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Russia Will Build Spa to Rival Europe's Top Resorts – Official

By The Moscow Times

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The Russian government may build a spa complex near the Caucasus Mountains meant to throw down the gauntlet to Europe's historic resorts, a top government official told news agency RBC.

"We need to make a Russian Freiburg — a world center for balneotherapy ... around which we will develop private clinics, food stations and so forth," Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Khloponin said in an interview with news agency RBC published last week. Freiburg is a resort town in southern Germany known for its thermal baths.

The proposed spa in the Kavkazskiye Mineralniye Vody territory would receive around 30 billion rubles ($560 million) in funding from the federal budget, Khloponin said.

The Kavkazskiye Mineralniye Vody territory, which lies in a mountainous region in Russia's Stavropol region, has been home to a number of resort towns since the tsarist era, among them the eponymous city of Mineralniye Vody.

The scheme may be Khloponin's alone, however. When asked for comment by RBC, the Economic Development Ministry and Finance Ministry said they had not heard of the plan.

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