



Perfumery by domestic and foreign manufacturers on display in Minsk, enabling visitors to smell fragrances from past centuries

# Scent of homeland so very pleasantly sweet

American perfumer Sophia Grojsman names scent 'Belaya Rus'

By Olga Khalezina

The Head of IFF was born in the village of Lyubcha, near Novogrudok, but has lived abroad for most of her life. However, Sophia's feeling of nostalgia for her homeland has endured and, after creating such globally known perfumes as Lancome's Tresor, her most recent perfume is devoted to Belarus. The fragrance is yet to be officially launched but, judging by her past success, is likely to be a fantastic promotion for our country.

## Own style

Over the past two decades, our country has been steadily developing its own perfumery and cosmetics branch, with around twenty companies combining high quality and reasonable prices. In fact, many Belarusians prefer domestic brands to those from abroad.

"In recent years, our domestic perfume has significantly raised its profile, boasting improved quality — as confirmed by increasing consumer demand," explains perfumer



Sophia Grojsman

Vladislav Rekunov, the Director of the Belarusian Association of Perfumery and Cosmetics Producers. "Russia is our major buyer at present but Lithuania, Kazakhstan and Ukraine are also keenly importing our fragrances. Imported products in local shops outnumber locally-made by 40 percent but, every year, sales of Belarus-made perfumes, eau de toilette and eau de cologne are rising."

Belarus' perfumery-cosmetic industry began in the early 1990s,

with a team of perfumery specialists trained at the Belarusian State Technological University.

## Personal and 'named after' perfumes

It's become popular for perfumes to be created with the participation of a famous personality abroad: a showbiz star or, even, a politician. The trend is now gradually catching on in Belarus. "Many people are confused by the idea of 'named after' and personal perfumes, which are two different things," explains Mr. Rekunov. "Personalised perfumes are created to order, especially for a particular person, after defining their own preferences. Our association has produced such aromas for several years, making exclusive scents for individuals, with production under laboratory conditions."

He assures us that domestically produced fragrances on sale in the shops are of the best quality.

## Beloved scents

"The fashion for certain aromas leads to particular perfumes becoming

popular," believes the Deputy Marketing Director at Belarusian-French Dilis Cosmetic, Andrey Shaporov. "Light floral scents tend to be popular with Belarusian women while men prefer cool sport-like notes, with a citrus flavour. Interestingly, blue bottles sell more quickly among men — perhaps because this is a colour associated with freshness. However, eastern-style, evening aromas have recently become more popular."

Reasonable pricing of domestically produced perfumes allows us to have perfume or eau de toilette for every occasion.

"We're currently importing combinations of fragrances and bottles for future Belarusian perfume from abroad. We partially order cardboard packing in Belarus," says Mr. Shaporov. "However, I think that, in the course of time, our produce will become completely import-substitutional."

The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus has joined the Belarusian State Technological University in studying fragrances from Belarusian timber, since pine trees can yield a range of perfume components.

## Best female ideas

### Innovative projects awarded in contest to promote information and communication technologies by female researchers

First place is shared by three projects: the 'Temporary Cloakroom Attendant for Future Mothers' Internet resource, enabling pregnant women to save money; an online database guide to Belarusian settlements worth visiting; and an online database which gives information on each educational establishment. Sergey Yenin, Deputy Director of T&C JSC, notes that the Day of Women and Young Girls in Information and Communication Technologies was organised as part of the *Media in Belarus* and *TIBO-2012* exhibitions — initiated by the International Telecommunication Union. The events included a contest of ideas and innovation projects by female researchers, and a round table discussion dedicated to the role of women-specialists. According to Mr. Yenin, gender inequality isn't as apparent in Belarus as it is in some other countries. However, such forums enable us to discuss which IT specialities are of interest to women and how they can be developed by Belarusian companies in the sphere of information and communication technologies.

## Grey-haired pupils before monitors

### Dozen computer schools for pensioners open in Polotsk District

Computer literacy classes have been running at rural libraries, where staff help train the elderly in how to use online resources, email and other means of modern communication. This should allow them to chat more easily with their grandchildren, who live all over the globe.

The Head of the Ideology Department at Polotsk District Executive Committee, Olga Voroshkevich, tells us that the district veterans' organisation and rural councils select each class to have 8-10 pupils. A convenient schedule (co-ordinated with library staff) is set up and the 'silver surfers' can then take a test to show their proficiency as Internet users.

# Demonstration of wit and artistic approach

29 farming initiatives win UNDP contest for Chernobyl regions

By Vasily Kharitonov

Villagers have been invited to compete for funding set aside for innovative farming projects, including working together in groups. The contest has been run in the three Belarusian regions most affected by the Chernobyl disaster: Bragin, Stolín and Slavgorod. The International Foundation for Rural Development (IFRD) have joined regional consultants in registering 45 applications from local farmers.

Completing the necessary documentation has been a test in itself, as technical-economic targets have needed to be clearly defined, in addition to action plans and time sched-

ules. In all, 29 applications have been chosen, with the winners given their requested materials. Participants contribute 30-50 percent of the total budget of each application (as stipulated by the contest rules).

"This year, residents of the selected regions have demonstrated an artistic approach, significantly expanding their range of initiatives compared to last year," notes Olga Lukashkova, who heads the UNDP project on enhancing security. "Most of the proposals dealt with improving health within areas affected by the Chernobyl disaster. Villagers realise that their success as entrepreneurs depends on maintaining their well-being."

Many of the applications have



Alina and Zhenya Kovalevich at farm presentation

proposed joint production and sale of vegetables, meat and milk, with some suggesting the growing of raspberries

and blueberries by individuals. The idea of growing cauliflowers is innovative for Belarusian farmers, who hope

to see the crop rival frozen imports. In addition, 50 vegetable producers from Stolín have proposed joint purchase of a laboratory to assess the mineral content of plants, aiding the effective use of fertilisers and monitoring the concentration of nitrates. According to the IFRD co-ordinator, Andrey Iodko, the number of group applications is growing, as farmers realise the benefits of co-operation. The first harvests should show how well these joint projects are being realised.

The *Enhancement of Security for Those Living in Territories Affected by the Chernobyl Disaster* project is run jointly by the UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and Belarus' Emergency Ministry.