

FUN TIME: MOSCOW OPENS THE LARGEST AMUSEMENT PARK



Dream Island, the newly opened commercial complex and amusement park in Moscow, is as large as 140 soccer fields where much of the infrastructure is covered.

Respecting the Russian tradition of going big, Moscow has opened the country's largest amusement park. **The park, covering 300,000 sq. meters (equivalent to 140 football fields), also includes a shopping center, a natural park and an artificial lake with a sailing school.**

The park is a project that was first discussed already in Soviet Russia, but now Russia has made it possible thanks to the love of locals of theme parks like Disneyland.

The Hidden Obsession for Disneyland

Imagining the giant park founded by Walt Disney in Russian territory was always seen as delusional, and while the thawing of the Cold War made it possible for McDonald's and Starbucks franchises to open, Mickey Mouse never set foot on the country.

Since the times of Kruschev, Russia dreamed of opening an amusement park similar to Disneyland. Nikita Kruschev was enthusiastic about the idea of a Soviet-style Disneyland after visiting the US in 1959, but the toughest wing of the military and the communist party proposed that the park focuses on the cultural, scientific and educational achievements of the USSR, while still having a didactic and fun spin. Of course, the idea did not go further.

Boris Yeltsin also tried and failed. And after many years, Vladimir Putin was able to attend the opening of Dream Island. However, it should be noted that the project was not started by the Russian government, but by the city of Moscow, which donated the land, and funds from a private investor group.

Just like Orlando

While visitors get the feeling that the aesthetic mimics that of Disneyland, investors made sure to avoid any reference to the giant park in Orlando, Florida.

However, similarities cannot be ignored. There is no Elsa from Frozen, but there is an Ice Queen. Just like in The Jungle Book, visitors can find an Indian boy, a bear and a panther, but these have Russian names. There is also a Russian version of the children's novel Pinocchio, created by Italian author Carlo Collodi.

The amusement park has nine themed areas, of which five are dedicated to Russian animated characters and the other four to The Smurfs, Hello Kitty, Hotel Transylvania and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

The Largest Dome in Europe

At least one-third of the complex is covered with a transparent structure to give the feeling of being outdoors, but without having to endure the harsh cold weather of Moscow in winter.

To reach the amusement park, **visitors have to go through an artificial city that resembles neighborhoods in Moscow, London, Rome and Barcelona.**

The central square has the largest glass dome in Europe, with 8,600 square meters of glass that rise up to 35 meters. The park has 35 attractions, ranging from traditional carousels to roller coasters, and even the latest virtual reality games.

Dream Island, with an approximate investment of \$1.5 billion, expects to welcome 50 million visitors a year.

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