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Billionaire to Open $500 Million Russian History Theme Park

By The Moscow Times

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Flames bursting from behind a viking longship at the Puy du Fou theme park in France's coastal Vendee region.

Russian billionaire Konstantin Malofeyev has signed an agreement with a French theme park company to build Russia's first historically themed amusement park with investments totaling up to 18 billion rubles ($512 million), Vedomosti reported Monday.

"We want to create not so much an entertainment park as a place for several hours of immersion in the history of Russia through a tremendous performance," Malofeyev told the newspaper, adding that the project is unprecedented in the Russian tourism market.

To bring the idea to life, Malofeyev, founder of the Marshall Capital investment group, has teamed up with Puy du Fou International, the company behind the popular historical theme park Puy du Fou in the Vendee region in western France, which attracts about 1.5 million visitors a year.

The company's president, Nicolas de Villiers, told the newspaper that they are prepared to co-invest in and manage the project.

"Russia needs a major tourism projects aimed at developing its economy and celebrating its past," Puy du Fou founder and French politician Phillippe de Villiers was quoted as saying in a joint statement with his son Nicolas.

A representative of the Moscow region's investment department confirmed knowledge of the plans.

Malofeyev did not specify the exact location of the park, but said that it will be built on 300 hectares of land near the Hotel Tsargrad — a hotel and entertainment complex that Malofeyev owns in the Moscow region. The park will be opened in 2.5 to three years' time, he said.

To read more about investment in Moscow visit **The Moscow City Government External Economic and International Relations Department** website.

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