

U.K. Aims to Boost Tourism From Russia

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Britain on Tuesday announced a goal to increase the number of visitors from Russia.

The country hopes that in seven years, the figure will be 75 percent higher than it was in 2011, said the British Tourist Authority, also known as VisitBritain.

"It's our ambition to welcome 370,000 Russian visitors a year by 2020," said Patricia Yates, the agency's director of strategy and communications.

"In 2011, we saw a promising 24 percent increase in the number of Russian visitors. That growth has continued into 2012," Yates said.

VisitBritain said that compared with the average tourist, Russians are more likely to visit museums, galleries, theaters and concerts.

"Over 210,000 Russians visited Britain in 2011, spending an average £1,450 per visit, nearly triple the average global spend," the agency said.

VisitBritain said Russians see Britain as an attractive destination. A survey after the London Olympics in 2012 found that they ranked Britain in the top five countries for culture and tourism.

About 66 percent of those surveyed said the games had increased their interest in visiting Britain for a vacation.

"This year will see an abundance of opportunities to entice more Russian visitors to Britain, sustaining the buzz created by the showpiece year that was 2012," the agency said.

Russians can enjoy the 200th anniversary of Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice," the opening of the Shard skyscraper, the year of natural Scotland and the arrival of a royal baby, VisitBritain said.

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