

Moscow's Booklover Bonanza

Novy Arbat is an open-air book fair

By [Alina Shubina](#)

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Anyone visiting Moscow and wandering around the historical center will, at one point or another, make their way west from the Kremlin and end up on Novy Arbat. As you walk along the busy street this summer, get ready to stumble onto a party: a festive row of wooden shopping stalls, cafes, and colorful bean bags, all taken up by people flipping through piles of books in their laps.

Don't worry that you're crashing a private party. You're at the Moscow Antique and Used Book Festival, where every booklover is welcomed with open arms. For three months a quarter-mile of sidewalk is transformed into a celebration of all things literary, with guest speakers, performances, and, of course, lots and lots of books to buy.

Visitors start off at the Public Library pavilion, where kids get to listen to fairy tales, learn

scrapbooking, and watch puppet shows, and adults can take part in a book exchange. Pick up anything that strikes your fancy, so long as you leave your own paperback for someone else.

If you're a true connoisseur, head straight to the Auction House. Bid on one of the rare items donated by Moscow collectors, and rest easy knowing all proceeds go to charity. Or, for a more hands-on adventure, take a crack at bookbinding: by the time you leave the festival, you'll be able to create your very own rare volume.

It wouldn't be a book festival without books, and there are dozens of antique book shops along the entire block. Representing various Moscow booksellers, the festival also offers a huge selection of second-hand volumes at amazing prices. Poke around the stacks — you never know what treasures you'll unearth. Most of the selection is in Russian, but the vendors will be all too happy to point you towards the foreign-language shelves. Many also stock great collections of art books in various languages — for those, you don't really need to read at all.

Whether you're in the mood to pick up a book and chill on a bean bag with some blinis, or simply want to check out the children's literature art exhibit as you walk past, this Book Fair is a fun way to spice up your journey down Novy Arbat.

The fair is open daily noon to 8 p.m. until Oct. 21.

13-21 Ulitsa Novy Arbat. For more information in Russian, see the [city site](#).

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