

The Saviour's (Spasskaya) Tower

Spasskaya tower was built in 1491 by Piero Antonio Solari and was called Frolovskaya, because it was located near the Church of Frol and Lavr. Only in 1658 it was renamed the "Spasskaya" tower, when the icon of Spas Nerukotvorniy was placed above the gates of this famous tower. In turbulent times, the tower was a kind of trap for enemies. If the enemy penetrated into the archers, iron bars were lowered and the enemy was locked in a stone bag. He was fired from the upper gallery of Sagittarius.

On the facade of the tower there are holes through which the chains for lifting and lowering a special wooden flooring of the bridge were passed, and in the passage of the gate there were grooves on which a metal lattice walked. How do you think, how high is it? (answers...) Including the star it is 71 metres high, at first it was 2 times lower but after in 1624- 1625 Christopher Galoway and Bazhen Ogurtsov built over the tower a many tiered top in the Gothic style. Here is a photo of Spasskaya tower in different years.

Look at the top before there was a two-headed eagle, but now on its place there is a red star. There are the same stars (instead of the eagles) on Troitskaya, Nikolskaya and Borovitskaya towers. People replaced the eagles because none of them was an old monument as they were made of copper so it was necessary to change it regularly. Now look at these gates. They have their own name- Holy gates. They were considered Holy gates, and through them it was forbidden to ride a horse, and the men who passed through these gates, had to take off their headgears in front of the image of the Saviour, lighted by lampadas. Those who did not obey this rule had to make 50 prostrations. The image of the Savior of Smolensk prayed sentenced to death criminals who were executed on the frontal place. There is a legend connected with the icon of the Saviour. In the middle of the XVII century on the Central provinces passed plague epidemic. She bypassed the city of Khlynov, and there were rumors that the cause is the miraculous image of the Saviour, who prayed for the townspeople. After Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich found out about it, he ordered to deliver the icon to Moscow. The image was delivered by a procession in 1648. After the Bolsheviks came to power, the gate image and the icon of the Saviour itself were lost. However, in June 2010, the iconographer Dmitry Vinokourov wrote an exact list of the famous miraculous icon. Initially, the Spasskaya tower had an English clock. They have been made in 1625 under the leadership of English mechanics Christopher Galloway. But in 1705, by decree of Peter I, the clock was redesigned in accordance with German traditions – with a dial for 12 hours. In 1770, the English clock was re-installed, they were found in the faceted chamber. Since 1770, the clock some time played the German melody " Ah, my dear Augustine." Modern chimes were performed by the brothers Nikolay and Ivan Butenop in 1851-1852 years and installed it on 8-10 tiers Spassky tower. Since that time the chimes performed at noon and 6:00 "March of the Transfiguration Regiment", and at 3:00 and 9:00 - hymn "If our Lord is famous in Zion" Dmitry Bortnyansky, which sounded over the red square until 1917. Modern watches weigh 25 tons and are driven by three weights weighing from 160 to 224 lbs. In four hours the dial diameter is 6.12 m, digit height - 72 cm, length-clockwise - 2,97 m, the minute - 3.28 m. They give birth two times a day.

That's all what we wanted to tell you. We hope that you were interested.

Thank you for your attention.

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Troitskaya Tower

The Troitskaya Tower the highest Kremlin tower (it's 80 meters high) and the second most important tower of the Kremlin (after the Spasskaya Tower), so you definitely need to know where it is located.

This is a 17th century map of the Kremlin (the guide is holding a map)

Can anyone show on the map where the Troitskaya Tower is located?

[answers]

It's here! [I point at it] So here's an interesting fact: today, this is the only tower with a bridge, but you can clearly see on this map that there were other bridges in the 17th century, as well! [I point at some of the bridges on the map].

But there isn't any water here, so why do we need a bridge? According to the map, a river called the Neglinka used to flow here. Do you know what happened to it?

[answers]

It has been channeled underground and the Alexander Garden is where the river used to flow.

Because of the bridge, enemies were expected to attack the Kremlin from this side. That's why this tower had to be defended very carefully. Over there [I point at a gatehouse of the tower and then at an 18th century painting] you can see a gatehouse. Who can guess how it could help to fight off attackers?

[answers]

As you can see, before they reached the Troitskaya tower, attackers would have to pass through the Kutafia Tower, so the defenders would first shoot at them from the Kutafia Tower. [I show all of that on the 18th century painting] But if the attackers managed to pass through the Kutafia Tower, they would be shot at from the Troitskaya Tower's gatehouse. And finally, if they managed to get into the Troitskaya Tower, they would be locked in it [I point at the Troitskaya Tower on the painting]. The tower is large enough to hold almost any number of attackers!

Now, what does the name of the tower mean? The Russian word Troitsa [Троица] means The Holy Trinity. So why did they give it the name Troitskaya? Can you guess?

[answers]

There was a mission church of a great monastery known as the Troitsko-Sergievskaya Lavra opposite this tower. And the tower was named after the monastery.

Take a good look at the top of the tower. [I point at the details I'm speaking of]. Doesn't it look Gothic?

The tower had no Gothic elements when it was first built (in 1495 - 1499), it got this Gothic top only in 1685. Have there been any more changes since 1685? Of course. Can you name them?

[If there is no answer, say, "Any ideas?"]

[answers]

[It had a chiming clock up to 1810; it had a double-headed eagle, not a star at the top]

And now - thank you for your attention and goodbye!

By Volovich M., Sargina S.

Kutafya Tower

Kutafya Tower is the only surviving bridgehead fortification of the Kremlin

This kind of defensive bastion was always built beyond a fortress's walls, since it protected the bridge and gates. Behind the Kutafya Tower we can see the Troitskaya Tower – the highest of the Kremlin towers.

The Troitsky, or Holy Trinity Bridge spans the distance from the Kutafya to the Troitskaya (Holy Trinity) Tower – the Kremlin's highest tower. It's the main entrance for tourists to the Kremlin. The Kutafya Tower is just 13.5m (or 44 feet), while the Holy Trinity Tower is 80m (or 262 feet).

It was built in 1516 simultaneously with the Holy Trinity Tower. The low powerful tower was surrounded by water from all sides. The only entrance was across the bridge leading to the Troitskaya Tower. The only gate of the Kutafya Tower was firmly shut in case of danger and the tower became a formidable obstacle to those besieging the citadel. In the 16th and 17th centuries the water level of the Neglinnaya River was high enough that water surrounded the tower on all sides, thanks to a system of dikes.

The Kutafya Tower consisted of two defense levels; on the top level there were the loopholes. In 1685 it was decorated with the filigree top.

It is said that the tower got its name from its heavy, ponderous form: the word "kutafya" in Russian once meant "ugly, clumsy woman". In 1668 a causeway leading through the tower to the Troitskaya Bridge was built.

The building was thoroughly restored in the 1970s.

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