1. Russia was given the rights to host the FIFA World Cup for the very first time in its history. This historical moment took place on December 2, 2010. The matches will kick off on June 14, 2018 with the finals taking place on July 15, 2018.

2. This will be Russia’s 11th appearance in the World Cup.

3. Russia’s highest ever finish in the FIFA World Cup is the 4th position in the 1966 World Cup.

4. This will be the first FIFA World Cup to be hosted in Europe since 2006 and the first time ever a World Cup is hosted in Eastern Europe.

5. This will be the 21st World Cup since the tournament started in Uruguay in 1930.

6. In this World Cup, there will be 32 competing teams all vying for the golden trophy at the end of the tournament.

7. The FIFA World Cup Russia 2018’s kick off match and the final will both be played in the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow.

8. The World Cup Russia 2018 brand identity and logo were unveiled on October 28, 2014, in space by Cosmonauts at the International Space Station which was projected onto the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.

9. The theme of the FIFA World Cup Russia 2018 is a dream and cosmic outer space exploration. The logo has been designed to look like the World Cup football trophy and is embedded with folk motives like matryoshkas and firebirds.

10. The mascot for the FIFA World Cup Russia 2018 was selected through online voting. He is a wolf with the name Wolf Zabivaka™ and was designed by a student called Ekaterina Bocharova.

11. For the very first time since 1958, Italy will not be part of the FIFA World Cup.

12. This World Cup will see the debuts of two new teams: Iceland and Panama.

13. Zimbabwe was expelled by FIFA from qualifying in the World Cup Russia 2018 because they did not pay their coach.

14. Indonesia was expelled by FIFA for participating in World Cup Russia 2018 qualifiers because of its government’s interference in the game.

15. The Telstar 18 football that will be kicked around in the FIFA World Cup Russia comes from Pakistan and is thermo bonded (made by attaching the panels of the football through heat).