

Prices of Foreign Cigarettes Up 20 Percent in Russia

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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As a result of an increase in excise duties and the weakening of the ruble, the prices of foreign cigarettes in Russia have gone up by 20 percent over the past year, the RBC newspaper reported Tuesday.

An average pack of foreign-brand cigarettes cost 85.6 rubles in October, up 20 percent compared to the same month last year, according to data from the Rosstat state statistics service, RBC reported.

Some foreign cigarette brands have seen an even bigger price hike. The price of Optima cigarettes, produced by the U.S. tobacco corporation Philip Morris, has increased by 56.8 percent from 44 (\$0.6) to 69 rubles (\$1.07) over the past 18 months, according to RBC's estimates.

The manufacturers attribute the sharp rise in prices to a 30 percent increase in the cost of excise stamps since the beginning of the year and the weakening of the Russian currency.

Almost all raw materials used for the production of cigarettes are purchased abroad and imported into Russia, according to RBC.

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