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Moscow Restaurants: Black Code Bistro Arrives on the Island

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Black Code is a new bistro situated on Sadovnicheskaya Ulitsa, an upmarket street which runs down the middle of Bolotny Island in the heart of Moscow. A short walk from Novokuznetskaya metro station, the restaurant is situated opposite the University of Design and Technology.

Mikhail Shishlyannikov, the restaurant's founder and chef, had a rather unusual path into the restaurant business. He first trained as an engineer before completing an internship at a Moscow restaurant, giving up his former career and opening his own labor of love.

The restaurant's nondescript gray door opens to reveal a little surprise: its opposite side is painted a vibrant red. In the afternoons you can enjoy the flow of students on Sadovnicheskaya Ulitsa as they go to and from lectures, while in the evening the street is rather peaceful. It's a people-watchers dream.

The menu is a collection of all the most popular food blockbusters in Moscow and features

everything from hummus to burgers, but with a twist to every dish. The deep fried zucchini is served with a yogurt dip and makes an addictively crunchy yet juicy snack (350 rubles) while the Middle Eastern tabbouleh based on bulgur wheat with a dressing of parsley, olive oil and spices is light and refreshing (190 rubles). Another Middle Eastern staple, hummus, is made from green peas (290 rubles).

Main dishes are cooked in a special coal oven. Try polenta with shrimps (410 rubles) or the calamari steak with Greek sauce tzatziki (400 rubles). The salmon steak is just as good and is accompanied by young asparagus sprouts and arugula (470 rubles).

If you're in the mood for something particularly filling opt for the cheeseburger with truffle oil (350 rubles). There's also a lamb version and a vegetarian burger with guacamole (both 390 rubles). If you still have room after all of that, try the passion fruit or chocolate mousse (both 220 rubles). While the drinks menu is hardly inventive, it contains a decent range of ale, lager and cider (from 220 rubles). Given that the corkage fee is only 300 rubles, you may prefer to bring your own bottle and keep down costs.

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