

SHOPPING

Back in the old days, the only place to buy a tin of caviar or a painted box was at an elite Beriozka store. Entry was restricted to foreigners and people with foreign currency, every store carried the same dull stuff and prices were high. The only other options were the sad selections at the State Department Store (GUM) or the notorious black market. Russia has come a long way since then – basic toiletries are no longer luxuries and one no longer need defy the law to bring home a decent souvenir.

That said, shopping is not among Russia's main attractions. Foreign goods, especially clothing, jewellery and anything with a designer label, are ridiculously expensive. High-quality Russian goods are priced to compete (meaning they are equally expensive).

Which is not to say that Muscovites are not shoppers. On the contrary. They are the reason that prices are so high. In the centre, eager consumers are packing into clothing boutiques, shoe stores, art galleries and bookshops. High-end shopping malls are opening on every corner – most recently, the Evropeysky Shopping Centre (p155), the world's biggest urban mall. On the outskirts, more cost-conscious shoppers are flocking to megamalls in search of cheaper goods. After eight years of record-breaking economic growth, Muscovites have money and they are ready to spend!

A small but enterprising fashion industry is up and coming in Moscow. A few local designers are blazing this trail, selling classy and creative designs. Moscow's vibrant art scene means that the capital's galleries are filled with paintings, sculpture and photographs. The selection of souvenir-type items is always changing and growing, as craftspeople unleash long-dormant creativity and collectors uncover long-hidden treasures.

See p248 for details on export restrictions concerning antiques and anything else more than 25 years old. For details on shopping for food items, see p161.

OPENING HOURS

Most shops are open from 9am or 10am until 8pm or 9pm. Large shopping centres stay open until 10pm or later. Hours are usually shorter on Sunday, from about noon to 8pm. Hours of operation are indicated in this chapter only when they differ from this norm.

KREMLIN & KITAY GOROD

The streets around the Kremlin are home to some of the capital's largest and most prominent shopping venues. The most historic occupies a prime locale on Red Square – GUM is now among the capital's snazziest shopping malls. Within a 500m radius around Red Square, you will find two other shopping centres, Okhotny Ryad and Nautilus. Meanwhile, Kitay Gorod is home to the capital's oldest marketplace and its swankiest shopping strip. The ancient trading arcades known as Gostiny Dvor are now a minimall, filled with small shops and souvenir stalls. And the ancient entryway into the city, Tretyakovsky proezd, might as

well be called 'Designer Way', as it is lined with boutiques and showrooms by Europe's hottest names.

GUS-KHRUSTALNY FACTORY STORE

Map p66

Antiques & Souvenirs

☎ 495-232 5658; www.ghz.ru; Gostiny Dvor;

📍 Ploshchad Revolyutsii

Since the glass production factory was founded there in 1756, the town of Gus-Khrustalny (east of Moscow) has been known for its high-quality glassware. This factory store carries an excellent selection of beautiful and reasonably priced crystal and glassware, especially coloured glass.

VOLOGDA LINEN

Map p66

Antiques & Souvenirs

☎ 495-604 5915; www.linens.ru, in Russian;

Gostiny Dvor; 📍 Ploshchad Revolyutsii

Russia's cool, moist summers are ideal for producing flax, the fibre used to manufacture linen. This elegant, durable fabric is respectfully known in Russia as 'His Majesty Linen'. High-quality linen products such as tablecloths, napkins, bed covers and even clothing are still manufactured in Russia.

VASSA & CO Map p66 Clothing & Accessories

☎ 495-698 1812; www.vassatrend.com; Nikol'skaya ul 5/1; **M** Ploshchad Revolyutsii

Vassa is a Russian designer but was trained in New York City and her designs reflect a classical and classy sense of style. Catering to modern Moscow women since 2000, Vassa offers suits, skirts, dresses and other professional clothing that stylish women might wear at the office or out on the town.

GUM Map p66 Shopping Mall

Gosudarstvenny Universalny Magazin; ☎ 495-788 4343; www.gum.ru, in Russian; Krasnaya pl 3; **M** Ploshchad Revolyutsii

In the elaborate 19th-century building on Red Square, the State Department Store – better known as GUM – is a bright and bustling centre filled with shops and cafés.

OKHOTNY RYAD Map p66 Shopping Mall

☎ 495-737 7393; www.oxotniy.ru, in Russian; Manezhnaya pl; **M** Okhotny Ryad

The best part about this underground mall is the fanciful fountain that splashes the shoppers as they enter and exit from Alexandrovsky Garden. Aside from the clothing and electronic stores, there is a big, crowded food court and a 24-hour internet café (p250) on the ground floor.

BASMANNY

The streets east of Kitay Gorod are lined with shops and boutiques, making the inner part of Basmanny a busy, bustling shopping district. You'll find one of Moscow's biggest bookshops, a slew of small boutiques (some featuring local designers) and a few art galleries.

BIBLIO-GLOBUS Map pp80–1 Books

☎ 495-781 1900; www.biblio-globus.ru; Myasnitskaya ul 6; **M** Lubyanka

Moscow's favourite bookshop is huge, with lots of reference and souvenir books on language, art and history, and a good selection of maps and travel guides. Just to prove that Russia's consumer culture can keep up with the best of them, this old-school bookshop now has a coffee shop on the ground floor.

ATMAN Map pp80–1 Clothing & Accessories

☎ 495-917 4640; ul Pokrovka 31; **M** Kurskaya
This boutique of Siberian designer Veronika Samborskaya features free-flowing, rough-

top picks**SHOPPING STRIPS**

- **Tretyakovsky proezd** (opposite) A veritable who's who of luxury goods, whether it's clothes (Prada, Gucci etc), cars (Ferrari, Maserati) or couches (Armani Casa).
- **Ulitsa Petrovka** (p151) A large department store, a fancy shopping centre and a bounty of boutiques. This shopping strip culminates in Stoleshnikov per, a pedestrian strip given over to the most exclusive shops.
- **Ulitsa Arbat** (p153) A long-standing tourist attraction, littered with souvenir stalls and antique shops.
- **Izmaylovo Market** (p156) Still the number-one spot for souvenir shopping.

hewn styles, often made from Russian linen. Samborskaya's unique designs somehow manage to combine rusticity and elegance.

MASHA TSIGAL

Map pp80–1 Clothing & Accessories

☎ 495-915 8464; www.mashatsigal.com; ul Pokrovka 11; **M** Kitay-Gorod

Masha Tsigal's boutique sells mostly casual clothes in skimpy styles, bright colours and bold designs – very playful and a little trumpy. Masha has outfitted Russian pop stars tATu, among others.

MON AMOUR Map pp80–1 Clothing & Accessories

☎ 495-544 3900; Myasnitskaya ul 18; **M** Lubyanka

By clothing we mean lingerie. And by accessories we mean Pherone candles, tease toys, masks and whips, as well as a whole line of rings and chains that you won't find at your more mainstream jeweller.

MAGAZIN CHAI-KOFE

Map pp80–1 Food & Drink

Tea-Coffee Store; ☎ 495-625 4656; Myasnitskaya ul 19; **M** Turgenevskaya

In 1894 the old Perlov Tea House was redecorated in the style of a Chinese pagoda. Today this fantastical facade contains the Tea-Coffee Store – a simple name for a place that is filled with coffee beans from Italy, Brazil, Costa Rica and Kenya, and tea leaves from China, India and South Africa.