

## **Sau Sheong Chang**

Digital October, which RailsClub Moscow was part of, was held in the converted warehouses along the Moskva River directly facing the majestic Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. And the conference was arranged impeccably, kudos to the organisers and the people who worked hard to make the conference possible. As foreigners and non-Russian speakers, we were given translation units (all the Russian speakers spoke in Russian) with pretty up-to-speed translations on the fly though there was no way I could verify its accuracy. Unsurprisingly, again as in RubyConf India, I was the only Chinese face in a sea of Russian faces. I was very pleasantly surprised though, behind the stoic faces that was the audience, were warm individual voices who asked interesting and engaging questions. One of the participants who couldn't speak fluently enough to me, got his wife to ask me for my autograph on his digital copy of "Cloning Internet Applications with Ruby". My Russian reader, his wife jokingly confided in me, apparently spent more time on my book than with her.

I had a great stay in the Mercure Arbat Moscow -- the room was a bit small but it was in the middle of town and accessible everywhere so that was understandable. Moscow is beautiful in September. With fading yellow brown leaves and chilly but not biting cold air, it's a city perfect for walking. Mariam and Ivan, both organisers of the conference, acted as tour guides and guided us briskly through parks and city blocks and heritage sites, zigzagging professionally along sights as we soaked up the Moscovite bustle. The Red Square was exactly like I thought it would be, with its amazingly red walls, the Kremlin rising to one side and St. Basil's Cathedral vividly colourful domes rising like candy-hued bonfire to the sky. Walking along the Red Square and even entering the Kremlin as a gawking tourist was surreal experience.

The talks were varied, some more memorable than others but all enjoyable. But what made it more enjoyable was making new friends amongst the Ruby community in Moscow and learning what a vibrant and growing community it was. I felt very welcome and comfortable, as amongst friends though thousands of miles away. Given half a chance, I'd definitely go back again!

## **Xavier Noria**

"It was a real pleasure for me to speak at RailsClub.

The organization was superb. They took care of everything related to paperwork so that I only had to do a routine step at the consulate. Then, once in Moscow, they were one of the best hosts I have seen, taking care of absolutely everything from arrival to departure. Really really well-organized, helpful, and very kind.

Moscow is of course a city you have to see, specially if you have not seen Russia before. We visited the city in a tour organized by RailsClub. Also, we tasted great food and were properly taught local shot practices :).

The conference itself was on par with everything else. Hosted in a modern venue called "Digital October", the talks and audience were awesome. Talks are translated to English/Russian, but as a speaker you do not have to worry at all. RailsClub has professional technical translators who

translate on the fly in their cabins, people may listen to them through headphones. That is all hidden from you, you can deliver a regular talk.

Alexander Petrov provided a touch of elegance playing his alto saxophone live with David Sanborn backgrounds in the registration and breaks. Totally amazing live performance.

Summary, if you are invited to go to RailsClub your answer is YES."

### **Ernie Miller**

"I was blown away by the quality of Rails Club. From the venue, to the attendees, to the organizers, everything was top notch. The organizers made my experience as someone who'd never been to Moscow a pleasure, and a real eye-opener: everything I thought I knew about Russia was wrong. I came away with a real appreciation for the development community there. They devoured highly technical content, even when presented in a second language or through a translator, and asked insightful and engaging questions. I'd highly recommend speaking at Rails Club to anyone who gets a chance."

### **David Graham**

Moscow was beautiful, and you were an amazing host. Our countries have so much shared history, it was important to see it from a new perspective. Visiting Moscow and Rails Club was one of the easiest and fun international trips I've taken.

### **Wynn Netherland**

Moscow has not only a rich history but a vibrant Ruby community. I felt privileged to be apart of the incredible lineup at railsclub.ru. The audience was engaging, and the staff went out of their way to make us feel at home. Definitely go if you get the chance!

### **Eric Hodel**

Moscow is big. Really, really big. I liked it.

I received excellent questions from the audience that were on-topic, so they were excellent listeners. I felt people enjoyed my talk.

Traveling to RailsClub felt much like a guided tour. I liked that I didn't have to worry about paying for meals or taking out too much or too little rubles, especially for the short stay.

### **Linda Liukas**

This was my first time in Russia, but definitely not last! The team at Railsclub showed us speakers a wonderful time: we visited all the big attractions in Moscow, but got to see also the local flavor (like a soviet era arcade game museum!). The conference was organized in one of the coolest venues I've ever seen (be sure to check closely the restaurant art!) and they even provided translations into english for talks in russian. Everyone was warm, welcoming & enthusiastic. Big thank you!

## **Jeremy Evans**

I had an amazing time at RailsClub. I don't think I have ever been treated so well. Moscow is a wonderful city, and the RailsClub organizers took us site seeing to not only the common tourist attractions such as the Kremlin and Red Square, but also to less common attractions such as the Soviet arcade game museum, where we got to play old working Soviet arcade games. The RailsClub organizers went above and beyond to make my experience special, taking me to a KHL (Russian hockey league) game, as I mentioned I was a huge hockey fan.

The conference itself was great, at the best venue I've seen for a conference. It started off with live saxophone playing from a local rubyist, which is something I haven't seen at other conferences I've attended. I had many interesting conversations with other attendees and speakers between the talks, and the talks themselves were very interesting. I was able to enjoy and follow the talks given in Russian because there was simultaneous audio translation, and the translator has

a really nice voice that made the presentations fun to listen to. For my presentation, there were some minor technical hiccups with getting my old laptop with analog-only video output working with the digital-only projector, but the organizers got those sorted out and everything went fine during the presentation. The conference after party was great, and I had many more interesting conversations with the other attendees and speakers while there.

I cannot speak more highly of the RailsClub organizers. They truly did everything they could to make my conference experience in Moscow the best it could possibly be. To anyone who has the privilege of being invited to speak at RailsClub, I highly recommend you accept the opportunity.

## **Steve Klabnik**

I really enjoyed my time in Moscow. Everyone was very friendly, it was great to see the sights, and I loved the subway... the food was good too! I would certainly recommend it.