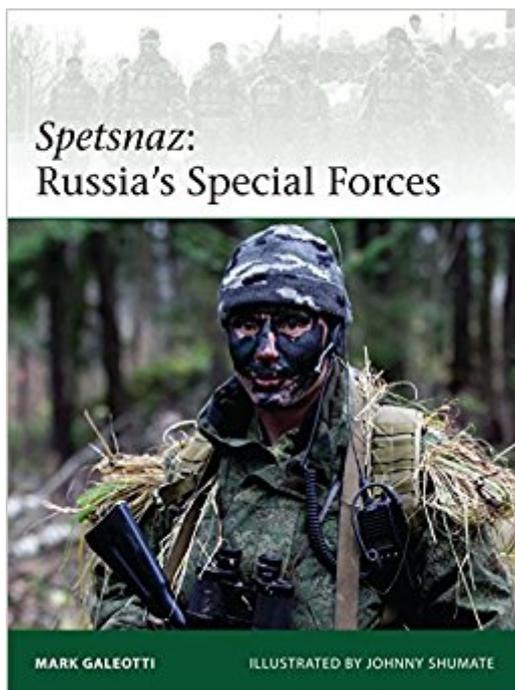


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# Spetsnaz: Russia's Special Forces (Elite)



## Synopsis

When the shadowy, notorious Spetsnaz were first formed, they drew on a long Soviet tradition of elite, behind-the-lines commando forces from World War II and even earlier. Throughout the 1960s-70s they were instrumental both in projecting Soviet power in the Third World and in suppressing resistance within the Warsaw pact. As a powerful, but mysterious tool of a world superpower, the Spetsnaz have inevitably become the focus of many 'tall tales' in the West. In this book, a peerless authority on Russia's military Special Forces debunks several of these myths, uncovering truths that are often even more remarkable. Now, since the chaotic dissolution of the USSR and the two Chechen Wars, Russian forces have seen increasing modernization, involving them ever more in power-projection, counter-insurgency and anti-terrorism and the Spetsnaz have been deployed as a spearhead in virtually all of these operations. This book offers a unique, absorbing guide to the secrets of the Spetsnaz, their most noteworthy missions and personalities, but is also packed with details such as orders-of-battle, equipment and operational doctrine.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Spetsnaz: Russia's Special Forces” chronicles everything from their origins to recent headlines. The Spetsialnogo naznacheniya (Special Designation) troops have carved out a reputation for ruthless efficiency, proficiency and ferocity. However, the Spetsnaz seem to be rather misunderstood and to some extent even mythologized. Mark Galeotti, an internationally recognized expert, traces their history

while outlining the evolution of their organization, missions and character. Their uniforms, equipment and weapons are detailed in depth. Galeotti shows how the Spetsnaz are the cornerstone of a new Russian way of war that stresses deception, surprise and speed, ensuring that they will maintain their elite status for the foreseeable future.

Toy Soldier & Model Figure magazine

Professor Mark Galeotti, formerly senior lecturer in international history at Keele University, is Clinical Professor of Global Affairs, New York University. He is a former Foreign Office adviser on Russian security affairs, and for 15 years (1991-2006) wrote a monthly column on this for Jane's Intelligence Review. The author lives in New York, NY.

As always, Osprey publishing delivers. No doubt I am sure more in-depth description of Russian weapon systems could have been added. Still the strength of this book is in the detailed origins of the Spetsnaz. The author dispelled the myth of Russia's most mysterious fighting force and showed the multilayers of this service.

As author Mark Galeotti points out, the Spetsnaz, Russia's much-vaunted military special forces, have been the subject of a certain amount of mythologizing over the years, inside and outside Russia. This Osprey Elite Series book is meant to be a corrective as well as a well-written history of Russia's Spetsnaz, including their roles in recent conflicts in Chechnya, Georgia and Ukraine. The introduction makes the crucial point that the Spetsnaz are not strictly speaking analogous to U.S. or other Western special forces units. They are special purpose units, meant for reconnaissance and specialized battlefield tasks, although their professionalism in comparison to the rest of the Russian military has often led to their being used in other roles, such as conventional infantry and for stability operations. The bulk of the narrative is a very readable history of the Spetsnaz, from their roots in the Bolshevik Red Army up through the Spanish Civil War, the Second World War, the Cold War, Afghanistan and the conflicts of modern Russia. The text makes the point that the Spetsnaz have often inspired both imitation and competition from other elements of the Soviet/Russian military, especially the Airborne Troops. The text is very nicely supported by an excellent collection of photographs, illustrations, and maps. Some coverage of uniforms and weapons is included. The concise nature of the book (62 pages of text) limits the amount of detail that can be included. The author has a strong background in the subject and is not shy about sharing his knowledge and his opinions. Recommended as an excellent introduction to the topic.

Another good title from Osprey. This Osprey Elite #206 does a good job of introducing the reader to the Spetsnaz, the Soviet/Russian special forces units long compared to those of the West. The author gives the reader an extensive history of the roots of the Spetsnaz units, going back to the days of the Bolsheviks and the Russian Civil War. Normally this would be a good thing, but in this case, it actually took space in this small volume from more recent information and, frankly, I saw as filler. The author does a decent job of evaluating the Spetsnaz in terms of Soviet requirements during the Cold War and how they viewed the Spetsnaz units differently than Western armies viewed their "special forces" units. Again, the author does a good job of briefly looking at the Spetsnaz actions in the Czech crisis of 1968, then looks at their operations during the Afghan War where their reputation was put to the test and, for the most part, showed themselves to be very effective in anti-mujahideen operations. Operations by Spetsnaz after the fall of the "Evil Empire" and subsequent wars in the Caucasus (particularly in Chechnya) are summarized. I found it interesting that some on the muslim side in the Chechnyan conflict had been former members of Soviet Spetsnaz units fighting members of the Russian Spetsnaz! There's a lot of good here including weapons and equipment as well as operations histories and training. It's not perfect and, as stated earlier, spends too much time for my taste on largely irrelevant roots and not enough on more specifics of modern operations. But, all in all, a good Osprey summary on the subject with the usual excellent Osprey photos, illustrations and color plates. Four stars.

Spetsnaz Russia's special forces is another very well represented book by the Osprey series. Book covers the latest material in an easy to understand writing. Book has many pictures and colored plates in it. I have read several books about this formation but the information is always dated, but not the case with this. Each unit location and mission status is covered also the latest weapons is covered. Great book on the organization and the latest information makes this book worth the purchase. Great read and enjoyable

I was pretty disappointed in this. This is mostly just a history lesson on the Spetsnaz, listing some of their famous missions and founders, I feel like there is so much else I don't know about the Spetsnaz that this book doesn't address, are there different kinds of Spetsnaz? Are the VDV (airborne) spetsnaz? What is their training like? and so on. It does go over spetsnaz uniforms and gear briefly, but overall I was disappointed.

I am interested in all things Soviet and modern Russian military and police/security forces. I have read Victor Suvarov's books on the subject of the spetsnaz. This book gives great information about the history of the spetsnaz and brings the subject up to date. This book will interest people looking for information about the spetsnaz and special ops units in the Russian armed forces.

A nice book on the different Spetsnaz units and sister units trained to the same standard. The author does a good job explaining what Spetsnaz means which has been misunderstood here in the west. There are several Spetsnaz units and each one of them are covered to a limited degree. Their various roles and skillsets are covered as well as some of their operations. I would suggest this to anyone interest in Special Operations units or the Russian military in general.

Very educational

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