

MICE & more

MICE around the world

February 2020



First incentive map of Russia and best incentive ideas in 15 regions

St. Petersburg comes closer for 52 countries

Impressive facts and figures from EXPO 2020 DUBAI



MICE-CONNECTION WORKSHOP



Combine your visit to Moscow
with MICE-Connection 2020

and receive an additional 28 meetings with
certified buyers in the atmosphere of
maximum care and an attention



60
Countries

>30000
Business Meetings

110
Exhibitors

300
Buyers

MICE-Connection 2018, 2019 –
according to Buyers and
Exhibitors – has become the most
PRODUCTIVE workshop in the
Russian MICE market.



4th of June, 2020
Radisson Collection Hotel, Moscow

Tel. +7-495-136-65-95
Email: org@mice-connection.com



MICE
CONNECTION

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

According to ATOR data (Association of Tour Operators of Russia), domestic tourism takes first place in terms of the number of journeys taken by Russians in 2019, and the difference between foreign and domestic destinations is quite noticeable. This trend has been observed over several years and is witnessing dynamic development. This is not surprising, as such a variety of nature, cultures and types of tourism is difficult to find in other countries. The view of foreign tourists is, of course, different, and they are still concerned about the accessibility of places of interest, services in the regions, the visa regime and safety. Thanks to a specially prepared international issue focused on incentive opportunities in Russia, we want to bring Russia closer to tourists from all over the world, regardless of the purpose of their trip – a weekend in St. Petersburg, a conference in Moscow or an incentive in Altai. Take inspiration from the new MICE opportunities in St. Petersburg, the variety of international hotel brands, not only in metropolitan cities, but in regional cities around the country too, unusual venues for events and, of course, the new industry development that will help you find partners and clients in Russia.

I often travel around Russia for work and more. My native St. Petersburg has been replaced by Moscow, but now I regularly return to the Northern Capital as a tourist, often a business tourist. It's always nice to go on vacation to Sochi at any time of year or attend a business event which, thanks to the abundance of sun, sea and mountains, is especially pleasant. And if you want to escape the worries of everyday life and dive into a unique type of nature, then Karelia, Altai and Kamchatka are perfect. A journey takes on a completely different angle when heading off on a train or maybe a ship along the country's rivers. And you will certainly be surprised and inspired by people who are open, welcoming and hospitable. We will start our journey straight away on the pages of MICE&more, and I'm sure that having finished reading this latest article, you'll already be thinking about your next visit to Russia!

Lina Moskvina
Editor-in-chief and founder of MICE&more



Photo styling: Oxana Inataeva, Olga Liora
Photographer: Elvira Uglova
MUaH: Alexandra Isakova
Wear: TORYZ
Location: Novotel Moscow Kievskaya

CONTENTS

Letter from the editor

3

Contents

4

Vega Izmaylovo Hotel and Congress Centre: hospitality with Russian soul

14

TOURISM IN FACTS AND FIGURES

Which countries did Russians visit in 2019?

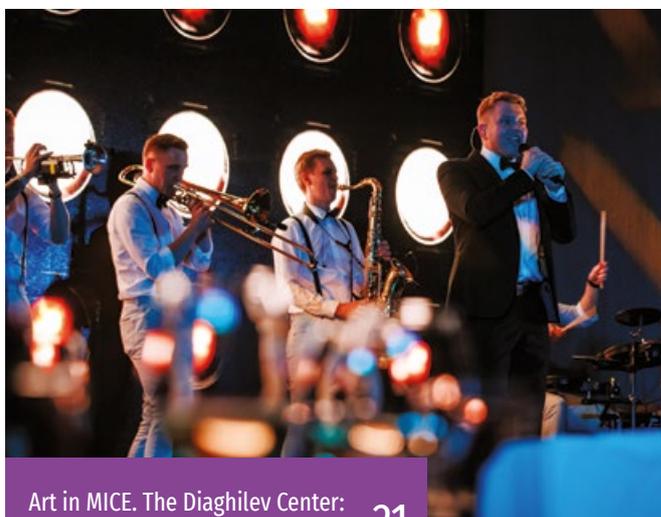
18

Radisson Hotel Group — so many ways to discover St. Petersburg!

24

Corinthia St. Petersburg, renowned and modern, business-minded yet stylish, is situated right in the historic heart of Russia's Northern Capital

35



Art in MICE. The Diaghilev Center: connecting you to high art

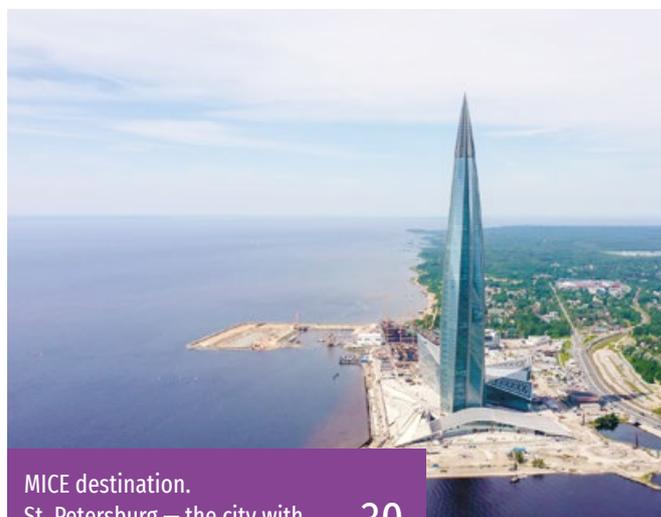
21



Incentive ideas on the map of Russia

6

Photo: bashinform.ru



MICE destination. St. Petersburg — the city with the perfect climate for MICE

30

FASHIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
Russian peculiarities in business

36

MICE STAFF
Hotel work: expectations vs reality

40

Radisson Collection Paradise
Resort & Spa, Sochi: personal,
professional, memorable

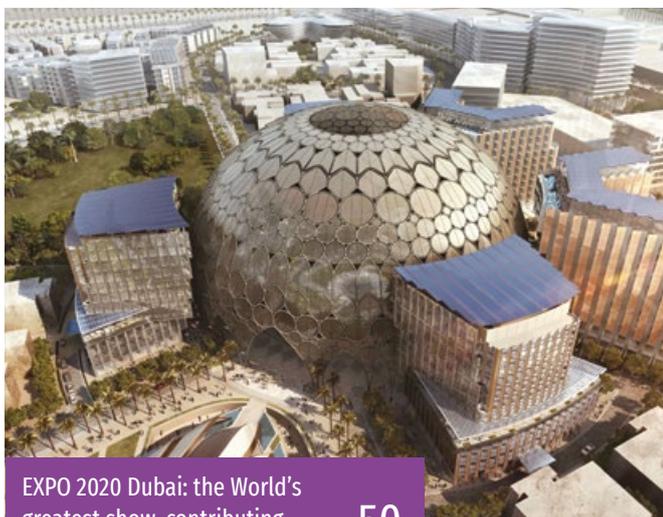
44

EVENT FORUM
Baltic-Nordic Event Forum

46

Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah Resort
& Spa showcases MICE within
a spectacular location

54



EXPO 2020 Dubai: the World's
greatest show, contributing
to a bright future for humankind

50



MICE-connection (workshop):
gateway to the Russian
business-tourism market

60



MICE News. Swiss trophies
for the Russians

57

INCENTIVE IDEAS ON THE MAP OF RUSSIA

» A while back, we did a little experiment. We prepared slides featuring different natural vistas and physical activities, then showed them to a group of MICE managers. Their task was to name the place “where the scene is happening.” It didn’t take long to get the answers: Switzerland, Iceland, Germany, China, the Tibetan mountains, the Norwegian fjords, Cote d’Azur, the Saharan desert, etc. They were shocked and surprised when we revealed the captions: all of the photos had been taken in Russia. As everyone knows, the land mass of our country is the largest in the world. Thus, we can confidently state: we have everything here. The main thing is to figure out what interests you the most. In this collection, we decided to take a trip along various points on the map of our great country and show you some incentive ideas in different regions: from Kamchatka in the East to Kaliningrad in the West.

KAMCHATKA

Land of volcanoes

Did you know that Russia is separated from the USA by just 3.76 km? Yes — that’s the distance between the islands of Big Diomedes and Little Diomedes: the maritime border runs between them. But we’re inviting you to the easternmost point of mainland Russia — the Kamchatka Peninsula. To experience what could possibly be the most intense feelings of your life, board



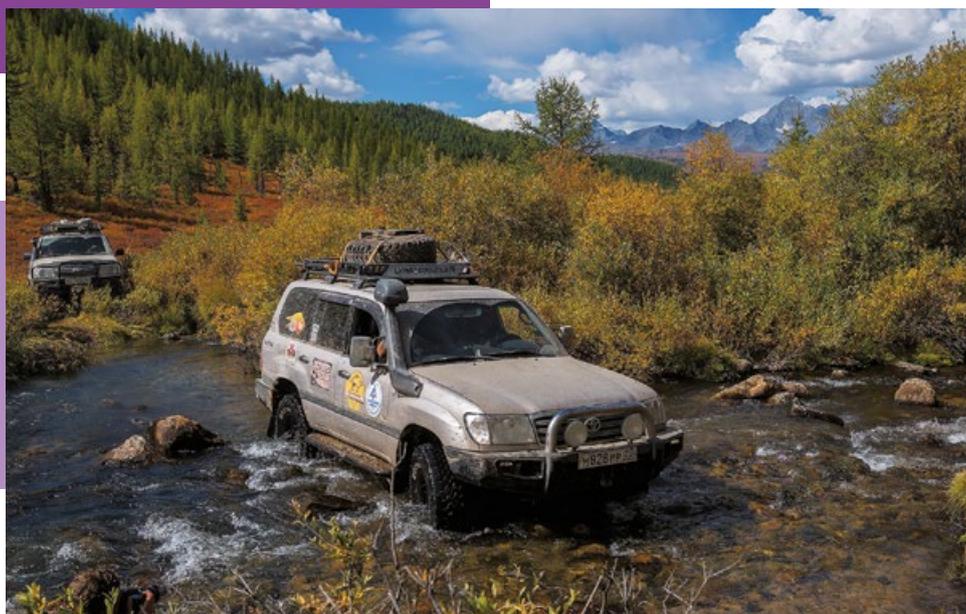
a helicopter and head for the Valley of Geysers. In the span of just a day, you’ll pass by three volcanoes, fly over the cauldron of one of them, see for yourself how the Earth breathes, and take a dip in some hot springs.

VLADIVOSTOK

Hunting for tigers on a photo-safari

Just 80 km from the city, the Primorsky Safari-Park awaits you. It’s a huge wildlife reserve, divided into 7 different parts: the lion park, the leopard park, the Himalayan bear park, the predatory-animal park, the wild-bird park, the hoofed-mammal park, and of course — the park of the Siberian (Amur) tiger, found on the endangered-species list. Above and beyond the amazing excursion you’ll take with a professional tour guide, you’ll also be able to help take care of the park’s animal wards. In the warm season, we recommend capping the trip with a dip in Lazurnaya Bay and a tasting of fresh-caught seafood from the Pacific Ocean.





SAKHALIN

The island that looks like a fish

A Jeep-safari through the hardest-to-reach areas of Sakhalin and the island's sandy shores, then... the fantastical "Devil's Fingers" rock outcropping, the stone arches, the sheer cliffs and marine terraces — you'll behold all of this, and more, during your boat excursion of the area. Here, you'll find year-long breeding grounds of sea lions and ringed seals, vast colonies of cormorants, seagulls and murre. You could also spot a hawk, a falcon, an egret or a Japanese crane. Come evening — a Russian banya with dip in the river. In the morning of the second day — fun-filled sea fishing, swimming and a relaxing rest on the beach.

YAKUTIA

Dog-sledding

Did you know that the Earth's cold pole is located in the Yakutian settlement of Oymyakon? Its official record: -67.7°C . Over a short expedition through Yakutia, you'll gain useful skills for surviving in the North, learn how to hitch the harnesses on your own, and discover how to properly communicate with sled dogs while on the move. You'll be able to take part in a shaman's rituals, drop in to the homes of local residents, and visit the dwelling of the mythical king of the cold — Chyskhaan. At the end of your trip, you'll be treated to a bus tour of the famed Lena Pillars. This unique rock formation is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site.



BAIKAL

Plunging into the “Blue Eye of Siberia”

This deep-water lake holds the world’s largest fresh-water reservoir, unique in terms of its composition: it contains so few mineral salts that it’s equatable to distilled water. In terms of rare fauna, Baikal surpasses both Madagascar and the Galapagos Islands. Here, you’ll be able to take part in group dives: in these parts, it’s equally popular in the summer and winter. The best time for diving is June, when the water is the clearest and there’s lots of light – underwater visibility approaches 40 m, and the deep currents are the weakest. The Baikal waters conceal not only the rich underwater world of flora and fauna, but also topographical diversity – grottos, vertical walls, canyons. Olkhon Island boasts deep-water spots for diving among some amazing natural landmarks.

BURYATIA

Heartland of Russian Buddhism

Buryatia is famed for its widespread alpine tourism, rafting along its many rivers and ethnographic tours, which can be combined with a trip to Buddhist monasteries (datsans). Bayan-Togod (Rich Peacock) hill is located 35 km from Ulan-Ude. For local residents, the hill is a sacred place, where services are held to make sacrifices to the spirits. It’s the site of Ivolginsky Datsan – the residence of Khambo Lama Bandido. The datsan’s grounds are home to some amazing structures – stupas erected at the site of Buddhist relics and a greenhouse devoted to the cultivation of the sacred Bodhi Tree. The Pure Land temple houses the cherished body of Khambo Lama Itigilov. He died in 1927, in the process of meditation. There’s a belief that Itigilov continues to exist in that state of limbo.



ALTAI

Place of strength

Mountain peaks, roiling rivers, endless ravines, crystal-clear lakes and amazingly beautiful vistas. From the incredible diversity of available programs, we might highlight the following: staying at an alpine hotel, a morning valley trip along the rapids of the Katun River, a visit to Patmos Island, which can only be reached by suspension bridge, a master-class in preparing teas and balms made from Altai herbs and a “green meal” made from wild grasses, a tour of a red-deer farmstead and a chance to uncover the secrets of the velvet-antler industry, a horseback-riding trip through red-deer country, and an evening enjoying an alpine-singing concert, included on the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage sites.

BASHKIRIA

A day in the life of nomads

You can take a horseback-riding trip through the mountain foothills, including a master-class in equestrian sports and archery. You'll also be treated to a visit to the Yashmovaya Mountain, covered in spots by the "ribbon jasper" and a unique apiary, featuring a tasting of the famed Bashkirian honey. A stop for a meal at a yurt will acquaint you with the most delicious national cuisine.



Photo: bashinform.ru

EKATERINBURG

Walking through the capital of the Urals

In recent years, Ekaterinburg has become one of the most vibrant cities in Russia. To get to know it, all you have to do is to... follow the red line. It's a phrase that should be interpreted literally, because the city features a pedestrian route that encompasses 35 distinct landmarks. It's marked by red paint on the pavement and runs a distance of roughly 6.5 km. Along the route, you'll see historic buildings, monuments, squares, the riverside, cathedrals and theaters, the Literary District and even the Urals Museum of Jewelry and Stone-Cutting History, where we definitely recommend making a stop. By the way, make sure not to miss Russia's first-ever monument to the Beatles!





ALONG THE VOLGA RIVER

To get an idea of the Russian mountains, it's a good idea to set out on a river cruise. For example, there are some short trips: from Moscow through the town of Uglich and Kostroma and onwards to the famed trading city of Nizhny Novgorod — or to Astrakhan, where they boast the best fishing catches and the tastiest watermelons, or to the Solovetskiye Islands, or to Valaam Island, or to splendid Kazan — the capital of Tatarstan. The routes run along the Moscow River, the Volga and the northern rivers. The cruises include excursions and various leisure activities.

KARELIA

Wooden architecture

The Kizhi open-air museum runs under the auspices of UNESCO and is known as a “handmade wonder of the world.” You can get there by speedboat. However, it's best to visit this historic place in combination with a trip down the Karelian rivers along routes of varying length and difficulty, including those that empty out into the White Sea.

NORTH CAUCASUS

Mineralnye Vody

This location boasts the country's three largest drinking-water and balneotherapeutic resorts: Arkhyz, Essentuki and Kislovodsk. During your ATV adventure to the foothills of Mount Elbrus (the symbol of the Caucasus), you'll see many one-of-a-kind mineral springs. For starters, it'll be the famed Dolina Narzanov (Narzanov Valley), where you'll taste the rare wild Narzans — from the live “red” hot-house to the rare “white.” The next sightseeing stop — a grouping of Bronze Age standing stones, known as “menhirs.” These are megaliths — the relics of Babylonian Zoroastrians, who first settled in these parts roughly 4,000 years ago. Following a narrow path, you'll end up at the Sultan waterfall, that is — at the vanishing glaciers of the Elbrus, which burst with a roar through the cliffside crevasse. In Dolina Narzanov where the hot springs boil, nature itself has organized a special bath, where anyone interested can restore their body and soul. At the end of your trip, you'll have the chance to visit cutting-edge alpine camps and meet people readying themselves to conquer the highest peak in Europe.





SOCHI

Sea, summits, sport

Sochi represents an Olympic heritage: the ski resorts of Krasnaya Polyana and Rosa Khutor, the Olympic Village and the Imeritian Valley by the coast. Sochi has a lot to boast about in terms of Adventure Tourism: Skypark, canyoning, jeeping. Sochi has a Formula-1 track, where your group will be able to arrange a race-car test drive with the help of professional race-car drivers. In Sochi, you can embark on engrossing quests based on popular mobile apps. Yet, as a sample excursion, we present to you... a visit to Ekzarho Farm. It's located in some of the region's most picturesque foothills. It encompasses both agrotourism and ecotourism. On the complex's grounds, you'll find everything you need to immerse yourself in the pleasure of communing with nature, interacting with animals, soaking up in the marvelous views and savoring the delicious organic foods. You'll especially enjoy the thrilling equestrian show, during which you'll be treated to a welcome drink or a gala dinner.

KALININGRAD

City of Immanuel Kant

This city, which was once known as Königsberg, is overflowing with destination ideas. For instance, you could stop by a medieval jousting field, complete with costumed performers, or spend the day as a cadet at a historical steam bath, or do some one-of-a-kind military teambuilding at one of the city's many forts, or conduct some ornithological research on the Curonian Spit – even bump into Kant and Baron Münchhausen during an urban quest. Especially popular among group tours is a visit to the amber quarry, where each guest has the chance to find their very own piece of amber (or even more than one).

MOSCOW

So, what does Moscow have to offer? The capital is a veritable treasure trove of destination ideas. There's one very dramatic option for getting to know the city. Taking a ride to the highest observation platform in Europe. It's on the 89th floor. It's located in the capital's modern commercial development, Moskva-City. Here, you'll be told of Moscow's past and of its plans for the future, take in a projection light show, taste Moscow's legendary ice cream and different kinds of chocolate. Most importantly – you'll have the chance for a dazzling panoramic photo-session. You can continue getting to know the capital over dinner on a comfortable yacht in the Radisson flotilla. A cruise on the Moscow River is always an unforgettable experience!



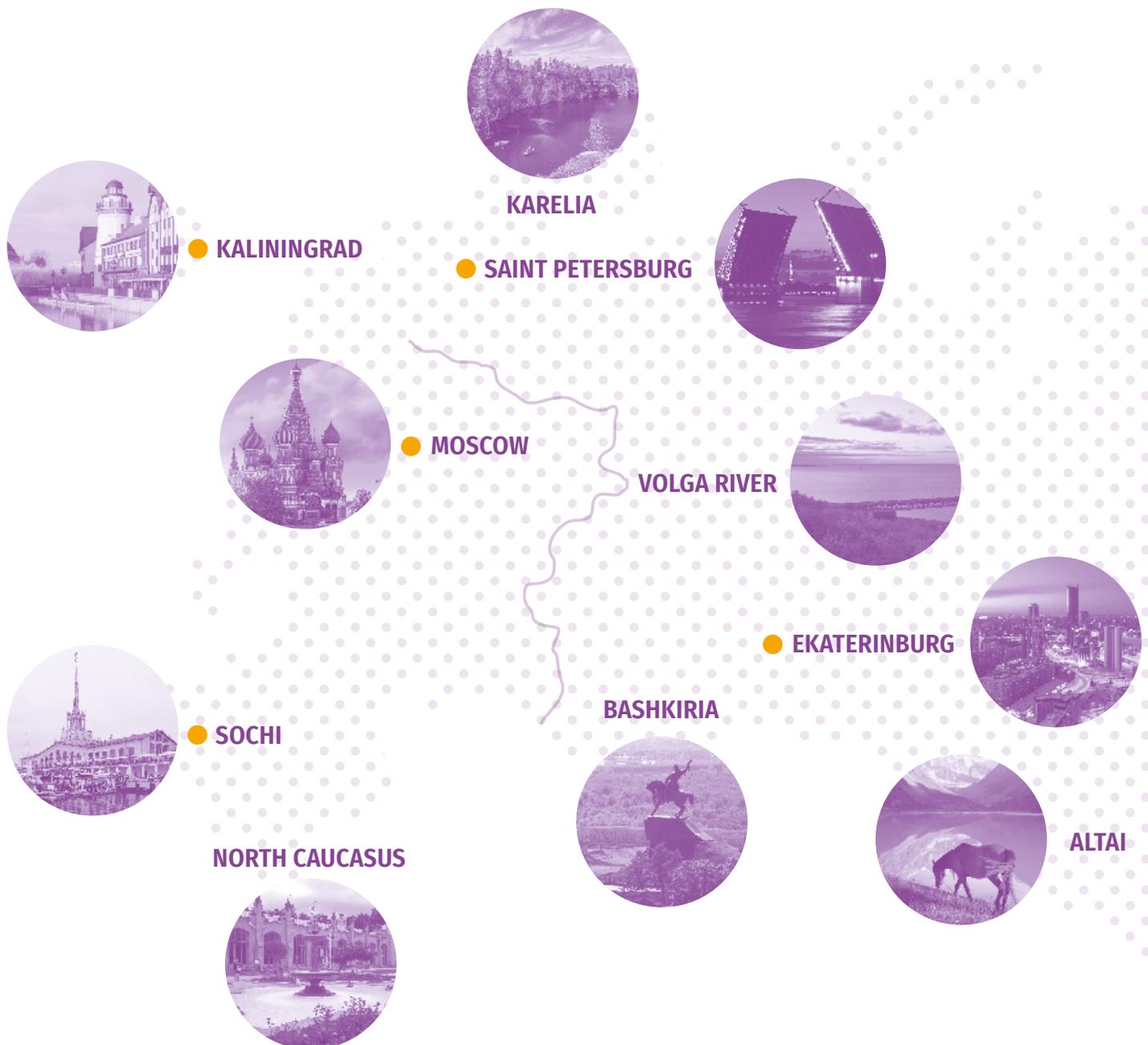
Thanks for help in preparing the material to “DMC KAVKAZ” (www.severnykavkaz.ru) and special thanks to the travel ambassador for the Northern Caucasus – Irina Bervinenko, LB Tour (www.lbtour.ru), Eventmore (www.eventmore.ru), More-agency (www.more-agency.ru), Baltma Tours (www.baltma.ru), event-agency “Our people” (www.sv-ludi.ru).

THE MAP

Moscow is home to one of the biggest city parks in the world. The park has an area of 15.34 square kilometers and is six times bigger than Central Park in New York.

Saint Petersburg is the most northerly city in the world with a population of over a million people. There are three times more bridges in Saint Petersburg than in Venice.

Sochi has one of the most spine-tin-gling bridges in the world. The Sky-bridge walkway is 439 meters long and is suspended at a height of 207 meters.



OF RUSSIA

Lake Baikal is the deepest lake in the world and the largest source of fresh-water on the planet. All of the world's major rivers – the Volga, Don, Dnieper, Yenisei, Ural, Ob, Ganges, Orinoco, Amazon, Thames, Seine and Oder – would have to flow for almost a year to fill up a pool with the same volume as Baikal.

The largest forest in the world is the Siberian Taiga. The total area of the taiga amounts to over 15 million kilometers – that's about 27% of all the forest on the planet.

The Trans-Siberian Railway is the longest railway in the world. It connects Moscow to Vladivostok, is 9,298 kilometers long and spans 8 time zones.



YAKUTIA



KAMCHATKA



SAKHALIN



BURYATIA



BAIKAL



VLADIVOSTOK

VEGA IZMAYLOVO HOTEL AND CONGRESS CENTRE: HOSPITALITY WITH RUSSIAN SOUL

»» What has attracted tens of thousands of tourists and business guests to the Vega Izmaylovo Hotel and Congress Centre for so many years? It's a symbiosis of quality infrastructure, taking into account the needs of the business community, its remarkable location and Russian soul. The hotel is just a couple of minutes' walk from the metro, within walking distance of the unique Izmaylovsky Kremlin and close to the natural-historical Izmaylovo Forest Park, the largest urban park in Europe. The links with its Russian origins can be seen in terms of its gastronomy, the styling of its rooms and other interiors, while the external environment helps guests become more closely acquainted with the Russian theme.

The "Kremlin in Izmaylovo" is an architectural complex stylised in accordance with Russian building styles of the 16th and 17th centuries, representing a permanent "Vernissage" which will be of interest to many foreign visitors. And the huge Izmaylovsky Park surprises with its combination of untouched wildlife and endless recreational opportunities.

But let's go back to the hotel to fully experience the hospitality of its staff and the entire place.

The Vega Izmaylovo Hotel and Congress Centre is part of the largest Izmaylovo hotel complex in Moscow. It supports a rich history of hospitality: the hotel has won a large number of high-profile awards. The wide geographic spread of guests from all over the world and experience of interacting with different audiences invariably motivate the hotel to become even more technologically advanced, always meeting modern international quality standards.

As a result, by the end of 2019, the Vega Izmaylovo Hotel and Congress Centre once again featured on the list of the 30 best hotels in Moscow according to TripAdvisor, while its rating according to Booking.com was 9.0 points.

The Vega Hotel presents a diverse line of accommodation options for every taste and budget. All this diversity stands out for its high-quality functionality. It's worth noting that, in terms of its interior solutions, the





hotel has generally focused on exclusivity and originality. As such, its “Travel to Russia” designer rooms take a warm, soulful approach to the Russian style, while the new “Smart Apartment” guest room collection, with its elegant urban style, shows the dynamic spirit of the metropolis.

The Russian theme is clearly also in evidence in its “Gusi-Lebedi” restaurant. This is a place where Russia’s soul comes to the fore, offering guests authentic homemade cuisine, a traditional warm welcome and hospitality. And restaurant visitors reciprocate in kind. Numerous reviews by guests who tell of their unforgettable experience of Russian cuisine, the interiors, cosy summer terrace and original service offer indisputable evidence of this.



The hotel has a full range of modern services, including free Wi-Fi, room service, parking, beauty salon and fitness centre. Here, you’re even welcome to bring your pets along as company.

The hotel is actively involved in the life of the business community. Its modern Vega Izmaylovo congress centre is equipped with all the technical resources to host and service a variety of event formats.

The variety of halls with their different configurations and capacities means you can choose a convenient space or combination of spaces for any event, accommodating up to 2,000 guests at once.

MICE Hotel

The flagship “Surikov-Vasnetsov” hall for 500 visitors is greatly appreciated by guests for its panoramic windows overlooking the original Izmaylovsky Kremlin which, with its fabulous “gingerbread” appearance, is sure to enliven any event. The 580 sq. m “Vdokhnovenie-Fantazia” Hall, thanks to its configuration and daylight pouring in through the huge windows, is a real favourite for exhibitions and presentations.

The “Constructor” Hall in the modern loft style is also worthy of note. It has already been noticed how the bright yellow accents of its interiors fill many event delegates with a light and sunny mood.

Plans for 2020 include the opening of 2 new halls and co-working areas.

An important factor in the complex task of arranging events is catering, as guests often spend 9 hours or more in the hotel. They can enjoy excellent breakfasts, lunches and “smorgasbord” buffet dinners which are always very popular. To supplement any event, there are plenty of coffee breaks, and a buffet or banquet in the “Gusi-Lebedi” restaurant provides a wonderful way to round off any programme in style.

It’s worth noting that more than 70% of the hotel’s business comes from its regular customers. Among its many loyal partners are such state-owned corporations as Roscosmos, Rostec and Rosatom, as well as the International Erikson University.

Every year, the Vega Hotel organises a prize aimed at promoting the best event organisers, handing it over to the winner in a special ceremony.

Welcome to the Vega Izmaylovo Hotel and Congress Centre. Here, you are always guaranteed a warm welcome with an open Russian soul!



FACTS AND FIGURES

The Vega Izmaylovo Congress Centre offers a variety of event formats: coaching, business cases, business games, training, seminars, exhibitions and conferences.

19 halls of different configurations and capacities.

Catering for up to 2,000 event guests at once.

The highly versatile “Surikov-Vasnetsov” modular hall with panoramic windows overlooking the Izmaylovsky Kremlin is designed for 500 guests.

The “Vdokhnovenie-Fantazia-Fantazia Malaya” modular hall with its large panoramic windows and total area of 580 sq. m is a favourite venue for exhibitions and presentations.

The loft-style “Constructor” hall with its bright yellow accents and separate area for coffee breaks is designed for 350 guests.

The most popular halls are “Progress” and “Tekhnologiya”, each with its own unique design, accommodating up to 100 guests.

In 2019, the Vega Izmaylovo Hotel and Congress Centre was ranked among the top 30 hotels in Moscow by TripAdvisor and has a rating of 9.0 according to Booking.com.

The hotel has a total of 1,009 guest rooms.

New interior solutions: Russian-style “Travel to Russia” designer rooms and a new limited collection of rooms in the urban style – the “Smart Apartment”.

The legendary “Gusi-Lebedi” restaurant is one of the top 50 Russian cuisine restaurants in Moscow, according to TripAdvisor, and is regularly awarded a certificate of quality.

The immediate proximity of natural and cultural-historical sites: the “Kremlin in Izmaylovo” architectural complex and Europe’s largest urban forest park, Izmaylovo.



VEGA
HOTEL & CONVENTION
CENTER

CONTACTS:

+7 (495) 737-79-00
konfzal@hotel-vega.ru
www.hotel-vega.ru/events

WHICH COUNTRIES DID RUSSIANS VISIT IN 2019?

» In this issue, we talk a lot about the potential for tourism in Russia. However, the tourist flow of Russians to other countries in 2019 also grew. So we decided to look at the statistics of the Analytical Service of the Association of Tour Operators and find out which destinations are most popular for Russians. Unfortunately, we cannot distinguish the share of business tourists and MICE in the total number of trips, but the trends are characteristic for all categories.

In general, the statistics for Russians travelling abroad can be divided into two roughly identical parts: one is the **former Soviet republics, including the Baltic states**, as well as the border countries – **China, Mongolia, Finland, Poland**; and the other is the so-called “long-haul” countries.

Tourists from Russia love to travel, do so often and, importantly, are happy to spend money on enjoying themselves. Correctly recognising the opportunities of the Russian market, many countries have tourism offices here, which throughout the year hold a number of events, including large-scale roadshows and festivals. In the last few years alone, more than a dozen international destinations have opened representative offices in Moscow, including **Qatar, Bahrain, Japan and Oman**.

If you look at the statistics for Russians travelling abroad in 2019, **Turkey** is ahead of other countries by a large margin. This phenomenon has numerous explanations. First of all, convenient logistics: Turkey is close to the central and southern parts of Russia; various airlines (both regular and charter) fly to Istanbul, Antalya and other Turkish cities from different Russian airports every day, and Russians don't require a visa. Turkish hotels focus on the Russian market: they have many Russian-speaking employees and the popular All Inclusive (or Ultra AI) system. Most hotels offer beneficial conference packages for groups, including high-quality technical equipment and a variety of coffee breaks.

The additional programme is also very varied: relax at sea, excursions, shopping, a large selection of activities and evening shows. In most cases, customers say they get good value for money.

It is interesting to note that 2019 saw a significant increase in departures to **Italy**. In fact, Italy was ahead of Turkey, which was in joint-second place with China. France also saw a high rate of visits.

In summer, business life grows quiet, but the indicators for individual tourism soar. Again, Turkey leads the way by a huge margin. Italy and Spain come next with almost equal figures, with Germany, Greece and Cyprus a little lower down the table, and Tunisia slightly behind.



As for summer growth in 2019, Montenegro came first with high growth figures. Italy and France are close behind. Hungary, South Korea and Turkey also showed good growth dynamics.

Turning to Russians' favourite holiday destinations by the sea (80% of departures in the summer), popularity by country is as follows (in descending order): Turkey, Italy, Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Tunisia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, UAE, Thailand, Vietnam, Croatia, Dominican Republic. The same list contains less popular beach destinations such as Indonesia, Hainan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Seychelles, Philippines and others.

These statistics track trends, but there is no constant. Each year gives every destination a chance to compete for leadership and its own share in the Russian market.



EXPERT OPINION:

Dmitry Gorin, CEO of VipService

If we take the results from 2019, we definitely see an increase in outbound tourism. Depending on the destination, it was 10 to 25 percent. And what is very important to note is that we have returned to the pre-crisis level. It's no secret that in 2014–16, there was a significant reduction in travel, but now the market is showing a steady positive dynamic.

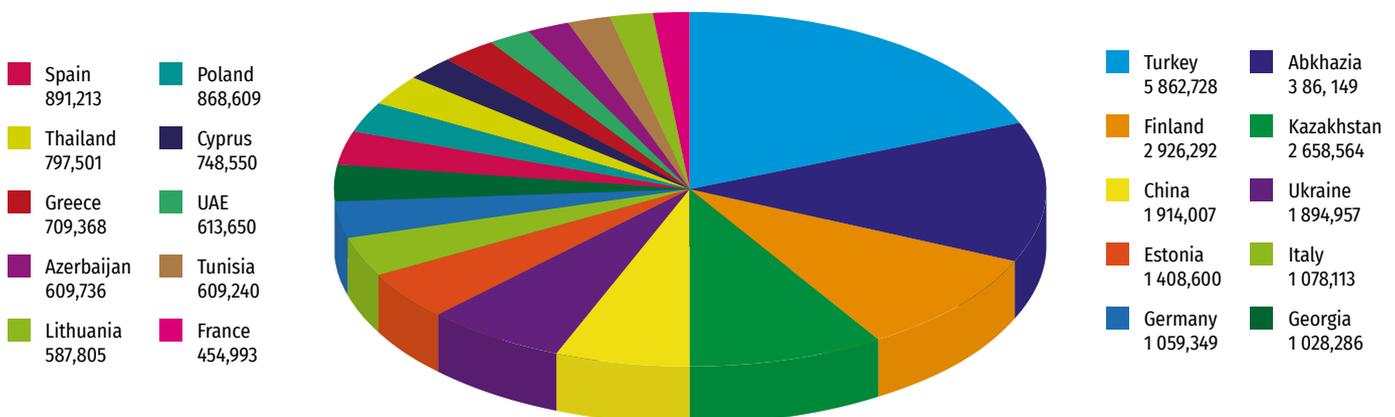
Talking about trends, online sales play a big role. There is also growing demand for dynamic travel package options. Tourists appreciate the opportunity to design their tour themselves, and technology companies, which together with hotels and transport service providers offer such solutions, are actively developing this type of tourism.

As for destinations, we can highlight an increase in popularity for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. There is growing demand for the countries of central and southern Europe, and Russians are invariably interested in the countries of South-East Asia and Latin America. Exotic destinations are growing more popular. For tourists in the luxury segment, we are seeing the steady growth of the Maldives and such destinations as Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand. In general, all destinations are in demand and I don't want to miss any of them out.

Of course, the development of outbound tourism is helped by the removal of visa barriers and, if you look at the statistics for the United Arab Emirates, we can see how the actual removal of visas served as a catalyst for the active development of tourism in the region.

As for the MICE segment, we are seeing further consolidation of market players, with the largest global brands offering new creative products to their customers, and here, technology and personalised offers are also important. As for minuses, I would note that the "struggle for the budget" is also a trend of the past few years and, most likely, it will continue. On the positive side, in this segment, we are pleased to note steady growth, which on average across countries ranges from 5 to 10 percent.

TOP 20 LEADING COUNTRIES IN TERMS OF OUTBOUND TRAFFIC FROM RUSSIA FOR THE FIRST 3 QUARTERS OF 2019



THE DIAGHILEV CENTER: CONNECTING YOU TO HIGH ART

» The International Diaghilev Cultural Center is about to celebrate its 15th anniversary. It is home to its own original programs based on classic repertoires, among others. These programs are enriched with an innovative approach, special effects, and original audio and video content. They are unique in that they remain high quality, thus carving out a place for Russian art on the global stage. The Center is run by **Natalya Toriashvili**, a graceful beauty with a dainty gait and strong character, which she first applied to ballet and brought that unique experience to the world of events.

education, fall within very different genres. They love experimenting and trying their hand at new performances. Moreover, they always do it to the highest quality: circus art, musicals, illusion shows, you name it! The Diaghilev Center attracts talented and professional people, so we can combine the seemingly incompatible in an innovative way.

All events at the Diaghilev Center are special and inimitable. There is nothing that has not been planned or thought through. Here, we treat the project like we treat the performance. A professional dramatist writes the script, a professional director

Originally, Natalya Toriashvili brought in Sergei Diaghilev, the grandson of the same impresario who glorified Russian art with his famous seasons, to create the Cultural Center. Thanks to this iconic figure, enthusiasts in various countries learnt Chaliapin, Pavlova, Nijinsky and many other Russian performers, artists and composers at the beginning of the 20th century.

At the initial stage, the Center was engaged in educational projects, whereby Natalya and Sergei would help future stars: they found teachers, fostered talent and sent young artists to competitions. At the same time, they prepared performances for various events, from camera receptions in embassies to major gala programs. And, of course, they performed their enterprises all over the world, linking them thematically to the era of Diaghilev's "Russian seasons".

Nowadays, the Diaghilev Cultural Center offers entertainment, education and enlightenment all at the same time. Its projects here are testament to the fact that the world of classical is incredibly diverse, and that with opera and ballet soloists you can push the boundaries and create unbelievably beautiful and original numbers, given that these artists, with their formal



a breakdancing squad. Often, such emotional performances end with an interaction with the audience, as standing still is very difficult. Another example is when customers ask for a belly dance to be included in the program. The "Eastern Dance" from Don Quixote performed by an honored artist of Russia is the type of exclusivity that the Diaghilev Center can offer you.

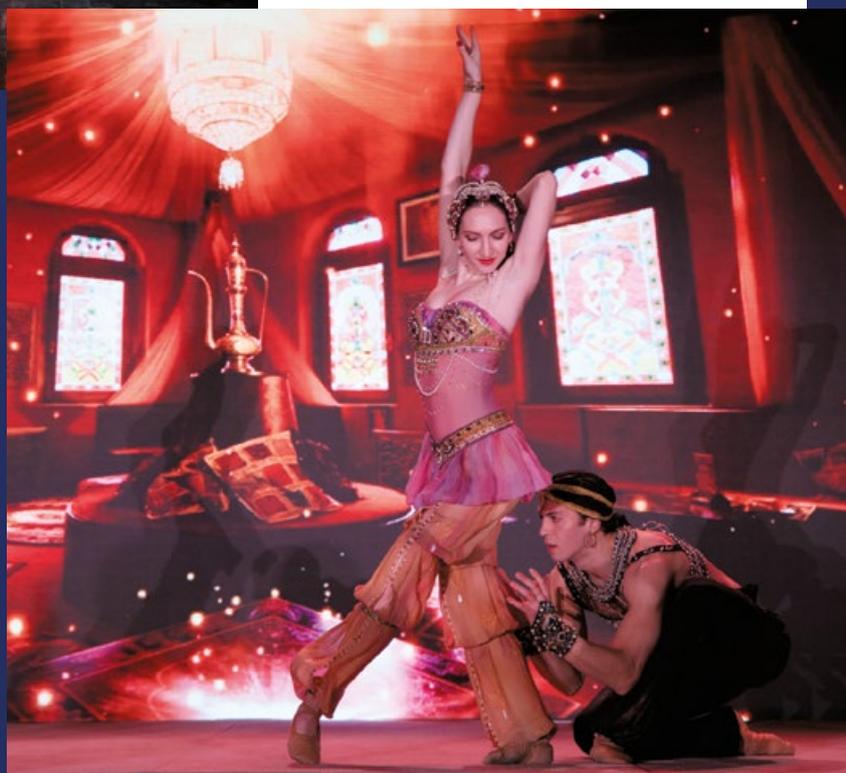
The Center has offices in St. Petersburg, Moscow and Sochi. The first performance abroad was launched a year ago in Dubai. As classical art is valued there, it is like a diamond for the Arab Emirates. There is an idea to open a center in one of the most musical cities in the world: Vienna.

The best example of a turnkey event of the Center is the unique event which was organized as part of the 23rd session of the General Assembly of UNWTO in September 2019, which was a major event for the global tourism industry.



stages the program, the set designer assesses the site, artists from the famous Mariinsky Theater or stars from musicals perform in the hall, and so on. Everyone is involved in the creative process. An essential condition for working in this kind of team is immersing oneself in the material, including corporate materials, so even an invited cover group can perform in a specific format thought up on the night. Everything is rehearsed, down to gestures and glances. We're all perfectionists here.

The producer of the Diaghilev Center is very keen on finding unusual solutions and brings a tiny bit of art to every number. For example, opera singers will compete with beatbox performers, while ballet dancers will go into battle with



Art in MICE

The theme was entitled "The Living Palace". The imperial action took place within an opulent palace in St. Petersburg. Over the course of one evening, its participants returned to the era of Catherine the Great. Torches and candles burned, guests were welcomed by dancing living park sculptures and the unique Horn Orchestra. Count Orlov greeted the audience, and as they went from room to room, ancient palace scenes were played out. We won't divulge all the details, but this magical day from a past era was presented in amazing detail: masks, maids of honor, guardsmen, opera divas, imperial ballet and, of course, a lifelike ball with fantastic fireworks.

Along with unique events, the Diaghilev Center's claim to fame is the Entreprise performance entitled "Anna Pavlova's Great World of Ballet", which has been touring around the world for 8 years now. If you, as an event organizer, want to surprise your audience and do this on a high level, the Diaghilev Center show is the pearl you are seeking among the countless other options. The show is unusual, comprising different forms of art such as music, ballet, opera singing, dramatic theater and painting. It combines video production and "living canvase" on stage. In Spring 2019, the Diaghilev Center tried out the format of a "corporate party show" at a client event in Helsinki at the old "imperial" theater of Finland in Alexander Palace. Here, European corporate partners and clients gathered in one place. We can therefore confirm that putting on a private or corporate event can be a unique form of entertainment.



5 INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT NATALIA TORIASHVILI

1. Prima ballerina 30 years in the ballet industry overall. Out of those, 19 years spent in top productions in various countries.
2. Mother to two amazing sons: 16 and 11 years old.
3. Represented the interests of the North-West region of Russia in her 4 years on the State Duma cultural committee.
4. Participates in the charitable foundation "Podari rebyonku prazdnik" (Give a child a holiday): each year, the foundation creates and transports Christmas presents to children's homes.
5. Founder and assistant at the Children's Ballet Theater.

Natalya Toriashvili says: "A lot of people think that the Diaghilev Center is a theater platform. But that's not the case. We have an international company which is popularizing Russian art across the world. And this Mission, most importantly, is part of my life and the life of our team today. The main thing is that art does not exist separately from life. We are very modern people, open-minded and very attentive to the needs of the customer. Our task, drawing on our entire professional skill-set at our disposal, is to create your event. We aim to become like-minded counterparts of our customers. As a result, thanks to our vision and performance, your event will acquire unbelievable synergy. We have many testimonies from grateful customers in various countries across the world."



THE DIAGHILEV CENTER IN NUMBERS:

- 14 years running. The first 6 years were spent exclusively in St. Petersburg (programs for foreign guests). After that, the center actively expanded its remit to encompass domestic and foreign markets. Branch offices were opened in Moscow, Sochi and Dubai. International projects.
- A highly proficient dedicated expert is responsible for each area of the company.
- Over 2,000 events per year.
- Largest event involved 6,000 people.
- Event highlights: Mendeleev Congress, Global Forum on Nature-Like and Convergent Technologies, St. Petersburg Economic Forum, UNWTO General Assembly.



RADISSON HOTEL GROUP – SO MANY WAYS TO DISCOVER ST. PETERSBURG!

» Radisson Hotel Group is one of the world's largest and most dynamic hotel groups. Brands managed by Radisson Hotel Group came to the Russian market a while ago. That means that guests who appreciate the exceptional quality of services offered by this hotel chain worldwide can be assured of the same high-level standards to which they are accustomed during their journey.

Moreover, in St. Petersburg, guests can not only count on the services they're familiar with, but can even choose which particular facility is the most fitting for their trip.

Radisson Hotel Group is the biggest international hotel chain in St. Petersburg and is represented by 6 hotels of 2 brands – Radisson Blu and Park Inn by Radisson – which are located in different parts of the city. Depending on the purpose of the visit, travelers can go for accommodation or a meeting venue in the city center, on Vasilevsky Island or within close proximity to the airport.

Here is a brief overview of the brand's hotels to help you to decide which St. Petersburg property is the most suitable for your travel and business purposes.

PARK INN BY RADISSON NEVSKY, ST. PETERSBURG

Located in the bustling city center, Park Inn by Radisson Nevsky is only a few minutes away from the major transportation hubs and world-famous tourist attractions.

The hotel features 269 modern comfortable rooms including 2 junior suites designed to make you feel at ease.

MICE ADVANTAGES

- » 2 well-equipped conference rooms, pre-function foyer and 2 modular rooms.
- » Free high-speed wireless Internet.
- » Event support services and event planning solutions.
- » Moskovsky railway station – 2 min walk.
- » Pulkovo Airport – 30 min by car.



RADISSON ROYAL HOTEL, ST. PETERSBURG

The Radisson Royal Hotel is perfectly located on St. Petersburg's main street, Nevsky Prospect. It is only a short distance from all the city's world-famous cultural and historic attractions, including the Fabergé Museum, and offers luxurious accommodation for an enjoyable stay.

Dating back to the 18th century, the building housing the Radisson Royal Hotel has a colorful history. The interior of the building was completely reconstructed in 2001, and the original façade has been restored to its former glory while retaining original features, many of which are almost 300 years old.

Historic hotel in the heart of St. Petersburg has 164 elegant rooms including 76 superior rooms.



MICE ADVANTAGES

- » 7 cozy yet spacious venues for ideal meetings in the city center.
- » M&E dedicated floor.
- » Pre-function area.
- » Natural daylight in main conference rooms.
- » 7 m ceiling height Atrium Hall, perfect for coffee breaks, special occasions & weddings.
- » The State Hermitage Museum – 30 min walk.
- » Moskovsky railway station – 10 min walk.
- » Pulkovo Airport – 30 min by car.



RUNE NORDSTOKKE,

Cluster General Manager of the Radisson Royal Hotel, St. Petersburg and Park Inn by Radisson Nevsky, St. Petersburg:

“With the central location of Radisson Royal and Park Inn Nevsky, we are in the heart of the city overlooking the main

street, placing our guests near world-famous attractions. Discovering St. Petersburg has never been easier than it is today. The new e-visa provides a unique opportunity to all international guests, both business and individual, to make their trip more convenient.”

Book your next event:
events.led@radissonhotels.com

MICE Hotel

PARK INN BY RADISSON PULKOVSKAYA HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER, ST. PETERSBURG

Nestled amongst historic buildings, verdant parks, stylish shopping centers and restaurants, Park Inn by Radisson Pulkovskaya is the perfect base for a stay in St. Petersburg.

Vibrant hotel with SPA facilities offers 842 rooms and suites with modern design and style.

MICE ADVANTAGES

- » 21 renovated meeting rooms and Congress Hall that hold from 10 to 1,000 delegates.
- » 4,600 m² of conference and exhibition space.
- » 3 restaurants that serve local and international cuisine and own Paulaner brewery.
- » 800 m² SPA aqua zone with a variety of saunas.
- » Free shuttle bus to and from the airport.
- » Pulkovo Airport — 15 min by car.
- » Expoforum exhibition venue — 15 min by car.



PARK INN BY RADISSON PULKOVO AIRPORT, ST. PETERSBURG

The only international hotel in St. Petersburg directly connected to the airport by a covered walkway.

200 stylish, vibrant rooms including 30 superior rooms, 2 family rooms and 10 suites with mood LED lighting panels, floor-to-ceiling windows and modern amenities.

MICE ADVANTAGES

- » 18 hi-tech meeting rooms offering 550 m² of flexible space on two levels.
- » Pre-function areas adaptable to specific events.
- » 280 m² restaurant suited for banquets, cocktail parties and social gatherings.
- » Modern audio-visual equipment, individual climate control and lighting.
- » City center with its world-famous attractions — 45 min by public transport.
- » Historical suburbs, Tsarskoe Selo and Peterhof Fountains — 30 min by car.
- » Expoforum exhibition venue — 15 min by car.



RODERICK SMITH,

Cluster General Manager of Park Inn by Radisson Pulkovskaya Hotel & Conference Center and Park Inn by Radisson Pulkovo Airport

“St. Petersburg, as Russia’s cultural city, is already on many visitors’ bucket list. Now, the free e-visa means many people can visit St. Petersburg and seriously consider the city for their

outbound conferencing. Over recent years, St. Petersburg has hosted many events, from international concerts to the World Cup, Confederations Cup, and this year it will host Euro 2020 and the Champions League in 2021. The city keeps developing and in the future will become even better destination to conference and enjoy.”

Book your next event:
events.led@radissonhotels.com

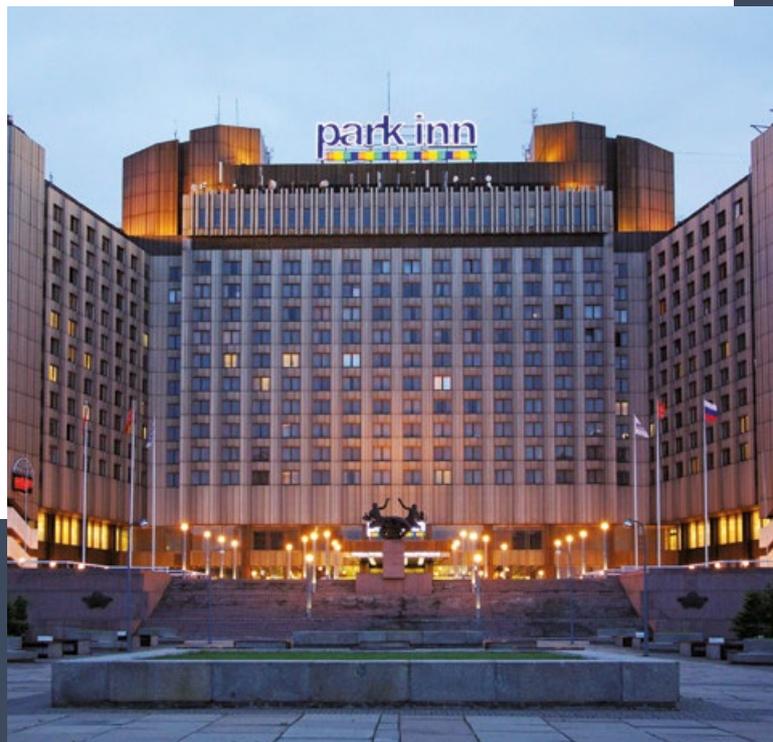
PARK INN PRIBALTIYSKAYA HOTEL & CONGRESS CENTER, ST. PETERSBURG

Elegant accommodation near the scenic Gulf of Finland with outstanding meetings and events facilities.

Biggest congress hotel in the city with 1,184 hotel rooms, including renovated Next Gen rooms, standard and superior rooms, junior suites and duplex suites.

MICE ADVANTAGES

- » 26 conference rooms that can hold from 10 to 1,500 delegates.
- » Over 2,000 m² of exhibition space.



- » The Blue Conference Room – a unique multi-functional space that can hold up to 1,500 delegates.
- » Mobile soundproof walls can split the Blue Room into five separate conference rooms so up to five events can be held at once
- » Spacious welcome foyer, cocktail service and coffee break zones.
- » Park Inn Restaurant with a buffet line for 800 persons.
- » Mobile walls split the restaurant into 3 separate parts.
- » Pulkovo Airport – 30 min by car on the highway.
- » City center attractions – 25 min by public transport.



ATAKAN TURHAN,

General Manager of Park Inn by Radisson Pribaltiyskaya Hotel & Congress Center:

“As the biggest international conference hotel in St. Petersburg, Park Inn by Radisson Pribaltiyskaya can host any international incentives for up to 1,500 people. We are very experienced

at how to work with such sized events. Since e-visas came in, I see continuously increasing interest from such different markets as Europe, India, Turkey and China to bring their employees for incentive trips to St. Petersburg as it is a perfect city to celebrate company success.”

Book your next event:
events.led@radissonhotels.com

RADISSON SONYA HOTEL, ST. PETERSBURG

Elegant boutique hotel with literature-inspired interior and Russian atmosphere, which represents F. M. Dostoyevsky's time and the central theme of his novel Crime and Punishment.

Radisson Sonya Hotel is conveniently located close to main sightseeings and Nevsky Prospect, and offers 173 comfortable rooms and suites in the historical part of the city.



MICE ADVANTAGES

- » 4 Fully-equipped conference rooms with a total area from 11 to 146 m².
- » Courtyard for banquets and special occasions with capacity up to 150 guests.
- » Metamorfos bar&restaurant serving modern Russian cuisine.
- » Themed interior and elegant design for weddings and banquets.
- » Dedicated wedding and event coordinator.
- » Central location in a walking distance from metro station.
- » Pulkovo Airport – 40 min by car.
- » Summer Garden – 15 min walk.
- » The State Hermitage Museum – 20 min by public transport.



ROHIT KARUNAKARAN,

General Manager of Radisson Sonya Hotel, St. Petersburg

“Radisson Sonya is a contemporary, personal hotel inspired by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. The hotel offers guests a true taste of the destination that will strike

a personal note in terms of architecture, location, ambience and design. Unique, authentic and inspiring. Our enviable location provides a memorable setting for both business and social gatherings near local attractions.”

Book your next event:
sonya.sales@radissonblu.com

Explore St. Petersburg during an exciting walk. Being an effective combination of team building and sightseeing tours, our quests are a good way for MICE tourists to get to know the Northern Capital of Russia.



We offer:

- 📍 Attractive stories based on true facts
- 🔍 Miracle contacts with well-known historical figures
- 📍 The most impressive and instagramable locations
- 📖 City legends by professional guides
- 🌟 Emotional charge and unbelievable experience

To get more information:

Prime Time, MICE and Event agency St. Petersburg, Russia
www.prime-event.ru info @prime-event.ru +7 (812) 950-06-67



Prime Time
Events. Design. Communications

ST. PETERSBURG — THE CITY WITH THE PERFECT CLIMATE FOR MICE

» The main theme of this issue is the possibilities for incentive events in Russia. However, there is one city in our country which deserves to be discussed separately and in detail — it is, of course, St. Petersburg: the monument city, the legend city, the trendy city.

Of course, the cultural component of St. Petersburg makes an impact regardless of economy, politics and time of year — tourists come to the city to admire the Petrine Baroque on Hare Island, study the incredibly rich collection of the Hermitage, marvel at the splendour of suburban royal residences, immerse themselves in the life of literary classics created here, experience the legendary Russian ballet, and simply take atmospheric photos along the countless canals. But let's wonder for a moment whether cultural heritage is all it takes to declare itself a MICE destination, what ambitions St. Petersburg has in this regard, and what has the city already done to implement its plans.

As you know, St. Petersburg has received World Travel Awards in various categories for several years in a row. In 2019, the city was named the best urban destination in Europe, having already featured in this category in 2015, 2016 and 2017. In 2018, St. Petersburg received three honours in the World Travel Awards: as leading global cultural destination, best European cruise destination and best European cultural destination (St. Petersburg was also awarded prizes in this nomination in 2017, beating London, New York, Paris, Rome and other world capitals). The city achieved these results thanks to its sustainable development in several directions.

ACCESSIBILITY AND CONVENIENCE

Let's start in order. When considering any destination for organising an event, the planner first of all wonders how delegates will be able to get there. And in this respect, St. Petersburg has taken tremendous steps to simplify the logistical task as much as possible.

The most anticipated and inspiring news of late 2019 was the introduction of electronic visas, making it easier for foreign nationals to enter St. Petersburg and the Leningrad Region. Specialists predict that this measure will increase the flow of foreign visitors by 2 million people in 2020.

According to Committee for the Development of Tourism data, since the launch of the new procedure, foreign nationals have already filed about 100,000 applications for an electronic visa to visit St. Petersburg.

REGISTRATION AND DETAILED INFORMATION:

<https://electronic-visa.kdmid.ru>

Who for:	citizens of 52 countries around the world
Registration term:	4 days
Duration of stay:	8 days
Methods of entry:	air, car, sea (rail not yet)
Cost:	free

Top of the list of applications are citizens from neighbouring countries: Estonia, Latvia, France, Germany and Finland — they are requesting more than half of all electronic visas.

The largest number of border crossings was recorded at Pulkovo Airport and the "Ivangorod" road checkpoint at the border with Estonia. Each of them saw more than 27,000 electronic visa holders pass through.

When considering logistics issues as a whole, it's also worth noting the architecturally and technically updated Pulkovo



Airport, or rather its completely new terminal and grandiose new objectives. Despite the fact that since the launch of the terminal in 2013, Pulkovo has reported an annual increase in passenger traffic on average of 10% (for 2019, this figure exceeded 19 million), the appearance of electronic visas should significantly increase these figures. Another major driver for attracting new tourist flows to the city is the introduction at St. Petersburg

airport from 1 January 2020 of a regime to remove restrictions on flights by foreign airlines according to the seventh degree of freedom of the air. In simple terms, this means that without restrictions, carriers will be able to transport passengers from the Northern Capital to 30 countries, namely: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Great Britain, Germany, Denmark, Ireland, Iceland, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg,

Macedonia, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Finland, Switzerland, Sweden and Estonia. And now it's even easier — the skies above St. Petersburg are now open for low-cost airlines, which means that flying to St. Petersburg is not only easier, but cheaper, too. As for future plans, the airport's management company is already considering options for expanding the infrastructure of the passenger terminal.

In addition to improving and raising the level of service of the airport itself, St. Petersburg is preparing to build a separate railway line connecting Pulkovo with the city centre, and it is expected that the airport express in the northern capital will be launched in 2022. For business tourists, this means convenience, saving time and ease of independent travel planning.

INFRASTRUCTURE

A major breakthrough in the development of St. Petersburg's MICE capacity came in 2014 with the opening of the new Expoforum congress and exhibition complex. Its managing company ExpoForum-International immediately set itself a task — not only to "close off" the need to organise local business events, but to actively attract large rotating congresses and to the best of its ability promote St. Petersburg as a modern, convenient MICE destination.

For several years in a row, events have been held here which have become a calling card not just for the city, but for the country, too: the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, Gas Forum, Legal Forum, Cultural Forum and others, each of these events attracting thousands of visitors to St. Petersburg and giving rise to satellite events organised at other venues within the city.

Today, this promotional initiative is supported by other major players in the city



Leonid Sergeev,
CEO of the managing company of Pulkovo Airport
"Northern Capital Gateway":

"Pulkovo has unprecedented conditions for development as an international aviation hub. I am sure that the implementation of a package of measures, including the seventh degree of freedom of the air for foreign airlines and electronic visas for citizens of 53 countries, will increase the transport accessibility of St. Petersburg and provide travellers with a wide choice of affordable options for comfortable direct flights to Pulkovo."

Sergey Voronkov,
CEO of ExpoForum-International:

"St. Petersburg is confidently striving to become the congress and exhibition capital of Russia: this is made possible by holding international rotating congresses here, and its development as a PCO (professional conference organiser) destination, along with state programmes in the field of MICE tourism. ExpoForum's portfolio includes 41 of its own events, and all of them develop key competences within the city: industry, energy and the gas sector, agro-industrial complex, education and the culinary industry. In 5 years, we have held 12 international rotating events. It is very important for our team to develop St Petersburg and the best it can offer."



ExpoForum

which have the potential to organise significant international events, such as the Gazprom Arena stadium, the "Novaya Golladia" and "Sevkabel Port" recreational projects and others.

When describing the infrastructure of St. Petersburg, we need to highlight the role of its hotel base. The active growth of the city's room stock began in the run-up to the 2018 World Cup. In preparation for this event, in the space of just one year, there were 7 new category 3 and 4-star hotels built with a total of just under 1,000 rooms. As of 1.8.2019, St. Petersburg had 1,467 classified accommodation facilities, which include all accommodation segments, and more than 46,000 rooms. According to the St. Petersburg Tourism Development Committee, three category 3-star hotels and two category 4–5-star hotels are planned to open in 2019–2021.

ST. PETERSBURG'S HOTEL ROOM BASE:

- 5* — 27 hotels
- 4* — 111 hotels
- 3* — 350 hotels
- 2* — 103 hotels
- 1* — 22 hotels
- No star rating — 854 accommodation units

* According to St. Petersburg Tourism Development Committee data

As for the near future, the city has clearly marked the trend for developing new creative spaces, including through the reconstruction of outdated industrial facilities. One of the most ambitious projects in this regard promises to be the "Island of Forts" in a suburb of St. Petersburg — Kronstadt. Here, a Naval Museum, historical park, memorial to lost sailors and hotels will be created on an area covering 100 hectares. The "highlight" of the development will be the restored forts. Developers expect the new attraction to bring in up to 5 million tourists.

Another development avenue for social infrastructure is the construction of fundamentally new, modern complexes capable of taking on not only practical functions, but also acting as the conceptual and architectural dominating hub of the city. Such a project is the Lakhta Centre, a multifunctional public and business complex housing the headquarters of the Gazprom group of companies, which has become the tallest skyscraper in Russia and Europe, with a height of 462 metres. More than a third of the area of the complex is reserved for conceptual public spaces: an open amphitheatre, a pedestrian promenade, a viewing platform, a modular concert hall, a convention centre, a scientific and educational centre with a planetarium, panoramic restaurants and galleries, etc. Construction of the complex has already been completed, work is underway to improve its business and public areas, and the Lakhta Centre is already claiming to have become a new landmark in St. Petersburg.

EVENTS

St. Petersburg is the northernmost city in the world with a population of more than 1 million. Perhaps, the realisation of this fact explains one of the difficulties the city faces in attracting MICE business — seasonality. Most organisers try to hold their events from May to September, when the city is warm and there's the best chance of sunny days. We won't argue — St.



New Holland

Petersburg is really especially beautiful in good weather; however, there are indisputable advantages in coming here in cold weather. Firstly, there is a serious reduction in accommodation tariffs (from 20 to 50%), secondly, less congestion of cultural venues, and thirdly, availability of most convention and exhibition facilities.

It should be noted that in recent years, St. Petersburg has been actively developing event tourism, which also positively affects the "blurring" of the notion of seasonality and attracts visitors to the city regardless of the weather. Already, there are several notable events that raise the image status of the region. The largest and most significant are the Festival of Light, Festival of Flowers and Festival of Brass Bands, Baltic Yacht Week, Scarlet Sails alumni festival and Stars of the White Nights classical music festival. The plan is that by 2023, the main reason for coming to St. Petersburg for one in five tourists will be event tourism.

Creating its own projects, St. Petersburg is also active in attracting well-known rotating business events, using all possible means to demonstrate to the world MICE community its impressive potential. The leading role in this promotional activity has been taken on by the Congress and Exhibition Bureau of St. Petersburg, which is currently conducting a huge amount of

Alistair Watts,
Vice President Sales, Marketing, Revenue, Distribution
& Loyalty Accor New East Europe (Russia, CIS, Georgia,
Ukraine, Israel, Turkey):

"The St. Petersburg market is very successful for Accor, and thanks to a combination of factors, we are optimistic for the future as well. There is strong leisure demand to the city and the season continues to develop into the winter period with the new e-Visa solution driving new demand. The e-Visa is also starting to shift international business travel demand from Moscow to St. Petersburg, in particular for MICE events as well as small meetings.

Accor's portfolio will expand in the coming years as we have development projects in all segments, including two Mercure, an additional Novotel, ibis Styles and one of our new lifestyle brands called Tribe. The luxury segment is also in high demand and we are set to announce two new projects this year. Our current portfolio in the market includes 3 properties, all in different segments: ibis, Novotel and SO/. The Novotel recently updated its public areas and 40 bedrooms, whilst the SO/ introduced a new rooftop terrace that during the summer season is the place to be."

Andrey Matsarin,

CEO of the Saint Petersburg Convention Bureau

"Currently, business tourism is considered one of the priorities in the development of the tourism sector of St. Petersburg.

Large-scale work to develop business tourism includes improving the urban infrastructure and the city's participation in international specialist exhibitions in Russia and abroad such as FITUR, ITB Asia, MITT, IMEX, IBTM etc. But the most important thing is to attract major business events to the city with international participation.

In order to do so and effectively present Saint Petersburg to the global conference community, the "Ambassadors" program has been in effect since 2018. St. Petersburg was the first to start implementing this promising and yet unique program for Russia. Thanks to the joint work of the Saint Petersburg Committee for tourism development, our Bureau and the Ambassadors (there are already 21 of them), this year St. Petersburg will host major international congresses such as Global Space Exploration Conference – GLEX-2020, the 30th Congress of the WSCTS – World Society of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgeons 2020, 22nd International conference on speech and computer SPECOM 2020, all-Russian Conference with international participation "Nursing Now-Russia".

information work on the foreign market. Another major area of the organisation's activity is working with internal MICE service providers, quality control and creating a unified database of reliable and professional partner agencies.

VARIOUS OPTIONS

So, we hope we have convinced you that St. Petersburg is an attractive MICE destination, as well as the expediency and convenience of planning your events here. Of course, it's better to see once than read a hundred times, but while you're planning your trip, we want to once again remind you where we started – with the city's rich cultural heritage, unique spirit and impeccable style. From this point of view, the possibilities offered by St. Petersburg are almost limitless – the city can serve as a truly elegant setting for events at any level. A walk around the rooftops, a private ballet in a noble theatre, a sailing regatta in the Gulf of Finland, a gala dinner on board a motor ship under the lifting bridges, an educational quest around the historical part of the city, a walk on the walls of the Peter and Paul Fortress or the colonnade of St Isaac's Cathedral, a crazy party on a street full of bars, a rooftop disco, jazz concert in an atmospheric club, banquet on the balcony of the presidential residence in the Konstantinovsky Palace etc ... all this is the same St. Petersburg, part of which every visitor to the city takes away with them, forever in love with St. Petersburg.



Lakhta Center

CORINTHIA ST. PETERSBURG,

RENOWNED AND MODERN, BUSINESS-MINDED YET STYLISH, IS SITUATED RIGHT IN THE HISTORIC HEART OF RUSSIA'S NORTHERN CAPITAL

» The lion's share of the Russian and international awards garnered by Corinthia St. Petersburg over the past decade have been won in the nominating categories "Russia's Leading Conference Hotel" and "Russia's Best MICE Hotel". You have to admit that's impressive, especially when you consider that the Corinthia is a five-star hotel located in the historic downtown of St. Petersburg. Worthily representing the exclusive Corinthia Hotels collection, the gem is a fitting tribute to the world art of hospitality as well as to local cultural traditions. So, what's the secret to the striking success of the hotel's business life?

Two opulent historic buildings of the 19th century majestically situated right in the heart of Nevsky Prospekt, harmoniously combining both history and vibrant modernity within their stately walls. An exceptional level of service, strict adherence to the brand's unique value system, contemporary luxury, and abundant infrastructure capable of handling the most ambitious tasks associated with the organization of seminal events – these are the hotel's main pillars and form the foundation of its successful operations.

In June 2019, Corinthia St. Petersburg was named for a record-breaking seventh time "Russia's Leading Conference Hotel" by the prestigious international World Travel Awards. According to the hotel's Marketing and PR Director Anna Kagan, "Over the course of more than 15 years, this resounding success has been made possible thanks to the exceptional professionalism of the hotel's team as well as to the mastery of world-class service, delivered with passion and a deep understanding of the hospitality business."

Today, Corinthia St. Petersburg is the largest and only five-star hotel in the historical city center offering such a high number of rooms and conference venues. The total capacity of all of the hotel's 17 modular meeting rooms is up to 1,000 people. Every day, the hotel accommodates events of varying formats and sizes: from international conferences and official banquets, to private weddings and posh social events.

The sweeping renovation to update the design of the hotel's lobby and guest rooms was completed in 2018. The entire key count of Corinthia St. Petersburg, totaling 388 rooms and luxury suites, is befitting of the facility's grand-hotel status. Travelers from all over the world have already embraced the new design and functional upgrades made to the hotel's spacious and elegant rooms. The hotel's guests traditionally look forward to the comfortable "Corinthia" beds designed for a relaxing sleep, free Wi-Fi, St. Petersburg's only Executive Lounge, and many other special benefits.



Today's modern grand-hotel Corinthia St. Petersburg combines the pleasure of a sumptuous stay for its guests with unique opportunities to hold high-profile events at the highest international level including all of the most ambitious MICE projects.

CORINTHIA ST. PETERSBURG,

Nevsky Prospekt, 57, St. Petersburg, Russia
+7 (812) 380 20 01 | corinthia.com/stpetersburg
Reservations.Stpetersburg@corinthia.com

RUSSIAN PECULIARITIES IN BUSINESS

» Get ready: there are tons of great things to discover about Russia. One of them is the high level of business communication, interwoven with national peculiarities of the Russian “dusha”, or soul.

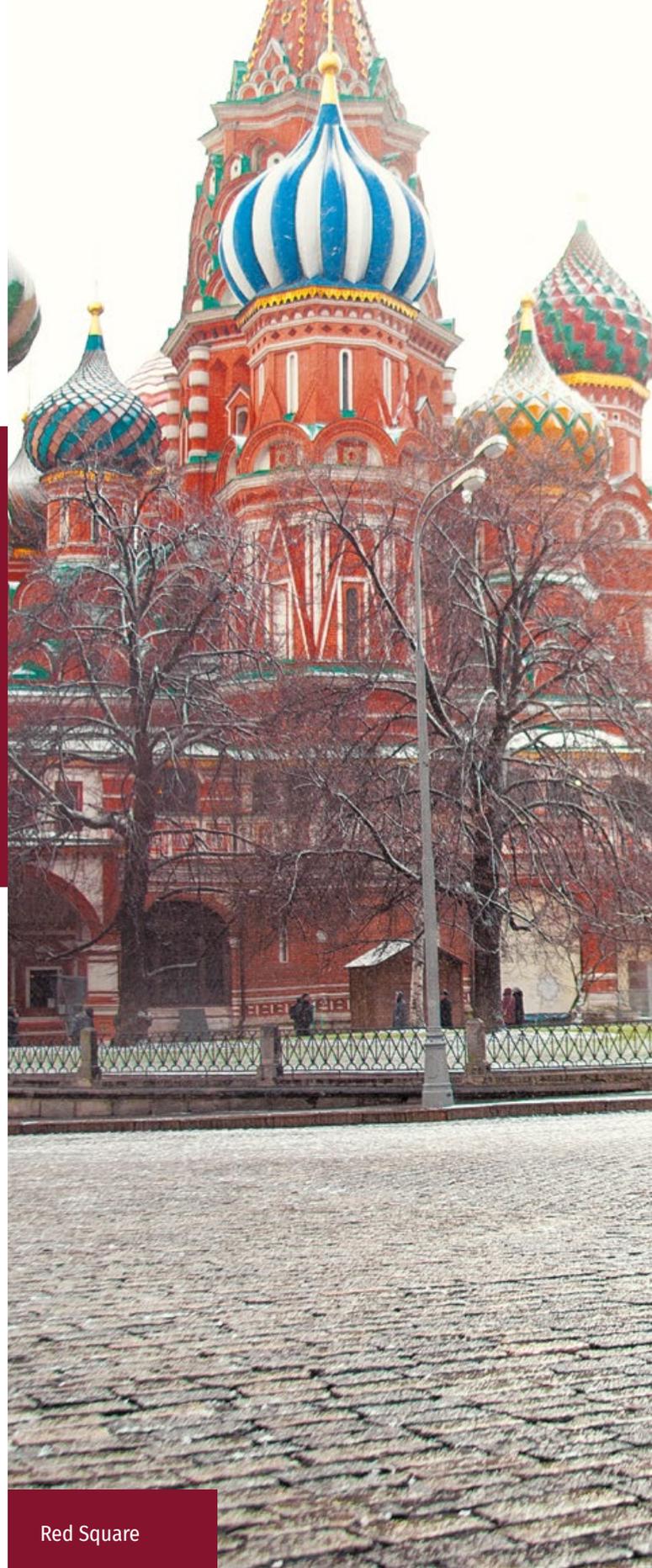
Anna Grekova and **Marina Semayeva**, international masters and coaches in business image and etiquette at the development centre Business Etiquette, are here to tell you more about it.

Russia is a country with a lot of resources and opportunities. There's everything, including established rules of business etiquette. The basis of these rules is the same in every country: respect for yourself and others, and forming and maintaining comfortable and effective relationships. But our businessmen demonstrate stark national characteristics of business behaviour: a developed spoken culture, adherence to commands, punctuality, attention to one's appearance and a love of putting on a spread.

SPOKEN CULTURE

Over the course of several generations, Russia has kept its status as the most well read country in the world. Literate speech shows that you are highly cultured and creates trust.

In state organisations and conservative companies, it's polite to use the formal term for “you” (or “Vy”, in Russian), and also call people by their name and patronymic. In more progressive commercial structures, you can just use their name, while preserving the respectful form of greeting. Any other greeting may be perceived as disrespectful, so using the official style of greeting “Vy” when speaking and writing is the main basis for business relations and avoids conflict.



Red Square



RESPECT FOR HIERARCHIES

But when talking with Russian partners of different ranks, the success of negotiations depends on choosing the correct form of conduct. Of course, there's rarely a strict hierarchy in relationships, such as there is in Japan, for example.

It's important to adhere to simple rule of business etiquette when you meet someone: the more junior are greeted and introduced by the more senior. If everyone has the same status, there is no order of significance. If you are the one who is interested in forming a business contact, you can say hello first regardless of status. You can be sure that Russian partners value a respectful attitude without over-familiarity or admiration.

PUNCTUALITY

Russians value punctuality highly. Business meetings and negotiations adhere to a strict schedule, are appointed several weeks before and must be confirmed on the eve of the meeting. Full work schedules have taught many people to value time, so being late or missing deadlines for work you have taken on is seen as disrespectful and neglectful, which can seriously damage your business reputation. Respecting temporary limits is an important rule of business conduct in Russia.

DRESS CODE

The well-known Russian saying, "greeted by clothes, escorted by the mind" hasn't lost its relevance nowadays. So, when deciding what to wear for business meetings in Russia, you should pay close attention to choosing a high quality material and well cut clothes. It's recommended that men opt for dark blue or grey suits, light-coloured shirt and status accessories: silk ties, stylish leather shoes and expensive watches. For women, it's best to wear dresses, skirts and trousers with a jacket, shoes with a comfortable heel and exquisite jewellery. A well-groomed appearance and thoughtful business wardrobe indicate a successful business position.

BUSINESS MEETINGS IN UNOFFICIAL SETTINGS

It's also widely known that Russians love to put on a spread and go to the banya. Don't be surprised if, during a long business exchange, one of the stages of "rapprochement" is an invitation to take a steam bath at the banya. At the same time, business meetings in restaurants are also commonplace. According to business etiquette rules, the inviting party should settle the bill. It's good form to return the favour next time. If a joint decision is made over lunch to continue cooperating,



GUM, Moscow

Lina Moskvina, Editor in Chief of MICE&more, Marina



the bill should be split. The important thing to remember is that regardless of where the meeting is taking place, it remains strictly business-oriented.

We hope that this knowledge of business etiquette and well formulated business image will help you be confident and successful in any international business situation!

Photographer — Daria Maltseva
MUaH — Victoria Akhmazova

Semaeva & Anna Grekova, Stylists of the project



HOTEL WORK: EXPECTATIONS VS REALITY

» One of the largest MICE segments is the hotel business: huge investments, massive infrastructure, leading service-level indicators, cutting-edge marketing and PR strategies, incredible drawing power... the whole success pyramid is directly dependent on the actions of each individual employee, even those in the most entry-level positions. Today, I'd like to talk to you about the criticality of the staffing question in the hotel business, and most importantly — to share with you my methods for solving it.



WHY ME?

What gives me the right to raise this topic, you're asking? I'll tell you. My experience with staff recruiting in the hotel industry began in 2005, when the management of a Turkish hotel chain contacted my agency for help in headhunting for Russian-speaking personnel. We did a great job handling the assignment. And we didn't just learn the hard way — we learned how to effectively use unconventional recruiting tools. The result was numerous headhunting contracts for the staffing of other foreign brands: we filled vacancies at hotels in Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, the UAE, Vietnam, Azerbaijan and Ukraine. In 2008, we started recruiting staff for hotels in Moscow and St. Petersburg, and thereafter — for regional hotels. With that, let's start with a little theory.

WHAT'S THE ACTUAL STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY?

- » Specialized educational institutions are not saturating the labor market with the required specialists, while study programs themselves are struggling to keep up with the breakneck pace of changing hotel needs.
- » Staff turnover in the hotel business remains one of the highest compared to that found in related sectors, standing at roughly 13% annually (at a normal rate of 3–5%). In Mos-

cow, Sochi and St. Petersburg, staff turnover sometimes gets as high as 30% in peak periods.

- » The industry is virtually devoid of wage growth (the average wage level in Moscow is RUB 45,000), with the market offering salaries only to those in management positions.
- » A discernable imbalance is emerging between supply and demand on the labor market — an imbalance that's tipped against employers. In considering vacancies, job-hunters are starting to prioritize not only financial terms but also the hotel's brand and image, the existence of an expanded benefits package, flexible scheduling and opportunities for professional and personal growth.
- » Hotels, in turn, are increasingly outsourcing the recruitment of specialists and hiring staff from the regions, while their interest in foreign specialists has started to wane.

BACK TO BASICS — EDUCATION

It would seem logical that you have to start by understanding how everything works, i.e. by getting a quality, specialized education that satisfies the requirements of the leading companies in this ever-evolving industry. But it's not all that simple.

Russia currently has roughly 100 institutions of higher education preparing specialists for the hotel business. Yet, it's no secret to anyone that the country's training of staff for the hotel industry leaves a lot to be desired. Firstly, as a rule, we train our tourism and hotel workforce according to a single program, which is at the very least strange, and as we can see — also inefficient. Secondly, Russian students spend virtually all of their study time learning theory, while the duration of internships is so short that it can be entirely discounted. By comparison, European students spend 4–5 months in the field every year.

The following regional and capital-city colleges and universities are having the most success providing training in the “Hotel Business” specialization:

- » Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University (KFU);
- » Southern Federal University (SFU);
- » Ural Federal University named after B.N. Yeltsin (UrFU named after B.N. Yeltsin);
- » Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia (RUDN);
- » Far Eastern Federal University (FEFU);
- » Synergy University (Moscow);
- » Bachelor’s Program at the Institute of Industry Management (RANEPa);
- » Russian State University of Tourism and Service (Moscow);
- » Moscow State Institute for the Tourism Industry named after Y. A. Senkevich;
- » Plekhanov Russian University of Economics (Moscow).

Yet, none of these colleges and universities have thus far managed to build a good name that compares to that of foreign institutions, which are leaders and trendsetters in their particular niche. Switzerland, for example, could be called the birthplace of hospitality. The Glion Institute of Higher Education (Glion, Bulle, Switzerland) and Les Roches, International School of Hotel Management (Bluche, Switzerland) opened here over 50 years ago, while the Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne — a public university — was founded here more than 100 years ago. Today, these universities top the ratings of educational institutions offering programs in hotel business and management, and train the best professionals for the industry. As such, Swiss training methods — based on practical experience and internships — are considered the best in the world, and international ratings show that the owners of the world’s largest hotel chains view this model as the most efficient.

Also worthy of note is Cornell University (Ithaca, USA) — the Ivy League school ranks 19th in global ratings. Hotel School The Hague (Hague, the Netherlands) and Oxford Brookes University (Oxford, Great Britain) are also among the world’s top-ten in terms of educational institutions specializing in the hotel business.

So, what next? It would seem that, given the workforce shortage, hotels should be rushing to scoop up prospective hires even before they’ve had the chance to graduate. But that isn’t happening, of course, and here’s why...

HOTELS PLACE SERIOUS DEMANDS ON THEIR STAFF, ABOVE AND BEYOND SPECIALIZED EDUCATION

A hotel’s staff is its public face — it’s the employees who burnish a hotel’s impeccable reputation. They’re responsible not only for themselves, but also for the entire team, since any mistake is a dark stain on the hotel’s reputation and therefore a blow to all of its employees, no exceptions. A properly assembled team of professionals has a positive impact on the profit, viability and further development of the individual hotel. So, what things should be given special attention when recruiting staff to work at a hotel?

Education, experience, motivation, psychological traits, physical appearance and presentability, knowledge of foreign languages (English at a minimum level of upper immediate, and preferably a second foreign language) and familiarity with guest-service standards, physical qualities, recommendations — this is but a short list of the essential requirements that must be considered in the recruitment of hotel staff.

The standard recruitment procedure encompasses the holding of an interview (including some unorthodox questions) with someone from HR and the candidate’s potential supervisor, knowledge and skill testing, and the requesting and checking of recommendations — but particular attention is paid to stress resistance. Hotel staff must always be composed, poised, courteous and attentive. More attention is also starting to be paid to religious and cultural differences. Guest-service quality standards at hotels are spelled out down to the subtlest gesture, and staff must strictly adhere to these requirements.

You might think that it’s counterproductive to raise the bar so high and then lament the staffing shortage. But the price of a mistake made by any one employee is just too high for hotels to take that risk. Moreover, these high standards are being dictated by each and every one of us — after all, when we’re travelling, we expect “special treatment” and “impeccable service” and we don’t forgive mistakes.

HERE’S WHAT HOTELIERS HAVE TO DEAL WITH IN TRYING TO RECRUIT THEIR TEAM:

- 1. Fighting with competitors — not just for the guest, but also for quality staff, while at the same time justifying and insisting on the exacting requirements they demand of employees.**

Exacting requirements lead to unavoidable difficulties in the recruiting of staff. Hotels are facing stiff competition from restaurants and the tourism business, Business Travel & MICE, and DMC-companies, all of which have lower requirements while offering more flexible work schedules or higher wages. In recruiting staff for hotels, we've often pointed out to employers that the total income of hotel wait-staff and kitchen employees is lower than in the restaurant business, and that the income of administrative staff is lower than at companies in related fields, while the requirements are higher and the control stricter. That's why most job-hunters prefer work with fewer requirements and a higher level of compensation.

2. Operating with a chronic shortage of managerial staff and line personnel.

The management shortage is often covered with internal resources (many chain hotels have their own training centers), as well as by monitoring the work of competitors (smart hotel HR always tracks what the market's A-listers are doing). But the shortage in line personnel is being felt particularly acutely.

Also worth mentioning is the staffing problem in the regions. They're having a really tough time in Crimea, and to fix the situation, Crimean hotels are recruiting staff from Moscow, St. Petersburg and other regions. Local staff are poorly motivated — they don't understand the concept of "customer-focus" and lack the proper knowledge of service quality standards. The top management brought in from the capital is now trying to train staff and introduce the right technologies and standards. Sochi went through the same thing back in the day — now, they have pretty well-qualified and motivated staff, although they still have things to work on.

My personal experience:

Not long ago, we were headhunting a sales and marketing director for a 5-star hotel in Rostov Region. The owner had wanted to bring in candidates from Moscow, but the applicants turned down the vacancy right at the initial negotiation stage with the owner. As it turned out, the reason boiled down to the hotel's disorganized business processes, its lack of IT infrastructure, professional staff and in-house training system, as well as its overall mindset. In the end, we found a management company that developed all of these processes for the specific hotel and took them under its own management.

3. In conducting a lengthy recruitment procedure (two or three stages), they risk losing a potential employee who's not prepared to wait that long.

My personal experience:

We were recently approached by a famous hotel chain from the UAE. At their best hotel, prompted by a spike in tourists coming from Russia and the CIS, they were looking for an executive chef with knowledge of Russian cuisine. The hotel's top manager travelled to Moscow three times to interview the candidates and taste the dishes that they had prepared, but every time was left unsatisfied by the food that they had cooked, although he had liked the candidates themselves. We talked with the client, and wound up finding out that the top manager had simply failed to appreciate the palate preferences of Russians (he was particularly unimpressed by borsch with sour cream, rassolnik and dressed herring). In the end, he went with our recommendations and we quickly closed the vacancy. We invited the candidates for a follow-up interview and helped the client make his choice based on experience, recommendations, motivation, and professional, psychological and managerial qualities.

The problems discussed above are encountered rather frequently and have a negative impact on the hotel labor market as a whole. If measures are taken in a timely manner, the situation can be changed for the better, making the hotel industry an attractive field for professional development and career growth.

As promised, I'll now share with you a list of necessary actions which, once taken, will close your staff-schedule gap as quickly as possible:

- » Advertise widely in the mass media/online, and hold regular job fairs. These tools won't just let a large number of specialists find out about your vacancy, but over the long-term will also elevate the value of your brand within the HR community.
- » Cooperate with specialized colleges and universities. There are lots of ways to go about cooperating, and they're certainly not limited to practical-training invitations. Jointly develop study programs, arrange student grants and competitions, organize topical clubs and meetings — try to get young people excited about the business and attract attention to your brand.

- » Choose reliable contractors and give them some of your load. Don't try to do everything yourself; save your energy and concentrate on the most important thing — serving your guests. Think about the functions that you can completely outsource. Security, food services, IT, cleaning, PR and online marketing — do you really have to do all that on your own? After all, having delegated these tasks to others, you won't have to recruit staff to handle them.
- » Develop and implement a well-defined system for recruiting, onboarding and on-site training. Tailor and set up your system for working with candidates in such a way that it's always on:



tracking the movement of the people you're interested in, monitoring the activities of the younger generation, and helping you look attractive to job-hunters. In other words, stay abreast of everything that's happening on the hospitality labor market.

- » Develop and implement a transparent and logical system that helps employees reach their career, creative and professional potential. Your employees have to know how the career ladder is structured at your specific hotel: your performance-evaluation system and approach to bonuses and incentives must be clear and uniform for everyone. As much as you can, try to encourage your employees' drive for professional growth — after all, we already know how hard it is today to find professional, dedicated management staff.
- » Develop your corporate culture and HR brand as a hotel business. Hotel staff are a family, and as we all know — the strongest families are the ones that have traditions. Support

them in all of their efforts — let them sprout from the idea of your brand and grow in their appeal and subtlety. Show your employees that you care about them — make a calendar of corporate, informational and team-building events, give presents and gratifying bonuses. Let the news of your friendly team and good management spread far beyond the walls of your hotel — it will all work to your advantage.

- » Track and analyze the wage system, financial and soft incentives offered by your competitors (and not just in the hotel business, but in the restaurant and tourism sectors and related industries as well). Use them in your business wherever you can — it will have a positive impact on the number of responses to your vacancies.
- » Liaise with recruitment and consulting agencies. What can a professional recruiter offer you? Firstly, they can help

you save time, especially when it comes to large-scale recruiting. Secondly, and where needed, they can provide confidentiality, which is particularly relevant when you need headhunting.

Thirdly, within the scope of cooperation, you can utilize their expertise in terms of team-building as a whole, as well as with regard to all of the steps mentioned above.

I suppose the only thing left to add is that the fate of our industry remains in our own hands. Together, let's deliberately and systematically make it more attractive, accomplished and vibrant.

Karina Yakovleva

Founder & CEO "Business Travel Job"
karina@btj.ru



123100, Moscow,
Shmitovskiy proyezd 3, str.3
tel.: +7 495 589-1209
www.btj.ru

PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL, MEMORABLE

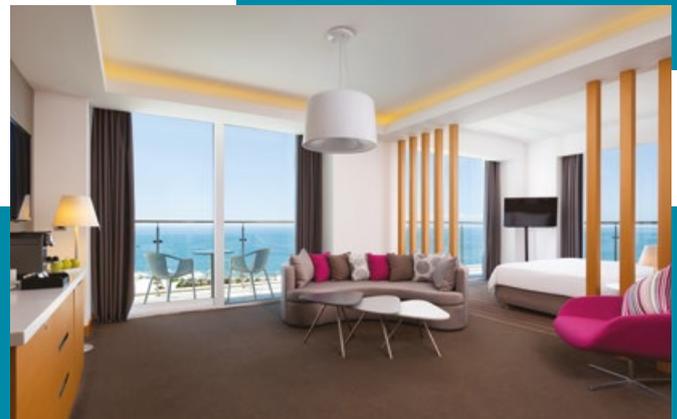
» Radisson Meetings, a concept developed by Radisson Hotel Group, is based on the three key elements of a successful event: personal, professional, memorable. Thanks to its unique location and professional approach to organizing events, Radisson Collection Paradise Resort & Spa, Sochi strictly adheres to all three of these elements, and the hotel boasts all the necessary facilities.

At Radisson Collection Paradise Resort & Spa, Sochi, it's easy to combine business and leisure: wake up for breakfast and enjoy the refreshing sea breeze, and during breaks – recharge your batteries at the hotel's private beach or at the spa.

In just five short years, the resort has already garnered more than 30 international and local awards. The hotel has repeatedly

In March 2019, one of Russia's most popular hotels, Radisson Blu Paradise Resort & Spa, Sochi, opened a new chapter in its history. The modern resort & spa on the shores of the Black Sea joined the premium brand Radisson Collection – a selection of exclusive Radisson Hotel Group properties.

Launched for Russia's 2014 Winter Olympics, the Radisson Collection Paradise Resort & Spa, Sochi rapidly gained a reputation as a sophisticated holiday hotspot and an iconic venue for corporate events. Situated directly on the shoreline, the hotel never ceases to delight its guests with dazzling views of the endless Black Sea and majestic Caucasus Mountains. The property has all of the facilities required for family vacations and spa holidays, and of course – for holding events of any size.



been named the best MICE hotel: “Best 5-Star Regional Hotel for Holding MICE Events” (BBT AWARDS 2018) and “Best Business Hotel in the Southern Federal District” (BUSINESS TRAVELLER AWARDS 2018). In 2019, for the second time in a row, the hotel’s beach received “Blue Flag” designation in acknowledgement for its compliance with high standards and responsible environmental management. Safehotels Alliance AB has twice awarded the famed resort hotel with “Executive Certification” in recognition of its high safety standards.

PERSONAL TOUCH

The entire Radisson Meetings concept revolves around the client and the client’s specific needs. The hotel tailors solutions based on the client’s goals and individual requirements



RADISSON COLLECTION PARADISE RESORT & SPA

50, 65 let Pobedy Str, Adler District, Sochi, Krasnodar region, Russia, 354349 , +7 862 243 33 33 events.spa.sochi@radissoncollection.com

to ensure that the event unfolds in perfect alignment with their vision. The hotel’s event specialists will precisely coordinate all aspects so that everything goes according to plan. They will also help the guest find ways to make improvements and give valuable recommendations.

PROFESSIONAL TEAM

- » Choosing the right place to hold a client's event can be a challenging task.
- » When working with Radisson Collection Paradise Resort & Spa, Sochi, clients can leave all their concerns aside: the hotel offers everything needed to meet your stated objectives.
- » With the “Yes, I can!” spirit, its coordinators and banqueting team provide support at every step of your event.

DAZZLING VENUES THAT CREATE MEMORABLE MOMENTS

Located on the coast of the Black Sea, Radisson Collection Paradise Resort and Spa, Sochi boasts conference space spanning a total of 2,000 m² with a separate entrance and parking for 100 cars. The Conference Center is designed to hold events of any kind – from private parties of five to conferences with 700 participants. Choose from one of our five meeting rooms, or our spacious ballroom, for your event. Our multifunctional ballroom of 700 m² can be divided into two separate spaces. It is ideally suited to execute either business conferences, weddings and gala dinners or car presentations and fashion shows.

During summer time, the hotel is ready to offer various options for holding business events – from entertainment programs, team-building activities to outside gala dinners for up to 500 with incredible sea views and sophisticated dishes.

FIND TIME TO RELAX

For those looking to maximize the convalescent effects of sea air and mountain vistas, the 2,500 m² Spa "SIBO" is a destination in its own right. Boasting a state-of-the-art thermal zone, guests have access to a large indoor pool and five steam rooms – all offering unique treatment techniques. In fact, the expansive facilities and treatments menu are so highly regarded that Spa "SIBO" has been recognized as a market leader in an array of international and local awards.

BALTIC-NORDIC EVENT FORUM

» Ten years ago, the European Council agreed for the first time to fund a strategy for an entire region: the Baltic Sea. The Baltic Sea Region includes 8 EU members that border the Baltic Sea: Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. The Strategy also welcomes cooperation with EU neighboring countries (Russia and Norway).

The goal of the Strategy was to strengthen cooperation between the countries in order to meet common challenges, and to benefit from the common opportunities facing the region. The Strategy is divided into three objectives, which represent its three key challenges: saving the sea, connecting the region, and increasing prosperity. Each objective relates to a wide range of policies and has an impact on the other objectives.

Since then, collaboration between the 10 countries of the region has flourished in many areas, from healthcare to taxes and corporate laws. Today, the 85 million people living in the Baltic Sea Region are more connected than ever. When new trends and opportunities appear, they tend to touch everyone. Over the years, a lot of corporations have merged multiple offices into one Baltic-Nordic headquarters instead of having small representative offices in each country.

Today, the event industry is emerging from a state of uncertain universality. It becomes clear that forums, conferences, exhibitions are not the format of event organizers. The “selfhood” of event organizers requires its own business events. Any local conferences and meetings that began to appear in the last 5 years are wonderful and their value is undeniable. But sooner or later it is time to leave the comfort zone.

That is why, outside of any policy, contrary to social and other stereotypes, it is time to look beyond the framework of understandable and familiar local markets. We must admit to ourselves: no matter what the political conditions dictate to us and no matter how attached we are to the local market, there are two desires that make us open the curtain and look into the hall — this is the desire to find like-minded people and find a new intellectual resource.

The future of the event is perhaps devoid of the romance of thirty years ago. It is prudent and pragmatic. But its main pathos is in that intellectual environment, which itself creates “its own cosmos,” its own world, devoid of prejudice and dictating a special order of possibilities.

The Live Communication Industry reflects those trends perfectly. Event professionals work with every intricacy that

the Region has, with shared hopes and worries for the people of the Baltic Region. Event agencies are being forced to collaborate more and more together, and to have partners in every country of the region to satisfy clients’ needs.

One of the most important decisions that was made in the North is the creation of the Baltic-Nordic event-association.

BALTIC EVENT INDUSTRY CLUB (BEIC)

It sets itself certain tasks, among which: promotion of the entire Baltic Sea region as a venue for various events, priority participation of members of the association at international B2B events as speakers and delegates, creating a unified database of contacts for event market professionals.

Members of the association are the largest event agencies in the Baltic Sea region and industry professionals providing services for event organizers. They are decision-makers of the industry in their countries.

The association is built on the principle of “head offices”. In each country of the Baltic region, a leader is supposed to provide informational support to potential event customers.

During recent years, BEIC has become a new stage in the development of our business and the Baltic Sea region in the European market. Many understand that the event industry in the Baltic Sea region has made significant progress. Contractors and event industry professionals from the Baltic and Scandinavian countries work for the largest event customers in Europe, event agencies receive recognition at the top European awards, and

have a portfolio of cases of up to 500,000 euros. The number of events in the Baltic region is increasing by 3% every year.

The BEIC has set itself a number of goals, among which we especially single out one — the role and advantages of the Baltic Sea Region in the European event market.

BEIC is the organizer of the Baltic-Nordic Event Forum, which in the last 5 years has become a place where event professionals can discuss what they see, and how to move forward.

ESTONIA

The strongest TECH market for professionals. The most advanced and impressive state in the EU in terms of the number of innovations and services in the field of the latest technologies for event organizers.

LATVIA

It is distinguished by the growing offices of global customers who prefer to open their branches here. The convenient location, the developing industry and the excellent

market for services made Latvians work with corporations and global customers earlier than almost all other countries.

LITHUANIA

The leader in the number of creative minds, start-ups and narrow-profile specialists. Domestic economic conditions forced the Lithuanians to use the services of independent experts, but this played a positive role — there are 50 offers for one brief, 49 of which will be absolutely competent, effective, incredibly tempting and from people with 10+ years of experience.

FINLAND

The country that has found the most logical and justified application of ROI. If you need an understanding of exactly what and how much you can get from the event, these are, of course, Finnish experts and Finnish companies.

SWEDEN

This is something we are completely unaccustomed to or where we have managed to break the habit. This is the only country in which the experiment is the norm, where there is no concept of format or the golden ratio, where creativity is the meaning, budget is the given, calculus is the obviousness and any measures are the wow effect.



The Baltic Sea is a reality + metaphor that hides tremendous power and powerful dynamic rhythm.

POLAND

A unique market for major events. Impressive budgets. Ingenious opportunities for implementing the most interesting and vibrant projects. Like any country with a strong domestic market, the Polish industry is increasingly looking for partners and customers in other regions.



RUSSIA

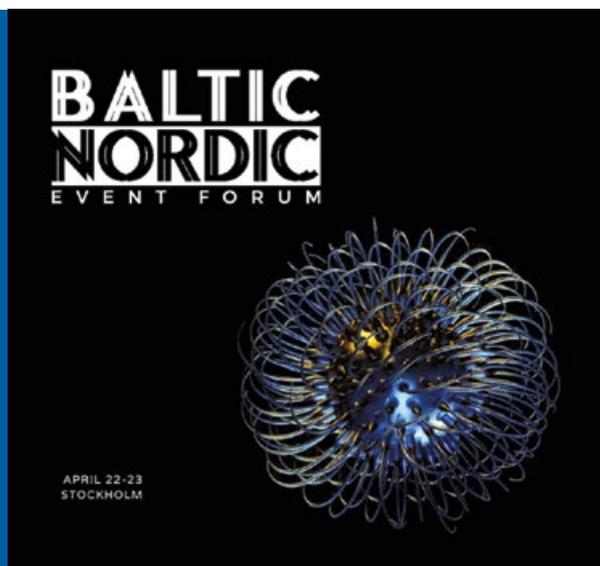
This is a symphony country. A country of enormous proportions and very different budgets. Here, there is grace for seekers of analogisms, unsolvable equations, and the theory of infinity. That is why you will always find here not at all what you were looking for, but the result will exceed your wildest expectations.

The Baltic region is unique. Because it is able to embrace the immense. The types and conduct of B2C and festivals, work with Clients, the death of live campaigns, moderation of the audience instead of speakers are just a few of the topics that will be discussed in April at the Baltic-Nordic Event Forum.

We created a “mix” of unique experience, opinions, views and dialogues, which determines not only the development of the industry – it is a synthesis of ideas without which there is no movement forward.

The Baltic-Nordic Event Forum 2020 will be held on April 22–23 in Stockholm, and will bring professionals together from all 10 different countries that have access to the Baltic Sea, and beyond. The forum provides a unique networking opportunity: event agencies, corporations, venues, HR professionals, suppliers and many more, who come to meet each other, share their experiences, and discuss future cooperation.

The Baltic Sea Region is growing very fast, and is becoming more connected every year. The Forum creates an opportunity for



people from different countries to come together and discuss matters that affect the whole Region: data, content, human and brand relations, sustainability, tender issues, climate change, political and economic challenges, new opportunities, innovation and high tech. The Forum guests represent every second event held in Northern Europe, and have a combined 200 mln euro budget. Together they have an impact on the whole industry, and even more – on our common future.

The Baltic-Nordic Event Forum is a 2-day event. The first day presents the most meaningful industry problems on stage, and tries to find solutions to overcome challenges.

The second day is dedicated to the Amber Event Awards, where the best event agencies can show their results to the top clients of the Region, and inspire and demonstrate new trends to their colleagues and partners.



MARY KIRILLOVA,
CEO at Baltic Event Industry Club

The event industry is very intellectual. It finds ways to connect any kind of business with people, and helps to deliver any kind of experience in over 1,000 different ways. In the TECH era, we are creating something really important – the industry of live touch. We are very lucky to be involved in this business, because we are free to create something completely new, together with our clients and partners.

Baltic Event Industry Club has been created to bring together the best agencies from the Baltic Sea Region. Ten countries around the Sea – Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark – this region is unique – from one of the most powerful markets in Germany and fastest developing in Poland, to amazing opportunities in the Baltic States, and new standards of organizing events in Scandinavia. All these countries are very different, but at the same time, they are just an hour by plane from each other. It is just a question of time before we start to collaborate and work without borders.

We are a business network created for those who need partnership in Northern Europe and for whom the future of live communications is important.

Our members have already proved their important role within their own countries. Together, we put on the stage of the Baltic-Nordic Event Forum the most meaningful challenges for the Nordic Event Industry, powerful corporates who care about their business and understand the value of their partners – event agencies.

Baltic Event Industry Club – the Pan-Baltic Alliance that is passionate, that cares, that has put all its forces, minds, and ideas to tell the world today – we are part of global business, we are here to collaborate and to create a new industry together. This industry has a voice; this industry is more powerful than you thought. And we are open to any of your ideas and projects, because we want to create the future of live communications together.

BALTIC EVENT INDUSTRY CLUB WAS LAUNCHED IN 2017.

IN 3 YEARS BEIC ORGANIZED:

- 4 Baltic-Nordic Event Forums
- 3 Baltic-Nordic Event Awards
- 1 Event Hackathon
- 1 Event Forum during the Meetings&Events show



BEIC participated as speakers or judges in over 17 events all around Europe and Russia



BEIC members received over 35 awards in different nominations in 11 different countries



BEIC members have created together over 10 different events



BEIC helped to establish over 100 relationships and partnerships during these events

THE BALTIC-NORDIC EVENT FORUM
www.bneforum.com

EXPO 2020 DUBAI: THE WORLD'S GREATEST SHOW, CONTRIBUTING TO A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR HUMANKIND

» There is less than a year to go before the opening of Expo 2020 Dubai, which is set to become one of the key international events in 2020. A festival, exhibition forum and show all in one, with a theme entitled “Connecting Minds, Creating the Future”, Expo 2020 will present three fundamental subthemes shaping our world: Opportunity, Mobility and Sustainability. The world’s great-

est event will bring together all types of human brilliance and achievement, presenting development prospects for the next 50 years.

Dubai is meticulously preparing for Expo 2020. This city has always impressed with its creativity, innovations and the scope of events hosted here before. However, this time, Dubai aims to break all records, both on its own and internationally.

DATES AND TIMES

Opening day: **20 October 2020**
Closing day: **10 April 2021**
Site opening hours: **Weekdays 09.00–01.00**
Weekends and special days: 09.00–02.00

BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The World Expo is one of the world’s oldest and largest international events, taking place every five years and lasting six months. The first World Expo was hosted a long time ago. It was London’s Great Exhibition of 1851. The distinctive buildings and products first revealed at different World Expos included the Eiffel Tower, the Seattle Space Needle, the typewriter, the television and even Heinz Tomato Ketchup. Founded in 1928, the Bureau International des Expositions regulates World Expos, preserving the core values on behalf of its 170 Member States. All World Expos are intended to serve as a bridge between governments, companies, international organizations and citizens.

Expo 2020 Dubai, which will be held over 4.38 sq. km, is going to deliver the largest event ever staged in the Arab world. You have the chance to be part of an unprecedented event, with access to the greatest inventions and unlimited opportunities to make lasting changes. Because it is a festival for all, where everyone can learn, innovate, make a difference and have fun by sharing ideas and working together.

All participants and visitors will explore the power of connections through three Thematic Districts reflecting **Opportunity, Mobility and Sustainability** trends as follows:

- » The interactive **Opportunity Pavilion** will introduce a meaningful set of 17 objectives that, if achieved, will ensure a good quality of life for many.
- » The **Mobility Pavilion** will explore the movement of people, goods, ideas and data, and how mobility has driven humanity’s development from our first steps out of Africa to today’s cutting-edge innovations.
- » The **Sustainability Pavilion** will display advanced features for respecting and living in harmony with the world we inhabit to ensure a sustainable future for all.

The Thematic Districts also boast performance spaces, innovation galleries, art installations and outdoor gardens. What’s more, there’s a children’s park and a full events program for families.

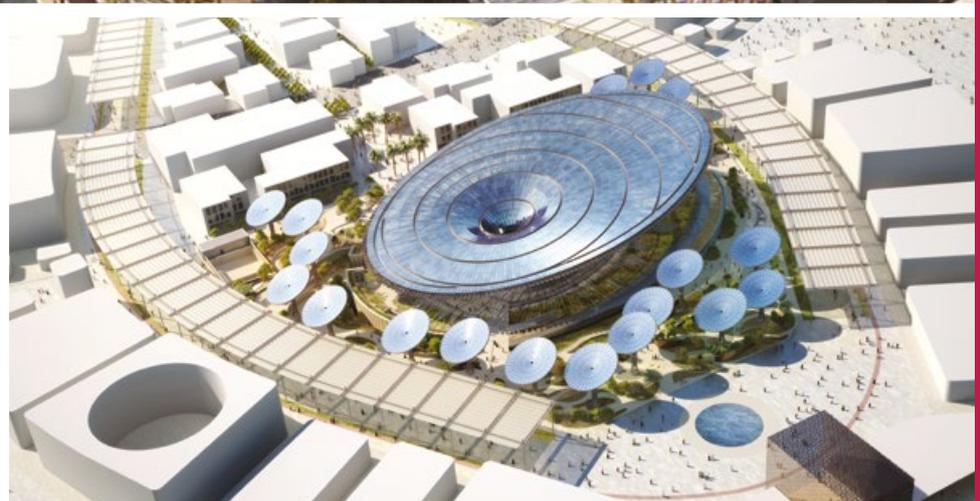
Named after the Arabic word for “connection”, Al Wasl Plaza will be hosting major Expo ceremonies and celebrations, while the venue’s dome will act as an immersive 360-degree projection surface both internally and externally. 192 individual Country Pavilions will showcase the unique architecture, culture and indigenous exhibits to present their countries.



The Expo gated area will include a wide variety of food and retail options so visitors will be able to taste dishes from around the world and explore unique shopping experiences.

Expo 2020, as a once-in-a-lifetime celebration, will welcome artists and academics, pop stars and pioneering thinkers, culinary wizards and corporate gurus, tech ninjas and tomorrow's leaders so that millions of visitors can come together to build a brighter future.

The Dubai Exhibition Centre, co-located at the Expo 2020 site, will be a major draw for the MICE industry during the 173 days of the Expo. It will play a key role in attracting domestic and international visitors to the heart of District 2020.



The Expo site is located within easy reach of the international airports of Al Maktoum, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and the cruise terminals of Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

To sum up, Expo 2020 Dubai is set to be a celebration of creativity, innovation, humanity and world cultures. As you can see, it is impossible to miss such an unrivalled occurrence. You have plenty of time to plan your convenient trip

throughout the full six months of Expo 2020. Go for it, enjoy it, advance and get more connected with the whole world!

As you can see, you simply can't miss this event. You still have time to plan your journey for whatever dates are convenient for you during the six-month course of Expo 2020. Go for it, enjoy the experience, meet new people and help change the world!

EXPO 2020 IN NUMBERS

VISITORS

- » Expo 2020 Dubai expects to welcome **25 million visitors** between October 2020 and April 2021, equivalent to welcoming the population of Australia through its gates in only six months.
- » Expo 2020 expects to attract approximately **16 times** the number of spectators that attended the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia.

EVENT TIME

- » Expo 2020 will host **60-plus live events** per day for **173 consecutive days**.
- » More than **200 participants** will take part in Expo 2020 Dubai, including representatives of countries, multilateral organisations, businesses and educational institutions.
- » **192 countries** have confirmed their participation in Expo 2020 Dubai. Every participating country at Expo 2020 will have its own pavilion for the first time in the 168-year history of the World Expos.
- » Expo 2020 expects to welcome approximately **150,000 visitors** per day on average.
- » Expo 2020 will have its own dedicated Dubai Metro station on the Route 2020 line, with carriages capable of transporting **44,000 passengers** per hour to and from the site.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE (F&B)

Expo 2020 will be an F&B destination in its own right, with more than 200 F&B outlets, more than **50 million meals served**, 50-plus global cuisines, future-shaping culinary tech, local favourites and delicious culinary tours.

AL WASL PLAZA AND THEMATIC DISTRICTS

- » Al Wasl Plaza's steel trellis dome covers an area the size of **16 tennis courts** and weighs as much as **500 elephants**.
- » At **67.5 metres** in height, Al Wasl Plaza's dome is more than 10 metres taller than Italy's Leaning Tower of Pisa.
- » At **130 metres** in diameter, Al Wasl Plaza's dome is almost wide enough to fit two Airbus A380s across its centre, wing to wing.
- » Expo 2020's three Thematic Districts will feature **192 Country Pavilions**, showcasing unique architecture, culture and exhibits from around the world.
- » The **320-metre track** that runs around the Mobility Pavilion will allow millions of visitors to see cutting-edge mobility devices in action.
- » The Sustainability Pavilion has the capacity to host **30,000 people** in a single day, more than the average number of people who visit the Eiffel Tower during the same period.





SHAUN VORSTER, Vice President of Strategy and Business Integration (Programming) of the Expo 2020 Dubai, briefly shares what Expo 2020 has in store for its visitors and participants:

“Expo 2020 Dubai will be a huge hub connecting unrivalled opportunities for knowledge, trades, innovative technologies, culture, gastronomy, education, tourism, sustainability and many other fields where all 192 state-participants will showcase the best their country has to offer.

In that sense, the issues of aesthetics and virtuosity remain of great importance. All 200 pavilions will have not only cutting-edge thematic content, but also state-of-the-art design and architecture.

It’s worth noting that the entire Expo venue is going to be conveniently adapted to any age, from kids to the elderly.

As for the culinary aspect, that’s a great section within itself. Expo will offer food-lovers a truly gastronomic journey, with 200 Food & Beverage outlets on-site. They will serve cuisine from every corner of the world, teamed with innovations using augmented reality and other cutting-edge technology.

I’d like to anticipate a question that many people will ask. To navigate comfortably around Expo 2020, visitors will be offered the latest apps to suit their preferences and personal interests, which will guide them with ease through the site.

Overall, various advanced technologies will be aimed at personalizing and customizing the participant and visitor experience.

Of course, I can’t help but mention the MICE industry. There are huge opportunities for this sector. The Dubai Exhibition Centre venue will be hosting a great deal of events in diverse fields.

Investment forums, large healthcare and educational summits, virtual reality and artificial intelligence conferences, tourism exhibitions and sustainable events are just some of the ways in which Russian business travelers can participate. They can participate in large networking events, which will be spread out across the Expo’s biggest convention platform. It’s a great chance to promote the event’s theme of **“Connecting Minds, Creating the Future”** in order to promote competition.

To summarize the above, we want to bring truly new values to every participant or visitor, whether they are from industries, associations and governments or individuals with their families,” said **Shaun Vorster** in summary.

SHANGRI-LA BARR AL JISSAH RESORT & SPA SHOWCASES MICE WITHIN A SPECTACULAR LOCATION

» Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa provides a uniquely Arabian experience that highlights the country's rich cultural heritage.

Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa, Sultanate of Oman offers a uniquely Arabian experience to the corporate meetings and incentive market.

Experience an authentic sanctuary nestled on 124 acres of pristine sandy bay engulfed by a picturesque backdrop of the majestic mountains of Oman. Comprised of two hotel wings, Al Waha and Al Bandar, it offers a uniquely Arabian experience to the corporate meetings and incentive market. This award-

winning resort is the perfect destination for events with the capacity to cater to the needs and requirements of any group. Its unrivalled recreational facilities and renowned Chi, The Spa add to the wide range of facilities available for guests to enjoy. Below are the top 10 reasons to host your next event at the Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa:

CULTURE & HERITAGE

Oman is a country steeped in a rich historical and cultural heritage. From the majestic city of Muscat and bustling souqs, to more than 1,000 historic forts,





castles and watchtowers that dot the countryside. Here, more than a thousand years of history and culture are transcended. Inland, bewitching desert landscapes are home to colourful wadis and ancient Bedouin settlements.

A HAVEN NESTLED ON A PRISTINE SANDY BAY

Engulfed by a picturesque backdrop of majestic mountains, a truly enchanting resort destination set against a backdrop of mountains and the shimmering Gulf of Oman with a 500-meter stretch of stunning coastline.

ONE OF THE LEADING AWARD-WINNING INTEGRATED RESORTS IN THE REGION

The most expansive resort in Oman with a total of 460 sea view rooms and suites with a balcony, terrace or patio. Perfectly tailored for accommodating large events and groups, the resort presents a unique collection of 19 food & beverage destinations to keep your guests enticed throughout their stay.

SHANGRI-LA SERVICE BLENDED WITH OMANI TRADITIONS OF HOSPITALITY

The moment you step onto the porte cochere, you will be enchanted by the warmth and authenticity of exceptional Omani hospitality. You enter the lobby and your senses will be bathed in a soothing scent. It's the Frankincense arrival experience.

INSPIRING AND IMMERSIVE MEETING DESTINATION

Versatile event venues await you with a traditional sense of place. The resort pays homage to a 1,056 sq. m pillarless ballroom and a 7-meter high ceiling, 8 breakout rooms, 3 pre-function areas and an incredible 7 scenic outdoor venues overlooking The Gulf of Oman. The resort boasts a 3,000 sq. m outdoor Amphitheatre for the first time in Oman.

CULINARY DESTINATION FEATURING THE MOST DIVERSE OFFERINGS IN OMAN

Discover dining for every occasion with an array of relaxed cafe and casual destinations. Tempting tastes, handcrafted food selections and exemplary service ensure that good times are always on the menu. The resort is set to extend the most diverse hotel culinary scene in Muscat with its 16 culinary destinations that are sure to delight every taste.

AN AQUATIC PARADISE FOR TEAM BUILDING

Discover the remarkable scenery surrounding the resort. Several scenic routes weave among the rolling hills and valleys that lead from the resort to a nearby village. Explore the dramatic coastline, secluded coves and beautiful sandy beaches with your group in an idyllic sunset cruise or arrange for a thrilling water sport or kayaking adventure at our Watercooled water sports centre for an ultimate teambuilding escapade, or visit our integrated marina to explore additional water-based activities.



MICE Hotel

THE ONE & ONLY LAZY RIVER IN THE COUNTRY

Two distinct Resorts offering differentiated products and enriching experience, boasting six temperature-controlled swimming pools and the only lazy river in Oman stretching across 500 m enabling you to effortlessly float between the Al Bandar and Al Waha hotels.

PRIVATE TRADITIONAL OMANI DINING

Explore a Bedouin-style setup fully prepared by our event specialists, enchantingly lit by an open sandpit fire, creating a warm and welcoming ambience among this stunning example of the Sultanate's rich cultural heritage. A lavish dining area displays the very best in traditional Omani cuisine, with lively and energetic entertainment from a cast of traditional musicians, singers and dancers. This exclusive dining experience is a culinary and cultural adventure that is not to be missed.

THE ONLY OFFICIAL TURTLE SANCTUARY IN A RESORT IN MUSCAT

Enhancing Shangri-La's commitment to biodiversity conservation and promoting



a sustainable environment for all native species and wildlife, we launched The Sanctuary, Care for Nature Project. Our resort is home to one of the five nesting sites in Oman, where approximately 100 turtles return each year to lay their eggs.

A dedicated turtle ranger is on site to ensure that the nests are sheltered from harm. Embark on a dedicated turtle talk with your group available in the Eco Centre and get a chance to experience one of the magical hatching events for yourselves.

A world on its own, the Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa is an all in one package in terms of offering groups an ideal, tailor made experience amidst the natural landscape of Oman. With a wide range of options embroiled with Shangri-La hospitality, the levels of satisfaction guests will experience will leave them nourished for more. Call us today at **+(968)24776666** or email us at **reservations.slm@shangri-la.com** to book your trip to paradise. Immerse yourself in the Shangri-La's Barr Al Jissah experience.

SWISS TROPHIES FOR THE RUSSIANS

» For almost twenty years, the Switzerland Convention & Incentive Bureau (SCIB) has been holding the unique annual Meeting Trophy event, which brings together representatives of the tourism industry from all over the world. For 10 of those years, a team from Russia has taken part in the Trophy. In January 2020, in honor of this first anniversary, SCIB organized a general gathering of participants from all ten seasons in Moscow at the Modus Friends restaurant. This incredibly joyous and sincere evening was a real gathering of Friends who were delighted to share their memories. By the way, it was named Swiss Trophy Tales.

We are all very familiar with fam trips. Sometimes, these trips are quite inventive but, in general, the format remains unchanged, and each time, when hitting the road, we roughly know what awaits us, especially after familiarizing ourselves with the route, program and hotels. Meeting Trophy is a very different story.

Even if you haven't been to Switzerland before, you'll have a general stereotype impression of the country. Unfortunately, it often comes down to a view of the country being "expensive and high-quality, but boring and for the chosen few". To give representatives of various MICE companies a fresh and non-stereotypical view of Switzerland, SCIB has developed a fundamentally new fam trip format: this is the team competition. And very original it is, too! If you're lucky enough to be invited to attend the Meeting Trophy, you know almost nothing about what awaits you. This is a great adventure where winning is the big draw. Large-scale teambuilding. Following from point to point according to the route map, the teams perform a series of different tasks — intellectual, sporting, creative. In the process of such



a dynamic marathon, participants get to know each other, reveal their talents, rally together, but most importantly – they discover Switzerland from completely different angles. In just two or three days, you cross the whole country by land, water and air, through mountains and cities. Different means of transport are used, you learn about the country's culture and history, try your hand at a variety of activities – from light-hearted to very serious options, try Switzerland out and immerse yourself in its national features. But... why are you doing all this?

Not just to test yourself (although doing so is very interesting). Swiss people are practical, so the main purpose of each Meeting Trophy is to offer a specific incentive trip in all its details and with different price components, so that participants, travelling the route themselves, recommend a similar program to their customers. This is an example of MICE activities in action, for small and large groups and on different budgets.

Let's go back to the Russian teams. Their participants, as a rule, are sophisticated people – business owners, company directors, departmental heads, leading specialists. They have been “living tourism” for many years, know the different destinations well and attend many events. They're not easily surprised. So every year, the task of the MICE&Digital manager of SCIB (Russia), Natalia Sizova, isn't easy: to invite, convince, and then to inspire. However, in the end, once they have attended the Meeting Trophy, what everyone regrets is that you can't visit twice. As the saying goes, “once you've been there, your life will never be the same!” Ten years later, we can see the real “Meeting Trophy fraternity”. These trophies bring a lot of new knowledge, discoveries, sensations and impressions.

So “What, When, and with Whom” happened on the steep Trophy routes? This was a topic of conversation not just around the tables at the anniversary party in Moscow, but on the stage, too. One by one, speakers in cozy knitted sweaters came up to the podium and shared their stories. All very different: full of mischief, profound, sentimental, philosophical, ironic, honest and incredible. Based on the results of this friendly contest between fifteen speakers – strictly in English (!) – the organizers chose “the most Swiss story”, “the most touching” and, of course, “the funniest”. The proud moment for our editorial staff was the fact that the editor-in-chief of MICE&more Lina Moskvina featured in the top three in all categories. The winners were Philippe Lukyanenko (ATH-HRG), Yulia Jolya (Show&Motion) and Oleg Kryuchkov (Eventplatform).





As for winning... The Russian team is always eager to move forward, and even third place, which is where we often end up, doesn't suit its participants. For Russians, victory means coming first. For ten years, so far we have managed to climb the first step of the podium just once: in 2015, we were victorious and "won the cow". Usually, we are overtaken by the sporty Scandinavians. But on the other hand, the Russian teams are the most creative and most adventurous in their creative approach, as everyone has noticed. So the chance of future victories is very high. But even without awards, taking part in the Meeting Trophy is a true gift from the gods.

P. S. After the anniversary party, we continue dreaming about Switzerland day and night and, frankly, are a little jealous of those who have the Meeting Trophy yet to come.

The conditions for taking part in the Meeting Trophy by **Natalia Sizova** (SCIB Russia)

"First of all, we invite people who like to work as a team. We need team players. Second, Trophy players must work in the MICE field, that is, be involved in organizing events. And third: since it's an international event, guests must speak English. Accordingly, if a person meets all three criteria, he or she could potentially become a member of the Russian team."

Meeting Trophy routes with Russian team participation

2010	Zurich – Bad Ragaz – Arosa – Lucerne
2011	Bern – Gstaad – Lausanne
2012	Zurich – Flims – Appenzell – St. Gallen
2013	Basel – Zurich – Bad Ragaz – Arosa
2014	Lugano – St. Moritz – Zurich
2015	Lucerne – Interlaken – Bern
2016	Verbier – Montreux – Lausanne
2017	Schaffhausen – St. Gallen – Flims – Zurich
2018	Basel – Zurich – Bad Ragaz – St. Moritz
2019	Zurich – Andermatt – Interlaken – Thun
2020	More to come...

MICE-CONNECTION (WORKSHOP): GATEWAY TO THE RUSSIAN BUSINESS-TOURISM MARKET

» MICE-Connection is a vibrant exhibition project and a completely new format for holding events for the leaders of the business tourism industry. Thanks to its groundbreaking strategy, it has become one of the cornerstone events bringing together the sector's key foreign players and Russian event organizers. Based on the findings of deep analytics, the project identifies the emerging needs of its target audience and offers constructive solutions for improving business for all concerned stakeholders. MICE-Connection Workshop 2020 has set itself some very ambitious goals: achieving the breakthrough of Russian business tourism into the global arena. Sitting down to discuss the company's origins and development path moving forward was MICE Connection CEO **Artem Obukhov** in an interview with MICE&more Editor-in-Chief **Lina Moskvina**.

LINA. Why doesn't Russia have such a major, prestigious business tourism exhibition like IMEX or IBTM?

ARTEM. Well, that's precisely what spurred me and my colleagues into action, namely – into creating MICE-Connection.

Of course, a number of exhibitions are held in Moscow that vaguely resemble IMEX or IBTM. However, the trend towards their reduction in scale and smaller exhibit numbers indicates that the level of organization of such events falls short

of the expectations of professional Russian buyers. That's why they almost always ignore such events.

After all, if these events were attended exclusively by the MICE & Corporate TOL segment, we'd be seeing characteristic growth in terms of their scale, insofar as the exhibits would be generating the necessary contacts, and consequently – the right projects. The regression shows that the exhibits are being undercut by the quality of the buyers. In my view, this is the key factor explaining the absence of a highly-professional exhibition in Russia. For the MICE-Connection team, this state of affairs served as a kind of incentive to pursue more effective actions and a more qualitative buyer screening process.

LINA. What, in general, is happening today on Russia's MICE market? What are the emerging trends, problems and unique features?

ARTEM. On the whole, we're seeing a slowdown – but also the solid growth of the Russian MICE market, both in terms of event budgets, as well as with respect to the geography of the events being held. There was a time when the numerous difficulties and crises facing the country were causing MICE projects to be redirected to the domestic market and the CIS countries. But today, as the representative of a company whose MICE department is growing, I can state with confidence that the countries of Europe, Asia, America and Africa are once again gaining momentum in terms of the business events of Russian corporate clients.

I should note that some of their budgets remain at the level seen 2-3 years ago. That's why some suppliers have to literally "invent" interesting programs in view of certain financial restrictions. Thankfully, this is an extremely rare occurrence. I always repeat my favorite phrase to my colleagues and friends in the market's corporate segment: "The emotional pleasure from a quality event lasts a lot longer than any happiness derived from its cheap cost."

Let me highlight the market's main problem. It's the constantly growing post-payment timeframes among corporate

customers. And these are the timeframes that both Russian MICE agencies and DMC contractors around the world are being forced to bear.

The unique feature of the Russian MICE market that's most striking to all of our foreign partners is its increasing shallowness of demand analysis. On average, one of our MICE-hotel specialists starts delving into demand 2-3 months before the start of the event, and confirms it among suppliers 3-4 weeks ahead of the project's launch. So, the final data on attendance numbers can be presented as close as a day before the start of the event. Representatives of hotels and host companies around the world are starting to catch on to this trend on our MICE market. And for that, we're immeasurably grateful to them.

LINA. How did you get the idea to organize a sector-specific event? What are your ambitions in terms of the exhibition's scale? What are your projections for this sphere over the next 5 years?

ARTEM. My colleagues and I often attend exhibitions and workshops — both locally and on the international scale. The idea of creating the MICE-Connection Workshop was born of a sense of despair for the “domestic” market of sector-specific business tourism exhibitions.

The main principles of the MICE-Connection Workshop are the quality and business-orientation of the event. What distinguishes us from competing exhibitions in Russia, first and foremost, is the high level of the Workshop's organization. It's something that's been noted by exhibitors and buyers alike. We take a very careful approach to inviting our professional visitors, and in that we've been helped by our 15 years of experience working in the MICE and Travel Marketing segment.

We only invite those who are authorized to make decisions in all structures: at major corporations, at MICE agencies and at concierge services. The Workshop's business focus and lack of a “show” make it not a “party” where everyone drops in to say hi, but rather

a unique platform for signing contracts and meeting new business partners. Over the next 5 years, we plan to consolidate the successful experience of global exhibitions together with our own unique ideas. Our plans include making a real breakthrough in terms of the promotion of Russian business tourism in the global arena.

LINA. What goals does MICE-Connection accomplish? Why did you choose the workshop format? As opposed to exhibitions, for example?

ARTEM. The main goal that the MICE-Connection Workshop accomplishes is the sharing of contacts and making of personal introductions between professional buyers from all over Russia and the relevant service providers from different countries of the world. MICE-Connection represents and new and rapidly-growing brand on our market. On June 4, 2020, the Workshop will be held for just the 3rd time ever.

From the very beginning, the idea of holding an event in the workshop format was predicated on the MICE-Connection development strategy: moving from a small business-focused event into a large-scale exhibition without compare on the





Russian market. It's important first to show what we're made of within modest scopes, and then to gradually scale up the event into international exhibition format.

LINA. How many exhibitors do you anticipate in 2020? What's the geography of the participants?

ARTEM. This year, we expect between 80 and 120 exhibitors. Taking part in the workshop will be representatives from airlines, hotels, travel agencies, conference venues and host companies – both from the Russian regions and CIS countries, but also from the European Union, America, Africa and Asia, which are gaining momentum.

LINA. How do you guarantee the quality of the different buyers and meetings? Some exhibitions literally hold interviews with prospective attendees. What's your approach?

ARTEM. Thanks to the fact that our company has a MICE & Travel Marketing department, MICE-Connection workers have the latest picture of the entire business tourism market right at their fingertips, year-round.

They're in constant contact with the key players representing the market's corporate, MICE and VIP segments, and have their fingers on the pulse of their projects around the world: past (successful and otherwise), present and future. Such clear and

compelling statistics give us the unique opportunity to thoughtfully plan the most timely catalog of invitees, encompassing both the exhibitors and buyers of our Workshop.

LINA. What perks and unique features does your event have that can't be found anywhere else?

ARTEM. Our team endeavors not only to attend to the needs of buyers, but also to ensure the event's comfort and productivity for the exhibitors. Above and beyond the incentive program we have for attracting the interest of top buyers to our event, we also put out the glossy magazine "Faces of the Russian MICE Industry." It features portraits of the most key players of the Russian MICE market. Participants in the shoot can only get a copy of the magazine by attending our Workshop.

Exhibitors and buyers alike appreciate our highly convenient system for scheduling MICE-CONNECTION meetings, including via a mobile app. The app makes it possible to avoid no-shows and stay in contact with those who have already confirmed their desire for a meeting within the event's framework.

Also worthy of special mention are our Moscow locations, which we choose specially for the purposes of holding the Workshop. Two times in a row now it's been the little-known Petroff Road Palace Hotel which has managed to dazzle even the most exacting audience. This year, we settled on another of the capital's historic venues – the Radisson Collection Hotel, Moscow. In view of the growing scale of the exhibition, it's going to be MICE CONNECTION's new home.

We've also prepared lots of surprises and novelties for our esteemed exhibitors and buyers, which we'll be announcing in April 2020.

LINA. What advice would you give to foreign companies that are only eyeing the Russian market, interested in weighing their potential and getting to know the specifics of the Russian MICE industry?

ARTEM. Here, there's only one piece of advice I can give – taking part in MICE-CONNECTION. It'll be your gateway to the Russian business tourism market.

CONTACT INFO:

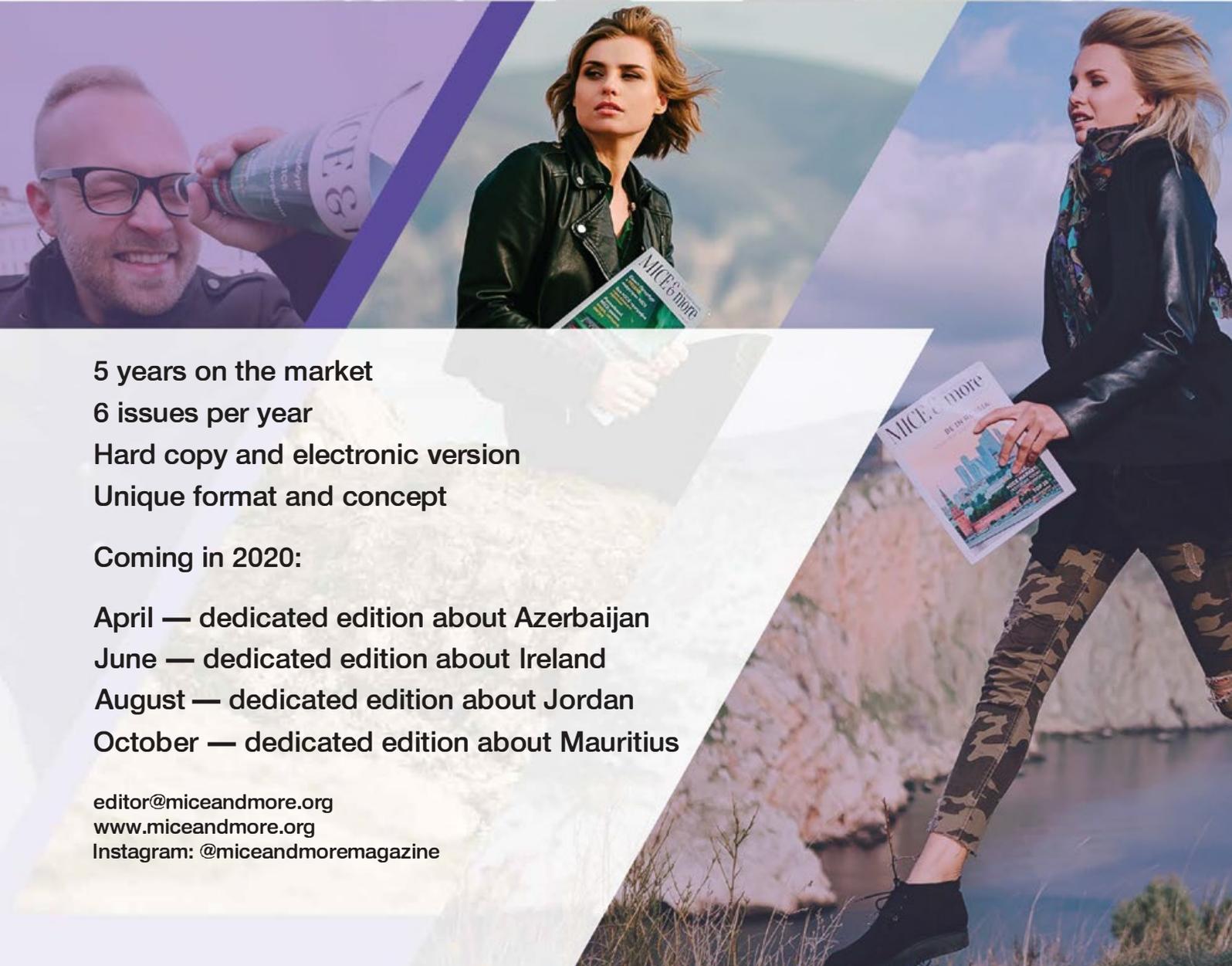
Artem Obukhov
"MICE CONNECTION"
CEO

www.mice-connection.com
org@mice-connection.com
Tel.: +7 (495) 136-6595 ext. 404
Mob.: +7 (926) 321-2769

MICE & more

MICE around the world

Edition № 1 for Russian-speaking MICE specialists



5 years on the market

6 issues per year

Hard copy and electronic version

Unique format and concept

Coming in 2020:

April — dedicated edition about Azerbaijan

June — dedicated edition about Ireland

August — dedicated edition about Jordan

October — dedicated edition about Mauritius

editor@miceandmore.org

www.miceandmore.org

Instagram: @miceandmoremagazine



EXPOFORUM IS THE BEST CONVENTION & EXHIBITION VENUE IN THE WORLD, EUROPE AND RUSSIA!



To create communication, embedding it into events and impressions – this is the deep meaning of our activity.

Sergey VORONKOV,
General Director of ExpoForum International,
RUEF President

VERSATILITY AS THE MAIN ADVANTAGE



EXHIBITIONS
up to 50,000 sq. m gross

CONVENTIONS
up to 30,000 delegates



CONCERTS AND SHOWS
up to 10,000 visitors

BANQUETS
up to 6,500 guests



SPORT EVENTS
up to 5,000 spectators

CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE
EXPOFORUM
PETERBURGSKOYE HIGHWAY 64/1, ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

EXPOFORUM-CENTER.RU