

Script 1

Presenter: Today we are going to discuss one of Moscow's estates – Kuskovo.

Tatyana Smirnova, the museum's deputy director, will tell the story of this ancient estate.

Tatyana Smirnova: Kuskovo takes its name from the former 16th century village which Peter the Great awarded to Boris Sheremetyev, a general at the battle of Poltava. The new owner built a summer residence there. Later his son Pyotr Sheremetyev, an important member of the nobility at the Russian Court, turned his family estate into a residence which amazed his contemporaries with its splendour. Up to 25,000 guests would flock there for lavish celebrations...

Presenter: Oh, really?!. Is the place that huge?

Tatyana Smirnova: Yes, the area of the estate is about 32 hectares. There is a wood with a pond in front of the main palace... The architectural ensemble of Kuskovo estate contains the palace itself, three pleasure pavilions: the Dutch House, the Italian Villa and the Chinese Pagoda – and some other buildings. Baroque gardens and a landscape park are geometrically laid out in the English style near the Large Pond. There was also a Menagerie of birds and animals, the Orangery and the open-air Green Theatre...

Presenter: And the Main Palace?

Tatyana Smirnova: The Palace has been preserved. It's a one-storey building made of wood and painted pink and white. It was built by Argunov and Mironov in the Neo-Classical style in 1769-77. The dancing hall is the largest and most beautiful room in the palace. The whole interior looks very festive because of the white and gilded wall decorations, mosaic floors and crystal chandeliers...

Script 2

Presenter: So, as the whole ensemble has been preserved, you may come here with your family and **enjoy the beauty** of the place...

Tatyana Smirnova: Exactly! When you enter its grounds, you'll feel as if you were one of Sheremetyev's guests invited by the host to admire his wonderful estate. But not only that – although Count Sheremetyev had his mansion built as a recreational summer residence, he paid a great deal of attention to different art forms. Fortunately, today a great part of his **huge** collection of fine and applied art is displayed in Kuskovo. Among the **34,000** exhibits, there are **glass** and ceramic

items from **different countries**. Some of them are unique; like the melodious **grandfather clock**, which strikes every hour in the Italian Cottage. The old Orangery houses a Ceramics Museum, displaying a superb collection of 18th-, 19th- and 20th-century porcelain; ranging from the Egyptian dinner service of **Alexander I** to **plates and vases** commemorating the construction of the Moscow Metro. Among other statues decorating the ensemble, there is one of the **goddess Flora**, which stands on top of the Hermitage Pavilion. In the Dutch House, there are three **rooms** decorated in Delft tile. Moreover, the gabled Swiss Cottage was created by the famous stage designer, Nikolai Benois...