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7 Things to Do in Moscow Before the End of the Summer

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You can feel it: summer is already slipping away, and in no time we will be back to business as usual. Luckily, Moscow's varied cultural calendar has still plenty to offer before the last ray of sun is gone.

The Moscow Times selects 7 of the best activities and events taking place in the capital in July and August.

1. 14th Festival of Israeli Cinema

Pioner Cinema is bringing to Sokolniki Park a project that will thrill those who have been dreaming of sunny days and open-air cinemas.

Famous for being one of the few places in Moscow to show foreign films in the original version, Pioner is teaming up with the the Israeli Embassy to present the 14th Festival of Israeli Cinema, a program of outdoor screenings, featuring Israeli comedies, thrillers, detective stories and dramas. Amoc Gitai's adaptation of Aharon Appelfeld's 1982 novel "Tsili" and the gripping psychological thriller "The Man in the Wall" are among the selected titles, many of which have already enjoyed a warm welcome at

various international festivals.

The festival, which started on July 12, runs until Aug. 17, with shows held weekly on Monday evenings. All films are shown in Hebrew with Russian subtitles.

Why go? For an unconventional Monday evening alfresco: a warm blanket, a cup of hot tea and a film to remember.

Details

2. Tripster's Three-Day Art Lecture Series

Travel service Tripster presents a series of lectures titled "How to Understand and Enjoy the Works of Art." Held in top art venues, such as the Museum of Moscow and the Manezh Exhibition Hall, everyone — regardless of age or level of education — is invited to join for a short crash course on symbolism and art history.

The program consists of three 2-hour lectures, starting at 7:00 p.m. on working days and 12:00 p.m. on weekends. Renowned artists and art historians from Moscow's best universities will guide the participants through an experience filled with interactive elements, practical tasks and discussions. The lectures aim to awaken a genuine interest in art, by providing a well-structured and comprehensive overview of different styles and epochs in art history.

The price of a ticket for a three-lecture series is 2700 rubles. The last lesson is scheduled for Aug. 15.

Why go? If you have always wanted to see more than an enigmatic smile in Leonardo Da Vinci's "Mona Lisa" and make sense of Pablo Picasso's "Guernica."

Details

3. Yayoi Kusama's Infinity Theory at Garage Museum

Since the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art unveiled its new building last June, modern art lovers in Moscow have been braving long waits and never-ending queues just for a peak inside the world of Yayoi Kusama.

"Infinity Theory," the Japanese artist's solo exhibition at the new Gorky Park venue, offers the visitors an exclusive sensory and psychological experience. By blurring the line between reality and illusion, art enabled Kusama to deal with her inner struggles with depression and mental illness — the result is a creative approach that elicits and challenges the modern collective imaginary.

The exhibition features two installations: the psychedelic "Infinity Mirrored Room — The Souls of Millions of Light Years Away" (2013) and "Guidepost to the Eternal Space" (2015), covered in the artist's famed red and white polka-dot pattern.

Why go? According to the reviews, the surreal one-minute experience in the Infinity Mirrored Room is worth queuing for, if only for the Instagram-worthy setting. Say selfie!

Details

4. Meet&Greet's Wednesday Evening Cooking Lessons

Young and enthusiastic, the three founders of food project Meet&Greet have been touring food

festivals in Moscow with their pop-up restaurants for a couple of years.

Set on sharing their love for food with the world, they also organize public and private master cooking lessons. This summer, they present a weekly course focused on dinners. By the end of each session, the participants will have learned how to prepare two dishes. No matter whether you look to Julia Childs or Ratatuille for inspiration, this promises to be a mouthwatering experience.

Classes start at 8:00 p.m. and cost 1800 rubles per person. All sessions are held at Meet&Greet's Open Kitchen. Due to high demand, booking is essential.

Why go? If you call yourself a foodie, want to learn to cook something other than a fried egg, or are an amateur chef looking to add some variety to your weekly menu — these classes will give you much more than dry theory.

Details

5. Free Classes at Hermitage Garden

From Aug. 2 until the end of the month, Hermitage Garden is offering outdoor free classes to keep you moving and shake off the stress of the big city life.

Yoga, World Class outdoor workouts, English classes for kids, historical ballroom dancing... There is plenty to choose from — even for the pickiest of visitors. Alongside traditional summer activities such as table tennis and Zumba, innovative training programs and bonding ballet classes for mothers and kids feature on the program.

Why go? This is the opportunity for those who struggle to keep their New Year resolutions — most classes run in the evenings and weekends. No excuses to be lazy.

Details

6. Soviet Photography Exhibition at the Lumiere Brothers Center

When wandering around the center of Moscow on a summer day, one can't help but wonder what life must have been like at the time of the Soviet Union. The Lumiere Brothers Center for Photography offers a chance to indulge in the past with its "Soviet Photo" exhibition, running until Sept. 6.

"Soviet Photo" explores the evolution of Soviet photography through the prism of Sovetskoye Foto (Soviet Photo), the country's biggest photography magazine in the 20th century. From 1926 to 1997, the publication featured key figures in Soviet photography, whose work can now be admired at the center. Running through the historic milestones of the Russian revolution, World War II and the fall of the Soviet Union, the project has an epic feel that will leave you mesmerized.

Why go? Whether you want to give your children an interactive history lesson, or take your parents on a trip down memory lane, this exhibition will not disappoint.

Details

7. Summer Book Club at Goncharovsky Park

For a quieter afternoon, eager literature-lovers can enjoy books and bean bags in the peaceful oasis of Goncharovsky Park until Sept. 15. The "Summer Book Club" allows visitors to borrow titles from a wide selection, while providing participants with the opportunity to meet other bibliophiles through

book exchanges, lectures and master classes, on every Saturday and open to both adults and children.

The park also holds children book clubs for younger readers, featuring book readings and discussions with the authors, at 3:00 p.m. every Wednesday. Book clubs for adults run at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday.

Why go? If you are yet alien to modern Russian literature, or in need of some guidance to get you back into reading — this is the event for you.

Details

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