**Moscow city**

MOSCOW , Rus. Moskva, city (1991 est. pop. 8,802,000), capital of Russia and of Moscow region and the administrative center of the Central district, W central European Russia, on the Moskva River near its junction with the Moscow Canal. Moscow is Russia's largest city and a leading economic and cultural center. Moscow is governed by a city council and a mayor and is divided into boroughs. The five major sections of Moscow form concentric circles, of which the innermost is the Kremlin (see under kremlin ), a walled city in itself. Its walls represent the city limits as of the late 15th cent. The hub of the Russian railroad network, Moscow is also an inland port and has several civilian and military airports. Moscow's major industries include machine building, metalworking, oil refining, publishing, brewing, filmmaking, and the manufacture of machine tools, precision instruments, building materials, automobiles, trucks, aircraft, chemicals, wood and paper products, textiles, clothing, footwear, and soft drinks.

**Points of Interest**

Adjoining the Kremlin in the east is the huge Red Square, originally a marketplace and a meeting spot for popular assemblies; it is still used as a parade ground and for demonstrations. On the west side of Red Square and along the Kremlin wall are the Lenin Mausoleum and the tombs of other Soviet political figures; on the north side is the completely rebuilt Kazan Cathedral (constructed in the 17th cent., razed by Stalin, and rebuilt in 1993); and at the southern end stands the imposing cathedral of Basil the Beatified (constructed 16th cent.). One of the most exuberant examples of Russian architecture, the cathedral has numerous cupolas, each a different color, grouped around a central dome. In front of the cathedral stands a monument to the liberators Menin and Pozharski.

To the E of Red Square extends the old district of Kitaigorod [Tatar city], once the merchants' quarter, later the banking section, and now an administrative hub with various government offices and ministries. Tverskaya Street (formerly Gorky Street), a main thoroughfare, extends N from the Kremlin and is lined with modern buildings, including the headquarters of the council of ministers; it is connected with the St. Petersburg highway, which passes the huge Dynamo stadium and the central airport. Near the beginning of Tverskaya Street is Theater Square, containing the Bolshoi and Maly theaters. Encircling the Kremlin and Kitaigorod are the Bely Gorod [white city], traditionally the most elegant part of Moscow and now a commercial and cultural area; the Zemlyanoy Gorod [earth city], named for the earthen and wooden ramparts that once surrounded it; and the inner suburbs. In the Bely Gorod is Christ the Savior Cathedral; demolished in 1931 to be replaced by a never-built Palace of Soviets, it was rebuilt in the 1990s. A notable feature of Moscow are the concentric rings of wide boulevards and railroad lines on the sites where old walls and ramparts once stood.

Except for its historical core, Moscow was transformed into a sprawling, often drab, but well-planned modern city under the Soviets. Post-Soviet Moscow has seen renewed construction, including the Triumph-Palace (866 ft/264 m, 2003), which echoes Stalin's Gothic-influenced Seven Sisters skyscrapers and is the tallest building in Europe. The tallest freestanding structure in Moscow is the Ostankino Tower (1967), a broadcast tower and tourist attraction that rises 1,771 ft (540 m). Among Moscow's many cultural and scientific institutions are the Moscow State Univ. (founded 1755), the Russian Academy of Sciences (founded 1725 in St. Petersburg and moved to Moscow in 1934), a conservatory (1866), the Tretyakov art gallery (opened in the 1880s), the Museum of Oriental Cultures, the State Historical Museum, the Agricultural Exhibition, the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), the Plekhanov Economic Academy, the Moscow State Law Academy, the Moscow Energy Institute, and the Peoples' Friendship Univ. of Russia (for foreign students). Theaters include the Moscow Art Theater , the Bolshoi (opera and ballet), and the Maly Theater (drama). Moscow is the see of a patriarch, head of the Russian Orthodox Church. The many large parks and recreation areas include Gorky Central Park, the forested Izmailovo and Sokolniki parks, and Ostankino Park, with its botanical gardens. The ornate subway system opened in 1935.

**History**

Although archaeological evidence indicates that the site has been occupied since Neolithic times, the village of Moscow was first mentioned in the Russian chronicles in 1147. Moscow became (c.1271) the seat of the grand dukes of Vladimir-Suzdal, who later assumed the title of grand dukes of Moscow (see Moscow, grand duchy of ). During the rule of Dmitri Donskoi the first stone walls of the Kremlin were built (1367). Moscow, or Muscovy, achieved dominance through its location at the crossroads of trade routes, its leadership in the struggle against and defeat of the Tatars, and its gathering of neighboring principalities under Muscovite suzerainty.

By the 15th cent. Moscow had become the capital of the Russian national state, and in 1547 Grand Duke Ivan IV became the first to assume the title of czar. Moscow was also the seat of the Metropolitan (later Patriarch) of the Russian Orthodox Church from the early 14th cent. It has been an important commercial center since the Middle Ages and the center of many crafts. Burned by the Tatars in 1381 and again in 1572, the city was taken by the Poles during the Time of Troubles (see Russia ). In 1611 the Muscovites, under the leadership of Kuzma Minin (a butcher) and Prince Dmitri Pozharski , attacked the Polish garrison and forced the remaining Polish troops to surrender in 1612. The large-scale growth of manufacturing in 17th-century Moscow, which necessitated an outlet to the sea, was instrumental in Peter I 's decision to build St. Petersburg on the Baltic. The capital was transferred to St. Petersburg in 1712, but Moscow's cultural and social life continued uninterrupted, and the city remained Russia's religious center.

Built largely of wood until the 19th cent., Moscow suffered from numerous fires, the most notable of which occurred in the wake of Napoleon I's occupation in 1812. Count Rostopchin denied accusations that he had ordered the blaze ignited to drive out the French. The fire was most likely accidentally begun by French looters and was fanned by fanatic patriots among the few Russians who had remained behind when Napoleon entered the city. Whatever the cause, the fire sparked an anti-French uprising among the peasants, whose raids, along with the cruel winter, helped force Napoleon's retreat.

Rebuilt, Moscow developed from the 1830s as a major textile and metallurgical center. During the 19th and early 20th cent. it was the focus of the zemstvo cooperative and Slavophile movements and became a principal center of the labor movement and of social democracy. In 1918 the Soviet government transferred the capital back to Moscow and fostered spectacular economic growth in the city, whose population doubled between 1926 and 1939 and again between 1939 and 1992. During World War II Moscow was the goal of a two-pronged German offensive. Although the spearheads of the German columns were stopped only 20 to 25 mi (32-40 km) from the city's center, Moscow suffered virtually no war damage. The city hosted the Olympic Games in 1980.

Due to inadequate public funds, Moscow's infrastructure suffered after the 1991 demise of the Soviet Union. Also, an increase in automobile ownership brought traffic congestion and worsened air pollution. The city, however, began to attract foreign investment and became increasingly westernized. In the 1990s its energetic mayor, Yuri Luzhkov, launched many ambitious reconstruction projects and by the end of the decade Moscow was experiencing a real-estate boom.