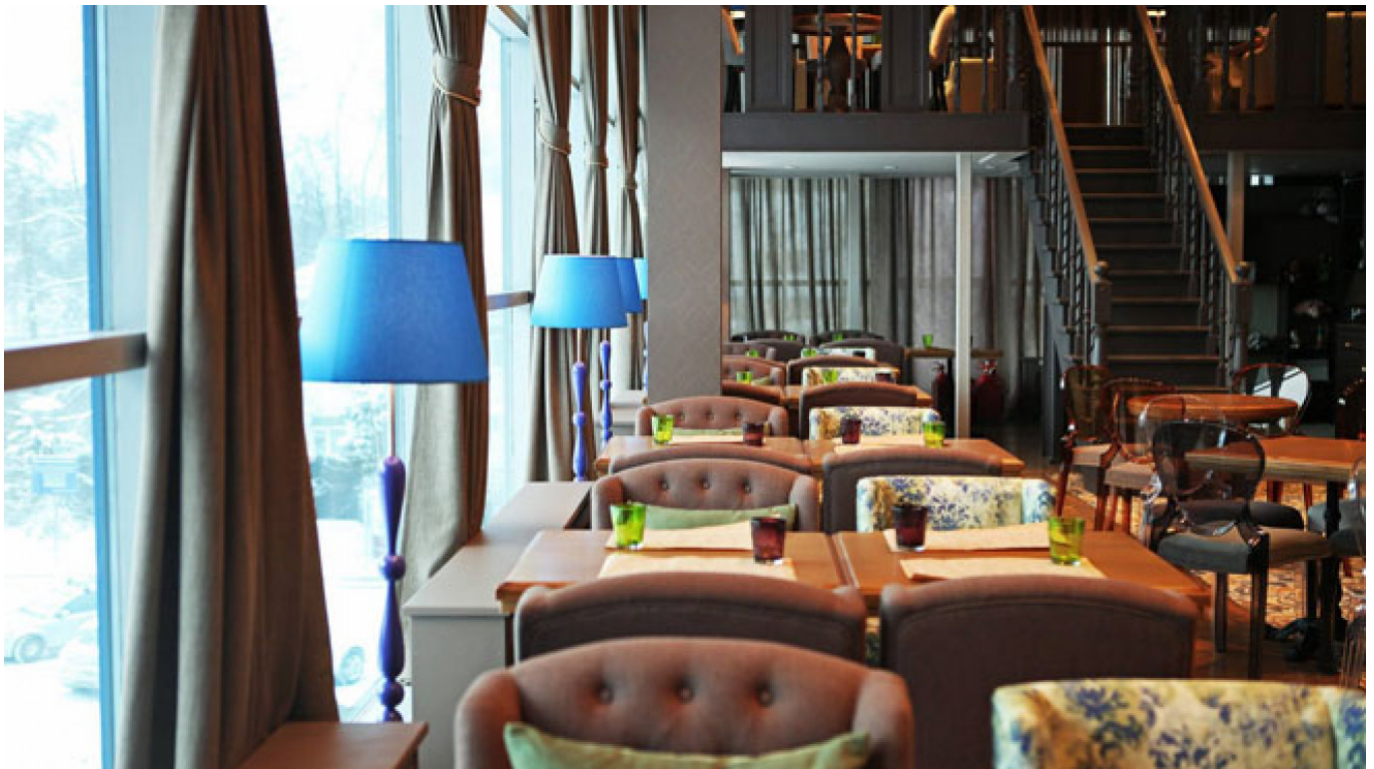


# Mark and Lev: Local, Innovative and Delicious

By [Michele A. Berdy](#)

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The restaurant's airy, rustic-modern interior filled with linen fabrics in earth tones creates a relaxing mood for hungry travelers and suburbanites.

Recently opened in Gorki 2 about 15 kilometers out Rublyovo-Uspenskoye Shosse, Mark and Lev brings farm-fresh food and Russian cuisine to a new level. The first Mark and Lev restaurant opened in 2014 outside Tula as the sole true locavore restaurant in Russia, serving food that was produced within 150 kilometers of the eatery.

Now they've brought their culinary magic closer to Moscow. Led by brand chef Olga Strizhibikova and the young, talented and extremely skilled chef Pavel Klepikov, the restaurant offers Russian products and Russian recipes that have been rethought and recreated under the influence of other cuisines and the chef's imagination. The accent in every dish is on flavor — the clear, vibrant flavor of naturally grown and produced products prepared in ways that keep every taste vivid and balanced. It's the sort of place where you hope no one notices you emptying the breadbasket to mop up every last bit of salad dressing

and sauce.

For now, the Gorki 2 restaurant is bringing in all their food from the Tula region, although they will probably begin buying from farmers closer by. And for now, they are offering their end-of-winter menu, since everything local is, by definition, seasonal.



Mark and Lev

That means lots of root vegetables and pulses, which are a revelation, not a burden. Their salad of seasonal vegetables, made according to a recipe by the painter Vasily Polenov, is a dish of potatoes, carrots, crisp pickles and salted mushrooms dressed with such a delightfully aromatic freshly pressed sunflower oil that you wonder why you've been buying the stuff made of olives.

For a main, try the crisp leg of duck with cabbage and apple mousse, or one of their perfectly aged and prepared steaks. But save room for one of their desserts: homemade ice cream on Tula gingerbread or "vareniki" made of delicate berry leather, filled with farmer's cheese and topped with berry foam. Enjoy it all with a choice from their surprising wine list — all Russian wines from places like the Don Valley at more than reasonable prices.

Just 12 kilometers from the Arkhangelskoye Estate Museum, Mark and Lev is the ideal way to end a day in the country.

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Gorki 2, Rublyovo-Uspenskoye Shosse

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