

A Good Cause: A Flea Market With a Difference

By [Madeleine Grieve](#)

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Nikolai Titov, 28, before he fell ill.

Check out a high-class flea market this Saturday and help others as Alive, a charity that helps adults pay for much-needed medical assistance, hosts Blagomarket.

The market will sell clothes, shoes, accessories, home furnishings, books and cosmetics. Each donated item has had to meet strict quality criteria, organizers say, but will cost between only 200 and 1,000 rubles (\$6 to \$33). Designer items will also be sold at special prices. ☒

The idea for the market came from photographer and journalist Natasha Voronitzin, who in 2004 was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and saw her life transformed.

She is housebound and last year invited her friends round to choose from the many beautiful things in her house she now no longer could use.

However, after one friend suggested setting up a market to raise money for her treatment

and another proposed inviting some well-known Russian designers to take part, Blagomarket was born, said Anna Stepanova, one of the organizers.

"We exchange one type of good for another," Stepanova said.

Blagomarket will also host master classes from professional stylists, make-up artists, aromatherapists and painters and entertain visitors with a plov party, music and dancing.

In 2011, Blagomarket raised just over 350,000 rubles (\$11,000). This year, they hope to raise 500,000.

The money will go to Eduard Alexeyev, a 27-year-old from the Rostov region who requires 250,000 rubles for rehabilitation treatment to help him walk again after collapsing three years ago with a bout of brainstem encephalitis.

The other beneficiary is Nikolai Titov, 28, who needs 250,000 rubles for a 21-day rehabilitation course. Titov, who has a wife and two children, collapsed with acute encephalomyelitis, swelling on the brain, which left him almost completely paralyzed.

Blagomarket's Freak Market is on Saturday and Sunday. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. 7 Khokhlovsky Pereulok, Metro Kitai-Gorod. www.blagomarket.com, www.livefund.ru.

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