

Moscow removes giant Louis Vuitton suitcase

30th November, 2013



Russia's government will remove a large building in the centre of Moscow. The building looks exactly like a brown Louis Vuitton suitcase. It is nine metres

high and 30 metres long and is covered in Louis Vuitton's famous logo. It also has two giant Russian flags running down one side. The luxury goods maker built it for a 6-week exhibition of Louis Vuitton luggage. The exhibition was going to open on December the 2nd to mark the 150-year anniversary of the company. A spokesperson from Louis Vuitton said everyone at the company was disappointed. The company had planning permission to make the building and Moscow building inspectors visited it many times before the builders finished it.

The giant suitcase became very unpopular with ordinary Muscovites. Many people could not understand why the city agreed to build it in Moscow's famous Red Square. A member of Russia's Communist Party said Red Square was "a sacred place for the Russian state". The suitcase was built next to the tomb of Lenin. A Moscow pensioner said: "This is an embarrassment for our country. All we think about is business, business, business." He said it was shocking because most Russians could never afford to buy a Louis Vuitton product. The building may be moved to another part of Moscow. The money collected from the exhibition will go to a Russian children's charity.

Sources: RIA Novosti / The Moscow Times

Writing

Compare and contrast a \$2,000 Louis Vuitton bag and an ordinary \$20 bag.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

government / suitcase / logo / flags / luxury goods / exhibition / anniversary / planning / unpopular / ordinary / famous / sacred / embarrassment / business / afford / charity

True / False

- a) The Louis Vuitton building looks like a giant bag. T / F
- b) The building is nine metres long. T / F
- c) The building was built for Louis Vuitton's 150th anniversary. T / F
- d) Louis Vuitton had permission to build the building. T / F
- e) Most people in Moscow loved the building. T / F
- f) The building was put next to where a famous Russian man was buried. T / F
- g) An old Russian man said the building embarrassed Russia. T / F
- h) The money from the exhibition will go to help homeless people. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. remove | a. senior citizen |
| 2. exactly | b. upset |
| 3. giant | c. normal |
| 4. disappointed | d. huge |
| 5. inspectors | e. take away |
| 6. ordinary | f. have the money for |
| 7. understand | g. checkers |
| 8. pensioner | h. totally |
| 9. afford | i. raised |
| 10. collected | j. comprehend |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What springs to mind when you hear the company 'Louis Vuitton'?
- b) Would you like to have some Louis Vuitton products?
- c) What do you think of an exhibition hall that looks like a giant suitcase?
- d) Is Moscow right to remove the building?
- e) Would you like to see a Louis Vuitton exhibition?
- f) Why are Louis Vuitton products so popular?
- g) What do you know about Louis Vuitton?
- h) Why do you think Louis Vuitton built the building in Moscow?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. remove a large building | a. for our country |
| 2. It also has two giant Russian flags | b. visited it many times |
| 3. mark the 150-year | c. from the exhibition |
| 4. The company had planning permission | d. running down one side |
| 5. building inspectors | e. another part of Moscow |
| 6. Many people could not understand | f. to make the building |
| 7. a sacred place | g. anniversary |
| 8. This is an embarrassment | h. in the centre of Moscow |
| 9. The building may be moved to | i. why |
| 10. The money collected | j. for the Russian state |

Discussion – Student B

- Why do you think the building was unpopular with people from Moscow?
- Was it wrong of Louis Vuitton to put the building in Red Square?
- Was the building more for publicity than for an exhibition?
- Why would the building be an embarrassment for Moscow?
- Is it wrong to always think about "business, business, business"?
- Is the world becoming overtaken by brands?
- Should the exhibition go ahead if money goes to a children's charity?
- What questions would you like to ask the boss of Louis Vuitton?

Spelling

- Russia's mgvennoter
- like a brown Louis Vuitton acutseis
- reecvod in Louis Vuitton's famous logo
- a 6-week itnhbxeiio
- everyone at the company was dtpdaoepinis
- Moscow building pictrosens
- The giant suitcase became very lpouuaprn
- rydrinao Muscovites
- a edcsra place for the Russian state
- This is an snemaemtbrars for our country
- never oadfrf to buy a Louis Vuitton product
- a Russian children's ahciytr

Answers – Synonym Match

| | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. e | 2. h | 3. d | 4. b | 5. g |
| 6. c | 7. j | 8. a | 9. f | 10. i |

Role Play

Role A – Louis Vuitton

You think a Louis Vuitton exhibition would be the most interesting. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their exhibitions. Also, tell the others which would be the least interesting of these (and why): a United Nations exhibition, a Mickey Mouse exhibition or a Ferrari exhibition.

Role B – United Nations

You think a United Nations exhibition would be the most interesting. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their exhibitions. Also, tell the others which would be the least interesting of these (and why): a Louis Vuitton exhibition, a Mickey Mouse exhibition or a Ferrari exhibition.

Role C – Mickey Mouse

You think a Mickey Mouse exhibition would be the most interesting. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their exhibitions. Also, tell the others which would be the least interesting of these (and why): a United Nations exhibition, a Louis Vuitton exhibition or a Ferrari exhibition.

Role D – Ferrari

You think a Ferrari exhibition would be the most interesting. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their exhibitions. Also, tell the others which would be the least interesting of these (and why): a United Nations exhibition, a Mickey Mouse exhibition or a Louis Vuitton exhibition.

Speaking - Exhibitions

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the exhibitions you most want to see at the top. Change partners often.

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| • Louis Vuitton | • BBC |
| • Apple | • McDonald's |
| • Ferrari | • Mickey Mouse |
| • The United Nations | • Levi's |

Answers – True False

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | F | b | F | c | T | d | T | e | F | f | T | g | T | h | F |
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.