**Moscow**

In March of 1918 Moscow became the capital. The supreme organs of state power and many central institutions moved to Moscow from Petrograd. It was extremely difficult in the years of the Civil war to see the image of a new city in deserted and unheated Moscow.

The rapid growth of Moscow's population occurred during the twenties and thirties, in 1931 work began to develop the Master Reconstruction Plan of Moscow, a plan which many people abroad considered to be vain dream.

The city grew and changed, the streets and squares became wider, the wooden houses at the former outskirts disappeared. But the buildings of cultural and historical value were carefully preserved.

Today, as ever, the Kremlin with Red Square is the centre of Moscow. Here Moscow began more than eight hundred years ago. The city has grown so vast since, the present and the past are so closely interwoven that one can not embrace it all at once.

Certain villages, distant country estates have become the new residential areas of Moscow. New dwellings rose not only within the established parts of Moscow but new neighbourhoods took shape in Tyoply Stan, Orekhovo-Borisovo, Yasenevo.

In the past century Moscow went through the invasion of Napoleon's army that forced all Muscovites to leave their city. Moscow was burned down but was never conquered. Once the enemy was driven away. its inhabitants set about building Moscow anew.

Nowadays in erecting new buildings, the Muscovites take care to preserve its unique monuments. Its architectural ensembles have been formed over the centuries and each generation added features of its Lime to the appearance of the city.

The city has thousands of libraries, schools, kindergartens and nurseries, hundreds of clubs and cinemas, dozens of higher educational establishments, theatres, museums and stadiums.

Neither words nor convincing figures, however, can give a complete idea of what had been done in Moscow. One has to visit Moscow plants and factories, to stroll about its streets and squares, to see its new residential areas.

The Kremlin is now both a piece of living history and an ensemble of masterpieces of Russian architecture.

The first thing that meets the eye is the redbrick walls of the Kremlin, reinforced by 20 towers, five of which are also gates. The Kremlin's towers are unique in appearance. Built in 1485, the Tainitsky Tower is the oldest. The highest of them is the Trinity Tower which is 80 metres tall.

The Bolshoi Theatre was opened in 1825. The theatre seats 2,150. The company has more than 900 members.

The State Tretyakov Gallery. The gallery's works of Russian fine arts range from unique mosaics and icons of the 11th century to works of contemporary artists. The gallery is named after great Russian Connoisseur Pavel Tretyakov who left his collection as a gift to the nation. It has become one of the most popular places of interest in Moscow since then.