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**MARKET PROFILE**

## Russian Market

### Main Holidays Celebrated in Russia

February 2012

## 1<sup>st</sup> of January / New Year Day

### DESCRIPTION

- Most popular holiday in Russia because during Soviet times religion was almost prohibited and Christmas was not celebrated.
- It is a family holiday, most people celebrate it at home or the place of their close relatives, friends.
- Main attributes of New Year celebration are New Year tree, Champaign, inviting an actor or a friend who plays the role of Farther Frost for kids.
- New Year parties are usually organized before New Year at work, at schools, at kinder gardens.
- There are quite many various performances for kids (plays at theatres, ice shows).
- Normally kids get sweet presents at such shows, plays since the present is included into the cost of ticket.

### TYPICAL PRESENTS

- Many people buy rather expensive presents for their families (the type of present depends on the specific needs and preferences of family members).
- It is also quite typical to give smaller presents to friends, colleagues and small or big presents (depending on relationship) to business partners.
- It is a season of visiting places of one's relatives and friends since the holidays last for almost 10 days (Dec. 31 – Jan. 9).
- In case people do not have a special present for their friends, relatives it is a social norm to give chocolates, alcohol as a present.



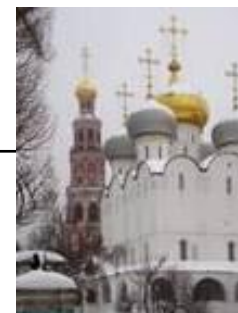
## 7<sup>th</sup> of January / Russian Orthodox Christmas

### DESCRIPTION

- The holiday is still less popular in Russia than New Year mainly because it was not celebrated during Soviet times.
- Religious people attend the service in the church on Jan. 6 or 7.
- The way of celebrating Christmas depends on family traditions and on how religious people are.
- For part of families it is one more occasion to enjoy holiday-like dinner with family and close friends.

### TYPICAL PRESENTS

- Normally no special presents are given for Christmas since all presents are prepared for New Year.
- In case people are going to the place of their relatives, friends on this day they can bring chocolate, alcohol as a present with them.



## 14<sup>th</sup> of February/ St. Valentine's Day

### DESCRIPTION

- It is a relatively new tradition: people started to celebrate the holiday not more than 10 years ago.
- Males and females who are in love give presents to each other and try to celebrate the day in a romantic way.
- We believe that the holiday is more popular with a younger audience (especially with teenagers and people in their 20s) than with people who are in their 40s or older.

### TYPICAL PRESENTS

- Can be anything – depending on needs, preferences of people and their financial possibilities.



## 23rd of February / Day of the Defender of the Motherland

- Originally it was Soviet Army Day.
- A few years ago official holiday name was turned into the Day of the Defender of the Motherland.
- Even when the name of the holiday was still Soviet Army Day there was a tradition to congratulate all males on this holiday.
- In a way it was equivalent of St. Valentine's Day for males: by giving presents to males females showed that they love them (presents can be given to husbands, boyfriends, sons, male colleagues).

- Can be anything – depending on needs, preferences of people and their financial possibilities.



## 8<sup>th</sup> of March/ International Women's Day

### DESCRIPTION

- Russian people started to celebrate 8<sup>th</sup> of March during Soviet times.
- It is interesting to note that although originally it was intended for emphasizing equal rights and social role of females eventually it became the holiday of femininity and Spring (since it is celebrated at the very beginning of Spring).
- By congratulating females on this day males emphasize that females are the better half of the society, that they make the world better, wish them to always remain attractive etc.
- Congratulating females on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March is almost a must (males congratulate their wives, girlfriends, daughters, mothers, female colleagues; females can congratulate each other as well).
- Certain companies give corporate presents to females working for them on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March.

### TYPICAL PRESENTS

- Can be anything – depending on needs, preferences of people and their financial possibilities.
- We assume that most wide-spread presents are jewelry, perfume etc.
- Giving flowers to females on this day is a social norm. Flowers are an addition to the main present or the main present itself – depending on financial possibilities of males.



## Easter

### DESCRIPTION

- Although religion was almost prohibited during Soviet times, most people still celebrated Easter by painting eggs, baking Easter cakes and going to the cemetery instead of church to pay tribute to their dead relatives and celebrate Easter there.
- Nowadays Easter is celebrated in a more active and religious way.
- Some people attend service on the eve of Easter which lasts almost all night long.
- Having a holiday-like lunch with family, close friends is rather typical.
- There is 7 week fasting (abstinence from food of animal origin for religious purposes) which precedes Easter.
- For those people who keep fasting (there are no so many of such people in Russia) Easter lunch is a real indulgence.

### TYPICAL PRESENTS

- Normally people do not give each other big presents, in most cases no special presents are given.
- While visiting one's relatives, friends people normally bring painted eggs, Easter cakes or boxes of chocolates with them.



## 1<sup>st</sup> of May / International Labour Day

### DESCRIPTION

- People like it because it is a day off which is nice to have at the beginning of May when it is warm.
- Many people can invite friends for barbeques at their datcha/ summer cottage BUT it is just an occasion to enjoy dinner, fresh air, company of friends and NOT a real celebration of the holiday itself.

### TYPICAL PRESENTS

- No special presents are given for the 1<sup>st</sup> of May.
- In case people come to the place of their relatives, friends to have lunch/ dinner with them they can bring chocolates, cakes, alcohol as a small present.



## 9<sup>th</sup> of May / Victory Day

- Celebrating of Victory Day (in World War II) depends on family traditions.
- Holiday-like lunch/ dinner is typical for part of families, especially for those where there are veterans of World War II.

- No special presents are given for the 9th of May.
- Bouquet of flowers are given to veterans of World War II.
- In case people come to the place of their relatives, friends to have lunch/ dinner with them they can bring chocolates, cakes, alcohol as a small present.



## 1<sup>st</sup> of September/ Day of Knowledge/ Learning/ Beginning of the school year

### First Sunday of October – Teacher's Day

DESCRIPTION	TYPICAL PRESENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>At the beginning of school year and normally on the eve of Teacher's Day (E.g. on Friday or Saturday) pupils bring presents to their teachers.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Flowers, boxes of chocolates.</li><li>Giving more expensive presents depend on traditions of specific school, class, teacher.</li></ul>



