

Russian narrative non-fiction

Vodka is much bigger

Essay. Azbuka. St. Petersburg 2020. 93 pages

It just so happens that vodka is considered a purely Russian drink. And it can't be drunk properly anywhere but in Russia. To drink it as it should be, as intended by those who created it. ... that is, again, by the Russians.

Foreigners consider vodka to be the strongest and hardest drink, almost impossible to consume, with a killer strength, and just as inscrutable as everything else Russian. Others see the special ability of Russians to drink vodka as a mysterious national peculiarity, bravery, and native strength. There is even a certain amount of envy in this: they just can't do it! But why?

The thing is that vodka cannot be treated as any other strong drink, which is used to get intoxicated. Vodka is a special science, part of a unique lifestyle and deep culture, not just a colorless transparent liquid!

In his essay „Vodka is much bigger“ Evgeny Grishkovets, with his inherent humor and wit, as well as a genuine love for this traditional drink, tells about the features of vodka and its higher manifestations in Russian culture.

“Evgeny Grishkovets is a comforter. Those are needed at all times, but especially in difficult times. Here everyone finds something for himself. Everyone who knows that there are no recipes or advice to be found here. Everyone who understands irony and who is no stranger to self-irony. Everyone who not only wants thoughtful reading, but also wants to have fun while reading. Everyone who is not only looking for laughter and fun while reading, but is also looking for a thoughtful book.” NG

“Now has come that rare time, that most beautiful moment when it is better to read about vodka than to drink it. This is not a treatment, not round of stories and tales, not an overlong toast. Although it is the first, the second, and the third, of course, too. But, first of all, a soulful and warm conversation.” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*

“There only are two kinds of readers: those who like Grishkovez, and those who have not read him yet.” *Echo Moskv*

“Exactly what was needed: Literature for an intelligent, educated reader, which combines a refined sense of irony with a positive view of the world.” *Knizhnoe Obozrenie*



THE AUTHOR

translations
13 languages

awards
Big Book shortlist 2018

sample available
english

other works
The Shirt
The Rivers
Asphalt
A...a

Grishkovets was born in 1967 in Kemerovo. He became famous in Russia for his plays, which he writes, directs and acts in. He has been awarded two major Russian theatrical prizes for his plays which have also been performed in Germany, France and Poland. His first novel, “The Shirt” (2004), was an event in the literary life of Russia and brought him a prize for the Best Debut, and the Anti-Booker prize. Grishkovets lives in Kaliningrad.

Evgeni Grishkovets