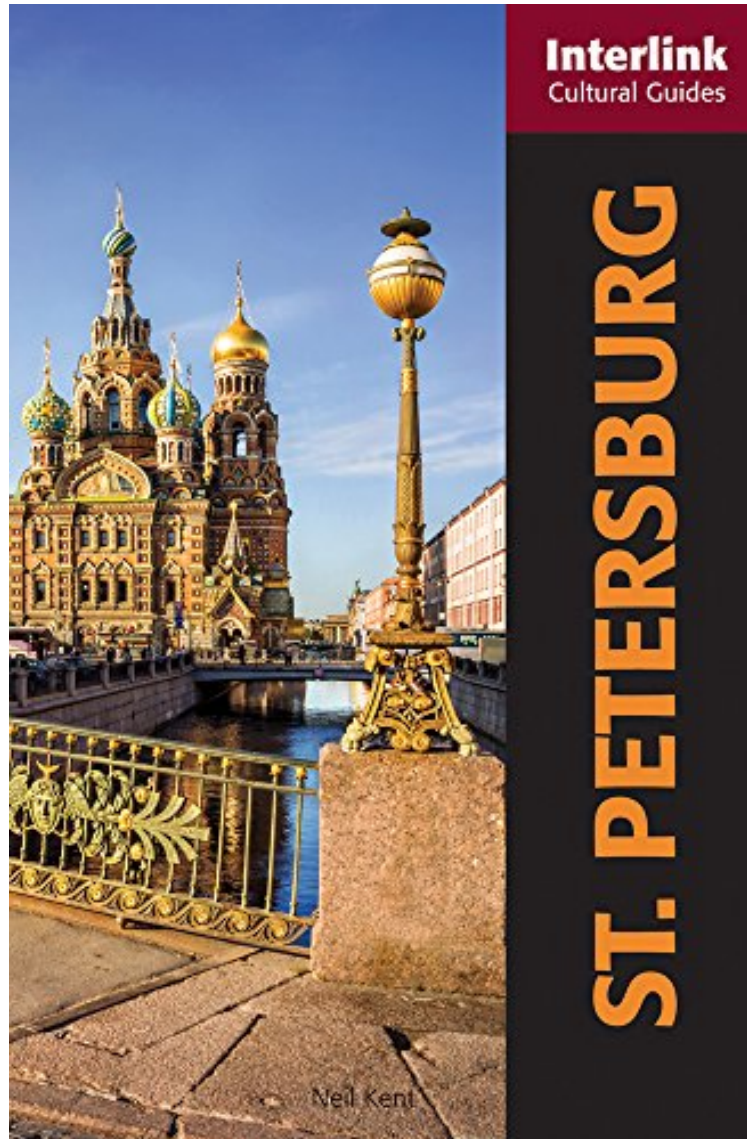


[Get free] St. Petersburg: A Cultural Guide

St. Petersburg: A Cultural Guide

Neil Kent

**Download PDF / ePub / DOC / audiobook / ebooks*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#6667351 in Books 2018-01-17Original language:English #File Name: 1566560462224 pages | File size: 27.Mb

Neil Kent : St. Petersburg: A Cultural Guide before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised St. Petersburg: A Cultural Guide:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Important Cultural CenterBy Greg PolanskyIn this extremely detailed cultural history of St. Petersburg Volkov succeeds in filling what he sees as a deficiency in histories written about the world's great cities. And by exploring St Petersburg's cultural history, Volkov has also written a history of Russia over the past three centuries. The book focuses mainly on literature, music, theater, and ballet. And in doing so,

Volkov shows how the arts in St. Petersburg affected all of Russia and in turn, at least during the pre-Soviet period, the rest of Europe and then affected the United States later on during the Soviet period. This book rewards those who already have some familiarity with Russian history. And there are even more rewards if you have read a lot of the authors discussed and listened to a lot of the classical music composers the author discussed as well. It's a good idea, for the music anyway, to listen to some of the pieces while reading the book. The book is quite long and extremely dense. Know what you're getting into when picking up this book. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. important book By Nilla Anyone interested in Russian culture or urban culture in general will find this book rewarding. Petersburg is an interesting city in its own right but its impact on literature and music cannot be underestimated. The author is remarkably knowledgeable and deeply serious about his subject as well as articulate and engaging. I really learned a lot from this book and highly recommend it. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Anil C. Great Book

St Petersburg is one of the world's most beautiful cities. Most of its baroque and neoclassical palaces and churches are modelled on those of Italy and France, in turn inspired by the temples of classical Greece and Rome. Yet it is situated on a swamp, a location so insalubrious that it took the lives of the thousands who built the city. Founded by Peter the Great on land seized from Sweden in 1703, the Tsar made it into his new capital and Russia's gateway to Europe. Guarded by the Kronstadt Fortress, it was never conquered and under his successors the city achieved a splendour and cultural richness that vied with other European capitals. After the Golden Age of the 1830s when Pushkin and Lermontov wrote some of Russia's greatest literature, famine and war would undermine political and cultural life, and the Revolution led to calamity. Nonetheless, in the dying embers of the old regime, music, art and theatre all thrived, creating a Silver Age which brought the city renewed renown. During the Soviet period, the city, renamed Leningrad, fell into a Cinderella-like slumber, with Moscow taking primacy. Yet it survived both wars to enjoy a revival after the fall of the Soviet Union under its old name. Neil Kent considers the extraordinary history of St Petersburg along with its political, religious, cultural and social dimensions, rich in stories and anecdotes from its various periods. Its musical heritage is unrivalled: Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov are all associated with the city. A walk today through the streets and courtyards evokes the world of Dostoyevsky who immortalized its violent underbelly in his 1865 novel *Crime and Punishment*. He turned to Orthodoxy for inspiration, as does the modern city today. This revival has been multifaceted, its pictorial glories

From Publishers Weekly For the city Dostoyevski called "the most abstract and premeditated city in the whole world," artists were crucial to creating an identity and a mythos. In each of six impressive chapters, Volkov focuses on an era and on a typically Petersburgian art form of the time. From Peter the Great's imperial mandate impelling the city from the marshy Baltic coast in 1703, Volkov moves on to Gogol's and Dostoyevski's cynical anti-Petersburg writings; the passionate, European/Russian hybrid of Tchaikovsky and the Mighty Five (Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, Balakirev, Cui); the waxing sense of doom and the concomitant nostalgia of Anna Akhmatova and Alexander Blok; the emigre Petersburg created abroad by Balanchine, Stravinsky and Nabokov; Shostakovich's city, depleted by the Great Terror and pounded during the Siege of Leningrad; and finally, to the beleaguered postwar city of Joseph Brodsky. This is a complicated strategy involving a tacking back and forth to pick up numerous themes and biographies and there are, perhaps inevitably, redundancies. Also Volkov, a musicologist by training and a devotee of literature by inclination (his previous books include *Joseph Brodsky in New York* and the controversial *Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich*) is sketchier in his treatment of the visual arts. But this well-researched and deeply personal book gives a complex, subtle view of the city's haughty and tortured history. Photos not seen by PW. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Volkov, a Russian emigre musicologist, offers an absorbing overview of the traditions and individuals responsible for the great cultural evolution of St. Petersburg (Leningrad) and its ever-shifting mythos?from Pushkin to Chagall, from Gogol to Stravinsky and on to the cultural diaspora of the late 20th century. Particularly noteworthy is Volkov's ability to place culture within a clear historical framework, since St. Petersburg's cultural impulse has been repeatedly assaulted by Russia's tormented history. The reader will be moved by the genius of Akhmatova and Brodsky, Tchaikovsky and Mussorgsky, and the other St. Petersburg icons whose 150-year parade makes strikingly clear that despite floods, famine, wars, and purges, the contributions of one city represent the very core of Russian culture. In contrast to this readable work, Katerina Clark's scholarly *Petersburg: Crucible of Cultural Revolution* (LJ 8/95) covers a much narrower time period. Highly recommended for most academic and public collections. ?Mark R. Yerburgh, Fern Ridge Community Lib., Veneta, Ore. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist The "window to the West," St. Petersburg has attracted many of Russia's greatest artists, from Pushkin to Dostoyevsky to Akhmatova in literature, from Tchaikovsky to Prokofiev to Shostakovich in music, Balanchine in dance, and Repin in painting. After the cultural obliteration of the Communist era, Volkov aims to restore these and dozens of other figures to their rightful places, and this book marks an important initial step in reviving the city's artistic heritage. In their day, names now famous weren't the recipients of unalloyed adulation: an artistic press, relatively free and certainly vibrant, was supported by the

abundance of whatever new poem, opera, symphony, or canvas was on offer. Volkov weaves together contemporary critiques and the testimony of the artists themselves in tracing what he calls the city's "conceptual development." He certainly does capture the distinctive personality of the great metropolis as he frames its artists' travails within the political and military storms that lashed them in this century--revolutions, purges, sieges and all. A sweeping embrace, Volkov's review of three centuries should touch Russophils in general and lovers of music and dance in particular.

Gilbert Taylor