



**ICONIC ART:** *The façade of the Old Tretyakov Gallery*

PHOTO: © PINGVIN121674 | DREAMSTIME.COM

**Aleksandra Enterprises, Inc.**  
aleksandra.com

**Aquamarine Hotel Moscow**  
aquamarinemoscow.com

**Bunker 42**  
bunker42.com

**Café Pushkin**  
www.cafe-puskin.ru/en

**GUM**  
www.gum.ru

**The Kremlin**  
kreml.ru

**Lotte Hotel Moscow**  
www.lottehotel.ru

**Moscow Metro**  
engl.mosmetro.ru

**The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts**  
arts-museum.ru

**Radisson Royal Hotel, Moscow**  
radisson.com

**Stolovaya No. 57**  
www.gum.ru/projects/s57

**The State Tretyakov Gallery**  
tretykovgallery.ru

the symbol of Moscow: St. Basil's Cathedral with its multicolored onion domes.

The Kremlin is practically a city within a city, incorporating four palaces, three cathedrals and several important museums. Bear in mind that because the Kremlin is also the official residence of the president of the Russian Federation (Vladimir Putin), it is often closed to visitors during state occasions — closures are usually advertised in advance.

For visitors of a certain age, the Kremlin retains some of the ominous bearing of the Cold War years, though most of the monumental trappings of communism have been swept away. Many have ended up in the Fallen Monument Park adjacent to the New Tretyakov Gallery. Here, in leafy surroundings, you can stroll among busts of Lenin, Stalin and other communist icons.

The State Tretyakov Gallery is divided between two locations. The New Tretyakov (10 Krymsky Val) houses a collection of Russian art from the 1917 Revolution onward, while the Old Tretyakov (10 Lavrushinsky Lane) presents a comprehensive overview of pre-Revolution art.

The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts has a wider geographic scope, including important works by Van Gogh, Picasso and Matisse as well as some of the golden treasures excavated from the archaeological site of Troy. This year marks the Pushkin Museum's centenary, and many celebratory events are scheduled.

The price of a Metro ticket gives you access to one of the city's greatest attractions — the Metro itself. Many of the 180 stations were designed as "people's palaces" and are breathtakingly beautiful. Among the best are Belorusskaya, Komsomolskaya, Park Kultury and Taganskaya. There is a Metro Museum at Sportivnaya Station.

## CHECKING IN WITH ALEKSANDRA EFIMOVA

Chicago-based businesswoman and president of Aleksandra Enterprises, Inc.



### WHAT ARE THE KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN INVESTORS IN MOSCOW?

Recently the city of Moscow approved expansion of the south-east territories. This is a major effort to decrease traffic, improve residents' lifestyles, create more green parks and recreation and increase living space per resident. Within this development, foreign businesses will benefit from opportunities in transportation, construction, parks, recreation and entertainment.

Other areas of opportunity include private hospitals and rehabilitation centers, high technology, IT and training. (Russians are hungry for "know-how" in many areas.)

### WHAT CULTURAL DIFFERENCES SHOULD AMERICANS BE AWARE OF WHEN DOING BUSINESS IN RUSSIA?

I have done business in Russia since 1998. Although I was born in Russia and am fluent in the language, cultural business differences still shake me sometimes. For example, it is essential to know people to get anything done. It's advisable to have a local partner with strong connections to increase your chances of success. The process of negotiating and signing contracts takes much longer than in the United States. Get ready for a period of "getting to know each other." Russians want to know who they do business with. And Russians are hospitable, so long dinners, visits to the *banya* [sauna] and vodka toasts are not stereotypes — they're reality. Russia is a male-dominated business world, so women definitely have to prove their way up. Also, be warned foreign entrepreneurs are often pressured for *otkati* — kickbacks.

### HOW HAS MOSCOW CHANGED SINCE THE FALL OF THE IRON CURTAIN?

More has changed than not, especially in Moscow. There is a strong entrepreneurial spirit, with privately owned restaurants, hotels and other businesses, leading to competition, more variety, better service and better value. It's now a much easier city for travelers — hotels, ATMs and more people speaking English. The city is an open, hungry market for foreign investment. Most important, people's mentality changed. They want to work hard and benefit from it.

### WHICH LOCAL ATTRACTIONS DO YOU RECOMMEND?

Red Square, the Kremlin, The Pushkin Museum, Tretyakov Gallery. More traditionally, try to experience a *banya*. There are plenty of great restaurants — like Café Pushkin, Turandot and Bosco — and awesome nightlife.