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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Moscow Scoops Top City Prize in World Travel Awards

“The best city in the world,” says Mayor Sergei Sobyanin.

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Moscow has undergone an expensive makeover since current Mayor Sergei Sobyanin took the reins in 2010. **Pixabay**

Forget London and Paris.

Moscow has been named the world’s leading city destination in 2019 by tourism industry standard the World Travel Awards.

The Russian capital saw off tough competition from a list including New York, Rio de Janeiro and Sydney, as well as the British and French capitals.

“Moscow really is the best city in the world!” the Russian capital’s Mayor Sergei Sobyanin wrote on the VKontakte social network after the awards ceremony in Muscat, Oman.

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Moscow has undergone an expensive makeover since Sobyanin took the reins in 2010.

Visitors can now stroll along pedestrianized waterfronts and widened sidewalks or relax in the new Zaryadye Park behind Red Square. There are shiny new buses, citywide bike and scooter rental stations and cafes and restaurants galore serving tasty Russian classics.

According to the mayor's office, 19.5 million people have visited Moscow in 2019 so far. In 2018, the year Russia hosted the FIFA World Cup, the figure was 23.5 million.

The World Travel Awards were established in 1993 by representatives of the travel, tourism and hospitality industries. Russia's cultural capital St. Petersburg won the leading city destination award in 2017.

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