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The Seven Best Places to Have Breakfast in Moscow

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The Metropol hotel has a lavish breakfast in its Great Hall for 2,000 rubles.

An old Russian adage says, "Eat breakfast yourself, share lunch with a friend, give dinner to your enemy." Breakfast-wise this meant, until recently, a trip to Starlite Diner for your average expat. Now Moscow has more and more exciting morning hot spots, serving homemade pastries, stacks of syrupy pancakes, eggs in every possible permutation and, of course, fresh takes on Russia's favorite morning staple: porridge.

This is our guide to some of the best breakfast places in the city — and one of the weirdest.

Cook'kareku

Cook'kareku (Russian for cock-a-doodle-doo) serves breakfast 24/7 with a 30 percent discount on food from a country where it's breakfast time at the time of ordering. This means there is a bumper crop of discount dishes between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. Moscow time, when it is

deemed breakfast time in France, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and Scandinavia. If there between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m., you can get a discount on a bizarre-sounding Pad Thai breakfast.

If all this sounds a bit complicated (the clock-shaped menu takes some deciphering), it's worth remembering that all breakfasts are served at all times for the full price of 420 rubles — a bargain, considering the quality of ingredients and their impeccable presentation.
The Kamchatkan breakfast (11 p.m. to 1 a.m.) is excellent — scrambled eggs on toast with smoked salmon and crab, garnished with lashings of beetroot puree and a dollop of *smetana* (sour cream). The Scandinavian is similarly good, poached eggs served with spinach and potato puree and sweetly marinated gravlax.

9 Sadovaya-Kudrinskaya Ulitsa, bldg 4. Metro Barrikadnaya. Tel. (495) 660-53-39.

Uilliam's

Uilliam's isn't the cheapest morning stop in Moscow, but that's not unexpected when it's full of clientele with tiny dogs peeking out of their designer handbags. Still, its flagship breakfast is both generously sized and delicious, coming in at 700 rubles for two courses. A yogurt-topped acai berry shot accompanies a crispy sesame bagel, which can be spread with fragrant, lemony hummus, slathered in smoked salmon, or both. Eggs follow, poached to perfection, surrounded by spinach and drowning in Hollandaise. A treat.

20A Malaya Bronnaya Ulitsa, Metro Mayakovskaya. Tel. (495) 650-64-62.

Coffee Piu

With views over Chistiye Prudy, pastries prepared before your eyes and the occasional smell of rich spiced apple filling the air, Piu manages to be both homey and spacious, with the added bonus of a nail salon in the next room. The blini are a world away from the usual Teremok fare, with warm parcels plump with creamy *tvorog*, or cottage cheese, and slivers of smoked salmon, with the slightest hint of buttery crust round the edges. Two hundred rubles will get you a tea or coffee, plus a choice of oatmeal *kasha* (porridge) or whatever the special is that day e.g. apple griddle cakes on Mondays, cheese omelets on Fridays.

9 Chistoprudny Bulvar Bldg. 1. Metro Chistiye Prudy. Tel. (495) 624-29-83.

Breakfast Cafe

Breakfast Cafe has all the touches you'd expect from a member of the Friends Forever franchise, which counts Conversation Cafe, Friends Forever, Chocolate Brownie Kitchen and I Love Cake among its number. Breakfast Cafe does breakfast all day, every day, and boy does it do it well. Stacks of fluffy raspberry pancakes drowned in white chocolate sauce; eggs Royale under Hollandaise with asparagus, smoked salmon and caviar; "Basketball" omelet with bacon, spinach and Parmesan; and, for those still unsatisfied, giant slabs of cake. Prices hover around 400 rubles for a generous meal, and the company's attention to detail makes each visit stand out — nice staff, food painstakingly presented and comfy blankets on the backs of chairs.

2/1 Malaya Nikitskaya Ulitsa. Metro Arbatskaya. Tel. 8 (916) 640-86-36.

Hotel Metropol

Nestled in Teatralny Proezd, the Metropol offers non-guests a lavish breakfast beneath the ornate stained-glass roof of the hotel's Great Hall, which was designed by artist Sergei Chekhonin at the turn of the 20th century. The Metropol serves a buffet breakfast at 2,000 rubles a head, with a range of pastries, juices, cold cuts, blini, fruit and lots of Prosecco. Come for the ceiling, stay for the caviar.

2 Teatralny Proezd. Metro Teatralnaya. Tel. (499) 501-78-00.



Breakfast Cafe

An eggy meal at Breakfast Cafe.

'The 21' Food Court

With an opening time of midday, food court "The 21" is not strictly a breakfast place, but its wide array of foods makes it a weekend favorite for groups with varying tastes. Carnivores will be sated by the Austrian sausage stand, Ess-Thetik, which offers hearty portions of wurst on authentic rye bread with piquant mustard and a side of coleslaw. The No Crepe stand offers delicate, crispy crepes — a delicious salted caramel and banana, as well as a reasonable ham, cheese, tomato and olive for 220 rubles. Belgian waffles (around 350 rubles) come piled with fruit, whipped cream and Nutella. Coffee from the WakeCup stand and smoothies, frozen yogurt and freshly pressed juices from the Freshberry stand complete your morning.

21 Novy Arbat. Metro Arbatskaya, Smolenskaya. Tel. (495) 691 77-87.

Kitchenette

Kitchenette's smart potted plants and sleek exterior mark it out on Kamergersky Pereulok, Moscow's main car-free street. Once inside, their eggs benedict burst deep yellow over warm, sweet brioche, with rich Hollandaise and good, strong coffee. The breakfast menu is a respectable length and, considering the location, prices are good. They also offer a 10 percent discount on weekdays before noon, when the 350 ruble business lunch deal gets going. They get extra marks for opening at 8 a.m., and their low-calorie vegetarian omelets.

6 Kamergersky Pereulok. Metro Teatralnaya. Tel. (495) 221 88 47

2 Presnenskaya Naberezhnaya. Afimall City, 5th floor. Metro Vystavochnaya, Tel. (495) 727-98-90.

Honorable Mentions:

Fresh

Upmarket vegetarian cafes serving a tasty, if slightly narrow range of all-day breakfasts. Soy milk is offered with all hot drinks and unusual options like tofu scrambled eggs, avocado toast and pineapple griddle cakes. Prices range from 300 to 400 rubles.

11 Ulitsa Bolshaya Dmitrovka. Metro Arbatskaya. Tel. 8 (965) 278-90-89.

10/7 Yermolaevsky Pereulok. Metro Mayakovskaya. Tel. 8 (968) 44125 91.

Cafe Pushkin

Cafe Pushkin's 24-hour breakfast menu is as decadent and expansive as the restaurant's fake gilt interior. Blini with black caviar costs a stonking 4,780 rubles, though the thrifty diner can get standard red caviar for 680 rubles. The usual range of egg dishes are on offer, but you can sample traditional crispy pancakes with groats and chicken liver for 485 rubles.

26A Tverskoy Bulvar. Metro Tverskaya, 8 (495) 739-00-33.

Weirdest Breakfast in Moscow

Khash

Khash is an infamous Caucasian delicacy that is said to make a blind-drunk man sober and jolly. Made from boiled-up cow's hooves, cow stomach spices and garlic, khash is known for its hangover-curing properties. But this may be down to the generous shots of vodka that come with it. Fortunately, the cow's feet are depilated beforehand, so you can rest assured it's hair of the dog that you're getting, not hair of the cow. The glistening remains of a cow stomach, pink and slightly gristly, can be found in the bowl's murky depths, and if you feel the need to disguise the taste of offal, a pungent saucer of pure garlic puree is never far away. Khash from U Burcho at Paveletskaya (open from 10am) can soothe your aching head for 670 rubles, while Gayane's at Smolenskaya serves it from midday for 420 rubles.

U Burcho. 77/1 Sadovnicheskaya nabererezhnaya. Metro Paveletskaya, Tel. (495) 979-06-42.

Gayane's. 2 Smolensky Pereulok, Bldg 1/4. Metro Smolenskaya. Tel. (499) 795-11-60.

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