

St Petersburg
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PRESS RELEASE
Glen Ballis named new Brand Chef at Kuznya House

In May 2018, the team at Kuznya House will be joined by brand chef Glen Ballis, who has developed a new concept for the menu, with an emphasis on local and seasonal produce. Working alongside Ballis will be the promising young chef Ruslan Zakirov (*Dvor Dzen*, Kreutz Flat, *Polet Café*.) In the near future, visitors will also see updated menus at Volkonsky DELI and the street bar and grill.

“For me, Kuznya House is like an uncut diamond,” Ballis explains. “It has an enormous potential, but its form has yet to be defined. My task is to hone the style of the restaurant and build the team who can help support it. There are four basic principles that I want to bring to Kuznya House: discipline, creativity, fun, and a focus on quality produce. I love simple food with a twist. The main thing is to find the ‘essence’ of the restaurant and then find ways to improve upon it.”

Born in Australia, upon finishing culinary school, Glen Ballis worked eight years in his home country before moving to Southeast Asia, where he spent the next twenty years. Afterwards, he moved on to London, and then Moscow, where he worked as a chef at *Nedalny Vostok* before partnering with the Novikov Group to develop the restaurants Roni, Mr Lee, Mendeleev Bar and Lucky Noodles. Ballis later joined forces with Alexander Oganezov to open the restaurants Glenuill, Cutfish and Remy’s Kitchen, which hold the title for the most delicious and stylish restaurants in the capital. In addition to these ventures, Ballis owns three restaurants in Singapore, which are managed by his son.

The investor for Kuznya House and Volkonsky DELI is Alexandre Garese.

The new menu, including photographs of select dishes, can be found in the attached materials.

Kuznya House
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Hours of Operation:
Sun – Thurs: 12:00 pm – 11:00 pm
Fri – Sat: 12:00 pm until the last guests

facebook.com/kuznyahouse
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KUZNYA HOUSE

In today's world, restaurants and clubs have long since shifted their focus from what used to be the core of their primary functions – to feed and entertain. In an era of network connectivity and the ability to work from anywhere, places like Kuznya House can easily serve as a "second home" for their regulars. Here one could practically spend their whole day conducting meetings, hanging out, working, watching films or listening to music. Frequenting restaurants and cafés has become second nature for the new generation, and a cultivated appreciation for gastronomy has joined the ranks of hobbies like music, cinema or sports.

Over the course of its temporary programs and the development of a cultural and social scene in Petersburg, "New Holland: Cultural Urbanization" has earned a spot as one of the most important ventures in the city, as a center of attraction for the youth and creative forces not only from St Petersburg, but from the whole of Russia. This is how Kuznya House has come to live up to its name ("The Forge") and original function, as a place where ideas can be formed, developed and implemented. Not surprisingly, Kuznya House stands in as a second home for all the participants and guests of "New Holland: Cultural Urbanization." This idea of a "home base" reflects throughout the domestic accents permeating the interior of Kuznya House. Preserving the historical layout, the building is arranged in three parts: the ballroom, with a bar, stage and table seating that can be removed during concerts; the Chef's Table; and the tea parlor, with its large, luxurious sofas surrounded by bookshelves. In the summer Kuznya House operates a large terrace with a sweeping view of the island's lawn.

The design elements and materials that give Kuznya House its unique look were selected with help from a photoarchive capturing the apartment interiors of St Petersburg at the turn of the 20th century: elegant wooden panels; massive, lacquered cabinets and cupboards; decorative stoves, used to conceal the air ducts; comfortable couches with Pavlovo Posad motifs; rich velvet curtains, armchairs and ottomans; and vintage lighting fixtures made from brass and porcelain from the Imperial Porcelain factory. These elements are complemented by furniture from the 1970s, including sleek tables and chairs with leather cushions. Hanging in the ballroom and the Chef's Table are works by a young, but already well-known artist from St. Petersburg, Denis Ichitovkin, a master of new realism. Particular attention was paid to the sound and lighting solutions. Mounted along the historical vaulted ceilings is a mosaic of white tiles and 147 analog bulbs, which can be programmed together with the rest of the lighting for evening events. The sound columns and subwoofer have been designed in their own unique style.

Musical and intellectual nourishment is served up by Kirill Sergeev, also known as Kito Jempere, and a member of the band by that name. Sergeev has overseen every aspect of the musical programming for the project, from the background soundtrack to the invitation of international performing artists.

VOLKONSKY DELI

The delicatessen – or, more commonly, just "deli" – is the most popular form of café in any big city, which is why New Holland definitely needed one on the island. Here you can grab a quick and delicious bite to eat on the spot, gather supplies for a picnic on the lawn, or just pick up some prepared food to enjoy at home later. The famous Volkonsky Bakery has developed and refined the deli's concept specifically for "New Holland: Cultural Urbanization." The café is divided into two parts. The first hall boasts a large vitrine full of bread and pastries, baked on site in the Forge, to give visitors a taste of what has earned Volkonsky its international reputation. There is also a menu offering sandwiches, salads, soups and desserts. The second hall is outfitted with comfortable seating and a big, red-lacquered table, a velvet couch and towering Viennese bar stools.

While Volkonsky DELI and Kuznya House remain two different projects, their interiors suggest some stylistic overlap, as part of the unified design concept of the whole island, which was developed by Sergey Bukin and Lyubov Leontieva. Wooden wall panels, massive mirrors, lacquered furniture with metal and brass finishes – all of these recurring elements combine to create the architectural codes, permeating and shaping the space of all the temporary pavilions in the park.

THE FORGE ("KUZNYA")

This building was constructed in the middle of the 19th century by engineer Mikhail Pasypkin. It is widely believed that Peter the Great used this building as his forge – that is, the blacksmith's shop – after metalworking tools were found in the woods around the neighboring Galerny Dvor. It is this building that has also suffered the most damage over the years, which is why, from the moment New Holland Development signed the investment contract, they made it a priority to restore and protect the building, even as the remaining restoration work was still in the process of getting the necessary approvals. For a little more than three years, the Forge (or "Kuznya") underwent extensive renovation work repairing the brick vaulted ceilings and façades; removing and replacing the roof entirely; installing wooden window and door frames; and adding a stone staircase, with cast-iron railings. The building has been adapted for its new function, with a system of modern wiring, ventilation, and other necessary amenities. Both façades are adorned with cast-iron canopies, propped up on stately iron legs. For the latest chapter in the history of New Holland, the former forge is home to two ventures: the restaurant and club, Kuznya House, and the delicatessen Volkonsky DELI. The interiors were designed by St. Petersburg-based architects Sergey Bukin and Lyubov Leontieva (Ludi Architects), while the concept was developed by New Holland. The Forge opened in December 2016.

NEW HOLLAND: CULTURAL URBANIZATION

In 2010, New Holland Development, an affiliate of Roman Abramovich's company Millhouse, LLC, won the tender for the restoration and renovation of New Holland Island, with the goal of creating a mixed-use complex that will serve as one of the epicenters of cultural life not only for St Petersburg, but for Russia as a whole. To help determine the concept and creative direction of the island's development, Millhouse turned to the Iris Foundation, a non-commercial initiative for the support and advancement of contemporary culture and art, launched by Daria Zhukova. This collaboration resulted in "New Holland: Cultural Urbanization," a fresh approach to the restructuring and modernization of the territory, a monument of cultural and national historical significance. Following the success of the seasonal programs, the project investors decided not to proceed with the original plan to clear the territory to construct a new building. Instead, they chose to organize a full-fledged city park, complete with a modern and convenient infrastructure, which each and every person could find his or her place. The island continues to host cultural programs as well as grand-scale civic initiatives. Future plans for the development of the territory include not only commercial enterprises, but also cultural and educational institutions, research laboratories, and exhibition spaces, whose programming will be overseen by emerging specialists. "New Holland: Cultural Urbanization" helps recruit a team of architects, designers, and urban planners, as well as provide the cultural content for the island's programming and participate in the selection of partners and operators. In August 2016, the first phase of the project came to completion, with the launch of New Holland's park zone, and the island begin to operate all year long. As of now, three historical buildings have been restored: the Forge, the Commandant's House and the Bottle.

New Holland: Cultural Urbanization
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