

Saturday, March 17, 2012

Subject: Metro for Tourists!

Here's a money-making idea for Kyivites looking after Tourists this summer,

1) Buy them a period ('season') ticket for the Metro, charging them a modest 500% mark-up on the cost price.

2) Send them off on a 'treasure hunt', armed with questions such as:

a) Taras Schevshenko station is so named to see if you can transliterate from the Cyrillic give you a chance of getting his name right in your own language commemorate a hero who stood up to the Tsars, and whose cottage was spared by Hitler and re-roofed by Stalin. give the friendly Metro militar the chance to practise her/his English by instructing you how to get from the station to said cottage.

b) Volksana sounds like a woman's name. Reasons for this are:

The Metro runs with greater reliability than the conventional trains, which go from Volksal station, which sounds like a man's.

This reflects the Ukrainian culture, where the women are even more responsible than men, and run strictly to time.

The received wisdom is that the name comes from Vauxhall in London

If that wisdom is correct, the burghers of Vauxhauill should be flattered by the comparison.

c) Teatralna station is noteworthy for its bas-reliefs. There are various stories about their meanings and best translations of the accompanying slogans:

Lenin declaiming "workers of Kyiv Unite, you have nothing to lose but your trains"

As above, but "brains"

Lenin again, but boasting of his skill as dance-band leader for the unsophisticated, gold-toothed pensioners who gather in the foyer above on Sunday evenings, and who seem happier than the citizenry in general.

The tombstone of an American diplomat heard rejoicing 'Gee, I didn't know I could get a McDonalds in Russia!'

Well, you get the general idea. And for prizes?

First A bowl of grandma's borsch, with smetana.

Second Two bowls of of borsch with Svetalna (who IS my grandmother).

enjoy!

Mike