



Londongrad: From Russia with Cash; The Inside Story of the Oligarchs

Mark Hollingsworth, Stewart Lansley

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The amazing true story of how London became home to the Russian super-rich – told for the first time ever. A dazzling tale of incredible wealth, ferocious disputes, beautiful women, private jets, mega-yachts, the world's best footballers – and chauffeur-driven Range Rovers with tinted windows.

A group of buccaneering Russian oligarchs made colossal fortunes after the collapse of communism - and many of them came to London to enjoy their new-found wealth. Londongrad tells for the first time the true story of their journeys from Moscow and St Petersburg to mansions in Mayfair, Knightsbridge and Surrey - and takes you into a shimmering world of audacious multi-billion pound deals, outrageous spending and rancorous feuds.

But while London's flashiest restaurants echoed to Russian laughter and Bond Street shop-owners totted up their profits, darker events also played themselves out. The killing of ex-KGB man Alexander Litvinenko in London to the death - in a helicopter crash he all but predicted - of Stephen Curtis, the lawyer to many of Britain's richest Russians, chilled London's Russians and many of those who know them.

This is the story of how Russia's wealth was harvested and brought to London - some of it spent by Roman Abramovich on his beloved Chelsea Football Club, some of it spent by Boris Berezovsky in his battles with Russia's all-powerful Vladimir Putin. Londongrad is a must-read for anyone interested in how vast wealth is created, the luxury it can buy, and the power and intrigue it produces.

Londongrad: From Russia with Cash; The Inside Story of the Oligarchs Details

Date : Published (first published May 5th 2009)

ISBN :

Author : Mark Hollingsworth , Stewart Lansley

Format : Kindle Edition 402 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Cultural, Russia, Politics, History



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From Reader Review Londongrad: From Russia with Cash; The Inside Story of the Oligarchs for online ebook

Claire says

Given the style of the book I'm surprised it has end notes. It felt rather like a Daily Mail article that had been turned into a book.

I enjoyed it because of my line of work. There's also a section in the index which lists my future employer - I wonder if they know.

Overall however I don't feel like it had much substance.

Kevin Tole says

Intensely dull journalese which appears to want us to all go WOW!! at the examples of largesse spewed regularly from the latest Russian set of thieves and villains. Poorly researched and essentially lacking in the detail and understanding that would have come from a greater knowledge and elucidation of historical events and subject matter. This book is down there with gutter journalism designed to sell copies at airports to those arriving or leaving for pastures Russian or Londinium or to Chelski fans. Its not worth the cheap paper it is written on and spends much of its time in awe to the people / villains involved in this currently non-ending blag of the highest order whilst at the same time doing its best to brown nose precisely those people it sets out to sensationalise. I truly disliked its suck up attitude whilst at the same time trying to find some kind of moral high ground from which to preach about the largesse of oligarchs and the corruptability of Russia.

Investigative journalism!!! Don't make me larf!!!!

Bro_Pair ???? says

Very readable and entertaining. I feel like London journalists are especially good with these kinds of books, for some reason. They have a flair for the story American newspaper reporters usually don't. I think part of it was, they see the obvious dark humor in the story of the oligarchs and their disgusting piggish lives.

Marco says

Excellent piece of work, well researched and an interesting read throughout, I've read pretty much every book on the subject and this is one of the best. Probably not ideal for someone who doesn't have an interest in the subject but if you do, get it.

Maryna Mishchenko says

Great book for those interested in todays Russia, the functioning of the system and the connection of power/government/FSB (which are all the same) and oligarchs...

The great number of tasty facts gathered by authors show that there are no boundaries for people`s greed, envy and vanity.

Timon Lesage says

A book about how Russian oligarchs acquired and spent their money. Some reviews on here seem disappointed with the emphasis on the latter, but the book only provides what it promises. And even then it's also surprisingly extensive in describing Kremlin power struggles and the botched privatisation. If you're truly interested in that you can always read the academic literature or journalism on these topics.

Adelyne says

(+) An "intertwined biography" format of four Russian oligarchs based in London – an interesting format that I don't think I've ever encountered in a book. It allowed for stories intertwining their lives, which happens quite a lot in the small world of Russian businessmen/politicians.

(-) Not the fault of the book but rather my own underlying lack of knowledge – as I am unfamiliar with most of the key players in Russian politics I got lost and had to go back a number of times to figure out who's who.

(-) Got rather repetitive at times, there's only so many times you can read about someone buying a new house or overpaying for a yacht in the course of 400 pages. I particularly enjoyed the interactions between the oligarchs and the politicians, not so much in between.

Overall: Rather well-researched and content-heavy account of Russian oligarchs who happen to be based in London – and how they got where they are now. Could have been more concise, because of this I think it took me longer to get through than a book of that length should have. 3 stars.

Amy says

Very interesting....I learned a ton about the Russian oligarchs and how they came to be that way. Surprisingly enough, many live in our area of England.

Will says

An entertaining read spanning the supposed privatization of Russian industry through the present day. You will learn about the lives of the handful of big players who got rich off of government oil contracts.

David says

Fascinating insight into the world of the Russian Oligarch in London. How they get their money and how they spend it. Also the impact it has had on London prices and consumption. Absolutely gripping.

Thomas Hettich says

If you're interested in reading about the products and services demanded by the "oligarchs" and don't mind that the "inside story" is rather incoherent, often badly-edited and at times repetitious, this is the book for you. What the book lacks in depth, it believes to make up for in breath as it name-drops at the turn of every page.

Philip Larmett says

A book I had seen in the stores several times, I finally got around to buying it this year. Journalism in book-form. The narrative is hard to follow in terms of time sequence, as events in many chapters overlap the others. And dates are not always clear.

Found a couple of errors of fact, which make me think the book could have been better researched or post edited. As far as I know the Le Havre ferry does not go to Folkestone...

The book ends in 2009, in the aftermath of the world financial crisis. And the authors' verdict is out on how seriously it affected the personalities they describe. The book seriously needs a new edition, to bring it up to date.

Putin is now back in power as president; is London still just as much the playground of the rich? The British private schools are still heavily populated by Russian rich-kids. And, of course, Putin's nemesis Berezovsky is no longer with us. Enough material for a new edition...

Jennifer says

I ended up feeling frustrated by this book, and found myself skimming the last few pages. It's hard to articulate why it didn't work for me, though I think the key is that it seemed to focus a great deal on how big the oligarchs' yachts are, and how many bedrooms their London townhomes have, so the more telling information got lost in the avalanche of millions of pounds and billions of pounds. I suspect that the things I wanted to know just aren't available--but 370 pages is a long time to reach the conclusion 'these oligarchs are super-secrective and we really don't know as much about their pasts and plans as we'd like.'

Mark Smith says

Absolutely loved this and read it from cover to cover in one sitting. Superbly researched with a compelling and informative story throughout. If you're interested in Russia, organised crime or the London elite scene definitely give this a read, irregardless of your politics.

Junghwa says

Very interesting book to read. I was never really interested in anything Russia or anything Russian, although my work often brings me to the ex soviet country. The book is a very easy read almost like a gossip magazine and provides a glance of how modern Russia is like. It does make you feel resentful - according to the book, about 30 people in Russia own some 40% of the economic output (2004). That is just insane. The book really helped me to understand the country and why its capital city is so much muddled up with sexy lingerie shops, luxury car ads, expensive restaurants, a good coffee up to 7 pounds, poor infrastructure, old ladas and the "normal", ordinary hard working people still pitifully poor. Wealth trickles down to the bottom of the pyramid, as slow as molasses in January.

I would have preferred to read more about the history on Russia's development of market economy and how these oligarchs took advantage of the system which absolutely lacked any sort of sound check and balance. The book gives so many little details saying this oligarch spent this much money on buying this property and that art and dated this model, making the whole book read like a hello magazine.
