

You've Been in Russia Too Long When ... Part 2 (Photo Essay)

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A woman carrying a pile of cakes on Tverskaya Ulitsa. In Russia, you must throw your own birthday party. **Igor Tabakov**

Our [recent photo essay](#) titled "You've Been in Russia Too Long When ..." drew a strong response from readers, who shared their own observations about the quirks and difficulties that they have faced living in Russia.

Mixing readers' ideas with some of our own, we have compiled a second list. Here it is:

You've been in Russia too long when ...

1. You are not particularly startled by the sight of hordes of girls in wet clothing playing in fountains.



Young women splashing in a fountain on Manezh Square near the Kremlin walls. On hot summer days, children and youth are a common sight in the city's many fountains. (Photo: Vladimir Filonov / MT)

2. You stop taking baths at home when the hot water is turned off and go to the banya instead.



This street advertisement reaches out to Moscow residents who have been left without hot water. It reads, "Banya 50% Off, Only in August." (Photo: Vladimir Filonov / MT)

3. You do not trust metro escalators or lifts in 12-story apartment buildings.



A pair waiting for the elevator at a Moscow apartment building after a day of skiing. Probably anyone who has lived in Russia for a reasonable length of time has gotten stuck in a lift or on an escalator. (Photo: Dmitry Grishkin / Vedomosti)

4. You think Sovetskoye Shampanskoye (Советское Шампанское) is pretty good champagne.



Bottles of Sovetskoye Shampanskoye rolling off the production line. A staple at holidays since Soviet times, the sparkling wine has drawn the ire of French winemakers, who say the beverage cannot legally be named after the Champagne region of France. (Photo: Smart Money)

5. People on the street share their life stories with you without any prompting.



Pensioners chatting on a park bench. (Photo: Igor Tabakov / MT)

6. Your Russian mother-in-law is no longer nice to you.



An elderly woman waiting at a bus stop next to an advertisement. (Photo: Igor Tabakov / MT)

7. "Face control" becomes a regular word in your vocabulary.



These super-cool boys walking down Tverskaya Ulitsa, Moscow's main street, might make it past a night club bouncer in about 10 years. (Photo: Igor Tabakov / MT)

8. You can take a three-day trip without an extra change of clothes.



Businessmen navigating Lesnaya Ulitsa near Belorussky Station in the winter. Dirty streets might cause business travelers to think twice about whether they can get away with only one set of clothes on a trip. (Photo: Igor Tabakov / MT)

9. You never drink tap water.



Locals carrying fresh water back home from a spring in the Pokrovskoye–Streshnevo district of northwestern Moscow. (Photo: Igor Tabakov / MT)

10. You think it's normal for house repairs to be a permanent activity.



A worker refurbishing an apartment on Tverskaya Ulitsa. Heated arguments and violent fights have erupted in apartment buildings over neighbors whose renovations never seem to end. (Photo: Igor Tabakov / MT)

11. You have been bitten so many times that you cross the street to avoid encountering any loose dog.



Stray dogs napping in the warmth flowing from the Ulitsa 1905 Goda metro station. (Photo: Igor Tabakov / MT)

12. Tough guys on the street at night pay no attention to you anymore.



Young people walking along a railroad track in Moscow. The graffiti does not necessarily imply the fate awaiting people who pass under the bridge alone at night. (Photo: Igor Tabakov / MT)

13. You believe that your gas-pellet gun is a real weapon.



A mother trying to hail a gypsy cab with her two children near the Krasnaya Presnya metro station. (Photo: Igor Tabakov / MT)

14. You would never, ever, shake someone's hand across the threshold of your door without inviting them inside first



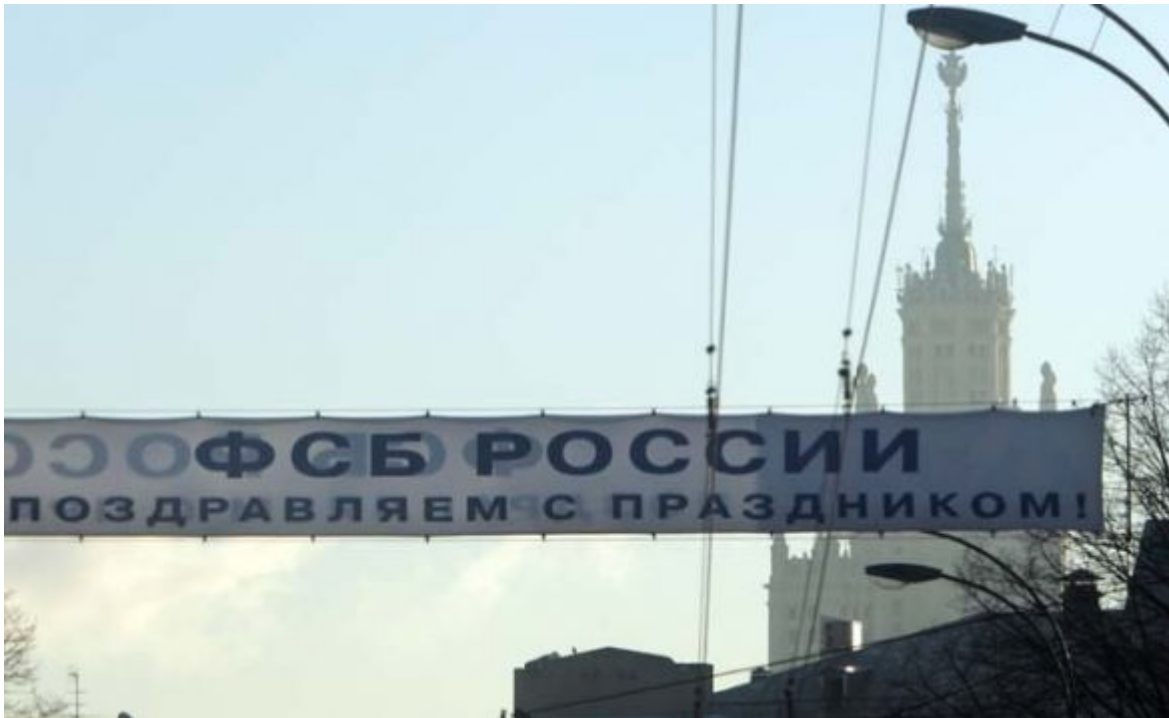
This hand advertisement looming over a no-entry sign seems to say it all about the Russian superstition. (Photo: Igor Tabakov / MT)

15. You no longer expect there to be any space in the trunk of any car for your luggage.



A driver finding that space is in short supply in the truck of his Zhiguli near the Sokol metro station. (Photo: Igor Tabakov / MT)

16. You throw your own birthday party every year.



Even the Federal Security Service is forced to throw its own party. This banner hanging across a Moscow street reads, "FSB of Russia: We congratulate you on your holiday!" (Igor Tabakov / MT)

17. You think "frost" is deep cold and you find winter in Tobolsk refreshing.



Moscow residents walking in a residential neighborhood on a winter day. (Photo: Vladimir Filonov / MT)

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