The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Hitting the Slopes and Cross Country Skiing in Moscow

January 26, 2017



Volen **VOLEN**

Moscow might not be the French Alps, but low altitudes don't mean an end to your dreams of hitting the slopes this winter. Whether you're a seasoned snow-bunny or someone looking to make the most of a Russian winter, here's our round-up of the best resorts in the region. Every complex offers equipment rental for both snowboarders and skiers.

Meshchersky Park

Ideal conditions for cross-country

Just outside the city limits in Odinstovo is a relatively new park in a remarkably pristine country environment. The parkland — 465 hectares, or about 1,150 acres — is a nice mix of forests and fields with a large pond. Most of it is left in a pristine state for outdoor fun, but they also maintain some paths and routes for crosscountry skiing — a total of five tracks, ranging from just over a kilometer to four kilometers. The tracks vary in width from three to six meters, making them comfortable for both fast and slow skiers. You

can rent skis there or bring your own, and they have trainers on hand to help improve your style. Check out the site for upcoming events, like the 30K race on Feb. 12. Head out this week and start getting in shape for it.

Leonid Tyagachev Club

Where stars are born

Another out-of-town resort, the Leonid Tyagachev Club can boast of being the oldest ski resort in Moscow, as well as the training base for many Olympian skiers from the Soviet era. In fact, to this day, the Russian mountain skiing and snowboarding teams still train here. The complex, 40 kilometers north of Moscow, is home to nine ski runs, several cross-country ski trails that remain well-lit into the night, and all the amenities of a country getaway: chalets, a hotel, a spa, tennis courts and an ice rink. The decor hasn't changed much in the last 50 years or so from the looks of it, but that just adds to its old world charm.

Lisya Gora

Something for everyone

Lisya Gora, or "Fox Mountain," is a picturesquely named complex, seven kilometers from Moscow, that offers five slopes catering to both beginners and confident skiers. The most advanced slope is 400 meters long with a drop of around 95 meters. Snowboard and ski jumps offer the more adventurous a chance to dabble in some free styling practice when they tire of the slopes. As with most other resorts, tubing is an option if balance isn't your strong point. All runs are open until midnight if you prefer nighttime skiing, and the adjacent forest provides the perfect spot for cross country skiing if you harbor a fear of heights.

Sorochany

Out-of-town professional resort

While this resort might not quite be the slice of Switzerland in Moscow that its website boldly proclaims, it does boast some of the most modern facilities in the region. Fifty kilometers outside of Moscow, the resort offers 10 slopes, the highest of which is 225 meters, and a variety of different runs depending on your ability. While the longest of them is more than one kilometer in length, you can speedily get back to the top with the help of Austrian and Italian manufactured double and quadruple chairlifts. Little ones can take lessons from friendly instructors on the baby slope or enjoy a spot of tubing. The resort keeps its slopes topped up with artificial snow, meaning you can enjoy winter sports through mid-April, whatever the temperature fluctuations over the coming months.

Kant

Slopes in the city

Kant, just a five minute walk from Nagornaya metro station, is the best option if you're looking to enjoy an afternoon of boarding or skiing and don't own a car. Nicknamed the

“Moscow Alps” by its management, Kant had an unlikely start in life as a city dump and takes its name from the sportswear brand that runs both the shop and slopes. Now an artificial hill, the complex offers 11 ski runs including one trail exclusively for beginners and a number of drag lifts to take you back to the top. The surrounding views of Soviet high-rises aren’t exactly alpine, but the runs themselves are well-maintained, lit up at night and open late. Popular with Muscovites for its accessibility, Kant also offers tubing facilities, a cafe and instructors for newbies.

Volen and Stepanovo

Weekend stopover

Volen, 60 kilometers to the north of the city, is one of the best-known ski resorts in the Moscow region. A short 15-minute bus ride away is Stepanovo, a smaller complex but still worth a visit if you’ve made the trip. With Austrian manufactured ski lifts of around 500 meters, a number of different difficulty runs and high quality slope maintenance, you won’t regret the trek out of the city once you’re here. Both resorts are well-lit for nighttime skiing or snowboarding and top up their runs with artificial snow as and when needed. With an alpine-themed hotel and Russian and Finnish bath houses on site, you could easily make a trip here into a weekend getaway with friends and family. What’s more, this January, Volen opened a new, steeper slope catering to daredevils into “extreme skiing.”

Sokolniki

Skiing just a metro ride away

If you aren’t quite up to a trip outside the city for some cross-country skiing, hop on the metro and get off at Sokolniki Park. The huge park has some of the best skiing in the city. Besides a 2-kilometer track, you can go off it to zip around part of the 45-kilomoter ski route. If you have your own skis, it’s open 24 / 7 for some early morning or moonlight ski trips. You can also rent equipment for the reasonable fee of 150 rubles for two hours (plus a 1,000 ruble deposit). That’s available 9:30 a.m. until 8 p.m. either at the intersection of 6th Luchevoi and Maisky Proseki, or at 11 Mitkovsky Proezd.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2017/01/26/hitting-the-slopes-and-cross-country-skiing-in-moscow-a56932