

Russia Wants Domestic Alternative to Booking.com

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Four Seasons Hotel on Moscow's Manezh Square.

The Russian government is planning to create a domestic hotel booking service to rival the likes of Booking.com, Kommersant reported Friday.

The project is meant to advance domestic tourism by promoting obscure hotels and spas in the regions, the newspaper said, citing the Federal Tourism Agency.

The yet-unnamed online service will also sell museum and train tickets.

The tourism agency and the Communications and Press Ministry are to jointly draft and present the an outline of the project next year, the paper said.

State companies Rostelecom and Rostec were cited as saying they were interested in the project, which could cost around \$50 million to develop over four years, according to Kommersant.

Domestic tourism reached 32 million travelers in Russia last year, compared to 18 million who traveled abroad, according to the Federal Tourism Agency.

Russia has worked to decrease its use of various global services in recent months as its relations with the West gradually unravel over Moscow's alleged meddling in the Ukrainian civil war.

The government announced plans to create a domestic payment system after Visa and MasterCard abruptly stopped services to two Russian banks sanctioned by the U.S. last spring.

State-sponsored search engine Sputnik, an alternative to Google, was launched by Rostelecom in May, though its daily audience currently stands at about 3,000 users, according to web statistics engine Liveinternet.ru.

See also:

[Ukraine Crisis Hurts Russian Tour Operators](#)

[Tour Agency Bankruptcy Leaves 25,000 Russians Stranded Overseas](#)

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