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Ladure Arrives in Moscow

By Andrei Muchnik

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The sweet treats at the French patisserie are a feast for the eyes as well as the palate. The always popular macarons come in a veritable rainbow of colors and flavors.

I only got into Ladurée on my second attempt more than two weeks after its opening. Ladurée Moscow is located in the largely expat neighborhood of Patriarch's Ponds, next to the Agent Provocateur lingerie store.

Last weekend macaron lovers stood in a line outside of the bakery in the freezing cold without any idea of how long the wait would be. As it turned out, there are only six tables in the café section of the store, so it is better to go on a weekday. Last Monday night I only had to wait for about ten minutes.

The waiter assured me that during the first few days the lines were as long as those outside McDonald's when it opened in 1990, but it looked like he probably was not even born then.

Compared to Ladurée in Paris, which serves full meals, the Moscow branch menu is limited to baked goods. Even then, not everything was available. Ladurée was out of French toast (650

or 750 rubles) but the waiter told me I might be luckier if I came in the morning. The 450-ruble lemon cake tasted like a typical lemon cake and was not much different from something bought at the corner grocery store.



Ladurée

The macarons are, of course, delicious, but overpriced at 225 rubles. When it comes to macarons, the visual effect is almost as important as the taste, and the brightly-colored offerings here don't disappoint. Ladurée offers various flavors like orange blossom, salty caramel, rose or licorice. Ladurée branded teas start at 550 rubles for a teapot, but more interesting blends like Marie Antoinette and The Sun King cost 590 rubles. You can also have a coffee, but the latte at 250 rubles is really café au lait served Parisian style in two small pots with espresso and steamed milk.

Ladurée is expensive compared to other alternatives in Moscow, but if you'd like to have a hot drink with macarons in a familiar Parisian interior or buy someone special a gift box with a design that is famous all over the world, go and get in line.

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