

On Stage Over the Holidays

Cultural life in Moscow dazzles

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency

The end of December and first week of January are slightly strange in Moscow. The grand expat exodus has ended the round of corporate and embassy parties, and New Year's and Orthodox Christmas are more often quiet family gatherings for Russians. Many Muscovites pack up and head north for skiing or south for some sun. There are, remarkably, no traffic jams. But that doesn't mean that culture is taking a break. To the contrary, the city's museums, concert halls, and theaters are offering some of the best performers and performances of the year. Here are just some of the extraordinary cultural events you can take in over the next few weeks.

Turetsky Choir

A group of male singers that had their origins in the Moscow Choral Synagogue, now the Turetsky Choir is a kind a high-class mash-up of a capella, pop, classical, ballads, and show

tunes. The great voices and showmanship make their concerts a terrific night at the theater. Their show in the Kremlin should put you in a real happy holiday mood. Dec. 28 and 30 at 9 p.m. Information and tickets can be found on the group's [site](#).

Kremlin Palace Hall. Entrance from Manege Square. Metro Alexandrovsky Sad.

New Year's Eve Concerts

It is a tradition for many families in Moscow to attend a concert in the afternoon or evening of Dec. 31 and then come home in time to set the table, pour the champagne, and see in the new year. At the International Performing Arts Center (formerly called Dom Muzyki), you can get into a toe-tapping good mood with one of several performances of New Year Tango. If for some reason you are not interested in “nostalgic melodies and hot rhythms of sensual Argentine tango,” perhaps you'd prefer their Splashes of Champagne concerts, which will get you in the mood with popular tunes from operettas and musicals by Strauss, Lehar, Kalman, Offenbach, Bernstein and others. See the [site](#) to choose an event and order tickets.

Across town at the new Zaryadye Concert Hall you can enjoy a New Year's Eve concert of the soprano Albina Shagimuratova and pianist Mikhail Pletnev, accompanied by nothing less than the Russian National Orchestra. Information and tickets can be found on the [site](#).

At the Moscow Conservatory halls in the afternoon and evening you can choose between the Argentinian tenor Marcello Alverez singing a grand concert of favorite arias and songs by Puccini, Saint-Saens and others; and organ concert; or New Year's Eve, Jazz-style. Tickets and more information about the concerts can be found on the [site](#).

The Nutcracker Sensation

The classic Russian Christmas ballet of the Nutcracker is performed – brilliantly, beautifully, and/or classically – on many of Moscow's stages. But this year's must-see Nutcracker is a brand-new production at Zaryadye Concert Hall. Based on an idea by the celebrated artist and theatrical producer Pavel Kaplevich, directed by Nina Chusova, choreographed by Anna Albalikhina, with costumes by the legendary Andrei Bartenev, this Nutcracker is opera, ballet, and an acrobatic circus show all rolled into one. Everything is going to be magical, starting from the moment you enter the theater. Be sure to get there early; pre-theater shenanigans will be worth the price of admission. Three productions a day at noon, 3 and 7 p.m. from Jan. 2 to 8. Tickets are available on the hall's [site](#).

6 Ulitsa Varvarka, Bldg. 4. Metro Kitai-Gorod.

Opera Lovers Rejoice

If you are a grown-up who loves opera, you'll be happy to know that Moscow's repertory over the holidays is not all sugar plum fairies and dancing mice. The theater with the longest name – the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theater – is taking a break from the Nutcracker on Jan. 4 with a fine production of La Boheme. Tickets are available on the theater [site](#).

The New Stage of the Bolshoi Theater premiered an excellent 'Iolanta' in 2015. The two-act

opera includes a symphonic suite Nutcracker with the production. Seats are available Jan. 15 – 17. Register on the [Bolshoi site](#) for tickets at their nominal price.

Collegium Musicum

If you haven't discovered the concert program at the Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul, the holiday season is a great time to begin. The acoustics are magnificent, the historical organ – installed in 1898 and restored in 2006 – is perhaps the finest in the capital, and the program of concerts is one of the most unique in Moscow's performing venues. From now until the end of the holidays, you can hear medieval music, Bach, Bach and Jazz, Vivaldi, and Baroque flute music. The highlight? Hard to say, but probably the concert on Jan. 1 at 5 p.m. of all the works Bach wrote for organ, performed by Alexander Fileisky, one of the country's most celebrated organists. Information about all the concerts and ticket sales can be found on the [site](#).

7 Starosadsky Pereulok. Metro Kitai-Gorod

Igor Moiseyev Folk Dance Ensemble

If you have never seen the Moiseyev dance troupe, make it your new Year's resolution. Their performance of "Dances of the World" at the Tchaikovsky Hall promises to be spectacular, and the giddy-making vertical rise of the seating makes for perfect sight-lines. Jan. 8 at 7 p.m.

4/31 Triumfalnaya Ploshchad. Metro Mayakovskaya. www.meloman.ru

For up-to-date information about events, see our [listings](#).

For information about performance venues, restaurants, clubs, stores, cinemas, museums, and other attractions and places of interest, see our [guide](#).

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