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Shopping for the Exotic in Moscow

By The Moscow Times

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Indian Spices

For people used to the full range of human ethnicity and color in many metropolises around the world, Moscow might not immediately seem multi-cultural. But it is, with dozens of ethnic groups besides Russians — mostly from within Russia (like the Tatars), or from the former Soviet republics (like Ukrainians), and some from neighbors and old friends, like Vietnam. While the city doesn't quite have ethnic neighborhoods, it does have a few stores that specialize in the cuisine and crafts from the near and far abroad. Here are our favorites.

Indian Spices

The first and still the best

Many years ago when you couldn't find iodized salt in Moscow, let alone turmeric or chickpeas, the Indian Spice Shop opened up on Sukharevskaya Ploshchad. It was so fragrant and packed with goodness that it seemed like a dream. Over the years many big chains and small specialty shops have opened, but the original Indian Spice shop still astounds. Here you

can buy every spice in the world; all the ingredients for Indian, Asian and South Asian cuisine; as well as Indian and other cosmetics and Ayurveda products. With three shops in Moscow, branches in St. Petersburg and Tver, plus home delivery, you will never want for mango pickles again.

Indian Spices.☒36 Ulitsa Sretenka, Bldg. 2 ☒Metro Sukharevskaya☒
indianspices.ru

KorShop

Korean and Asian specialty shop

This mini-market on Avtozavodskaya is run by a Korean family and has everything you need to make popular Korean dishes like bulgogi (grilled marinated beef) or bibimbap (rice with vegetables). There's a good selection of noodles, including soba, and a wide array of Korean and other Asian sauces. Check out the large tea section with a big assortment of herbal teas, including unorthodox choices like buckwheat tea. You can also get several types of Korean sake or soju (similar to vodka). Don't pass by local specialties like marinated sesame leaves and various kimchi (pickles), as well as fermented soy bean paste and frozen dim sum.

KorShop.☒17/2 Ulitsa Masterkova ☒Metro Avtozavodskaya.
korshop.ru

Baursak

Food from the steppes

Have a hankering for some Kazakh food? Baursak is the store for you. You can get ingredients for Central Asian staple dishes, like special meat for beshbarmak (noodles with boiled meat). You can get the noodles for lagman soup as well as many other types of noodles. There's also more exotic fare, like canned horse meat and kumys — fermented horse milk or shubat — fermented camel milk (160 rubles). Some of the most popular products are horse meat chips (100 rubles a pack) and kurts — dry cheese balls, hard and salty, both great with beer. Kazakh sweets and chocolates are also available. Baursak has a second location, at Preobrazhensky market.

Baursak.☒11/2 Ulitsa Sadovaya-Chernogryazskaya ☒Metro Krasniye Vorota☒
baursak.net

Kitaiskiye Tovary

Chinatown in one shop

Kitaiskiye Tovary (Chinese Goods) is a small store adjacent to the Kitaisky Kvartal restaurant. The "goods" on sale here are truly good, but are from Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore in addition to China. There's about 100 different types of sauces and Asian vegetables like banana leaves, soy bean sprouts and bok choy. There's a wide selection of instant and regular noodles and snacks like Thai shrimp chips. Check out the huge tea section including pu-erh

tea tablets (from 35 rubles) that you can buy one at a time. There’s a good selection of Asian beer: Singha from Thailand, Tsingtao from China and Hite from Korea.

Kitaiskiye Tovari.☒12 Prospekt Mira. Metro Sukharevskaya☒
china-food.ru

Hanoi

From pho bo to flip flops

Hanoi is a huge shopping center and hotel complex on the outskirts of the city, close to Yaroslavskoye highway. You can get anything from instant noodles and famous Vietnamese coffee to traditional Vietnamese clothing and furniture. The annual Vietnamese expo also takes place here in October. There’s a food court on the second floor, with some Vietnamese choices. In the hotel complex there’s an enormous restaurant called Viet Soul, where you can sample authentic Vietnamese cuisine. Here pho bo soup is just 250 rubles, assorted nems (savory fried pancakes) are 350 rubles, and grilled chicken with lemongrass will set you back 480 rubles.

Hanoi Shopping Center.☒146 Yaroslavskoye Shosse. Metro VDNKh
hanoi-moscow.biz

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