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McDonald's Schedules Siberian Expansion

By Rachel Nielsen

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McDonald's opened its restaurant on Ulitsa Krasnaya Presnya, pictured, in Moscow in 1996.

After serving more than 2 billion fast-food meals and opening more than 300 locations here, McDonald's has committed to opening its first restaurants east of the Ural Mountains.

The U.S.-based fast-food giant is "actively looking into the possibility of opening restaurants in Novosibirsk, Barnaul, Tomsk and Novokuznetsk," Viktor Eidemiller, vice president of development for McDonald's Russia, told Vedomosti.

In addition, McDonald's will open its first location in Krasnoyarsk at the end of 2013 or the beginning of 2014, he said.

Since it entered the Russian market in January 1990 with its restaurant near Moscow's Pushkin Square, McDonald's has ramped up to about 30,000 employees throughout European Russia. It is also expanding its network of domestic suppliers that manufacture foodstuffs

that then get delivered to its restaurants.

Earlier this year, McDonald's Russia president Khamzat Khasbulatov said expanding in Siberia and even the Urals posed logistical problems.

"We have to consider the possibilities for obtaining real estate that makes it possible for us to create a chain, so that the logistics and logistics management will be effective," he said at an April news conference.

Eidemiller told Vedomosti that the Siberian locations will get their food items from the logistics center in Kazan, which is midway between Moscow and the Urals. Later, they will receive items through Yekaterinburg, Eidemiller said.

Close competitor and fried-chicken chain KFC, which is owned by Yum! Brands, has almost 200 restaurants in Russia, including one location in each of the Siberian cities of Omsk, Krasnoyarsk, Novosibirsk, Nizhnevartovsk and Surgut, according to its website. Sandwich chain Subway's website says the company already has 36 locations in Siberia and one in the Far East among its 220 locations.

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