

Zapadnaya Dvina from Panorama to Bella

New Belarusian-Latvian tourist project to enhance attractiveness of region

By Sergey Golesnik

Recently, much has been spoken of the Zapadnaya Dvina as a river uniting nations. The Belarusian-Swedish *Panorama Dvina-Daugava* project, aiming to revive the famous 'from the Varangians to the Greeks' route, will be complete next year. However, the Dvina will continue to be given attention as a promising tourist destination. This was high on the agenda in Polotsk, which recently hosted an international conference dedicated to trans-border tourism as well as a presentation of the Belarusian-Latvian *Bella Dvina* project.

"The first project was financed by Sweden; now, the EU is giving us funding," Igor Zagrekov, chief specialist of the Polotsk City Ex-

ecutive Committee's Department for Physical Culture, Sports and Tourism (the leading partner of the *Bella* project) tells us. "Both projects pursue similar goals: to create a common trans-border tourist space between Vitebsk, Polotsk and Daugavpils."

The *Bella Dvina* project (Bella stands for Belarus-Latvia) will rely on the rich experience of the *PAMINA Rhine Park*, operational within the German-French trans-border area. Seven districts of the Vitebsk region and Polotsk are to acquire well-equipped tourist camping sites, information centres and information points.

The major participants of the project — Polotsk City Executive Committee, Latgale Regional Development Agency and the Interac-



Interesting travel along the Zapadnaya Dvina

tion Institution of the German-Belarusian House in Belarus — have already signed a partnership agreement. The creation of an Internet

site and issuing of information brochures, alongside participation in exhibitions held in Minsk and Riga, are the first plans.

Chagall and Malevich influence businessmen

By Diana Kurilo

Vitebsk Modern Art Centre Museum attracts attention of businessmen and financiers from Austria, the UK, Turkey and Poland

Vitebsk's Modern Art Centre Museum recently presented a project dealing with prominent artists Marc Chagall and Kazimir Malevich at the Belarus Investment Forum in London. The pair, who worked in Vitebsk in the first post-revolutionary years, were later recognised as avant-garde founders. The museum has been seeking partners to restore its folk art school, founded by Chagall and Malevich. The project envisages the creation of a museum and the construction of an exhibition-business centre on the Zapadnaya Dvina River quay.

According to the Director of the museum, Valentina Kirillova, businessmen's interest has been stirred by the prominent names and the opportunity to develop a new model of tourist infrastructure at national and international level. Additionally, the artworks of contemporary painters would be promoted at the site. The museum is already preparing working meetings with potential partners in Vitebsk.

From all continents

By Galina Vecher

Over past decade, number of foreign students has more than tripled

This year, over 7,000 foreign students from 83 countries (including those from Zambia, Argentina, Australia and the Maldives) are studying in Belarus.

Belarusian universities support partner relations with scientific organisations and universities from 57 countries worldwide as part of over 600 agreements, including those dealing with student exchange. The country's largest partners are universities in Russia, Poland, Ukraine, Germany and China.

The Concept of Educational Services Export Development has been approved as part of Belarus' collaboration with foreign countries; in particular, by 2010, such services should have grown over 1.5 times (on 2005) to reach \$7.11m. This is set to become a major part of the republic's foreign economic activities.

Belovezhskaya Pushcha expanding its protected territory

Belovezhskaya Pushcha — included on UNESCO World Heritage List — may enlarge its territory 16 fold

By Olga Kobyak

At the international *Belovezhskaya Pushcha: from Forest Area to National Park* scientific and practical conference (dedicated to the preservation of protected areas) it was announced that the Pushcha could grow to cover 80,000 hectares. General Director Nikolai Bambiza tells us that only a small part of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha — 5,000 hectares out of 160,000 within Belarus — is included on the UNESCO World Heritage List. This unique European forest is home to giant 44-50 metre tall firs and 42 metre tall pines, and has over 1,000 oaks aged 300-700 years, as well as 450-year-old ashes, 300-year-old pines and 250-year-old firs.

This year, UNESCO experts assessed the National Park's area at the invitation of Belarus and, in 2009, the Pushcha is to submit its proposal for including additional territories to the World Heritage List. Mr. Bambiza explains that these proposed territories are the oldest protected areas, where human activity is prohibited. They



Pre-New Year Pushcha

neighbour already enlisted territories.

The Belovezhskaya Pushcha is one of the oldest reserves in the world and gained World Heritage Listing by UNESCO in 1992; in 1993, it gained the status of a biosphere reserve. In 1998, it was named a key ornithological territory of global significance. It runs over 60km from north to south and from 10 to 50km from west to east, covering 163,505 hectares (20 per cent of which are reserved areas).

Girls from boys' dreams

By Marina Panaseva

If we believe that beauty will save the world, the *Interstyle* trade fair has come to Minsk's rescue

The Belexpo National Exhibition Centre has hosted the *Interstyle* trade fair. Young girls with doll eyelashes and bright hair and boys with unusual haircuts wandered through the perfumed aisles drinking in the latest innovations in perfumery, decorative and curative cosmetics, as well as facial, body and hair care products. Huge stands of manicure equipment were on show, along-



Inspiration rules at *Interstyle-2008* exhibition

side furniture, equipment and accessories for spa centres and beauty salons. Participants joked that 'a good bath can refresh your beauty'.

Master classes were given in how to use various pieces of equipment, lotions and potions, with visitors paying close attention — and, even, taking photos.

To develop professionally, it's vital to follow the latest innovations and trends — so beauty experts find the event invaluable. However, there was something interesting for everyone. Meanwhile, hair stylists competed to create hair 'ikebanas' with scissors, hair colour and spray — creating true works of art.

ALEXANDER RUZHECHKA