The Moscow Times
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

How to Spend the Golden Autumn in Moscow

By The Moscow Times

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Pixabay

The red and gold hues of autumn have arrived,▣which means a mad dash to enjoy frost-free pavements and squirrel-filled parks▣before the chill properly sets in. There are plenty of ways to warm up this season,▣be it enjoying an outdoor market, with a cup of something hot by a roaring fire▣or taking a brisk walk in the great outdoors. So go on, wrap up warm and▣embrace the season.

Hot Cocktails

Kick the frosty chill

A guaranteed spirit-raiser in the darkening days▣of the year, a warming cup of something just a little bit alcoholic has to be▣one of the few advantages of the chillier months ahead. Living in Moscow▣needn't mean having to sacrifice your standards when it comes to the

perfect brew. An age-old favorite has to be the mulled wine and authentic grog — a heady mix of rum, cinnamon and lemon — at Scandinavia restaurant.

Alternatively, head to Noor bar for more inventive offerings, from a steaming apple toddy to hot eggnog with a twist. Another picturesque option is Veranda 32.05 in the Hermitage Garden, which serves up no less than three mulled wine variants including one with a fiery splash of ginger. Alternatively, buy a bottle of Italian red wine from your local supermarket, heat on the stove and add sugar (to taste), some grated nutmeg, a few whole cloves, a vanilla pod, cinnamon stick and your preferred citrus fruit.

scandinavia.ru

noorbar.com

veranda3205.ru

Golden Autumn Festival

Harvest time

You may have noticed that over the past week, makeshift markets and indulgent pumpkin and wheat bedecked displays have been popping up in many of the city's squares. This is all part of the "Golden Autumn" festival, which will run through Oct. 9 at 49 different sites across the city. Foodies can enjoy perusing fresh, seasonal produce from across the fertile motherland, including speciality cheese, meat and fish. Many of the areas will run quirky demonstrations, such as tea ceremonies, ship building master classes (running on the fishing theme) and open-air cooking schools for gourmands old and young. The aim of the festival is not only to celebrate the nation's bounty of delicious food products but to also get people thinking about from where the food on their plates comes. Whether that interests you or not, no one can refuse a steaming cup of medovukha — a traditional honey-based drink — or blini fresh from the hot plates.

mos.ru/city/festivals/autumn2016

Various locations

Through Oct. 9

Enjoy Mushroom Season

An ode to the humble fungi

Are your social media feeds clogged with pictures of your Russian pals and their bounty of scavenged toadstools? If you're longing to get in on the action, a few words of advice. Setting out on an amateur mushroom hunt in the city's parks is not the best idea. First, mushrooms are rather active biological organisms and easily absorb all kinds of nasties from the surrounding environment. Second, if you don't know what you're doing, you could easily mistake an edible puffball for a juvenile death cap (the clue is in the name). Your best bet is

to find a knowledgeable native willing to invite you to their out-of-town dacha and give you a crash course in forest foraging.

If that all seems like a bit too much effort why not head to the namesake restaurant by the White Rabbit group? Dried, salted, pickled or freshly picked, Mushrooms is out to prove to you that mushrooms needn't be an afterthought. Tuck into the porcini risotto (710 rubles) or enjoy the exotic enokitake ramen soup (480 rubles).

Mushrooms

mushroomsmoscow.ru

22 Bolshaya Yakimanka, Metro Polyanka

Cozy up by a Fire

Enjoy the blaze of an open hearth

Let's face it, there's nothing better than the glow of a fire to warm the cockles of your heart, and your frozen fingers. With many of the city's residents living in apartment blocks, Muscovites often have to search further afield to find a toasty glow. Those feeling decadent, or celebrating a special occasion, could head to the beautiful 19th-century-inspired Cafe Pushkin, which boasts a grand fireplace room, a richly decorated interior and a Russian and French fusion menu.

Keeping with the historical theme, lovers of neo-Gothic architecture will be dazzled by the fairy-tale interior of The Central House of Writers, known by its Russian name "Tsentralny Dom Literatorov" (TsDL). The grand central hall features not only a stunning chandelier — gifted by Stalin to writer Maxim Gorky — but also a grand fireplace, providing the perfect setting for you to feast like a tsar.

cafe-pushkin.ru

restcdl.ru

Stretch Your Legs

Feast your eyes on the season's colors

If you're on the hunt for colorful foliage and crisp fresh air, Moscow has a wealth of parks, estates and grounds to explore. Tsaritsyno, to the southeast of the city, is an obvious choice when it comes to getting lost in nature. The rural palace was commissioned by Catherine the Great in 1775, although the complex then lay in ruins for many years. After a series of renovations, the estate, nestled in acres of beautiful woodland, is looking grander than ever. Head for a wander around the large ponds, explore sun-dappled trails and warm up afterward by heading to the palace, which boasts a museum, a number of ever-changing exhibitions and a cafe.

Alternatively, head to Kolomenskoye,▣situated high on a curve of the Moscow River. The former royal estate with its▣orchards, 1532 Ascension church and great wooden palace is a wonderful place to▣lose yourself for an afternoon. You'll see many locals feeding the squirrels —▣get involved if you dare. If you don't have the time to head out of the city▣center, there are plenty of tree-lined boulevards to enjoy in Gorky Park and▣around Tverskaya.

tsaritsyno-museum.ru

mgomz.com/kolomenskoe

Izmailovo Kremlin Crafts Fair

Artisan crafts and seasonal fun

Channel your inner country bumpkin this weekend▣at the colorful Izmailovo Kremlin autumn crafts fair. The annual event, which▣attracts more than 200 artisans from across Russia, brings a little bit of the▣good ol' country life to the capital. For one weekend only, dozens of hay▣figures will populate the complex and a makeshift barn will appear where▣visitors can feast, frolic and perhaps even discover a little bit of that▣illusive "Russian soul." Meanwhile, there will be plenty to keep little countrymen and women occupied:▣from demonstrations by professional blacksmiths and potters to folk musicians▣performing fun-to-say instruments like the balalaika and gusli. As is▣traditional on the day of the fair, the Izmailovo Kremlin's museums will all be▣open for free, so if you've been dying to learn about the history of Russian▣vodka, visit the Museum of Bread — yes, that's a thing — or visit the hut of▣Baba Yaga, this is a prime opportunity. Afterward, buy some natural honey,▣gingerbread or dried fish from Siberia to remember your grand day out.

Izmailovo Kremlin

kremlin-izmailovo.com

73 Izmailovskoye Shosse, Metro Partizanskaya

Oct. 1-2 from noon until 6 p.m

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