

Hipster Market Opens at Moscow City Financial District

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A new market featuring food, sports and fashion has opened in Moscow's financial district Moscow City in an attempt to bring some life into the crisis-struck business center.

The market, called Empire Blackyard, will operate until Aug. 28 in the underground space of the Empire Tower, a 60-story skyscraper. The market offers ping-pong and skateboard contests, master classe, a bookstore, a cinema and fresh food straight from Moscow's legendary Danilovsky market.

“We organized Empire Blackyard market to show that Moscow City is not an isolated capsule,” Ksenia Smolnikova, Moscow City PR manager told the Moscow Times. “We welcome everyone, and want to prove that there are plenty things to do here besides shopping and taking in the panoramic views.”

More than 20 companies are taking part in the month-long event. Ping Pong club “Moscow” and Pepper Customs, which makes longboards, a kind of skateboard, are organizing

tournaments and putting together demonstrations of their sports, GREENGO floral and home décor shop has a booth selling flowers and decorations while burgers are available from the Durum Durum food truck.

Online service Amediateka is in charge of the cinema and will show episodes of the top-ranked TV shows according to rankings by IMDB. The lineup includes “True Detective,” “Game of Thrones,” and “Boardwalk Empire” among others.

All shows are dubbed in Russian, but viewers can request headphones broadcasting the original English language.

The organizers hope that the initiative will revitalize the financial district, which has especially hit hard by the ruble devaluation and the economic sanctions imposed by the West against Russia as punishment for its role in the Ukraine crisis. Many firms pulled out of their Moscow City offices and construction of new buildings in the area slowed.

PR manager Smolnikova said that the image of the district as one of empty skyscrapers is not accurate.

“It's not clearly visible for Muscovites usually, but there are actually around 100,000 people everyday in this area — workers, residents, guests,” Smolnikova told the Moscow Times. “We want locals to be able to get everything here: not only work, but also relax, have dinner, watch a movie during a week and even come back here with their children on the weekend.”

Tatiana Voltzinger, the development director of Moscow City was quoted in the Empire Blackyard press release as saying that such markets will be held throughout the year and will include other activities, such as educational programs and music festivals, in addition to more street food options.

The Empire Blackyard market will take place from July 28–Aug. 28 at 6 Presnenskaya embankment, bldg. 2, Empire business complex, underground gallery. It will be open every day from 12:00 p.m. – 9 p.m.

For more information and schedule visit citynext.ru or <https://www.facebook.com/events/605686726201118/>

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