

Spotlight

on **RUSSIA**

#Vol. 6

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Alexander Pushkin

Russia's greatest poet p 9

Moscow Zoo

the largest zoo in the world p 10

Sochi

an ideal choice for holidays on the Black
Sea coast p 12



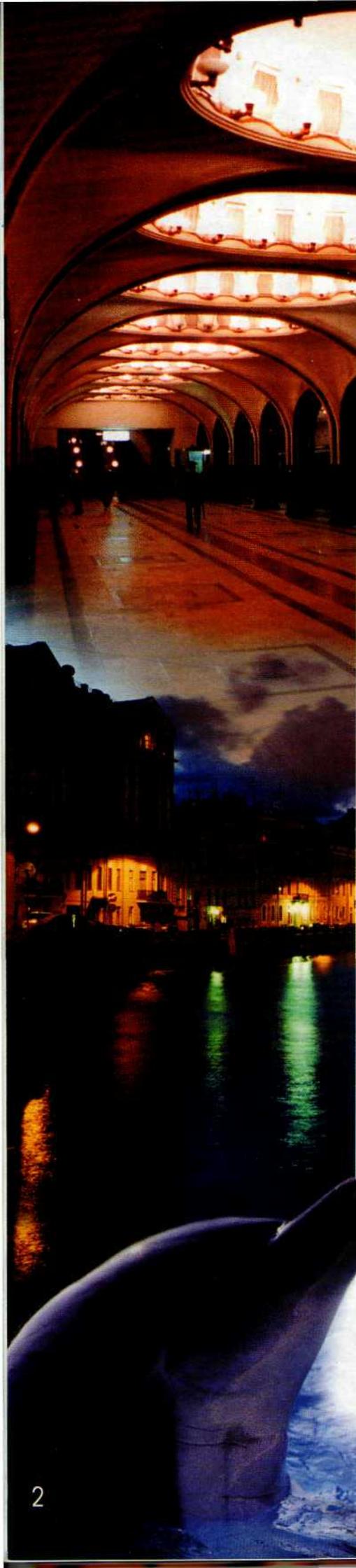
Don't miss!

Moscow's "Underground Palace"

Experience the beauty of the Moscow metro

White Nights in St Petersburg

Experience a wonder of nature in the "Venice of the North"



Editor's Letter

A very big hello from the 'Spotlight on Russia' team.

We are very excited about our magazine and hope that you all like it.

In this issue there are some great articles about the White Nights of St Petersburg, Moscow Zoo, daily life in Russia, the great poet Alexander Pushkin and many, many more.

We hope you find the magazine interesting as well as useful. Also, there are plenty of great competitions for you to enter, so have fun.

Lastly, if you have a good idea for an article or any other comments please send us an email on: www.spotlightonrussia.ru.

Children from all over the world may read your articles and discover your country.

Goodbye, until the next time,

The 'Spotlight on Russia' team.

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The resort capital of Russia. Have fun on the Black Sea coast!

Families

What is your home life like? How big is your family? Do your parents work? Do you live in a house or an apartment?

This week, **Spotlight on Russia** talks to Anna, (13) about her life in Moscow.

Anna, can you tell me a little about your family?

Well, my family is quite small. I haven't got any brothers or sisters. My grandmother lives with us, so all together there are four people in my family.

Do you live in a house or an apartment?

We live in a big apartment near the city centre. I love it here.

Do your parents work?

Yes, they both work. They are teachers. I am lucky because my grandmother looks after¹ me when they are at work. I often help her around the house and we go shopping together in the afternoons.

What is it like being a child in Russia?

We have a lot of fun, like most children, but winter makes our life a bit different. It gets very cold so we can't play outside. When it snows I go skiing and ice-skating. Little children also build snowmen and have snowball fights.

Do you spend much time outside?

When the weather is warm², we spend plenty of³ time outside. At the weekends I love going on bike rides with my friends. I also enjoy trips to the countryside with my parents.

So, how do you like life in Moscow? Is your life the same as Anna's or different? Write in and tell us about yourself.



ACTIVITIES

- Compare your life to Anna's. Discuss it in class.
- Work in pairs. Use the questions in bold to interview your partner. Record your dialogue.

¹takes care of

²not cold

³as much as possible

Dachas



Anna (12) – Tumen



Anton (12) – Astrakhan



Andrey (11) – Voronezh



Olga (11) – Murmansk

Are you a country lover or a city slicker¹? Many Russians love the countryside. So every weekend they escape to their “dachas”.

But what’s a “dacha”? **Spotlight on Russia** finds out more ...

Many Russian people have a plot² of land out in the country called a “dacha”. They often have a small house there where they can relax or grow fruit and vegetables in the garden.

Dachas are usually a few kilometers outside the city. So Friday evening and Saturday morning thousands of cars, buses and local trains carry³ millions of people to their dachas outside the city. People carry⁴ bags, backpacks and small carts with what they need for a relaxing weekend at the dacha. You can often see cats and dogs in the cars as people usually take their pets with them.

People spend their weekends at their dachas during the spring, summer and autumn. During the spring people clear the garden. Many people plants vegetables such as cucumbers, tomatoes, onions and potatoes while others prefer to grow flowers. In the summer, families swim and fish in nearby lakes and rivers. They also pick⁵ fruit and berries which they use to make jam. Autumn is the most beautiful season on the dacha. All of the trees, grass and plants are green, red and yellow and there are a lot of colourful flowers.

During the long, cold Russian winters, people can’t wait to return to their dachas. There they can relax and get away from⁶ and the busy city life.

Look at the pictures, then vote for your favourite dacha.

¹someone who lives and works in the city and is used to city life.

²small area, ³transport, ⁴have with them, ⁵collect, ⁶escape from

ACTIVITIES

- Imagine you want to explain to your English pen-friend what a dacha is. Use the information in the text to tell the class. Talk about:
 - what it is
 - where you can find it
 - how people use it
- Vote for the best picture. Give reasons.
- Write to us about your dacha and what you like to do there.

When you visit Moscow be sure to travel in style on one of the most amazing metro systems in the world. Read on to find out more.

Spotlight on Russia

visits Moscow's underground palace.

Moscow is the capital city of Russia. It is one of the largest cities in Europe. Around eleven million people live there. Many tourists visit Moscow every year to see its famous sights and fantastic architecture.

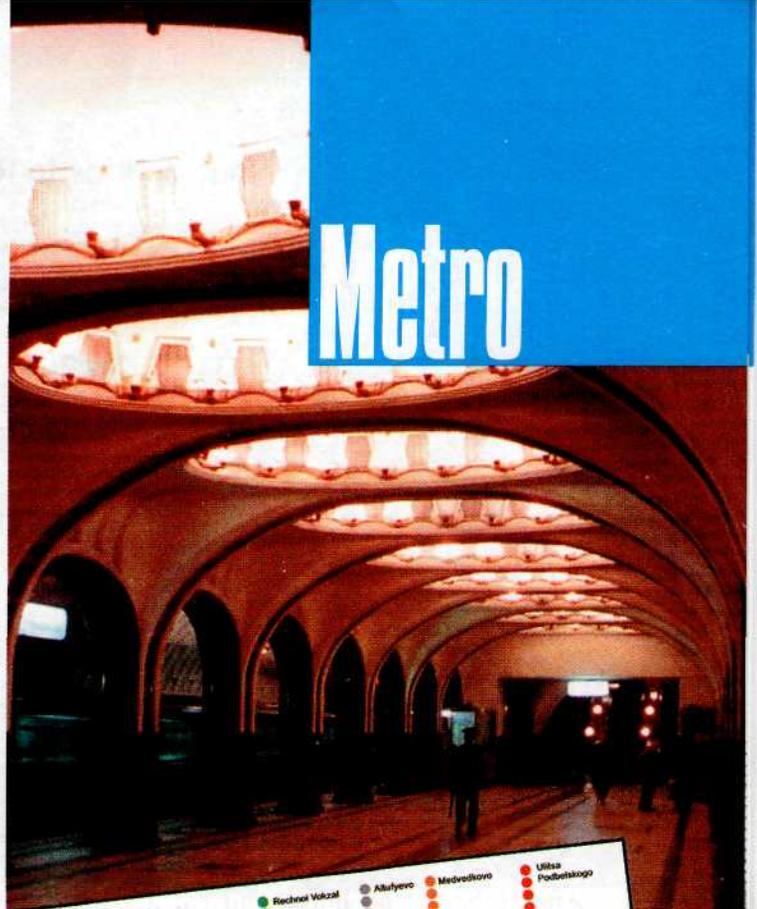
The most popular means of transport for locals and visitors is the metro. The Moscow metro is very fast. It has 164 stations around the city and it is always very busy. Seven million passengers use it every day from 6am to 1am. Passengers can tell where a train goes from the voice of the announcers. All trains that go to the centre have a male voice and trains that go away from the centre have a female voice.

The metro goes to all major¹ sights. The Station Ploshcad Revolutsii takes you to the Kremlin and Red Square. The metro station Teatralnaya is near the Bolshoi and Maly Theatres. But the metro is also an attraction in itself. People call it "The Underground Palace", because many stations are really beautiful with mosaic ceilings, wonderful chandeliers², beautiful sculptures and brilliant paintings.

For a real life adventure, every visitor to this beautiful city should take a ride on the underground metro. It is one of Moscow's major tourist attractions.

Do you enjoy travelling on the metro?
What's your favourite station? Write in and tell us to win free metro tickets for a week.

¹important ²lights hanging from the ceiling



ACTIVITIES

- Is there a metro in your town? Compare it to Moscow's metro.
- Which type of transport do you use most? Why?
- In pairs decide where you are in Moscow. Ask for/tell the way to Moscow State University, Bolshoi Theatre, Botanic Garden, Gorky Central Park of Culture and Tsaritsino estate. The names on the metro map can help you.

What do kids in Russia do every day? Is their life exciting?



Spotlight on Russia talks to Marina Smirnova – a 12-year-old student from St Petersburg.

Hi, my name is Marina Smirnova. I'm 12 years old and I live in the beautiful town of St Petersburg. My daily routine is typical of most students my age.

I get up at 7:00 am and after a quick breakfast I walk to school. School starts at 8:00 am and finishes at 2:00pm from Monday to Friday. There are 30 students in my class and every day we have 6-7 lessons. Each lesson lasts 45 minutes with a 10-minute break in between. My favourite lessons are history and maths. They are both very interesting. We have lunch in the school canteen during the longer break in the afternoon. We have many exciting things to do at school after classes. On Tuesday and Thursday I have guitar lessons.

After school I go home and eat a snack before I start on my homework. We always have lots of homework to do and it usually takes me 2-3 hours to finish it. Around 6 o'clock in the evening, I have dinner with my family. I enjoy this time because on weekdays it's the only chance we have to relax and be together as a family.

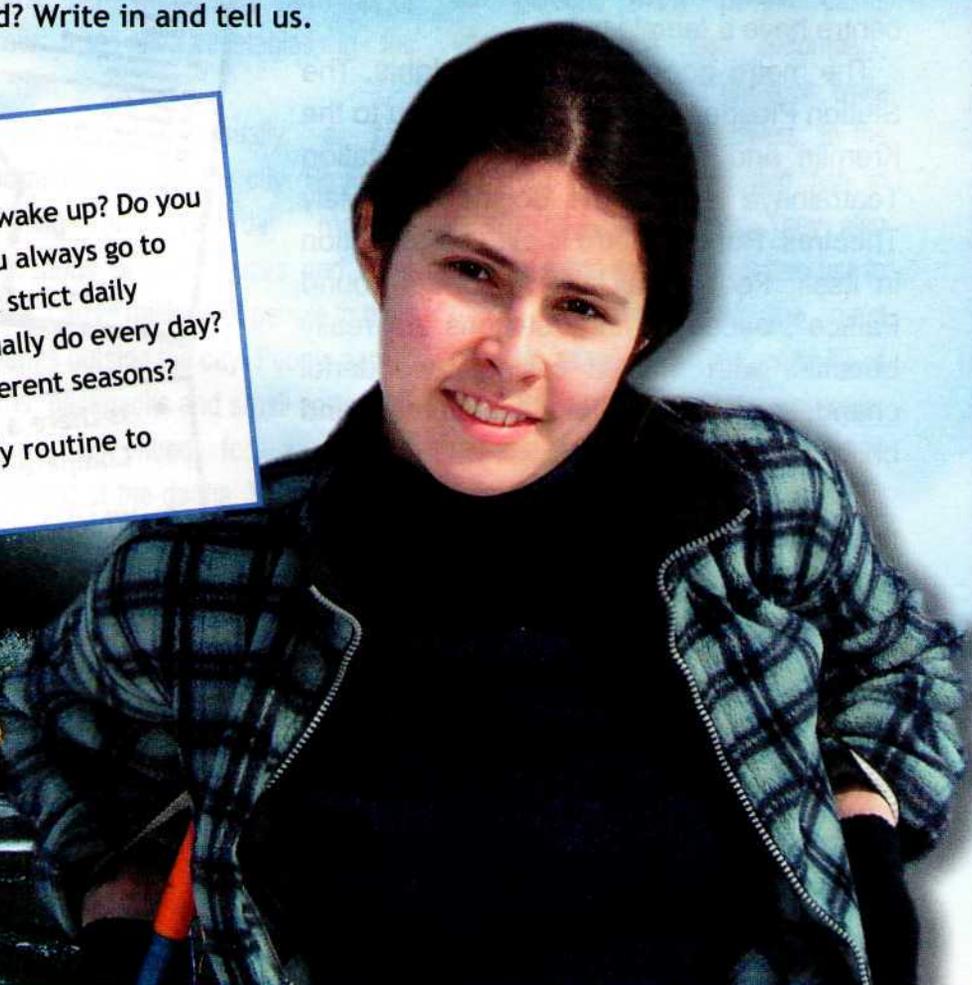
After dinner, I usually watch TV. I like watching Sports and Music shows. Sometimes I play a game of chess with my father. Most nights I go to bed at 10:30pm and read for a while before I go to sleep.

What kind of life do you lead? Write in and tell us.

ACTIVITIES

Discuss in class:

- What time do you usually wake up? Do you have late nights, or do you always go to bed early? Have you got a strict daily routine? What do you usually do every day? How different is it in different seasons?
- How similar is your daily routine to Marina's?





White Nights

Summer time in St Petersburg is very special but why?

Spotlight on Russia visits “Venice of the North”.

People often say that St Petersburg is the ‘Venice of the North’. This is because it is a beautiful city with 90 waterways, 42 islands and 300 bridges. Every summer from June until July something wonderful happens in St. Petersburg. It is a wonder of nature that Russians call the ‘White Nights’.

Visitors from all over the world travel to the city to see this. During the White Nights

the sun does not set completely and a silver glow¹ fills the sky. This sight attracts tourists and locals who take to the streets to enjoy it and celebrate.

At night, crowds² of people sing and dance by the Neva River. They watch the bridges open as boats pass by and fireworks fill the sky. A visit to St Petersburg during that time is a fantastic experience.

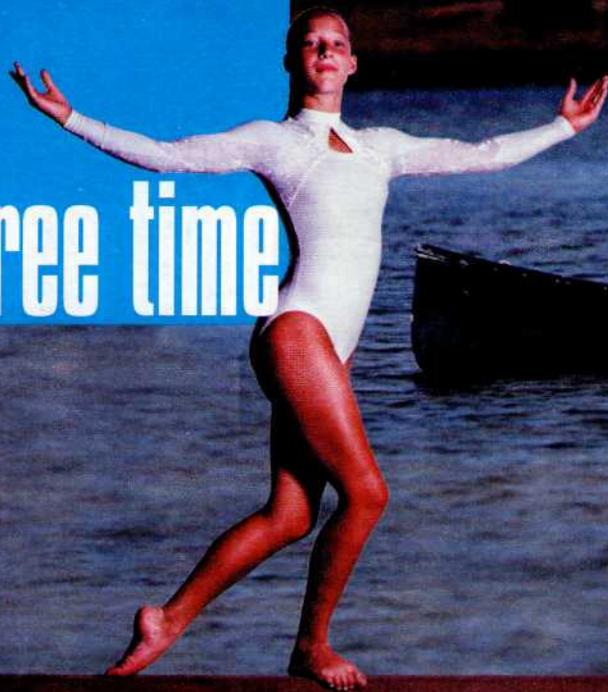
The White Nights are certainly a beautiful sight. Write to us about any other interesting event you know about. The best articles get to appear in the next two issues of “Welcome to Russia”.

¹light ²a large number of

ACTIVITIES

- What is special about St Petersburg? What happens at that time? Discuss in class.
- Look at the picture and discuss it with your partner. Imagine you are tourist over there. What are you doing?

Free time



How do people in Russia spend their free time?
It's not all work and no play.

Spotlight on Russia finds out what leisure means to Russian people.

Russian people spend their spare¹ time in many different ways. One thing they all love is reading. Russians also love going to the cinema and the theatre.

When it comes to more active pastimes, skiing and ice-skating are very popular with people of all ages. In the winter, many people skate on frozen ponds and skating rinks. Ice-skating is one of Russia's most important sports. Russians are also famous for their ice hockey teams. Many of the top players in Canada and the United States are from Russia.

Other free time activities include: hiking, mountain

climbing, backpacking and canoeing. Many Russians take part in organised sport. Football is the favourite, but many people also do gymnastics, or play volleyball and basketball.

In the summer, chess games take place² in parks. Another hobby is stamp collecting and there are thousands of stamp clubs.

People from different nationalities in Russia have their own traditional types of exercise. For example, the Yakuts of central Siberia are very good reindeer-sled racers and the Buryats in eastern Siberia love archery.

We are trying to find out what our readers like to do in their spare time. Be part of our big survey today. Write a short article/letter about what you do in your free time and send it to us.

¹free ²happen



ACTIVITIES

Discuss in class:

- Which are the Russians' favourite leisure activities?
- What are the favourite leisure activities of the people where you live?
- What do you do in your free time?

Britain has Shakespeare, Germany has Goethe and Russia has Alexander Pushkin. He was a brilliant poet and writer, and a favourite with all Russian literature fans.

Spotlight on Russia

finds out more about this famous Russian writer.

Alexander Pushkin was born in Moscow on 6th June 1799. From a young age his nurse taught him all about Russian folktales and traditions. Alexander wasn't a good student, but he loved to read and spent many hours in his father's library. He wrote his first poem at the age of 8 and published his first poem at 15.

His work was very different from the other writers at the time and this often got him into trouble with the tsar and the government. For example, one of his most famous plays, *Boris Godunov* was only published years after he wrote it for political reasons.

After marrying a beautiful young girl called Natalya Goncharova in 1831 he continued to write. Millions of people consider his novel, *Eugeny Onegin*, his poem, *The Bronze Horseman* and his drama, *The Stone Guest*, to be masterpieces¹.

Alexander Pushkin was only 37 when he died. He played a great part in 'The Golden Age of Russian Literature'. He's Russia's greatest² poet and national pride.

"Spotlight on Russia" is having a poetry competition for all the young writers out there. Send us a poem about your life and win the chance to see it in next month's issue!!



ACTIVITIES

- Make a timeline about Pushkin's life. Add more facts about him. Use it to talk to the class about him.
- Write a quiz for your classmates about Pushkin's life and work and send it for our website.

¹the best ones ²most important

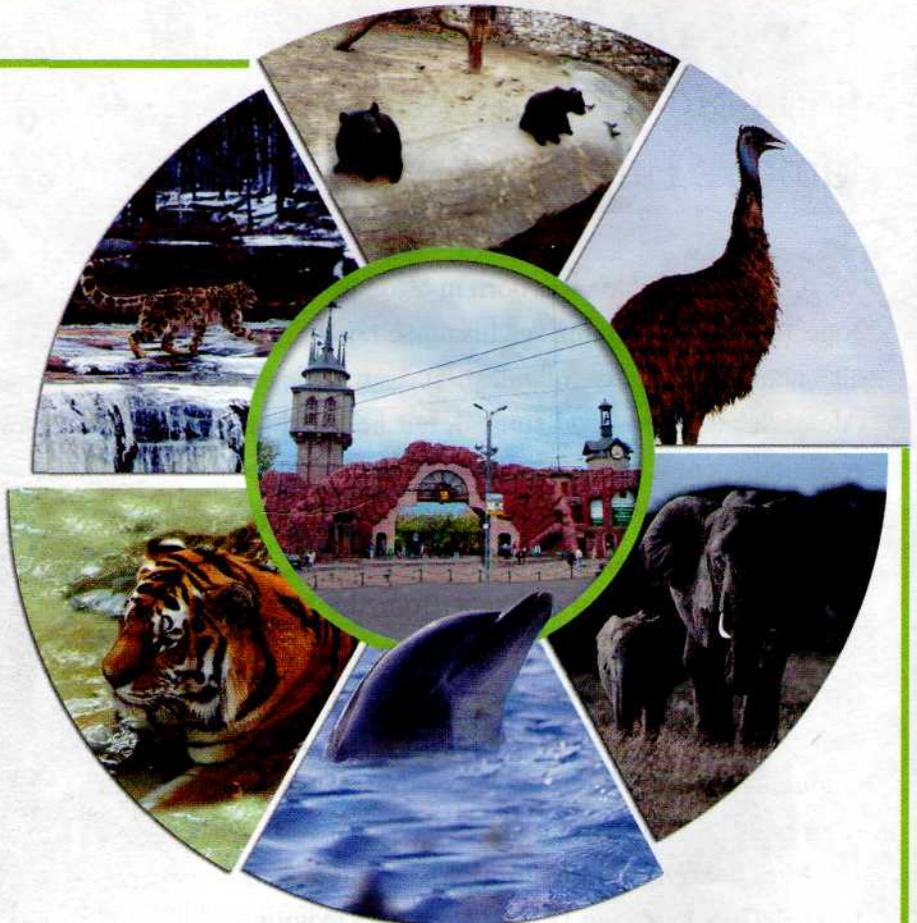
MOSCOW ZOO

Who would believe you can find tigers, monkeys, snakes and fish in the centre of the Russian capital?

Spotlight on Russia visits the Moscow Zoo.

Tigers, monkeys, emu and fish in the very centre of the Russian capital! These creatures all live in the Moscow Zoo, one of the largest in the world! Moscow Zoo covers an area of 20 ¹hectares which is home to over 7000 different ²species. The zoo has also got many exotic animals and birds. Getting around the Zoo is easy but get a map to make sure you see everything.

First, visit the Animal Island. There you can see the Amur tigers, the white snow leopard, the Himalaya bears, the Asian lions and even an Australian emu, which is almost two metres tall! It is on the second floor of 'Animal Island' and it is full of colourful fish in large aquariums. Don't miss the Night World exhibition too. This is a great chance for you to see the night animals since they sleep during the day! For all young



visitors, the Children's Zoo is a must! Children can see the heroes of their favourite fairy tales: the three piglets, the wolf and seven young goats and many other animals well known to all the kids.

Kids of all ages can also visit playgrounds and buy gifts from the souvenir shops. There are also cafés and picnic areas. All of these things make visiting the zoo a perfect day out!

What's your favourite animal? Send us pictures and a short description and win tickets for Moscow zoo.

¹1 hectare equals to 10,000 square metres
²kinds of animals

ACTIVITIES

- Imagine you visited the Moscow Zoo. What did you do and see there? Tell your partner.
- Describe your route around the Moscow Zoo using the picture. Say what you are watching.

Mushrooms

You find them in every kitchen in Russia.
What are they? ... Mushrooms of course.



Spotlight on Russia
finds out about this old
Russian tradition.

Mushrooms

Every year from July to October many Russian people go hunting¹ for mushrooms. It is a very old Russian tradition. Some people collect mushrooms to sell in shops and restaurants in the cities but most of them end up in the Russian kitchen. Housewives bake the mushrooms with sour cream in the oven, fry them in butter, or boil them in soups. Sometimes they cook them as a main dish, or mix them with cheese, yoghurt, beef or chicken. Let's look at the recipe Olga sent us.

Ingredients:

- 10-12 large fresh mushrooms
- ¼ cup grated cheese
- ½ cup soft cheese
- 1 tablespoon oil
- ½ tablespoon parsley
- 1 onion
- salt / pepper

Directions

- 1 Clean mushrooms properly².
- 2 Remove³ stems. Chop them in small pieces.
- 3 Fry the stems in oil with onion.
- 4 Mix cheese, parsley and fried stems and onions.
- 5 Fill⁴ mushrooms with the mixture.
- 6 Cook under hot grill for 3 minutes.

Did you like them? We are looking for more tasty recipes. Send your favourite one to us. Any recipe that appears in "Welcome to Russia" wins a cookery book.

¹playing

²the right way

³get rid of

⁴make full

Try making your
own tasty
**Stuffed
Mushrooms**
with the
recipe Olga
sent us.



ACTIVITIES

- Tell your partner about mushrooms in your family traditions.
- Read the article and find:
 - four verbs related to cooking
 - three dairy products
 - poultry
 - a type of meat

Sochi

If you think Russia is all about snow and cold weather, you can be wrong. You can enjoy a warm sunny beach holiday at Sochi.

Spotlight on Russia visits Sochi – the resort capital of Russia.



ACTIVITIES

Discuss in class:

- What impressed you most about Sochi?
- Collect information on another holiday resort in your country and write an article about it.

Write about:

- home
- location
- what famous for
- activities one can do
- recommendation

The city of Sochi is a popular Russian holiday resort on the Black Sea coast. It is about 1,500 miles south of Moscow. The city is famous for its warm weather, beautiful landscapes, golden beaches and health spas.

Every summer, more than 1.5 million visitors from Russia and abroad¹ spend their holidays there. People travel to Sochi by both air and sea. It has got an international airport with flights to most major Russian cities, as well as Europe. Its port has a direct² sea link with Turkey, Greece, Georgia and Ukraine. Most tourists visit the city in the summer, but the winter season attracts skiers to the Krasnaya Polyana resort. As well as skiing, visitors can enjoy hunting, fishing and mountain climbing. There are also lots of festivals in Sochi and every year in June there is the international film festival. In the evening, Sochi is alive³ with colourful street cafés and restaurants where you can eat delicious food at reasonable⁴ prices.

Sochi is a city that has got something to offer everyone. Whether you want to spend time on the ski slopes or at the beach, Sochi is the ideal choice for you.

What was your best holiday? Write in and tell us about and win a weekend at Sochi.

¹foreign

²straight

³active

⁴not extreme