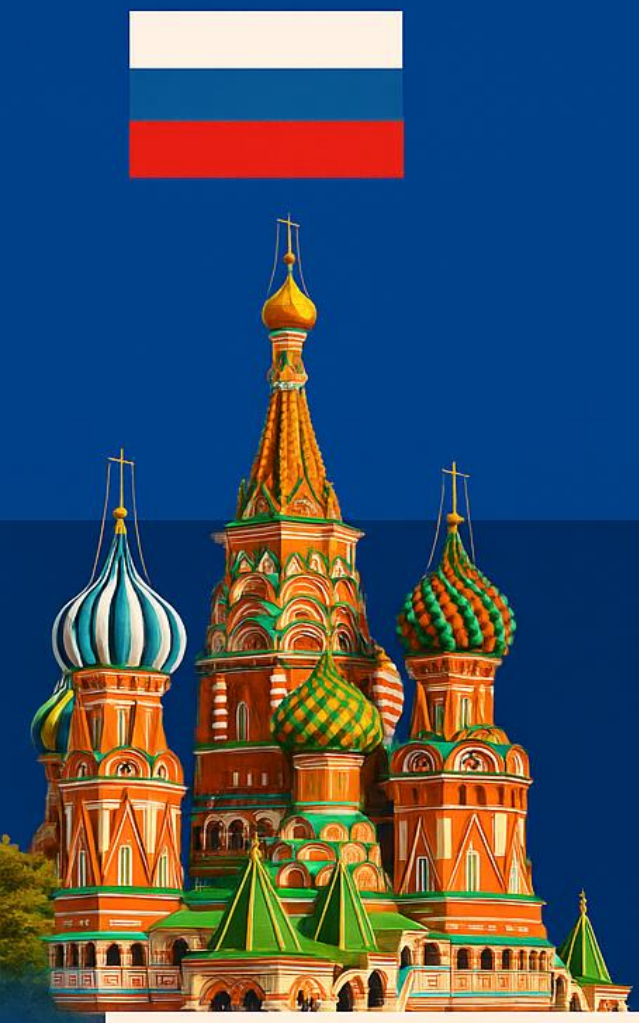




BETWEEN RUSSIA AND TÜRKIYE

A Personal Journey

Workbook for English Learners (B1 Level)

DARIA GRUDININA

WORKBOOK

Between Russia and Türkiye: A Personal Journey

Рабочая тетрадь по английскому языку (уровень B1)
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Аннотация

Рабочая тетрадь ***Between Russia and Türkiye: A Personal Journey*** *— это уникальное путешествие между языком, культурой и личными историями.*
Через реальные наблюдения, сравнения и эмоциональные тексты книга объединяет две страны — Россию и Турцию — глазами автора, прожившего этот опыт.
Здесь английский язык перестает быть академическим — он становится живым инструментом выражения чувств, размышлений и культурных открытий.
Каждая тема — это не просто лексика и грамматика, а часть личного пути: от бытовых наблюдений до философских размышлений о семье, идентичности и свободе.
Книга рассчитана на учащихся уровня B1, преподавателей, а также всех, кто интересуется культурой, психологией и современным подходом к изучению языка.

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UNIT 1 *Two countries, One heart*



Let me start by saying this: never in my life did I think I would end up living in Türkiye. It wasn't a country on my wish list. It wasn't on my «must visit» map. I had no particular interest in it at all.

About twelve years ago, when I was twenty-four or twenty-five, I went to Türkiye for the first time. It was a family vacation in the small beach town of Side — a very touristy spot, known for its all-inclusive resorts, wide sandy beaches, and peaceful vibe. It was a good, calm, classic family holiday. And that was it. Nothing more. Türkiye didn't steal my heart, didn't leave me craving to come back. I left with no plans to return. Years passed.

At thirty-one, I came back — not for vacation this time, but to look for a factory in Istanbul that could produce pieces for my clothing brand. And still... Istanbul didn't impress me. It didn't make me cry when I left, like I've seen people do on Instagram ***(currently restricted in Russia)***, writing poetic captions about how the city changed their soul. I didn't feel that. I didn't even find the factory I was looking for. I celebrated my birthday in a touristy restaurant that played Russian pop songs, served mediocre food, and had zero authentic atmosphere. I left disappointed and uninspired.

But life has its own plans.

Two years later, at thirty-three, I packed two suitcases, grabbed my dog, and moved to Türkiye.

This time — for real.

And something unexpected happened: I fell in love with Istanbul. Not blindly, not romantically — but deeply.

Türkiye is not a perfect country — just like no country is. It has its flaws, its challenges, its cultural differences and social issues. But it also has a unique beauty — a mix of architecture, nature, people, and history that wraps itself around you. I learned the language — not fluently, but enough to speak and live. I met incredible people. I worked as a head of sales department in a real estate agency, earned good money, and — most importantly — I felt happy.

Those three years I spent in Istanbul remain the happiest years of my life so far. Eventually, I left. I returned to Russia and lived in Sochi for a while. But then… Türkiye called me again. This time it was a job offer. I moved to Antalya. But I couldn't love Antalya the way I loved Istanbul. I couldn't settle. I couldn't find my rhythm. Even though, **technically, Antalya is more «immigration friendly»** than Istanbul, it just didn't feel like home.

Now, I'm back in Russia. And I've realized something important:

I've always loved Russia. I never wanted to leave it forever.

I wanted to travel — yes. To explore. To learn. But not to replace.

I love Russian people. I love our culture, our humor, our food. I love Soviet movies, songs, books. I love that unspoken connection we share — that feeling when someone just gets your joke, your references, your background, without having to explain. That's hard to find in a foreign country.

I love Russia not because I'm supposed to — not out of blind patriotism — but because my soul belongs here.

And yet…I also love Türkiye. I love Türkiye for what it gave me. For the version of me that it awakened. For the healing I experienced there. Because in Türkiye, I went through one of the most important psychological journeys of my life — my separation from everything I was taught to be. My real personal transformation.

So here I am now. Somewhere in between. My roots are in Russia. But a part of my soul will always belong to Türkiye.

Just a part.

IDIOMS

Home is where the heart is

Значение: Дом там, где сердце
Пример: I've lived in many cities, but Russia is still home. Home is where the heart is.
Перевод: Я жила во многих городах, но Россия все равно – мой дом. Дом там, где сердце.

A fish out of water

Значение: Чувствовать себя не в своей тарелке
Пример: When I first moved to Türkiye, I felt like a fish out of water.
Перевод: Когда я впервые переехала в Турцию, я чувствовала себя не в своей тарелке.

Vocabulary: Two countries, One heart

Слово/выражение	Перевод/ значение на русском языке
wish list	список желаний, мест, куда хочется поехать или что хочется сделать
must visit	обязательное для посещения
touristy	слишком туристическое место, рассчитанное на туристов, не аутентичное
all-inclusive resort	отель с системой «все включено»
to impress	впечатлить, произвести впечатление
authentic	аутентичный, настоящий, не подделка, не туристический
suitcase	чемодан
flaws	недостатки, изъяны
to settle	обжиться, прижиться, адаптироваться к месту
uninspired/inspired	без вдохновения / вдохновленный
to belong	принадлежать, ощущать, что ты на своем месте
soul	душа
healing	исцеление, восстановление
personal transformation	личностная трансформация, внутренние изменения
to awaken	пробуждать, будить, проснуться
blind patriotism	слепой патриотизм
root/roots	корень/ корни, происхождение, основа

Exercise 1: Translate from English into Russian
Переведите предложения на русский язык. Используйте значения из словаря.

1. Istanbul didn't impress me during my first visit.
2. This place feels too touristy — I want something more authentic.
3. I packed my suitcase and moved to Türkiye.
4. I never had this country on my wish list.
5. Those three years became a time of personal transformation.
6. I didn't feel like I belonged there.

7. He was uninspired and couldn't settle in the new city.
8. Love for Russia is not just blind patriotism.
9. The all-inclusive resort was perfect for a quiet family vacation.
10. I believe every soul needs a place for healing.

Exercise 2: Translate from Russian into English
Переведите предложения на английский язык, используя слова из словаря.

1. Турция никогда не была в моем списке желаемых мест.
2. Он не смог прижиться в новом городе.
3. Это было слишком туристическое место, без аутентичности.
4. Я собрала чемодан и уехала.
5. Это был период моей личностной трансформации.
6. Я чувствовала, что принадлежу России.
7. Мы остановились в отеле с системой «все включено».
8. Я не просто патриот — я действительно люблю свою страну.
9. Ему нужно было исцеление.
10. Она была вдохновленной и готова начать новую жизнь.

Exercise 3: Translate from Russian into English
Переведите предложения на английский язык, используя слова из словаря.

wish list / suitcase / flaws / settle / authentic / belong / impressed / uninspired / patriotism / healing

1. I packed my _____ and moved to a new country.
2. Every country has its own _____, and that's okay.

3. She felt _____ by the fake smiles and plastic atmosphere.
4. He couldn't _____ in such a noisy and fast-paced city.
5. The village was so peaceful and _____ — it felt like home.
6. I didn't _____ there, no matter how hard I tried.
7. The book didn't make it to my _____, but I still enjoyed it.
8. His _____ helped him survive the hardest times.
9. The atmosphere of that café truly _____ me.
10. After that heartbreak, I needed time and space for _____.

Grammar Focus — Past Simple Tense (Прошедшее простое время)

Когда мы используем Past Simple?

Мы используем Past Simple, когда говорим о действии, которое произошло в прошлом и уже завершилось. Мы часто указываем, когда это было:
I moved to Turkey in 2021. — Я переехала в Турцию в 2021 году.
We visited Istanbul last summer. — Мы ездили в Стамбул прошлым летом.

Формула:
Утверждение: подлежащее + V2 (вторая форма глагола)
Отрицание: подлежащее + did not (didn't) + V1
Вопрос: Did + подлежащее + V1

Примеры:
I visited Antalya last year.
She didn't like the food.
Did you meet anyone interesting?

Verb	V1 (infinitive)	V2 (Past Simple)
go	go	went
live	live	lived
see	see	saw

Exercise 4: Choose the correct verb form
Выберите правильную форму глагола

1. I (go / went) to Side with my family.
2. We (don't / didn't) speak Turkish then.
3. She (lived / lives) in Istanbul for three years.
4. Did you (find / found) a good apartment in Antalya?
5. He (travelled / travels) a lot during that period.

Grammar Focus — Present Perfect Tense
(Настоящее совершенное время)

Когда мы используем Present Perfect?

Мы используем Present Perfect, когда говорим о:
Опыте, который произошtл в жизни, но без указания, когда именно.
I have lived in Turkey. — Я жила в Турции.
(Когда именно — не важно. Главное — факт.)

Действии, которое началось в прошлом и связано с настоящим.
I have just moved back to Russia. — Я только что вернулась в Россию.
Результате, который важен сейчас.
I have visited many Turkish cities. — Я побывала во многих турецких городах.
(Сейчас у меня есть этот опыт.)

Формула:

have/has + V3 (Past Participle)
I / you / we / they → have
he / she / it → has

Примеры:

✔ I have lived in Turkey.
✔ She has never been to Istanbul.
✘ He have gone. → (Неверно!) → He has gone.

Exercise 5: Correct the mistakes (if any)
Исправьте ошибки, если они есть

1. I have been in Turkey last year.
2. She has visited Cappadocia.
3. We has just returned from Istanbul.
4. Have you ever eaten Turkish delight?
5. He have never lived abroad.

Exercise 6: Choose the correct tense
Выберите правильный вариант глагола (Past Simple или Present Perfect)

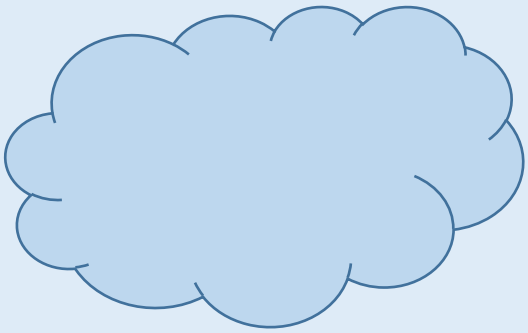
1. I (have visited / visited) Antalya twice.
2. She (has changed / changed) a lot since she moved to Türkiye.
3. We (have lived / lived) in Istanbul for three years before returning.
4. I (have never felt / never felt) so free before.
5. He (met / has met) me at the airport last summer.
6. I (have tried / tried) to find a factory, but I failed.
7. This city (has become / became) one of my favorites.
8. I (didn't think / haven't thought) I would enjoy it — but I did.
9. I (have started / started) learning Turkish recently.
10. We (have gone / went) to a restaurant that played Russian music.

Exercise 7: Complete the sentences using Past Simple or Present Perfect

1. I _____ (never / imagine) living in another country.
2. He _____ (arrive) in Türkiye three years ago.
3. I _____ (not find) a suitable apartment yet.
4. They _____ (go) back to Russia last year.
5. We _____ (have) many conversations about life abroad.
6. I _____ (fall) in love with Istanbul over time.
7. She _____ (not visit) any museums during her stay.
8. We _____ (eat) amazing food there.
9. I _____ (learn) how to communicate in Turkish.
10. My view of this country _____ (change) a lot.

WRITING TASK

Would you like to live in a foreign country? Why or why not?



Write a short essay (100–150 words) on the topic:

You can use the following structure:
1. **Introduction** — briefly state your opinion.
2. **Body** — explain your reasons (one or two), maybe give examples.
3. **Conclusion** — summarize and share your final thought.

Useful Vocabulary:

live abroad /culture / experience / homesickness /personal growth / different mentality / feel at home / comfort zone / language barrier / job opportunity

Tips:

- Try to use 3–5 words from the vocabulary list.
- Use linking words like **first, also, because, however, in conclusion**.
- Don't worry about perfection — focus on expressing your idea clearly.

REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on your personal experience. Answer the questions in English or in your native language — whatever feels more natural.

What do you love most about your country?
За что вы любите свою страну?

Name another country that you love. What do you love about it?
Назовите другую страну, которую вы любите. За что вы ее любите?

Tip: There are no right or wrong answers here. Just be honest and speak from your heart.

UNIT 2 ARCHITECTURE OF RUSSIA AND TÜRKIYE

A journey through walls, domes, and silent beauty



1. Russian Architecture: Styles and Identity

When people speak of Russian architecture, they often imagine the onion-shaped domes of St. Basil's Cathedral or the regal facades of the Winter Palace in Saint Petersburg. But the truth is — Russian architecture is much more than a handful of iconic landmarks. It is a deep, layered story told through time, style, climate, and soul.

Russian architectural heritage is a tapestry woven from different threads: from the austere elegance of pre-Mongolian churches in Vladimir and Suzdal, to the grand classicism of the imperial period, to the playful and ornate lines of Art Nouveau in Moscow. And then — the brutal monumentality of the Soviet era, followed by the daring glass-and-steel skyscrapers of modern Moscow.

In Saint Petersburg, you walk down Nevsky Prospekt and feel like you've stepped into a storybook. The perfectly aligned classical facades, the golden spires of cathedrals, the water glistening under romantic bridges — it's impossible to remain indifferent.

Moscow, on the other hand, has a different rhythm. More dynamic, more eclectic, a little more chaotic — it's a city where the past and the present collide in fascinating ways.

But Russian beauty doesn't live only in its capitals. In small northern towns, you'll find wooden masterpieces with lace-like carvings on windows. In the Volga region — powerful red-brick kremlins and cathedrals. Architecture here speaks the language of geography, religion, history, and the Russian spirit — quiet, proud, and enduring.

And as someone born and raised in Russia, I cannot help but feel a natural connection to these walls and rooftops. It's in my DNA. The feeling when you walk past a centuries-old church, or eat ice cream next to a giant Soviet monument — it's familiar, personal, nostalgic.

2. Turkish Architecture: History and Spirit

You cannot compare Russian and Turkish architecture. Not because one is better or worse — but because they come from entirely different worlds. Different religions, climates, histories, and cultural roots. That's what makes the comparison so fascinating.

Turkish architecture is a celebration of harmony — between East and West, old and new, spiritual and practical. Especially in Istanbul, the architectural landscape feels like a living museum. One moment you pass a Byzantine cathedral, the next — an Ottoman mosque, and then suddenly a modern café in a 19th-century European-style building.

There's a rhythm to it. A beauty in the unexpected contrast.

The Hagia Sophia — with its massive dome and quiet, almost mystical atmosphere — leaves you breathless. The Blue Mosque with its six minarets and soft blue tiles feels like poetry turned into stone. And then there's Süleymaniye Mosque — not just a building, but a soul with walls.

When I lived in Istanbul for three years, I often felt overwhelmed by the city's beauty. Not in a touristy way — but in a deeply personal one. I would walk through the narrow streets of Sultanahmet, breathe in the smell of coffee and roasted chestnuts, hear the call to prayer echoing through the air, and realize — this place was touching something ancient in me.

Yes, I am not Muslim. And yes, I always found more spiritual depth in Catholic cathedrals — the silence, the stained glass, the sense of vertical longing. But Turkish architecture moved me in a different way. It wasn't just religion. It was history. Warmth. Storytelling through arches and tiles and stone.

In Antalya, where I later lived, the architecture was more modern, more neutral. But even there — in the old town of Kaleiçi — you could still find pieces of the past: wooden Ottoman houses, ancient gates, Roman walls. Not as grand as Istanbul, but still charming.
Turkish architecture reminded me: beauty doesn't always scream. Sometimes, it whispers.

3. Personal Reflection: What Took My Breath Away

Architecture is not just about buildings. It's about memory. About how a place makes you feel, what it awakens in you.

When I think of Russia, I feel rooted. Grounded. Home. When I think of Türkiye — especially Istanbul — I feel enchanted. Uplifted. In love.
Each has its own magic. Russia speaks to my past, my roots, my childhood. Türkiye speaks to my growth, my transformation, my becoming.
I will never forget how I stood in front of Hagia Sophia, heart pounding, trying to grasp how much time had passed inside those walls. I will never forget how I first saw the golden domes of Saint Isaac's Cathedral under the pale northern sun.
I will never forget how I walked the quiet streets of Kaleiçi or the loud, pulsing avenues of Nevsky.
Because architecture — at its best — doesn't just tell the story of a country. It tells your story, too.
And in my story — both Russia and Türkiye live forever. Not as destinations. But as parts of my heart.

Exercise 1: Choose the correct answer (A, B, C, or D) based on the text.

1.What is one reason the author finds it hard to compare Russian and Turkish architecture?

A Both countries use the same materials

B They are very similar in style

C They come from completely different cultures and histories

D Turkish architecture is more modern

2. What is special about Saint Petersburg, according to the author?

A It is a city with only Soviet architecture

B It is full of modern skyscrapers

C It leaves no one indifferent with its beauty

D It is not very well preserved

3. What type of architecture does the author associate with Russia's North?

A Ottoman domes

B Concrete towers

C Wooden houses and fairy-tale style

D Classical porticoes

4. How did the author feel about her first visit to Istanbul?

A She immediately fell in love with it

B She found it completely magical

C It didn't leave a deep impression

D She got lost in the city

5. What makes Antalya different from Istanbul, architecturally?

A It has many more modern buildings

B It has fewer historical landmarks

C It is the capital of Türkiye

D It has more cathedrals than mosques

6. Which religious buildings most deeply impressed the author in the past?

A Orthodox churches in Russia

B Mosques in Türkiye

C Catholic cathedrals

D Buddhist temples

7. Why does Turkish architecture make a strong emotional impact on the author?

A Because of its bright colors

B Because it reminds her of childhood

C Because it's linked to food and everyday culture

D Because she prefers the Muslim faith

8. What does the author say about Moscow?

A It is more historical than Saint Petersburg

B It feels cold and unfriendly

C It is a modern city that still has history

D It has no architectural character

9. What does the author say about living in Istanbul?

A She felt like a tourist

B It was one of the happiest periods of her life

C She didn't enjoy her work there

D She had trouble adjusting

10. What general feeling does the author express about both countries' architecture?

A Frustration with modern styles

B Love and deep appreciation

C Confusion about the differences

D Indifference to visual design

VOCUBALARY

English word / Phrase	Russian Meaning
architecture	архитектура
diverse	разнообразный
landmark	достопримечательность
heritage	наследие
wooden architecture	деревянное зодчество
cathedral	собор
domes	купола
column	колонна
portico	портик
symmetric design	симметричный дизайн
avant-garde	авангард
monumental	монументальный
functional	функциональный
caravanserai	караван-сарай (гостиница для путешественников)
mosque	мечеть
minaret	минарет

English word / Phrase	Russian Meaning
blend of cultures	смешение культур
Eastern motifs	восточные мотивы
concrete	бетон
earthquake resistance	устойчивость к землетрясениям
preservation	сохранение
urban identity	городской облик
fairy-tale style	сказочный стиль
emotionally moving	вызывающий сильные эмоции
take your breath away	захватывает дух
historically layered	насущенный историческими слоями
modern skyline	современный городской пейзаж
to be inspired by	быть вдохновленным чем-либо
to be unimpressed	не быть впечатленным

Exercise 2: Переведите слова с английского на русский Используйте значения из словаря.

1. heritage
2. dome
3. blend of cultures
4. caravanserai
5. urban identity
6. earthquake resistance
7. wooden architecture
8. emotionally moving
9. take your breath away
10. functional

Exercise 3: Переведите слова с русского на английский

1. симметричный дизайн
2. купола
3. сказочный стиль
4. сохранение
5. мечеть
6. портик
7. бетон
8. современный городской пейзаж
9. восточные мотивы
10. быть вдохновленным чем-либо

Exercise 4: Вставьте подходящее слово по смыслу Выберите нужное слово из списка и вставьте в предложение

urban identity / minaret / fairy-tale style / avant-garde / take your breath away / concrete / preservation / mosque / unimpressed / historically layered

1. The old city of Istanbul is incredibly _____ — you feel centuries overlapping.

2. The Soviet _____ buildings are still found in many Russian cities.

3. The _____ of Russian wooden churches feels like something from a storybook.

4. Her eyes filled with tears — the cathedral was so beautiful it could _____

5. Many regions in Russia work hard on the _____ of historical sites.

6. A _____ rose above the mosque, pointing high into the sky.

7. He was completely _____ by the modern buildings — they felt cold and flat.

8. The Blue _____ is one of the most iconic buildings in Türkiye.

9. Moscow has a strong _____ with its mix of old and new styles.

10. The museum was designed in an _____ style — bold and unusual.

Grammar focus: Passive Voice (Страдательный залог)

Что это?
Passive Voice (страдательный залог) используется, когда важнее не кто делает действие, а над кем/чем оно совершается.

Формула:
to be + V3 (Past Participle)
Форма глагола “to be” зависит от времени и подлежащего.

Примеры из текста:
- «Many mosques **were built** during the Ottoman Empire.»
- «Russian churches **are admired** for their beauty.»
- «Caravanserais **were used** to shelter travelers.»

Passive Voice – Present & Past Simple

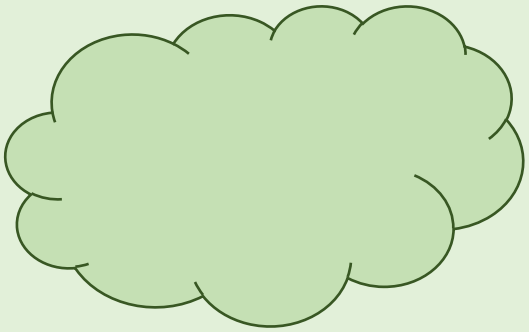
Время	Формула	Пример
Present Simple	am/is/are + V3	The mosque is visited every day
Past Simple	was/were + V3	The cathedral was biult in the 18th centure

Exercise 5: Rewrite the sentences using Passive Voice
Переделайте предложения в страдательный залог.

1. Architects design modern buildings using innovative materials.
2. The Ottomans constructed many impressive mosques.
3. They preserve ancient Russian churches very carefully.
4. Tourists visit Hagia Sophia all year round.
5. People admire Saint Basil’s Cathedral for its beauty.
6. Earthquakes sometimes damage Turkish architecture.
7. The Soviets built wide avenues and large squares.
8. They use domes in both Russian and Turkish religious buildings.
9. Many architects study Ottoman design even today.
10. Locals and foreigners respect the cultural heritage of both countries.

WRITING TASK

The most impressive building I have ever seen...



Write a short essay (120–150 words) on the topic:

Use the following questions to guide your writing:
• Where is this building located?
• What does it look like? (Use adjectives: grand, historical, modern, colorful, etc.)
• Why did it impress you?
• What did you feel when you saw it?
• Would you like to visit it again (or show it to someone)? Why?

Use Passive Voice where possible!
(Example: "The church was built in the 17th century.")

Helpful Vocabulary & Phrases
Фразы, которые могут быть вам полезны

Describing location:
• This building is located in...
• It can be found in the heart of...
• It stands near / next to / opposite...

Describing appearance:
• The architecture is grand / magnificent / ancient / modern.

• It was built in the ____ century.
• The building is decorated with…
• It has huge columns / a high dome / elegant windows / colorful mosaics.
• The interior is breathtaking / peaceful / richly designed.

Describing impression:

• I was deeply impressed by…
• It left me speechless.
• I felt inspired / emotional / amazed.
• It reminded me of…
• I had never seen anything like it before.

Talking about feelings:

• I felt like I had stepped into a different world.
• There was something magical / spiritual about it.
• It felt like a connection with the past.

Explaining significance:

• This building represents the culture / history / religion of the country.
• It's a symbol of national pride / resilience / identity.
• It tells a story about the past.

Useful passive voice structures:

• It was built in 1856.
• It was designed by a famous architect.
• The decorations were made by local artists.
• The building is considered one of the most beautiful in the city.

REFLECTION

Answer the following questions in 3–5 sentences each:

1. Do you pay attention to architecture when you travel? Why or why not?

2. What architectural style do you like the most? (e.g., classical, modern, oriental, gothic, etc.)

3. What does the architecture of your country say about its history and culture?

4. Do you think modern buildings are less emotional or meaningful than old ones? Why?

5. If you could build your dream house, what would it look like?

UNIT 3 FOOD CULTURE: RUSSIA AND TÜRKIYE



Let's start with a confession: I love food. I truly believe we live only once, and if food brings you joy, you should absolutely allow yourself to experience that joy. Food is not just about nutrition; it's about culture, tradition, memory, and even comfort. Yes, I believe in balance. I don't support extremes when it comes to overeating or obsessive dieting. But I do believe in beautiful, tasty food — food that makes you happy.

We live in a diverse world, full of national cuisines, regional flavors, and secret family recipes. To me, food is not only fuel; it's an experience. It tells a story. And if you're lucky — it brings back childhood.

Russian Cuisine: Warmth, Tradition, and Memories

Russian cuisine is more than just food. It's a feeling. A memory. A bite of childhood. It's home.

I grew up in Russia, so of course, my love for Russian food runs deep. It's in my blood. It's my cultural code. I've tasted many other cuisines — I'm a fan of Italian, Japanese, and Chinese food. I adore Thai seafood, especially shrimp. But nothing compares to Russian food. Nothing feels more "mine."

Russian cuisine is rich and hearty. It's diverse. It's full of flavor and meaning. Let's talk about soups — I don't really like soups in general, but there is one exception: borsch. A hot, deep-red bowl with sour

cream and fresh herbs — that's not just food. That's nostalgia. That's comfort. That's love in a spoon.
And what about syrniki — those sweet cottage cheese pancakes served with jam or honey? Or blini, thin Russian pancakes filled with everything from caviar to sweet condensed milk? These are dishes that bring people together — over breakfast, over tea, over life.
Russian cuisine is not only delicious — it's also symbolic. Pies, pickles, dumplings (pelmeni), salads, honey cake — all of these carry stories. Of family. Of winter evenings. Of grandmothers cooking in the kitchen.
Wherever I go, however amazing the foreign cuisine may be, Russian food always feels like a warm blanket. It's my comfort zone. My top favorite. My forever number one.

Turkish Cuisine: A Complex Relationship

Now let's talk about Turkish cuisine — and here, my feelings are more complicated.
I lived in Türkiye for four years. And during that time, I learned one important thing: Turkish cuisine is either something you fall in love with completely… or something you never fully understand.
For me, sadly, it was the second. We didn't become friends.
Let me explain.
Turkish food is famous all over the world. Tourists rave about it. Locals are proud of it. Whenever I told someone I lived in Türkiye, the response was always: "Wow! The food there must be amazing!" But there's a big difference between visiting a country and living there long-term.
As a tourist, you enjoy the sweetness of baklava and the crunch of künefe. You taste the magic of street simit and drink endless çay in tulip-shaped glasses. But when you eat that food every day, something changes — at least for me.
First, I don't really eat sweets. So most of the Turkish desserts — even though beautiful — are too sugary for my taste. I mean, baklava is so sweet it makes my teeth hurt! One bite — and I'm done.

Second, I don't like most Turkish soups. Many of them have yogurt as a base, which is just… confusing to me. I've never really understood it. There was one exception: tomato soup. It was okay. But not life-changing.
Third, I'm not a fan of meze — those cold appetizers like eggplant spreads and vegetable salads. I don't love vegetables in general. And fish? Except for shrimp and salmon, I don't eat much seafood. So again — not really my world.
Hot dishes? Well… I adore meat. But I like it simple, clean, and well-cooked. In Türkiye, there are many spices in meat dishes — and sometimes, they overpower the flavor. I enjoy a good steak — juicy, tender. But unfortunately, I never found that kind of steak in Türkiye. It was always dry, overcooked, tough. Like chewing leather.
The only thing I absolutely loved? Turkish bread. Even in my childhood in Russia, we used to buy Turkish loaves — fluffy, soft, slightly sweet. Bread in Türkiye is perfect. That's a win!
So yes — Türkiye is warm, soulful, culturally rich. I loved living there. I loved the people, the nature, the energy. But the cuisine? We just weren't meant to be.

Final Thoughts

Food is deeply personal. What feels like "home" to me may feel strange to someone else. What makes your taste buds dance may leave mine confused.
Russian food is my heritage. It's my forever love. Turkish food, while beautiful, wasn't the love of my life — and that's okay. Life is about tasting, trying, discovering.
You may fall in love with sushi. Or Indian curry. Or Greek moussaka. Or Turkish döner. Or your grandmother's pancakes.
Just promise me one thing: do not be afraid to try. Even if it's not your favorite — it's still a part of the world. And the world is worth tasting.

Exercise 1: Choose the correct answer (A, B, C, or D) based on the text.

1. What is the author's general attitude towards food?

A She avoids trying new cuisines

B She loves food and believes in enjoying it in moderation

C She follows a strict diet

D She prefers eating only sweets

2. Which dish does the author consider the ultimate Russian classic?

A Pelmeni

B Borsch

C Olivier salad

D Pancakes

3. Why does the author say she didn't connect with Turkish cuisine?

A She doesn't like spicy food

B She didn't live in Türkiye long enough

C She found many dishes too sweet or heavy

D She is vegetarian

4. What does the author mention about Turkish soups?

A They are her favorite part of the cuisine

B She enjoys them for breakfast

C She dislikes the use of yogurt in them

D They remind her of Russian borsch

5. Which Turkish dish did the author enjoy most?

A Kebab

B Kunefe

C Tomato soup

D Hummus with sausage

6. How does the author describe her connection to Russian cuisine?

A As something she learned to like over time

B As a deep cultural and emotional bond

C As boring and repetitive

D As too simple for her taste

7. What is her view on people who strictly limit their food choices?

A She admires their discipline

B She thinks it's necessary for health

C She doesn't support strict food restrictions

D She plans to do the same

8. What is her opinion on Turkish desserts?

A	She finds them perfectly sweet
B	She doesn't eat desserts at all
C	She enjoys baklava and kunefe
D	She finds them too sweet for her taste

9. What makes it difficult for her to eat Turkish food regularly?

A	Lack of available ingredients
B	Too many local restaurants
C	Her selective and picky eating habits
D	Turkish food is too bland

10. What does she say about Russian food compared to others?

A	It's her second favorite after Italian
B	It's less diverse than Turkish cuisine
C	It always stays number one for her
D	It's too complicated to cook

VOCABULARY

English word / Phrase	Russian Meaning
confession	признание
balance	баланс, равновесие
memory	воспоминание
hearty	сытный, плотный
comfort zone	зона комфорта
cottage cheese pancakes (syrniki)	сырники
bite of childhood	вкус детства
symbolic	символический
to fall in love (with)	Влюбиться (в)
complicated	сложный
sugary	приторный, слишком сладкий
overpower	перебивать (вкус, аромат)
fluffy	пышный, мягкий
heritage	наследие
taste buds	вкусовые рецепторы
cold appetizers (meze)	холодные закуски (мезе)
personal	личный
to chew leather	жевать подошву
to be meant to be	Быть предназначенным (в переносном смысле) – «нам не суждено быть вместе»
discovery	открытие
don't be afraid to try	не бойся пробовать

Exercise 2: Translate from English into Russian
Переведите предложения, используя слова из словаря.

1. I’m a huge fan of Russian cuisine.
2. My taste buds didn’t dance when I tried Turkish dishes.
3. She packed her suitcase with spices and went to cook abroad.
4. I’m quite picky when it comes to food.
5. Turkish desserts like baklava are too sweet for me.

6. This soup was topped with yogurt — I found that strange.
7. Hummus with sausage was the only dish I truly enjoyed.
8. I still cook Russian meals even when I live abroad.
9. I'm not a big fan of cold starters.
10. Russian borsch is a comfort food I'll never give up.

Exercise 3: Translate from Russian into English
Переведите предложения на английский язык, используя слова из словаря.

1. Я не фанат турецкой кухни.
2. Баклава — это слишком сладко для меня.
3. Мои вкусовые рецепторы не реагировали на местную еду.
4. Я очень избирательна в еде.
5. Я люблю стейки, но в Турции их плохо готовят.
6. Даже в Турции я продолжала готовить русские блюда.
7. Я не понимаю, почему они добавляют йогурт в суп.
8. Я считаю русскую кухню самой вкусной.
9. Мне тяжело было найти, что поесть.
10. Я не ем холодные закуски.

Exercise 4: Choose and insert the correct word from the vocabulary
Вставьте подходящее слово на английском языке из списка:

taste buds / picky / borsch / cold starters / comfort food / spices / yogurt / suitcase / desserts / cuisine

1. She brought her favorite _____ when she moved abroad.

2. I find Russian _____ rich and satisfying.

3. My _____ didn't respond to most local dishes.

4. _____ are not my thing — I prefer hot meals.

5. That sweet treat was one of the most sugary _____ I've ever had.

6. I'm quite _____ about what I eat.

7. We had soup with a spoonful of _____ on top.

8. Russian _____ will always be my number one.

9. I don't like too many _____ in my meat.

10. Borsch is my ultimate _____.

Grammar Focus: Present Simple vs Present Continuous

Объяснение на русском:
Present Simple (настоящее простое): используем для регулярных действий, привычек, вкусов, общих утверждений.
I love Russian food.
I don't eat Turkish desserts.

Present Continuous (настоящее длительное):
используем для действий, происходящих сейчас, временных ситуаций, изменений.
I'm living in Türkiye now.
I'm trying new dishes.

Exercise 5: Choose the correct verb form
Выберите правильную форму глагола

1. I (love / am loving) Russian food.
2. These days I (cook / am cooking) more Turkish dishes.
3. She (doesn't eat / isn't eating) anything sweet.
4. Right now, I (taste / am tasting) this soup with yogurt.
5. We (always eat / are always eating) borscht on Sundays.
6. He (tries / is trying) to enjoy Turkish cuisine, but it's hard.
7. I (live / am living) in Istanbul at the moment.
8. Usually, I (make / am making) pancakes for breakfast.
9. Look! She (eats / is eating) baklava!
10. I (prefer / am preferring) Russian cuisine over Turkish.

Exercise 6: Correct the mistakes
Исправьте ошибки в предложениях

1. I am liking Russian cuisine.
2. She is not eat meat.
3. They cooks Turkish soup every Friday.
4. We are live in Türkiye now.
5. He don't eat cold starters.

WRITING TASK

Write a short personal story (8–10 sentences) about your favorite cuisine.
You can answer the following questions to help you write:

Use vocabulary from the unit and try to include both Present Simple and Present Continuous tenses in your writing

What is your favorite cuisine and why?

What are your favorite dishes?

Is there a cuisine you don't like?

Have you ever tried food from another country that surprised you?

Would you like to learn how to cook dishes from another culture?

REFLECTION

Answer the following questions in 3–5 sentences each:

1. Do you enjoy trying new types of food? Why or why not?

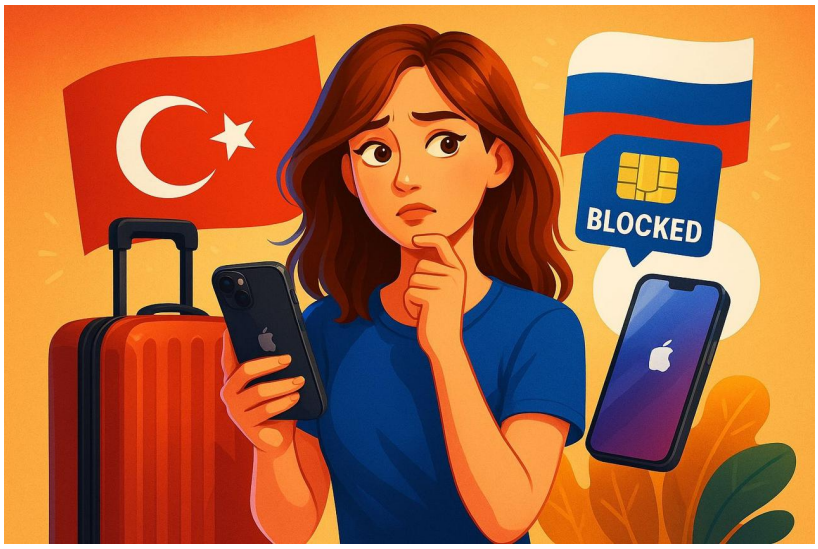
2. What does «comfort food» mean to you? Can you name an example?

3. Is there a dish that reminds you of home?

4. Have your food preferences changed over the years?

5. If you moved to another country, how would you deal with missing your national cuisine?

UNIT 4 iPHONE TAX AND SIM UNLOCKING IN TÜRKIYE



Let me tell you a story. A story about my phone, my stubbornness, and a very special tax.

I have always been an iPhone fan. My journey began with the iPhone 6, and since then, I've been loyal to the brand. I didn't upgrade every year — sometimes every two or three years — but the iPhone was always with me. When I moved to Türkiye with my dog and my two suitcases, I brought my beloved iPhone with me. That's when the story truly began.

Shortly after arriving, I learned something quite unpleasant: foreign phones are blocked after 120 days of use with a local SIM card — unless you pay a special phone registration tax. This applies to all phones brought from abroad, not just iPhones. Why? The government wants to support local manufacturers and keep money inside the country.

When I first moved to Türkiye, the registration fee was about 3,000 TL — around $200 at the time. It wasn't clear to me why I should pay again for a phone I had already bought. I thought: "What if I lose it? What if it breaks tomorrow? Why spend extra money now?" So, I found a way around the system. A friend connected me with someone who could unlock the phone unofficially — for an extra fee, of course.

I used this "unofficial unlock" for a while. But everything changed. The rules became stricter. The fee increased. When I bought a new iPhone 14 Pro, the registration tax had already jumped to 32,000 TL, and later to 45,000 TL —OMG that is $1000! Yes, that's on top of the cost of the phone itself.

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Today, if you're moving to Türkiye permanently, you have a choice:

- Buy a Turkish phone (already registered).
- Pay the tax and register your foreign phone.
- Use temporary tricks — for as long as they work.

If you're a tourist, relax — this tax won't affect you unless you stay longer than four months.

The lesson? Living abroad teaches you a lot — not just about new cultures, but about taxes, rules, and how to survive when your phone suddenly stops working. And yes — it made me appreciate the simple joys of life back in Russia... where no one asks for $1,500 just to use your phone.