

Moscow Restaurants: Good Mood Food at Laflafel

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Laflafel / Facebook

Laflafel began life as a small market stall and Kosher food delivery service. Fast forward four years and several reincarnations and it's now a bustling restaurant full of zest and warmth tucked on a side street between Chistiye Prudy and Kurskaya. The wholesome eatery serves up Middle and Far Eastern dishes in a hip, minimalist interior. Think warm welcomes and hummus packed with the flavor of tahini and olive oil.

The menu is eclectic. Dishes range from traditional Israeli to Indian. A small number of vegetarian mains are complemented by a board of specials — the select menu ensuring that food always arrives at your table soon after ordering.

The soup of the day — on this occasion sambar, the south Indian lentil-based favorite — costs 170 rubles and is served in its own cast iron pot. Specials change daily: rich hummus served with pita and salad (290 rubles) and a falafel burger that will delight burger

enthusiasts and vegetarians alike (299 rubles).

The palak paneer (380 rubles) offers a vibrant pop of color to your table. A fragrant sauce made from spinach, garam masala and garlic mixed with chunks of protein-rich paneer cheese make it as tasty as it is eye-catching. Those hankering for something less heavy should try the sweet yet spicy Israeli latkes (290 rubles) — addictive little potato cakes served hot from the skillet.

Vegans are also well catered for. A favorite is Laflafel's signature Spielberg (340 rubles), a Russian-style falafel cutlet served with a generous portion of hummus and a mound of vegetables. ☒ The sparsely decorated setting is pleasantly informal: two rooms make it easy to gather with friends, or enjoy some quiet time with a book as the staff spin vinyl records in the background. Lounge at the rustic bar and sip on an iced latte or a masala tea as you enjoy the bustle around you.

It's very much a community spirit. You'll likely be served by one of the owners and on Fridays Laflafel celebrates the Jewish sabbath by baking a symbolic challah which is broken and shared with the cafe's guests. ☒ Laflafel's no frills, no fuss approach means that while its dishes are authentically exotic, they remain very approachable. We know where we will be heading for our falafel fix in future.

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