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Afisha Picnic Celebrates 10 Years With Suede, Food and Music

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Suede, Jamiroquai and MGMT headline the picnic, which is alcohol-free unless you buy an expensive ticket.

Ten years after a listings magazine decided to have the then-novel idea of an alcohol-free music festival in a park in Moscow, Afisha Picnic celebrates a decade as the city's top festival with a packed lineup and even more food than normal.

Over the years, the festival has had a host of big names and up-and-coming artists who would become too big to ever come back to Afisha, such as Beirut, Marina and the Diamonds, and Janelle Monae.

"There are two traditional summer institutions in Moscow: Afisha Picnic and Food Holiday," said Alexei Zimin, editor-in-chief of the magazine Afisha-Food. "The first one takes place in Kolomonskoye Park in July, and the second one in Gorky Park on the last Saturday of August. But this year marks the 10th anniversary of the picnic, so we decided to change our

calendar and geographical preferences."

In other words, the food festival is being combined with the music festival. Moscow's best chefs will be showing off their skills, and you can pick up the best of the city's organic food and non-organic food, from Georgian khachapuri to New Orleans watermelon salad with basil and chili.

Brit pop veterans Suede, Jamiroquai and MGMT are the headline acts playing on the main stage in the second half of a day. But there are plenty of other acts to catch such as American rap star Talib Kweli, whose song "Get By" was recently remixed featuring Kanye West, Mos Def and Jay Z.

There's also Sohn, the Vienna-based Londoner whose lyrics like "I died a week ago" have seen his music dubbed "sadwave," Belarussian rock band Lyapis Trubetskoi, deemed the loudest Russian-speaking group around, and Russian group Kasta, four rappers from Rostov who return to the festival five years after their last appearance.

"Afisha Picnic, with its interesting selection of musicians, is the most enjoyable compared with other outdoor [festivals]," said the group Kasta, speaking through their press secretary. "This year we are looking forward to Talib Kweli's and Jamiroquai's performances."

If you do happen to hate both food and music, the festival has plenty more on offer with a theater for children to create a performance, plus events and activities from Moscow's hippest museums and the usual selection of leisurely picnic activities including the sport of speed badminton.

Of course, it's not Moscow if there's not a way to find alcohol in a dry-zone festival. Some people found places selling beer last year near the river, or you can stump up 5,000 rubles for a ticket that gives you access to a bar.

Afisha Picnic starts at noon on Saturday and runs till 11 p.m. Presale tickets are available for 2,500 rubles ($75). picnic.afisha.ru*.*

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