

Sights ■

Itineraries	53
Organised Tours	54
City Centre	54
Kremlin	54
Red Square	62
Manezhnaya Ploshchad	65
Teatralnaya Ploshchad	66
Lubyanskaya Ploshchad	66
Kitay Gorod	76
Chistye Prudy	78
Petrovsky District	79
Tverskoy District	81
Barrikadnaya	84
Arbat District	87
Kropotkinskaya	89
Khamovniki	93
Zamoskvorechie	96
Zayauzie	100
Outer Moscow	102
North of the Centre	103
East of the Centre	104
South of the Centre	104
West of the Centre	106

Sights

Moscow is massive, and not only in terms of area. Wide pavements packed with people, busy thoroughfares crowded with cars, neck-wrenching skyscrapers towering above on either side of the street: its big-city appearance and attitude can be more than a little overwhelming. Not to mention the thousands of museums, parks, restaurants and clubs that welcome visitors. Where to start?

For the purposes of this book, we've broken the capital into 12 manageable areas, each defined by geography and also by activities and atmosphere. We start at the heart of it all, where Moscow was born. The Kremlin's ancient walls contain churches and treasures that could keep a visitor occupied for days. Just outside the Kremlin walls, in the area defined as the City Centre, visitors can see Moscow's most famous sights – from St Basil's to the Bolshoi Theatre and Lubyanka Prison.

From the centre, we move out into the surrounding neighbourhoods, again starting with the most ancient. Just east of Red Square, Kitay Gorod was the first settlement outside the Kremlin Walls in the 13th and 14th centuries – an era that is still remembered for its architecture.

Successive neighbourhoods form a circle around the Kremlin, following the Boulevard Ring and the Garden Ring roads (see the boxed text, p76). To the northeast is Chistye Prudy, named after the ponds that sparkle with sunlight on the main boulevard, but dwarfed by chaotic Komsomolskaya ploshchad.

Directly north of the Kremlin is the Petrovsky District, Moscow's swankiest shopping area, named after its main street and historic St Peter's monastery. West of Petrovsky District is the Tverskoy District, named for Tverskaya ulitsa, Moscow's most prominent commercial

district. West of Tverskoy – out past the Garden Ring – is Barrikadnaya, so called for the barricades and street fighting that took place here during the 1905 revolution.

West of the Kremlin is the Arbat District, home to (and namesake of) the famous street that came alive with artists in the 1960s. To the southwest is Kropotkinskaya, surrounding the gargantuan Cathedral of Christ the Saviour; and Khamovniki, site of Novodevichy Convent. Directly south of the Kremlin, Zamoskvorechie is another historic part of Moscow with church-lined streets. Zayauzie sits to the southeast, isolated by rivers and dominated by Taganka ploshchad.

Moscow is greater than these 12 areas, sprawling all the way out to the Outer Ring Road (MKAD; see the boxed text, p76). Sights worth visiting on the city outskirts include the once-county estates that were built by prerevolutionary aristocrats. The only elevation that deserves the name in the whole flat expanse is the Sparrow Hills (Vorobyovy Gory), 6km southwest of the Kremlin, which is topped by the Moscow University skyscraper.

ITINERARIES

One Day

If you have but one day in Moscow, spend it seeing what makes this city famous: St Basil's Cathedral (p63), Lenin's Tomb (p63) and the Kremlin (p54). Allow a few hours in the afternoon to gawk at the gold and gems in the Armoury (p61). For dinner, indulge in a historic feast at Café Pushkin (p129).

Three Days

Spend a day running around Red Square, as described above.

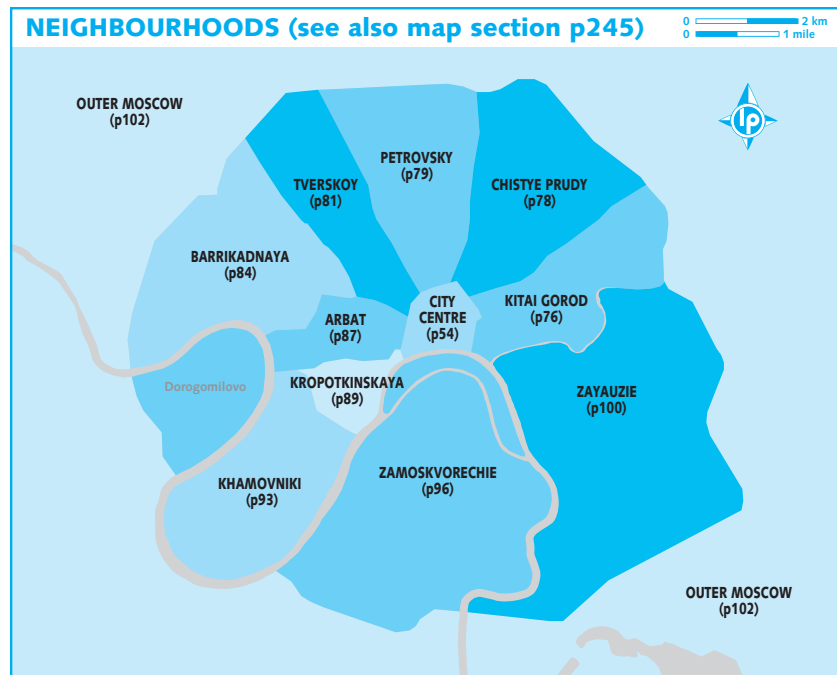
Art lovers should spend the second day at either the Pushkin Fine Arts Museum (p91) or the Tretyakov Gallery (p100), two world-class art museums. After lunch, follow a walking tour in the surrounding neighbourhood; the Architecture Amble (see p108) admires the grand houses in the Arbat District and Kropotkinskaya, near the Pushkin; the Church Walk (see p113) is an opportunity to see the highlights of Zamoskvorechie, near the Tretyakov.

Plan a night out on the town. Get tickets to *Swan Lake* at the Stanislavsky-Nemirovsky Musical Theatre (p147), or to perhaps something more daring at the New Ballet (p146). If you prefer to participate rather than spectate, head to Karma Bar (p141) to tear up the dance floor.

On the third day, hit the ATM and head to the Izmaylovo (Vernisazh) Market (p162) near Izmaylovsky Park for some serious souvenir shopping. Recuperate in the park on the grounds of the Izmaylovo Royal Estate (p104). In the evening, go out for some Caucasian food. Try Karetny Dvor (p133) or Tiflis (p136) for Georgian wine and shashlyk.

One Week

Take in all of the activities suggested in the three-day itinerary. Then, plan an overnight excursion to Vladimir and Suzdal (see p187 and p190), the highlights of the Golden Ring. Use your remaining days to visit Novodevichy Convent (p95), the All-Russia Exhibition Centre (p103) or Arkhangelskoe (p205).



FOR CHILDREN

Got kids with you in Moscow? They might not appreciate an age-old icon or a Soviet hero, but Moscow has plenty to offer the little ones.

Alexandrovsky Garden (p61) & Patriarch's Ponds (p84) Both have small playground areas and plenty of room for the kids to run around.

All-Russia Exhibition Centre (p103) Amusement park rides and video games in a socialist-realist setting.

Central Museum of the Armed Forces (p103) Let the kids climb around on army tanks, as opposed to monkey bars.

Gorky Park (p99) Thrilling rides in summer and ice skating in winter make it the ultimate Russian experience.

Matryoshka Museum (p84) Dolls and more dolls.

Moscow Zoo (p85) Big cats for little kids.

Sculpture Park (p100) See all the Soviet heroes and climb around on them, too.

ORGANISED TOURS

CAPITAL TOURS

Map pp248-9
% 232 2442; www.capitaltours.ru; Gostinny Dvor,
ul Ilyinka 4; m Kitay Gorod

This spin-off of Dom Patriarshy Tours offers a twice-daily Kremlin/Armoury tour (adult/child US\$37/20; h 10.30am & 3pm Fri-Wed) and Moscow city tour (adult/child US\$20/10; h 11am & 2.30pm). Tours depart from Gostinny Dvor.

DOM PATRIARSHY TOURS

Map pp248-9
% /fax 795 0927; http://russiatravel-pdtours.net/firms.com; Vspolny per 6, Moscow school No 1239; m Barrikadnaya

Provides unique English-language tours on just about any specialised subject; some provide access to otherwise closed museums. Day tours range from US\$16 to US\$40 per person. Look for the monthly schedule at upmarket hotels and restaurants, or online.

CITY CENTRE

Eating p123; Shopping p155; Sleeping p165

The Kremlin – synonymous with politics and power – is the geographic centre and political heart of the capital. In 1147 Yury Dolgoruky summoned his allies to this very spot, thus marking Moscow's beginnings. Ever since, the Kremlin has served as the symbol of the state. From here Ivan the Terrible unleashed his terror, Napoleon watched Moscow burn, Lenin fashioned the dictatorship of the proletariat, Gorbachev orchestrated *perestroika* and Yeltsin concocted the New Russia.

In the early days, all the residents lived within the low wall that surrounded the fortress. These days, nobody lives in the

City Centre. Official buildings, historic museums, grand theatres, luxury hotels and shopping centres line the streets. The wide boulevards and ceremonial squares are best suited for parades, rallies, concerts and other pomp and circumstance.

This is the domain of officialdom, which visitors will perceive immediately. The police presence is very visible, directing cars and pedestrians in an orderly fashion. Official events often cause the closure of Red Square, if not the surrounding streets. Even under normal circumstances, when Lenin's Tomb is open to the public, pedestrians are strictly controlled by surly men in uniform. They usher visitors in one side and out the other and prohibit casual strollers. The atmosphere is befitting Russia's authoritarian image. The powerful Kremlin walls, the stately buildings and the proliferation of police emphasise the idea that this regime takes itself seriously (as have all regimes that have ruled from their roost in the Kremlin).

Nonetheless, the City Centre is the area where visitors to Moscow spend most of their time, and rightly so. The historical significance and architectural magnificence of this 1-sq-km space is truly awe-inspiring.

Orientation

The Kremlin is a north-pointing triangle with 750m sides, occupying a spot of land on little Borovitsky Hill. Red Square lies outside its eastern wall, while Alexandrovsky Garden flanks the western wall. The Moscow (Moskva) River flows to the south, so the best views of the Kremlin are from Sofiyskaya naberezhnaya, across the river. North of the Kremlin, above the apex, is Manezhnaya ploshchad, named after the royal stables that once occupied this spot.

The City Centre lies in the arc around the Kremlin bound by Mokhovaya ulitsa, Okhotny ryad, Teatralny proezd and Lubyansky proezd. The arc is punctuated by three squares – Manezhnaya ploshchad, Teatralnaya ploshchad and Lubyanskaya ploshchad. Parts of Kitay Gorod are also contained within this arc. But for the purposes of this book, Kitay Gorod is treated as a separate neighbourhood.

KREMLIN

The apex of Russian political power, the Kremlin (% 202 3776; www.kremlin.museum.ru; adult/student & child R300/150, pho-

TOP FIVE CITY CENTRE SIGHTS

- **Armoury (p61)** Museum of royal treasures.
- **Assumption Cathedral (p57)** Golden domes glistening in the sun.
- **Lenin's Tomb (p63)** Pay your respects to the Communist leader.
- **State History Museum (p64)** Exhibits from the Stone Age to the present.
- **St Basil's Cathedral (p63)** Famous onion domes and spires

tography permit R50; h 9.30am-4pm Fri-Wed; m Alexandrovsky Sad, Borovitskaya or Biblioteka imeni Lenina) is not only the kernel of Moscow, but also the whole country. A kremlin – or fortified stronghold – has existed on this site since Moscow's earliest years. When Moscow became the capital of medieval Rus in the 1320s, the Kremlin served as the headquarters of the Russian Orthodox Church and the seat of the prince. The 'White Stone Kremlin' – which had limestone walls – was built shortly thereafter.

However, most of the present-day buildings, walls and towers date from the 15th and 16th centuries. After his marriage to the Byzantine princess Sofia Paleologue, the ambition of Ivan III (the Great) was to build a capital that would equal the fallen Constantinople in grandeur, political power, achievements and architecture. In an effort to build the 'Third Rome', Ivan brought stonemasons and architects from Italy, who built new walls, three great cathedrals, and other structures, most of which are still standing.

Although Peter I (the Great) shifted the capital to St Petersburg, the tsars still showed up here for coronations and other celebrations. Over the years, the biggest threat to the Kremlin was Napoleon, who blew up parts of it before making his retreat in 1812. Fortunately, the timely arrival of Russian troops prevented total destruction. The citadel wouldn't be breached again until the Bolsheviks stormed the place in November 1917.

The Kremlin remained closed to the public until 1955. It was Stalin who, in 1935, had the imperial double-headed eagles removed from the wall's five tallest towers, replacing them with the distinctive red-glass stars still there today.

Before entering the Kremlin, deposit all bags at the left luggage office (per bag R60; h 9am-6.30pm), under the Kutafya Tower, near the main ticket office. The main ticket office is in the Alexandrovsky Garden, just off Manezhnaya ploshchad. The ticket covers entry to all buildings except the Armoury and Diamond Fund Exhibition; it also does not include the special exhibits that are sometimes held inside the Ivan the Great Bell Tower.

In any case, you can and should buy tickets for the Armoury here, to avoid queuing up once inside. Arrive early before tickets sell out. There's also an entrance at the southern Borovitskaya Gate, mainly used by those heading straight to the Armoury or the Diamond Fund Exhibition.

Inside the Kremlin, the police will keep you from straying into the out-of-bounds areas. Visitors wearing shorts will be refused entry.

Visiting the Kremlin buildings and the Armoury is at least a half-day affair. If you intend to visit the Diamond Fund or other special exhibits, plan on spending most of the day here.

ENTRANCE TOWERS

Map p258
The Kutafya Tower (Kutafya bashnya), which forms the main visitors' entrance today, stands apart from the Kremlin's west wall, at the end of a ramp over the Alexandrovsky Garden. The ramp was once a bridge over the Neglinnaya River and used to be part of the Kremlin's defences; this river has been diverted underground, beneath the Alexandrovsky Garden, since the early 19th century. The Kutafya Tower is the last of a number of outer bridge towers that once stood on this side of the Kremlin.

From the Kutafya Tower, walk up the ramp and pass through the Kremlin walls beneath the 1495 Trinity Gate Tower (Troitskaya bashnya), the tallest of the Kremlin's towers. Right below your feet were the cells for prisoners in the 16th century. On your way to Sobornaya ploshchad you pass the buildings described following, that are closed to visitors.

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

Map p258
The lane to the right (south), immediately inside the Trinity Gate Tower, passes the 17th-century Poteszny Palace (Poteszny dvorets), which Stalin decided to move into. The yellow Poteszny Palace was built

TRANSPORT

With the exception of Red Square, each of the squares in the arc of the City Centre has its own metro stop (or stops, as the case may be): Lubyanka at Lubyanskaya ploshchad; Teatralnaya at Teatralnaya ploshchad; and Okhotny Ryad at Manezhnaya ploshchad. To access Red Square, use Okhotny Ryad or Ploshchad Revolutsii. The entrance to the Kremlin is on the west side of the complex, so it is closest to metro stations Alexandrovsky Sad and Biblioteka imeni Lenina.

All of these stations are within walking distance of each other (although the trek around the outside of the Kremlin is longer than it appears)

by Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich and housed the first Russian theatre. Here Tsar Alexey enjoyed various comedic performances. In keeping with conservative Russian Orthodox tradition, however, after the shows he would go to the *banya* (Russian bath-house), then attend a church service to repent his sins.

The bombastic marble, glass and concrete State Kremlin Palace (Gosudarstvenny Kremlyovskiy dvorets), built between 1960 and 1961 for Communist Party congresses, is also a concert and ballet auditorium that holds 6000 people. North of the State Kremlin Palace is the 18th-century Arsenal, commissioned by Peter the Great to house

workshops and depots for guns and weaponry. An unrealised plan at the end of the 19th century was to open a museum of the Napoleonic Wars in the Arsenal. Now housing the Kremlin Guard, the building is ringed with 800 captured Napoleonic cannons.

The offices of the president of Russia, the ultimate seat of power in the modern Kremlin, are in the yellow, triangular former Senate building, a fine 18th-century neoclassical edifice, east of the Arsenal. Built in 1785 by architect Matvei Kazakov, it was noted for its huge cupola. In the 16th and 17th centuries this area was where the *boyars* (high-ranking Russian nobles) lived. Next to the Senate is the 1930s Supreme Soviet (Verkhovny Soviet) building.

PATRIARCH'S PALACE Map p258 Patriarshy dvorets

This palace was mostly built in the mid-17th century for Patriarch Nikon, whose reforms sparked the break with the Old Believers (p101). The palace contains an exhibit of 17th-century household items, including jewellery, hunting equipment and furniture. From here you can access the five-domed Church of the Twelve Apostles, which has a gilded wooden iconostasis and a collection of icons by the leading 17th-century icon painters.

The highlight is perhaps the ceremonial Cross Hall (Krestovaya palata), where feasts for the tsars and ambassadors were held. From the 18th century the room was used to produce *miro* (a holy oil used during church services, which contains over 30 herbal components); the oven and huge pans from the production process are on display.

Now quiet, the palace in its heyday was a busy place. Apart from the Patriarch's living quarters, it had huge kitchens, warehouses and cellars stocked with food, workshops, a school for high-born children, offices for scribes, dormitories for those waiting to be baptised, stables and carriage houses.

ASSUMPTION CATHEDRAL Map p258 Uspensky sobor

On the northern side of Sobornaya ploshchad, with five golden helmet domes and four semicircular gables facing the square, the Assumption Cathedral was the focal church of prerevolutionary Russia, and the burial place of most of the heads of the Russian Orthodox Church from the 1320s to

1700. A striking 1660s fresco of the Virgin Mary faces Sobornaya ploshchad, above the door once used for royal processions. If you have limited time in the Kremlin, come straight here. The visitors' entrance is at the western end.

In 1470 Russian architects Krivtsov and Myshkin were commissioned by Ivan the Great to replace the old dilapidated cathedral, which dated from 1326. As soon as the ceiling was put up, one of the walls collapsed. During Soviet times, history books said this calamity was the result of bad workmanship, but today revisionist history indicates that a bad earthquake caused the collapse. Either way, Krivtsov and Myshkin lost their jobs, and Italian architect Aristotile Fioravanti was given a crack at it. After the foundation was completed, Aristotle toured Novgorod, Suzdal and Vladimir to acquaint himself with Russian architecture. His design is a more spacious version of the Assumption Cathedral at Vladimir, with a Renaissance twist.

In 1812 French troops used the cathedral as a stable; they looted 295kg of gold and over five tonnes of silver from here, but much of it was recovered. The church closed in 1918. According to some accounts, in 1941, when the Nazis were on the outskirts of Moscow, Stalin secretly ordered a service in the Assumption Cathedral to protect the city from the enemy. The cathedral was officially returned to the Church in 1989, but it operates as a museum.

The interior of the Assumption Cathedral is unusually bright and spacious, full of warm golds, reds and blues. The west wall features a scene of the Apocalypse, a favourite theme of the Russian Church in the Middle Ages. The pillars have pictures of martyrs on them, as martyrs are considered to be the pillars of faith. Above the southern gates there are frescoes of Yelena and Constantine, who brought Christianity to Greece and the south of Russia. The space above the northern gate depicts Olga and Vladimir, who brought Christianity to the north.

Most of the existing murals on the cathedral walls were painted on a gilt base in the 1640s, with the exception of three grouped together on the south wall: *The Apocalypse (Apokalipsis)*, *The Life of Metropolitan Pyotr (Zhitie Mitropolita Petra)* and *All Creatures Rejoice in Thee (O tebe raduetsya)*. These are

TOWERS OF POWER

The present Kremlin walls were built between 1485 and 1495, replacing the limestone walls from the 14th century. The walls are 6m to 17m tall, depending on the landscape, and 2m to 5m thick. They stretch for 2235m. Originally, a 32m-wide moat encircled the northern end of the Kremlin, connecting the Moscow and Neglinnaya Rivers.

The 20 distinctive towers were built mostly between 1485 and 1500, with tent roofs added in the 17th century. Originally, the towers had lookout posts and were equipped for heavy fighting. Most were designed by Italian masons. The more interesting towers are on the eastern and southern sides. Starting at the northern corner and going clockwise:

Corner Arsenal Tower (Arsenalnaya bashnya) The stronghold of the Kremlin with walls 4m thick. A well built into the basement to provide water during sieges still survives today.

St Nicholas Tower (Nikolskaya bashnya) Previously a gated defensive tower on the northeastern flank. Through this gate, Dmitry Pozharsky and Kozma Minin (as depicted in the statue in front of St Basil's Cathedral) led a civilian army and drove out the Polish occupiers.

Senate Tower (Senatskaya bashnya) Originally a nameless, gateless tower, and finally named after the construction of the Senate in the 18th century.

Saviour Gate Tower (Spasskaya bashnya) The Kremlin's 'official' exit onto Red Square. This gate – considered sacred – was used for processions in tsarist times. The two white-stone plaques above the gate commemorate the tower's construction. Between the tower's double walls, a staircase links five of its 10 levels. The current clock was installed in this gate tower in the 1850s. Hauling 3m hands and weighing 25 tonnes, the clock takes up three of the tower's levels. Its melodic chime sounds every 15 minutes across Red Square and across the country (on the radio).

Tsar Tower (Tsarskaya bashnya) A later addition (1680), which sits on top of the Kremlin wall. Legend has it that Ivan the Terrible watched executions and other Red Square activities from the old wooden tower that previously stood on this site.

Alarm Tower (Nabatnaya bashnya) Housed the Spassky Alarm Bell, which was used to warn of enemy attacks and to spur popular uprisings. After quashing one uprising, Catherine the Great was so outraged that she had the clapper removed from the bell, so it could sound no more. The bell remained mute in the tower for 30 years before it was finally removed.

Konstantin & Yelena Tower (Konstantino-Yeleninskaya bashnya) Built to protect the settlements outside the city, it is complete with firing platforms and a drawbridge over the moat. During the 17th century this tower was used as a prison, earning it the nickname 'torture tower'.

Moskvoretskaya Tower The round tower at the southeastern corner.

Petrovskaya Tower

First & Second Nameless Towers Both destroyed in 1771 because they interfered with the construction of the Kremlin Palace, but rebuilt after its completion.

Secret Tower (Taynitskaya bashnya) The first tower built (1485), it is named after a secret passageway leading down to the river.

Annunciation Tower (Blagoveshchenskaya bashnya) Named for the miracle-working icon on the façade. In 1633 the so-called Laundry Gate was constructed nearby for Kremlin washerwomen to go down to the Moscow River, but it was later bricked up.

Water Tower (Vodovzvodnaya bashnya) A circular tower erected at the confluence of the Moscow and Neglinnaya Rivers. From 1633 a water lift in the tower pumped water to a reservoir and supplied a system of underground piping for the Kremlin.

attributed to Dionysius and his followers, the cathedral's original 15th-century mural painters. The tombs of many leaders of the Russian Church (metropolitans up to 1590, patriarchs from 1590 to 1700) are against the north, west and south walls.

Near the south wall is a tent-roofed wooden throne made in 1551 for Ivan the Terrible, known as the Throne of Monomakh. Its carved scenes highlight the career of 12th-century Grand Prince Vladimir Monomakh of Kiev. Near the west wall there is a shrine with holy relics of Patriarch Hermogen, who was starved to death during the Time of Troubles in 1612.

The iconostasis dates from 1652, but its lowest level contains some older icons. The 1340s *Spas yaroë oko* (*Saviour with the Angry Eye*) is second from the right. On the left of the central door is the *Vladimirskaya Bogomater* (*Virgin of Vladimir*), an early-15th-century Rublyov school copy of Russia's most revered image: the *Vladimirskaya Ikona Bogomateri* (*Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God*). The 12th-century original, now in the Tretyakov Gallery (p100), stood in the Assumption Cathedral from the 1480s to 1930. One of the oldest Russian icons, the 12th-century red-clothed *Svyatoy Georgy* (*St George*) from Novgorod, is by the north wall.

The original icons of the lower, local tier are symbols of victory brought from Vladimir, Smolensk, Veliky Ustiug and other places. The south door was brought from the Nativity of the Virgin Cathedral in Suzdal (see p191).

CHURCH OF THE DEPOSITION OF THE ROBE

Map p258
Tserkov Rizpolozhenia

This delicate single-domed church, beside the west door of the Assumption Cathedral, was built between 1484 and 1486 in exclusively Russian style. It was the private chapel of the heads of the Church, who tended to be highly suspicious of such people as Italian architects.

Originally an open gallery or porch surrounded the church; it was later removed and the church was connected with the palace for the convenience of the tsars. The interior walls, ceilings and pillars are covered with 17th-century frescoes. It houses an exhibition of 15th- to 17th-century woodcarvings.

IVAN THE GREAT BELL TOWER

Map p258
Kolokolnya Ivana Velikogo; special exhibits adult/student & child R100/50
With its two golden domes rising above the eastern side of Sobornaya ploshchad, the Ivan the Great Bell Tower is the Kremlin's tallest structure – a landmark visible from 30km away. Before the 20th century it was forbidden to build any higher than this tower in Moscow.

Its history dates back to the Church of Ioann Lestvichnik Under the Bells, built on this site in 1329 by Ivan I. In 1505 the Italian Marco Bono designed a new belfry, originally with only two octagonal tiers beneath a drum and a dome. In 1600 Boris Godunov raised it to 81m, a public works project designed to employ the thousands of people who had come to Moscow during a famine.

The building's central section, with a gilded single dome and a 65-tonne bell, dates from between 1532 and 1542. The tent-roofed annex, next to the belfry, was commissioned by Patriarch Filaret in 1642 and bears his name. Exhibitions from the Kremlin collections are shown on the ground level.

TSAR CANNON & BELL

Map p258
Tsar Pushka & Kolokol

North of the bell tower is the 40-tonne Tsar Cannon. It was cast in 1586 by the blacksmith Ivan Chokhov for Fyodor I, whose portrait is on the barrel. Shot has never sullied its 89cm bore and certainly not the cannonballs beside it, which are too big even for this elephantine firearm.

Beside (not inside) the bell tower stands the world's biggest bell, a 202-tonne monster that has never rung. An earlier version, weighing 130 tonnes, fell from its belfry during a fire in 1701 and shattered. Using these remains, the current Tsar Bell was cast in the 1730s for Empress Anna Ivanovna. The bell was cooling off in the foundry casting pit in 1737 when it came into contact with water, causing an 11-tonne chunk to break off. One hundred years later, the architect Monferrand took the damaged bell out of the pit and put it on a pedestal. The bas-reliefs of Empress Anna and Tsar Alexey, as well as some icons, were etched on its sides.

South of the bell, the pleasant park of Ivanovskaya ploshchad offers spectacular views south over Moscow.

ARCHANGEL CATHEDRAL

Map p258
Arkhangelsky sobor
The Archangel Cathedral at the southeastern corner of Sobornaya ploshchad was for centuries the coronation, wedding and burial church of tsars. It was built by Ivan Kalita in 1333 to commemorate the end of the great famine, and dedicated to Archangel Michael, guardian of the Moscow princes. By the turn of the 16th century it had fallen into disrepair and was rebuilt between 1505 and 1508 by the Italian architect Alevisio Novi. Like the Assumption Cathedral, it is five-domed and essentially Byzantine-Russian in style. However, the exterior has many Venetian Renaissance features – notably the distinctive scallop shell gables and porticoes.

The tombs of all Muscovy's rulers from the 1320s to the 1690s are here, bar one (the absentee is Boris Godunov, whose body was taken out of the grave on the order of a False Dmitry and buried at Sergiev Posad in 1606). The bodies are buried underground, beneath the 17th-century sarcophagi and 19th-century copper covers. Tsarevich Dmitry (a son of Ivan the Terrible), who died mysteriously in 1591, lies beneath a painted stone canopy.

It was Dmitry's death that sparked the appearance of a string of impersonators, known as False Dmitrys, during the Time of Troubles. Ivan's own tomb is out of sight behind the iconostasis, along with those of his other sons: Ivan (whom he killed) and Fyodor I (who succeeded him). From Peter the Great onwards, emperors and empresses

were buried in St Petersburg; the exception being Peter II, who died in Moscow and is here. Some 147th-century murals were uncovered during restorations in the 1950s. The south wall depicts many of those buried here; on the pillars are some of their predecessors, including Andrey Bogolyubsky, Prince Daniil and Alexander Nevsky.

HALL OF FACETS

Map p258
Granovitaya palata
Named for its Italian Renaissance stone facing, the Hall of Facets was designed and built by Marco Ruffo and Pietro Solario between 1487 and 1491, during the reign of Ivan the Great. Its upper floor housed the tsars' throne room, scene of banquets and ceremonies. Access to the Hall of Facets was via an outside staircase from the square below. During the Streltsky Rebellion of 1682, several of Peter the Great's relatives were tossed down the exterior Red Staircase, so called because it ran red with their blood. (It's no wonder that Peter hated Moscow and decided to start afresh with a new capital in St Petersburg.) Stalin destroyed the staircase, but it was rebuilt in 1994.

The hall is 500 sq metres with a supporting pillar in the centre. The walls are decorated with gorgeous murals of biblical and historical themes, although none is original. Alas, the building is closed to the public.

TEREM PALACE

Map p258
Teremny dvorets
The 16th- and 17th-century Terem Palace is the most splendid of the Kremlin palaces.

THIS IMAGE
NOT AVAILABLE
IN PICK & MIX

Made of stone and built by Vasily III, the palace's living quarters include a dining room, living room, study, bedroom and small chapel. Unfortunately, the palace is closed to the public, but you can glimpse its cluster of 11 golden domes and chequered roof behind and above the Church of the Deposition of the Robe.

ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL Map p258 Blagoveshchensky sobor

The Annunciation Cathedral, at the south-west corner of Sobornaya ploshchad, contains the celebrated icons of master painter Theophanes the Greek (Feofan Grek in Russian). They have a timeless beauty that appeals even to those usually left cold by icons.

Vasily I built the first wooden church on this site in 1397. Between 1484 and 1489, Ivan the Great had the Annunciation Cathedral rebuilt to serve as the royal family's private chapel. Originally the cathedral had just three domes and an open gallery around three sides. Ivan the Terrible, whose tastes were more elaborate, added six more domes and chapels at each corner, enclosed the gallery and gilded the roof.

Under Orthodox law, Ivan's fourth marriage disqualified him from entering the church proper, so he had the southern arm of the gallery converted into the Archangel Gabriel Chapel (Pridel Arkhangel Gavrila), from which he could watch services through a grille. The chapel has a colourful iconostasis, dating from its consecration in 1564, and an exhibition of icons.

Many murals in the gallery date from the 1560s. Among them are the *Capture of Jericho* in the porch, *Jonah and the Whale* in the northern arm of the gallery, and the *Tree of Jesus* on its ceiling. Other murals feature ancient philosophers, such as Aristotle, Plutarch, Plato and Socrates, holding scrolls with their own wise words. Socrates' scroll reads: 'No harm will ever come to a good man. Our soul is immortal. After death the good shall be rewarded and the evil punished.' Plato's says: 'We must hope God shall send us a heavenly Teacher and a Guide.'

The small central part of the cathedral has a lovely jasper floor. The 16th-century frescoes include Russian princes on the north pillar and Byzantine emperors on the south, both with Apocalypse scenes above them. But the cathedral's real treasure is the iconostasis, where in the 1920s restorers uncov-

ered early-15th-century icons by three of the greatest medieval Russian artists.

Theophanes most likely painted the six icons at the right-hand end of the biggest row of the six tiers of the iconostasis. From left to right, these are the Virgin Mary, Christ Enthroned, St John the Baptist, the Archangel Gabriel, the Apostle Paul and St John Chrysostom. Theophanes was a master of portraying pathos in the facial expressions of his subjects, setting these icons apart from most others.

The third icon from the left, Archangel Michael, is ascribed to Andrei Rublyov, who may also have painted the adjacent St Peter. Rublyov is also reckoned to be the artist of the first, second, sixth, seventh and probably the third and fifth icons from the left of the festival row, above the deesis row. The seven icons at the right-hand end are attributed to Prokhor of Gorodets.

The basement – a remnant of the previous 14th-century cathedral on this site – contains a fascinating exhibit on the Archaeology of the Kremlin. The artefacts date from the 12th to 14th centuries, showing the growth of Moscow during this period.

GREAT KREMLIN PALACE Map p258 Bolshoy Kremlyovskiy dvorets

Housing the Armoury and much more, the 700-room Great Kremlin Palace was built between 1838 and 1849 by architect Konstantin Thon as an imperial residence for Nicholas I. It is now an official residence of the Russian president, used for state visits and receptions. However, unlike Russian tsars, the president doesn't have living quarters here.

The huge palace incorporates some of the earlier buildings such as the Hall of Facets, Terem Palace and several chapels. Although vast, the building has never received great praise, being criticised as 'barrack-like' and 'pretentious'. Several ceremonial halls are named after saints, including St George, St Vladimir, St Andrew, St Catherine and St Alexander. St George's Hall is mainly used for state awards ceremonies, while major international treaties are signed in St Vladimir's Hall. To save you the trouble, the Great Kremlin Palace (apart from the Armoury – see following) is closed to tourists, except those on an official state visit. From time to time, Dom Patriarshy Tours (p54) brings tourists here.

ARMOURY Map p258

Oruzheynaya palata; adult/student & child

R300/175; 10am, noon, 2.30pm & 4.30pm

The Armoury dates back to 1511, when it was founded under Vasily III to manufacture and store weapons, imperial arms and regalia for the royal court. Later it also produced jewellery, icon frames and embroidery.

During the reign of Peter the Great all craftsmen, goldsmiths and silversmiths were sent to St Petersburg, and the armoury became a mere museum storing the royal treasures. A fire in 1737 destroyed many of the items. In the early 19th century, new premises were built for the collection. Much of it, however, never made it back from Nizhny Novgorod, where it was sent for safe-keeping during Napoleon's invasion in 1812.

Another building to house the collection was completed in 1851, but it was later demolished to make way for the Palace of Congresses, now the State Kremlin Palace (see Government Buildings, p56). So the Armoury is now housed in the Great Kremlin Palace. Despite the disasters that have befallen this collection throughout the centuries, the Armoury still contains plenty of treasures for ogling, and remains a highlight of any visit to the Kremlin.

The exhibit starts upstairs; your ticket will specify a time for entry. Here's what you'll find:

Room 1 Stuffed to the gills with various gold and silver objects. Don't overdose, as there is plenty more to come.

Room 2 Houses the renowned Easter eggs made from precious metals and jewels by St Petersburg jeweller, Fabergé. The tsar and tsarina traditionally exchanged these gifts each year at Easter. Most famous is the Grand Siberian Railway egg, with gold train, platinum locomotive and ruby headlamp, created to commemorate the completion of the Moscow-Vladivostok line.

Rooms 3 & 4 Armour, weapons and more armour and more weapons.

Room 5 Here you will find all those gifts proffered by visiting ambassadors over the years. Each piece of gold or silver is yet another reason why the average peasant trying to coax some life out of a mouldy seed might get a little miffed. Ignoring the plight of the masses, you can enjoy the skill of the craftspeople who made these items.

Room 6 Coronation dresses of 18th-century empresses (Empress Elizabeth, we're told, had 15,000 other dresses).

Room 7 Contains the joint coronation throne of boy-tsars Peter the Great and his half-brother, Ivan V (with a secret compartment from which Regent Sofia prompted them), as well as the 800-diamond throne of Tsar Alexey, Peter's father.

The gold Cap of Monomakh – jewel-studded and sable-trimmed – was used for two centuries at coronations.

Room 8 Only the best royal harnesses and equestrian gear.

Room 9 Centuries worth of royal carriages and sledges line the aisles in this huge room, one of which surely could have kept a village of potential revolutionaries fed for several years. The once-glittering gold leafing has faded and the wood has shrunk revealing gaps in the decoration. Look for the sleigh in which Elizabeth rode from St Petersburg to Moscow for her coronation, pulled by 23 horses at a time – about 800 in all for the trip.

DIAMOND FUND EXHIBITION Map p258

Vystavka almaznogo fonda; % 229 2036; adult/student R350/175; 10am-noon, 2-5pm Fri-Wed
If the Armoury hasn't sated your lust for diamonds, there are more in the separate Diamond Fund Exhibition in the same building. The collection, mainly precious stones and jewellery garnered by tsars and empresses, includes such weighty beasts as the 190-carat diamond given to Catherine the Great by her lover Grigory Orlov. The displays of unmounted diamonds are stunning, revealing the real beauty of these gems.

There are almost no signs – even in Russian – as the locals are only allowed in as part of a guided tour. No tours are offered in other languages, which is to your advantage, since you do not have to wait as the Russian visitors do.

ALEXANDROVSKY GARDEN Map p258 Alexandrovskiy sad; Библиотека имени Ленина

The first public park in Moscow, Alexandrovsky Garden sits along the Kremlin's western wall. Colourful flower beds and impressive Kremlin views make it a favourite strolling spot for Muscovites and tourists alike. Back in the 17th century, the Neglinnaya River ran through the present gardens, with dams and mills along its banks. When the river was diverted underground, the garden was founded by architect Osip Bove, in 1821. Enter through the original gates at the northern end.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (Mogila neizvestnogo soldata) at its north end is a kind of national pilgrimage spot, where newlyweds bring flowers and have their pictures taken. The tomb contains the remains of one soldier who died in December 1941 at Km 41 of Leningradskoe shosse – the nearest the Nazis came to

Moscow. The inscription reads: 'Your name is unknown, your deeds immortal.' There's an eternal flame, and other inscriptions listing the Soviet hero cities of WWII and honouring 'those who fell for the motherland' between 1941 and 1945. South of the tomb, a row of red urns contains the earth from the 'hero cities': cities that withstood the heaviest fighting during WWII. The changing of the guard happens every hour.

Further south, the obelisk was originally a monument to commemorate the House of Romanovs. In 1918 it had a dramatic change in mission when it was redesigned the Monument to Revolutionary Thinkers, in honour of those responsible for the spread of communism in Russia.

RED SQUARE

Immediately outside the Kremlin's north-eastern wall is the infamous Red Square, or Krasnaya ploshchad. Commanding the square from the southern end is the building that, more than any other, says 'Russia': St Basil's Cathedral.

Red Square used to be a market square adjoining the merchants' area in Kitay Gorod. It has always been a place where occupants of the Kremlin chose to congregate, celebrate and castigate for all the people to see. Here, Ivan the Terrible publicly confessed his misdeeds in 1547, built St Basil's to commemorate his victories in the 1550s, and later had numerous perceived enemies executed. Red Square also saw the dismem-

bering of the Cossack rebel Stepan Razin in 1671, as well as the en masse execution in 1698 of 2000 members of the Streltsy (Peter the Great's mutinous palace guard).

Soviet rulers chose Red Square for their military parades, perhaps most poignantly on 7 November 1941, when tanks rolled straight off to the front line outside Moscow; and during the Cold War, when lines of ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missile) rumbled across the square to remind the West of Soviet military might.

Incidentally, the Russian name of Krasnaya ploshchad has nothing to do with communism or the blood that flowed here: *krasny* in old Russian meant 'beautiful' and only in the 20th century did it come to mean 'red', too.

Red Square is closed to traffic, except for the limousines that whiz in and out of the Kremlin's Saviour Gate from time to time. Most people here are sightseers, but that doesn't reduce the thrill of walking on this 400m by 150m area of cobbles, so central to Russian history. It's particularly atmospheric when floodlit at night.

The best way to enter Red Square is through the Resurrection Gate. Rebuilt in 1995, it's an exact copy of the original completed on this site in 1680, with its twin red towers topped by green tent spires. The first gateway was destroyed because Stalin thought it an impediment to the parades and demonstrations held in Red Square. Through the gateway is the bright Chapel of the Iverian Virgin, originally built in the late 18th century to house the icon of the same name.

GUM Map p258

☎ 921 5763; Red Square (Krasnaya pl) 3; 11 10am-10pm; 11 Ploshchad Revolyutsii The elaborate 19th-century façade on the northeastern side of Red Square is the Gosudarstvenny Universalny Magazin (State Department Store). GUM once symbolised all that was bad about Soviet shopping: long queues and shelves empty of all but a few drab goods. A remarkable transformation has taken place since *perestroika*, and today GUM is a bright, bustling place with over 1000 fancy shops (p155).

KAZAN CATHEDRAL Map p258

Nikolskaya ul 3; admission free; 11 8am-7pm, evening service 8pm Mon; 11 Ploshchad Revolyutsii The tiny Kazan Cathedral, opposite the northern end of GUM, is a 1993 replica. The original was founded in 1636 in thanks for the 1612 expulsion of Polish invaders (for two centuries it housed the *Virgin of Kazan* icon, which supposedly helped to rout the Poles). Three hundred years later, the cathedral was completely demolished, allegedly because it impeded the flow of celebrating workers in May Day and Revolution Day parades.

LENIN'S TOMB Map p258

☎ 923 5527; Red Square (Krasnaya pl); admission free; 11 10am-1pm Tue-Thu, Sat & Sun; 11 Ploshchad Revolyutsii The granite tomb of Lenin, standing at the foot of the Kremlin wall, is another of Red Square's must-sees, especially since (if some people get their way) the former leader may eventually end up beside his mum in St Petersburg. For now, the embalmed leader remains as he has been since 1924 (apart from a retreat to Siberia during WWII). See boxed text, p64, to learn how he keeps his waxy demeanour.

From 1953 to 1961, Lenin shared the tomb with Stalin. In 1961, during the 22nd Party Congress, the esteemed and by then ancient Bolshevik, Madame Spiridonova, announced that Vladimir Ilych had appeared to her in a dream, insisting that he did not like spending eternity with his successor. With that, Stalin was removed and given a place of honour immediately behind the mausoleum.

Before joining the queue at the north-western corner of Red Square, drop your camera at the left-luggage office in the State

History Museum, as you will not be allowed to take it with you. Humourless guards ensure that visitors remain respectful.

After trouping past the embalmed figure, emerge from the mausoleum and inspect the Kremlin wall, where Stalin, Brezhnev and other Communist heavy-hitters are buried. Besides these two, some of the worthies given the honour of burial here:

Felix Dzerzhinsky The founder of the Cheka (forerunner of the KGB).

Yakov Sverdlov A key organiser of the revolution and the first official head of the Soviet State.

Andrei Zhdanov Stalin's cultural chief, and the second most powerful man in the USSR immediately after WWII.

Mikhail Frunze The Red Army leader who secured Central Asia for the Soviet Union in the 1920s.

Inessa Armand Lenin's rumoured lover. She was a respected Bolshevik who was the director of Zhenotdel, an organisation fighting for equality for women within the Communist Party.

John Reed The American author of *Ten Days that Shook the World*, a first-hand account of the revolution.

ST BASIL'S CATHEDRAL Map p258

Intercessional Cathedral; ☎ 298 3304; Red Square (Krasnaya pl); adult/student & child R100/50; 11 11am-5pm Wed-Mon; 11 Ploshchad Revolyutsii No picture can prepare you for the crazy confusion of colours and shapes that is St Basil's Cathedral. This ultimate symbol of Russia was created between 1555 and 1561 (replacing an existing church on the site) to celebrate Ivan the Terrible's capture of the Tatar stronghold, Kazan. The capture took place on 1 October 1552, the feast of the Intercession which gives the cathedral its official name, Intercession Cathedral by

TOP FIVE FREEBIES

- Cathedral of Christ the Saviour (p90) Glitter and gold on a huge scale.
- Kolomenskoe Museum-Reserve (p104) Pay to enter the museum, but seeing the beautiful grounds and churches will cost you nothing.
- Gorky House-Museum (p84) Tribute to a literary mastermind, housed inside an Art Nouveau masterpiece.
- Lenin's Tomb (left) Pay your respects to the founder of the Soviet state.
- Sakharov Museum (p77) Political and artistic exhibits, as well as information about the life and times of the dissident.

THIS IMAGE
NOT AVAILABLE
IN PICK & MIX

the Moat (Pokrovsky sobor). Its design is the culmination of a wholly Russian style that had been developed building wooden churches; legend has it that Ivan had the cathedral's architect blinded so that he could never build anything comparable.

The cathedral's apparent anarchy of shapes hides a comprehensible plan of nine main chapels: the tall, tent-roofed one in the centre; four big, octagonal-towered ones, topped with the four biggest domes; and four smaller ones in between.

The misnomer St Basil's actually refers only to the extra northeastern chapel, which was added later. It was built over the grave of the barefoot holy fool Vasily (Basil) the Blessed, who predicted Ivan's damnation and added correctly, as the army left for Kazan, that Ivan would murder a son. Vasily, who died while Kazan was under siege, was buried beside the church that St Basil's soon replaced. He was later canonised.

Only in the 1670s were the domes patterned, giving St Basil's its multicoloured appearance. Between 1772 and 1784 the cathedral received a metal roof and a whitewashing; its domes were gold-leafed in keeping with the fashion of the time. Although Napoleon ordered it to be destroyed in 1812, his troops did not have enough time to complete the task. In 1817 the cathedral returned to its present

colourful appearance, the cemetery was closed and the houses and moat surrounding the cathedral were removed.

The interior is open to visitors. Besides a small exhibition on the cathedral itself, it contains lovely frescoed walls and loads of nooks and crannies to explore. A collective ticket (adult/student R230/115) with the State History Museum (below) is available.

Out front of St Basil's is the statue of Kuzma Minin and Dmitry Pozharsky, one a butcher and the other a prince, who together raised and led the army that ejected occupying Poles from the Kremlin in 1612. Up the slope is the round, walled Place of Skulls, where Ivan the Terrible made his public confession and Peter the Great executed the Streltsy.

STATE HISTORY MUSEUM Map p258
% 292 4019; www.shm.ru; Red Square (Krasnaya pl); adult/student & child R150/75; h 11am-7pm Wed-Mon; m Ploshchad Revolyutsii

At the northern end of the square, the State History Museum has an enormous collection covering the whole Russian empire from the Stone Age on. The building, dating from the late 19th century, is itself an attraction – each room is in the style of a different period or region, some with highly decorated walls echoing old Russian churches. Reopened in 1997, each year sees

the addition of a few more galleries. A joint ticket (adult/student R230/115) allowing access to the museum and St Basil's Cathedral is available at either spot.

MANEZH NAYA PLOSHCHAD

At the north end of Red Square, through the Resurrection Gate, is Manezhnaya ploshchad (Manezh Square), named after the Kremlin's stables which once occupied this area. The Soviet Union's most successful WWII commander, Marshall Zhukov, presides over this square, mounted on his horse and appearing much like he did at the Victory Day Parade in Red Square on 24 June 1945.

In the last decade, Manezhnaya ploshchad has been transformed with the vast underground Okhotny Ryad shopping mall. From the square, it appears as a series of half-domes and balustrades, and a network of fountains and sculptures. (See p156 for details on shopping here.)

Once dominated by huge hotels, the square's character has changed with the demolition of the Intourist Hotel and Hotel Moskva. The intersection is going decidedly upmarket, as Le Royal Meridien National hotel, which still dominates the corner, is to be joined by the Ritz Carlton Moscow on the site of the Intourist, and the new Hotel Moskva (p66) on the site of the old one.

The fine old edifices to the southwest of the square are: the Russian State Library (p221), including the classical Paskov House dating from 1787; the old Moscow State University building, built in 1793 and named after the celebrated scientist Mikhail Lomonosov; and the historic Hotel National, now known as Le Meridien Royal National (p166).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Map pp248-9
% 292 4171; Manezhnaya pl 1; admission R100;
h 10am-5.30pm Tue-Sun; m Ploshchad Revolyutsii or Okhotny Ryad

An excavation of Voskresensky most (Voskresensky Bridge) – which used to span the Neglinnaya River and commence the road to Tver – uncovered coins, clothing and other artefacts from old Moscow. The museum displaying these treasures is situated in a 7m-deep underground pavilion that was formed during the excavation itself. The entrance is at the base of the once and future Hotel Moskva.

CENTRAL LENIN MUSEUM Map pp248-9
pl Revolyutsii 2; m Ploshchad Revolyutsii
The former Central Lenin Museum was once the big daddy of all the Lenin museums, but was closed in 1993 after the White House shoot-out. It is sometimes used for special exhibits, but more often, communist rabblers congregate here.

HOUSE OF UNIONS & STATE DUMA

Map pp248-9
Okhotny ryad; m Okhotny Ryad or Teatralnaya
The green-columned House of Unions dates from the 1780s. Its ballroom – called the Hall of Columns – is the famous location of one of Stalin's most grotesque show trials, that of Nikolai Bukharin, a leading Communist Party theorist who had been a close associate of Lenin. Next door is the seat of the Russian parliament, the State Duma. This glowering building was erected in the 1930s for Gosplan (Soviet State Planning Department), source of the USSR's Five-Year Plans. Both buildings are closed to the public.

MANEZH EXHIBITION CENTRE

Map pp248-9
% 292 4459; Manezhnaya ul; h 11am-8pm
Tue-Sun; m Alexandrovsky Sad, Borovitskaya or Biblioteka imeni Lenina
The long, low building on the southwestern side of the square is the Manezh, housing art

LENIN UNDER GLASS

Red Square is home to the world's most famous mummy, that of Vladimir Ilych Lenin. When he died of a massive stroke (on 22 January 1924, aged 53), a long line of mourners patiently gathered in the depths of winter for weeks to glimpse the body as it lay in state. Inspired by the spectacle, Stalin proposed that the father of Soviet communism should continue to serve the cause as a holy relic. So the decision was made to preserve Lenin's corpse for perpetuity, against the vehement protests of his widow, as well as Lenin's own expressed desire to be buried next to his mother in St Petersburg.

Boris Zbarsky, a biochemist, and Vladimir Voribov, an anatomist, were issued a political order to put a stop to the natural decomposition of the body. The pair worked frantically in a secret laboratory in search of a long-term chemical solution. In the meantime, the body's dark spots were bleached, and lips and eyes sewn tight. The brain was removed and taken to another secret laboratory, to be sliced and diced by scientists for the next 40 years in the hope of uncovering its hidden genius.

In July 1924, the scientists hit upon a formula to successfully arrest the decaying process, a closely guarded state secret. This necrotic craft was passed on to Zbarsky's son, who ran the Kremlin's covert embalming lab for decades. After the fall of communism, Zbarsky came clean: the body is wiped down every few days, and then, every 18 months, thoroughly examined and submerged in a tub of chemicals, including paraffin wax. The institute has now gone commercial, offering its services and secrets to wannabe immortals for a mere million dollars.

In the early 1990s, Boris Yeltsin expressed his intention to heed Lenin's request and bury him in St Petersburg, setting off a furore from the political left as well as more muted objections from Moscow tour operators. It seems that the mausoleum, the most sacred shrine of Soviet Communism, and the mummy, the literal embodiment of the Russian Revolution, will remain in place for at least several more years.

THIS IMAGE
NOT AVAILABLE
IN PICK & MIX

exhibitions. This neoclassical landmark was badly damaged by a fire in 2004 – sparking much speculation that it was not an accident. It is newly renovated and reopened, and now with the underground parking garage that may have ‘sparked’ the fire.

TEATRANAYA PLOSHCHAD

The aptly named Teatralnaya ploshchad, or Theatre Square, opens out on both sides of Okhotny ryad, 200m northeast of Manezhnaya ploshchad. In the early 18th century, the Neglinnaya River ran through here and powered water mills where Hotel Metropol is now. Only in the early 19th century did the square receive its grand appearance, with the construction of the theatres. The 1835 fountain by Vitali – partially blocked by the statue of Karl Marx (Map pp248–9) marks the centre of the square.

BOLSHOI THEATRE Map pp248-9

☎ 292 0050; www.bolshoi.ru; Teatralnaya pl 1; m Teatralnaya

While the northern half of the square is surrounded by theatres, its centrepiece is the celebrated Bolshoi, built in 1856. This historic theatre saw the premier of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* in 1877 and *The Nutcracker* in 1919. These days, the main stage is closed for much-needed and long-awaited renovations (until 2008), but the New Stage continues to put on performances (see p146 for details).

Across and down ulitsa Petrovka from the ‘Big’ Bolshoi is the ‘Small’ Maly Theatre,

THE ONCE & FUTURE HOTEL MOSKVA

After years of rumours, the infamous 1930s-era Moskva hotel on Manezhnaya ploshchad was finally demolished in 2003; one in a long list of Soviet-era institutions to bite the dust. A new luxury hotel is expected to appear in its place in 2006. The story goes that Stalin was shown two possible designs for the original hotel and – not realising they were alternatives – approved both. The builders did not dare to point out his error, and so built half the hotel in constructivist style and half in Stalinist style. The incongruous result became such a familiar feature of the Moscow landscape that the new, high-class hotel being constructed on the site is expected to re-create its predecessor's architectural quirks.

a drama theatre (see p148). On the west side of the square is the National Youth Theatre.

HOTEL METROPOL Map pp248-9

☎ 927 6000; www.metropol-moscow.ru; Teatralny proezd 1/4; m Teatralnaya

Sculpted stone, tiled mosaic and wrought iron distinguish the fantastic façade of this luxury hotel – one of Moscow's finest examples of Art Nouveau architecture. The mosaic on the western side, the *Princess of Dreams*, is a masterpiece by Mikhail Vrubel depicting a Russian fairy tale (see boxed text, p166). The interior is no less exquisite, and tourists are usually not discouraged from going inside. Don't miss the spectacular stained-glass ceiling in the restaurant.

OLD FIELDS Map pp248-9

Staraya Polyay; Teatralny proezd; m Lubyanka or Teatralnaya

Along Teatralny proezd, archaeologists uncovered the 16th-century fortified wall that used to surround Kitay Gorod, as well as the foundations of the 1493 Trinity Church. Coins, jewellery and tombstones were also excavated here. Besides the remains of the wall and the church, you can now see a statue of Ivan Fyodorov, the 16th-century printer responsible for Russia's first book.

The gated walkway of Tretyakovsky proezd leads into Kitay Gorod. The archway, built in the 1870s, was apparently financed by the Tretyakov brothers, founders of their namesake gallery (see p100). Apparently, the construction of the medieval-style gate and the opening of the passageway was an attempt to relieve traffic on Nikolskaya ulitsa. Since its reopening in 2000, Tretyakovsky proezd is lined with exclusive shops, including Mercury, which financed much of the restoration.

LUBYANSKAYA PLOSHCHAD

For decades, the broad square at the east end of Teatralny proezd (called Lubyanskaya ploshchad, or Lubyanka Square) was a chilling symbol of the KGB, or Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (Committee for State Security). From 1926 to 1990, it was called ploshchad Dzerzhinskogo, after

(Continued from page 66)

Felix Dzerzhinsky, who founded the Cheka, the KGB's forerunner. A tall statue of Dzerzhinsky dominated the square.

When the 1991 coup collapsed, the statue was memorably removed by angry crowds, with the assistance of a couple of cranes. Now you can see the statue in all its (somewhat reduced) glory in the Sculpture Park, where it stands among others fallen from grace (see p100). There was a movement – reputedly backed by Mayor Luzhkov, strangely enough – to resurrect ‘Iron Felix’ and return him to his place of honour.

KGB MUSEUM Map pp248-9

ul Bolshaya Lubyanka 12/1; m Lubyanka

This four-room museum is devoted to the history, propaganda and paraphernalia of the Soviet intelligence services. The museum is not open to casual callers, but Dom Patriarshy Tours (see p54) occasionally takes groups there (and provides a translator). Security is super tight: an FSB (Federal Security Service; the KGB's successor) agent leads a small group, room by room, recounting Cold War-era espionage anecdotes. Exhibits include a few fun spy tools, but nothing to really impress a technologically advanced audience. It's predictable, but entertaining.

LUBYANKA PRISON Map pp248-9

Lubyanskaya pl; m Lubyanka

In the 1930s, Lubyanka Prison was the feared destination of thousands of innocent victims of Stalin's purges. Today the grey

building looming on the northeastern side of the square is no longer a prison, but is the headquarters of the FSB. The FSB keeps a pretty good eye on domestic goings-on. The building is not open to the public.

The much humbler Memorial to the Victims of Totalitarianism stands in the little garden on the southeastern side of the square. This single stone slab comes from the territory of an infamous 1930s labour camp situated on the Solovetsky Islands in the White Sea.

MAYAKOVSKY MUSEUM Map pp248-9

☎ 921 9387; www.museum.ru/majakovskiy; Lubyansky proezd 3/6; admission R60; h 1-9pm Thu, 10am-5pm Fri-Tue; m Lubyanka

The startlingly post-modern entrance on this prerevolutionary mansion is appropriate for a museum dedicated to the revolutionary, futurist poet Vladimir Mayakovsky. The building is actually where Mayakovsky lived in a communal apartment during the last years of his life. The room where he worked – and shot himself in 1930 – has been preserved. Run by the poet's granddaughter, the museum contains an eclectic collection of his manuscripts and sketches, as well as the requisite personal items and family photographs.

MOSCOW CITY HISTORY MUSEUM

Map pp248-9

☎ 924 8490, 924 8058; Novaya pl 12; admission R50; h 11am-5.30pm Tue-Sun; m Lubyanka This elaborate Russian Empire-style building dates from 1825. Formerly the John the Baptist Church, it now houses a small

THIS IMAGE
NOT AVAILABLE
IN PICK & MIX

(Continued on page 75)

history museum, demonstrating how the city has spread from its starting point at the Kremlin. Exhibits are heavy on artefacts from the 13th and 14th centuries, especially household items and weapons and other representations of medieval Moscow.

POLYTECHNICAL MUSEUM Map pp248-9
% 923 0756; Novaya pl 3/4; adult/student R150/75; h 10am-5pm Tue-Sun; m Lubyanka
Occupying the entire block of Novaya ploshchad, this giant museum covers the history of Russian science, technology and industry. Indeed, the museum claims to be the largest science museum in the world. The permanent exhibits cover just about every aspect of Soviet scientific achievement, from a model of Lomonosov's laboratory to Mendeleev's development of the periodic table to Popov's first radio receiver.

While the museum's focus is scientific, the building is also architecturally interesting and visually appealing. Three different parts of the structure were built at different times and in different styles: the oldest, central section (1877) represents the Russian Byzantium era; the eastern section (1896) is inspired by 17th-century Russian styles; and the western section (1907) is Art Nouveau.

KITAY GOROD

Eating p124; Shopping p156

The narrow old streets east of Red Square are among the oldest in Moscow, estab-

lished in the 13th century as an early trade and financial centre. Kitay Gorod means – literally – 'Chinatown', but actually has nothing to do with China. The name derives from *kita*, which means 'wattle', after the palisades that reinforced the earthen ramp erected around this early Kremlin suburb. The area's ancient, bustling streets and exquisite, tiny churches make it an ideal place for an enjoyable stroll (see p114 for details).

Orientation

Kitay Gorod is bound, quite definitively, by Red Square in the west and by the Moscow River in the south. The northern border is ulitsa Pokrovka (called ulitsa Maroseika closer to the Kremlin). This portion of the Boulevard Ring is called – appropriately enough – Pokrovsky bulvar. The streets contained therein are a confusing maze of windy one-ways and narrow no-throughways, packed with churches and monasteries.

A significant piece of Kitay Gorod, just east of Red Square, is inside the area bound by Lubyansky proezd. Sights in this area are listed under Kitay Gorod, not City Centre, for the sake of consistency.

For the purposes of this book, Kitay Gorod also includes sights that are east of the Boulevard Ring, including those around the section of the Garden Ring, called Zemlyanoy val. Just off this road is busy Kursky vokzal (Kursk station; see p216 for train services). A constant bustle

RINGS AROUND MOSCOW

Picture Moscow as five ring roads that spread out from the centre:

- **Inner Ring Road** About 300m north of the Kremlin, it's formed by the streets Mokhovaya ulitsa, Okhotny ryad, Teatralny proezd and the squares of Novaya ploshchad and Staraya ploshchad. Three other important squares – Manezhnaya ploshchad, Teatralnaya ploshchad and Lubyanskaya ploshchad – punctuate this ring.
- **Boulevard Ring** (Bulvarnoe Koltso) About 1km from the Kremlin. It's mostly dual carriageway, with a park strip down the middle. Each section has a different name, always ending in 'bulvar'. The Boulevard Ring ends as it approaches the Moscow River in the southwest and southeast.
- **Garden Ring** (Sadovoe Koltso) About 2km out. Most of this ring's northern sections are called Sadovaya-something (Garden-something) ulitsa; some of its southern sections are called ulitsa-something-val, recalling its origins as a rampart (*val*). And the difference between the Garden and Boulevard rings? The Garden Ring is the one *without* any gardens.
- **'Third' Ring** (Tretioe Koltso) Located about 4.5km from the Kremlin, it's a new, eight-lane, high-speed motorway, recently built to absorb some of the traffic from Moscow streets. The motorway provides motorists with a speedy route across (or rather, around) town.
- **Outer Ring Road** (Moskovskaya Koltsovaya Avtomobilnaya Doroga; MKAD) Some 15km to 20km from the Kremlin, it forms the city limits.

TRANSPORT

Kitay Gorod is the metro station that provides easiest access to this neighbourhood, although Ploshchad Revolyutsii is also convenient to the sights that are closer to the Kremlin. If you are heading further east, get off at Kurskaya or Chkalovskaya.

surrounds Moscow's biggest train station, due in part to the Atrium shopping centre nearby (p156).

CHORAL SYNAGOGUE

Map p254
% 924 0472; Bolshoy Spasoglinishchevsky per 10;
h 9am-6pm; m Kitay Gorod
Moscow's oldest synagogue was built in 1891 by the businessman Polyakov, who made his fortune in the sugar industry. It was the only synagogue that continued to operate throughout the Soviet period, in spite of Bolshevik demands to convert it into a workers' club. The interior is quite exquisite.

CHURCH OF THE TRINITY IN

NIKITNIKI

Map pp248-9
Ipatyevsky per; m Kitay Gorod
This little gem of a church, built in the 1630s, is an exquisite example of Russian baroque. Its onion domes and tiers of red and white spade gables rise from a square tower. Its interior – only partially open due to renovation – is covered with 1650s' gospel frescoes by Simon Ushakov and others. A carved doorway leads into St Nikita the Martyr's Chapel, above the vault of the patrons who financed the construction of the church.

ENGLISH HOUSE

Map pp248-9
% 298 3952; ul Varvarka 4A; admission R20;
h 11am-6pm Tue-Sun; m Kitay Gorod
This reconstructed 16th-century house, white with peaked wooden roofs, was the residence of England's first emissaries to Russia (sent by Elizabeth I to Ivan the Terrible). It also served as the base for English merchants, who were allowed to trade duty free in exchange for providing military supplies to Ivan. Ironically, this museum has no signs or descriptions in English.

MONASTERY OF THE EPIPHANY

Map pp248-9
Bogoyavlensky per 2; m Ploshchad Revolyutsii
This monastery, the second-oldest in Moscow, was founded in 1296 by Prince Daniil, son of Alexander Nevsky. One of the first abbots of the monastery was Stefan, the brother of Sergei Radonezhsky (patron saint of Russia and founder of the Trinity Monastery of St Sergius). The current Epiphany Cathedral was constructed in the 1690s in the Moscow baroque style.

ROMANOV CHAMBERS IN ZARYADIE

Map pp248-9
% 924 4529; ul Varvarka 10; admission R150;
h 10am-5pm Thu-Mon, 11am-6pm Wed;
m Kitay Gorod
This small but interesting museum is devoted to the lives of the Romanov family, who were mere *boyars* (nobles) before they became tsars. The house was built by Nikita Romanov, whose grandson Mikhail later became the first tsar of the 300-year Romanov dynasty. Exhibits (with descriptions in English) show the house as it might have been when the Romanovs lived here in the 16th century. Some of the artistic detail, such as the woodwork in the women's quarters, is amazing. Enter from the rear of the building.

SYNOD PRINTING HOUSE

Map pp248-9
Nikolskaya ul 15; m Ploshchad Revolyutsii
This is where Ivan Fyodorov reputedly produced Russia's first printed book, *The Apostle*, in 1563. (You can see the man himself at Old Fields, p66). In 1703 the first Russian newspaper *Vedomosti* was also printed here. Up until the early 19th century, Kitay Gorod was something of a printing centre, home to 26 of Moscow's 31 bookshops at the time.

SAKHAROV MUSEUM

Map p254
% 923 4115; www.wdn.com/asf; ul Zemlyanoy val 57; admission free; h 11am-7pm Tue-Sun;
m Chkalovskaya
South of Kursky vokzal by the Yauza River is a two-storey house in a small park containing the Andrei Sakharov Museum. Its displays cover the life of Sakharov, the nuclear-physicist-turned-human-rights advocate, detailing the years of repression in Russia and providing a history of the

courage shown by the dissident movement. Temporary expositions cover current human-rights issues (see boxed text, below, for one example). There are signs in English and audio guides are planned. Look out for a piece of genuine Berlin Wall in front of the building.

ZAIKONOSPASKY MONASTERY

Map pp248-9

Nikolskaya ul 7-9; m Plushchad Revolyutsii This monastery was founded by Boris Godunov in 1600, although the church was built in 1660. The name means 'Behind the Icon Stall', a reference to the busy icon trade that once took place here. On the orders of Tsar Alexey, the Likhud brothers, scholars of Greek, opened the Slavonic Greek and Latin Academy on the monastery premises in 1866. (Mikhail Lomonosov was a student here.) The academy later became a divinity school, and was transferred to the Trinity Monastery of St Sergius (see p195) in 1814.

CHISTYE PRUDY

Eating p125; Shopping p157; Sleeping p166

Chistye Prudy, or 'Clean Ponds', refers to the lovely little pond that graces the Boulevard Ring at its intersection with ul Pokrovka. The Boulevard Ring is always a prime location for strolling, but the addition of the quaint pond makes this a desirable address indeed. Paddleboats in summer and ice skating in winter are essential parts of the ambiance. Pick a café and (depending on the season) sip a beer or a coffee while watching boaters or skaters go by.

This area was not always so swank. Back in the 17th century, it was the home of Moscow's meat markets and slaughterhouses. In fact, Myasnitskaya ulitsa means 'butcher street'. Peter the Great gifted the land to the merchant Alexander Menshikov, who cleaned up the area. As a part of this effort, Alexander renamed it Chistye Prudy. Besides the pond itself and the lovely architecture in the surrounding streets, the area is home to Moscow's first post office,

TRANSPORT

The area immediately around Chistye Prudy is easily accessible by the metro stop of the same name, as well as its connected station, Turgenevskaya. Komsomolskaya, on the Ring line, serves Komsomolskaya ploshchad. An intermediary stop near the Garden Ring is Krasnye Vorota.

founded in 1783 in one of the houses of the former Menshikov estate.

Northeast of here, the atmosphere changes radically at Komsomolskaya ploshchad. The three main train stations surrounding the square – and the diverse and dubious crowds that frequent them – make this one of Moscow's hairiest places.

This one square captures not only Moscow's social diversity, but also its architectural diversity. Kazansky vokzal (Kazan station; see p216 for services), on the south side of the square, was built between 1912 and 1926 and is a retrospective of seven building styles that date back to a 16th-century Tatar tower in Kazan. The style of architect Alexey Shchusev changed over the years, and his later work includes Lenin's tomb.

Leningradsky vokzal (Leningrad station; see p216), with the tall clock tower on the northern side of the square, is Moscow's oldest, built in 1851. It is very similar to its counterpart at the far end of the line, the Moscow station in St Petersburg. Yaroslavsky vokzal (Yaroslavl station; see p217) is a 1902–04 Art Nouveau fantasy by Fyodor Shekhtel.

The 26-storey 'wedding cake' west on Komsomolskaya ploshchad is Hotel Leningradskaya. One of Stalin's 'Seven Sisters' (see boxed text, p29), it is now home to the Agriculture Ministry, 600m south on the Garden Ring.

Orientation

From Lubyanskaya ploshchad, Myasnitskaya ulitsa heads northeast to the Boulevard Ring (here, Chistoprudny bulvar). This intersection is the location of the Chistye Prudy metro stop, although the pond itself is a little further south along the boulevard. Chistye Prudy encompasses the streets surrounding this area, stretching as far west as ulitsa Bolshaya Lubyanka and south to ulitsa

Pokrovka. From Chistye Prudy metro station, prospekt Akademika Sakharova goes further northeast to Komsomolskaya ploshchad, Moscow's transport hub.

MENSHIKOV TOWER Map p254

Arkhangelsky per; m Chistye Prudy Hidden behind the post office, this famous tower was built between 1704 and 1706 on the order of Menshikov from his newly founded estate. The tower – one of Moscow's first baroque buildings – was originally 3m taller than the Ivan the Great Bell Tower. A thunderstorm in 1723 saw it hit by lightning and seriously damaged by fire. Trouble plagued the owner as well. Menshikov fell from grace after the death of Peter the Great, and he was exiled to Siberia. The tower was neglected for several decades. When finally repaired in the 1780s, it lost much of its height and elegance. Today, it houses the working Church of Archangel Gabriel.

YELOKHOVSKY CATHEDRAL

Map pp246-7

Church of the Epiphany in Yelokhovo; www.mospat.ru; Spartakovskaya ul 15; m Baumanskaya Spartakovskaya ulitsa is the unlikely address of Moscow's senior Orthodox cathedral. This role was given to the Church of the Epiphany in Yelokhovo in 1943. (The Patriarch had been evicted from the Kremlin's Assumption Cathedral in 1918.) The Patriarch leads important services here today.

Built between 1837 and 1845 with five domes in a Russian eclectic style, the cathedral is full of gilt and icons. Not to mention old women kneeling, polishing, lighting candles, crossing themselves and kissing the floor. In the northern part of the cathedral is the tomb of St Nicholas the Miracle Worker (Svyatoy Nikolay Ugodnik). A shrine in front of the right side of the iconostasis contains the remains of St Alexey, a 14th-century metropolitan.

PETROVSKY DISTRICT

Eating p126; Shopping p157; Sleeping p167

Now restored to its fashionable prerevolutionary status, the Petrovsky District constitutes Moscow's glossiest central shopping area. Petrovsky Passage was one of the earliest converts to the consumer culture,

CAUTION: CENSORSHIP

In January 2003 Yuri Samodurov, director of the Sakharov Museum in Moscow, premiered a contemporary-art exhibit entitled 'Caution: Religion'. The exhibit cast a critical eye on the clash between the nascent Orthodox revival and the emerging mass-consumer culture in Russia. It depicted, among others, the image of Jesus on a Coke can and the Seven Deadly Sins being committed by an average Russian family in daily life. The message: despite the sharp increase in citizens who identify themselves as Orthodox Christian, it is the values and identities of mass-consumer culture that dominate post-communist society.

The exhibit elicited a shrill reaction from the Russian Orthodox Church, nationalist politicians and some patriotic hooligans, who were so offended by it that they vandalised the museum. The uproar attracted the attention of the state prosecutor.

The episode is revealing of the way in which Russia's long tradition of dissent has evolved in postcommunist times. Throughout the Soviet period, dissent most often took political forms, correcting the lies of the regime and exposing its brutalities. As a prime example, the museum's inspiration and namesake, Andrei Sakharov, spent nearly six years under house arrest in Nizhny Novgorod for criticising Soviet policy. When communism collapsed, some wondered if Russia's long tradition of dissent would fade away with the commissars. As evidenced by 'Caution: Religion', dissent in post-Soviet Russia has not disappeared, but it is taking on new cultural forms.

The case against heretical artists also highlights another side of postcommunist Russia. Under the administration of thin-skinned President Putin, free expression has been curtailed, independent media has been intimidated and human-rights advocates have been silenced. The regime that espoused liberal political values has come to reflect an embattled Russian nationalism.

The charges brought against the museum included inciting ethnic hatred and offending true believers. The prosecutor demanded – in the name of religious sensibility – that the exhibit should be destroyed and museum officials should be punished. In March 2005, a Moscow court handed down the verdict. Museum director Samodurov and his deputy were found guilty and ordered to pay a fine of R100,000 each. Outside the courthouse, angry Christians were not appeased. 'These kind of people should be beaten in the face', one true believer railed.

Samodurov said that he would appeal the court's finding, taking the case, if necessary, all the way to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. The communist dictatorship may have fallen, but the ghost of Andrei Sakharov still haunts the Kremlin.

TRANSPORT

The metro's green Zamoskvoretskaya line follows Tverskaya ulitsa north from Manezhnaya ploshchad past Belorussky vokzal (Belarus station). Stops include Teatralnaya (connecting with Okhotny Ryad and Ploshchad Revolutsii), Tverskaya (connecting with Pushkinskaya and Chekhovskaya), Mayakovskaya and Belorusskaya. Alternatively, Trolleybus Nos 12 and 20 run up and down Tverskaya ulitsa as far as Belorussky vokzal. For sights around ploshchad Nikitskie Vorota, Arbatskaya metro station is also useful.

Heading north, each busy intersection has its own unique personality, crowded shopping centres, metro stop and traffic jams. From the square that bears his name, a statue of Alexander Pushkin surveys his domain. Pushkin Cinema, Café Pushkin and Pushkinskaya metro station are all within sight; apparently Pushkin has taken the place of Lenin in New Russian ideology.

If the hustle and bustle of Tverskaya ulitsa wears you out, sneak away from the main drag for a breather. Many churches are tucked into these streets, including the 17th-century Church of SS Cosma and Damian, behind Tverskaya ploshchad. West of here, through the arch across Bryusov pereulok, is the unexpected gold-domed Church of the Resurrection, which is full of fine icons rescued from churches torn down during the Soviet era.

The pedestrian strip on Kamergersky pereulok is a prime people-watching spot. The trendy cafés and restaurants that line this side street provide perfect vantage points for Moscow's most beautiful people to don their shades and check each other out. Tverskoy bulvar – peaceful, pleasant and blooming with trees – is possibly the loveliest stretch of the Boulevard Ring; see the walking tour on p110 for more details.

Patriarch's Ponds, by the Garden Ring, hearkens back to Soviet days, when the parks were populated with children and babushkas. In the back streets around Bolshaya Nikitskaya ulitsa many old mansions have survived, some renovated, others dilapidated. Most of those inside the Boulevard Ring were built by the 18th-century aristocracy, outside, by rising 19th-century industrialists. With little traffic, Bolshaya Nikitskaya ulitsa is excellent for a quiet ramble (see p115).

Orientation

The bottom of Tverskaya ulitsa – at Manezhnaya ploshchad (see p65) – is the city's hub. From here, the busy street heads northwest, past the trendy pedestrian side street Kamergersky pereulok and the city's Central Telegraph office. The prominent Pushkinskaya ploshchad (Pushkin Square), marks the intersection of Tverskaya ulitsa with the Boulevard Ring (here, Tverskoy bulvar). Further northwest, Tverskaya ulitsa intersects with the Garden Ring at Triumfalnaya ploshchad. The metro stop still bears the square's former moniker, Mayakovskaya, named after the poet whose statue dominates the square. Just west of here is Patriarch's Ponds, flanked by one of Moscow's most exciting streets to eat out in, Spiridonovka pereulok (see p120).

Tverskaya ulitsa changes name to 1-ya Tverskaya Yamskaya ulitsa and continues northwest to Belorussky vokzal (Belarus station). For our purposes, the Tverskoy District encompasses the area that surrounds Tverskaya ulitsa, from ulitsa Bolshaya Dmitrovka in the east to Bolshaya Nikitskaya ulitsa in the south.

Bolshaya Nikitskaya ulitsa runs almost parallel to Tverskaya – from the Moscow State University building, on Mokhovaya ulitsa, to the Garden Ring. Ploshchad Nikitskie Vorota, where Bolshaya Nikitskaya ulitsa crosses the Boulevard Ring, is named after the Nikitsky Gates in the old city walls, which the ring has replaced.

CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN IN PUTINKI

Map pp248-9
ul Malaya Dmitrovka 4; m Pushkinskaya or Tverskaya

When this church was completed in 1652, the Patriarch Nikon responded by banning tent roofs like those featured here. Apparently, he considered such architecture too Russian, too secular and too far from the Church's Byzantine roots. Fortunately, the Church of the Nativity has survived to grace this corner near Pushkinskaya ploshchad.

CHURCHES OF THE GRAND & SMALL ASCENSION

Map pp248-9
Bolshaya Nikitskaya ul; m Arbatskaya
In 1831 the poet Alexander Pushkin married Natalya Goncharova in the elegant Church of the Grand Ascension, on the western

side of ploshchad Nikitskie Vorota. Six years later he died in St Petersburg, defending her honour in a duel. Such passion, such romance... The church is frequently closed, but the celebrated couple is featured in the Rotunda Fountain, erected in 1999 to commemorate the poet's 100th birthday.

Down the street, the festive Church of the Small Ascension sits on the corner of Voznesensky pereulok. Built in the early 17th century, it features whitewashed walls and stone embellishments carved in a primitive style.

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY MUSEUM

Map pp248-9
% 299 6724; www.sovr.ru; Tverskaya ul 21; admission R50; h 10am-6pm Tue-Sun; m Pushkinskaya or Tverskaya
Formerly known as the Revolution Museum, this retro exhibit traces Soviet history from the 1905 and 1917 revolutions up to the 1980s. The highlight is the extensive collection of propaganda posters, in addition to all the Bolshevik paraphernalia. Look for the picture of the giant Palace of Soviets

(Dvoretz Sovietov) that Stalin was going to build on the site of the blown-up – and now rebuilt – Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. English-language tours are available with advance notice.

GLINKA MUSEUM OF MUSICAL CULTURE

Map pp248-9
% 972 3237; ul Fadeeva 4; admission R50; h noon-7pm Tue-Sun; m Mayakovskaya
Musicologists will be amazed by this massive collection of musical instruments from all over the world. The museum boasts over 3000 instruments – handcrafted works of art – from the Caucasus to the Far East. Russia is very well represented – a 13th-century *gusli* (traditional instrument similar to a dulcimer) from Novgorod, skin drums from Yakutia, a *balalaika* (triangular, three-stringed instrument) by the master Semyon Nalimov – but you can also see such classic pieces as a violin made by Antoni Stradivari. Recordings accompany many of the rarer instruments, allowing visitors to experience what they sound like.

HOW MATRYOSHKA GOT HER START

Rare is the tourist that leaves Russia without a *matryoshka* – one of the most Russian of all souvenirs. The hand-painted wooden nesting doll which so symbolises Russia is not, as you might imagine, an ancient handcraft developed and perfected by generations of peasant families. Rather, the concept was adapted from a traditional Japanese toy.

In the 19th century, Russian artists were eager to embrace cultural styles that would unite traditional and modern elements, and contribute to the growing sense of national identity at that time. Savva Mamontov, a celebrated patron of the arts, established art studios at his Abramtsevo estate (p193) where artists could do just that. Toys were considered a particularly creative form of folk art, and Savva's brother, Anatoly, set up a workshop to revive and develop folk-peasant toys. In this workshop, Mamontov had a collection of toys from around the world, including a Japanese nesting doll depicting the Buddhist sage Fukuruma. Inspired by this prototype, the toy maker Vassily Zvizdochkin and the artist Sergei Maliutin created the earliest Russian nesting dolls, identifiable by their Slavic features and peasant dress.

During this time, Matryona and Matryosha were popular female names. Derived from the word for 'mother', the names conjured up images of a healthy, plump woman with plenty of children. Thus the diminutive of the name was applied to the nesting dolls, symbolic of motherhood, fertility and Mother Russia.

At the beginning of the 20th century, large-scale production of the Russian *matryoshka* began at the toy centre at Sergiev Posad. Here, artists developed a unique, realistic style of painting the dolls, depicting colourful scenes of village life, patriotic historical figures and beloved literary characters.

The Bolshevik regime began cracking down on this creative outlet as early as 1923. The exhibition and sale of any *matryoshki* not consistent with the regime's artistic or ideological goals were banned. The ban also included the depiction of such controversial figures as tailors, bakers and any entrepreneurial types; Gypsies (Roma), Jews and other ethnic groups; fantastical figures such as mermaids and goblins; and so on. Eventually, the *matryoshka's* diversity and creativity diminished, and she adopted one standard female image. Factory production began in the 1930s, and this 'art' was nearly lost.

The 1990s saw a revival of the more original *matryoshka*, designed and painted by individuals. Production returned to artists and craftsmen, who are free to paint whom and how they wish. As a result, modern-day *matryoshki* take on every imaginable character and style.

Once again (this time due to market forces), artists often get inspiration for this Russian handcraft from foreign sources. From Warner Brothers to the Bush brothers, from the Red Sox to the Red Wings, from the *Simpsons* to *Star Wars*, many Western popular cultural images are depicted on the dolls these days.

This incredible collection started with a few instruments that were donated by the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory at the end of the 19th century. The collection grew exponentially during the Soviet period. It was named after Mikhail Glinka in 1945, in honour of the nationalist composer's 150th birthday.

GORKY HOUSE-MUSEUM Map pp248-9
% 290 5130; Malaya Nikitskaya ul 6/2; admission free, photographs R100; 11am-6pm Wed-Sun; 1 Pushkinskaya or Tverskaya
This fascinating 1906 Art Nouveau mansion was designed by Fyodor Shekhtel and gifted to celebrated author Maxim Gorky in 1931. The house is a visual fantasy with sculpted doorways, ceiling murals, stained glass, a carved stone staircase and exterior tile work. Besides the fantastic décor, it contains many of Gorky's personal items, including his extensive library. A small room in the cupola houses random, rotating exhibits of contemporary or quixotic artwork.

LYUBAVICHESKAYA SYNAGOGUE
Map pp248-9
Bolshaya Bronnaya ul 6; 1 Pushkinskaya or Tverskaya
Converted to a theatre in the 1930s, this building was still used for gatherings by the Jewish community throughout the Soviet period. The rug on the altar hides a trapdoor leading to a small cell where Jews used to hide from the communists. Today the building serves as a working synagogue, as well as a social centre for the small but growing Jewish community in Moscow (see p13).

MATRYOSHKA MUSEUM Map pp248-9
% 291 9645; Leontevsky per 7; admission free; 10am-6pm Mon-Thu, 10am-5pm Fri; 1 Pushkinskaya or Tverskaya
On a quiet side street, the Matryoshka Museum – formerly the Museum of Folk Art – is a two-room museum showcasing designer *matryoshka* dolls and different painting techniques. The centrepiece is a 1m-high *matryoshka* with 50 dolls inside. The exhibit demonstrates the history of this favourite Russian souvenir. Don't come looking for modern-day pop-culture inspired dolls because the museum takes a traditionalist tact.

PATRIARCH'S PONDS Map pp248-9
Bolshoy Patriarshy per; 1 Mayakovskaya
Once this area contained several ponds that kept fish for the Patriarch's court (hence the name). Patriarch's Pond was immortalised by writer Mikhail Bulgakov, who had the devil appear here in *The Master and Margarita*. The initial paragraph of the novel describes the area to the north of the pond, where the devil enters the scene and predicts the rapid death of Berlioz.

Bulgakov's flat, where he wrote the novel and lived up until his death, is around the corner on the Garden Ring. Although the empty flat used to be a hang-out for dissidents and hooligans, it now has tight security appropriate to this high-rent district. The small park west of the Patriarch's Ponds, however, is still free for all. It's a popular spot for babushkas pushing strollers, lovers kissing on park benches and kids renting ice skates. It has a huge statue of 19th-century Russian writer Ivan Krylov, known to Russian children for his didactic tales.

BARRIKADNAYA

Eating p132; Shopping p159; Sleeping p168
Bolshaya Nikitskaya ulitsa intersects the Garden Ring at Kudrinskaya ploshchad, and the surrounding neighbourhood is known as Barrikadnaya, so called because it saw heavy street fighting and barricades during the 1905 and 1917 uprisings. Just south of here, along the Moscow River, is the site of one of Moscow's largest ongoing urban projects, known as Moscow-City (see p22). Indeed, the development plan includes the construction of a new mini metro line. Mayor Luzhkov has grand plans to move much of the city administration to this new urban centre.

The area seems, perhaps, an unlikely locale for a new town hall. But the World

Trade Centre (WTC) and the exhibition centres, and Krasnaya Presnya Park have made this neighbourhood a hotbed of business activity. Ulitsa 1905 goda, which heads north from the WTC, may not look hip-hop happening, but these staid Stalinist structures are home to some of Moscow's most innovative restaurants (see p120).

The neighbourhood is well and truly up-and-coming, with an emphasis on 'up'. Skyscrapers of glass and steel tower 20 stories over the rest of the city, shining like beacons to Moscow's wheelers, dealers and fortune seekers. Amid all the construction, the Stalinist Hotel Ukraina still stands on the opposite side of the river, almost a tribute to times gone by.

Orientation

Barrikadnaya centres around Kudrinskaya ploshchad, where Bolshaya Nikitskaya ulitsa and Povarskaya ulitsa intersect with the Garden Ring. This wide and noisy stretch of the Garden Ring (here, Novinsky bulvar) makes it easy to believe the story that the ring's widening and tree felling in the 1930s were done to enable warplanes to land. The skyscraper at Kudrinskaya ploshchad is one of the Stalinist neo-Gothic 'Seven Sisters' (see the boxed text, p29) – an apt landmark for this busy urban intersection.

The main road heading west out of the square is Barrikadnaya ulitsa, but it changes name to ulitsa Krasnaya Presnya, and then to Zvenigorodskoe shosse when it intersects with busy ulitsa 1905 goda.

South of here, the Moscow River loops up from the south. The northern bank of the river is marked by the impressive façades of the White House and the WTC, with more

tall glass and steel structures on the way. West of the WTC, a new pedestrian bridge connects two shiny skyscrapers on either side of the river.

CHEKHOV HOUSE-MUSEUM

Map pp248-9
% 291 6154; ul Sadovaya-Kudrinskaya 6; admission R30; 11am-5pm Tue-Sun; 1 Barrikadnaya
'The colour of the house is liberal, ie red', Anton Chekhov wrote of his house on the Garden Ring, where he lived from 1886 to 1890. The red house now contains the Chekhov House-Museum, with bedrooms, drawing room and study all intact. The overall impression is one of a peaceful and cultured family life. The walls are decorated with paintings that were given to Chekhov by Levitan (painter) and Shekhtel (Art Nouveau architect), who often visited him here. Photographs depict the playwright with literary greats Leo Tolstoy and Maxim Gorky. One room is dedicated to Chekhov's time in Melikhovo (see p207), showing photographs and manuscripts from his country estate.

MOSCOW ZOO Map pp248-9
% 253 6367; www.zoo.ru/moscow; cnr Barrikadnaya & Bolshaya Gruzinskaya uls; adult/child R80/free; 9am-8pm Tue-Sun Apr-Sep, 9am-5pm Tue-Sun Oct-Mar; 1 Barrikadnaya or Krasnopresnenskaya
Popular with families, this big zoo is surprisingly well maintained and populated with lots of wildlife, though enclosures are often too close for animal comfort. The highlight is the big cats exhibit, starring several Siberian tigers. Huge flocks of feathered

TRANSPORT

Conjoined metro stops Barrikadnaya and Krasnopresnenskaya serve this area. Another station called Ulitsa 1905 Goda is further west. A mini metro line now branches off from Kievskaya to serve the new Moscow-City development, including the new station at Delovoy Tsent and the coming-soon station at Mezhdunarodnaya.

THIS IMAGE
NOT AVAILABLE
IN PICK & MIX

friends populate the central pond, making for a pleasant stroll for bird-watchers. For a new perspective on Moscow's nightlife, check out the nocturnal animal exhibit. This interior space is artificially lit by night, so that the animals remain awake. The black lighting allows visitors to see them prowling around as they would during the dark-est hours.

For more four-legged fun, follow the footbridge across Barrikadnaya ulitsa to see the exhibits featuring animals from each continent.

SHALYAPIN HOUSE-MUSEUM

Map pp248-9

☎ 205 6326; Novinsky bul 25; admission R30;
 ⌚ 10am-5pm Tue & Sat, 11.30am-6pm Wed & Thu,
 10am-3.30pm Sun; 🗺 Barrikadnaya
 The world-famous opera singer, Fyodor Shalyapin (also spelt Chaliapin), lived in this quaint cottage from 1910 to 1920, with his Italian wife and five children. In Russian cultural life, the eminent bass stands alongside icons such as Konstantin Stanislavsky and Maxim Gorky. Indeed, his stature is evident from the museum exhibit, which features photographs of the singer in such

admirable company, as well as gifts and correspondence that they exchanged. More interesting for theatre buffs are the posters featuring Shalyapin's most celebrated performances, as well as original stage costumes. Occasional concerts are held in the museum's white room.

WHITE HOUSE

Map pp248-9
 Krasnopresnenskaya nab 2; 🗺 Krasnopresnenskaya or Barrikadnaya
 Moscow's White House, scene of two crucial episodes in recent Russian history, stands just north of Novoarbatsky most. It was here that Boris Yeltsin rallied the opposition that confounded the 1991 hardline coup, then two years later sent in tanks and troops to blast out conservative rivals – some of them the same people who backed him in 1991. The images of Yeltsin climbing on a tank in front of the White House in 1991, and of the same building ablaze after the 1993 assault, are among the most unforgettable from those tumultuous years.

The White House – officially called the House of Government of the Russian Federation (Dom pravitelstva Rossiyskoy federatsii) – fronts a stately bend in the Moscow River, with the Stalinist Hotel Ukraina rising

on the far bank. This corner of Moscow is particularly appealing when these buildings and Novoarbatsky most are lit up at night.

ARBAT DISTRICT

Eating p134; Shopping p160; Sleeping p169

Moscow's most famous street, ulitsa Arbat, is something of an art market, complete with instant portrait painters, soapbox poets, jugglers and buskers (as well as some pickpockets). It is undeniable that the Arbat today has been taken over by souvenir stands and pavement cafés. Nonetheless, it still evokes a free-thinking artistic spirit.

Near ulitsa Arbat's eastern end, the Wall of Peace is composed of hundreds of individually painted tiles on a theme of international friendship.

Just off the well-worn cobblestones of the Arbat lie the quiet lanes of old Moscow, a city once inhabited by writers and their heroes, old nobles and the nouveau riche. The era and its people are long gone, but you can still sense them in the grand houses they left behind. See p108 for details a walking tour that includes some of these grand houses.

Until the 1960s, ulitsa Arbat was Moscow's main westward artery. Then a swathe was bulldozed through the streets to its north, taking out the old Arbatskaya ploshchad, a monastery and half a dozen churches. The result was present-day ulitsa Novy Arbat – wide, fast and filled with traffic.

THE LAST OF MODERNISM IN MOSCOW

Clementine Cecil

Russia's seminal contributions to international modernist architecture are sparse, elegant buildings that stand out among Moscow's grand Stalinist parades and colourful Orthodox churches. But most of these buildings have gone without even basic maintenance since they were constructed in the late 1920s and early '30s, and now they are on the edge of extinction.

Narkomfin (Novinsky bul 25; 🗺 Barrikadnaya or Krasnopresnenskaya), the model for Le Corbusier's *Unité D'Habitation*, is set slightly back from the Garden Ring, wedged between the US embassy and Novinsky Passage shopping centre. On the World Monuments Fund Watch List since 2002, this building is an early experiment in semicomunal living, and a prototype for contemporary apartment blocks. Narkomfin was designed and built between 1928 and 1930 by Moisei Ginzburg and Ignatii Milinis for members of the National Finance Ministry. There was room for 50 families in duplex apartments. Communal space was maximised and individual space was minimised. Apartments had minute kitchens and people were encouraged to eat in the communal dining room in the neighbouring utilities block.

Narkomfin was built strictly on Corbusian principles: pillar supports, supporting frames, wall-screens, horizontal windows, open planning and flat, functional roofs. Yet it predated Le Corbusier's vertical city. The story goes that the young architect asked Ginzburg for copies of the layouts of the duplex apartments, which he took back to Paris and developed into his own revolutionary designs.

Despite its iconic status, Narkomfin is on the edge of collapse. Few Muscovites know of its existence, and so dilapidated is its façade that most who pass think it is an abandoned ruin. Half of its apartments are still inhabited but its roof is leaking and the walls are at the point of falling away due to water damage. The building is scheduled for demolition due to advanced deterioration, which has been speeded along by the recent construction of a shopping centre next door. Mayor Luzhkov has spoken openly against constructivist buildings, calling them 'flat-faced.' Moscow's chief architect, Alexander Kuzmin, grimly joked that the buildings are doomed, as 'they do not convert easily into casinos.'

Clementine is the cofounder of the Moscow Architecture Preservations Society (www.maps-moscow.com)

TRANSPORT

Two large squares – each with their own metro station – anchor the opposite ends of ulitsa Arbat. In the west, Smolenskaya metro is at Smolenskaya-Sennaya ploshchad; and in the east, Arbatskaya metro is at Arbatskaya ploshchad.

Note that both Smolenskaya and Arbatskaya are stops on the light-blue Filyovskaya line as well as the dark blue Arbatsko-Pokrovskaya line, which can be confusing. The really tricky part is that you cannot change lines between these stations, so make sure you go in the entrance serving the line that you need. The exception is the Arbatskaya stop on the Arbatsko-Pokrovskaya line, which is linked to other lines via Biblioteka imeni Lenina, Borovitskaya or Alexandrovsky Sad.

Orientation

The Arbat District centres on Arbatskaya ploshchad, the square formed at the intersection of Vozdvizhenka ulitsa (which runs west from the Kremlin), Novy Arbat ulitsa (which continues west to become the road to Smolensk) and the Boulevard Ring (here, Nikitsky bulvar). Wide, busy Novy Arbat slices the district almost in half.

Just south of the square, ulitsa Arbat (sometimes called 'stary Arbat', or 'old Arbat') is a 1.3km pedestrian mall that stretches to Smolenskaya-Sennaya ploshchad on the Garden Ring. On this square is one of Stalin's 'Seven Sisters', the Foreign Affairs Ministry. 'Stary' ulitsa Arbat defines the character of the neighbourhood. But it is sadly isolated by the busyness and traffic around Smolenskaya-Sennaya ploshchad and Arbatskaya ploshchad.

North of here (as far as Bolshaya Nikitskaya ulitsa), evocative names identify the area as an old settlement of court attendants: Khleby (bread), Skatertny (tablecloth), Serebryany (silver) and Plotnikov (carpenters). Aristocrats and artists eventually displaced the original residents, and the mansions that line the streets reflect that change. These days, many of these buildings are occupied by embassies and cultural institutions.

For the purposes of this book, the Arbat district extends over the Borodinsky most and the Novoarbatsky most to include the area known as Dorogomilovo, which is south of the Moscow River and around Kievsky vokzal (Kyiv or Kiev station).

BULAT OKUDZHAVA STATUE

Map pp248-9

ul Arbat; 🗺 Smolenskaya

The statue at the corner of Plotnikov pereulok is of Bulat Okudzhava, a 1960s cult poet, singer and songwriter, much of whose work was dedicated to the Arbat (he lived at No 43; see boxed text, p88).

GOGOL MEMORIAL ROOMS

Map pp248-9

☎ 291 1224; Nikitsky bul 7; admission free;

⌚ reading room noon-7pm Mon-Fri, memorial rooms noon-7pm Mon & Wed-Fri, noon-5pm Sat & Sun; 🗺 Arbatskaya

The 19th-century writer Nikolai Gogol spent his final tortured months here. The rooms – now a small but captivating museum – are arranged as they were when Gogol lived

ARBAT, MY ARBAT

Arbat, my Arbat, You are my calling.
You are my happiness and my misfortune.

Bulat Okudzhava

For Moscow's beloved bard Bulat Okudzhava, the Arbat was not only his home, it was his inspiration. Although he spent his university years in Georgia dabbling in harmless verse, it was only upon his return to Moscow – and to his cherished Arbat – that his poetry adopted the freethinking character for which it is known.

He gradually made the transition from poet to songwriter, stating that, 'Once I had the desire to accompany one of my satirical verses with music. I only knew three chords; now, 27 years later, I know seven chords, then I knew three.' While Bulat and his friends enjoyed his songs, the composers, singers and guitarists did not. The ill-feeling subsided when a well-known poet announced that '...these are not songs. This is just another way of presenting poetry.'

And so a new form of art was born. The 1960s were heady times – in Moscow as elsewhere – and Okudzhava inspired a whole movement of liberal-thinking poets to take their ideas to the streets. Vladimir Vysotsky and others – some political, others not – all followed in Okudzhava's footsteps, their iconoclastic lyrics and simple melodies drawing enthusiastic crowds all around Moscow.

The Arbat today – crowded with tacky souvenir stands and overpriced cafés – bears little resemblance to the hallowed haunt of Okudzhava's youth. But its memory lives on in the bards and buskers, painters and poets who still perform for strolling crowds on summer evenings.

here. You can even see the fireplace where he infamously threw his manuscript of *Dead Souls*. An additional 'reading room' contains a library of Gogol's work and other reference materials about the author. The quiet courtyard contains a statue of the emaciated, sad author, surrounded by some of his better-known characters in bas-relief.

HOUSE OF FRIENDSHIP WITH PEOPLES OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Map pp248-9

Vozdvizhenka ul 16; m Arbatskaya

The 'Moorish Castle' studded with seashells was built in 1899 for an eccentric merchant, Arseny Morozov, who was inspired by a real one in Spain. The inside is sumptuous and equally over the top. Morozov's mother, who lived next door, apparently declared of her son's home, 'Until now, only I knew you were mad; now everyone will.' This place is not normally open to the public, but sometimes exhibitions are held here.

LERMONTOV HOUSE-MUSEUM

Map pp248-9

% 291 5298; ul Malaya Molchanovka 2; adult/student/child R30/25/20; h 2-5pm Wed & Fri, 11am-4pm Thu, Sat & Sun; m Arbatskaya
'While I live I swear, dear friends, not to cease to love Moscow.' So wrote the 19th-

century poet Mikhail Lermontov about his hometown. The celebrated author of *A Hero of Our Time* lived in this little pink house on a small lane off Novy Arbat ulitsa. Here, he was raised by his grandmother, and wrote poetry and prose in the primitive office in the attic. Today, the cosy bungalow evokes the family's everyday life, displaying the poet's books, artwork and hobbies.

MELNIKOV HOUSE

Map pp248-9

Krivoarbatsky per 10; m Smolenskaya

This concoction of brick, plaster and diamond-shaped windows was built between 1927 and 1929 by Konstantin Melnikov – the great constructivist architect who was denounced in the 1930s. Melnikov continued to live in the house, one of the few privately owned homes in the USSR, until his death in 1974. The house is still owned by the architect's family and it is not usually open to the public, although Dom Patriarshy Tours occasionally brings groups here (see p54). For more details on the house, see the boxed text, opposite.

MUSEUM OF ORIENTAL ART

Map pp248-9

% 202 4555; Nikitsky bul 12A; admission R100;

h 11am-8pm Tue-Sun; m Arbatskaya

For the sake of accuracy, this impressive museum on the Boulevard Ring should

probably be called the Museum of Asian and African Art, as the collection of tens of thousands of pieces represents both continents. The collection covers an equally vast time period, from ancient times to the 20th century, including painting, sculpture and folk art. The exhibit also includes an interesting feature on Nikolay Rerikh (see p92), the Russian artist and explorer who spent several years travelling and painting in Asia.

PUSHKIN HOUSE-MUSEUM

Map pp248-9

% 241 4212; ul Arbat 53; admission R40;

h 10am-5pm Wed-Sun; m Smolenskaya

After Alexander Pushkin married Natalya Goncharova at the nearby Church of the Grand Ascension (see p82), they moved to this charming blue house on the old Arbat. The museum provides some insight into the couple's home life – a source of much Russian romanticism. (The lovebirds are also featured in a statue across the street.)

Literary buffs will appreciate the poetry readings and other performances that take place here, this place should not be confused with the Pushkin Literary Museum (p92), which focuses on the poet's literary influences.

KROPOTKINSKAYA

Eating p135; Sleeping p170

The obvious and inevitable centrepiece of Kropotkinskaya is the spectacular Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. Its sheer size and splendour guarantee its role as a love-it-or-hate-it landmark and controversy spark. It is amazingly opulent, garishly grandiose and truly historic. It is, no doubt purposefully, the defining feature of the neighbourhood.

It is not, however, the highlight of Kropotkinskaya. This graceful neighbourhood is a 'museum' of classical mansions, especially along ulitsas Prechestinka and Ostozhenka (see the walking tour, p108).

CONSTRUCTIVISM: ARCHITECTURE FOR A NEW MAN *Clementine Cecil*

Constructivism was part of the Russian avant-garde movement that followed the revolution, and lasted until Stalin's reactionary regime became entrenched in the early 1930s. The term first appeared in the early '20s, and has increasingly been associated only with architecture; the most visible of the arts. The new movement identified with the new political and social order; it represented the culture of the future. During this brief period, architects devised new forms of living for a 'New Man': the Soviet citizen.

It was a time of great experimentation in form, building materials and technology. Much of the building technology utilised in Constructivism came from the Bauhaus school. In the depression following WWI, foreign architects came to Russia to practice. However, this very internationalism led to the official rejection of constructivism. Under Stalin, contact with the West was deemed 'antirevolutionary', thus discrediting the buildings.

Constructivist buildings are light, transparent, full of windows, and stand on pillars. Stalin, with his iron fist, wanted a grander style proclaiming the might of the Soviet Empire as it entered a phase of economic prosperity. Architects were ordered to return to the classical model, so buildings were brought back down to earth from their pillar supports, and decoration began to dominate over function.

The **Melnikov House**, dating from 1927–29, was the only private house built under Communism. The plot of land was granted thanks to a rare moment of cultural vision on behalf of the authorities. The architect Melnikov created his new home from two interlocking cylinders.

The house was experimental also in its designation of living space. The whole family slept in one room, painted a golden yellow and divided by narrow wall screens. Melnikov softened the corners in the room, even those on the hexagonal windows, to create a soothing environment for peaceful sleep.

This house, an icon of the Russian avant-garde, is still intact and is inhabited by the architect's son, Viktor Melnikov, now in his nineties. Although blind, Viktor is a tireless guide and carrier of his father's vision. He has tried to keep the house exactly as it was when his father lived there, down to the tubes of paint scattered across his desk. Viktor sometimes shows around visitors who ring the bell, but due to his age and blindness, a tour is not always guaranteed.

This seminal work of architecture underwent restoration in the 1990s. However, the work was poorly executed and the house has been suffering from the after-effects ever since. The Moscow Architectural Preservation Society (MAPS) nominated this structure to the 2006 World Monuments Fund (WMF) Watch List. The organisation is presently raising money with the WMF for emergency repairs, while Viktor is trying to persuade the Culture Ministry to make the house-studio into a museum in his father's honour, and to undo the harm of previous preservation work.

TRANSPORT

This neighbourhood is served by Kropotkinskaya metro station. Sights in the southern part of the neighbourhood are also convenient to Park Kultury.

Furthermore, these streets are also home to a slew of world-class museums and art galleries, making Kropotkinskaya one of Moscow's most vibrant art districts. The Pushkin Fine Arts Museum and the neighbouring Museum of Private Collections are long-standing attractions for art lovers, housing unexpected but impressive collections. In recent years, the area has also seen a flourishing of smaller galleries.

Renovating and resurrecting some of the neighbourhood's incredible architecture, celebrated contemporary artists Zurab Tsereteli and Ilya Glazunov have both opened galleries. The Russian Academy of Art and the Moscow House of Photography exhibit varied work by up-and-coming artists. These new additions complement and add value to the Rerikh Museum, an often-overlooked gem featuring work by the mystical artist. Indeed, the grand cathedrals aside, Kropotkinskaya is a veritable goldmine for art lovers, who could easily spend several days appreciating all of its riches.

Orientation

Ulitsa Volkhonka branches out from the southwest corner of the Kremlin to the Boulevard Ring (here, Gogolevsky bulvar). This intersection is dominated by the massive Christ the Saviour Cathedral and the classical edifice of the Pushkin Fine Arts Museum. An incongruous Fredrick Engels oversees the activity from a corner of the square.

From here, ulitsa Prechistenka continues southwest to the Garden Ring. The equally grand ulitsa Ostozhenka heads more directly south, running somewhat parallel to the Moscow River. Ulitsa Ostozhenka intersects with the Garden Ring (here, Zubovsky bulvar) as the latter heads east to cross the Moscow River.

This neighbourhood borders the Arbat District in the north, with a rough boundary at pereulok Sivtsev Vrazhek. It is bounded in the west by the Garden Ring and in the south by the Moscow River.

CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE SAVIOUR

Map pp252-3

☎ 201 2847; www.xxc.ru; ul Volkhonka 15; admission free, guided tours R330; 11am-5pm daily, tours 2pm Sat-Sun; 11 Kropotkinskaya

This gargantuan cathedral now dominates the skyline along the Moscow River. It sits on the site of an earlier and similar church of the same name, built between 1839 and 1883 to commemorate Russia's victory over Napoleon. The original was destroyed during Stalin's orgy of explosive secularism. Stalin planned to replace the church with a 315m-high 'Palace of Soviets' (including a 100m statue of Lenin), but the project never got off the ground – literally. Instead, for 50 years the site served an important purpose: the world's largest swimming pool.

This time around, the church was completed in a mere two years and at an estimated cost of US\$350 million, in time for Moscow's 850th birthday in 1997. Much of the work was done by mayor Luzhkov's favourite architect Zurab Tsereteli (see the boxed text, p92), and it has aroused a range of reactions from Muscovites, from pious devotion to abject horror. Muscovites should at least be grateful they can admire the shiny domes of a church instead of the shiny dome of Lenin's head.

GLAZUNOV GALLERY Map pp252-3

☎ 291 6949; ul Volkhonka 13; adult/student R150/100; 11am-6pm Tue-Sun;

11 Kropotkinskaya

This elaborate Russian empire-style mansion, opposite the Pushkin Fine Arts Museum, houses a new gallery dedicated to the work of Soviet and post-Soviet artist Ilya Glazunov. Apparently this gallery was a long time coming, due primarily to the artist's own insistence on moulded ceilings, marble staircases and crystal chandeliers. But now it is open and the interior is impressive: three floors filled with fanciful illustrations of historic events and biblical scenes.

Glazunov is famous for his huge, colourful paintings that depict hundreds of people, places and events from Russian history in one monumental scene. His most famous work is *Eternal Russia* (*Bechnaya Rossiya*), while more recent examples are *Mystery of the 20th Century* and the *Market of our Democracy*. Such social commentary

is a rather recent development, of course; the artist's earlier work tended to focus on medieval and fairy-tale themes.

MOSCOW HOUSE OF PHOTOGRAPHY Map pp252-3

☎ 231 3325; www.mdf.ru; ul Ostozhenka 16; admission free; 11am-6pm; 11 Kropotkinskaya In addition to the exciting and innovative photography exhibits that are held on site, this gallery also organises the annual International Photography Festival, usually held in conjunction with a foreign partner. The result is widely acclaimed, cutting-edge contemporary photography, exhibited at venues around the city. Exhibits have also featured works from the archives of some prominent photographers from the Soviet period.

MUSEUM OF PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Map pp252-3

☎ 203 1546; ul Volkhonka 14; admission R40; 11 noon-7pm Wed-Sun; 11 Kropotkinskaya Next door to the Pushkin Fine Arts Museum, this smaller museum shows off art collections donated by private individuals, many of whom amassed the works during the Soviet era. Exhibits are organised around the collections, each as a whole, and the details of collectors and donors are displayed alongside the art. The centre-piece, perhaps, is the collection of the museum's founder, Ilya Silberstein, an accomplished historian of Russian literature and art. Other highlights include a collection of Old Believer icons from the 16th to 20th centuries, the Lemkul room exhibiting fantastic glassworks, and impressive exhibits of 20th-century artists such as Alexander Rodchenko and Barbara Stepanova.

TOP FIVE KROPOTKINSKAYA SIGHTS

- Cathedral of Christ the Saviour (opposite) This massive creation evokes a range of reactions.
- Glazunov Gallery (opposite) Huge colourful paintings in an impressive mansion.
- Pushkin Fine Arts Museum (right) Fabulous museum of foreign art.
- Rerikh Museum (p92) The place for lovers of fantastical art.
- Tolstoy Literary Museum (p93) Study the great man's literary influences.

PUSHKIN FINE ARTS MUSEUM

Map pp252-3

☎ 203 7998; www.museum.ru/gmii; ul Volkhonka 12; adult/student R300/150, audio guide R250; 11 10am-6pm Tue-Sun; 11 Kropotkinskaya This is Moscow's premier foreign-art museum. It is famous for its impressionist and postimpressionist paintings, but also has a broad selection of European works from the Renaissance onwards, mostly appropriated from private collections after the revolution. There is also an amazing (read: mind-numbing) array of statues through the ages.

Keep an eye open for any special exhibitions at the Pushkin. In recent years it has revealed some fabulous art hoards that were kept secret since seizure by the Red Army from Germany at the end of WWII. The museum is also making an effort to mount some ambitious temporary exhibitions from its vast legitimate holdings.

On display are many of the most famous paintings by Matisse, such as *Goldfish*; some lesser-known pieces by Picasso; a few exquisite primitive paintings by Rousseau; and works by Miro, Kandinsky and Chagall. The museum also contains several pieces by Van Gogh, including the scorching *Red Vineyards* and the tragic *Prison Courtyard*, painted in the last year of his life.

The extensive collection of French impressionist works is based on the collection of two well-known Moscow art patrons, Sergei Shchukin and Ivan Morozov. It includes representative paintings by Manet, Monet and Renoir, and sculptures from Rodin's *Gates of Hell* and *Monument to the Townspeople of Calais*. The rich collection of 20th-century art continues to grow, with recent additions by Arp and others.

The highlight of the Pushkin's permanent display is the four incredible rooms of impressionist and postimpressionist paintings and sculpture. But don't neglect the 17th-century Dutch and Flemish paintings, including the dramatic Rembrandts, especially his moving *Portrait of an Old Woman*.

The Ancient Civilisation exhibits contain a surprisingly excellent collection, complete with ancient Egyptian weaponry, jewellery, ritual items and tombstones. Most of the items were excavated from burial sites, including two haunting mummies. Another room houses the impressive exhibit *Treasures of Troy*, which is actually from the

excavation of a settlement dating to 2500 BC. A German archaeologist donated the collection to the city of Berlin, from where it was appropriated by the Soviets in 1945.

PUSHKIN LITERARY MUSEUM

Map pp252-3

☎ 202 8531; ul Prechistenka 12; admission R40; 11am-5.30pm Tue-Sun; 11 Kropotkinskaya Housed in a beautiful empire-style mansion dating from 1816, this museum is devoted to Russia's favourite poet's life and work. Personal effects, family portraits, (mostly) reproductions of notes and handwritten poetry provide insight into the work of the beloved bard.

The elegant interior recreates a fancy 19th-century atmosphere, especially the grand ballroom which is decorated with mirrors, sconces, chandeliers and heavy drapes. Several rooms are dedicated to Pushkin's specific works, demonstrating the links between his personal life and the poetry he produced. Perhaps the most interesting exhibit is 'Pushkin & His Time', which puts the poet in a historical context, demonstrating the influence of the Napoleonic Wars, the Decembrists' revolt and other historic events. This literary museum provides much more in-depth insights than the Pushkin House-Museum on ulitsa Arbat (p89).

RERIKH MUSEUM Map pp252-3

☎ 203 6419; Maly Znamensky per 3/5; adult/student R150/75; 11am-6pm Wed-Sun; 11 Kropotkinskaya

Nikolay Rerikh (known internationally as Nicholas Roerich) was a Russian artist from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, whose fantastical artwork is characterised by rich, bold colours, primitive style and mystical themes. This museum, founded by the artist's son, Sergei, includes work by father and son, as well as other family heirlooms and personal items. The artwork is intriguing: Rerikh spent a lot of time in the Altay Mountains of Siberia, Central Asia and India, so his paintings feature distinctive landscapes and mythological scenes. The building – the 17th-century Lopukhin manor – is a grand setting to admire the artwork.

RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF ART

Map pp252-3

☎ 201 4150; ul Prechistenka 21; R40; 11am-7pm Tue-Sun; 11 Kropotkinskaya Next door to the Tsereteli Gallery, the Russian Academy of Art hosts rotating exhibits in the historic 19th-century mansion of the Morozov estate. Despite the institutional-sounding name, this is part of the Tsereteli empire. But it still puts on inspired and varied shows featuring mostly contemporary Russian and foreign artists.

TOLSTOY LITERARY MUSEUM

Map pp252-3

☎ 202 2190; www.tolstoymuseum.ru; ul Prechistenka 11; adult/student R100/30; 11am-6pm Tue-Sun; 11 Kropotkinskaya Opposite the Pushkin Literary Museum is the Tolstoy Literary Museum, supposedly the oldest literary memorial museum in the world (founded in 1911). In addition to its impressive reference library, the museum contains exhibits of manuscripts, letters and artwork focusing on Leo Tolstoy's literary influences and output. Family photographs, personal correspondence and artwork from the author's era all provide insight into his work. This museum undoubtedly contains the largest collection of portraits of the great Russian novelist. Entire exhibits are dedicated to his major novels such as *Anna Karenina* and *War & Peace*. The museum does not contain so much memorabilia from Tolstoy's personal life, which is on display at the estate-museum in Khamovniki (p96).

TSERETELI GALLERY Map pp252-3

☎ 201 4150; ul Prechistenka 19; R150; 11am-6pm Tue-Sun; 11 Kropotkinskaya Housed in the 18th-century Dolgoruky mansion, this is the latest endeavour of the tireless Zurab Tsereteli. The gallery shows how prolific this guy is. The rooms are filled with his often over-the-top sculpture and primitive paintings. If you don't want to spend the time or money exploring the gallery, just pop into the Artist's Gallery café (see p135), which is an exhibit in itself.

KHAMOVNIKI

Eating p136; Sleeping p170

Set on a sort of peninsula formed by the Moscow River, Khamovniki feels a bit isolated. South of the Garden Ring, its streets are not so clogged with cars; its pavements are nearly empty; there is not a crane or wrecking ball in sight. Peaceful parks – Skver Devichego Poly (Maiden's Field) and Mandelshtam Park – offer respite to passers-by, but they are not as busy as the parks closer to the centre.

The Tolstoy Estate-Museum also maintains an air of an artist's retreat on the edge of town. At the southern end of ulitsa Lva Tolstogo is the beautiful Church of St Nicholas of the Weavers.

TRANSPORT

The red Sokolnicheskaya metro line runs from the city centre at Teatralnaya and Biblioteka imeni Lenina, via Kropotkinskaya, out to the district of Khamovniki. The stops here are Park Kultury (also on the Ring line), Frunzenskaya and Sportivnaya. If you prefer to travel above ground, you might consider taking trolleybus No 5 or 15, both of which run down ulitsas Prechistenka and Bolshaya Pirogovskaya from Kropotkinskaya metro station.

The district's outstanding attraction is the Novodevichy Convent and Cemetery. A cluster of sparkling domes behind turreted walls on the river, the convent is rich in history. The name 'Novodevichy' (New Maidens) probably originates from a market, once held in the locality, where Tatars bought Russian girls to sell to Muslim harems.

The huge Luzhniki sports complex (p151) occupies the area within the wide river bend southwest of the Novodevichy. Luzhniki – meaning 'marshes', which is what this area used to be – was the main venue for the 1980 Olympics. It is always a hive of activity. Across the river is Sparrow Hills and the vibrant area surrounding the Moscow State University (p106), which offers a remarkable contrast to sleepy Khamovniki.

Orientation

This region is surrounded on three sides by the Moscow River, as it dips down south and loops back up to the north. Its northern boundary is the Garden Ring. At its intersection with Bolshaya Pirogovskaya ulitsa (the extension of ulitsa Prechistenka), a brooding statue of Tolstoy sits in the park, Skver Devichego Poly. The Tolstoy Estate-Museum is just south of here on ulitsa Lva Tolstogo, while the Novodevichy Convent and Cemetery are about 1.6km further southwest.

CHURCH OF ST NICHOLAS OF THE WEAVERS Map pp252-3

Tserkov Nikolai v Khamovnikakh; ul Lva Totstogo; 11 Park Kultury

This church, commissioned by the weavers' guild in 1676, vies with St Basil's Cathedral for the most colourful in Moscow. The ornate green-and-orange-tapestry exterior houses an equally exquisite interior, rich in frescoes and icons.

LEAVING A MARK ON MOSCOW

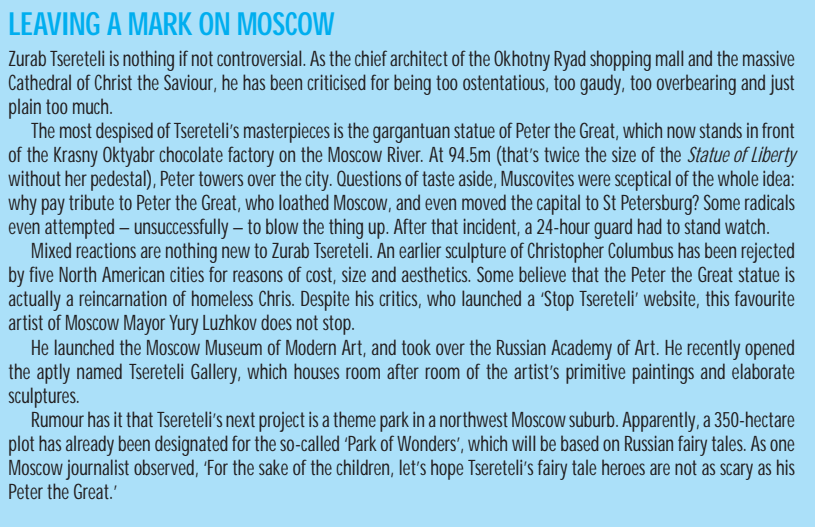
Zurab Tsereteli is nothing if not controversial. As the chief architect of the Okhotny Ryad shopping mall and the massive Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, he has been criticised for being too ostentatious, too gaudy, too overbearing and just plain too much.

The most despised of Tsereteli's masterpieces is the gargantuan statue of Peter the Great, which now stands in front of the Krasny Oktyabr chocolate factory on the Moscow River. At 94.5m (that's twice the size of the *Statue of Liberty* without her pedestal), Peter towers over the city. Questions of taste aside, Muscovites were sceptical of the whole idea: why pay tribute to Peter the Great, who loathed Moscow, and even moved the capital to St Petersburg? Some radicals even attempted – unsuccessfully – to blow the thing up. After that incident, a 24-hour guard had to stand watch.

Mixed reactions are nothing new to Zurab Tsereteli. An earlier sculpture of Christopher Columbus has been rejected by five North American cities for reasons of cost, size and aesthetics. Some believe that the Peter the Great statue is actually a reincarnation of homeless Chris. Despite his critics, who launched a 'Stop Tsereteli' website, this favourite artist of Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov does not stop.

He launched the Moscow Museum of Modern Art, and took over the Russian Academy of Art. He recently opened the aptly named Tsereteli Gallery, which houses room after room of the artist's primitive paintings and elaborate sculptures.

Rumour has it that Tsereteli's next project is a theme park in a northwest Moscow suburb. Apparently, a 350-hectare plot has already been designated for the so-called 'Park of Wonders', which will be based on Russian fairy tales. As one Moscow journalist observed, 'For the sake of the children, let's hope Tsereteli's fairy tale heroes are not as scary as his Peter the Great.'



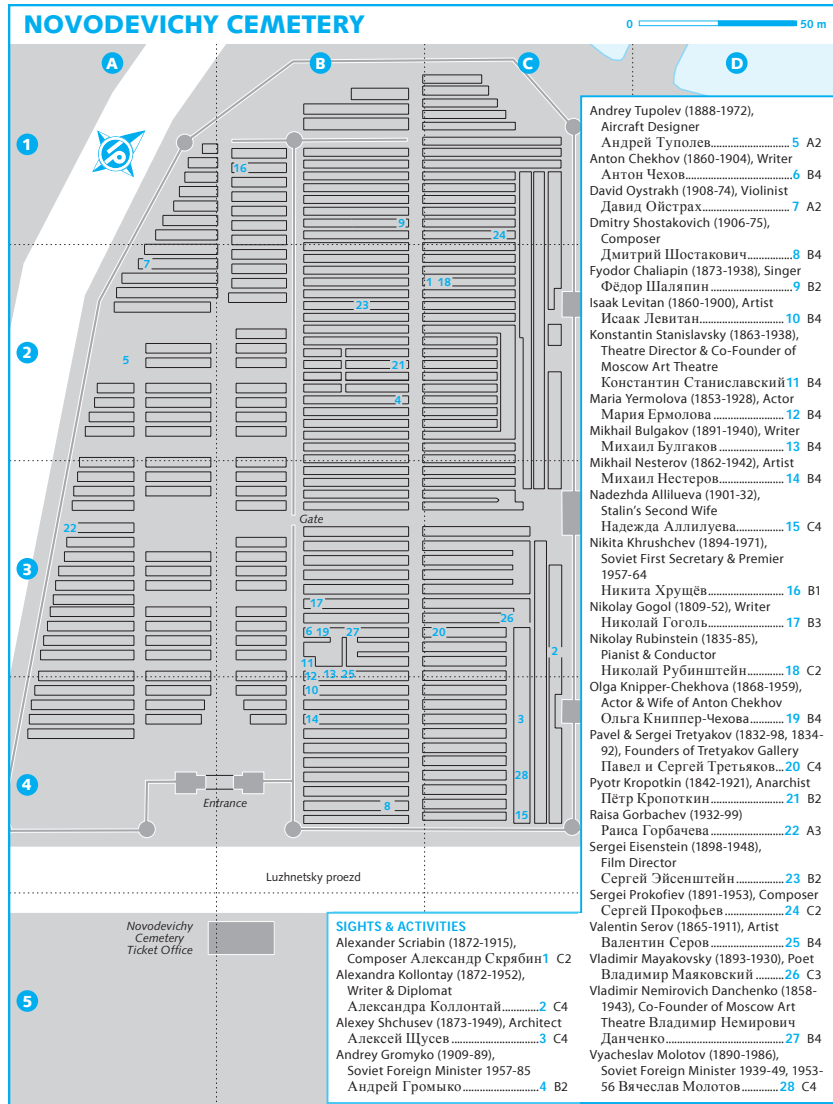
NOVODEVICHY CEMETERY Map pp252-3
Luzhnetsky proezd; admission R30; h 9am-6pm;

м Sportivnaya

Adjacent to the Novodevichy Convent, the Novodevichy Cemetery is one of Moscow's most prestigious resting places – a veritable 'who's who' of Russian politics and culture. Here you will find the tombs of Chekhov, Gogol, Mayakovsky, Prokofiev, Stanislavsky, Eisenstein and Gromyko,

among many other Russian and Soviet notables.

In Soviet times Novodevichy Cemetery was used for eminent people, whom the authorities judged unsuitable for the Kremlin wall, most notably, Khrushchev. The intertwined white-and-black blocks round Khrushchev's bust were intended by sculptor Ernst Neizvestny to represent Khrushchev's good and bad sides.



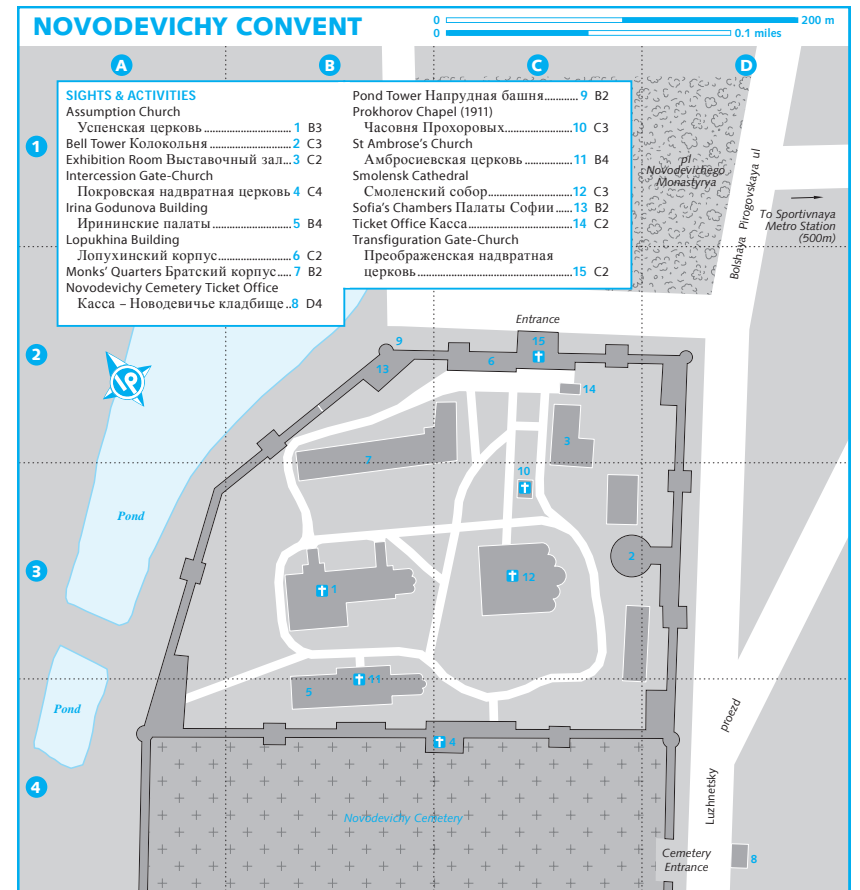
The tombstone of Nadezhda Alliluyeva, Stalin's second wife, is surrounded by unbreakable glass to prevent vandalism. A recent addition is Raisa Gorbachev, the sophisticated wife of the last Soviet premier, who died of leukaemia in 1999.

If you want to investigate this place in depth, buy the Russian map (on sale at the kiosk), which pinpoints nearly 200 graves.

NOVODEVICHY CONVENT Map pp252-3
% 246 8526; Luzhnetsky proezd; adult/student R150/75, photo permit R60; h grounds 8am-8pm daily, museums 10am-5pm Wed-Mon; м Sportivnaya
The Novodevichy Convent was founded in 1524 to celebrate the taking of Smolensk from Lithuania, an important step in Moscow's conquest of the old Kyivan Rus

lands. From early on, noblewomen would retire to the convent, some more willingly than others. Novodevichy was rebuilt by Peter the Great's half-sister, Sofia, who used it as a second residence when she ruled Russia as regent in the 1680s. By this time the convent was a major landowner: it had 36 villages and about 10,000 serfs around Russia.

When Peter was 17, he deposed Sofia and confined her to Novodevichy; in 1698 she was imprisoned here for life after being implicated in the Streltsy rebellion. (Legend has it that Peter had some of her supporters hanged outside her window to remind her not to meddle.) Sofia was joined in her enforced retirement by Yevdokia Lopukhina, Peter's first wife, whom he considered a nag.



You enter the convent through the red and white Moscow baroque Transfiguration Gate-Church, built in the north wall between 1687 and 1689. The first building on the left, after the ticket office, contains a room for temporary exhibitions. Yevdokia Lopukhina lived in the Lopukhin Building against the north wall, while Sofia probably lived in the chambers adjoining the Pond Tower.

The oldest and most dominant building in the grounds is the white Smolensk Cathedral, modelled in 1524–25 on the Kremlin's Assumption Cathedral. It was closed at the time of research, but the sumptuous interior is covered in 16th-century frescoes. The huge iconostasis – donated by Sofia – has some more icons from the time of Boris Godunov. The tombs of Sofia, a couple of her sisters and Yevdokia Lopukhina are in the south nave.

The bell tower, against the convent's east wall, was completed in 1690 and is generally regarded as the finest in Moscow. Other churches on the grounds include the red-and-white Assumption Church, dating from 1685 to 1687, and the 16th-century St Ambrose's Church.

Boris Godunov's sister, Irina, lived in the building adjoining the latter church. Today, Irina's Chambers hold a permanent exhibit of 16th- and 17th-century religious artwork such as icons and embroidery.

TOLSTOY ESTATE-MUSEUM

Map pp252-3
% 246 9444; www.tolstoymuseum.ru; ul Lva Tolstogo 21; adult/student R100/30; h 10am-5pm Wed-Sun; m Park Kultury
Leo Tolstoy's winter home during the 1880s and 1890s now houses an interesting mu-

seum dedicated to the writer's home life. While it's not particularly opulent or large, the building is fitting for junior nobility – which Tolstoy was. Exhibits here demonstrate how Tolstoy lived, as opposed to his literary influences, which are explored at the Tolstoy Literary Museum (see p93). See the salon where Rachmaninov and Rimsky-Korsakov played piano, and the study where Tolstoy himself wove his epic tales.

ZAMOSKVORECHIE

Eating p137; Shopping p161; Sleeping p170

Zamoskvorechie ('Beyond Moscow River') stretches south from opposite the Kremlin, inside a big loop in the river. South was the direction from which Tatars used to attack, so Moscow's defensive forces were stationed in Zamoskvorechie (Donskoy and Danilovsky Monasteries), along with quarters devoted to servicing the royal court.

After the Tatar threat abated, more and more merchants moved to the area from the noisy and crowded Kitay Gorod. Zamoskvorechie once boasted Moscow's greatest number of churches, built by merchants in the 17th and 18th centuries to secure luck in business. Only at the end of the 18th century were merchants joined by nobles, and later by factory owners and their workers. Playwright Alexander Ostrovsky, who lived here in the 19th century, often described the secluded life of Zamoskvorechie in his plays, including *Groza (The Storm)*.

Although this area was little damaged by Stalin, present-day critics claim that it has suffered at the hands of mayor Luzhkov and his developer-cronies. Certainly, con-

TRANSPORT

Tretyakovskaya and Novokuznetskaya metro stations serve the northern tip of Zamoskvorechie, near the Tretyakov Gallery. The northern part of this district is also accessible by walking over the Bolshoy Moskvoretsky most from the Kremlin, a route that traverses the island.

Oktyabrskaya metro station serves the square by the same name. Polyanka station lies in a sort of Zamoskvorechie no-man's land to the north of here. Gorky Park and the New Tretyakov are midway between Oktyabrskaya and Park Kultury stations – a 1km walk in either direction. At the eastern end of this district, Paveletskaya ploshchad has its own metro station by the same name.

struction marks every corner, each site representing another battle between local residents and municipal developers. The most controversial project is the planned development of the island between the Moscow River and the Vodootvodny Canal, which includes the conversion of the Krasny Oktyabr factory into luxury condominiums. Nonetheless, Zamoskvorechie is still a varied, intriguing area, which you can explore by following the walking tour described on p113.

Zamoskvorechie is also a thriving art district, thanks to the proliferation of galleries at the Central House of Artists (p161), not to mention both branches of the Tretyakov Gallery. From almost any vantage point in Zamoskvorechie you can see the giant sculpture of Peter the Great, product of the tireless Zurab Tsereteli (see the boxed text, p92).

Orientation

Directly south of the Kremlin, Zamoskvorechie is surrounded by the Moscow River on three sides. The Vodootvodny (Drainage) Canal slices across the top of this district, preventing spring floods in the city centre and creating a sliver of an island opposite the Kremlin.

The main roads, ulitsas Bolshaya Yakimanka, Bolshaya Ordynka and Pyatnitskaya run roughly parallel to each other, heading southward from the canal. Ulitsa Bolshaya Yakimanka terminates at busy Oktyabrskaya ploshchad, recently voted by Muscovites as the ugliest square in the city.

West of Oktyabrskaya ploshchad, along the Moscow River, is Gorky Park, the Sculpture Park and the massive New Tretyakov Gallery. East of Oktyabrskaya ploshchad, along the Garden Ring (here, ulitsa Zatsesky val), busy Paveletsky vokzal (Pavelets station) dominates the square of the same name.

BAKHRUSHIN THEATRE MUSEUM

Map p255
% 953 4470; ul Bakhrushina 31/12; admission R100; h noon-6pm Wed-Mon; m Paveletskaya
Russia's foremost stage museum, founded in 1894, is in the neo-Gothic mansion on the north side of Paveletskaya ploshchad. The museum exhibits all things theatrical – stage sets, costumes, scripts and personal items belonging to some of Russia's stage greats. The exhibits are not limited only to drama, but also trace the development of opera, ballet and puppetry. Highlights include the costumes and stage set from *Boris Godunov* (starring the famous bass, Fyodor Shalyapin) and the ballet shoes worn by Vaslav Nijinsky.

CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE WARRIOR

Map pp252-3
ul Bolshaya Yakimanka; m Oktyabrskaya
The finest of all Zamoskvorechie's churches mixes Moscow and European baroque styles, resulting in a melange of shapes and colours. It was commissioned by Peter the Great in thanks for his 1709 victory over Sweden at Poltava. Although it's a working church, it is often locked; the 17th-century iconostasis is reputedly a masterpiece.

TOP FIVE ZAMOSKVORECHIE SIGHTS

- **Danilovsky Monastery (p98)** The Orthodox Church's spiritual and administrative centre.
- **Gorky Park (p99)** Festive refuge from the hustle and bustle.
- **New Tretyakov Gallery (p99)** Showcase of 20th-century Russian art.
- **Sculpture Park (p100)** See the fallen heroes of the Soviet era.
- **Tretyakov Gallery (p100)** Superb Russian icons and other prerevolutionary art.

THIS IMAGE
NOT AVAILABLE
IN PICK & MIX

DANILOVSKY MONASTERY Map pp246-7

% 955 6757; Danilovsky val; admission free;

h 7am-7pm; m Tulsckaya

The headquarters of the Russian Orthodox Church stand behind white fortress walls. The Danilovsky Monastery was built in the late 13th century by Daniil, the first Prince of Moscow, as an outer city defence. It was repeatedly altered over the next several hundred years, and served as a factory and a detention centre during the Soviet period.

It was restored in time to replace Sergiev Posad as the Church's spiritual and administrative centre, and the official residence of the Patriarch during the Russian Orthodox's millennium celebrations in 1988. Today, it radiates an air of purpose befitting the Church's role in modern Russia.

On holy days this place seethes with worshippers murmuring prayers, lighting candles and ladling holy water into jugs at the tiny chapel inside the gates. Enter beneath the pink St Simeon Stylite Gate-Church on the north wall.

The monastery's oldest and busiest church is the Church of the Holy Fathers of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, where worship is

held continuously from 10am to 5pm daily. Founded in the 17th century and rebuilt repeatedly, the church contains several chapels on two floors: the main one upstairs is flanked by side chapels to St Daniil (on the northern side) and SS Boris and Gleb (south). On the ground level, the small main chapel is dedicated to the Protecting Veil, and the northern one to the prophet Daniil. The yellow and neoclassical Trinity Cathedral, built in the 1830s, is an austere counterpart to the other buildings.

West of the cathedral are the patriarchate's External Affairs Department and, at the far end of the grounds, the Patriarch's Official Residence. Against the north wall, to the east of the residence, there's a 13th-century Armenian carved-stone cross or *khachkar*, a gift from the Armenian Church. The church guesthouse, in the southern part of the monastery grounds, has been turned into the elegant Hotel Danilovskaya (p179).

DONSKOY MONASTERY Map pp246-7

% 952 1646; Donskaya ul; admission free;

h 7am-7pm; m Shabolovskaya

The youngest of Moscow's fortified monasteries, it was founded in 1591 and built

to house the *Virgin of the Don* icon (now in the Tretyakov Gallery). This revered icon is credited with the victory in the 1380 battle of Kulikovo; it's also said that in 1591, the Tatar Khan Giri retreated without a fight after the icon showed him with burning arrows in a dream.

Most of the monastery, surrounded by a brick wall with 12 towers, was built between 1684 and 1733 under Regent Sofia and Peter the Great. From 1918 to 1927 it was the Russian Orthodox Church headquarters; later it was closed as a monastery, falling into neglect despite being used as an architecture museum. Restored in 1990 and 1991, it's now back in Church hands.

The Virgin of Tikhvin Church over the north gate, built in 1713 and 1714, is one of the last examples of Moscow baroque. In the centre of the grounds is the large brick New Cathedral, built between 1684 and 1693; just to its south is the smaller Old Cathedral, dating from 1591 to 1593.

When burials in central Moscow were banned after the 1771 plague, the Donskoy Monastery became a graveyard for the nobility, and it is littered with elaborate tombs and chapels.

The Donskoy Monastery is a five-minute walk from Shabolovskaya metro. Go south along ulitsa Shabolovka, then take the first street west, 1-y Donskoy proezd.

GORKY PARK Map pp252-3

% 237 1266; ul Krymsky val; adult/child R50/15;

h 10am-10pm; m Park Kultury or Oktyabrskaya

Part ornamental park, part funfair, Gorky Park is one of Moscow's most festive places to escape the hubbub of the city. Officially the Park of Culture, it's named after Maxim Gorky, and stretches almost 3km along the river upstream of Krymsky most. You can't miss the showy entrance, marked by colourful flags waving in the wind and the happy sounds of an old-fashioned carousel.

Inside, Gorky Park has a small Western-style amusement park with two roller coasters and almost a dozen other terror-inducing attractions (aside from the view of the Peter the Great statue). Space buffs can shed a tear for the *Buran*, the Soviet space shuttle that never carried anyone into space. Most of the rides cost R30 to R60.

In winter, the ponds are flooded for skating and tracks are made for cross-country skiing. Skis/skates are available for rental for R50/80 per hour.

LENIN FUNERAL TRAIN Map p255

Traurny proezd V I Lenina, Paveletsky vokzal; admission free;

h 10am-6pm Mon-Fri; m Paveletskaya

The wide square on the Garden Ring is dominated by the Paveletsky vokzal (Pavelets station). The finest loco in the neighbourhood, however, stands idle in an air-conditioned pavilion just east of the station. It is the funeral train that brought Lenin's body to Moscow from Gorki Leninsk, where he died, in January 1924. The old steam engine is in beautiful condition, but does not attract many visitors these days. From Kozhevichenskaya ulitsa, cut behind the row of kiosks and through the overgrown park to the pavilion in the back.

NEW TRETYAKOV GALLERY

Map pp252-3

% 238 1378; www.tretyakov.ru; ul Krymsky val;

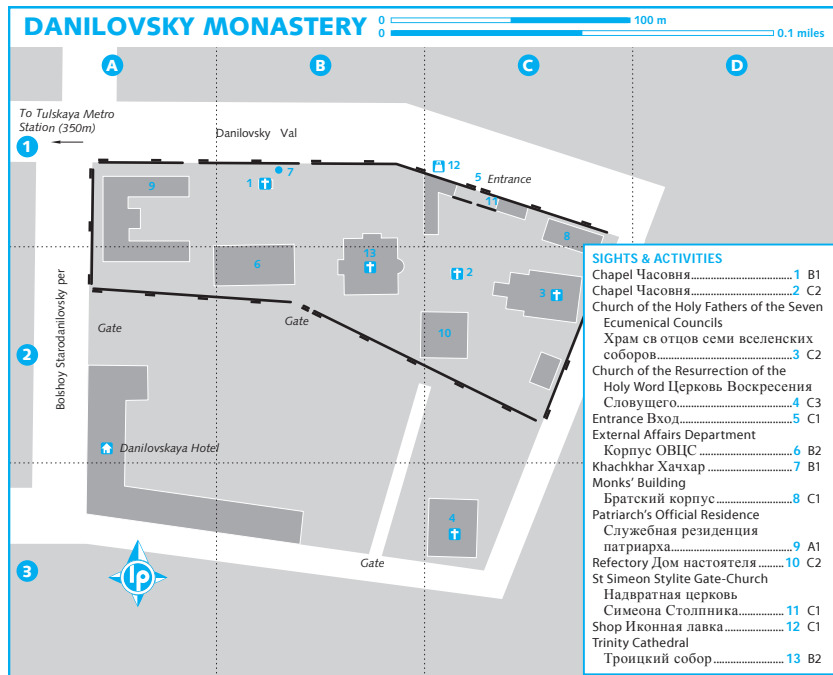
adult/student & child R225/130; h 10am-6.30pm

Tue-Sun; m Park Kultury or Oktyabrskaya

The premier venue for 20th-century Russian art is this branch of the State Tretyakov Gallery, better known as the New Tretyakov. This place has much more than the typical socialist realist images of muscle-bound men wielding scythes and busty women milking cows (although there's that too). The exhibits showcase avant-garde artists such as Malevich, Kandinsky, Chagall, Goncharova and Popova.

In the same building as the Tretyakov, the Central House of Artists (see p161) is a huge exhibit space used for contemporary-art shows.

THIS IMAGE
NOT AVAILABLE
IN PICK & MIX



OSTROVSKY ESTATE-MUSEUM

Map pp252-3

☎ 951 1140; ul Malaya Ordynka 9; admission R30; 11 noon-5.30pm Wed-Sun; 11 Tretyakovskaya Alexander Ostrovsky is the 19th-century playwright who is often considered the greatest Russian realist writer. This museum is devoted to his life and work for the Maly Theatre, which he founded, and to Zamoskvorechie, where he lived and loved. Some of the writer's personal effects are on display here. More intriguing are the paintings and engravings of old Moscow, which featured so prominently in Ostrovsky's work.

SCULPTURE PARK

Map pp252-3

☎ 290 0667; Krimsky val 10; admission R50; 11 9am-9pm; 11 Park Kultury or Oktyabrskaya The wonderful, moody Sculpture Park, behind and beside the New Tretyakov, is Moscow's most atmospheric spot to indulge in some Soviet nostalgia. Formerly called the Park of the Fallen Heroes, it started as a collection of Soviet statues (Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, a selection of Lenins and Brezhnev) put out to pasture after they were ripped from their pedestals in the post-1991 wave of anti-Soviet feeling. These discredited icons have now been joined by contemporary work, including an eerie bust of Stalin surrounded by heads representing the millions of purge victims.

TRETYAKOV GALLERY

Map pp252-3

☎ 951 1362, 953 5223; www.tretyakov.ru; Lavrushinsky per 10; adult/student R225/130, audio tour R120 extra; 11 10am-6pm Tue-Sun; 11 Tretyakovskaya Nothing short of spectacular, this branch of the State Tretyakov Gallery holds the world's best collection of Russian icons and an outstanding collection of other prerevolutionary Russian art, particularly the 19th-century *Peredvizhniki*, or Wanderers.

The original part of the building is a likeness of an old *boyar* castle, designed by Viktor Vasnetsov between 1900 and 1905. The collection is based on that of the 19th-century industrialist brothers Pavel and Sergei Tretyakov (Pavel was a patron of the *Peredvizhniki*).

Within the museum grounds is the Church of St Nicholas in Tolmachi where Pavel Tretyakov regularly attended services. It was trans-

ferred to this site and restored in 1997, and now functions as exhibit hall and working church. The exquisite five-tiered iconostasis dates back to the 17th century. The centrepiece is the revered 12th-century *Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God*, protector of all Russia.

The Tretyakov's 62 rooms are numbered and progress in chronological order from rooms 1 to 54, followed by eight rooms containing icons and jewellery. In rooms 20 to 30, the art of the most prominent *Peredvizhniki* artists occupies its own rooms. Look for Repin's realist work, including the tragic *Ivan the Terrible and his Son Ivan*, in rooms 29 and 30. A selection of Levitan's landscapes is in room 37. Vrubel's masterpieces, including *Demon Seated* (1890), are in rooms 32 and 33.

Icons are found on the ground floor in rooms 56 to 62. Rublyov's *Holy Trinity* (1420s) from Sergiev Posad, widely regarded as Russia's greatest icon, is in room 60.

Show up early to beat the queues. The entrance to the gallery is through a lovely courtyard; the Engineer's Building (Lavrushinsky per 12) next door is reserved for special exhibits. Thanks to a lavish renovation during the early 1990s, the gallery has wheelchair access.

ZAYAUZIE

Taganskaya ploshchad on the Garden Ring is the monster intersection – loud, dusty and crowded – that is the hub of Zayauzie, the area south of the little Yauza River. The district was originally developed in the 16th and 17th centuries as the territory of the blacksmith guild. Around the square, which was built up in the 1970s and 1980s, little remains from this early period, but traces of the past are still found in the streets that radiate from it.

TRANSPORT

Ploshchady Taganskaya and Ilycha have their own namesake metro stops. Taganskaya, which is on both the Ring line and the purple Tagansko Krasnopresnenskaya line, is also cojoined with Marksistskaya, on the yellow Kalininskaya line.

Another station further south is Proletarskaya (and cojoined Krestlanskaya Zastava station), which is the closest access point to the Novospassky Monastery

Wandering north on Goncharnaya ulitsa reveals a few unexpected architectural gems: several impressive classical mansions, an industrialist's manor house now known as Batashyov Palace and the charming church of St Nikita just beyond the Yauza. The whole area, however, is dwarfed by the Kotelnicheskaya Apartment, one of Stalin's Seven Sisters (see the boxed text, p29).

Zayauzie is dotted with 16th-century monasteries that also served as the outer ring of Moscow's defence system, including Novospasskaya and Andronikov. An Old Believers' Community still thrives east of here, as it has for hundreds of years. These historic monasteries somehow seem out of place amid the wide highways and mammoth apartment blocks that dominate the area. The flashing lights and traffic jams on Taganskaya ploshchad certainly represent another world.

This chaotic square is something of an entertainment district, boasting the renowned Taganka Theatre (p148), two legitimate jazz and blues clubs (p145) and a huge new casino. The impressive new Moscow International House of Music (p145) is just across the Moscow River.

Orientation

Zayauzie is a triangular-shaped area, southeast of the Kremlin. It is defined in the north by the little Yauza River, and in the west by the Moscow River. The heart of Zayauzie is Taganskaya ploshchad, which forms at the intersection of the Garden Ring (here, Narodnaya ulitsa and Zemlyanoy val) and several major roads. From the square, Taganskaya ulitsa shoots off to the east, Marksistskaya ulitsa heads on a diagonal to the southeast, and Bolshoy Komenshchiki ulitsa – which becomes Novospassky proezd – heads south toward the monastery of the same name. The Andronikov Monastery towers over the Yauza River to the northeast.

About 4km east of Taganskaya is another busy square, ploshchad Ilycha, formed at the intersection of Rogozsky val and shosse Entusiastov.

ECCLESIASTICAL RESIDENCE

Map p255

Krutijskoe Podvorye; 1-y Krutijsky per; admission free; 11 10am-6pm Wed-Mon; 11 Proletarskaya Across the road south of Novospassky Monastery is the sumptuous Ecclesiastic

Residence. It was the home of the Moscow metropolitans after the founding of the Russian patriarchate in the 16th century, when they lost their place in the Kremlin.

NOVOSPASSKY MONASTERY

Map p255

☎ 276 9570; Verkhny Novospassky proezd; admission free; 11 7am-7pm Mon-Sat, 8am-7pm Sun; 11 Proletarskaya Another 15th-century fort-monastery is 1km south of Taganskaya ploshchad: the New Monastery of the Saviour, or Novospassky Monastery.

The centrepiece, the Transfiguration Cathedral, was built by the imperial Romanov family in the 1640s in imitation of the Kremlin's Assumption Cathedral. Frescoes depict the history of Christianity in Russia; the Romanov family tree, which goes as far back as the Viking Prince Rurik, climbs one wall. The other church is the 1675 Intercession Church.

Under the river bank, beneath one of the monastery towers, is the site of a mass grave for thousands of Stalin's victims. At the northern end of the grounds are the brick Assumption Cathedral and an extraordinary Moscow-baroque gate tower.

OLD BELIEVERS' COMMUNITY

Map pp246-7

Starobryadcheskaya Obshchina; admission free; 11 9am-6pm Tue-Sun; 11 Ploshchad Ilycha One of Russia's most atmospheric religious centres is the Old Believers' Community, located at Rogozhskoe, 3km east of Taganskaya ploshchad. The Old Believers split from the main Russian Orthodox Church in 1653, when they refused to accept certain reforms. They have maintained old forms of worship and customs ever since. In the late 18th century, during a brief period free of persecution, rich Old Believer merchants founded this community, among the most important in the country.

The yellow classical-style Intercession Church contains one of Moscow's finest collections of icons, all dating from before 1653, with the oldest being the 14th-century *Saviour with the Angry Eye* (*Spas yaroo oko*), protected under glass near the south door. The icons in the deesis row (the biggest row) of the iconostasis are supposedly by the Rublyov school, while the seventh, *The Saviour*, is attributed to Rublyov himself. North of the church is the Rogozhskoe Cemetery.

Visitors are welcome at the church, but women should take care to wear long skirts (no trousers) and headscarves. The community is a 30-minute walk from ploshchad Ilycha. Otherwise, take trolleybus No 16 or 26, or bus No 51, east from Taganskaya ploshchad; get off after crossing a railway. Rogozhskoe's tall, green-domed 20th-century bell tower is clearly visible to the north.

RUBLYOV MUSEUM OF EARLY RUSSIAN CULTURE & ART

Map p254
% 278 1467; Andronyevskaya pl 10; adult/student R85/40; h 11am-6pm Thu-Tue; m Ploshchad Ilycha
On the grounds of the former Andronikov Monastery, the Rublyov Museum exhibits icons from days of yore and from the present. Unfortunately, it does not include any work by its acclaimed namesake artist. It is still worthwhile visiting, not least for its romantic location. Andrei Rublyov, the master of icon painting, was a monk here in the 15th century; he's buried in the grounds, but no-one knows quite where.

In the centre of the monastery grounds is the compact Saviour's Cathedral, built in 1427, the oldest stone building in Moscow. The cluster of *kokoshniki*, or gables of colourful tiles and brick patterns, is typical of Russian architecture from the era. To the left is the combined rectory and 17th-century Moscow-baroque Church of the Archangel Michael; to the right, the old monks' quarters house the museum.

OUTER MOSCOW

Eating p138; Shopping p161; Sleeping p179

Moscow extends all the way to the Outer Ring Road, a multilane highway known as MKAD (p76). And the city continues to sprawl, especially as large international stores, shopping centres and movie theatres spring up on the outskirts. Retailers are real-

TRANSPORT

No less than 14 branches of the metro extend out from central Moscow. More often than not, there is a stop near your destination, which is specified in the listings below. If additional transport is required, such as a bus or trolley from the metro stop, this information is provided in the review.

ising that Muscovites – who now own cars – are willing to drive to places that offer lower prices and larger selections. Furthermore, there are few space constraints on the outskirts, meaning cheaper real estate and bigger stores.

By the same token, people are moving to the outskirts. The Russian version of suburban sprawl comes in two forms: gated communities containing the mansions of Moscow's nouveaux riches, who choose not to live in the busy centre; and massive Soviet-style blocks housing Muscovites who can't afford to live any closer to the centre.

Outer Moscow offers a few sights to lure the traveller out of the centre, not to mention a vast array of accommodation options that are more affordable than those in the centre.

Orientation

The main roads heading north out of the centre are: Leningradsky prospekt (also called Leningradskoe shosse further north), which is the continuation of Tverskaya and Tverskaya-Yamskaya ulitsas; and prospekt Mira, which is the continuation of ulitsas Sretenka and Bolshaya Lubyanka. The former heads toward Sheremetyevo airport, while the latter is where you will find Rizhsky Market and the All-Russia Exhibition Centre.

West of the centre, Kutuzovsky prospekt leads to the Borodino Panorama, Victory Park and beyond. The neighbourhood known as Fili is just north of here.

In the southwest, Moscow State University dominates the neighbourhoods around Sparrow Hills. Both prospekts Vernadskogo and Leninsky head out of the centre through the neighbourhood known as Yugo-Zapadnaya, or 'southwest'. Varshavskoe shosse comes directly south out of the centre through Zamoskvorechie to the Donskoy and Danilovskoy Monasteries and beyond. Prospekt Andropova leads from Taganskaya ploshchad to the Kolomenskoe Museum-Reserve.

Heading east, Shcholkovskoe shosse leads to the long-distance bus station, passing just north of Izmaylovsky Park. Shosse Entuziastov passes just south of Izmaylovsky Park. Ryazansky prospekt runs further south, passing Kuskovo Park.

NORTH OF THE CENTRE ALL-RUSSIA EXHIBITION CENTRE

Map pp246-7

Vserossiyskiy Vystavochny Tsentr (VVTs); % 544 3400; www.vvcentre.ru; h pavilions 10am-6pm, grounds 9am-7pm; m VDNKh
No other place sums up the rise and fall of the great Soviet dream quite as well as the All-Russia Exhibition Centre. The old initials by which it's still commonly known, VDNKh, tell half the story – they stand for Vystavka Dostizheny Narodnogo Khozyaystva SSSR (USSR Economic Achievements Exhibition).

Originally created in the 1930s, the VDNKh was expanded in the 1950s and '60s to impress upon one and all the success of the Soviet economic system. Two kilometres long and 1km wide, it is composed of wide pedestrian avenues and grandiose pavilions, glorifying every aspect of socialist construction from education and health to agriculture, technology and science. The pavilions represent a huge variety of architectural styles, symbolic of the contributions from diverse ethnic and artistic movements to the common goal. Here you will find the kitschiest socialist realism, the most inspiring of socialist optimism and, now, the tackiest of capitalist consumerism.

VDNKh was an early casualty when those in power finally admitted that the Soviet economy was in dire straits – funds were cut off by 1990. Today, as the VVTs, it's a commercial centre, with its pavilions given over to sales of the very imported goods that were supposed to be inferior; much of the merchandise on sale is low-priced clothing and the like from China. The domed Kosmos (Space) pavilion towards the far end became a wholesaler for TV sets and VCRs, and Lenin's slogan 'Socialism is Soviet power plus electrification' still adorns the electrification pavilion to its right. Although you may not want to do your shopping here, VVTs does host international trade exhibitions.

For tourists, it's a fascinating visit to see the remnants of socialism's achievements. Muscovites are not so easily amused, however. Fortunately the new VVTs also offers other distractions, including an amusement park, paint ball, a stocked fish pond and an open-air circus.

CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE ARMED FORCES

Map pp246-7
% 681 6303; ul Sovetskoy Armii 2; admission R30, English-language guided tour R650; h 10am-4.30pm Wed-Sun; m Novoslobodskaya
Covering the history of Soviet and Russian military since 1917, this massive museum occupies 24 exhibit halls, plus open-air exhibits. Over 800,000 military items, including uniforms, medals and weapons, are on display. Among the highlights are remainders of the American U2 spy plane (brought down in the Urals in 1960), and the victory flag raised over Berlin's Reichstag in 1945. Take trolleybus No 69 (or walk) 1.3km east from the Novoslobodskaya metro.

COSMONAUTICS MUSEUM

Map pp246-7
% 283 7914; adult/child R40/20, English audio guide R100; h 10am-7pm Tue-Sun; m VDNKh
The soaring 100m titanium obelisk outside the All-Russia Exhibition Centre is a monument 'To the Conquerors of Space', built in 1964 to commemorate the launch of Sputnik. In its base is the Cosmonautics Museum, a high-concept series of displays from the glory days of the Soviet space program. Exhibits rely heavily on cool space paraphernalia – Yuri Gagarin's space suit, the first Soviet rocket engine, and lots of charts and diagrams of various expeditions. The highlight is the awe-inspiring video footage from various orbit missions. Sadly there is no gift shop selling freeze-dried astronaut food.

OSTANKINO PALACE & TOWER

Map pp246-7
% 286 6288; admission R40; h 10am-6pm Wed-Sun mid-May-Sep; m VDNKh
The pink-and-white Ostankino Palace, a wooden mansion with a stucco exterior made to resemble stone, was built in the 1790s as the summer pad of Count Nikolai Sheremetev, probably Russia's richest aristocrat of the time. Its lavish interior, with hand-painted wallpaper and intricate parquet floors, houses the count's art treasures. The centrepiece is the oval theatre-ballroom built for the Sheremetev troupe of 250 serf actors, who also played in Kuskovo Park (see p104). In 1801 Count Nikolai married one of the troupe, Praskovia Zhemchugova, and the two retired to Ostankino to avoid court gossip.

Only the Italian Pavilion is open for visits. The hours are limited, and it's closed on days when it rains or when humidity is over 80%.

After a fire in 2000, the 540m Ostankino TV Tower closed to the public, although it still provides a distinctive landmark for the area. Apparently, the tower has been repaired – complete with an observation platform and a sky-high café – and is expected to reopen soon.

To reach Ostankino Palace, walk west from VDNKh metro, across the car parks, to pick up tram No 7 or 11, or trolleybus No 13, 36, 69 or 73 west along ulitsa Akademika Korolyova.

EAST OF THE CENTRE

IZMAYLOVO PARK & ROYAL ESTATE

Map pp246-7

№ 166 5881; Izmaylovskoe sh; admission free; h 11.30am-5pm Wed-Sun; m Partizanskaya Izmaylovo is best known for its extensive arts and crafts market (see p162), held every weekend beside the royal estate. After shopping, Izmaylovsky Park and the crumbling royal estate are nice for a picnic or more serious outdoor activity.

A former royal hunting reserve 10km east of the Kremlin, Izmaylovsky Park is the nearest large tract of undeveloped land to central Moscow. Its 15 sq km contain a recreation park at the western end, and a much larger expanse of woodland (Izmaylovsky Lesopark) east of Glavnaya alleya, the road that cuts north-south across the park. Trails wind around this park, making it a good place to escape the city for hiking or biking. To get there, head south (away from the giant Hotel Izmaylovo complex) from Partizanskaya metro.

The royal estate is on a small, moated island to the northwest of the park. Tsar Alexey had an experimental farm here in the 17th century, where Western farming methods and cottage industries were sampled. It was on the farm ponds that his son Peter learnt to sail in a little boat; he came to be called the Grandfather of the Russian Navy.

Past an extensive 18th-century barracks (now partly occupied by the police) is the beautiful five-domed 1679 Intercession Cathedral, an early example of Moscow baroque. The nearby triple-arched, tent-roofed

Ceremonial Gates (1682) and the squat brick bridge tower (1671) are the only other original buildings remaining. The latter contains an exhibition hall.

KUSKOVO PARK & MANSION

Map pp246-7
№ 370 0160; ul Yunosti 2; admission per exhibit R50-150; h 10am-4pm Wed-Sun Nov-Mar, to 6pm Wed-Sun Apr-Oct; m Ryazansky Prospekt When Count Pyotr Sheremetev married Varvara Cherkassakava in 1743, their joint property amounted to 1200 villages and 200,000 serfs. They turned their country estate at Kuskovo, 12km east of the Kremlin, into a mini-Versailles, with elegant buildings scattered around formal gardens, as well as an informal park. It's a pleasant trip out from central Moscow.

The main wooden mansion, Kuskovo Mansion, overlooks a lake where the count staged mock sea battles to entertain Moscow society. Across the lake to the south is the informal park. North of the mansion in the formal grounds are an orangery, now housing an exhibition of 18th- to 20th-century Russian ceramics; an open-air theatre, where the Sheremetev troupe of serf actors performed twice weekly; a pond-side grotto with exotic 'sea caverns'; a Dutch house, glazed inside with Delft tiles; an Italian villa; a hermitage for private parties; and a church with a wooden bell tower.

The buildings are closed when humidity exceeds 80% or when it's very cold, counting out much of the winter.

Bus Nos 133 and 208 go from Ryazansky Prospekt metro to the park.

SOUTH OF THE CENTRE

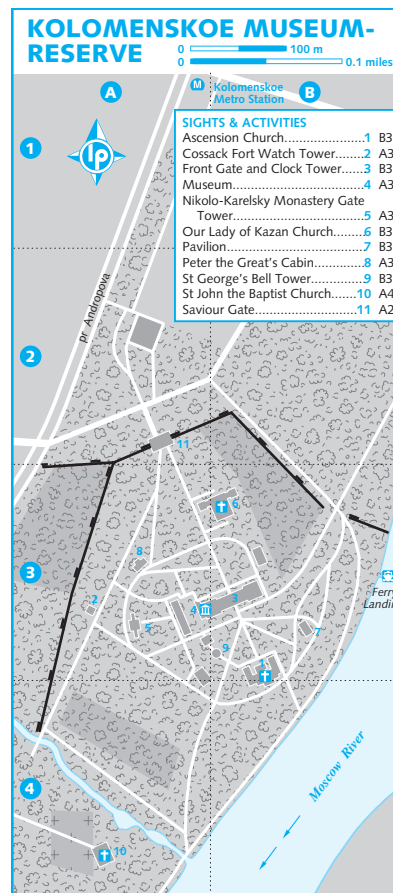
KOLOMENSKOE MUSEUM-RESERVE

Map pp246-7

№ 115 2768; admission grounds free; h grounds 10am-9pm, museum & cabin 10am-5pm; m Kolomenskaya

Set amid 4 sq km of parkland, on a bluff above a bend in the Moscow River, the Kolomenskoe Museum-Reserve is an ancient royal country seat and Unesco World Heritage Site. Many festivals are held here during the year, so check if anything is happening during your visit.

From Bolshaya ulitsa, enter at the rear of the grounds through the 17th-century Saviour Gate to the whitewashed Our Lady of Kazan Church, both built in the time of Tsar Alexey.



The church faces the site of his great wooden palace, which was demolished in 1768 by Catherine the Great. Ahead, the white, tent-roofed 17th-century front gate and clock tower mark the edge of the old inner palace precinct. The golden double-headed eagle that tops the gate is the symbol of the Romanov dynasty.

The adjacent buildings house an interesting museum (adult/child R300/100) with a bit of everything: a model of Alexey's wooden palace, material on rebellions associated with Kolomenskoe, and Russian handcrafts from clocks and tiles to woodcarving and metalwork.

Outside the front gate, overlooking the river, rises Kolomenskoe's loveliest structure, the quintessentially Russian Ascension Church. Built between 1530 and

1532 for Grand Prince Vasily III, it probably celebrated the birth of his heir, Ivan the Terrible. It is actually an important development in Russian architecture, reproducing the shapes of wooden churches in brick for the first time, and paving the way for St Basil's 25 years later. Immediately west of it are the round 16th-century St George's Bell Tower and another 17th-century tower.

About 300m further southwest across a gully, the white St John the Baptist Church was built for Ivan the Terrible in the 1540s or 1550s. It has four corner chapels that make it a stylistic 'quarter-way house' between the Ascension Church and St Basil's.

Among the old wooden buildings on the grounds, is Peter the Great's cabin (adult/child R200/100), where he lived while supervising ship and fort building at Arkhangelsk.

Tsaritsino Palace

Map pp246-7
№ 921 0139; admission R100; h 11am-5pm Wed-Fri, 10am-6pm Sat & Sun; m Orekhovo or Tsaritsino

On a wooded hill in far southeast Moscow, Tsaritsino Palace is the eerie shell of the exotic summer home that Catherine the Great began in 1775 but never finished. She allowed architect Vasily Bazhenov to work on it for 10 years before sacking him; apparently he had included a twin palace for her out-of-favour son, Paul. She hired another architect, Matvey Kazakov, but eventually gave up altogether as money was diverted to wars against Turkey. What stands now is mostly Bazhenov's fantasy combination of old Russian, Gothic, classical and Arabic styles.

The Great Palace is merely a shell of a building, nonetheless impressive for all its arches and towers. Rebuilding is often talked about, but long in coming. The palace is surrounded by equally enticing outbuildings: the Opera House, a near-perfect venue for concerts; the ornate kitchen (*khibny dom*); and the light-filled Small Palace, which sometimes houses exhibits. The Patterned Bridge, which you are likely to pass under en route to/from the metro, is so called for the ornate Gothic designs adorning the pink brick.

The English-style wooded park stretches all the way south to the Upper Tsaritsinsky Pond, which has rowing boats available for hire in summer, and west to the Tsaritsino Palace complex.

WEST OF THE CENTRE

BORODINO PANORAMA Map pp246-7

№ 148 1967; Kutuzovskiy pr 38; adult/student R50/30; h 10am-5pm Sat-Thu; m Park Pobedy or Kutuzovskaya

Following the vicious but inconclusive battle at Borodino (see p205) in August 1812, Moscow's defenders retreated along what are now Kutuzovskiy prospekt and ulitsa Arbat, pursued by Napoleon's Grand Army. Today, about 3km west of Novoarbatsky most and Hotel Ukraina (where Russian commander Mikhail Kutuzov stopped for a war council) is the Borodino Panorama, a pavilion with a giant 360° painting of the Borodino battle. Standing inside this tableau of bloodshed – complete with sound effects – is a powerful way to visualise the event.

The Triumphal Arch, further out, celebrates Napoleon's eventual defeat. It was demolished at its original site in front of the Belorusskaya metro station during the 1930s and reconstructed here in a fit of post-WWII public spirit.

About 1.5km north of the Borodino Panorama in the neighbourhood of Fili, you will discover the 1690s Church of the Intercession, a beautiful red-brick Moscow baroque confection.

MEMORIAL SYNAGOGUE AT

POKLONNAYA HILL Map pp246-7

№ 148 1907; Minskaya ul; admission free; h 10am-6pm Tue-Thu, noon-7pm Sun; m Park Pobedy

This synagogue opened in 1998 as a part of the complex at Victory Park (see following). It is a memorial to Holocaust victims, as well as a museum of the Russian Jewry. Admission is with a guide only, so you must make arrangements in advance, especially if you want a tour in English. Otherwise, you might be able to join an existing group.

MUSEUM OF THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR & VICTORY PARK

Map pp246-7
№ 142 4185; ul Bratiev Fonchenko 10; admission R30; h 10am-5pm Tue-Sun; m Park Pobedy

To the west of the Borodino Panorama, Victory Park is a huge memorial complex celebrating the Great Patriotic War. The park includes endless fountains and monuments, the Memorial Synagogue at Poklonnaya Hill (see left) and the memorial Church of St George. The dominant monument is a 142m obelisk (every 10cm represents a day of the war).

The Museum of the Great Patriotic War, located within the park, has a diorama of every major WWII battle the Russians fought in. Exhibits highlight the many heroes of the Soviet Union, and also show weapons, photographs, documentary films, letters and many other authentic wartime memorabilia.

SPARROW HILLS

Map pp246-7
Universitetskaya ploshchad; m Vorobyovy Gory
The best view over Moscow is from Universitetskaya ploshchad on the Sparrow Hills. From here, most of the city spreads out before you. It is also an excellent vantage point to see Luzhniki, the huge stadium complex built across the river for the 1980 Olympics, as well as Novodevichy Convent and the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

Behind Universitetskaya ploshchad is the Stalinist spire of Moscow State University (Moskovsky Gosdarstvenny Universitet), one of the 'Seven Sisters'. The building, is the result of four years of hard labour by convicts between 1949 and 1953. It boasts an amazing 36 stories and 33km of corridors. The shining star that sits atop the spire is supposed to weigh 12 tonnes. Among other socialist realist frills on the façade, look for the eager students looking forward to communism. The building is not open to the public, which is a shame, because the lobby is equally elaborate, featuring bronze statues of distinguished Soviet scientists.

© Lonely Planet Publications. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'