



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Moscow on a Shoestring Budget

Moscow, 3 Days

Table of contents:

Guide Description	2
Itinerary Overview	3
Daily Itineraries	5
Moscow Snapshot	12

Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: "World's most expensive city" is no idle threat -- Moscow seems to take a joy in making most things outrageously, pointlessly expensive, if only to retain its title. But if you can't afford the city's high life, there's still hope for you. This cheapskate plan shows you how to enjoy Moscow without breaking your wallet.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Moscow

DAY NOTE: Extreme budget travelers, on your marks! A cheap day of sightseeing first requires a pit stop for fuel. Elki Polki, a folksy canteen chain for those with "democratic tastes," has all the carb-heavy Russian foods you need: pelmeni (dumplings), fried potatoes, black bread, beer. From there, move on to the Mother of all tourist destinations, Red Square. Make sure to have your passport on hand as the policemen love to shake down hapless foreigners for bribes. But even those are cheap -- 100 rubles! Lenin's Mausoleum on Red Square is sometimes a long wait, but a must-do for the budget tourist since it's free. Walk along the Moskva River towards Christ the Saviour Cathedral. Notice a monster on the horizon? Yep, that's the Monument to Peter the Great, a controversial piece of art if there was one. Just a little past Peter, you'll find Gorky Park, the famous sprawling "culture park" with cheap delights for all ages. Here you'll find young Russians walking hand in hand, children enjoying carnival games and families on outdoor picnics. Your best bet for an inexpensive dinner is shashlik (shish kebab) at one of the many stands around the park.



Elki-Palki
Russian fare



Red Square (Krasnaia Ploshchad')
The heart of the city



Lenin's Mausoleum (Mavzolei V.I. Lenina)
Resting place of Soviet leader



Cathedral of Christ the Saviour (Khram Khrista Spasitela)
Symbolic reconstruction



Monument to Peter the Great (Monument Petry Velikomu)
Controversial monument



Gorky Park
Listening to the winds of change

able to sneak in a few shots with the Soviet statues before someone yells at you. Ride the blue line up to Partizanskaya and follow the crowds to Izmailovo Park, a massive souvenir market. Bargain hunters, proceed to the very back for authentic Soviet memorabilia excavated from pensioners' closets. Among these "worthless" trinkets, you can sometimes find gems. Food at Izmailovo is also as cheap as you'll find in Moscow -- I recommend the plate of plov (pilav) and a glass of kvas (bread water). The day passes quickly when you're shopping, but be sure to hop on the metro and zip across town to Vorob'iovy Hills before sundown for the best vista of Moscow and look at the Moscow State campus. To meet university students, a legendarily cheap crowd, head to Kitaisky Lyotchik in Kitai Gorod, which has food, drink and live music at bottom-of-the-barrell prices.



Metro (The)
Architectural curiosity



Izmailovo Park (Izmailovskii Park)
One of Moscow's oldest parks



Observation Site on the Vorob'iovy Hills
Vantage point to survey Moscow



Moscow State University, main building (Moskovskii Gosudarstvennyi Universitet)
Highest of the Stalin's Seven Sisters



Kitaiskii Liotchik Dzhao Da
Live music every day

Day 3 - Moscow

DAY NOTE: It's your last thrifty day in Moscow, so we gotta make the most of it. The VVTs (All Russian Exhibition Center) is an interesting relic of the Soviet Union which has fallen into disrepair. Its pavillions formerly displayed the country's agricultural achievements -- now it is home to countless cheap clothing vendors and gaudy amusement rides. Renting rollerblades is the best way to quickly see the whole VVTs before lunch. Keep walking north through the VVTs until you reach the Botanical Gardens, a peaceful park with a view of Ostankino Tower. Next, hop back on the Metro and take it down to the south of the city -- Kolomenskoe station. This massive park can be difficult to navigate; once you arrive, it's best to pick a path and just meander. When you've had your fill of churches and scenery, travel back downtown for a big night of dinner and dancing at Project OGI, a favored club of the young and cheap.

Day 2 - Moscow

DAY NOTE: Moscow's pride is the Metro. Not only is it cheap (less than a dollar per ride), efficient and speedy, with trains arriving every 30 seconds in rush hour, many of its stations are works of art -- Ploshchad Revolyutsii by Red Square, for example. Taking photos in the metro is technically illegal, but you'll be

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife



All-Russian Exhibition Centre (Vse-rosiiskii Vystavochnyi Tsentr - VVTs)

Ex-Soviet business park



Ostankino Television Tower (Ostankinskaia Televizionnaia Bashnia)

Second tallest of its kind



Botanical Gardens (Botanicheskii Sad)

Flowers, grasses, plants and grains



Kolomenskoe

Country residence of Muscovy Tsars



Project OGI (Proekt OGI)

Arty hang-out

Day 1 - Moscow

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Extreme budget travelers, on your marks! A cheap day of sightseeing first requires a pit stop for fuel. Elki Polki, a folksy canteen chain for those with "democratic tastes," has all the carb-heavy Russian foods you need: pelmeni (dumplings), fried potatoes, black bread, beer. From there, move on to the Mother of all tourist destinations, Red Square. Make sure to have your passport on hand as the policemen love to shake down hapless foreigners for bribes. But even those are cheap -- 100 rubles! Lenin's Mausoleum on Red Square is sometimes a long wait, but a must-do for the budget tourist since it's free. Walk along the Moskva River towards Christ the Saviour Cathedral. Notice a monster on the horizon? Yep, that's the Monument to Peter the Great, a controversial piece of art if there was one. Just a little past Peter, you'll find Gorky Park, the famous sprawling "culture park" with cheap delights for all ages. Here you'll find young Russians walking hand in hand, children enjoying carnival games and families on outdoor picnics. Your best bet for an inexpensive dinner is shashlik (shish kebab) at one of the many stands around the park.

contact:

tel: 7 495 628 5525

fax: +7 495 995 9569

<http://www.elki-palki.ru/>

location:

Neglinnaya, 8/10

Moscow 107031

hours:

M-Su 10a-midnight

1 Elki-Palki

DESCRIPTION: Elki-Palki is a chain of Russian-style restaurants. It is one of the few places which offers predominantly Russian food and drinks on its menu, although Coca-Cola and beer are also available. The interior can differ from outlet to outlet, but it will always include a lot of woodwork and linen tablecloths. The waiters all wear national Russian costumes. Out of all the traditional Russian menu items available, the borscht (beet soup), kvas (a non-alcoholic drink made from fermented yeast) and vodka can be considered obligatory. The famous telega (a buffet of salads and starters) will set you back. You will have a wide choice of fish dishes, salads and freshly baked pies with various fillings to choose from as well. It should perhaps be noted that sharing food is not approved of. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/545>

location:

Red Square

Moscow 125009

hours:

24 hrs

2 Red Square (Krasnaia Ploshchad')

DESCRIPTION: This is possibly the most famous central square in the world. It is a humbling sight both day and night; beautiful in winter— regally dramatic all the year round. Originally an expanse of nothing more than mud, and populated by a ragged collection of hawkers, beggars and outcasts, Red Square acquired its present grandness gradually. Nowadays, the square and its surrounds positively exude the drama of Russian past and present. The walls of the Kremlin loom on one side, their blood-red height belittling the pale GUM department store opposite. At the southern end of the square towers, is the onion-domed exuberance of St Basil's Cathedral. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: +7 495 232 5657 (Tourist Information)
http://www.aha.ru/~mausoleu/index_e.htm

location:

Red Square (Krasnaia Ploshchad')
Moscow 103073

hours:

Tu-Th, Sa 10a-1p

3 Lenin's Mausoleum (Mavzolei V.I. Lenina)

DESCRIPTION: Architect Alexei Shchusev (who built this imposing mausoleum on Red Square in 1930) modeled it on the ziggurat terraced temples of the ancient Assyrians and Babylonians. Inside, visitors file round the embalmed body of the leader of the Russian Revolution, Vladimir I. Lenin. The material used for the exterior is mostly dark-red granite and grey and black labradorite. The colors are in perfect harmony with the red bricks of the Kremlin Wall that looms in the background. It measures 12 meters in height and 24 meters in length. Admission is free. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: 7 495 203 3823

location:

Volkhonka Ulitsa, 15
Moscow Moscow 119019

hours:

8a-8p

4 Cathedral of Christ the Saviour (Khram Khrista Spasitela)

DESCRIPTION: Mayor Luzhkov was once considered a pretender to the Russian Presidency. He certainly does not lack the sense of civic grandeur with which previous Russian rulers have been blessed. This vast cathedral, whose golden domes sit atop a pale majestic hulk of marble and granite, was built at Luzhkov's bidding for the princely sum of USD150 million. The original was erected in commemoration of Russia's defeat over Napoleon. And the current reconstruction was built for Moscow's 850th anniversary, and is a fitting symbol both of a reborn Russia and the dizzy pretensions to grandeur of modern Moscow. Admission is free. © wcities.com



wcities

location:

Krymskaya Naberezhnaya
Moscow 109072

hours:

24 hrs

5 Monument to Peter the Great (Monument Petry Velikomu)

DESCRIPTION: The idea for this monument was conceived by Mayor Luzhkov and created with the help of city-sponsored artist Tsereteli. The monument has courted extensive controversy. For a start, Peter the Great's enthusiasm for his northern capital St. Petersburg was motivated at least in part by his hatred for Moscow. Putting aside historical politics though, others complain that the monument is just plain ugly. The monument itself is 165 feet high, featuring a strident Peter the Great standing atop a frigate in full sail and brandishing a golden scroll. It stands on the western tip of the elongated island formed between the Moskva river and the Vodootvodnyi canal. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: 7 495 237 1100
fax: 7 495 237 0707
<http://www.moscow.info/parks/gorky-park.aspx>

location:

Krymskii Val, 9
Moscow 117049

6 Gorky Park

DESCRIPTION: Gorky Park (traditionally referred to as Park Kul'tury i Otdykha or Park of Culture and Recreation) stretches along 3 kilometers of the Moskva river to the southwest of the city center. The park became known to the Western public thanks to a blockbuster movie based on Martin Cruz Smith's best-selling book, 'Gorky Park,' and the Scorpions' famous song. Laid down in 1928, the original ornamental gardens are now accompanied by an entertainment zone, hosting everything from science lectures to rock concerts in its auditorium. © wcities.com

Day 1 - continued...

hours:

M-Su 11a-8p

Day 2 - Moscow

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Moscow's pride is the Metro. Not only is it cheap (less than a dollar per ride), efficient and speedy, with trains arriving every 30 seconds in rush hour, many of its stations are works of art -- Ploshchad Revolyutsii by Red Square, for example. Taking photos in the metro is technically illegal, but you'll be able to sneak in a few shots with the Soviet statues before someone yells at you. Ride the blue line up to Partizanskaya and follow the crowds to Izmailovo Park, a massive souvenir market. Bargain hunters, proceed to the very back for authentic Soviet memorabilia excavated from pensioners' closets. Among these "worthless" trinkets, you can sometimes find gems. Food at Izmailovo is also as cheap as you'll find in Moscow -- I recommend the plate of plov (pilav) and a glass of kvas (bread water). The day passes quickly when you're shopping, but be sure to hop on the metro and zip across town to Vorob'iovy Hills before sundown for the best vista of Moscow and look at the Moscow State campus. To meet university students, a legendarily cheap crowd, head to Kitaisky Lyotchik in Kitai Gorod, which has food, drink and live music at bottom-of-the-barrell prices.

contact:

tel: 7 495 622 1568
fax: 7 495 971 3744
<http://www.metro.ru/>

location:

Garden Ring and
Mayakovskaya
Moscow Moscow 103012

hours:

M-Su 5:30a-1a

1 Metro (The)

DESCRIPTION: Most cities' public transit systems are necessary eyesores. Moscow's is a masterpiece. Central planning meant that Stalin was free to pour funds and artistic energy into creating the metro. Today it's the world's busiest subway system. However, it's showing some strain, as even trains that run every 90 seconds aren't enough to diffuse crowding. The system is still cleaner than most other big-city subways. Its oldest stations, dating from the 1930s and 1940s, are its grandest, particularly those on the Circle Line. The newer stations at the edges of town are corridors of bland but well-polished white tile. Even if you don't use the metro to get around, take a peek at one of the following stations: **Ploshchad Revolyutsii**, with its bronze sculptures of Soviet swimmers, mothers, and sailors holding up the marble columns; **Kievskaya** (Circle Line stop), with its cheerful mosaics portraying Ukrainian-Russian friendship; **Novokuznetskaya**, with its cast-iron streetlights; and **Novoslobodskaya**, with its Art Nouveau stained glass. For an even closer view of the metro, with models and an avalanche of statistics, visit the tiny **Metro Museum** atop the Sportivnaya station (tel. **495/622-7309**; free admission; open to individuals Thurs 9am-4pm; open for groups only Mon-Wed and Fri 9am-4pm). The friendly director is a former metro driver who has a lifetime of stories to share (though in Russian only). Most stations are quite deep, and all have head-spinningly long escalators; some of the stations were even built as bomb shelters during World War II. © Frommer's

contact:

tel: 7 495 166 7909/ 7 495
166 8690
<http://www.moskva.ru/guide/parks/izmaile.html>

location:

Narodnyi prospekt, 17
Moscow 111187

hours:

M-Su 24 hrs

2 Izmailovo Park (Izmailovskii Park)

DESCRIPTION: Izmailovo Park is one of the city's oldest parks and covers an area of 332 hectares. It was founded under the reign of Peter the Great and since then has accumulated numerous ponds and attractions. It also hosts the Izmailovo market, one of the best places to pick up souvenirs. Kruglyi pond has a boat station where you can rent a catamaran or a boat for 30-50RUR. During weekends and holidays performers from the Moscow State Circus supply some light-hearted entertainment. Entry is free. © wcities.com



wcities

location:

near Ulitsa Kosygina, 30
Moscow 119285

hours:

M-Su

3 Observation Site on the Vorob'iovy Hills

DESCRIPTION: This small balustraded promenade sits on an inverted horseshoe line at which the northeastern wing of Teplostanskaia Vozvyshennost' (the Teplyi Stan Plateau) starts plummeting to the right bank of the River Moscow. This promenade offers a panoramic view of Moscow. From here you can see the Novodevichii Convent, the golden domes of the Kremlin, the Andreevskii Monastery, both Moscow's telecom towers, Shabolovka and Ostankino, and clear skies permitting, up to four of the Seven Sisters skyscrapers that dominate central Moscow's skyline. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

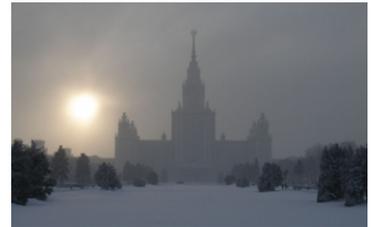
tel: 7 495 939 1000
fax: 7 495 939 0126
<http://www.msu.ru/>

location:

Leninskie Gory
Moscow 119992

4 Moscow State University, main building (Moskovskii Gosudarstvennyi Universitet)

DESCRIPTION: At 240 meters, carrying a golden star-tipped spire on the top and displaying giant Communist-style statues on terraces and portals, this is the highest and easily the most impressive of the Seven Sisters. The main tower houses university offices. The smaller towers and the wings are blocks of hostels (6,000 rooms) and splendid professional flats (184). The two lowest storeys of the main tower are marble and bronze. A doorway from the University's Museum of Earth Sciences on the 24th floor leads to an open-air observation terrace with a panoramic view to the northeast. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: 7 495 623 2896
<http://www.jao-da.ru/>

location:

Lubianskii Proezd, 25
Moscow 101000

hours:

24 hrs

5 Kitaiskii Liotchik Dzha Da

DESCRIPTION: Live music, comparatively cheap food and drinks, and a mixed crowd of Russians and ex-pats are the strengths of this bar and nightclub, which focuses on all kinds of Russian music. It's just a few steps from the metro station and not far from numerous other venues. Of the two small rooms, only one has a stage, and it can get very stuffy during concerts, especially if people are dancing. © wcities.com

Day 3 - Moscow

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: It's your last thrifty day in Moscow, so we gotta make the most of it. The VVTs (All Russian Exhibition Center) is an interesting relic of the Soviet Union which has fallen into disrepair. Its pavillions formerly displayed the country's agricultural achievements -- now it is home to countless cheap clothing vendors and gaudy amusement rides. Renting rollerblades is the best way to quickly see the whole VVTs before lunch. Keep walking north through the VVTs until you reach the Botanical Gardens, a peaceful park with a view of Ostankino Tower. Next, hop back on the Metro and take it down to the south of the city -- Kolomenskoe station. This massive park can be difficult to navigate; once you arrive, it's best to pick a path and just meander. When you've had your fill of churches and scenery, travel back downtown for a big night of dinner and dancing at Project OGI, a favored club of the young and cheap.

contact:
tel: 7 495 760 3386
fax: 7 495 760 3009
<http://www.vdnhexpo.ru/>

location:
Мира просп
Moskva 129223

hours:
M-Su 10a-6p

1 All-Russian Exhibition Centre (Vse-rosiiskii Vystavochnyi Tsentr - VVTs)

DESCRIPTION: Largely referred to by its soviet-era acronym of V-D-N-Kh, this sprawling exhibition site was once host to a complex of exhibitions showing off the economic and technological fruits of the Soviet world. Nowadays the 68 pavilions are full of pretty ramshackle stores with all sorts of household goods. The centre boasts some 40,000 square meters of outdoor space and nearly 130,000 square meters of indoor exhibition space. It hosts some 350 exhibitions each year and 40 to 50 of them are international. The annual visitor influx is close to 10 million. Admission is free. © wcities.com

contact:
tel: 7 495 602 2234
fax: 7 495 789 6163
<http://www.tvtower.ru/>

location:
Ulitsa Akademika Koroleva,
15
Moscow 127427

2 Ostankino Television Tower (Ostankinskaia Televizionnaia Bashnia)

DESCRIPTION: The Ostankino TV tower has been looming over northern Moscow since 1967. At 540 meters, it is the world's second tallest free-standing structure after Toronto's CN tower. It consists of a hollow cone of reinforced concrete kept in position by strained wide-diameter steel ropes anchored in a giant foundation slab. It supports the transmitting antennae of nearly 40 radio and television channels. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:
tel: 7 495 977 9145
fax: 7 495 977 9172
<http://www.moscow.info/parks/botanical-gardens.aspx>

location:
Botanicheskaia ulitsa, 4
Moscow Moscow 127276

hours:
Sa W 10a-8p (in winter till 4p)

3 Botanical Gardens (Botanicheskii Sad)

DESCRIPTION: This 360-hectare garden was founded in 1945 for scientific and educational purposes, and its collection includes a whole host of wild flowers, grasses and plants, plus a proud 200-year old oak tree. You can also visit the beautifully landscaped Japanese rock garden. The Dendrium has more than 4000 species of trees and bushes from all over the world. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: 7 495 115 2768
fax: 7 495 112 1155
<http://www.museum.ru/kolomen/>

location:

Prospekt Andropova, 39
Moscow 154387

hours:

Tu-Su 10a-6p

4 Kolomenskoe

DESCRIPTION: This 390-hectare estate served as a country residence for the Russian Tsars from Ivan III to Peter I. The most famous building on the estate is the early 16th-century Church of the Ascension. At 62 meters, this brick and limestone structure with a tent-shaped roof is one of the tallest church buildings in Moscow. The main constituent museums are the Front Gate, Sytnyi Dvor (the Muscovite royal household, art tiles and tiled ovens) and the House of Peter I (a log cabin). © wcities.com

contact:

tel: 7 495 627 5366/ 7 495 710 6174
<http://www.proektogi.ru/>

location:

Potapovskii Pereulok, 8/12,
building 2
Moscow 101000

hours:

Daily 24 hrs

5 Project OGI (Proekt OGI)

DESCRIPTION: You could visit here just to read the concert listings or flyers on the wall. More fun is to come on a night featuring Finnish percussionists or other music you might not find at home. Open daily 24 hours. © Frommer's



Project OGI (Proekt OGI)

Moscow Snapshot

Local Info

While the Soviet Union is now just a memory, there is still a lot in Moscow to remind tourists what it was like--and why everyone is thankful that it has been consigned to the history books. The Kremlin, which served as the seat of communist government, is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. An imposing walled-in complex of palaces, cathedrals and government offices, it's a familiar landmark steeped in Moscow's rich and bloody history. Inside the fortified city, you can find architecture in huge proportions--which tells you something about this former government's large ego. The Uspensky Sobor is a massive cathedral where tsars were once crowned, while the Armoury Museum is home to many of the treasures in Russia's immense store, including Faberge Eggs and the 180-carat diamond once presented to Catherine the Great.

Sights

Your visit to Moscow should rightfully begin at Red Square. Bounded on all sides by the Kremlin, the brightly colored onion-shaped domes of St. Basil's Cathedral, Lenin's Mausoleum and the State Historical Museum, Red Square can easily eat up an entire day because there are so many historic sites to see. Culture in megadoses may also be consumed in the art, sculpture and paintings found in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts and in the Tretyakov Gallery. Another attraction that should not be missed, if you can get a ticket, is the Bolshoi Circus, the oldest circus show in the city. You can get most places via the huge and complex Moscow Metro, which is more than just an efficient transport system--the ornately decorated and lavishly painted stations once served as bomb shelters as well.

Dining

Fine dining in Moscow is an amazing and amazingly expensive experience--if the doormen of the elitist establishments will allow you entry. Top gourmet spots

include Cafe Pushkin at Pushkin Square, Noev Kovcheg, famous for its spicy *basturma*, and Aist. For a taste of Russian food without such a hefty bill, check out Matrioshka or Moo Moo. At One Red Square you can eat the same food that was served to the tsars.

Shopping

The GUM shopping complex in Red Square is one shopping site not to be missed--but you might want to take a look at the nosebleed-level price tags before you buy. Okhoktny Ryad is home to high-street fashion, while Tverskaya Ulitsa is a hip shopping street lined with expensive boutiques. Also check out the Ulitsa Arbat, a 1-kilometer-long pedestrian street in the center of Moscow, for interesting souvenirs and street music played with typical Russian passion.

© NileGuide

History

In 1147, Prince Dolgoruki invited a group of nobles from Novgorod to a grand feast at his lodge overlooking the Moskva river. That location became the Kremlin--the power center of the emerging Russian state. The surrounding area gradually evolved into a vast metropolis and one of the world's great capital cities.

The Mongols arrived during the first half of the 13th Century, decimating the already crumbling remnants of the declining Kievan civilization. The Mongols took a relatively hands-off approach to the governance of their vast conquered territory, extracting tribute from approved princes rather than administering the areas directly. During this time, the principality of Muscovy assumed importance thanks to its advantageous position on a confluence of trade routes and the location of the Orthodox church in Moscow.

By 1480, Tatar(Mongol) domination weakened enough to allow Ivan III(the Great) the pleasure of tearing up the regime's symbol of authority in the

Assumption Cathedral. He then proceeded to subdue both the pesky Lithuanians and the proud civilization of Novgorod to the north. To celebrate his achievements, he invited Italian architects to revitalize the Kremlin, which had become the center of a now-flourishing city.

Ivan the Terrible's reign was characterized by the consolidation(in famously brutal fashion) of Moscow and the territory it governed. Ivan was obsessed with the possibility of treason and allowed no mercy to those who fell under his suspicious gaze. He died in 1584, and the years up until 1613 were marked by a series of ascension crises known as the Time of Troubles. This ended with the dawn of the Romanov Dynasty, which lasted until the revolution of 1917.

Peter the Great's reign saw the emergence of Russia onto the European political stage, but also the eclipse of Moscow by Peter's pet project: the new northern capital of St Petersburg. Peter despised the conservative views pervading many Russian philosophies, partly because of childhood traumas. He traveled to Europe on his Great Embassy, learning about western European technologies, philosophies and economies. When he returned, he was determined to bring Russia into mainstream Europe. By 1712, the Imperial court had been transferred to what became the capital of the Russian empire until the necessities of war returned that title to Moscow in 1917. Until then, Moscow was consigned to a secondary role in Russian history as Russia played out its European aspirations from St Petersburg.

In June 1812, Moscow was largely destroyed by fire and looting in the wake of Napoleon's invasion. The French were eventually chased all the way back to Paris, but Moscow was in dire need of complete reconstruction. Much of modern central Moscow dates from this period.

During the 19th century, whispers of discontent about Tsarist autocracy,(fanned by the influence of Western ideas), became louder, but the Imperial regime, despite acts like the abolition of serfdom in 1861,

Moscow Snapshot continued

was far from lenient. The end of the 19th century saw a growth both in underground revolutionary movements and dissent within the aristocracy itself. With the coming of World War I and the devastation it brought with it, the rule of the Romanovs was soon to be history, and Russia's last tsar, Nicholas II, abdicated. Soon afterward in October 1917, the Bolshevik Revolution ushered in more than 70 years of Communism.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks consolidated their power by ceding huge territory to the Germans as part of a peace deal and by exterminating remaining opposition to their regime during a three-year civil war. In March 1918, the capital was transferred from St Petersburg back to Moscow. Though this was done because St Petersburg was still under threat from the Germans, it was at the same time a suitable accompaniment to the change that was underway as Russia moved from Imperial to Soviet power.

A brief period of economic liberalization followed the restrictive "War Communism" of the civil war period. After Stalin took the helm following Lenin's death in 1924, he began isolating potential opponents and started the process of mass industrialization as well as mass terror.

During the 1930s, millions of people died in the countryside where enforced collectivization brought production to its knees. As the Great Terror gathered speed, countless numbers of people were arrested, tortured, killed or exiled to labor camps. The offices of Stalin's secret police at the Liubianka have never quite shed their symbolism as the center of Stalinist repression. Party members were assassinated as Stalin's paranoia grew ever stronger. Trials held just for show in the House of Unions resulted in dubious confessions of alleged wrongdoing by former Party faithful who were often subjected to having sulfuric acid poured on them and then condemned to death.

The terror was also accompanied by a period of mass construction. The first line of Moscow's impressive metro system was constructed and opened in 1935.

The Second World War or the Great Patriotic War, as it is known in Russia broke out on June 22, 1941 when German forces broke a previous Nazi-Soviet pact and mounted a full-scale invasion. The initial stages of the war were disastrous for the Soviet side and it took awhile for Stalin's forces, somewhat crippled by his military purges, to begin the difficult process of repelling the Fascists. Both Moscow and St Petersburg came under close threat of capture. As German forces approached Moscow in October, 450,000 people were put to work digging trenches. The Germans were finally defeated, but up to 30 million Soviet citizens died in the effort. On June 24th, Red Square witnessed a deeply symbolic moment as high-ranking soldiers rode their horses onto Red Square and trampled swastika banners in front of Lenin's Mausoleum.

Post-war Moscow was subject to a flurry of construction activity, including the start of work on Stalin's skyscrapers, (also known as the Seven Sisters), a series of buildings intended to make the city look sufficiently grand, fit for a capital of world Communism.

Stalin died in 1953 and was followed by Krushchev, whose Secret Speech to the 20th Party Congress acknowledged Stalin's crimes. Thus began The Thaw, a period of relative political and cultural relaxation after Stalin's rule by terror.

The distinctly passive Brezhnev took the country listlessly through a period of stagnation, which was followed by self-proclaimed fix-it man Gorbachev. His policies of glasnost (open public discourse) and perestroika (economic reconstruction) aimed to rejuvenate the ailing socialist state, but it was beyond help and by the late 1980s the authority of the Communist Party was under threat. The charismatic leader Boris Yeltsin rose from campaigning Moscow Party boss to become the spearhead of movements against the authority of Gorbachev. He ripped up his Party membership card on TV.

A failed coup could not slow the momentum of the fall of Soviet Communism. On Christmas day of 1991 Gorbachev resigned

and the Russian tricolor was raised above the Kremlin.

Through violent conflict between the President and the parliament in 1993 and some shaky elections along the way, Yeltsin led Russia into the brave new world of Capitalism. Since the fall of Communism, Moscow has attracted more than the lion's share of foreign capital and new development, to the extent that it is often spoken of by outsiders as a different country. Its architecture has been improved by a few projects pushed by populist mayor Luzhkov, most notably the Church of Christ the Savior, a remake of an original building swept away by the Communists.

©

Hotel Insights

Since the fall of Communism in the beginning of the 1990s, the new Russia has seen Moscow transformed to an extent unimaginable in any other Russian city, even St Petersburg. One manifestation of this is the abundance and variety of new (or newly refurbished) top-class hotels. Nearly all major hotel groups offer something in Moscow. However, the gap between the top luxury hotels- (there are 19 listed here compared to only three in St Petersburg)- and the budget accommodations is often wide.

City Center

In some rooms at the Hotel Baltschug Kempinski you'll be treated to stunning views over Red Square. Although built in 1898, it was thoroughly re-modernized by new German management during the 1990s.

The Metropol Inter-Continental is a high-class affair and possibly one of the finest hotels Moscow has to offer: art-nouveau elegance combined with modern amenities to luxurious effect, but expect to pay accordingly. A similarly-styled effort is the city-owned Le Royal Meridien National, again a luxurious hotel dating back to pre-revolutionary times.

The Marriott Moscow Royal Aurora is one of a trio of Marriot establishments in the

Moscow Snapshot continued

city, the others being the Marriott Moscow Grand and the Marriott Tverskaia. They are all well-appointed, though the Royal is the most lavish of all. It is near the Bol'shoi Theatre and is a favorite with VIP visitors.

Yet another renovated, refurbished hotel of the pre-Communist times is the Savoy Hotel Moscow, which was a languishing sub-standard Soviet hotel until extensive (and impressive) renovation at the end of the 1980s.

The Budapest is in a slightly higher price category, but is reasonably deserving of the steeper prices it demands, while the East-West Hotel is more expensive but also attractive.

North

Located some way up Tverskaia Ulitsa (Tverskaia Street), the Marriott Grand is a brand new hotel with high-tech facilities, such as in-room internet. Further up the same stretch of road lies the Sheraton Palace, a modern hotel known for the quality of its restaurants, as well as the final Marriott hotel (the Moscow Marriott Tverskaya Hotel, which is a little quieter than its counterparts though no less well-equipped).

The Moscow Marriott Tverskaya Hotel sits across from the Olympic Sports Complex. Both were erected especially for the 1980 Moscow Olympics, but have since been renovated.

One particularly curious hotel is the Marco Polo Presnja Hotel, just over two kilometers (a little over a mile) northwest of the city center on grounds owned by the Patriarch (the most senior figurehead of the Orthodox Church). This is a relatively inexpensive luxury option.

The Novotel Sheremetyevo 2 Moscow Airport is practically at the terminal of the Sheremetyevo Airport. A free shuttle bus slightly mitigates the distance to the hotel.

The Kosmos boasts an impressive number of 3500 beds. It is quite a distance from town but is located across from a metro station. The area has a generous ensemble

of restaurants as well as a reputation for prostitution.

The Sovietskaia combines Soviet styling with updated amenities and a famous pre-revolutionary restaurant, the Novyi Yar, adjacent to it.

The Traveller's Guest House is the premier option for backpackers stopping through Moscow, while Nasledie (Heritage Hostel) targets a similar market but lies a bit further away from the city center.

South

A corporate atmosphere reigns at Gazprom Hotel, in a building owned by the conglomerate of the same name. The Hotel Orlenok and Sevastopol' are two other moderate options in the south of the city.

West

The Golden Ring Hotel offers reasonably priced rooms not far from the end of the famous Ulitsa Arbat to the west of the Kremlin.

The Radisson SAS Slavjanskaya is a multi-purpose complex including some corporate offices, a shopping mall, a cinema and a 410-room hotel.

Relatively inexpensive rooms and excellent service distinguish the Katerina-City Hotel, a Scandinavian-run hotel some way to the south-east of the city center.

The Arbat hotel is located next to one of the "Seven Sisters" buildings, which dominate Moscow's skyline. This particular one towers up at the end of Ulitsa Arbat. Rooms are in the upper-medium price range. A much cheaper option in a similar area is afforded by the Belgrad, but rooms are significantly less appealing.

The Ukraina is actually located inside one of the huge Gothic monsters that forms part of the "Seven Sisters" and is accordingly Soviet in ambiance. Modern touches include a business center. The Mir is another Soviet effort located next to the White House.

©

Restaurants Insights

Moscow's contemporary dining and wine scene is utterly unlike anything that existed here during the age of the Iron Curtain. The transformation of the city from Communist citadel to Capitalist frontier is reflected in the entirely new range of restaurants that have sprung up since the beginning of the 1990s—Irish bars, snazzy American diners, expensive Japanese restaurants, Australian pubs...the list goes on. From the thriving fast-food scene to the numerous prestigious restaurants serving the new elites, eating and drinking in Moscow will not be boring. Moscow also harbors a surprisingly rich stock of ethnic cuisine from around the former Soviet Union, the most widespread being that of Georgia (a former Soviet republic to the south) but also including Central Asian and other Caucasian varieties. If you've got enough money, Moscow's selection of top class restaurants is unbeatable.

Red Square and the Kremlin

Other opportunities for high-quality Russian cuisine and exquisite presentation are offered at top-notch restaurants such as Serebrianyi Vek (the name means "Silver Century"), which was once a Soviet bathhouse. For fresh Japanese cuisine, you won't find much better than Laluna, which offers a menu of sushi rolls and a wide variety of sakes to sample. If you're looking to save some cash, there's always chain restaurants such as Sbarro. The doorway of Godunov is a large vaulted arch. Expect to find the best in obscure, ancient Russian dishes on the menu here. Red Square 1 is a fine 19th-century style restaurant as centrally located as its name suggests.

City Center

Bunker is a popular local spot for after-work drinks and dinners. There is also a live music schedule and a dance floor for those feeling more adventurous. U Babushki is a modern restaurant that serves fresh seafood dishes and French cuisine with an extensive wine list. Gratzki is a family-friendly restaurant that serves Italian food and offers live jazz music. Papa John's is a popular option for those

Moscow Snapshot continued

with children. If you'd like something more rustic try Khlestakov Traktir, which offers plenty of hearty Russian fare on its menu, while the slightly more expensive Argo specializes in Georgian cuisine. The wait staff at Elki-Palki are decked out in old-fashioned Russian costumes. Don't miss your chance to try their homemade pies. The Ukrainian restaurant Shinok has a collection of live game animals grazing out front and entertainment provided by a clown on the weekends.

Kitai-Gorod

This district displays Moscow's most impressive architecture, and the dining options here are somewhat limited, but still delicious. KruiZ(Cruise) is a pub and steakhouse that has a pirate theme, with servers dressed accordingly. People also come here at night to grab a beer and shoot some pool. Named for a Chinese pilot, Kitaiskii Letchik Dzhao Da(Chinese Pilot Dzhao Da) is conveniently open 24 hours and is reasonably priced. Vogue Cafe is an appropriately named cafe where people go to be seen. There is also live music and an eclectic menu with everything from Russian to Italian dishes.

The North

Tsarskaia Okhota was a hunting-themed favorite of Boris Yeltsin, with a rustic interior and a live music lineup on Sunday. The German eatery Bierstube is as well known for its beer selection as it is for its menu of classics like Sausages with Sauerkraut. Always expect great service when you stop by. The American Bar & Grill is popular with Americans living abroad because of its Western menu and English-speaking staff. There is a patio open in the summer for those looking to dine outdoors.

South Of The City Center

Darbar has an extensive menu of Indian food and an à la carte menu. Khlestakov Traktir was built to model the setting of the Gogol's play "The Government Inspector," with a VIP lounge that accommodates large groups. For something different, try Bul'dog(The Bulldog), a Latin restaurant with Peruvian-style decor. If you're looking

for impressive traditional Russian creations, Danilovskii is a fantastic option.

The East

The Schwein, which is German for "pig," is a bar and restaurant that features live music and delectable German and Russian cuisine. Inside, you will find plenty of fun, pig-related decorations. For authentic Ukrainian cuisine, try Vechera na Khutore(Evenings on a Farm). The name comes from a Gogol folk story, and the building is modeled after a windmill.

The West

Kafe Ogonek is a popular local cafe where you can find a tasty, inexpensive Russian meal. Be sure to try the signature cocktail made of garlic, vodka, pepper and cloves. Le Gastronom offers unbeatable international cuisine(principally seafood, including shark) for a sizable wad of rubles. It is considered to be one of the best restaurants in Moscow. If you're looking to spend a bit less, Patio Pizza has 30 different kinds of pizza and a sizable wine list. Oblomov is a classically-decorated restaurant with pool tables and various board games available. Mama Zoia's is a no-nonsense restaurant where you can get the best in Georgian food and enjoy live, local music. For Mexican fare, Pancho Villa is a must; it's known for its generous portions of traditional dishes.

©

Nightlife Insights

Moscow is one of the world's major capital cities, with entertainment and nightlife to match the title. The traditional offerings of classical music and drama have been joined in recent years by a vibrant and often extravagant array of nightclubs. The following is a mere introduction to Moscow entertainment.

Classical Music: Opera, Ballet, Orchestral

Russia's great heritage of classical music is reflected in the quality of its orchestras and orchestral venues. The Bol'shoi Theatre is a world-renowned institution and the jewel of Moscow's cultural nightlife. The performances, as well as the auditorium,

are immaculate. In terms of grandeur, the Bol'shoi surpasses anything else in Russia. It is a popular venue, especially among visiting tourists, and tickets may be difficult to find at short notice.

Other major venues include the Kremlin Palace of Congresses(State Kremlin Palace), a modern building within the walls of the Kremlin that hosts performances of the great Russian ballets. Both the Stanislavskii and Nemirovich-Danchenko Musical Theater and the Helikon Theater in Arabt run a variety of Russian and foreign classics, with the latter taking a more innovative approach.

For the city's best orchestral music, visit the Tchaikovskii Concert Hall and the Tchaikovskii Conservatory.

Theater

Modern Moscow may be a commercial epicenter, but theater and the arts still find a special role in the city life. The breadth and range of drama theaters rival those of most major capitals.

The Moscow Art Theater has always been among the city's most prominent theaters, of which there are now two branches. The original, Chekhov Moscow Art Theater(MKhAT- Moskovskii Khudozhestvennyi Teatr imeni A. Chekhova), is reputed to be the best.

The Theater on Taganka was a politically controversial theater during Soviet times. It is famous for its veiled satires.

For classic Russian drama, head to the Maly Theatre, founded in 1824. It continues to produce material predominantly from the 19th Century. The same is true for the Sovremennik Theater. Contemporary works are favored by a few theaters, most notably the Maiakovskii Theater and the Lenkom Theater. The Lenkom is the birthplace of the Russian rock-opera.

The Iugo-Zapad Theater performs a mixture of works, from foreign classics to Soviet staples.

You'll find alternative theater productions offered up at the Obraztsov Puppet Theater(Teatr Kukol imeni Obraztsova) and

Moscow Snapshot continued

the Moscow Clown Theater(Moskovskii Teatr Klounady).

Cinema

The smell of popcorn and Hollywood blockbusters can be found at the Amerikanskii Dom Kino(American House of Cinema), Moscow's most glitzy film house. The Pod Kupolom(Under the Dome) and the Kodak Kinomir(Cinema World) both feature American films.

For Russian movies, visit the Illuzion or the Kinosentr(Cinema Center).

Clubs

Moscow is home to some of the world's most fiercely fashionable clubs. The Garage and Titanik are popular nightclubs, especially with the young and rich. Golodnaia Utka(Hungry Duck's) is a wild and intense spot for dancing, while laid-back Bohemian types might prefer to stop in at Proekt OGI.

16 tonnes and Svalka are good places to hear live music, as well as Le Club and Arbat Blues Club, which both specialize in live jazz and blues.

©

Things to Do Insights

Many of Moscow's quintessential sights are located in the heart of the city around the Red Square and the Kremlin. While there are things to do and places to see throughout the Russian capital, most travelers will begin their exploring here.

The Kremlin

An ancient seat of Russian power, an awe-inspiring symbol, and an internationally-renowned landmark, the Kremlin is the spiritual heart of the Russian government: a giant, walled complex combining sacred monuments of both church and state. Russian rulers have sat here since medieval times, excluding the temporary interruption when St Petersburg was made capital. There is a story that when one film crew was at work shooting a period film in the Kremlin grounds, Yeltsin himself came out of his office to instruct them to keep the

noise down. The grounds themselves are thick with history, home to a scattering of churches and cathedrals that would suffice elsewhere for a whole city.

Entry can be gained via the Kutafia Tower(Kutaf'ia Bashnia), which lies at the end of a ramp jutting from the Kremlin's west wall. Security is understandably high at this point. Walk up the ramp and you'll get to the Trinity Gate(Troitskaia Bashnia), built in 1495 and placed right on top of a 16th-century prison.?? the right, beyond the Trinity Tower is the Poteshnyi Palace(Poteshnyi Dvorets) in which Stalin had private apartments and where his wife shot herself. Next, on the right is the Kremlin Palace of Congresses(State Kremlin Palace), a former venue for Communist Party parties and now a huge 6000-seat concert hall which is, and always was, completely out of tune with its surroundings.

On the left side lies territory strictly out of bounds to tourists. From west to east the buildings are the Arsenal, the Senate and the building of the Supreme Soviet(Verkhovnyi Sovet). The first of these is fronted by an array of Napoleonic cannons while the second is very notable for being the official residence of the Russian president himself.

On the right you'll see the Patriarch's Palace(Patriarshii Dvorets), a 17th-century building constructed for the head of the Orthodox church.

You can walk through the arches of the Palace, at which point you will find yourself entering the Kremlin's core. From here you can either swing to the left for a quick peek of the Tsar Cannon(Tsar-pushka), an impressive but non-functioning 40-ton piece of heavy armory, or you could proceed onto the main square itself and investigate what's going on there. Surrounding the square, there are various churches and cathedrals.

The Rest Of Red Square

The Cathedral of the Assumption(Uspenski Sobor) lies just beyond the Patriarch's Palace at the north end of the square

and is justifiably considered one of its key monuments. A golden-topped, five-domed structure built in the 15th Century, it was returned to Orthodox Church ownership in 1989.

Next to this(on the right) lurks the snappily-named Church of the Deposition of the Robe, a late 15th-century effort built in wholly Russian style. Inside, you'll find, among other things, a permanent display of wood-carvings. To the south lies the Hall of Facets, where Tsars would entertain guests in the Throne Room. This is closed to the public.

On the other side of the square is the Ivan the Great Bell-Tower(Kolokolnia Ivana Velikogo). It stands higher than any other of the Kremlin's buildings, while behind it, noticeably at ground-level, sits the rather forlorn Tsar Bell(Tsar-kolokol), which never made it to the bell-tower after it lost a chunk during the forging process.

The south side of the square is bordered by two cathedrals, the first of these being the Archangel Cathedral, initially erected in the 14th Century as a place of burial for the tsars but then extensively re-shaped at the beginning of the 16th Century. The second is the Annunciation Cathedral(Blagoveshchenskii Sobor), which used to be a private church for the Tsars.

From here you can head west, past the Great Kremlin Palace(Bol'shoi Kremlevskii Dvorets), which is normally closed to everyone except visiting statesmen. Keep going toward the Armory, an impressively rich ensemble of state treasures dating well back into the dim and distant history of the Muscovite regimes. From here you can exit via the nearby Borovitskii Gate.

Kitai-Gorod

Go east from the Red Square and you'll find yourself in the business neighborhood of Kitai-Gorod, an area almost entirely encircled by reconstructed medieval walls and filled with interesting traditional architecture including wonderful mansions and churches. After taking a look at the well-preserved 17th-century Tserkov Troitsy v Nikitinkakh(Church of the Trinity

Moscow Snapshot continued

in Nikitinov), you could do some shopping or grab a bite to eat at Chambers in Zariadie (Muzei Palaty v Zariade), the former home of Romanov boyars, which has been converted into a commercial center. Be sure to visit Lubyanka Square, which is where you'll also find the KGB headquarters. It's also worth checking out the Slavyanskaya Square and Theatre Square, on which sits the Bolshoi Theatre. Even if it is on the late side, you can always grab some good food 24 hours a day at the Kitaiskii Letchik Dzhao Da (Chinese Pilot Dzhao Da).

Guided Tours

Capital Tours (+7 495 232 2442/<http://www.capitaltours.ru/>)

Ost-West (+7 812 327 34 16/<http://www.ostwest.com>)

Isango (+1 866 663 7017/<http://www.isango.com/>)

Three Whales (+7 495 4208441/<http://www.threewhales.ru/t3.htm>)

Moscow Tour Guide (+7 495 565 61 63/<http://www.moscowguidedtours.com>)

Monkey Business Shrine (<http://www.monkeyshrine.com/places/moscow/guided-tours.php>)

Moscow with Elena (<http://www.yourmoscowguide.com>)

©

Travel Tips

Getting There

Air

Sheremetyevo International Airport (SVO)
+7 495 232 65 65
<http://www.svo.aero/>

Sheremetyevo International Airport offers flights to and from Moscow. The airport is located ten kilometers (six miles) from the MKAD, the beltway around Moscow. There are bus, taxi, and other transportation services in and out of the Moscow International Airport. Major airlines to Moscow include:

Aeroflot Russian Airlines (+7 495 223 5555/
<http://www.aeroflot.ru/eng/>)

Air France (+1 800 237 2747/<http://www.airfrance.us/>)

British Airways (+1 800 247 9297/<http://www.britishairways.com/>)

Delta (+1 800 241 4141/<http://www.delta.com/>)

Finnair (+1 800 950 5000/<http://www.finnair.com/>)

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (+1 800 225 2525/
<http://www.klm.com/>)

Lufthansa (+1 800 399 5838/<http://www.lufthansa.com/>)

From the Airport

There is a train that connects the airport to Moscow's Belorussky Station. The trip takes 35 minutes and costs RUB250. You will find the airport station 250 meters (820 feet) in front of Terminal 2. More information can be found here: <http://www.aeroexpress.ru/en/>

Train

Moscow has eight major train stations that provide service for long-distance, intercity travel, including:

Belorussky Station- 7 Tverskaya Zastava
Ploshchad, +7 95 251 6093

Kazansky Station- 2 Komsomolskaya
Ploshchad, +7 95 264 6556

Savyolovsky Station- Ploshchad
Savyolovskogo Vokzala, +7 95 285 9005

Yaroslavlsky Station- 5 Komsomolskaya
Ploshchad, +7 95 921 5914

Some trains come equipped with RZD sleeper cars, allowing passengers to rest during their trip.

Bus

Moscow Tramway (<http://tram.ruz.net/>) is the bus/tram/subway system with routes that span throughout Moscow. Travelers from outside of Moscow will most likely arrive at the Central Bus Terminal where intercity and long-range buses arrive and depart. It is located near Shcholkovskaya Metro station, and owned by Mostransavto (<http://www.mostransavto.ru/>).

Car

From the northern Russian cities, take route M8 south. From the southern cities, take route M2 north. From the west, follow route M1 east and from the east, take M7 west. Moscow has two major beltways: the MKAD (the outer beltway), and the Third Transportation Ring (inner beltway).

Getting Around

Moscow Tramway (<http://tram.ruz.net/>) is Moscow's favorite transportation service. However, the Moscow Metro (<http://www.metro.ru/>) is much more intriguing. The metro stations are famous for their art, murals and chandeliers. Europe's longest escalators are part of Park Pobedy station, located 84 meters (275 feet) underground.

Since metro stations are located further apart the further you travel away from the city center (four kilometers/ 2.5 miles), an extensive bus network guarantees short walking distances. Buses pick up passengers at all stations to bring them closer to their destinations.

©

Fun Facts

Moscow

Country: Russia

Moscow by the Numbers:

Population: 10.4 million

Elevation: 190 m/ 623 ft

Average Annual Rainfall: 60 cm/ 23.6 in

Average Annual Snowfall: 46 cm/ 18 in

Average January Temperature: -9°C/ 16°F

Average July Temperature: 17°C/ 63°F

Length of Moscow River: 65 km/ 40 mi

Quick Facts:

Major Industries: machine building, metalworking, oil refining, publishing, brewing

Electricity: 220 V, 50 Hz, two pin thin European plugs

Time Zone: GMT+3

Country Dialing Code: +7

Moscow Snapshot continued

Area Code: 95(7 and the area code must be dialed even for local calls)

Did You Know?

Moscow has more billionaires living in the area than any other city in the world. With a

total of 74 billionaires, Moscow beats New York City's statistic by three.

Seven of Moscow's buildings, two hotels, two administrative buildings, two blocks of

flats, and the Moscow State University, look exactly the same.

©