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Maslenitsa in St. Petersburg

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Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency

The Great Lenten Fast that precedes Easter is upon us, and St. Petersburg is ready to celebrate the end of winter and the joys of blini in style.

Mariinsky Maslenitsa
Musical celebration

This year, beside the traditional celebrations in various parts of the city, Maslenitsa will be celebrated in one of the city's most prominent venues. The Mariinsky Theater will hold its third International Festival of Maslenitsa in Songs: seven days of events with local and international artists.

Maslenitsa week will open on Feb. 12 with the Prague Philharmonic Choir, and continue with "The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniya," Rachmaninoff's "All-Night Vigil," "The Snow Maiden," an a cappella marathon, the St Petersburg TV and Radio

Children's Chorus and the Popov Grand Children's Chorus. It will all end on Sunday with the I Vocalisti Chamber Choir, featuring soloist Anna Maria Hefele and conductor Hans-Joachim Lustig.

1 Theater Square
www.mariinsky.ru/en/

City Events
Blini, games, and burning the effigy of winter

Numerous themed events for kids and families will also take place all over the city. The Palace Square of Peterhof will host theatrical performances, workshops for kids and, of course, stacks of buttery pancakes. For those interested in knowing more about the traditions connected to this Slavic folk holiday, the Benois Museum at Peterhof will host a special exhibition running from Feb. 8-18 that explores how Maslenitsa used to be celebrated in Russian noble families.

If you are looking for one-catch traditional event, then head over to the the annual celebrations at Babushkin Park on the weekend of Feb. 17 and 18. The park offers all sorts of activities for both adults and children, from performances of folklore groups, games, contests, workshops and an ice rink to burn off all the calories gained during the pre-Lenten indulgences.

Finally on Forgiveness Sunday you will be able to ask your family and friends to forgive you for any wrongs you have done and prepare for a new start, symbolized by the burning of the Maslenitsa effigy. At Yelagin Island the closure of the week will be accompanied by a light show as well as traditional dances and music. Here, a full immersion into the traditions will offer still more advantages: participants in traditional costumes will be granted free entrance and receive special gifts.

For more information, see this site*.*

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