

Moscow Restaurants to Refuse 'Unpatriotic' Visa and MasterCard

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Two Moscow restaurants are to start refusing Visa and Mastercard payments for "patriotic reasons," the RBC news website reported Tuesday.

The Dr. Zhivago restaurant, based in Moscow's Hotel National, and the Kitayskaya Gramota restaurant on Sretenka Ulitsa, are to only accept card payments made with the Russian Mir payment card or American Express. Kitayskaya Gramota, which offers Chinese cuisine, will also accept China UnionPay.

"The founding concept of Dr. Zhivago is to use Russian ingredients to create national cuisine. The Mir card is a local financial product, so we decided to support its use," said restaurateur Alexander Rapoport, who owns both of the eateries, RBC reported. "If our customers don't like it, or find it inconvenient, we can change the rules back. I don't see what the problem would be, as we do have cash machines on site," he said. The ban has not yet been rolled out to other restaurants owned by Rapoport.

The Mir card payment system was created by the Russian Central Bank to cut reliance on US-based firms Visa and MasterCard. Both companies cut ties with a number of Russian banks subject to US sanctions in 2014.

Under Russian legislation, all local card transactions must be processed through a state-run National Payment Card System, making it more difficult for foreign payment providers to service Russian banks.

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