The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Moscow's Best Open-Air Pools

This is the perfect weekend for serious pool time

By Hannah McCarthy

August 10, 2018

Chaika is right in the city center. **Hannah McCarthy / MT**

Chaika Sports Complex

The pool at the Chaika Sports Complex was the first outdoor pool built in Moscow, and the 1950s-era leisure space is centrally located on the river bank just opposite Muzeon.

There are three different pool areas: a small shallow area, a larger area for longer laps, and a smaller pool for doing shorter laps. While some people were sunbathing on the wooden platform around the pool, the Chaika pool is clearly for people who actually want to swim – there are no couples staying dry and sipping Möet. Music plays pleasantly in the background, and there are usually lots of small sociable groups of people of different ages who regularly visit the pool — perhaps availing themselves of the discounts the pool offers for pensioners and young people.

On your first visit to the pool, remember to factor in extra time to register and get your medical test done (a brief check to make sure you don't have any infectious skin or other ailments). You can also pay for a membership rather than one session, which is certainly better value if you intend on using the pool regularly. Also, don't forget to bring your own towel!

A single pass is 1500 rubles on weekdays and 1800 rubles on the weekend. The 1-month medical certificate is 200 rubles.

3 Turchaninov Pereulok, Bldg. 1. Metro Park Kultury. chayka-sport.ru

The Bassein at Sokolniki

The Bassein is idyllically located at the end of a wooded-path in Sokolniki Park, and walking through the park, past cyclists and walkers to the secluded pool is a true escape from the city. The pool area has a wooden bar and towel services, and could easily feature in a trendy hotel.

During the weekdays, the Bassein is not very busy and the atmosphere is a bit subdued. But on the weekend the pool comes alive with families, couples and groups of friends. The pool is family-friendly with a special children's pool and play area, but you will also find plenty of couples taking Instagram-ready photos by the pool.

The pool offers two types of passes which allow you sit in different areas: a VIP pass means you can have one of the loungers right beside the main pool, and a Standard pass means you can have one of the loungers in the lawn by the restaurant area. If you are in the VIP area, you will be close to the music speakers and a screen, which if you are looking for a fun weekend day with friends might be preferable. Those looking for a more relaxed ambiance might prefer to be in the standard area.

The cost ranges for adults from 800 to 2000 rubles, depending on the day of the week and class of ticket, and for children from 200 to 400 rubles. Towel rentals are available.

1/1 Sokolnichesky Val. Metro Sokolniki.park.sokolniki.com/activities/3

Luzhniki Aqua Complex

Originally known as the Central Lenin Stadium when it was opened in 1956, the Luzhniki Sports Complex hosted the Olympics in 1980 and the final game of the FIFA World Cup earlier this summer. Apart from an 80,000-person stadium, the complex also contains two outdoor pools perfect for cooling down during Moscow's hot summer days.

Visitors to the Luzhniki Aqua Complex can opt for a sports ticket, which provides access to the 50-meter lane swimming pool (Zone A), or a sports and recreation ticket, which provides access to both Zone A and a 21-meter recreational pool (Zone B). Visitors are provided with a colored bracelet depending on their ticket, and that gives them access to the complex and changing rooms. The changing rooms are basic but clean and have everything you would require, including a sauna to unwind after a swim.

The outdoor pool area has light wooden decking and makes use of the surrounding natural grass. The pools themselves are accessed by walking through an area with loungers and a sand

volleyball court. There is a café nestled in between the two swimming pools that has a relaxed vibe with no music playing.

The sports pool was deep enough for anyone wishing to practice diving, while the recreational pool was shallower and more suitable for young children and families. Overall, there was a good mixture of families, groups, couples, and individuals with only a few selfie sticks.

Passes are for 90 or 180 minutes and range from 800 to 1900 rubles, depending on the day and time period. Towel rentals are an additional 200 rubles.

24 Ulitsa Luzhniki. Metro Vorobyovy Gory. www.aqua-luzhniki.ru/

Shore House Beach

Located on the outskirts of the city by the Moscow River, Shore House Beach delivers an escape from the city and a little bit of Marbella in Moscow. This is not the pool you go to for your weekly triathlon training; this is where you got to get away from it all and have a few drinks by the pool. There are pristine loungers and towels included in the entrance price for those looking to have a dip and top up their tans.

Shore House Beach is typically a weekend hangout, and you may find that have the place to yourself on a weekday. The venue also has a restaurant which looks on to the river and serves a mixture of Russian, Central Asian and Asian dishes. Shore House Beach regularly hosts events, so make sure to check that its open to the public in advance.

Prices range from 1500 to 5000 rubles for a day pass, depending on the day of the week and level of pass. The pass includes towel rental.

66th km of MKAD, Crocus City. Metro Myakinino. shore-house.ru

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/08/10/moscows-best-open-air-pools-a62490