the very far east of Russia, this region may seem inaccessible to many, but reaching the peninsula is not as hard as it can seem at first glance. It is only a few hours by air travel from major Russian cities, and it's a port-of-call included



in dozens of sea cruises. And once they've reached Kamchatka, tourists are in for a truly incredible adventure!

Kamchatka Volcanoes

There are 30 active and 300 dormant volcanoes in Kamchatka. Each of them has its own unique qualities and character. To ascend the volcanoes, you will need to come in summer. The most visited by tourists are the Avachinsky, Mutnovsky and Gorely volcanoes, and even novice hikers are able to climb them. In the winter, you can reach the foothills of the volcanoes by snowmobile.

The Valley of Geysers

The unique Valley of Geysers is one of Kamchatka's world-famous attractions. You can only reach it by helicopter, and the flight one-way takes no more than two hours. More than 40 geysers and numerous thermal springs are concentrated in this unique place. Tourists who have visited the Valley of the Geysers say that you can hear the earth breathing here.

Kurile Lake

You can meet the best-known inhabitants of Kamchatka's animal kingdom — bears — by taking a helicopter trip to Kurile Lake. Moreover, these predators pose no threat at all to man here. The lake is the world's largest spawning site for salmon, so the bears are always

well-fed and happy with life. You can see dozens of these pigeon-toed animals at once while they "fish" in the lake; they pay no attention whatsoever to people.

Sled dog kennels

The Beringia, a traditional Kamchatka dog sled race, jump-started dog sledding as a sport on the peninsula. It takes place annually and is the main event of the winter season. There are several dog sled kennels located in the vicinity of the region's capital. Kamchatka's sled dogs — huskies, laikas, samoveds and malamutes — greet kennel visitors with loud barking and friendly "embraces". At the kennels, you can ride a dog sled as a passenger or try your hand at driving.

Thermal springs

Near Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, there are dozens of hot thermal pools whose waters have unique healing properties. The Paratunka resort region has spa and health resorts that cater to any taste. Most pools here are outdoors and open 24/7. It's a special delight to swim in hot curative waters in winter, when everything around you is covered in banks of snow, with a cloud of steam rising above the pool. TLR visitkamchatka.ru







GETTING THERE

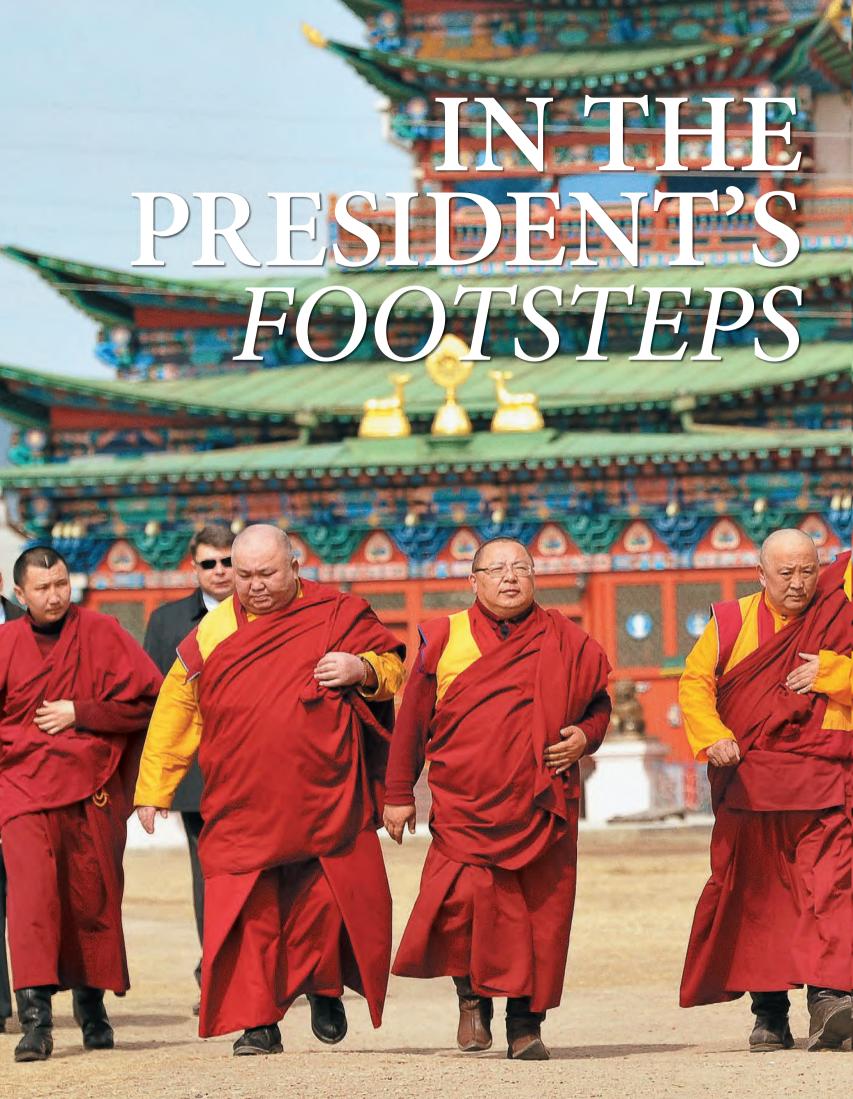
How to get there Kamchatka has regular flight connections with Russia's major cities — Moscow, Novosibirsk, Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk in the Far East, and many others. In the summer, seasonal flights to the U.S. (Anchorage, Alaska) are also available.

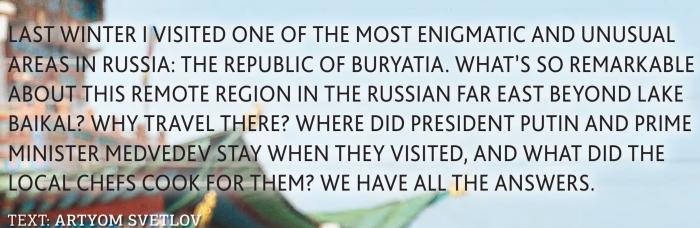
Where to stay Excellent service and friendly staff await you at the peninsula's hotels: Nachalnik Kamchatki (not rated), Petropavlovsk (3-star), Geyser (3-star), Komandor (not rated), and Severnye Priklyucheniya (Northern Adventures) Park Hotel.

What to eat
Many tourists visit this
region for Far-Eastern cuisine, with its seafood, fish
and red caviar. Come visit
Kamchatka Local Kitchen
restaurant, Kalelyn ethnic
food cafe, Pastrami wine

and gastro bar, Butcher meat and wine restaurant, or Da Vinci restaurant you won't regret it! HOTO: KAMCHATKA TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER

What to buy
You can buy traditional
Kamchatka souvenirs and
arts and crafts items in
the ethnic souvenir shops,
such as Shaman, Nulevaya
Versta, Medveditsa and
Kamchatskaya Faktoriya.
You can also buy traditional Kamchatka clothes in
Kamcha-Shop.







TRAVEL The Republic of Buryatia

t was early December. Ulan-Ude, Buryatia's capital city, welcomed our team, which included representatives of the TUI tourist agency and journalists, with an invigorating 27°C below zero (-16.6°F). Buryatia's endless *steppes* get no lasting snow cover thanks to the incessant, biting winds, so we felt the freezing air in our bones. We put on all the warm clothes we had with us, including thermal underwear, scarves and fur hats. We needed all the help we could get.

In Buryatia's Capital

The purpose of our trip was not only educational, it was also commercial. The major international tour operator TUI Group Russia and the CIS, had decided to expand its operations to this region of Siberia and begun developing package tours. Since nothing like this had been previously available on the market, TUI's plans were of particular importance for the region. We met with Alexey Tsydenov, the official head of the Republic, who was happy to share his

vision of Buryatia's future. More than 1.5 million tourists come to Buryatia every year. Naturally, the main attraction is Lake Baikal. There is a lot of interest in it, especially among Chinese investors. However, the local government would rather work with our own Russian investors.

In October 2019 Ulan-Ude will be hosting the AIBA Women's World Boxing Championships. Last year women boxers from Buryatia took two gold and two silver medals at the Russian Women's Boxing Championships; and now it appears they will have to prove that they are the best in the world.

Architecturally, Buryatia's capital looks a lot like many other Siberian cities. Its main square is the site of the world's largest sculptural head of Vladimir Lenin, which weighs 42 tons and stands almost eight meters high! The giant head looks a little scary, but the locals have long grown accustomed to him and hold all the city's main celebrations on the square. We soon got used to him, too, taking selfies with the great revolutionary.

The magnificent National Opera and Ballet Theatre of Buryatia, the architectural face of Ulan-Ude.

The Memorial
House and Museum
of the scholar and
spiritual leader
Agvan Dorzhiev
is located in
the grounds of
the Atsagatsky
Datsan, 50 km from
Ulan-Ude.

The outstanding educator and Buddhist Lama once lived in this log house.

At the Memorial House and Museum of the Semeiskie Old Believers.

Architecturally, Buryatia's capital looks a lot like many other Siberian cities. Its main square is the site of the world's largest sculptural head of Vladimir Lenin, which weighs 42 tons and stands almost eight meters high!







Ivolginsky
Datsan, located
36 km away
from Ulan-Ude,
is the main
centre of
Buddhist studies
in Russia, one
of the so-called
"power places"
of Eastern
Siberia.

In 2002 the incorrupt body of Hambo Lama Itigilov was transferred to Ivolginsky Datsan. The Lama's body, which was retrieved from the grave 75 years after his passing, did not show any signs of decay.

Another "monument" to Soviet rule is the spectacular Buryat National Opera and Ballet Theatre, which was established in 1939. The building, which is famous for the enormous fresco adorning its auditorium ceiling, is an example of the so-called "Stalinist Empire style" in architecture and is considered a cultural heritage site. We were given a guided tour of the theatre and even allowed to go backstage and attend a rehearsal.

A visit to the Lamas

Ivolginsky Datsan (Buddhist monastery), the centre of Buddhist spiritual practices in Russia, is located 36 km away from Ulan-Ude. Most of the temples here were built in the 1970s.

In 2002 the incorrupt body of Hambo Lama Itigilov was transferred to Ivolginsky Datsan. Hambo Lama Itigilov died in 1927, having instructed his followers to exhume his body after 75 years. When the monks performed the ritual, they discovered the Lama's body intact, with no signs of decay. Many a scientist, including some from other countries, has tried to unlock this mystery: cells taken from the Lama's dead body are the same as the cells of a healthy living person.

Today the Lama's body is seated in a large armchair behind a protective glass, and at set intervals during the year, any visitor can approach him to bow and pray. An exception was made for our group, and we were allowed to visit the sacred site outside of the normal schedule. By the way, before going into the temple you are required to let go of all dark thoughts and worries in order to enter in a positive and happy

mood — otherwise, you run the risk of spoiling other people's karma.

The monastery also houses a Buddhist university (with 100 students currently studying there), a hotel that is open in the summer, a museum of Buddhist art, and a visitor center.

I was drawn to the souvenirs sold at stalls inside the monastery. There was a great selection, from slippers and belts made from camel hair in Buryatia and neighbouring Mongolia to incense and portraits of the Dalai Lama. I purchased a pair of cute "inseparable" elephant figurines. According to Buddhist tradition, the elephant is one of the most revered animals; indeed, Buddhist teaching tells us that before she gave birth to Gautama Buddha, his mother dreamt of a white elephant entering her body, and even though she was married, her vision was seen as a portent of the appearance of a divinity on earth.

POSOLSKY MONASTERY

There are three functioning Russian Orthodox monasteries in Buryatia today. The Posolsky Transfiguration Monastery, located on the shores of Lake Baikal, is quite remarkable. It was founded in 1681 on the site where eight members of the first Russian diplomatic mission to Mongolia were murdered and buried. The monastery has been under reconstruction since 2000. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides assistance to the Posolsky Transfiguration Monastery through its Board of Trustees.

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Respect for tradition

The Buddhist spiritual tradition and Buryatia's traditional culture and customs are quite fascinating. And right now Buryatia is experiencing a renewed interest in its national traditions. For example, after a baby was born, Buryats used to bury the placenta and umbilical cord, which were thought to represent another, unborn human being who must be committed to the earth to avert misfortune and sorrow. The newborn's parents were to remember the place, as it was thought to be the birthplace of their child. This was the place where a Buryat came during hard times to pray or ask for something. Today this tradition is enjoying a revival, and local hospitals are finding ways to accommodate new parents.

Another difference between Buddhist and Christian traditions is that Buddhists do not visit cemeteries.







Buddhist masks at the Memorial House and Museum of Agvan Dorzhiev.

Everyone at the Steppe Nomad ethno-tourism centre is fond of camels.

Vladimir Putin during his visit to Ivolginsky Datsan with Lama Damba Ayusheev, head of the Buddhist Traditional Sangkha of Russia. Since they believe in reincarnation, they see the body after death as an empty shell, not something to worship — to do so is to invite trouble. Some of the indigenous people practice shamanism. Long ago, the Buryats looked to their shamans to tell them where and how to bury their dead: sometimes in wooden coffin-like boxes, or simply in clothing; sometimes they left bodies lying above the ground for wild animals to tear apart. Naturally, these customs are not practiced today, and the authorities work to combat such tendencies.

There are many mixed marriages in Buryatia between ethnic Russians and Buryats, who have lived together in harmony for centuries. Nonetheless, every Buryat knows the story of their family seven generations back. A written ancestral record with the names of all relatives is kept in every house and yurt.

One of the most interesting places we visited was the Steppe Nomad ethno-tourism center. Here we learned to play checkers/dice Buryat style and dance the *yohor*, the traditional Buryat round dance. The locals even recreated for us an entertaining and joyful Buryat wedding. Most of us ended up taking part in the ceremony, playing the roles of the groom, his friends, the bride, and the relatives. We tasted the traditional Buryat beverage called "milk vodka" — with 9 to 11 % alcohol, it tastes a bit like Japanese sake.

Yet another popular tourist destination is Tarbagatay, an ancient Russian Old Believers' settlement. A delicious meal and a full-fledged folk performance welcomed us to the village.



The new Baikal Reserve visitor centre hosts lectures about Lake Baikal, its ecosystem and wildlife.

The audience gave the folk dancers a round of applause.

Baikal whitefish with mushrooms. Absolutely delicious! about this unique, endless lake and its wildlife. We were quite surprised to hear that it has recently been prohibited to fish the lake for its famed Baikal omul, the signature component of the region's cuisine. Today, only one local business holds the permit to fish Baikal omul, so there is a good chance that the "Baikal" omul you buy in a store was caught in, say, the Yenisei or Lena Rivers. We purchased some smoked omul at a local store, and I honestly cannot tell you where it came from. We were told it was "local". What I can tell you is that it was absolutely delicious — I don't think I've ever eaten anything so good.

A Presidential dinner

Buryat cuisine is dominated by meat dishes, and the locals' preference is for lamb. The most popular dish is called *buuz*. *Buuz* is best described as steamed meat dumplings in the shape of a yurt, with a small opening at the top of the dough to gather up the juices. It is a bit like the Georgian

The Old Believers of Transbaikal, also called "Semeiskie", meaning "of the family", have preserved their unique culture through centuries. They got this nickname when entire families were resettled in Buryatia by special order of Catherine the Great. Today their descendants welcome tourists with traditional Russian dishes and show them their age-old way of life, their ceremonies, songs and dances. "The Cultural Space and Oral Culture of the Semeiskie" is included in UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List.

To Baikal

On the way to Lake Baikal, Buryatia's ultimate natural wonder and tourist attraction, we stopped to bathe in local hot springs. We really enjoyed the large pool with mineral water springs — all year round, the water temperature here reaches +37-38°C (about 98-100°F.) None of us will ever forget relaxing in hot water with the air temperature at -27°C, or trying to run up the frozen steps of the pool as our wet slippers stuck to them.

Lake Baikal belongs on everyone's bucket list. Even in the winter, the vast, sea-like lake was an astonishing experience. It was already beginning to freeze over, but the waves were still breaking at the shore. Storms even form over the lake. Around the lake, the snow-covered trees and shrubs looked so beautiful that all the photographers reached for their cameras, and all tourists got their phones out.

We also went for a remarkable hike on a new ecological trail through the snow-covered forest of the Baikal

Nature Reserve. We saw the tracks of wild animals and birds, and ancient dwellings of Transbaikal's indigenous people. We also saw a stuffed Siberian musk deer at the Baikal Nature Reserve museum. Who'd have thought that the area was also home to a sabre-toothed deer?

The Baikal Reserve visitor centre, which was opened just a few years ago, is modern yet fits seamlessly in the surrounding landscape. The centre offers guided tours that tell visitors



The Republic of Buryatia TRAVEL



Artyom
Kuriksha, head
chef at the
Baikal Plaza
Hotel's Tenghiz
restaurant,
told us what
President
Putin and
Prime Minister
Medvedev eat
for breakfast.

A visit to Buryatia will leave you with enduring memories of Lake Baikal's vibrant landscape. khinkali. Naturally, all kinds of fish from Lake Baikal are also a staple, including whitefish, grayling and omul.

Artyom Kuriksha, head chef at the Baikal Plaza Hotel's Tenghiz restaurant, prepared a real feast for our dinner. It is worth noting that Vladimir Putin has stayed at the Baikal Plaza several times, and it was Artyom and his co-workers who created a signature dish for Mr. Putin, calling it "Fish à la President": baked Baikal omul stuffed with porcini mushrooms and pine nuts.

As for us, we dined on Baikal whitefish with fried button and shitake mushrooms and bell pepper jam, as well as yak tartare and venison.

Naturally, we absolutely had to ask Artyom what our President eats when he stays at the Plaza.

"Vladimir Putin likes simple food. For breakfast, he always has *syrniki* (traditional soft cheese pancakes), oatmeal, fresh fruit and berries. Also, we offered him *pirozhki* (small pastries) stuffed with bird cherries, cabbage, pine nuts and honey. He enjoys blini with caviar as well. Lunch for the President and those who accompany him is prepared by the Kremlin cooks who travel with the group. We begin preparations for his visit a week ahead, as the President's party usually comprises seventy or so individuals. The party arrives with two trucks of food supplies."

"Do you feel anxious when the President comes?"

"First time he came, we were really nervous, but after that it became easier. Now we know what to do. We don't get any sleep, because everything needs to be done at a certain time. Let's say the plane leaves at 6 am. That means that we have to start preparing all the food they take with them at 3 am. It is not like you can put it all in the fridge!" Artyom laughs...

By the way, Prime Minister Medvedev has also stayed at the Baikal Plaza twice. According to the chef, Dmitry Medvedev's taste in food is quite similar to President Putin's.

Folk songs, music and dance created a wonderful atmosphere for our excellent dinner, a dinner that was, indeed, worthy of a president. TLR

ROUTES Karelia



Mystical **North**

GRIGORY KUBATYAN, A WELL-KNOWN TRAVELER AND PHOTOJOURNALIST FROM ST. PETERSBURG, IS THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOKS *LIFE ON THE ROAD AND TO INDIA BY BIKE.* IN THIS "ROUTES" COLUMN, HE TALKS ABOUT THE AMAZING KARELIA.

he Republic of Karelia is Russian Finland, the land of the lakes — the large navigable ones, such as Ladoga and Onega, and hundreds of small ones, where pike, zander and burbot are hiding. The local lakes are named in the Karelian manner: Vygozero, Munozero, Segozero, Pertozero, etc. There is even a Kosmozero. In the north, Karelia backs up to the White Sea, an austere wonder of nature.

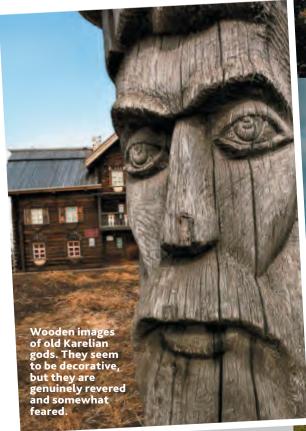
There is a Karelian saying: "The Karelian didn't burn in the fire, but the Russian got lost in the smoke." It's a debatable point, but it's also just a joke. A dark and mystical kind of humor. One thing is clear from the saying: there is no greater misfortune in Karelia than fire, because this is the land of forests and forest dwellers. And thus it is also a land of pagan legends and myths. Folk stories are still alive today that tell of sinister noiade wizards; wandering lights; leshy — forest spirits — capable of leading travelers astray and making them go around in circles in the thick woods; and mysterious labyrinths and gigantic rocks, or seitas, near which spirits dwell. There are also many monasteries, churches and hermitages here. Holy relics and devilry, piety and atheism — everything exists side by

Which route to take in Karelia depends on how you are getting there. This time, I set off to drive from St. Petersburg, recording distances between the towns and villages of the Leningrad Region and Karelia with must-see places for tourists.

St. Petersburg (the beginning of the route) — Staraya Ladoga (130 km) — Tikhvin (230 km) — Verkhniye Mandrogi (430 km)

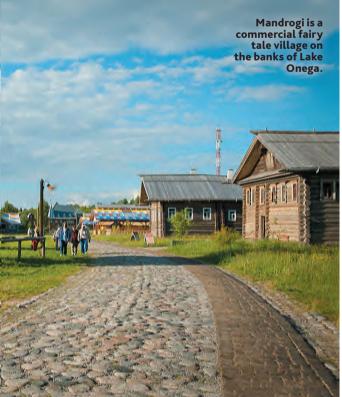
Staraya Ladoga — this town was dubbed "the capital of Northern Rus"

during a high-profile media campaign in 2003. St. Petersburg was at the time celebrating its 300th anniversary, while Staraya Ladoga turned 1,250 years old. The president came here twice, and the city might have expected a big future in tourism and the status of the new "mother of Russian cities". But that didn't happen. Nevertheless, it is worth stopping here. Once upon a time, the Varangians lived here, or maybe ancient Germanic people, and even neolithic people, for that matter. Historians study their sites and burial mounds with unfailing interest. I would recommend seeing Staroladozhskaya Fortress, going inside Nikolsky Monastery and climbing up Malyshev Hill









There is no greater misfortune in Karelia than fire, because this is the land of forests and forest dwellers. And thus, it is the land of pagan legends and myths.

to admire the wonderful view of the fortress and the Volkhov River.

Tikhvin — site of the Holy Dormition Convent, which is home to the Icon of Our Lady of Tikhvin, believed to work miracles. During World War II, the Germans removed the icon from the country, and it later turned up in Chicago. The icon was returned to Russia in 2004 with great fanfare and a government escort. The monastery has a remarkable bell tower. If you walk around the back of the Assumption Cathedral, you can see inscribed pagan stones built into the foundation of the building. It appears

that they were objects of reverence in the distant past. Next to one of the stones, an awning was built and the icon was mounted there next to a collection box for donations. Even today, worshippers come to the miraculous icon and to the stones with their worries and hopes. I asked one lady why. "My mother did it when she was in pain and didn't know any doctors," she answered. "And now I come here, too."

Verkhniye Mandrogi — this village on the Svir River is a bit touristy. Here cruise ships make a stop on their way from Ladoga to Onega. To amuse →

ROUTES Karelia

the travelers, eight log cabins were transported here from the Vologda Region. You can relax in the village, go horseback riding, do pottery, hammer a horseshoe, or visit the museum of vodka and a Russian sauna.

Verkhniye Mandrogi — Scheleyki (130 km) — Gimoretsky Pogost (136 km) — Sheltozero (166 km) — Petrozavodsk (260 km)

Scheleyki is a small village on the western shore of Lake Onega. Here



In Ruskeala you can bathe in an icy lake, hike on one of the eco trails, or visit the rope-course park with a rope swing. An underground route was recently opened.

stands the wooden five-domed church of Dmitry Solunsky the Myrrh-Gusher (St. Demetrios of Thessaloniki), built in 1783. To the north of the village is a gabbro-diabase quarry. This solid volcanic rock resembles basalt and is used for facing the surfaces of metro stations and for the manufacture of tomb stones. The imposing gabbro-diabase cliff is several kilometers long.

Gimoretsky Pogost is the cemetery of the Gimreka village ("gim" means river), with the unique tent-roof church of the Nativity of the Mother of God built in 1659. Miraculously, the wooden church has survived since the

The embankment in Petrozavodsk is a popular place for meetings and walks among young people.

Kizhi is the biggest collection of wooden churches and houses in Russia.

You can get From Petrozavodsk to Kizhi by "Meteor" hydrofoil ferry in no time. Or you can crawl there on a motor boat.



times of Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich the Silent, the father of Peter the Great. The church is in a state of some neglect, but still looks striking.

Sheltozero is the capital of what is known as the Veps *volost* (province). The province became autonomous in the 1990s and acquired its own flag, which resembles Scandinavian flags. However, since 2004, the province has officially ceased to exist. The regional ethnographic museum still exists, however, and there are several architectural artifacts. On the way from Gimreka to Sheltozero you can look for "holy Veps groves". Or, if you are lucky, someone will show them to you.

Petrozavodsk — the capital of the Republic of Karelia. The city has a population of 270,000. There is an attractive city park overlooking Lake Onega, several museums, a philharmonic hall and a botanical garden. In the National Theater (better known as the Finnish theater), you can see the Kalevala epic performed. Near the city is a sled-dog and reindeer farm.

Among popular restaurants, I would recommend a fish restaurant, Fregat (the fish is brought from the Barents Sea), a hipster cafe, Kukhnya, and a log-cabin restaurant, Karelian Gornitsa which serves potato *shanga*, whitefish and roasted bear meat. You can have a good inexpensive meal in the Testo cafe (*chebureki and vareniki*), or in the Hermes cafeteria (salads, meatballs, borscht.)

Petrozavodsk — Kizhi (68 km by lake, 1.5 hours).

Kizhi is also a *pogost*, a former cemetery on an island. Nowadays it is a major tourist destination and a UNESCO world heritage center. It's the biggest collection in the Russian North of wooden houses, chapels, mills and other wonders built with just an axe and no nails. The most amazing thing here is the Church of the Transfiguration, built in 1714 and topped with 22 cupolas. It is currently being restored. Last summer, this extraordinary church stood



The Holy Dormition Convent in Tikhvin is a place of pilgrimage for those who believe in miracles.

The flooded marble quarry in Ruskeala is today considered a natural wonder. St. Isaac's Cathedral is built from these stones.

without cupolas, but the work is supposed to be completed by the end of 2019.

You can get to Kizhi from Petrozavodsk by fast "Comet" or "Meteor" hydrofoil ferries for about \$24 one-way. If time permits and you have a car, try the route Medvezhyegorsk — Velikaya Guba — Oyatevschina, and from there it is less than \$5 by a motor boat. In winter, you can get here across the ice of Lake Onega on a snowmobile or on skis.

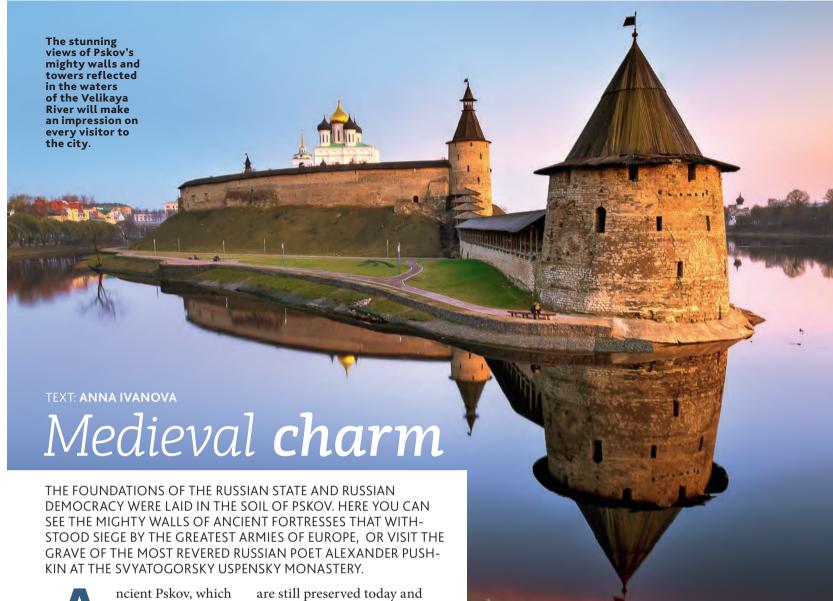
The ticket to enter the reserve is about \$8 (\$9 on weekends.) Some entertaining activities include a ride in a horse-drawn buggy or attending a culinary master-class. It is forbidden to stay overnight on Kizhi. The nearest accommodations are in the village of Yersenevo: take a motor boat to Oyatevschina, then walk half a kilometer, and you can choose between Kizhanin or Kizhskaya Blagodat guest houses.

Petrozavodsk — Ruskeala (259 km)

Ruskeala is a photogenic mountain park with a marble quarry. Here marble for the Hermitage, and Kazan and St. Isaac's Cathedrals was quarried. During the war, the quarry was flooded and abandoned. The film *The Dawns are Quiet Here* was shot near the Ruskeala waterfalls, at the site of actual battles. In modern times, another movie was filmed here — *The Dark World*, which received a very low rating, but was about Lapland sorcerers, lake witches, and the legends that Karelia is rich in.

You can bathe in the lake in Ruskeala (it's cold!), hike on one of the eco trails, and visit the ropecourse mountain park with a rope swing and a climbing wall. Two years ago, an underground route was opened that goes along the old shafts and mines. TLR





ncient Pskov, which is now 1,116 years old, was once one of the biggest cities in Russia and Europe. The Pskov fortress consisted of five fortified circles, which made the city practically impenetrable. Three of them

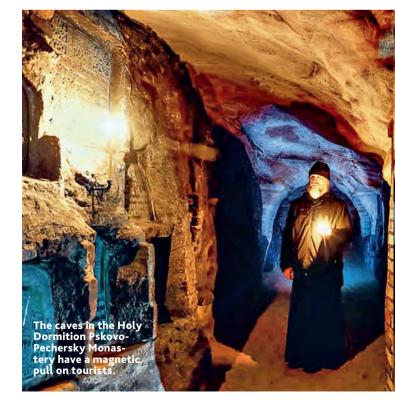
attract tourists from all over the world. The stunning views of Pskov's mighty walls and towers reflected in the waters of the Velikaya River will make an impression on every visitor to the city.

A stroll along the old town's

shady, cozy streets is a particular pleasure. Here medieval architecture is intertwined with the architecture of a 19th century provincial centre. You will discover the secret of Pskov's churches, which look different from different angles: sometimes vast and monumental, sometimes small and compact. Pskov is called "the Home of the Holy Trinity", thanks to another well-known landmark: the majestic Trinity Cathedral, which stands at the centre of the city's kremlin.

Tourists and pilgrims alike are drawn to the "God-Given" caves in the Holy Dormition



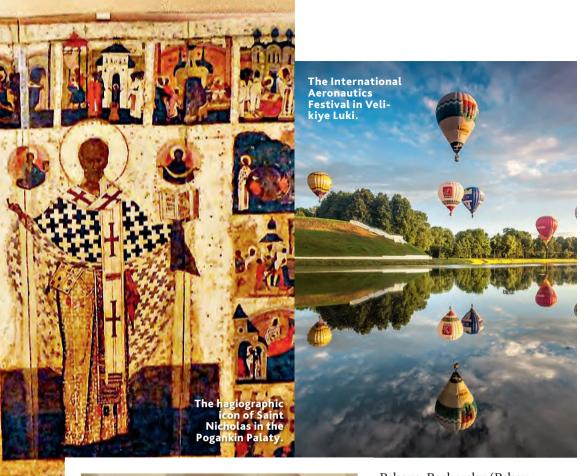


Pskov Region ROUTES

Cultural and Architectural Museum — exhibits the paintings of Vasily Tropinin, Karl Bryullov, Ivan Aivazovsky, Boris Grigoryev, Aristarkh Lentulov, Marc Chagall, Robert Falk and Pyotr Ossovsky.

The grave of Russia's greatest poet, Alexander Pushkin, is also in the Pskov Region, at the Svyatogorsky Uspensky Monastery. In the Mikhailovskoye Museum, you can learn about Pushkin's life and fun-loving escapades, and discover the history of Alexander Pushkin's great-grandfather Abram Hannibal, the "Moor of Peter the Great".

Every year, the Pskov Region hosts a great number of interesting events, such as the festivals of military-historical reconstruction the Battle on the Ice, Isaborg, and the Iron City. At these events you can try on the armour of Russian and Teutonic knights, learn archery and forge a sword. You can also enjoy a good time and get your fill of pancakes while celebrating Maslenitsa (Shrovetide), or float high in a hot-air balloon at the annual Aeronautics Festival in Velikie Luki. Finally, you can hear performances by popular poets at the Days of Pushkin Poetry and Russian Culture in Pushkin Hills, TLR tourism.pskov.ru



The Pogankiny Palaty house exhibitions of ancient artefacts

Pskovo-Pechersky (Pskov-Caves) Monastery, located 50 kilometers from Pskov. There are "streets" through the caves built into the Holy Hill with more than 10,000 underground tombs. Tours are conducted by the brethren of the monastery.

Art lovers will be amazed by the paintings displayed in the local museums. In Pogankiny Palaty — one of the buildings of the Pskov Historical,

GETTING THERE



How to get

By plane from Moscow — 2 hours, tickets from \$14. By train from Moscow from 12 to 16 hours, tickets from \$10; from St. Petersburg — 3.5 hours, tickets from \$9.50.

Where to stay You will find comfortable and modern accommodations in Pskov at the Old Estate Hotel. Rooms from \$70. The Izborsk hotel complex, in an ancient village with a fortress-museum, also has rooms from \$45.

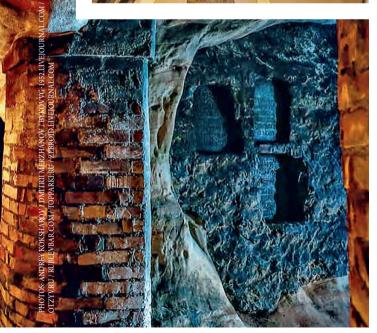


What to eat Pskov has a great variety of restaurants, cafes and bistros. In the Rublev bar, you can try tasty Russian dishes such as thick Chudskaya ukha, a local fish chowder made with Pskov zander. Be sure to try the delicacy of the

tsars: snetok, a tender and marvelously tasty variety of smelt, which is an excellent accompaniment

What to buy

Tourists can buy books, albums and other souvenirs with the sights of Pskov and its famous suburbs. Pskov artisans offer a wide variety of ceramics and handmade goods: crockery, clay figurines, pots and vases. In addition, the region is famous for its honey, pryaniki (spiced biscuits) and textiles.





IN THEIR REVIEWS, GUESTS OF THE DVOR PODZNOEVA HOTEL AND RESTAURANT COMPLEX DESCRIBE IT AS ONE OF THE SIGHTS OF PSKOV. THE COMPLEX INCLUDES THREE HOTEL BUILDINGS, RESTAURANTS, A CAFE, THE VINNYE PALATY (WINE CHAMBERS) BOUTIQUE, AND A SPA CENTRE.

his four-star hotel is located in the heart of the city, just steps away from Pskov's main attractions and government offices. Here you'll find everything you might need: clean and cozy rooms, friendly and attentive staff, a 24-hour lobby bar, two conference halls and a banquet hall. In 2019, a third hotel building was opened, with stylish suits and studios.

The restaurants are housed in 17th century stone chambers, which lend your meal a remarkably authentic atmosphere. Here you can easily imagine yourself a guest at a tsar's lavish feast.

In the Trapeznye Palaty restaurant you can taste European and Russian dishes prepared according to local recipes — many of them ancient. The varied menu of the Pivnye Palaty restaurant will satisfy lovers of foaming beer and charcuterie.

Guests with children, meanwhile, can enjoy a selection of baked goods in Pirogovye Palaty: pirozhki (stuffed buns), turnovers, cakes and pastries. The light and airy interior of the

Kofeinye Palaty bakery creates a festive mood, and their deserts, gourmet pastries and candy will leave no one indifferent. The Vinnye Palaty wine cellar offers world-famous wines.

The Dvor Podznoeva complex carefully preserves the history and heritage of the past. Its in-house museum features exact copies of archeological finds once used by the people who lived on this land a thousand years ago: head dresses, items of clothing, accessories and weapons.

A pleasant discovery for guests is the spa centre Bez Dna — translation: "bottomless" — which has a swimming pool, relaxing Turkish baths and a Finnish sauna. Further health benefits can be gained from a workout at the gym, skin care procedures, laser therapy, hydro massage, and several other kinds of massage.

We can't wait to welcome you to Pskov! TLR 15, 3B Nekrasova Street, Pskov Tel.: +7 (8112) 797-000,

+7 (8112) 797-001 hotelpskov@dvorpodznoeva.ru www.dvorpodznoeva.ru





The facade of the Dvor Podznoeva hotel.

All rooms at the hotel feature modern renovated interiors.

The hotel spa offers a swimming pool, sauna, massage parlour, and gym.



A modern hotel in the heart of ancient Pskov

Your stay in one of Russia's most beautiful ancient cities will be unforgettable if you choose the Pokrovsky Hotel.

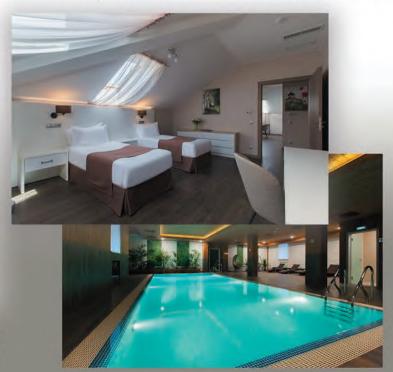
Located on the city's main thoroughfare, the Pokrovsky Hotel is in close proximity to one of Pskov's most famous landmarks, the Pokrovskaya Tower, as well as the city's wealth of architectural and historic treasures and museums. It is also in the centre of commercial activity, which makes it especially convenient for both tourists and business travellers.



Here history is treasured, the future is created, and experiences to be cherished are born.



2, Kuznetskaya Ulitsa, Pskov, Russia pskhotel.ru





IN THE BIRTHPLACE OF RUSSIA

MOST PEOPLE IN RUSSIA, LET ALONE ABROAD, ARE SURPRISED TO DISCOVER TWO REGIONS WITH SIMILAR NAMES ON THE MAP: NOVGOROD AND NIZHNY NOVGOROD. HERE WE WISH TO TELL YOU ABOUT VELIKY NOVGOROD AND THE NOVGOROD REGION.

here should you go and what should you see in the "Birthplace of Russia"? That's what the locals — who are proud of their history and guard it carefully — call Veliky Novgorod.

Veliky Novgorod

Upon arriving in the city, which celebrated its 1,160th anniversary this year, your first stop should be to experience the silence of the ages in St. Sophia Cathedral. This is a working cathedral built in the 11th century by Yaroslav the Wise and Princess Ingegard on the site of a wooden church that had been razed by fire. This is the most ancient church anywhere in

Russia. The wrought iron Magdeburg gates and the Icon of the Mother of God are the pride of the cathedral.

We recommend that you take the five-minute walk from the Novgorod Kremlin to admire the works of the genius painter Theophanes the The "Sadko"
International
Folk Music
Festival takes
place at the
"Vitoslavlitsy" wooden
architecture
museum.



Greek. These are the only of his monumental frescos surviving in the world today, and they can be seen in the Church of the Transfiguration on Ilyin Street. Any Novgorodian will tell you of dozens more such amazing places, almost 40 of which are under UNESCO protection.

And you should certainly try pickles from the village of Kholynya: their recipe is over 500 years old. From summer till spring, cucumbers are kept in oak barrels at the bottom of a river, acquiring an unmatched crunchiness and a delicate, pleasant taste.

Staraya Russa

Staraya Russa is a couple of hours away from Veliky Novgorod. On the way there,

The Novgorod Region ROUTES







you can dip a toe into the river of time itself. The Ilmen Glint on the banks of Lake Ilmen is a monument of natural history. This is the longest exposed seabed of the Devonian period on the Russian Plain: the layers are from 420 to 360 million years old — living witnesses to the Age of Fishes.

In Starya Russa, you can soak up the literary atmosphere in the Fyodor Dostoyevsky House Museum. Here, in a small provincial town, Dostoevsky wrote The Brothers Karamazov, and it's quite possible that a little creative inspiration will come your way, too.

Staraya Russa is also known for its curative mud and mineral waters, thanks to which it achieved the status of the "Imperial Resort".

Be sure to try the salt at Rushanin Medieval Manor, an open-air museum that recreates the medieval town's historic atmosphere.

Borovichi and Okulovka

Borovichi is the region's second city. Here you can immerse yourself in a world of turbulent waters, river rapids, suspension bridges and extreme sports. The Msta River rapids are a real challenge for whitewater rafters. The Ryk (Roar) and Tri Byka (Three Bulls) rapids are considered to be the most dangerous. The natural beauty of the Borovichsky District and the neighbouring Olulovsky District is such that the historian and naturalist Vitaly Bianki called the area the "Country of Marvels," where entry is forbidden to indifferent people whose hearts are closed

Staraya Russa. The Merciful Saviour bell tower and chapel in the Transfiguration Monastery.

The "Princely Fraternity" Festival features tournaments, fairs and music shows.

Novgorod's grey schi (cabbage soup) is made from the green top leaves of cabbage, which acquire grey colour in the process of fermentation.

The Fyodor
Dostoyevsky
House Museum
in Staraya Russia
displays some of
the writer's original
belongings, documents and editions
of his books
published in his
lifetime.

to the wondrous beauty of the Novgorod rivers and forests.

A museum dedicated to the life of the great military leader Alexander Suvorov is located in the village of Konchansky, Borovichsky District.

The great explorer and scientist Nicholas Miklouho-Maclay lived in the Okulovsky District, in the village of Yazukovo. His estate still stands today and is of considerable interest to travellers.

Be sure to try Novgorod's grey schi (cabbage soup), made from the green top leaves of cabbage, which acquire grey colour in the process of fermentation. The dish is for real foodies and gastro tourists who are open to new experiences.

Khvoinaya

Traveling into the depths of the Novgorod Region, you should visit the town of Khvoinaya. In the forest near the town, there are karst lakes which mysteriously drain into the earth. The most beautiful lake in the Karst Lake Reserve is Gorodno Lake. In addition, there are five more lakes and one chain of lakes.

Be sure to try medovukha — an alcoholic drink made from northern, amber honey. TLR novgorod.travel



ALEGENDARY

LOCATED ON THE BLACK SEA IN THE
SOUTH-WEST OF CRIMEA, THE CITY OF
SEVASTOPOL IS A CULTURAL, HISTORICAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND RECREATIONAL CENTRE,
AND THE HOME PORT OF RUSSIA'S BLACK
SEA FLEET. ITS RICH HISTORY AND AMAZING
NATURAL SURROUNDINGS MAKE SEVASTOPOL AN ATTRACTIVE DESTINATION FOR
TRAVELLERS.

Grafskaya Pier, Sevastopol. The pier is a historical and architectural landmark named after the Serbian Count Marko Voynovich, who was a founder and admiral of the Black Sea Fleet.



Sevastopol's history dates back several thousand years, and visiting the city allows you to travel back through the centuries to explore different epochs and become acquainted with the intertwining of its cultures, civilizations and ethnic groups. Sevastopol's unique strategic and geographic location has helped to determine its fate and identity, playing a significant role in the formation of the city.

Worthy of Honour

Founded in 1783 on the order of Empress Catherine II, the name "Sevastopol" can be translated from Greek as "honourable". Catherine turned the city into Russia's principle naval base, and for 236 years Sevastopol has lived up to its proud name for its unparalleled courage and military glory.

Many important events, well-known legends and traditions are linked to the city. It is famous

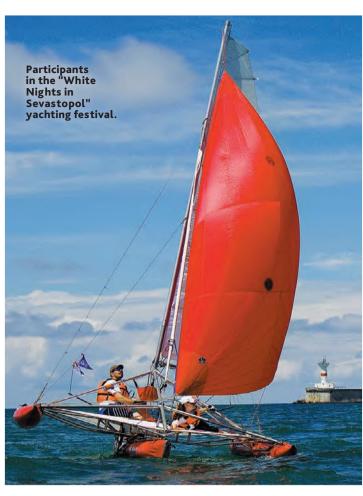
Included on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2013, the Tauric Chersonesos Historical and Archaeological Museum-Reserve dates back 2,000 years and is one of the most popular tourist attractions.

for major tourist attractions such as the Tauric Chersonesus Historical and Archaeological Museum-Reserve, the Museum of Military History of Fortifications, the Sevastopol Military-Historical Museum-Reserve and Great Sevastopol Trail, as well as its beaches, theatres and sea cruises.

Included on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2013, the Tauric Chersonesos Historical and Archaeological Museum-Reserve dates back 2,000 years and is one of the most popular tourist attractions, where the historic chronicles of the region emphasize the period of early Orthodox Christianity. It was here that St. Vladimir, or Prince Vladimir the Great, was baptized (at Chersonesos, also known as Korsun), thus beginning the process of Christianization of Old Rus'.

The Sevastopol Military-Historical Museum-Reserve combines the story of the exploits of Russian soldiers during the Crimean war of 1853-1856 and World War II, and consists of the Memorial Complex of the Monuments of the Defence of the City 1854-1855, the "Historical Boulevard", the Defence of Sevastopol 1854-1855 Panorama, the Memorial Monuments of the Defence of the City 1854-1855, "Malakhov Kurgan" 1941-1944, the Memorial complex "Sapun-Gora", the "Sturm Sapun Mountain May 7, 1944" Diorama, the Cathedral of St. Vladimir, where many outstanding military figures are





Sevastopol THE BLACK SEA

buried, the Museum Cultural-Exhibition Centre, and the House-Museum of the Sevastopol Underground Resistance 1942-1944.

The Museum of Military History of Fortifications and Museum "Coastal Battery 35" are of particular interest for tourists. The Museum of Military History of Fortifications is an underground, rock-hewn submarine repair and maintenance base, which was once a top-secret installation and is now one of the city's top tourist attractions. The Museum "Coastal Battery 35" is a museum complex dedicated to the heroic feats of the city's defenders in 1941-1942, the site of bloody battles where soldiers died fighting the Nazi invaders.

Their courage won them unfading worldwide fame. "Gentlemen! If only I could walk, I would go to the holy places of Russia — Leningrad, Stalingrad, and Sevastopol, get down on my knees and kiss the holy land," said American President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

After the Crimean War, settlements named after Sevastopol (sometimes called Sebastopol) appeared in Australia, the United Kingdom, California and Mississippi, and even on the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. The museum Sebastopol House was built in Texas in →



1854-1856 and is included in the National Register of Historic Places, while Boulevard de Sébastopol is one of Paris's main thoroughfares.

A Wealth of Culture and Nature

The city boasts many interesting places to visit, including museums, churches, and memorials: there are some 2,175 sites in all, of which 1,358 have the status of cultural heritage sites, with 126 under federal protection. There are British, French, German, Italian, and Turkish monuments and memorials, which have been visited by public figures such as Winston Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt, Prince Charles, Silvio Berlusconi and

With its dark blue sea, the ships in its harbour, and the doves on the embankment, the city could have been specially designed for weddings and photo sessions.

With its mild coastal climate, Sevastopol's tourist season lasts up to 130 days a year. Amazing mountain and sea landscapes attract tourists seeking active recreation.













other high-ranking officials at different times.

With its mild coastal climate, Sevastopol's tourist season lasts 130 sunny days. The sea heats up to about 23-24 °C in July, and the amazing mountain views and extraordinary seascapes attract Russian and foreign travellers for holidays and vacations. The city has more than 185 hotels and guesthouses, numerous cafes and restaurants, and 36 city beaches, and its citizens are polite and hospitable to all, doing their best for guests.

The Great Sevastopol Trail

The Great Sevastopol Trail (GST) is a safe and easily accessible trail for adventure travellers, its 117-kilometer path circling the peninsula from Balaklava to Lyubimovka, from the southern to the western shores of the Black Sea through the Crimean Mountains. The main route consists of eight main sites, with the paths between them from four to ten hours each to walk.

GST is equipped with a tourist navigation system and a Via ferrata (translated from Italian, it means "iron path"). This is a protected climbing route fitted with steel cable and bracket supports that passes through some of the most beautiful landmarks of Southern Crimea. The Via ferrata requires no specialist climbing skills, and travellers are provided with maps and equipment, together with free use of a special website and mobile app.

Sea Kayaking

Sevastopol is a sea port, and offers a wide range of water activities including diving, yachting and kayaking, allowing its world of underwater harbours, ship wrecks and underwater caves to be explored. You can hire a yacht to sail along the South Crimean shore, while with a kayak you can explore the area's hidden beaches and rock tunnels, and relax far away from civilization.

In Vino Veritas

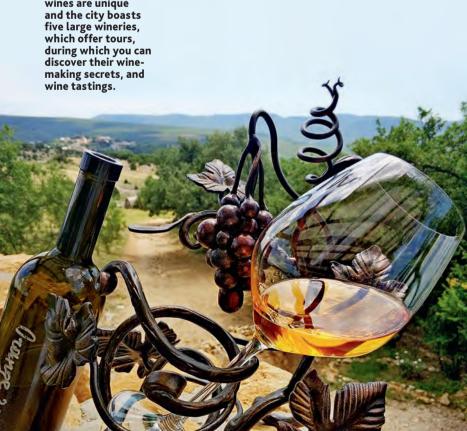
Enogastronomy is a new travel philosophy that seeks out undiscovered tastes and authentic traditions, which in Sevastopol means fresh seafood and local wines, many made by small producers. On the same latitude as Burgundy, Bordeaux and Piedmont, the area's vineyards stretch out over the Sevastopol area down picturesque roads and over extraordinary landscapes.

With their fine aroma, Sevastopol's wines are unique and the city boasts five large wineries, which offer educational tours, during which you can discover their wine-making secrets, and wine tastings. Join the festivities!

Sevastopol hosts many special events, including international festivals and sports competitions. These include Navy Day, celebrated on the last Sunday of July, one of the city's favourite occasions. Other large-scale events include the Opera

The Great Sevastopol Trail is a trail for adventure travellers, its 117-kilometer path circling the peninsula from Balaklava to Lyubimovka, from the southern to the western shores of the Black Sea through the Crimean Mountains.

With their fine aroma, Sevastopol's wines are unique



in Chersonesus Festival (August 14-17, 2019), the Crimea Historical Military Festival (September 6-16), Bike Show (August 10), Sevastopol Sail Week (September 15-22), the international extreme sports festival X-FEST (August 24-25), the Great Sevastopol Trail Festival (October 14-20), and the Big Tourist Jamboree in the well-equipped Toporova Dacha. TLR

SEVASTOPOL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Sevastopol Tourism Development Centre has been established to promote the city's tourism potential and best travel experiences. For more information and feedback related to our tourist landmarks, routes, tours, festivals, exhibitions and concerts. Contact us on +7 (978) 907-96-70,

e-mail: crt.sev@mail.ru

Sites: sevastravel.ru, facebook.com/pg/SevastopolTIC/posts,

Travel information centres are located at

- Sevastopol, Kornilova Embankment 2,
- Tourist Information Office
- Sevastopol, Balaklava, Nazukina St. 29,
- Tourist Information Office
- Sevastopol, Lyubimovka, Kachinskoye Highway (Sofia Perovskaya stop), Tourist Information Office Perovskaya stop), Tourist Information Office





THE BLACK SEA Sevastopol Balaklava, outside Sevastopol, is a popular tourist destination. Visi-tors can enjoy views of Balaklava Bay and its adjacent beaches, which can be reached by boat, and Cape Aya with its caves.





Krasnaya Polyana EYE WITNESS



he company Domain, which operates Sochi's gaming zone, invited journalists and editors to take part in a poker tournament. The casino regularly hosts such meetings of amateur gamblers, and with the Krasnaya Polyana gaming zone 540 meters above sea level, it would be a crime not to take advantage of the opportunity to ski while at the resort.

At 960 meters

The scribes were accommodated at the 4-star Gorki Panorama Hotel, 960 meters above sea level. The hotel is situated in the ultramodern ski resort Gorki Gorod, which was created for the 2014 Winter Olympics. Not far from the hotel — one of ten at the resort, of various levels of comfort — is the main cable lift, as well as ski lifts, numerous ski and snowboard rental outlets, and a selection of restaurants and cafes. The cost of staying at 3-4-star hotels in January is from \$90 to \$125, including breakfast. On weekends, the price may be higher due to increased demand. The price at the Gorki Panorama hotel includes visits to a spa with pool and sauna.

Down below, at 540 meters above sea level, there are additional hotels, as well as railway stations, bus stops, apartments, shopping centers, restaurants, cafes, and casinos.

A one-day ski-pass (from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) is \$35 for adults and \$23 for children. The more days you

purchase, the lower the price. An evening ski pass, from 6 to 11 p.m., costs \$23. Equipment rental (skis, boots, poles) was about \$25 for 24 hours. On the flight back, however, more than 30 bags with skiing items were unloaded from the plane — it seems people prefer to travel with their own equipment.

There are many ski trails for beginners and professionals alike. It was six degrees Celsius in the mountains almost every day, but the capricious weather surprised us with a downpour before our departure. It rained almost all day long. In the mountains, at 2,200 meters, it came down as a blizzard of snow, reducing visibility to zero, and nobody got through it without a few spills. But neither bad weather nor the total lack of visibility that day could deter skiers and snowboarders.

Gorki Gorod's restaurants offered a European menu and Caucasian cuisine at Moscow prices. On average, lunch cost \$15-25 per person. For instance, at the popular Caucasian cuisine restaurant Pkhali and Khinkali, located right by the ski lift, a portion of *khinkali* mutton dumplings (five pieces) cost about \$7, *kharcho* was \$7, pork shashlik — \$8, *khash* (offal soup) — \$9, veal with chestnuts — \$12, and Adjaruli *khachapuri* (baked cheese bread) — \$7.

Just as good as Las Vegas

The main event — the reason we'd been invited — began with an excursion to the Boomerang

The highest point of the Gorki Gorod resort is at 2,200 meters above sea level. Several slopes of various levels of difficulty start here, and there is a magnificent view of the mountains and the whole resort. The weather in Sochi can be capricious, and when we arrived at the summit, a real blizzard began.

The stylish Boomerang Hotel is housed in a freestanding building on the bank of the River Mzymta. The company's owners leased a seven-story building and plan to open a restaurant, a club and a hotel in addition to the casino.





From there we headed to Casino Sochi, which is already two years old. Located in the building where the Media Center was housed during the Olympics, the casino is astonishingly grand and luxurious. Bright lights worthy of the Las Vegas Strip attract gamblers and tourists. The interior is also beyond all praise: luxurious furnishings, VIP rooms and halls, a great number of tables, slot machines ... They say that \$63

million went into the casino. How soon will the investment pay off? Considering that the company's tax payments amounted to \$23.4 million in two years, I think the casino is doing fine.

All in all, 1,400 people work in the Krasnaya Polyana gaming zone, which includes Casino Sochi, Boomerang and Bonus, a slot-machine parlor. Visitors come from all over the country, from Kaliningrad to Vladivostok.

The journalists were able to see the popularity of Casino Sochi for themselves. On a Saturday evening, there was barely room to move. For instance, you had to wait for a long time for a free seat at the Russian poker table.

According to statistics, 84 percent of guests are Russian nationals. The rest of the guests are foreigners, and there were many visitors from abroad that evening, playing roulette, poker and the slot machines. In two years, the gaming zone has been visited by 850,000 people from 146 countries, and the percentage of foreign guests keeps growing.

"In a short time in Sochi a new level of tourism has been created — gaming tourism. People from all over the world come here, including world-famous poker players. Now, after the Winter Olympics, thanks to the new infrastructure, this is an entertainment center with all imaginable

Casino which had just opened in January 2019 at the neighboring Rosa Khutor resort. The space was not very large, but was already packed with visitors. Journalists had fun posing for photos amid the sleek hi-tech surroundings, although we were strictly forbidden from photographing players and staff.

I should mention that you have to have your passport with you on your first visit to the casino. You will be issued with an ID card for the gaming zone, which allows you to enter all gaming establishments and make transactions. All this ensures order, transparency and safety at the casino. This is probably the main achievement of the new gaming zones, which opened in Russia in 2009 after the total ban on gambling was partly lifted.

The stylish Boomerang Hotel is housed in a freestanding building on the bank of the River Mzymta. The company's owners leased a sevenstory building and plan to open a restaurant, a sports bar, a club and a hotel in addition to the casino. Already, \$11 million has been invested in equipping the casino, while the whole project will cost an estimated \$15.5 million. Mark Stankevich, who is from Poland, is the casino's general manager. He has lived in Russia for a long time and speaks Russian quite well.



A rainbow staircase in Gorki Gorod at 960 meters.

Several ski trails, new ski lifts, restaurants and cafes at several levels—all this attracts athletes and tourists alike.

The chef of Brunello, Ilya Zakharov cooks scrumptious dishes!

Players from all over the world come to the poker tournaments at Casino Sochi.
Tournaments lasting several days are held almost every month, and the prize pool may reach several hundred million rubles.

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kinds of service, from skiing to spas to chic restaurants and casinos. During the holidays, the hotels are at 100 percent occupancy," says Dmitry Afinogenov, director of development for the Krasnaya Polyana Gaming Zone. "More than 120 large companies have held corporate events here in the last two years, and our restaurant Brunello is one of the best in Sochi."

A world poker capital

Casino Sochi regularly holds world poker tournaments. It has already hosted 18 major tournament series, and the record prize pool at a tournament was almost \$11 million! According to the organizers, it took just two years to do the amount of work that takes other countries decades to execute.

"We were all waiting for a casino to open in Sochi because we realized that it would be the best casino in Russia and the CIS," said Artur Voskan-yan, manager of the poker project. "And that's exactly how it has turned out. In two years, Sochi has become recognized as a global brand among poker enthusiasts, including those from Macao, Monaco and Las Vegas. We are currently hosting the World Poker Tour with a prize purse of \$2.7 million. We have 52 tables — we began with just 10, but now we could add even more. Twelve major tournaments are planned for this year."

Poker has long since stepped out of the shadows, and now everybody is playing, men and women alike. For the latter, incidentally, there is a separate tournament. The entry fee starts from \$200.

"Poker tournaments are like summer camps for adults. Everyone knows each other, the families spend time together and become friends. Poker is a hobby that can make you money," said Voskanyan.

World Poker Tour President Adam Pliska traveled to Sochi from the U.S. for the tournament. Adam Pliska, who could easily be mistaken for the ex-President of the United States, began his presentation by stating that he is not Barak Obama, and praised the Russians for their outstanding organization of the tournament. His team shot several excellent videoclips about the ski resort and casinos in Sochi, which they immediately posted on the Internet.

The only complaint from the representatives of the gaming zone, including foreign guests, was the difficulty in obtaining Russian visas for foreigners. They generally felt that simplifying the visa process and the possibility of getting a long-term visa would vastly increase the number of foreign tourists.

Cards on the table

If you have never played poker, it's worth a try. The relatively simple rules allow beginners to test their luck (and skill) at the table. You are

guaranteed a rush of adrenalin and emotion.

More than 40 journalists from different cities were first taught the rules of Texas Hold 'Em. Then the cards were dealt, chips were handed out — and the game began. After three rounds of 30 minutes, each with increased stakes, only the luckiest were left standing.

The winners were announced at the gala reception in the casino restaurant, Brunello. Internationally renowned chef Ilya Zakharov was on hand as guests enjoyed a gourmet dinner.

After the dinner, many of the journalists tried their luck at the roulette wheel behind the poker tables and slot machines. Someone even managed to win a jackpot on the slots.

The unforgettable evening ended with a concert by the popular Russian singer Trofim, whom many of the guests at the Gorky Gorod resort had come to listen to. "This is quite the cultural center," I thought, and went to place my bet on red. TLR

Casino Sochi is more than a gaming center, it is also an entertainment destination. There are concerts by famous performers, and TV stars visit regularly.

Here you can play poker, black jack, roulette and slot machines. One member of our group won a jackpot at the slots.

At the press conference for the opening of the new Boomerang Casino (from left to right): Editor of Tourism and Leisure in Russia **Magazine Anton** Semyonov, **World Poker Tour President Adam** Pliska, producer of Celebrity TV Olga Svetláya, and manager of the poker project Artur Voskanyan.







The Delicious Land of the Nightingale

TEXT: KRISTINA KOPTSEVA
PHOTOS: TIC OF THE KURSK REGION

ANY TRAVELLER, WHETHER IN DISTANT LANDS OR A NEIGHBORING COUNTRY, WILL ALWAYS BE EAGER TO TRY LOCAL FOOD—INDEED, IT IS THROUGH TRADITIONAL CUISINE THAT WE LEARN ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE'S UNIQUE CULTURE AND WAY OF LIFE. KURSK NATIVES HAVE BEEN KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES AS HOSPITABLE WITH A NUMBER OF CULINARY SPECIALITIES.

his is our "Land of the Nightingale: Culinary Tour", presented to you by the Kursk Regional Tourism and Information Centre.

Day 1

The first stop on our culinary tour is the village of Dronyayevo in the Kurchatov District, where you can try the authentic potato drunka. Drunka is a zapekanka, a baked dish made from mashed potatoes, fresh eggs from free-range hens, milk, and butter. It is garnished with sour cream. This recipe has been handed down from one generation to the next, and we are confident that you will enjoy this delicious traditional fare.

After this hearty lunch, tourists are invited to the town of Kurchatov (named after Igor Kurchatov, a Soviet nuclear physicist and director of the Soviet atomic bomb project), where they can visit the Kursk Nuclear Power Plant Information Centre. The next stop is the town's central square, where you can see several important landmarks, such as the monument to Igor Kurchatov, the "Black Tulip" — a memorial to the Soviet soldiers who were killed in Afghanistan (1979-1989) — and the monument commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Kursk. Visitors can also enjoy a walk along the embankment of the cooling pond for the Kursk Nuclear Power Plant. In the 40 years that the power plant has been operating, this area has become a spontaneous nature reserve, providing a habitat for a unique species of reed and rare birds.

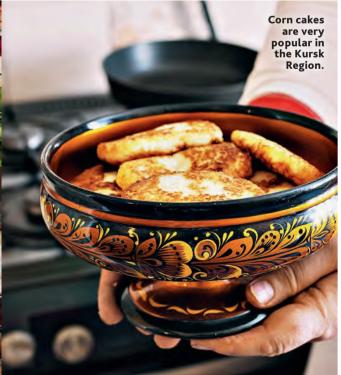
Day 2

On the second day of their trip tourists will be visiting the Ponyri District, an area known for its traditional way of making garbuznya. The story of this dish begins in the 19th century, when the region was populated by the Sayans,









The first stop on our culinary tour is the village of Dronyayevo in the Kurchatov District, where you can try authentic potato drunka.

a local sub-ethnic group of Russians. Garbuznya, a pumpkin porridge served with millet flatbread, was prepared from simple ingredients: pumpkin, millet, milk, salt, sugar, and butter. Many local residents grew pumpkins on their land, as the fruit stored well through the winter, and pumpkin dishes were tasty and nutritious. There is much more to Ponyri and the surrounding area for tourists than the delicious dish of garbuznya. It was here in July 1943 that one of the major confrontations of the Second World War, the Battle of Kursk, began. Along with the Battle of Stalingrad, it is considered

the turning point of the War. Visitors will have a chance to see the Kursk Bulge Memorial complex, the Angel of Peace Column, and the Teplovsky Heights Monument. A guided tour of the Ponyri Memorial Museum of the Battle of Kursk is provided. Tourists can also visit one of the most revered sites of the Russian Orthodox Church, the ancient monastery known as the Korennaya Pustyn — the "root hermitage".

Day 3

The next stop in our culinary journey is the country estate of the renowned Russian poet Afanasy Fet in the

settlement of Svoboda, which is located in the Zolotukhinsky District. Here you will learn the secret recipes of the poet's lunch menu. Fet's contemporaries remembered him as an enthusiastic host who enjoyed treating his guests to favourite dishes cooked to his own recipes. A vegetable butter-based soup, roast beef, apple sweetmeats (pastila), and bread crumb kvass (a fermented beverage) were all served.

Fet's country estate, which he bought in 1877 from the descendants of General Rtishchev, was located in the village of Vorobievka, quite close to Korennaya Pustyn, in an area that was famous for its diverse and unspoiled natural landscape. Many a renowned Russian writer, artist and composer visited the poet here during the last few years of his life, with Leo Tolstoy and Pyotr Tchaikovsky among them.

Every May the estate hosts a celebration of music and poetry known as "Nightingale Night". Traditionally, the first Sunday of July is the date of the yearly literary gathering, which is



Fet's country estate, which he bought from the descendants of General Rtishchev, was located in the village of Vorobievka, quite close to Korennaya Pustyn.

attended by writers, poets, and literature lovers from all over Russia.

Day 4

The final day of our culinary tour will take you to Maryino, the former estate of the Princes Baryatinsky, where you can taste the same dishes as the owners once offered to their guests.

This three-story noble mansion, built in the 19th century, is located in the centre of the estate and is surrounded by parkland. It is flanked by household buildings that are connected to the mansion through arched gateways. Designed by the local Kursk architect Karl Hofmann, the mansion was initially called the Izbitsky House, since it was built on the River Izbitsa. Later, to honor Ivan Baryatinsky's beloved wife Maria, the mansion was re-named Maryino.

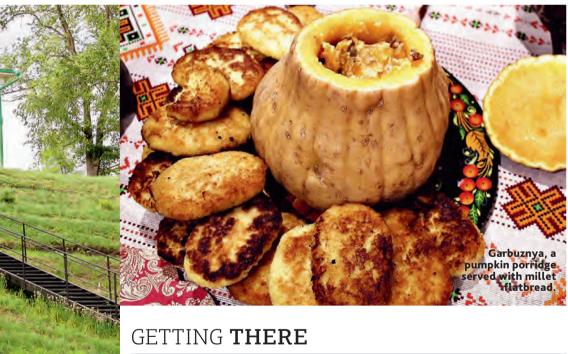
It is surrounded by a beautiful park with majestic trees. The Maryinsky Pond, with a number of islands, is also part of the estate, on one of which stands a rotunda with sixteen columns and a spherical dome.











How to get there
You can get here from
Moscow or St. Petersburg
by plane, train or bus. The
train ticket from Moscow to
Kursk will cost you approximately \$11, and \$40 from St.
Petersburg.

Where to stay
The regional business
centre offers four-star hotels
like the Element, Aurora, and
Prestige Hotels. Three-star

hotels such as the Aquamarine and White Acacia are also available. Average room rate: \$40+.

What to eat
We recommend the
following Kursk restaurants offering
European and
local dishes:
Utka (Duck),
Mezzanine, Biblioteka
(Library), Kikan,

and Belaya Akatsiya (White Acacia). Average check: \$13 per person.

What to buy
Kozhlya clay toys, Sudzha
ceramics, Samoryadovo
rushniks (ritual embroidered
textiles), bast shoes, Kursk
khokhloma (decorative
painted wood), Korennoy gingerbread, Kursk Antonovka
apples, and the "Kursk Bird"
candy.

Originally, a white marble statue representing the birth of Venus adorned the centre of the rotunda. The statue was the work of the Italian sculptor Fenelli. Today a copy stands in its place.

The oval island in the middle of the pond is the site of a brick Protestant chapel built for Princess Maria. Craftsmen from St. Petersburg also built a "fleet" of boats to take people to the island. The original bridges crossing the park's canals have also been preserved.

Once upon a time, noble ladies escaped the scorching sun under cozy pergolas, which survive to this day.

Prince Baryatinsky, having traveled all over Europe, was full of progressive ideas, which he put to use on his estate. Everything served at the table was grown in the estate's fertile soil.

We all have a favourite dish, and Prince Baryatinsky was no exception: he loved roast rack of lamb. A young ewe was selected for this dish, and the meat was soaked in marinade for several hours. Even today the recipe will not be revealed to you: just know that the marinade includes spices and herbs borrowed from French, English and Italian cuisines.

You can also try dishes from the regional menu in various Kursk restaurants. TLR gokursk.ru

In the land of scientists and writers

IT'S AN OPPORTUNITY NO WRITER OR BOOK LOVER CAN AFFORD TO MISS: THE CHANCE TO VISIT PLACES WHERE SOME OF THE GREATEST FIGURES OF RUSSIAN CULTURE



The Grand Ducal Church in Yelets is crowned by a crystal cross of amazing beauty and elegance.

DAY ONE

08:24 am. The group arriving from Moscow by train will be met in Yelets. Beautiful Yelets, which has preserved its authentic history and culture, is the most ancient town of the Lipetsk Region. Walking along its narrow streets, it seems as if time in Yelets has stood still. It was here that Ivan Bunin spent his youth, while Alexander Bakulin, a writer of fables, was born here, as well as the essayist Dmitry Bulgakov and the spiritual writer Luka Yefremov.

09:00 am. Breakfast in Staryi Gorod Restaurant. **10:00** am. Sightseeing tour of Yelets. We will walk around the historical center of the town and visit the Ivan Bunin Literary and Memorial Museum, where you will be offered tea with homemade pastries. The museum is located in the house where the future Nobel Prize recipient lived for more than three years while he was a student at the Yelets preparatory school for boys. Another sightseeing highlight is the Museum of Folk Crafts, where you will see how lace is woven and take part in a master class. **02:00** am. Lunch in Staryi Gorod restaurant.

03:00 pm. On the way to Lipetsk, we stop in the town of Zadonsk and visit Zadonsk Nativity Virgin Monastery, which includes a cathedral, five churches, a well chapel, a refectory church, a gate chapel, and a bell tower. Stored at the



These appealing and tasty dishes are served in Staryi Gorod restaurant in Lipetsk.

The hands on the old clock at Leo Tolstoy railway station have stood still for a hundred years. They were stopped the moment workers learned of Tolstoy's death in the morning of 20 November 1910.





DAY TWO

10:00 am. Leave for Leo Tolstoy Village. The village is known throughout the world as the place where, in 1910, the great Russian writer Leo Tolstoy spent the last seven days of his life.

12:00 pm. A tour of the Leo Tolstoy Cultural and Educational Center and the literary and memorial museum dedicated to the writer. The room where the great novelist's heart stopped beating is preserved as it was that day.

The room of the Astapovo station inspector, where Leo Tolstoy spent his last seven days.





monastery are the incorrupt relics of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, and sacred waters still spring up in the well chapel. **05:00** pm. An evening walk around Lipetsk. You will discover little-known historical facts about the life of the city and its residents, visiting the best-known sights, including the Chapel of Ss. Peter and Paul, the old mineral spa, the canons in Nizhnyi Park, the Nativity of Christ Cathedral, the Gubin Estate — the former stately home of General Gubin, the estate of Princess Volkonskaya, Verkhnyi Park and the Ancient Church of the Assumption. **06:30** pm. Hotel check-in, dinner.

Beautiful Yelets is the oldest town of the Lipetsk Region. Walking along its narrow streets, it seems as if time in Yelets has stood still.

01:00 pm. A tour of the museum and its exhibits, including clocks and a steam train.

02:00 pm. Lunch in Khutorok restaurant.

03:00 pm. Visit to the Nikolai Sysoev Picture Gallery. Works by the Russian realist painters Nikolay Sysoev and his wife Nina Skorubskaya are displayed at the gallery. The gallery's collection also includes works by other well-known Russian painters of the second half of the 20th century.

03:30 pm. Visit to the Center for Cultural Development, taking part in a master class in belt-weaving or in Rangoli — the art of creating colorful ornaments out of flowers, rice and rice flour.

04:30 pm. A grand tea party will conclude the literary tour! The travelers will be treated to rare teas with a wide variety of sweets — just the way Leo Tolstoy liked to take his tea! The great writer had a weakness for desserts, and was unfailingly served berry jam and other delicious treats with his evening tea.

05:00 pm. Leave for Lipetsk railway station. **07:47** pm. Train departs for Moscow (arrives at 5:35 a.m.). **TLR** liptur.ru



The iconostasis of the Nativity of Christ Cathedral, a religious centre and architectural gem in Lipetsk.

The monument and memorial museum to Ivan Bunin, author, poet and winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature, in Yelets.

m



RIOR MONK WHOSE SINGLE COMBAT WITH TATAR WARRIOR CHELUBEY OPENED THE BATTLE OF KULIKOVO. IT IS ALSO THE HOMELAND OF RUSSIAN POETS FYODOR TYUTCHEV AND ALEXEY TOLSTOY. THE INDOMITABLE PARTISANS OF THE BRYANSK REGION, MEANWHILE, WON A PERMANENT PLACE OF HONOUR IN RUSSIAN MILITARY HISTORY WITH THEIR FEATS IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

ere you can follow the partisans' forest paths and immerse yourself in the history of World War II while visiting such historical landmarks as the Partisans' Field, Khatsun, the Camp of the Vinogradov Partisan Brigade at Krugloye Lake, and Seshinsky Museum of the International Resistance Movement. Visitors to these memorial sites will be able to see a staged partisan skirmish, try a portion of kasha (meaty porridge) cooked over the campfire, receive a shelkovka (a letter hand-written on a piece of cloth) as a gift, and

visit an exhibition of military equipment.

Particular attention is paid in the Bryansk Region to the restoration of Orthodox landmarks. Visiting Svensky Monastery, founded by Roman Mikhailovich, Prince of Bryansk, in 1288, you will learn the story of the miraculous recovery of the prince's sight after he prayed before the Pechersk Icon of the Theotokos, originally brought from Kyiv. Tsar Peter the Great used to sit here in the shadow of a huge oak tree that still stands on the monastery hill.

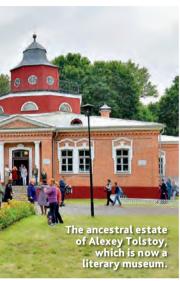
Bryansk Trinity Cathedral symbolizes a return to spiritual



Bryansk Region DIRECTIONS



The first memorial in Russia dedicated to villages destroyed during World War II was erected in the village of Khatsun in 2011. There were more than a thousand such villages in the Bryansk Region alone.





roots, as the cathedral was built with donations from the residents of Bryansk and other Russian regions. It houses the relics of St. Oleg of Bryansk.

The beauty of Bryansk Region features in the verse and prose of many local sons who have left their mark on international culture. The village of Ovstug in Zhukovsky District is home to the ancestral estate of the Tyutchev family, a star in the constellation of Russian stately homes of the 18th and 19th centuries. Today, it houses a museum honouring the great Russian philosopher, poet, and writer Fyodor Tyutchev. Ovstug is one of the most beautiful spots in Bryansk Region, charming its many visitors with the outstanding beauty of its landscapes. In a pavilion on an island in the middle of the lake, you can spend a few unforgettable moments watching the swans swim around you. On the first Saturday in June every year, Ovstug hosts an All-Russian Poetry Festival.

Another ancestral estate — that of the poet, playwright, and novelist Alexey Tolstoy — is located in the village of Krasny Rog in Pocherpsky District. In the renovated main house, built by Tolstoy's ancestor Count Razumovsky, you can see the preserved personal effects of the writer. Alexey Tolstoy and his wife and muse Sofia are buried at the old wooden Assumption Church.

Today in Bryansk Region, great efforts are committed to the preservation of folk art and crafts, and to the promotion of the famous local brands, Dyatkovsky Crystal and Karachayevo Toys. The Dyatkovsky Crystal Museum displays the best examples of crystal glassware dating back three hundred years, and you can also tour the Church of the Burning Bush, featuring the world's only crystal iconostasis and other unique crystal church decorations. There is also a shop where you can buy handmade crystal glassware.

Welcome to Bryansk Region! TLR turizm-bryansk.ru





Getting **There**



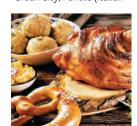
How to get there

From Moscow to Bryansk there is a high-speed train that runs three times a day. Travel time 4 hours. You can also fly to Bryansk from St. Petersburg and from Moscow.

Where to stay
Bryansk offers
a wide selection of
hotels for all tastes
and budgets. The most
popular include Tsentralnaya, Bryansk, Desna,
Gostinny Dom, Vladimir
Plaza, and Megapolis.



The area boasts numerous venues offering unique cuisine. The best cafes and restaurants include Razdolye, Chester, Myaso Yest, Art Hall, Green City, Pontile (Italian



cuisine), and Augustin, a beer restaurant.

What to buy

Local confectionery made by the craftsmen of Bryankonfi (Bryansk Confectionery Factory) and the famous Starodubsky Cheese made by Umalat factory in Sevsk are guaranteed to delight. Copies of the locally venerated icons of the Svensk Mother of God, Ss. Oleg and Polikarp of Bryansk, and Alexander Peresvet make for a particularly special gift.























ART WITHOUT BORDERS

NOVOSIBIRSK REGION IS THE BUSINESS AND CULTURAL CENTRE OF SIBERIA. THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING TO DO, FOR LOCALS AND VISITORS ALIKE, WITH A HUGE NUMBER OF FESTIVALS AND CELEBRATIONS TO OCCUPY AND ENTERTAIN YOU.

TEXT LYUBOV ROMANOVA

ver the years, music and dance festivals, air shows and historical reenactments have transformed this Siberian region into a great place to relax and have fun.

Art Festival

Every spring, the Trans-Siberian Art Festival, a major cultural event, delights both Novosibirsk residents and visitors to the city. This celebration of music showcases new stars, hosts international premieres, and offers many other pleasant surprises, with new works by contemporary composers performed here for the first time every year.

Vadim Repin, a world-renowned classical violinist and a native of Novosibirsk, serves as the festival's artistic director, and the backbone of the festival is always the Novosibirsk Philharmonic Orchestra.

This spring some of the world's most famous musicians came to perform in Novosibirsk: the conductors Tugan Sokhiev, Charles Dutoit (Switzerland), and Yan Pascal Tortelier (France); the pianists Konstantin Lifschitz (Switzerland), Denis Kozhukhin, Sergei Tarasov, and Claudia Yang (Malaysia & China); the violinists Daniel Lozakovich (Sweden), Roman Simovich







Novosibirsk Region EVENTS

(Montenegro); the cellists Antonio Meneses (Brazil) and Alexander Knyazev, and many others. A series of performances by the Harbin Symphony Orchestra, lead by Muhai Tang, was a separate and highly successful event.

Two international premiers took place during the festival at the A. M. Katz State Concert Hall. Conducted by Tugan Sokhiev, the Symphony Orchestra performed "Music of the Sea" by the Novosibirsk composer Boris Lisitsyn, and Vadim Repin played a violin concerto by Alexander Raskatov with the Symphony Orchestra lead by conductor Andres Mustonen.





For the first time in the history of the festival, an opera performance was also included in the programme. Conducted by Dmitry Kryukov (Moscow), the Trans-Siberian Festival Orchestra, with the participation of music academy students, performed Wagner's "Tannhäuser". To celebrate the Year of Theatre, the festival also included performances by the Milanese puppet theatre Carlo Colla & Figli. The audience was particularly interested by "Devil, Soldier, and Violin", a multimedia show based on "A Soldier's Story" and

other works by Igor Stravinsky, which was conducted by Dmitry Sitkovetsky (USA). transsiberianfestival.com

Siberian Fire

The Siberian Fire International Festival of Military History is one of the most ambitious and impressive events of the summer. It takes place every June in the village of Bolshoy Oyosh in Kolyvan District.

This summer it was attended by more than five hundred historical re-enactment enthusiasts from Russia, France, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and the Czech Republic, and over 50 000 spectators came to enjoy the shows. Dozens of historical re-enactment campsites and interactive spaces were set up in the festival grounds. Visitors were given the opportunity to learn about

The Trans-Siberian Art Festival, a major cultural event, delights both Novosibirsk residents and visitors to the city. It showcases new stars and hosts international premieres.



nine periods in world and Russian history presented in the re-enacted battle scenes.

The festival began with a picturesque procession. An exhibition of military and civilian equipment from different periods in history was also set up on the festival grounds, and everyone was welcome to pose for photos. Then, before the eyes of the public, a World War I battle scene was re-enacted, followed by a performance that illustrated the contribution of Siberian soldiers to the liberation of Sevastopol from German forces in 1944. Perhaps the most impressive sight was offered by a staged battle scene, complete with heavy military equipment, explosions and gunfire, commemorating the 30th anniversary of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

Separate venues were open for children and teenagers: "Knightly Tournament for Children", "Landsknecht Recruiting", "Obstacle Course", and "Children's Historical Firing Range". Festival events also included military sports competitions between military-patriotic clubs of the region.

According to tradition, the festival ended with a gala folk concert and colourful fireworks. sibpatriotcentr.ru/siberianfire



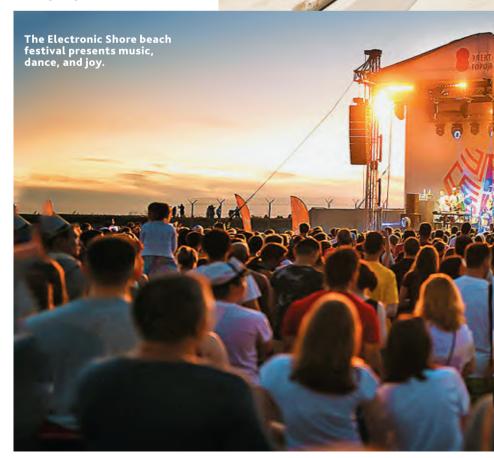


Air Show

The last weekend of July, the aerodrome in Mochishche (12 km away from Novosibirsk) hosts a magnificent air show. More than 450 dedicated professional aviators from various regions of the Russian Federation participate in this event. Among them, there are champions of Russia, Europe and the world, and more than seventy experienced parachutists.

Approximately one hundred aircraft take part in the show. The sounds of engines and the applause of spectators accompany feats performed by Russian Armed Forces airplane and helicopter pilots, as well as solo and group acts by civilian pilots. Watching vintage aircraft fly is especially captivating. The athletes dazzle spectators with breathtaking parachute jumps and canopy relative work. Powered paragliders, motorized delta-planes, and kites are also on display. The Russian Falcons, the Russian Air Force's aerobatics performance team, demonstrate their spectacular command of the Sukhoi fighter jets in solo and group performances.

Throughout the show visitors can admire and even touch military and civil aircraft, World War II era automobiles, other vintage









The Russian Falcons give a breathtaking performance in Sukhoi fighter jets.

The pool of non-Newtonian fluid at Electronic Shore beach festival. Everybody wants to walk on water!

The festival began with a picturesque procession of historical re-enactments.



cars, and bikes from motorcycle clubs. Anyone looking for a snack heads to the "field kitchen", which offers a delicious hot dish of buckwheat groats with meat. Children enjoy fairground rides and other entertainment.

vk.com/club149949773

Electronic Shore

"Electronic Shore", the much anticipated beach festival, is yet another exciting event that takes place in August. It brings together everyone who enjoys dancing, sport, delicious food, great music and good company. During the festival the beach is transformed into a massive musical, sport and entertainment venue. The organizers claim to "transport" you to Hawaii, and everything around really is Hawaiian: tanned girls

in bathing suits, muscular surfers, traditional flower garlands, straw villages, surfer bikes and cars, iced cocktails, totems and fancy costumes. Just say "Aloha!"

The festival's programme includes water polo, windsurfing, a dance-off and fancy dress swimming competition, a float fight, salsa master classes, performances by famous musicians, and entertainment for children. To make sure nobody goes hungry, the food court and market stay open all day.

All the best elements from previous festivals will be brought back this year, like the legendary Dance Battle — more than ten hours of performances by top dancers representing the most popular trends, including aerial silk dancing.

When you come to this unforgettable event, do not miss a chance to take a run through the pool of non-Newtonian fluid — this has been one of the most popular attractions at previous festivals!

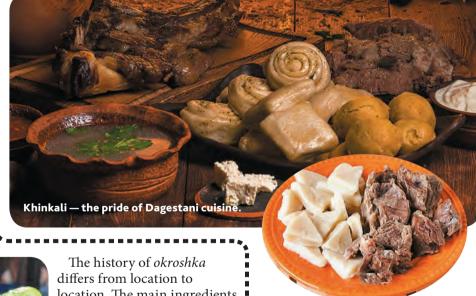
fest.2090000.ru TLR

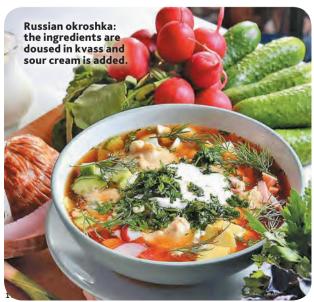
Novosibirsk Regional Tourist and Information Centre: turizm.nso.ru



RUSSIAN OKROSHKA

The first recipes for *okroshka* are over a thousand years old. The main ingredient is kvass, which is mentioned in historical sources dating to 989. Originally, only onion and black radish were used to make *okroshka*. The sliced vegetables were doused in kvass and sour cream was added. *Okroshka* had a resurgence thanks to Volga barge haulers, who carried huge loaded barges. For their work, they were paid in *kvass* and *vobla* (fish jerky). The fish was dry and very salty, so the barge haulers began soaking it in kvass and adding vegetables to it.





differs from location to location. The main ingredients are fish, meat, rutabaga, turnip, eggs and green vegetables. Sauerkraut or pickle brine, whey or kefir can all be used as broth. But most commonly the dish is doused in kvass, because of its refreshing and thirst-quenching qualities. The one essential ingredient is sour cream.

Balkon, 8 Novinsky Boulevard, Moscow.

DAGESTANI KHINKALI

Khinkali is the calling card of Dagestani cuisine. It is not just one dish, but a whole collection of dishes. There are four important components in *khinkali*. The first one is boiled meat (mainly mutton, but beef, cured sausage or chicken may be used as well). The second component is a dough wrap of various

shapes and sizes, as well as broth and sauce, always with garlic. People cook khinkali in all the regions of Dagestan, but there are some variations. For instance, khinkali are prepared by the Kumyk and Lak peoples using unfermented dough, while Avars use a dough made with sour milk. Khinkali look like wontons and may be served either separately or with mutton broth. Na Khinkal, 66v Shamilya Prospekt, Makhachkala

MORDOVIAN SNACK

Mordovia's traditional dishes are noted for their high nutritional value. That's why they are not just tasty, but filling. A popular snack made with beets is called *valdo vakstere viv*: the name is translated as "scarlet power." The recipe is simple. Boiled or fresh beets are cut into small pieces, mixed with traditional goat milk and sprinkled with vegetable oil. To these ingredients it is possible to add either sugar or salt. Mordovskove Podvorve, 21 Saransk Street, Saransk.

BURYAT BUUZ

Buuz is a popular Buryat treat. They are sometimes confused with the more widespread manty dumplings. According to the Buryat recipe, trimmed mutton is minced in a wooden tub. Then the belly fat is finely

Buryat buuz are prepared with ground mutton and shaped by hand. chopped with onion and added

to the ground meat. Salt, pepper, and a pressed clove of garlic are added to taste. To bind the juice from the mince, a tablespoon of sifted wheat flour is sprinkled over the mixture. The dough is made with eggs, rolled out thinly and cut into circles. A small piece of ground meat is placed in the

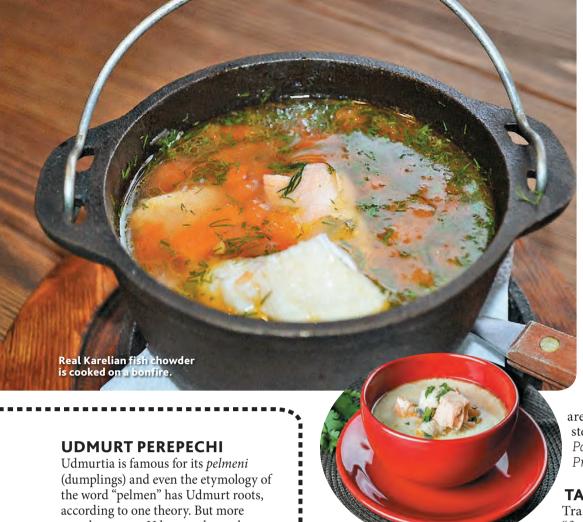
center of the circle, and the edges are carefully folded, while rotating the buuz in the palm of the hand, leaving a small opening on top. The result should look like a beautiful meat "rose". The buuz are steamed for half an hour, depending on their size and the thickness of the dough.

Urgy, 40 Tobolskaya Street, Ulan Ude.

KARELIAN FISH CHOWDER

The most popular Karelian dish is the fish chowder called Kalaruokka. There are numerous versions of the recipe, but the most common one uses whitefish. In addition, locals sometimes make the soup with milk or with fermented fish. The secret of cooking Karelian fish chowder lies in the following: five minutes before readiness, the fish broth is poured through a thick layer of birch coals. Unlike the Russian equivalent (which is tastiest when it is most transparent), Kalaruokka is slightly murky. Not only eggs and fish are added, but also Iceland moss, rye flour, and birch buds. Karelskaya Gornitsa, 13 Friedrich Engels Street, Petrozavodsk





everyone who wants to understand Kalmyk cuisine has to try dotur. Kyur Cafe, 14 Pyurbeev Street, Elista.

SAKHALIN SALAD

Sakhalin cuisine is very unique. It combines elements of Russian, Korean, Japanese and Manchurian cuisine. The Sakhalin salad of burdock stalks is equally unusual. Green shoots of burdock are soaked in cold water overnight, then boiled for 20 minutes in salted water. The stalks are peeled, cut in small pieces and tossed into bubbling vegetable oil. Salt and pepper are added, along with soy sauce. The dish is sprinkled with sesame, sunflower or pumpkin seeds, and pressed garlic and onion are then added, after which the dish is

stewed to readiness.

Pak Degam, 31 B/1 Kommunistichesky Prospekt, Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.

TATAR BESHBARMAK

Translated from the Tatar, besh means "five," and barmak means "finger." It is the dish of "five fingers" — to be eaten

popular among Udmurts themselves are perepechi: open-faced cheese pastries, prepared using unleavened dough with various fillings: cheese, mushrooms, cab-

bage or ham. They are cooked in traditional ovens, hence the name perepechi (from pech, meaning "oven"). In 2005, an event called "Perepechi vs. Pizza" took place in Izhevsk, but the dish gained wide popularity after the performance of the Buranov Babushkas band at the Eurovision Song Contest in 2012. The clip featuring an Udmurt oven had 13 million views on the Internet! Perepechkin Cafe, 34 Udmurtskaya Street, Izhevsk.

KALMYK DOTUR

Dotur is soup made from mutton offal (liver, kidneys, tripe, intestines) with added belly fat, blood, milk and salt. The giblets are stewed separately, then doused with clear broth. This is a very thick, fatty soup, and it is served with sliced raw onion, sprinkled over *dotur* in the bowl. This dish has quite a particular taste, But it is probably the most authentic Kalmyk dish, and

In Udmurtia, perepechi are more popular than pelmeni.

> For dotur the offal is stewed separately, then doused in clear broth.

in your fingers, all five of them. This tradition originates from the times when Turkic nomads ate meat with their hands during meals. This is a hot dish of minced boiled meat (mutton or beef), with onions sliced in circles, and unleavened boiled dough in the form of noodles. All this is liberally peppered and served in a cauldron or cast-iron pot, from where you take as much as you want using your bare hands. Beshbarmak is usually accompanied with a hot, rich meat broth, slightly salted and peppered. Bilyar, 15 Vishnevskogo Street, Kazan.

BASHKIR CHAK-CHAK

Bashkiriya is famous for its honey, which is why Bashkir ethnic dishes are not just about meat. The most popular desert of the Bashkir



people is chak-chak. To make it, you need eggs, flour, sugar, honey, and melted butter, as well as water and salt. Whipped eggs, flour and salt are mixed into a dough, which must then be rolled out into a layer five millimeters thick. The sheet of dough is then sliced into strips no more than a centimeter wide and cut across into small pieces. These strips are then fried in melted butter. A syrup is made out of water, sugar and honey, which is then combined with the fried pieces of dough. The finished dish is usually piled up on a plate in a heap and served with tea after the dessert sets.

Vkuslandia Bakery, 41 Lenin Street, Ufa. **TLR**



Bashkir chak-chak is a honey desert that is popular throughout Russia!



UREAN

nnic dish**es**



Sevastopol

28-29 september/2019

A festival of New Wine

Zolotaya Balka Farming Company

Many types of wine are produced in Crimea, from sparkling and dry table wines to fortified wines such as port, as well as cognac. The best samples are gathered in one place, once a year in September, at the WineFest winemakers' exhibition-presentation. There is a full programme of tasting new wine, master classes, competitions and interactive presentations.

Valets

21-22september/2019

The "Antonovka Apples" Festival

Kommunarov Street, Yelets

At the end of September, Yelets celebrates this festival, which is based on the literary legacy of the great writer Ivan Bunin (author of the short story "Antonovka Apples"). The festival recreates the atmosphere of an old Russian town around the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries: merchants and their wives, ladies and their admirers, grammar-school boys and girls stroll along the town's garden paths. In the city park, the dance programme "Ball of the Gymnasium Students" takes place, while couples seek to escape the crowds in the "Dvoryansky Sad" (Garden of Gentlefolk).

Bone Carving Art

Magadan

Astra Shopping Center, 18A Gorky Street

october/2019

The international festival "Carving Art of the Peoples of the World" takes place twice a year in Magadan, the capital of Kolyma, Land of Gold. Not only Russian craftsmen, but masters from all around the world take part. Carved bone is a calling card of the region, along with its gold and seafood. The festival includes bone-carving art exhibitions, master classes and a conference on art history.



Taste of Yakutia

Yakutsk, city restaurants

This food festival presents the best dishes of Yakut cuisine, as well as those of other peoples of Siberia, the Arctic and the Far East. Popular city restaurants present everyday dishes alongside festival and ritual specialities that reflect the region's ethnic culture and traditions. Every people has its own traditional cuisine. The choice here includes venison, beef, horse meat, stroganina (frozen fish or meat in slices), traditional fish dishes, as well as the most delicious desserts, refreshing drinks and pastries, and much more. The Festival holds a special Day of Horse Meat and a Day of Stroganina.



08-10

november/2019

Jazz at the Philharmonic

Kaliningrad Regional Philharmonic

The "Jazz at the Philharmonic" Music Festival combines jazz and classical music. Alongside famous jazz musicians, wellknown artists and ensembles take part. Classical music may be performed in a jazz manner here, while you'll hear blues played on an organ. These Autumn concerts attract jazz fans from other Russian regions and from neighbouring European countries.

4-08

december/2019

Poetry Biennale

Moscow, museums, libraries, art venues of the city

At this year's 11th International Moscow Poetry Biennale the focus is on the poetic culture of Latin America. Twenty leading poets will visit from Brazil, Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia, Argentina and Mexico. Participants will discuss the understanding of Latin American poetry in Russia — and Russian poetry in Latin America.



Barnaul

november-december/2019

Altai Wintering

Barnaul, Belokurikha, Sovetsky (Lake Svetloye), Zmeinogork, Zarinsk

This festival opens the winter tourist season in the Altai Region. More than 70 events are held during the festival: winter sports competitions, races with huskies, as well as public festivities and fireworks. The most memorable event will be an excursion to the Lebediny (Swan) nature preserve, a frozen lake where over 700 whooping swans come to winter. You can see the snow-white swans moving gracefully along its snowbanks and ice floes.



PHOTOS: ALTSTURU / ENOFYLZWINEBLOG.COM / MYNEWSDESK.COM REZBADEREVO.RU / PROJECT16125.TILDA.WS / ZEN.YANDEX.RU

Hound Hunting Holiday

The village of Maslovka, Dankovsky district, Lipetsk region

This ancient pastime of the nobility has been revived thanks to the efforts of local enthusiasts. Hunters assemble with their borzois and falcons at this picturesque location on the River Don in the Dankovsky Region. Guests can watch an "exhibition match" between hounds and foxes. You can also try horseback riding, speak with travellers by a big bonfire, experience local treats and buy distinctive handmade knickknacks made by artisans and craftsmen.



december-january/2020 al of Russia New Year Can Ryazan, city streets and squares This year, the New Year Capital of Russia will be Ryazan. a city located 180 kilometers from Moscow. The festival opens on December 7, and continues with the Father Frost parade (the local equivalent of Father Christmas). Later a New Year village opens, as well as a food festival of pryaniki (gingerbread) and mulled wine. The All-Russian Festival

of Fire and Light take places from December 28 to January 6. The Ryazan New Year Olympic Games will be held from January 1 to 5, with a food festival on January 3.

The Battle of Knights Lipetsk region, Yelets district,

Yeletsky village, Rusborg field.

The Rusborg historic re-enactment festival is organized by talented enthusiasts. Every year it gathers about 1,000 re-enactors from both Russia and abroad, as well as tens of thousands of tourists on "Tourist Day." It is one of the best festivals in the former Soviet Union dedicated to the Viking era, from the 9th to 11th centuries. The festival's main attraction is a reconstruction of a historical medieval battle. For the entertainment of visitors, there are also musical performances and craft workshops.



february/2020

Vladivostok Ice Run Vladivostok, Novik Bay, Novik athletic club

The Vladivostok Ice Run half marathon launches the annual mass sporting events on the ice of the frozen sea off the coast of Russian island. Every year, about 1,000 people take part in the marathon. The race track runs along the ice of Novik Bay. Participants in the half marathon are experienced athletes as well as beginners. For children, there is a half-kilometer track, with another for amateurs (5 and 10 kilometers), and for the toughest one of 21.1 kilometers.

World Folkloriada

Ufa, Toratau Congress Hall, concert venues of the city

Modelled on the Olympic Games, the World Folkloriada folklore festival is held every four years, and has its own flag, hymn and symbol, with the slogan "Hand in Hand". The main part of Folkoriada includes performances by artists from around the world. who represent their nations' traditional music and dancing, exhibit their folk crafts and folk dresses, and hold food fairs. The 4th World Folkloriada will take place in the Republic of Bashkotorstan. The 2020 festival may well become the largest in its history more than 3,000 participants of amateur dance groups and performers from 81 countries are expected. Festival quests can not only watch performances, but learn to play folk instruments, try unusual ethnic dishes, and study different folk arts. Concerts are held daily at different venues around the city.







The 75th Anniversary of Victory

Moscow, Red Square and other city squares

In 2020, Russia marks the 75th anniversary of the victory of the Soviet people in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 (the Eastern Front of World War II). May 9 is a public holiday, Victory Day. Military parades are held in the capital and in all major Russian cities. Later in the day, as part of the "Immortal Regiment" parade, people take to the streets with portraits of their relatives who fought in the war.

22-24

may/2020

Pacific Tourism Forum

Vladivostok, Russky Island, Far Eastern Federal University

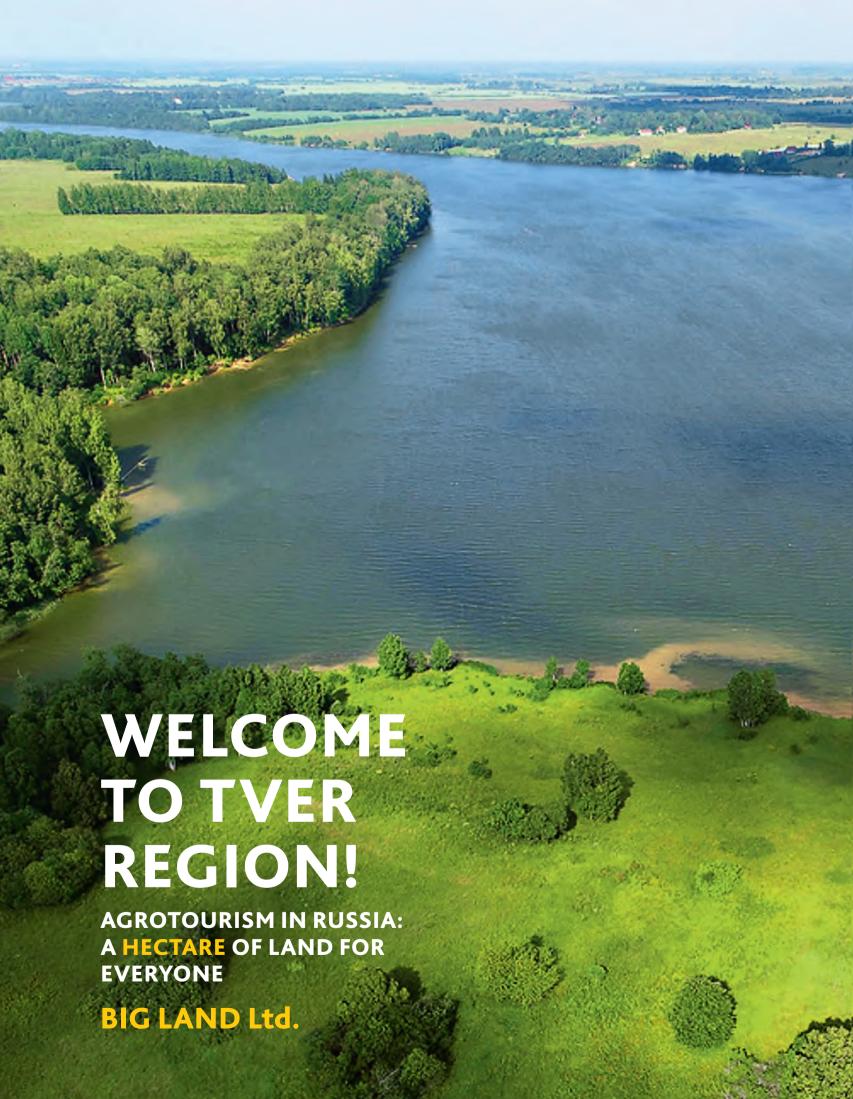
The Pacific Tourism Forum is an annual event held in late May on the campus of the Far Eastern Federal University on Russky Island. Traditionally, the forum's programme consists of three sections: the business event, the Pacific Tourism Exposition, PITEand the "Day of the Traveller" Festival. This significant event gathers dozens of major Russian and foreign tourism companies and tour operators, and covers tourism industry development not just in Primorye but all around Asia and the Pacific Rim. In 2019, more than 10,000 people attended the forum's events, while 4,500 people visited the yachting and recreation event Vladivostok Boat Show.



St. Petersburg, Zenith Arena stadium

The 65,000-seat main football stadium of St. Petersburg will host four matches of the 2020 UEFA European Football Championships (Euro 2020). The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) has approved holding three group stage matches (June 13, 17 and 22) and one quarterfinal match (July 3) at the St. Petersburg Stadium. The website euro2020.com/tickets began ticket sales on June 12, 2019. The cheapest group stage matches will cost €50, the most expensive €185.







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