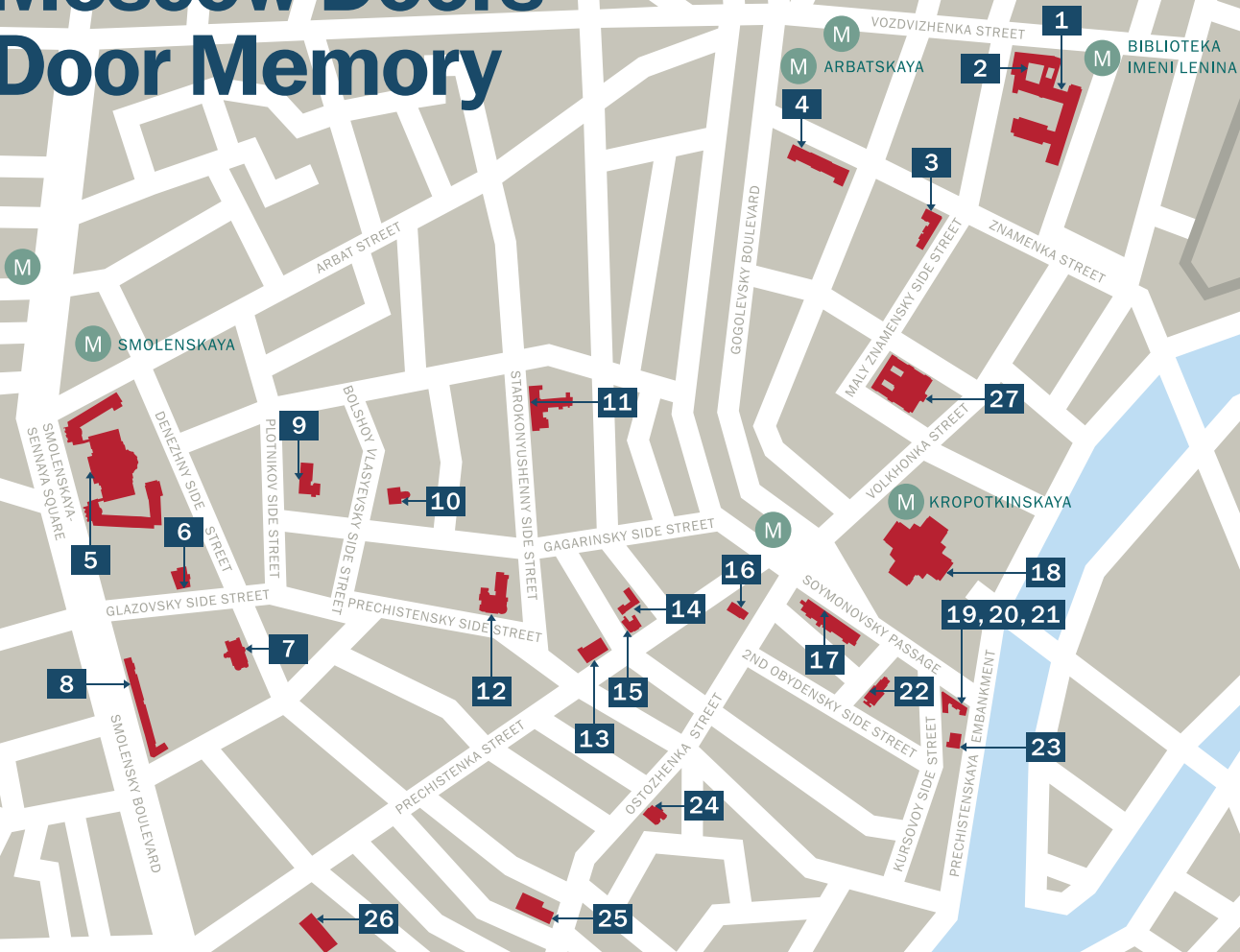


Moscow Doors

Door Memory





1.

Russian National Library

VOZDVIZHENKA ST., 3/5, BLDGS. 2, 3, 4

The Russian National Library is the country's principal library. It contains 45.5 million items. The library building was designed by the outstanding Soviet architects Vladimir Shchuko and Vladimir Gelfreykh.



2.

1 What should the entrance to one of the largest libraries on the earth look like? Undoubtedly, it should be stately; after all, this is the pride of the country. This is why the bas relief over the entrance features flags and Soviet symbols.

2 The door leading into the Museum of the Book, where extremely rare old publications are kept. Over the entrance is an enormous portal in the Neoclassical style, decorated with fine ornamentation.



3.

House of Arafelov

MALY ZNAMENSKY SIDE ST., 11/11, BLDG. 1

A rectangular door in a semi-circular doorway. Above it is an entablature; and on each side are pilasters... Classical forms will never go out of fashion. The slender, elongated semi-column in the middle of the door and concealing the gap between the two door panels looks interesting.



4.

4 Ministry of Defence

ZNAMENKA ST., 19

What a grand door this is! It must be three times bigger than an ordinary house front door. It is not immediately possible to tell where the door panels finish: the door seems to be a single piece. This stately door is a good example of Soviet Neoclassicism.



5.

5 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

SMOLENSKAYA SENNAYA SQ.,
32-34/57/23, BLDG. 1

This luxurious door, framed by a monumental portal with bas reliefs, has been entered by many who have decided the course of events of worldwide importance. Go up to the main entrance: the doors are embellished by the coats of arms of what used to be the Soviet republics, the date '1951' incorporated in ornamentation, and oak and bay leaves.



6.

6 House of List

GLAZOVSKY SIDE ST., 8, BLDG. 1

A creative manifesto for the new architecture of the 20th century and a masterpiece by Leon Kekushev, this is one of the first houses in Moscow which can be described as 'Art Nouveau'. Look more closely at the mosaic panel depicting the underwater world: it displays the monogram 'WW', which is reason to think that its author was the famous architect William Walcot.



7.

7 Mansion house of Berg

DENEZHNY SIDE ST., 5, BLDG. 1

A spruce portal, skillful carving on the door... And where does this door lead? Into one of the first houses in Moscow to have had electricity installed. The 'electric ball' which was held here was remembered for a long time: under the unfamiliar electric light the ladies, as Vladimir Gilyarovsky wrote, looked like "badly painted dolls".



8.

8 Residential building, 1940

SMOLENSKY BOULEVARD, 22/14,
ENTRY No 7

A portal of polished black stone frames the monumental door. Notice the well-preserved original coffered sidelights. This rich and interesting décor was designed by the well-known Soviet architect Viktor Kokorin.

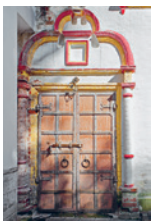


9.

9 Turn-of-the-19th-century apartment house

PLOTNIKOV SIDE ST., 10

Look at how the decorative profile of the door panel has been transformed: the classical division into four parts remains, but the lines have become curves in a butterfly shape. In the 'Art Nouveau' era flowing, curved outlines were preferred to straight and abrupt ones.



10.

10 The Church of Vlasy in Staraya Konyushennaya sloboda

BOLSHOY VLASIEVSKY SIDE ST., 8, BLDG. 1
(IN THE COURTYARD)

This handsome portal could only have been created in Old Russia: it is in the Naryshkin Baroque style – a distinctive, Russian architectural phenomenon dating to the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th centuries. Over the course of time, the door has been replaced more than once; the present door is a recreation of the one which stood here in the 17th century.



11.

11 Gymnasium of I. and A. Medvednikov

STAROKONYUSHENNY SIDE ST., 18

This arched door sunk into the doorway was created more than 100 years ago to a design by well-known architect Ivan Kuznetsov. The handle, which has been rubbed until it shines, is authentic and, unlike most handles in such cases, has never been replaced.



12.

12 The Mansion house of Mindovsky

PRECHISTENSKY SIDE ST., 6/1, BLDG. 1

A Neoclassical portal decorated with sidelights and moulding in the form of flowers. This is a simple and apparently unremarkable door. However, its threshold was crossed by people who decided the course of World War II – Joachim von Ribbentrop, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs and Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain.



13.

13 House of Matveeva

PRECHISTENKA ST., 14/1, BLDG. 1

If you wish your architectural composition to be elegant, then adding columns is an almost fail-safe way of achieving this. The half-columns on both sides of this doorway give this entrance to a 19th-century house an undeniable refinement.



14.

14 2nd Special School for Artillery

PRECHISTENKA ST., 12/2, BLDG. 8

The original door to this building has not survived, but the 1930s portal is of such monumentality that it makes this school entrance impossible not to notice. The portal's rich decoration – the combination of pink and white and the rhombi and cornices – convincingly contrasts with the simple concrete wall.

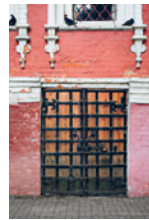


15.

15 State Pushkin Museum

PRECHISTENKA ST., 12, BLDG. 1

Some doors need portals or at least architraves for their compositions to be complete, but this door is wonderful as it is. Also very fine is this house from the beginning of the 19th century, built to a design by the outstanding architects Domenico Gilardi and Afanasy Grigoriev.



16.

16 Palace of Golovin (Red Palace)

PRECHISTENKA ST., 1/2

The massive door owes its presence in this place to US president Nixon: in anticipation of Nixon's visit to Moscow in 1972 the authorities started demolishing dilapidated buildings; behind them, they found a 17th-century palace in the Naryshkin Baroque style. The way the building looks now is the result of restoration.



17.

17 House of the clergy of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour

SOYMONOVSKY PASSAGE. 7, BLDG. 1

At first sight, everything here is simple. But look closer: can you see the play with geometric shapes? The door is divided into three panels; the glazed pieces are triangular, square, and semi-circular, and on the top wooden panel are circles.



18.

18 Cathedral of Christ the Saviour

VOLKHONKA ST., 15

In Moscow it would be difficult to find doors more majestic or impressive than these! The monumental portals are embellished by sculptures on religious themes. Can you see the figure of a dove (a symbol of the Holy Spirit) on the tympanum?



19.

Apartment house of Pertsova

KURSOVOY SIDE ST., 1

One of the most famous buildings of early-20th-century Moscow, this apartment block brings together techniques taken from the 'Art Nouveau' and Russian Revival styles (artist: Sergey Malyutin; architect: Nikolay Zhukov). All the doors of this house are different – as is only to be expected since it was conceived as a house for artists and needed to be individual and striking.



20.

19 Sergey Malyutin, a fine Russian painter, came up with the idea for the famous matryoshka and... this interesting hexagonal door topped with a kokoshnik [corbel arch] with a depiction of the fairytale Sirin bird.



21.

20 The brickwork of the wall, the wood carving on the door panels, and the fanciful ornamentation on the colourful majolica panel: every part of this portal has its own pattern.

21 What an interesting shape the artist has given this majolica architrave! The door itself is set deep in the wall and the wooden pattern on its panels imitates fabric.

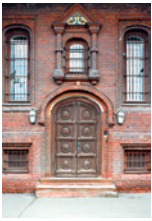


22.

22 The Church of the Prophet Ilya Obydenny

2ND OBYDENSKY SIDE ST., 6/3, BLDG. 1

What an elegant porch topped by a golden onion dome! The entrance to this 18th–19th-century church is situated on the other side, and you should definitely go in so as to see 'Unexpected Joy', the miracle-working icon of the Mother of God.



23.

23 The Tsvetkovskaya Gallery

PRECHISTENSKAYA EMBANKMENT 29, BLDG. 1

Behind these amazing doors once lay true treasures – a collection of more than 1800 works of art. This house was built in the style of an Old Russian terem [palace] to a design by the artist Viktor Vasnetsov, author of the facades of the Tretyakov Gallery.



24.

24 Mansion house of Kekusheva

OSTOZHENKA ST., 21, BLDG. 1

This house entrance is a well-integrated composition in which each detail has been designed with great care. The house was designed for his family by Leon Kekushev, one of the best architects working in the 'Art Nouveau' style in Moscow.



25.

25 Moscow Council for Orphanages

OSTOZHENKA ST., 36

Its spiral columns and alternation of profiled surfaces with fanciful carving make this a complex, picturesque doorway... Here the Russian Revival style reproduces the decorative language of the 17th century.



26.

26 House of Golokhvostov

PRECHISTENKA ST., 33/19, BLDG. 2
(IN THE COURTYARD)

This door, which is certainly more than a century old, is in a fairly dilapidated condition. Certain parts of it have been lost, along with the steps which used to lead up to it... However, it retains its charm.



27.

27 Pushkin State Museum of Fine Art

VOLKHONKA ST., 12

Look at the main entrance to this museum, which was built to a design by architect Roman Kleyn (1898–1912) in the Neoclassical style. Professor Ivan Tsvetaev, whose idea it was to create this museum as a temple of the arts, explained the way in which the doors of ancient Greek temples are arranged as follows: “The temples received their illumination through the entrance door and through the aperture over the door.” This bronze door was made in accordance with the above principle.

Door of apartment house →
at Volkhonka, 14
(the building itself has not survived)

Photos from the 1930s

Look carefully at these two historical photographs and you will see how the appearance of this building changed after the cast iron canopy over the main entrance was dismantled.

