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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Happy Birthday To Moscow!

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Get ready for non-stop partying as Moscow celebrates its birthday! **mos.ru**

This year Moscow is celebrating its 870th birthday with a big party. Instead of the usual weekend of activities, City Day 2017 is actually City Week. From Sept. 1 to 10, there will be over 400 events at 300 venues all over the city. Most museums will be open free of charge with special programs. There will be concerts in parks and squares, from the Spasskaya Tower Festival on Red Square to children's choirs by the Christ the Savior Cathedral and rock concerts at Muzeon. It will be topped off with a grand firework display on Saturday night. Don't worry about getting around and getting home: the metro and light rail system will operate 24 hours on Sept. 10.

Main Venues

Moscow is celebrating seven main themes this year: Moscow sets records, creates, invents, conquers, discovers, builds and celebrates victories. These themes are going to be explored at spots around the city, mostly along Tverskaya Ulitsa, throughout the three squares in front of Red Square, up and around Bolshaya Dmitrovka and Kuznetsky Most, and along the boulevard to Novy Arbat. On Saturday and Sunday (Sept. 9 and 10) Tverskaya and Okhotny Ryad will be closed to traffic. To be safe, consider the entire city center to be a

pedestrian zone for the holiday.

It's hard to pick favorites, but here are some events we'll be visiting.

Extreme Sports

Kamergersky Pereulok will be purged of café tables and rearranged as a Parkour Park. Bring helmets and knee guards. On Manege Square there are two huge pools set up for wakeboarding competitions. There will be competitions of locals on Sept. 8 and 9, and then a huge "Jam Session" on water on Sunday (Sept. 10) with wakeboarders from around the world, like Sam de Haan, Ian Curry and Dominik Guhrs. If your extreme sports take you off the ground and water, head over to the Moscow City towers where there will be a climbing wall with 15 different routes for children and adults.

Street Theater, Fashion and Music

Muzeon and Gorky Park will hold a festival of street theaters from France, Italy and Russia while a 10-hour performance of dance, opera, acrobatics and theater called "Color Dreams" will go on near Gorky Park's main fountain. Across the way in Muzeon there will be cutting-edge fashion shows, and evening concerts. See more on the
park site.

Art Street

If you have a budding artist in your family, you might spend the first ten days of September on Klimentovsky Pereulok, where there will be master classes on the arts covering both history — like the story of the Tretyakov Gallery — and applied art — like learning how to water color.

Sing in a Choir

On Saturday night (Sept. 9) Persymphens is holding a huge concert at 8 p.m. across from the Telegraph Building on Tverskaya Ulitsa (where Kamergersky Pereulok begins). Persymphens is the Russian abbreviation of the First Symphony Ensemble of the Mossoviet, founded in 1922 and revived about a decade ago. As befitting the first Soviet public choir, it will perform Put Oktyabrya (The Path of October), the first Soviet cantata written in 1927. The cool bit: you can join in. First, click to get your
score. And then click again here to
apply. If you don't make the cut, come to hear the music anyway.

Foodie Delight

Over the city day weekend, 11 Moscow restaurants specializing in Russian cuisine will be cooking and sharing on Tverskaya Ulitsa. You'll be able to learn how to make belyashi (fried open meat pastries), grill shashlyk, and even make "bird's milk cake," which was created for the Prague restaurant in 1978. Don't worry. No birds were harmed — or milked — in the making of this delicious dessert.

Museums and Tours

Among the 80 museums that will be open free of charge over the weekend are MMOMA (Moscow Museum of Modern Art); the Museum of Moscow; The Gulag History Museum, and the Old English Courtyard. Lots of sites will offer free excursions, like at the Moscow Zoo or the Marina Tsvetayeva House Museum. Check out the extensive listings on the Moscow City Day site.

Moscow by Foot, Rail and River

If you play your cards right — and plan your schedule well — you'll be able to see the city with the help of the best guides and from the best vantage points. First you can tour the city from on high — from the Moscow Central Ring railway line. The elevated ring line was opened in 1908, closed to passengers in 1934 and used for cargo and military transport until last year. The 90-minute tours are at 11 am, 2 and 4 p.m. on both days. They are in Russian and free of charge, but you have to register by phone 8 495 637 7005. If you prefer the water view, take a river cruise with a curator from the Museum of Moscow. The river tours will take place from 6 to 8:15 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. on Sunday. The excursion is free but you will have to buy a boat ticket. Call to register at 8 495 637 7005. On foot there will nearly a hundred different tours, most in Russian, some in English, some free and others for a fee. Check on this site for tours in Russian and English over the City Day celebration and afterwards.

Firework Finale

This year the main fireworks display will be on Saturday night (Sept. 9) at 10 p.m., presumably because little viewers will be in bed on Sunday night, getting rested for a school day. The city promises a great display of lights and sound shot into the night sky from 13 places around the capital. Insiders say that the number 870 will somehow shine in the sky, too. The best viewing areas are Poklonnaya Gora (Park Pobedy); Brateyevsky Park; and Raushskaya Naberezhnaya, which is just across the Moscow River and to the right of the Baltschug Kempinski Hotel (facing the Kremlin).

These are just a small sample of the City Day events. For a full listings of events in Russian (and some listings in English), see the Moscow City Day site.

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