



A Photographic Report

JOURNEY TO SOUTHERN CRIMEA:
PART ONE

by Brigitte Lacombe

In April photographer Brigitte Lacombe travelled to the Southern coast of Crimea on the Black Sea with a team of scholars, museum curators, historians, archaeologists, architects, landscape artists, geologists, and archivists as part of the 'Southern Coast of Crimea: World Heritage Site' research project.

The cultural expedition was organised by the Dmitri Likhachev Foundation, a non-governmental organisation devoted to preserving cultural heritage, along with the State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg. Its purpose was to ascertain whether the region could be eligible to become a UNESCO World Heritage site. "It may not be possible right now to include in the [UNESCO] List the monuments of the Crimea," said Professor Mikhail Piotrovsky, Director General of the State Hermitage Museum, "but we need to find out."

'The Southern Coast of Crimea: World Heritage Site' research project hopes to raise national and international awareness about the region's singular and varied cultural heritage.

Today Crimea, a disputed territory between

Ukraine and Russia, is in the midst of a crisis. The international community has condemned Moscow's 2014 annexation of the peninsula and does not recognise its new frontier. It remains a highly sensitive and complex situation.

YES & NO is publishing this portfolio of Lacombe's unique images of the Southern Crimean Coast prior to an exhibition set to open at the State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg in November 2018.

Essay by Elena Vitenberg & Katya Galitzine

The Crimean peninsula has been inhabited for millennia. Ancient Greeks established trading posts, the Goths, ramparts, and the Genoese defensive fortresses. It was not until the reign of Catherine the Great that Crimea became part of Russia when her lover Grigory Potemkin annexed the land after defeating the Ottoman Khanate in 1783. Giving Potemkin the title Prince of Tauride, the Empress described Crimea as "the jewel in the crown of the Russian Empire".

The first coastal holiday villa was built on

the peninsula in the 1820s by a princess Anna Golitzine who wanted to escape St Petersburg high society. From that time the coastline became famous as a fashionable holiday resort for the Russian aristocracy. Later came the Russian Tsars' estates and mansions with subtropical parks and gardens. Alexander Pushkin, Leo Tolstoy, and Anton Chekhov are just a few of the many writers, poets, and artists who enjoyed the Crimean Coastline. In the 1920s many of the large estates were repurposed for use as hotels, sanatoria, and hostels for Soviet officials and workers' holidays.

With the advent of wild capitalism after the end of the Soviet era, unregulated speculative development began to destroy the Southern Crimean landscape. Today urgent protective measures are vital to preserve the natural and artistic beauty of the unique 70 km of coastline. If these measures are not put in place, ancient forests, elegant parks, historical buildings, and archeological monuments—some of which date back to the seventh century BC—risk being irreparably lost.

1 (Opening spread)

The main road along the Southern Coast of Crimea stretches for 70 km. Before the late 19th century, the only access along the coastline was either by sea or through the mountainous pass by foot.

2

View of Ayu-Dag (Bear Mountain) from Artek. Founded in 1925, Artek became the most famous children's camps of the former Soviet Union. It houses five museums, five swimming pools, a 7,000-seat stadium, and a yacht club. In 1820, Alexander Pushkin began writing his poem 'The Prisoner of the Caucasus' in Gurzuf beyond the mountain.

3

Alupka Palace from the rooftop with a view of the peak of Ai-Petri of the Crimean Mountains. The estate was designed by British architect Edward Blore for Prince Mikhail Vorontsov, the governor of Crimea.

4

The private beach below the Charax Estate, home of the Grand Duke George Mikhailovich of Russia.

5

Charax Estate, home of the Grand Duke George Mikhailovich of Russia, built in a Scottish Baronial style on the ruins of an ancient Roman garrison fortress.

6

Exterior of the Yusupov Palace, Koreiz. Standing in the grounds of the palace, a winged lion made after Carpaccio's Lion of St Mark.

7

Mellas Estate. Built in the 1830s for a Russian statesman by the name of Perovsky, Mellas later belonged to the writer, poet, and satirist Alexei Tolstoy (a distant relative of Leo). It then became a sanatorium used by Moscow Government officials—complete with an open-air cinema.

8

Grand Duke Peter's Moorish palace, Dulber ('beautiful' in the language of Crimean Tartars). The Duke was mocked when Dulber was built because it was not in the style of a Mediterranean villa. But it was this building, built like a fortress, that saved the lives of many of the Imperial family in revolutionary Crimea.

9

The Yusupov Palace, Koreiz. View of Ai-Petri and the covered balcony. In the 1820s, this was the site of the first holiday villa built in the region by a princess of the Golitsyn family. In 1945 Stalin stayed here during the Yalta (Crimean) Conference of the Big Three.

10

Anton Chekhov's seaside house at Gurzuf. The playwright and short-story writer lived here for his health. A neighbour of his inspired the plot of *The Cherry Orchard*, 1903.

11

Lenin Monument in Artek. At 208 hectares, Artek resort is 6 hectares larger than the size of Monaco.

12

Colonnades at Mellas. In honour of the ancient Greeks who once lived on the Crimean coast, classical colonnades such as these are common features of the Southern Crimea's landscape. The region is mentioned by the 'Father of History' Herodotus and in Homer's *The Odyssey*.

13

The Adalary Rocks outside Gurzuf are a Southern Coast of Crimea landmark. In the background can be seen Ayu-Dag (Bear Mountain).

14

Derelict mansion and garden. By 1920, there were several hundred noble estates, including ten Romanov palaces and landscaped resorts on the Southern coast. Each estate or resort had its own villa/palace surrounded by a large park. Today many have been neglected and are being destroyed by developers.

15

The park at Alupka Palace with the peak of Ai-Petri in the distance. The estate's original owner, Prince Vorontsov, grew up in England and wanted to recreate Kew Gardens in Crimea. The Californian magnolia tree pictured here was planted by Mikhail Vorontsov himself.

16

Alupka Palace. The interior of the palace was decorated in the English Victorian style. Winston Churchill stayed here during the Yalta Conference in 1945.

17

View of Chekhov's bedroom in the museum which was once his home. In this house Chekhov wrote the short story *Lady with a Lapdog*, 1899.

18

Massandra Winery. The local Crimean climate is ideal for growing vines. In the 19th century Prince Lev N. Golitsyn created prize-winning dessert wines. To this day unopened bottles remain 'resting' in Massandra's cellars caked in dust.

19

Steps at Rodina (Motherland) Sanatorium. This Stalinist, neo-classical style sanatorium, was built during the 1950s. The steps lead visitors through the landscaped park to the Black Sea. The Soviet sanatoria emulated the architectural style of the aristocratic estates.

20

Massandra Palace. Built originally for Tsar Alexander III in the style of early French baroque architecture. The steps shown here lead to the landscaped park in the grounds of the estate.

21

'Salve' (Be well) mosaic found on the floor of Alupka Palace. The climate of the region is well-known for its health benefits.

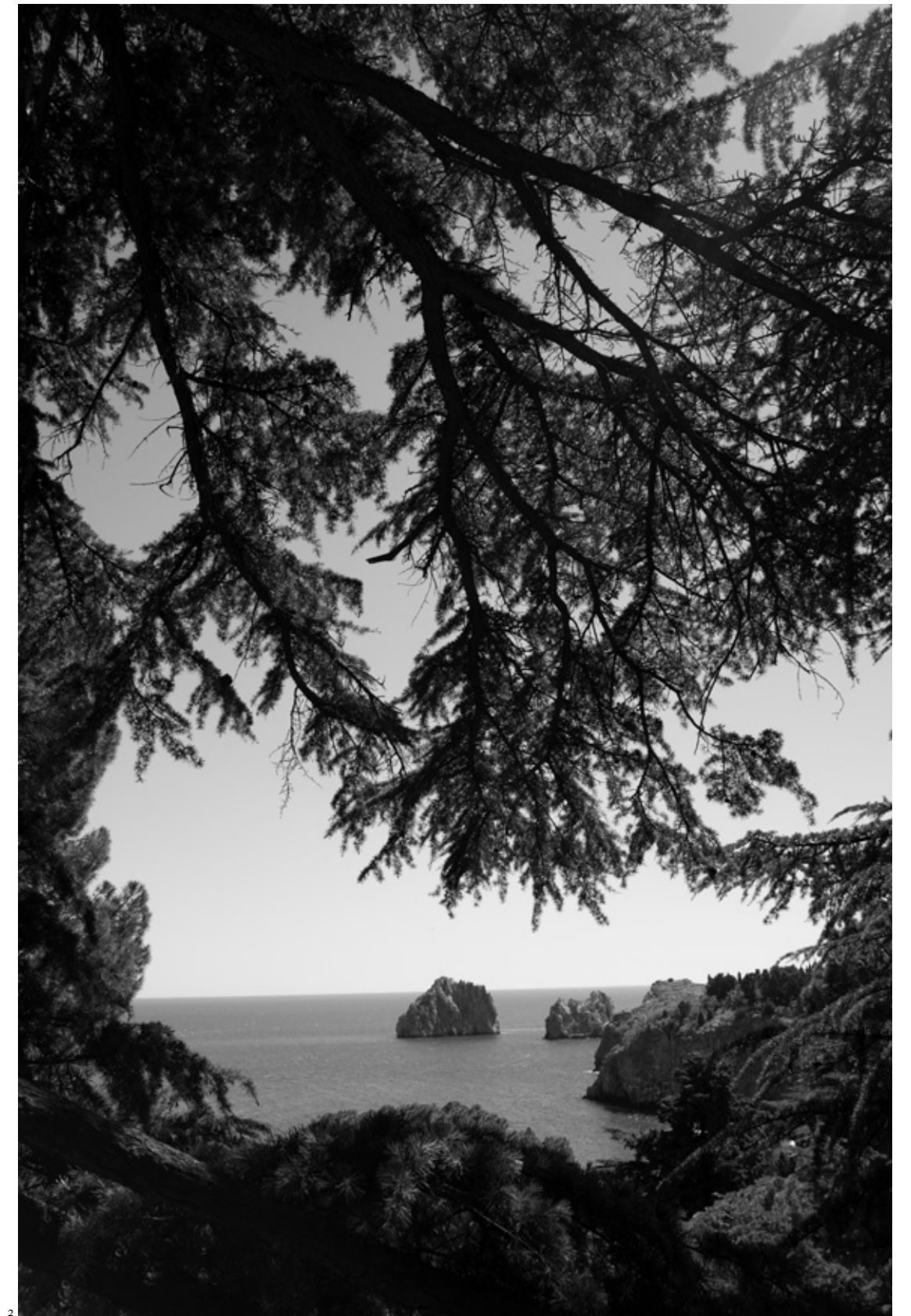
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Yalta Boulevard. "It was said that a new person had appeared on the sea-front: a lady with a little dog." (*Lady with a Lapdog* by Anton Chekhov, 1899).

23

The Black Sea. "The water was of a soft lilac hue and there was a golden streak from the moon upon it." (*Lady with a Lapdog* by Anton Chekhov).

Captions by Elena Vitenberg & Katya Galitzine







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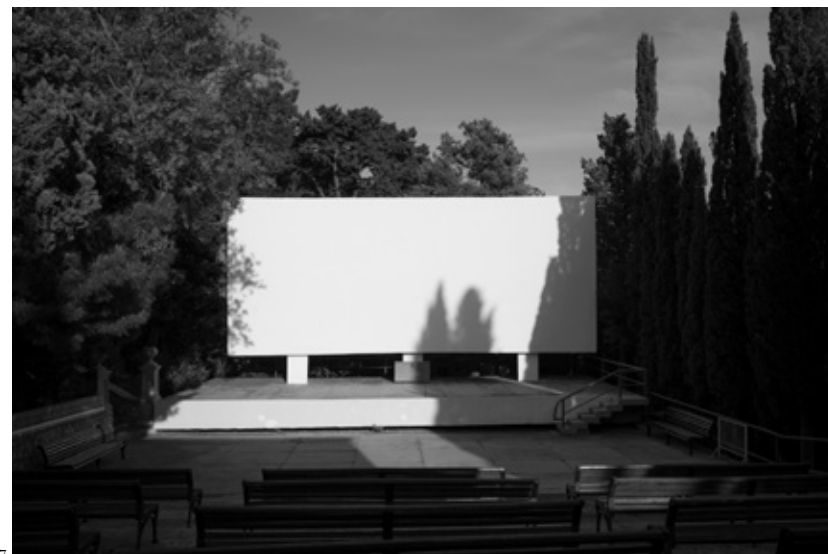
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A Photographic Report

JOURNEY TO SOUTHERN CRIMEA:
PART TWO

by Brigitte Lacombe



Custodians of the Heritage
by Elena Vitenberg

Translated by Katya Galitzine
November, 2018

Over a period of nearly a thousand years, many diverse civilisations have created the cultural landscape of the Southern Coast of Crimea. Along the bays of the Black Sea, this human development has fashioned parks, built defensive walls, palaces and health resorts, and planted vineyards. All these different cultures, living along the coast of the peninsula, have added to its unique natural history and cultural heritage.

It is almost impossible to feel alone here. An imaginary hero from a Bunin story walks by your side down dark alleys; Chekhov's legendary lady with a lapdog sits on a bench with a view over Yalta; and Pushkin's timeless words, "Farewell, free element, o Sea!" ring out to all who gaze at the expanse of the Black Sea.

People leave something of themselves here along the coast of the peninsula; something of their personal stories—their very soul—all of which play an important part in shaping and preserving the region's physical and cultural heritage.

In this second part of *A Photographic Journey: Custodians of the Southern Coast of Crimea Heritage*, historians, architects, wine-makers, and archeologists are introduced to us by photographer Brigitte Lacombe. Many of the individuals whose portraits are presented in these pages live permanently in the Crimea while others visit on expeditions. Several of them were born on the peninsula; some came for work.

There isn't a single person in Russia who is without links in some way to the Crimea. There are those whose ancestors fought in one of many wars, others who fell deeply in love with the region, and others still who simply feel the need to live in its unique, healing climate for their health.

"I ended up here by chance, and yet also not by chance." The sentiment behind the words of Anna Galichenko could be expressed by any one of our heroes.

Anatoly Annenkov

An outstanding landscape architect since the 1960s, Anatoly Annenkov worked as the landscape designer for Nikitsky Botanical Garden. He also created over 50 other parks, of which no fewer than 30 are on the Southern Coast of Crimea.

"In January 1946*, due to my excellent school grades, I was sent from an orphanage to the pioneer camp, Artek. Five whole days from the snowy corners of Russia we travelled to the Crimea, finally arriving by train at Artek during the night. When I woke up the next morning, I could not believe my eyes. There was no sign of snow, sleet or cold. The sun was shining and it was warm, almost like summer, and all around us were beautiful parks with unusual trees. But most importantly we could see the sea, and above us hung the enormous rock face of Ayu-Dag. Not wasting a minute, I climbed out of the window and ran through the park to the sea!

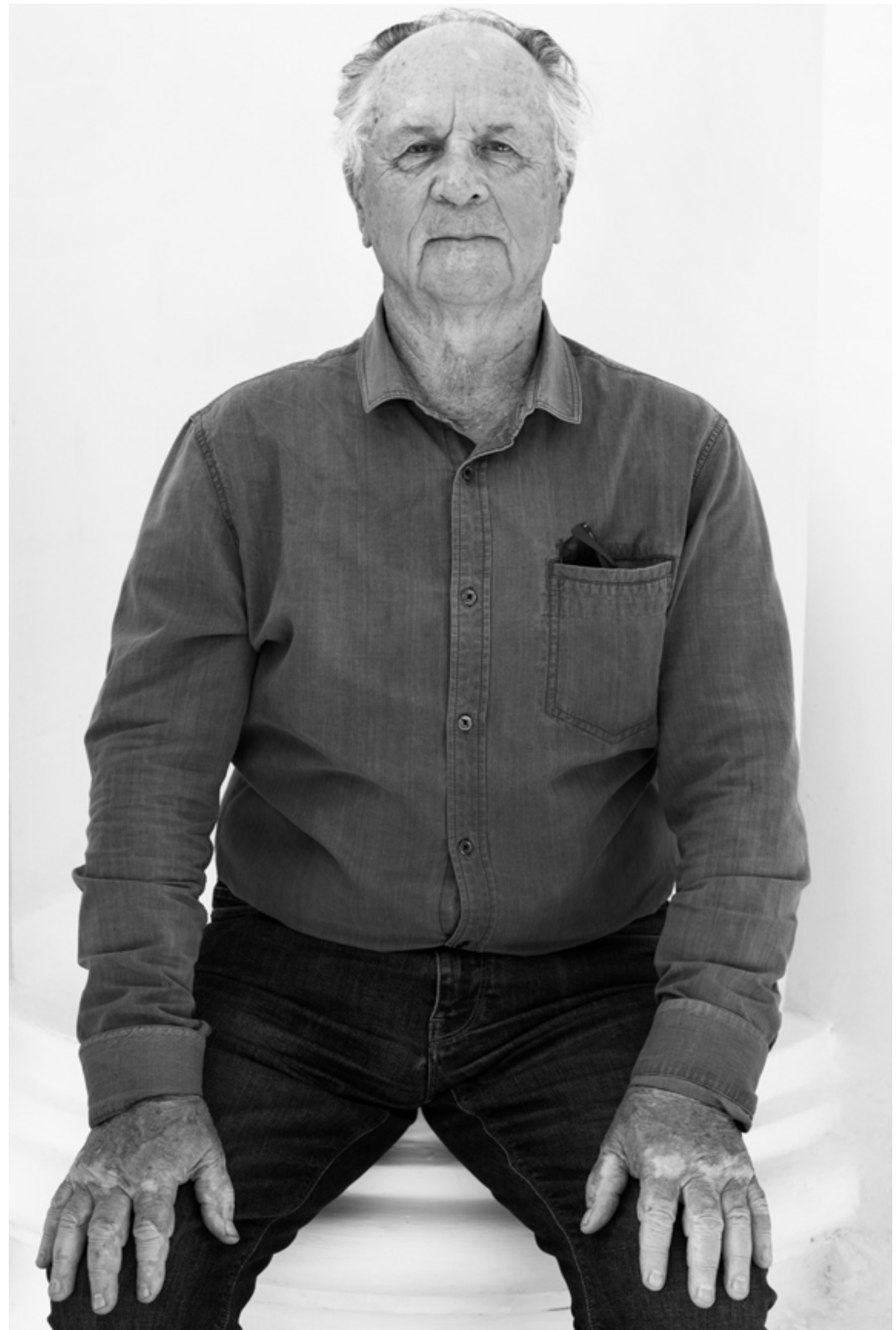
"Everything I saw on the coast amazed me. Along the shore stood abandoned, broken down Romanian anti-aircraft guns, cannons, and on the beach was a gravestone to an Unknown Sailor. All this was seen against the backdrop the Black Sea, with its enormous billowing waves.

"I was, of course, sent back, because Artek children were not allowed to go to the sea on their own, as often mines that had been thrown into the sea could detonate.

"It is my childhood memories of those Artek days that remind me of the main purpose of a landscape architect, which is to emotionally touch all those who visit a park; that a landscape composition must influence the visitor; that there should be the desire to communicate, be active or, on the contrary, to relax or meditate."



*The second winter after fascist troops (mostly Romanian and the German Wehrmacht) had left Crimea in 1944.



Previous spread: Group photo of the Expedition of Experts to the Southern Crimean Coast
Above and opposite: Anatoly Annenkov, Landscape Designer, Nikitsky Botanical Garden



Anna Galichenko

A distinguished historian and local expert, Anna Galichenko is also a specialist on the culture of the estates of the Crimea and art connoisseur who has worked at the Vorontsov Palace in Alupka for more than 50 years. She is the author of more than 100 research articles and books.

“My father was imprisoned after the war for anti-Soviet sympathies. When he was released he travelled here to find work. At the time I came with him, and I said I would never leave the Southern Coast of the Crimea, I’d never go anywhere ever again—because the road had made me violently sick. In those days the journey from the railway station to the sea took six hours through the mountains (now it is only an hour and a half!)

“I worked as a nurse. At the concert of a British pianist in Yalta I met my future husband. He had the ‘war sickness’, tuberculosis, and so at 23 I became a widow. I was also ill with TB and I therefore needed to change everything, including my profession, and start a new life.

“It was then that I began to work at the museum; and through this I became an art historian. In the 1990s I started writing about the various estates and met many of the descendants of the owners of the Crimean palaces, who were able to return from abroad for the first time.

“They visited the estates of their ancestors and were able to recognise places they knew from the memories that had been handed

down through their families’ stories. But when they came back again after the year 2000, they discovered many of the historical palaces and estates had been ruined or demolished due to rapid over-development. And the memory of their forebears had begun to disappear.

“I saw how quickly the heritage of the Southern Coast of Crimea could vanish. After that I went to Moscow. But now I’ve come back to Crimea to be near my husband’s grave.”

Irina Kryukova

The Nikitsky Botanical Garden, created in 1812, became the epicentre of the development of landscaping culture in the Southern Coast of Crimea. Catherine the Great commanded, “One of the most important features of Tauride shall be the parks, and in particular the botanical gardens!”

Nikitsky Botanical Garden is the original of all the parks in Crimea—and also for hundreds of parks in all the corners of Russia. Plants from the Nikitsky Botanical Garden were distributed free of charge to all estates in Crimea.

“I am the ‘standard bearer’ of Nikitsky Botanical Garden. Over the years, all my other ‘comrades-in-arms’ have died, but I continue to wave the flag for the Garden.” Irina uses a military metaphor because, over the last three decades, the Garden has been very badly damaged, with the loss of several hectares of land, by real estate developers. With a team of friends,

Irina has led an heroic battle against these forces to preserve the Garden and save it from total destruction.

“One of my grandfathers was Head Curator of the Russian Museum at the time of the Blockade. Another grandfather was a meteorologist in Crimea. I came to visit him during a school holiday in 1941 and so became witness to the war. Despite all the terrible things happening and the hardships for people, the Germans protected Crimea for themselves. Throughout the war, only one tree in the whole of the Nikitsky Botanical Garden was cut down, an araucaria, for Christmas. The German soldier responsible for this crime was sent to the Eastern Front.

“After the war I finished university and dreamt of going to work at Nikitsky Botanical Garden. But they did not take me at first. And so I went to the sea and flooded the shore with my tears, until my back was completely burnt by the sun.

“Three years later it came about that I got to work at the Garden and I have worked here now for more than 50 years. As a botanist I created the Museum of the Nikitsky Botanical Garden, and was also the first botanist in Crimea to have endangered plants included in the Red Data Book of Endangered Species of the USSR.

“I am the author of a book on the history of Nikitsky Botanical Garden, which will remain after me. The book is the result of my life—and it is my legacy.”



Top: Anna Galichenko, Art Historian, Alupka Palace Museum
Bottom: Irina Kryukova, Botanist, at her home in Nikitsky Botanical Garden

Vladimir Ezhov

Climate, sea, landscape, wildlife, local produce, grapes and wine, movement and healthy walks—all these are special to Crimean resorts. Vladimir Ezhov is Professor of the Scientific Institute of Medicine for Resorts.

“My roots are Crimean, I am a local historian and third-generation doctor. My father was in charge of running the sanatoria along the Southern Coast. Under his management were 40 tuberculosis health centres. My first ‘health centre’ experience took place at the age of five: a room in a health hotel, green lampshades with tassels, the sound of cicadas outside the window, adults having long evening conversations.

“In the morning, the seaside had an aroma of iodine; a dip in the cold water, a boat trip, the first ‘cheburek’* of my life. Everyone was in a good mood. This was, and still is, it seems, the value of a health resort, to come to the sea to feel good.”

* (a kind of lamb pasty originally from the Crimea and Caucasus)

Rameta Kushkhova

Madeira (Madera in Russian) has been made in the region at the winery, Massandra, for 126 years.

“I’ve been producing Madeira since 1988 and so far I am the only female winemaker of this type of wine—and keeper of the Crimean Madeira standard. I graduated from the institute in the midst of the famous anti-alcohol campaign, when the vineyards were cut down and there was no work anywhere in this area. I got into Massandra by a happy coincidence at a time when it was virtually impossible. But it is not by chance—even my name is almost an anagram of the name of the wine: Madera/Rameta!

“The Madeira is special to this region, preserving an original flavour with its amazing, versatile bouquet and completeness of taste. Enriched by the rays of the sun and the atmosphere of the Black Sea breeze, with a trace of resinous mountain air, it creates its own unique history.”



Above: Rameta Kushkhova, Winemaker, Madeira Court, Massandra Winery
Opposite: Vladimir Ezhov, Medical Doctor, Alupka Palace Museum



Natalia Starikova

Architect, town planner for small-towns and villages along the Southern Coast of Crimea, Natalia Starikova is the author of the Reconstruction Project for the Yalta Embankment.

“For me, Crimea is the place of my birth and the first words of my life are the names of the different villages in Southern Crimea—Laspi, Partenit, Alupka... My father, Peter Andreyevich Starikov, worked as the Head Architect in Yalta from 1950 to 1970 and the geography and place names of the Southern Coast were part of everyday life in our house. He helped in the creation of the All-Union Resorts along the coast; at the same time he restored old houses that had been damaged during the war years, (these were mainly historical palaces, villas and mansions), and in addition he built new sanatorium-resort complexes.

“But the deep wish of my father in his work, first and foremost, was to protect the ‘necklace’ of beachfront parks, the places left as a legacy of

the Southern Coast from before the Revolution. Largely thanks to him, up until the mid 1990s, some beautiful examples of the Modern Style in Yalta have luckily been preserved. Nowadays, when supervising a project, close attention must be paid to the landscape. The building bacchanalia of the last decade leaves me in sad bewilderment because I am so aware of the continuity and responsibility in relation to the generation of city planners from the 1950s to the 1970s.”

Marina Zemlyanichenko

Marina Zemlyanichenko has written dozens of books and articles on the history of the Romanov family and their estates along the Southern Coast of Crimea. For more than 30 years she has worked at Livadia Palace and participated in the creation of its museum.

“My husband and I worked as chemists in St Petersburg. When we were in our 40s there was an explosion in the laboratory. My husband was

physically injured and lost the chance to continue his research. In order to cure his depression, we decided to go and have a look at the Crimea.

“I witnessed how every day he returned to life and surprised myself by suggesting, ‘Let’s go to the South Coast to live.’ This was a very unusual step in Soviet times. We completely changed our lives, professionally studying the history of the Romanovs, which at the time was quite risky. Together we wrote many books and articles.”

Alla Khanilo

Since 1946 Alla Khanilo has worked at the Chekhov House Museum as a guide and Chekhov expert. She arrived at the Lacombe photo-shoot holding her ‘employment book’ (the Soviet-era document that showed your place of work). In it can be seen the handwriting of Anton Chekhov’s sister, Maria Pavlovna Chekhova, who had hired her as a guide for the museum. For more than 10 years they worked together, until Maria Chekhova’s death in 1957.





Top: Alla Khanilo, former Researcher and Guide, Chekhov House Museum
Bottom: Nikolay Donenko, Dean of the Cathedral of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin, Nizhnaya Oreanda
Opposite: Alla Khanilo holding her Employment Book which includes her 1946 employment record by Maria Chekhova, Anton Chekhov's sister