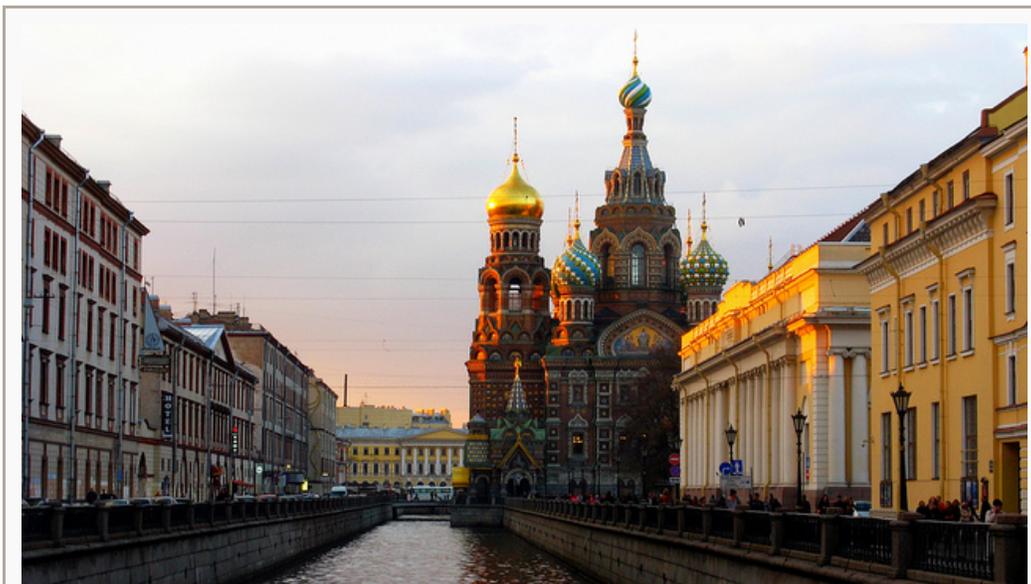


The best bookshops in Saint Petersburg, Russia

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Julia Leikin is a PhD candidate at UCL's School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies, conducting research for her dissertation in Russia. In this post she talks us through the best bookshops in **Saint Petersburg, Russia**. If there's a bookshop that you think other students and academics should visit when they're undertaking research or visiting a city for a conference, find more information about contributing below.



St. Petersburg at Sunset, taken from Nevsky Prospekt. Credit: [J. Elliott](#) CC BY 2.0

The Russian writer Nikolai Gogol wrote a magnificent short story about Nevsky Prospekt, declaring that there was nothing finer in Imperial St. Petersburg as it was – and still is – the fairest of the city's thoroughfares. Chances are, as an academic visiting Saint Petersburg, that you will find yourself on Nevsky at the city's main library, sightseeing, or just passing through.

You will likely see the glassy globe atop the old Singer Company building at number [28 Nevsky Prospekt](#) in the centre of Saint Petersburg, which now houses [Dom Knigi](#) (House of Books). This is a large general interest book store, although the entire bottom floor has sections devoted to different disciplines, including history, military studies, ethnography, anthropology, economics, and law. The store is busy and crowded, but often hosts lectures by local authors. It is certainly worth a visit, although your academic interests might be better served elsewhere.

Further down at number 66 Nevsky Prospekt is the [Knizhnaia Lavka Pisatelei](#) (Writers' Book Stall). It has a great history, and even its antiquated name is a nod to the origins of the Saint Petersburg book trade in books stalls of the Gostiny Dvor (or "Guest Court," a Russian marketplace). The Soviet Writers' Congress of 1934 passed a resolution to establish the Writers' Book Stall here, and visitors might enjoy the Old Soviet or Soviet-style propaganda posters painted on the walls. This is now a modern, free flowing space holding a selection of Russian and world literature, literary and cultural criticism, cinematography, poetry and many other subjects. It also pays tribute to its historical antecedents of the Russian and Soviet Literary Funds, dedicated to supporting writers with two shelves given over to Saint Petersburg's local writers. There is also a lithograph printing press in the back where visitors can make their own prints of some of the city's iconic views.

Around the corner from the Writers' Book Stall, along at 15 Fontanka Canal, is the charming and eclectic [Poriadok Slov](#) (Word Order). One of two locations for this independent bookshop, this location has that cozy, eclectic feeling with bookshelves along the walls and display tables piled with books throughout the single room. In addition to its

selection of modern, post-modern and classical theory, history, and cultural criticism, it features an active calendar of lectures, presentations, meetings, and other events bound to be of interest to its visitors. A list of these events can be found in its website, albeit only in Russian.



Finally, only a few streets down, at 57 Liteinyi Prospekt, there are two bookstores of interest. [Podpisnie Izdaniia](#) (Subscriptions) is a sleek, elite bookstore with a wide selection of literature, literary criticism, philosophy, theology, history, local history, and guidebooks, as well as a selection of stationery, Moleskine and Leuchtturm notebooks, calendars, and postcards. There is also a very affordable WiFi café, where you can sit and read a book or two.

Just two doors down, also on Liteinyi Prospekt, is [Akademkniga](#), a used bookstore chock-full of old Soviet editions of books on a wide range of subjects as well as invaluable reference collections. The books are sold at bargain prices, but more importantly, many of the books they trade in are out of print and generally unavailable anywhere except the library or other second-hand shops. Happy hunting!

Julia Leikin is an alumna of LSE (MSc in International Relations, 2006). She is currently a PhD candidate at UCL's School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies, conducting research for her dissertation in Russia.

Do you have a favourite bookshop? If there's a bookshop that you think other students and academics should visit when they're undertaking research or visiting a city for a conference, then now's your chance to tell us all about it.

As part of a new weekly feature on LSE Review of Books, we're asking academics and students to recommend their favourite two or three bookshops in a particular city, with the aim of building an exciting online series for our book-loving community of readers the world over.

Bookshops could be academic, alternative, foreign language, hobby-based, secret or underground institutions, second hand outlets, or connected to a university. We'd like to cover all world regions too.

If something comes to mind, we're looking for around 100 words per bookshop, detailing why this place is a must-

see. Our editorial team can then find suitable photos and links to accompany the piece, though you're welcome to supply these too. We only ask that you focus on just one city or region, and two or three bookshops within it.

Email us now if you'd like to contribute: lsereviewofbooks@lse.ac.uk

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