

Moscow in the Midst of a Caffeinated Revolution

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West 4 serves impeccable espresso drinks along with alternative brews.

It's been more than two years since The Moscow Times' previous review of Moscow's coffee culture, and a lot has changed since then. At that time, few Muscovites had heard of things like cold brew, Chemex (a type of pour-over) or AeroPress (a faster variation on the French press). Now there are enough independent specialty coffee joints that it isn't even necessary to include omnipresent chains like Coffee House, Shokoladnitsa and Starbucks — or even overpriced Coffeemia — in this list.

Moscow's true coffee revolution came on the coattails of the city's food revolution — in just a few years, offerings at cafes went from bland and expensive to interesting and moderately priced. When it came to coffee, Double B Coffee and Tea served as the trailblazer.

Double B Coffee and Tea

Just two years ago, Double B Coffee and Tea was a curtained-off section of the Mandarin Combustible bar on Lubyanskaya Ploshchad. Now it can boast more than a dozen outlets in Moscow and four in St. Petersburg. The chain also has outposts in Nizhny Novgorod, Astana and Prague. Double B stands for Babushka Batman (Granny Batman) and ever since its flagship store opened, the concept behind it has been simple: It serves coffee and tea, no desserts, in small places with minimalist design and only a few tables.

Their espresso machines are top of the line, and they serve coffee of different origins that can be prepared in a Chemex, AeroPress or hario — a Japanese-style drip coffee. Double B started the current Moscow fashion for "rough" coffee (prepared with burned sugar) infused with various flavors, such as lavender or grapefruit. They also offer an extensive tea menu.

Double B Coffee and Tea. Various locations. double-b.ru.

Cooperative Cherniy

Cooperative Cherniy started out as a stall at the now-closed bookstore inside the Polytechnic Museum building a couple of years ago. Cooperative then moved around the city quite a bit, to a vegetarian cafe at Artplay and a clothing store at Tsvetnoy Boulevard before settling into its current place at a craft beer bar on Pokrovka. One of the pioneers of speciality coffee, Cooperative first served only coffee brewed by alternative methods (V60, Chemex, AeroPress). Now they also serve some espresso-based specialty drinks. Cooperative is also one of the few places in Moscow serving cold brew — coffee brewed in cold water for 12 hours. Desserts from Injir, the darling of the street food scene, are sometimes also available.

Cooperative Cherniy. Inside Sosna i Lipa. 31 Ulitsa Pokrovka. Metro Kurskaya. facebook.com/chernyicooperative.

LES

With its main venue tucked away behind the Rozhdestvensky monastery (10/7 Rozhdestvensky Bulvar), LES really broke into the scene after opening an outpost in the courtyard of the Museum of Moscow (2 Zubovsky Bulvar). The menu is focused on simple espresso-based drinks, nothing fancy. But LES' coffee really packs a punch, and if you need to wake up, this is the place to go. Nothing beats their comfy patio on a sunny day. AeroPress and lesser-known alternative methods such as the Clever coffee dripper and the Danish immersion system Eva Solo are available. Some desserts and teas are on the menu as well.

LES. 10/7 Rozhdestvensky Bulvar. Metro Trubnaya. +7 986-177-5113. facebook.com/pvles.

West 4

The name suggests an association with the eponymous street in lower Manhattan, which runs mostly through the West Village. West 4, located at 3/14 Ulitsa Ostozhenka — the block often dubbed as Moscow's "golden mile" because of its staggering real estate prices — serves drinks that would be able to satisfy the most snobbish Manhattanites. West 4 offers up impeccable espresso-based drinks plus several alternative methods, including Chemex

and AeroPress. A short walk away from three major museums — the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, the Moscow Museum of Modern Art on Gogolevsky Bulvar and the Multimedia Art Museum, West 4 is a perfect spot to take a break from gallery hopping. West 4 also occasionally organizes exhibitions and live concerts. They recently opened a second venue, the Coffee Brew Bar on Stoleshnikov Pereulok inside the Chop-Chop hair salon.

West 4. 3/14 Ulitsa Ostozhenka. Metro Kropotkinskaya. +7 495-695-2729.
facebook.com/west4coffee.

Mams&Paps

If you'd like to have a decent coffee while standing on a deck of a ship, Mams&Paps is the place to go. It is located on the recently revived Brusov ship marooned at Krymskaya Naberezhnaya in Muzeon park — a hotbed of hipster-oriented startups. Mams&Paps serves great espresso-based drinks, plus their own ice cream, pastries and smoothies.

Mams&Paps. Brusov Ship, Park Muzeon. Metro Polyanka. +7 905-500-3150.
facebook.com/mamspapsteam.

Good Enough

Started by some of the former members of Burger Brothers, whose branch just across the Garden Ring from the cafe revolutionized Moscow's burger scene a couple of years ago, Good Enough is a great place for coffee and breakfast. At Good Enough, you are guaranteed a friendly atmosphere and great homestyle cooking. The coffee bar's signature drink is a cold espresso with orange juice and cascara, the dried skin of coffee cherries.

Good Enough. 4/10 Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya Ulitsa. Metro Mayakovskaya. +7 963-688-9616. facebook.com/goodenoughcoffee.

Get Coffee

Very conveniently located right next to Chistiye Prudy, this hole-in-the-wall serves surprisingly good espresso-based drinks. It's a good spot to get your caffeine refill while taking a stroll around the Boulevard Ring or while waiting for a movie at the nearby Rolan theater.

Get Coffee. 7 Ulitsa Pokrovka. Metro Chistiye Prudy. +7 916-900-7834.
facebook.com/GetCoffeeMoscow.

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