

To Sochi – in the wake of the sun!

Sanatorium Belarus — for rest and health

By Natalia Pisareva

In our impetuous times, it's difficult to relax — even when we know we are supposed to be on holiday! With many facing tough financial times, it's hard to find a break that won't cost an arm and a leg. However, a true oasis is at hand in the form of Sanatorium Belarus — situated in a quiet suburb in the centre of Sochi.

I'm dreaming of visiting this city on the Black Sea's coast — in addition to France and Italy, which boast the same mild subtropical climate. From the point of view of culture, it's a dream. Don't be surprised at finding film stars walking the red carpet during the *Kinotavr* festival — or members of the Club of the Merry and Witty. In a few years' time, the Olympic flame will burn here, lighting the way for new Olympic stars.

Sanatorium Belarus is ever growing and expanding, with an 'apartment-hotel' being constructed nearby — the latest trend in Europe, which allows people to buy flats which can be rented out to tourists.

The sanatorium itself is rather large, with 428 rooms, a villa and two camp grounds. Its beautiful arched facades, marble stairs and columns and high ceilings are a sight to behold. The rooms were restored last year and now boast new

furniture. Almost all have balconies with eye-catching views and fifteen hectares of the spa are occupied by the dendrological garden featuring 350 species of plants. Some simply like to walk along the well-groomed lawns, admiring the Italian pines, deodars, magnolias, oleanders and camellias.

Additionally, there are dedicated walkers' routes — with many advised to walk a certain number of miles each day by their doctor. Swimming, taking a sauna, physical training and mechanotherapy are also common recommendations. There is also a gym, as well as tennis, volleyball and basketball courts.

Tourists come to the sanatorium all year round — to improve their health and immunity and restore their sense of calm (lost due to our daily stresses at work).

Matsesta hydrogen-sulphidous is known for its medical benefits, while the hydropathic establishment offers iodine-bromide, pearl, vertical and other baths, alongside Charcot's, circular and rising douches. It's also possible to receive a hydro paraffin body and hand massage, an ozokerit and paraffin treatment, inhalations or tasty phyto-tea. Most importantly, every day, a bus takes people to Matsesta, where the waters help those with painful joints; many see a miraculous change in their condition.



Having a rest at Sanatorium Belarus is comfortable, interesting and beneficial for your health

Each room in the sanatorium's Primorsky building has a balcony with an amazing view opening from the eighth floor. Just 150 metres away is the beach — one of the most beautiful in the city. Its granite cubes, wooden terraces, new boat station and a revamped site for air baths are a delight. A restaurant is soon to open by the sea — to worthily rival the local café. Continu-

ing the gastronomical theme, tasty meals are provided within your package of stay three times a day. When you first arrive, the doctors set an individual diet for each guest; you select dishes for the coming days from a list.

...Although many people are still convinced that it's almost impossible to find a place at this wonderful spa — it's not true. My own

call brought me a booking for August-September (July has almost fully sold out). Prudent tourists booked as far back as in February and made a good choice. This spa stands up well against its competitors and has kept its prices the same as they were last year. The 'velvet' season is ahead, when Sochi is at its best — especially, at the Sanatorium Belarus!

City remains significant through the centuries

Polotsk to join Hansa Union of New Time

By Diana Kurilo

Delegates from Hansa cities meet in Veliky Novgorod, at the 29th International Hanseatic Days.

Alongside Polotsk, Dutch Groningen and Icelandic Stykkisholmur have also joined the New Hansa Union (revived in 1980). It unites those cities which used to be its members in the Middle Ages or had strong ties with Hansa. According to Vladimir Tochilo, the Chairman of Polotsk City Executive Committee, this international project encompasses 173 cities and will elevate Polotsk's status within Europe, while promoting international ties in tourism and business. Mr. Tochilo isn't excluding Polotsk's participation in Hansa projects. Moreover, the Hansetag (meeting of mayors of member cities) plays an important role in the pan-European economy.



Ancient Polotsk among most beautiful cities in Belarus

The Hansa Union was founded by German merchants in the 13th century to promote trade in Northern Europe. It operated according to unwritten laws until the 18th century, uniting over 200 cities within the North Sea

and Baltic Sea regions. Polotsk housed a Hansa Union bureau — as proven by documents. The New Hansa Union unites large and small cities from 15 European states, with Russia being represented by 12 cities.

Wonders appear to never cease

By Nadezhda Radivon

New 'Nature's Seven Wonders' tourist route developed in Minsk region

The route will cover picturesque sites in the Myadel and Vileika districts — such as legendary Lake Naroch, the River Viliya, Vileisky water reservoir and the island-castle in Myadel Lake. Here, you can see the remains of an 11th century urban fort, which are thought to have once belonged to Polotsk Duchy's border fortress. In addition, there is a unique weeping fir tree and blue lakes. Moreover, tourists will be able to visit rural guesthouses.

The seven wonders of the Minsk region have been chosen by Internet voting on the official site of the Belarusian Republican Youth Union's Minsk Regional Committee. The project began on November 19th, 2008. The 34 most interesting nature sites from around the Minsk region were suggested, with votes col-



Lake Naroch

lected. It is hoped that the process will promote respect for our traditions, culture and natural heritage among young people, in addition to promoting tourism.

The selected natural wonders included Klets's 400 year old oak tree (23m high, with 3-4 people needed to embrace it) and Borisov's boulder. The Earth's most ancient inhabitant — merostomes from the Eurypteris genus (whose remains have been found in Soligorsk) — was named the absolute winner. The find is 25cm long and is over 370 million years old. Over 1,200 people voted for this wonder.