

Good Bars and Pubs For Expat Sports Fans

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The dark, wooden bar and array of taps with familiar international brews is like a reminder of home at O'Hara's.

As the Red Sox and Cardinals face off in baseball's World Series, American expats are hard-pressed to find a place to view the game. Indeed, any sport-loving expat who has lived abroad for long enough knows the last-minute panic to find a bar showing the Superbowl, Wimbledon, or the Champions League final.

To make things easier next time, we have compiled a list of decent pubs and sports bars in Moscow where you can head to watch your favorite championship or just relax with like-minded sports fans. While even these sports havens do not regularly show baseball, they have a good choice of beer and show matches that you cannot always watch on public television. These places attract expats and Muscovites alike during game days and, of course, Friday nights.

O'Hara's

Baumanskaya is an area with a large number of Irish pubs, and O'Hara's is located just a five-minute walk from the nearest metro station. While the pub may prize itself on its selection of whiskies — with more than 55 different types available — O'Hara's offers a good choice of beers from across the British Isles: from Irish stouts to Scottish ales and English cider. European brews are also available, with the cheapest pint costing 240 rubles (\$7.5) for a Heineken and all beers available at a discounted price of 200 rubles on Sundays.

While there is no large screen in the pub, O'Hara's has a decent number of small screens on the first and second floors that relay Russian and international sporting events. Soccer, hockey and boxing are all broadcast at the pub, though if there is a specific sporting event you want to watch that is not being shown, the management team will try to accommodate your needs. And, if you are not pleased with your team's result on the pitch, you can always take destiny into your own hands by playing a game of table soccer — against someone worse than you — for 50 rubles.

O'Hara's is located on 20 Ulitsa Fridrikha Engelsa. Metro Baumanskaya. 495-710-7324. For more information visit oharapub.ru.

Liga Pap

In Chistiye Prudy, one of the more historical areas of the town, every third building houses a bar, club or restaurant, and it is here that you will find Liga Pap. Located a 10-minute walk from the nearest metro station, Liga Pap is a classy establishment with more than 20 HD screens — with 3D format for selected games — and a large 5-by-3-meter projection screen. Crucially for “armchair” sports fans, screens are easily visible from every seat in the pub, so you will not have to crane your neck while cheering on your team. The pub's unique selling point, however, has to be in the main hall, where tables are set on graduated stands in front of the large screen. Not only does this mimic the physical layout of a stadium, it also goes some way to recreating the stadium atmosphere — especially when busy. Liga Pap shows all the popular sports, including football, hockey, athletics and even Formula 1, though be sure to ask if your desired sporting event is not being broadcast.

Liga Pap seems to be targeted at a more highbrow audience with cocktails more the order of the day here than beer. That said, prices are reasonable with a pint of Liga's own beer available for 160 rubles.

Liga Pap, 24 Ulitsa Bolshaya Lubyanka. Metro Chistiye Prudy. 495-624-3636. For more information, visit ligapap.ru.

Bobby Dazzler

Another pub located at Chistiye Prudy is Bobby Dazzler. Opened in 2003, this place has become a second home for Moscow-based supporters of the English soccer team Manchester United. “The main idea of this place is to show people English and generally British culture as it is,” said Alexei Yuryevich, the administrator at Bobby Dazzler. “Our pub is the only [one of its type] in Moscow. We play British music, cook British food, offer British beer, show premier-league football and many other sports. We show the British style. All these things

add to the pub's authenticity. That is the point," he said. And he does have a good point. It is rare to find a pub abroad that so captures the essence of a traditional British pub, but Bobby Dazzler somehow manages to do this.

Dazzler's has a large selection of English beer and ciders available, but also offers a good range of beers from across the British Isles and continental Europe. A pint of most ales, lagers and stouts costs between 230 and 250 rubles. Bobby Dazzler's is a nonsmoking pub.

Bobby Dazzler is located at 7/13 Kostyansky Pereulok. Metro Chistiye Prudy. 495-608-0383. For more information, visit bobbydazzler.ru.

Sports Bar

The aptly named Sports Bar is located a five-minute walk from the nearest metro station in the Novy Arbat area. Inside, replica soccer shirts and hockey helmets adorn the walls, and, for those who fancy a flutter, there is also a betting shop on the premises. While small, the bar packs in thirteen HD televisions and has three large projector screens, broadcasting everything from soccer and tennis to NHL games and synchronized swimming. For fans who are worried about missing any big games back home, such as the

Superbowl, the bar stays open until 6 a.m. to accommodate for late broadcasts.

Sports Bar is reasonably priced, though the beer menu is not very extensive. A pint of the cheapest lager, Matsuri, will set you back 165 rubles.

Sports Bar is located on 10 Novy Arbat. Metro Arbatskaya. 495-690-4311. For more information, visit sports-bar.ru.

Kruzhka

While drinks prices in the places listed above are all fairly similar, if you fancy somewhere cheap — or simply wish to watch a game somewhere with a lot of noise — Kruzhka is a good alternative. This beer-hall chain has more than 40 bars dotted around the city, usually located close to a metro station, so Kruzhka also provides a good back-up option should you find all the other places to be completely full of people. Information regarding broadcasts and reservations is available on their website.

Kruzhka is a budget choice and does not have the most extensive food or drinks menu, but it allows those who are not able to spend much money to meet with friends and feel the atmosphere of the sports community. While international sporting events are broadcast here, there is a preference for Russian domestic sport. A pint of the cheapest beer, Baltika, will set you back just 75 rubles.

To find your nearest Kruzhka, visit kruzhka.ru.

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