

Q&A: Meet Anna Endrikhovskaya, a Sixth-Generation Muscovite

June 01, 2018



Personal Archive

Anna Endrikhovskaya is head of the concierge service at the MOSS hotel, one of Moscow's first "real" boutique hotels. Before that she worked as a concierge at several major Moscow hotels — the Marriott Royal Aurora, the Intercontinental Moscow Tverskaya, and the Metropol.

I am a sixth-generation Muscovite. I was born in Moscow but grew up in Greece, where my dad worked as a shipbuilder, and we only moved back to Moscow when I was a teenager. So for a while I felt extremely uncomfortable in Moscow and wanted to move abroad again.

It was different back then: Everything was either expensive and aimed at the very rich or badly done and of poor quality. Simple pleasures were not affordable.

I wanted to become an actress but my mom saw my potential in the hospitality business and steered me toward the right university. I've always felt that the previous generation, those

who were born in the late 1970s, were the “lost ones.” Many of them suddenly realized that they weren’t doing what they actually wanted to do. That’s how the whole “downshifting” to Bali and Goa trend started. So it was very important for me to choose the right path. And mom told me: “Look, you’ve always loved hotels.” And it’s true, ever since I was kid, I always knew everyone at the hotels where we were staying: the maids, the chefs and the waiters. That’s why I first went to study at the Hospitality College at the Plekhanov Russian University of Economics.

I ordered a cup of coffee at every major Moscow hotel, observing the way it worked. That’s how I chose where to work for my first job — the Marriott Royal Aurora. I wanted to be a concierge from the start, but they had no vacancies and I accepted the position of butler first. I met a lot of obnoxious and capricious oligarchs while working there. It was a unique experience.

I wanted to move abroad until 2012. That’s when I received the award for the world’s best concierge from the Hotel Concierge Society Les Clefs d’Or. When I came back to Moscow with the award, I realized that I had to stay here, in Russia, and make it a better place — to fulfill my civic duty, in a sense. I started giving public talks about hospitality — not just about hotels, but about restaurants and bars too. At some point I became aware that I was surrounded by like-minded people and finally started feeling comfortable.

Moscow is becoming more bike-friendly. I got my bike out several years ago, suffered through a couple of weeks of using it and put it back. I got it out again this spring and people still walk on bike paths, but things are changing for the better.

I just love the Russian State Library. It’s like a box of secrets and the reading room looks like a church. And their archives section at Pashkov House is just incredible. It was built by the famous architect Vasily Bazhenov and it’s rumored that it served as the headquarters for Russian masons. When I was there, I saw a manuscript by Fyodor Dostoyevsky that he completed while in prison, writing with his nail! And you can actually see the nail marks: totally amazing.

I like to hang out at the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art; I like to spend time people-watching at the cafe there. The building feels very comfortable, and I like to imagine how my dad partied at the jazz club that used to be located on the site.

I enjoy having breakfasts at the historical dining hall at the Metropol. It’s like a visit to my great-great-great-granddad’s. When my ancestors moved to Moscow from Poland he used to work across the square at the Bolshoi Theater as a hairdresser and tailor.

I like the Severyane restaurant. Everything there is beautifully and honestly done, straight from the heart. I enjoy going to the Propaganda nightclub — it’s the same as it used to be when I was 14 and got in there for the first time. I also occasionally stop by Cafe Pushkin at night, order pelmeni and a shot of vodka.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/06/01/changing-moscow-the-city-through-the-eyes-of-a-sixth-generation-muscovite-a61797>