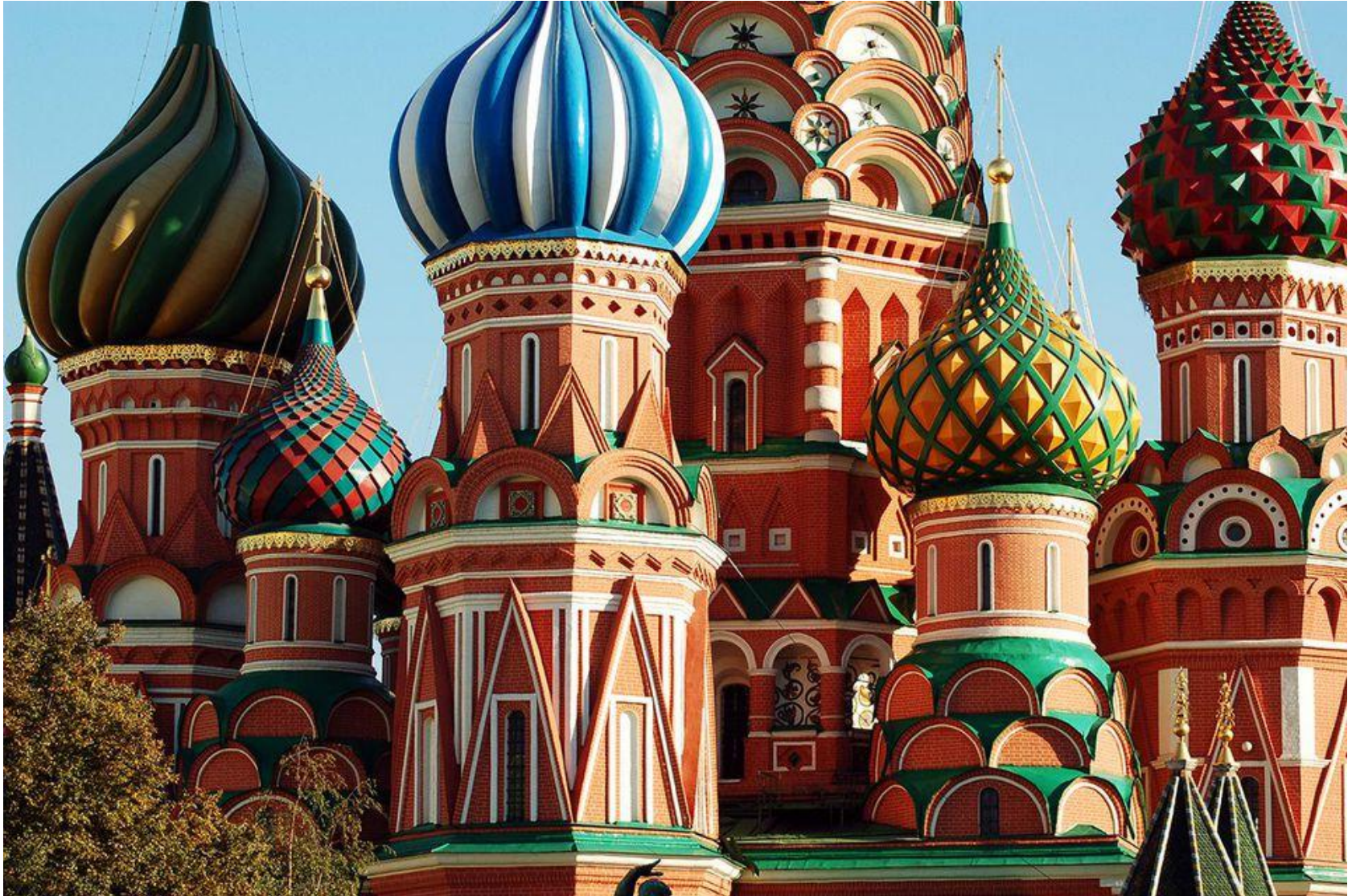


Russian Culture Facts



Facts about the country of Russia

Russia is the largest country in the world in area and spans Europe and Asia from West to East.

Because Russia encompasses so much land, it also exhibits a great diversity in geography and ethnicities. Though generalizations about Russian culture can be made, the size and diversity of the country mean that



maintain
elements that aren't
Russia.

Russia's People

Though those who live in Russia are called “Russians,” about 160 various ethnic groups can be found in Russia. Russian is the official language, though over 100 languages are spoken by its peoples.

The majority of Russians identify with the Eastern Orthodox (Christian) religion, but Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism are also practiced in Russia.

Udmurt people



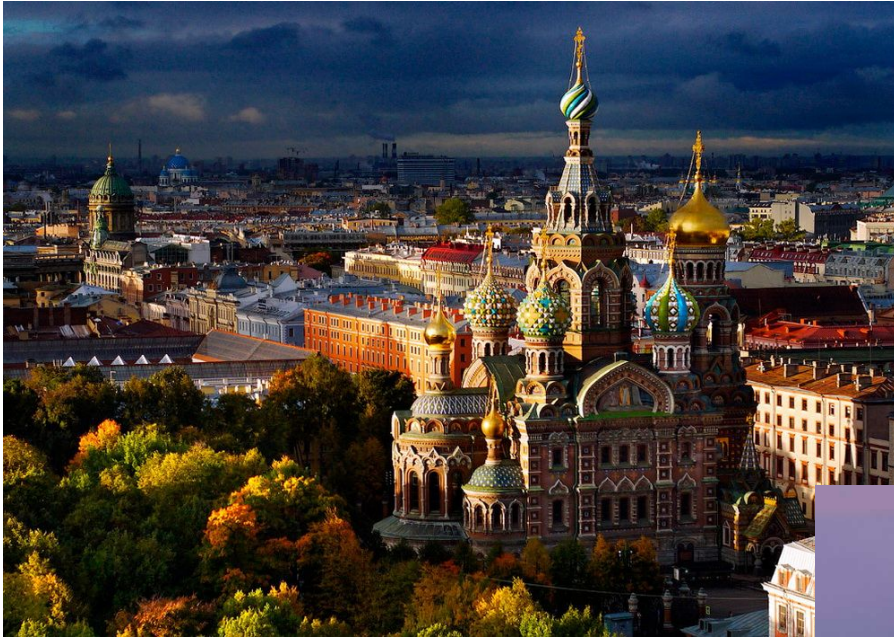
Russia's Cities

Russia's capital city is Moscow, though St. Petersburg once held that title and now serves as a “second capital”. Moscow is home to many important symbols of Russian culture, such as the Kremlin, St. Basil's Cathedral, the Tretyakov Gallery, and more.



St. Petersburg

The culture of St. Petersburg is uniquely “European” due to the efforts of Peter the Great



Each city in Russia is unique and exhibits its own culture. For example, Kazan has a strong Tatar heritage and is the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan. Siberian cities reflect the realities of living in the far east of Russia with its bitterly cold winters and ethnic communities. Cities along important trade routes, like the Volga, preserve elements of ancient Russia.



Russian Food and Drinks



Food and drinks are a big part of life in this vast country. Most people are familiar with Russian vodka, that clear, flavorless spirit that encourages and warms the blood. But Russians are also avid tea drinkers, and Russian tea culture is as strong as vodka culture. Russian foods are comforting, rich, and focus on the flavors favored over generations. Special holiday foods in Russia, like kulich and pelmeni, grace tables

seasonally, and their preparation and consumption is surrounded by ritual.



Russian families sometimes keep a dacha, or summer cottage, where they escape for the weekends or the summer and where they tend vegetable gardens and fruit trees.

When addressing friends or family, it's important to know a little about Russian names, which don't follow English-language conventions. You may hear the same person called by a variety of names which sound nothing alike!



Russia's Holidays

Russian celebrates standard Western holidays, such as Christmas, New Year's and Easter, but other holidays, like Victory Day and International Women's Day, take on special emphasis in Russia.



Russian holidays also recognize uniquely Russian



example,
celebrates Russia's
exploration.

Russian Traditions

Russian culture is often tradition-driven. Traditions govern everything from how many flowers to give a woman (an odd number - 3, 5, 7...) to how to drink a bottle of vodka (one bottle for three people).

Learning about Russian traditions will enrich your experience in Russia because you'll be able to navigate social situations more confidently.



One of the most interesting things you can see a day

is the Maslennitsa (the 'Week of Pancakes' to winter), where pagan traditions mixed.

Russian Family Life

Russian families don't differ drastically from families around the world. Both the mother and father typically work, and children go to school (where they typically learn English and other languages) to prepare them for university. The babushka, the Russian grandmother, fills the role of

wise woman, curator of
ns, and

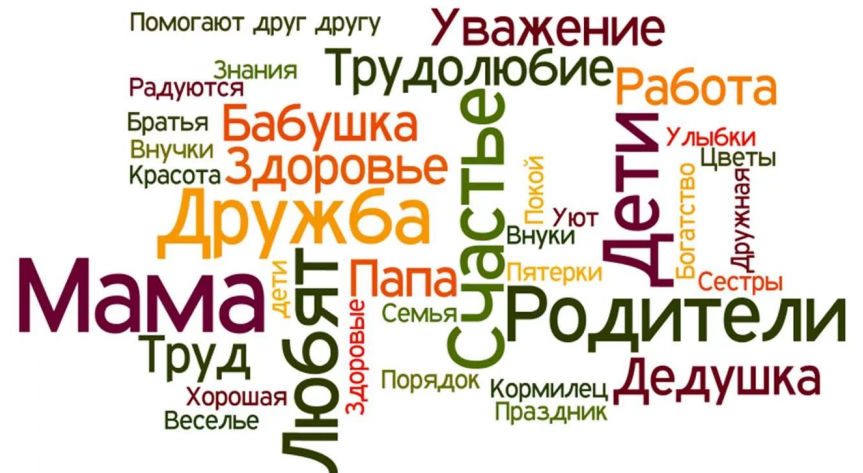
baker of



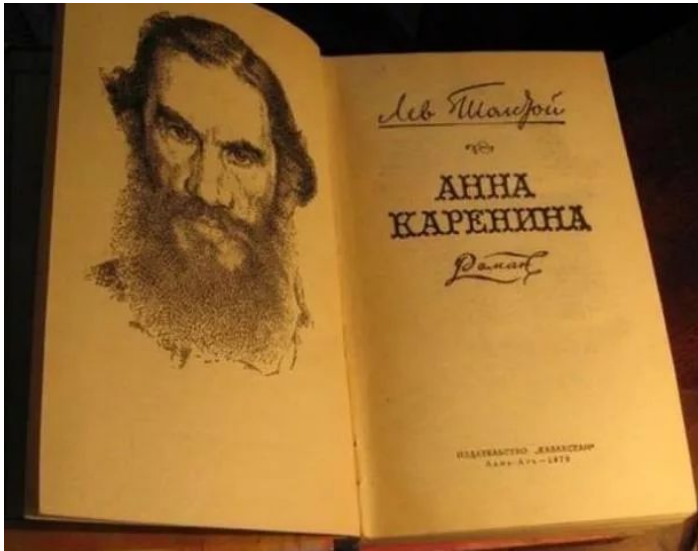
Russian Language

Russian language uses the Cyrillic alphabet. Russian Cyrillic uses 33 letters. These letters are derived from an old Slavic alphabet developed when Cyril and Methodius spread Christianity to the southern Slavic people in the 9th century. If you're traveling in Russia, it helps to know which letters in the Cyrillic alphabet are analogous to Latin letters. This makes reading signs and maps easier, even if you can't speak the language.

Russian language itself is a Slavic language and shares some root words with other Slavic languages.



Russian Literature



one of the greatest
languages.

Most people

Tolstoy, who wrote the
“War and Peace” and
another

weighty

“Crime and Punishment”. Theater goes still

s, and poetry enthusiasts swoon

over the verses of Pushkin. Russians take their literature

very seriously, and many Russians can easily recite

passages from famous works at the drop of a hat.

When you travel, visit the former houses of Russian authors; many are preserved as museums.

Russian Arts and Crafts

Russian handcrafted souvenirs make wonderful gifts and home decorations. The most well-known Russian craft is the matryoshka doll, or painted nesting doll. Finely decorated lacquer boxes also make special souvenirs. Regional and national styles of folk craft, as well as materials (birchbark) typify handicrafts.

These can be purchased at souvenir markets.

Some are of heirloom quality and bring enjoyment to multiple generations.



Russian History

Russian history begins with Kievan Rus, which existed as the first unified, Slavic Christian state. After Kievan Rus fell as a result of Mongol invasion, the Grand Duchy of Moscow gained might and power in the region. Peter the Great established the Russian Empire and moved the capital city to St. Petersburg. With the Bolshevik Revolution in the early 20th century, the Russian monarchy disintegrated and 70 years of Communist rule followed.

In the last century, democracy. Many Russian history are important to culture because they its people) what it is

*Великая Октябрьская революция
1917 года*

