The Moscow Times
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Your Christmas Shopping Sorted: Moscow's Best Festive Fairs

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Maxim Zmeyev / Reuters

Friends and family back home already laden with matryoshka dolls from Christmases past? If you're looking for some original holiday gift inspiration this December, don't worry, we've got it covered. Moscow is bursting with bazaars, craft fairs and handmade gifts— so sharpen those elbows, wrap up warm and get into the holiday spirit.

ArtFlection

Artisans' paradise

More than 100 of the country's finest potters, designers and craftspeople will descend on Moscow toward the end of the month, meaning that even if you've left your shopping until Christmas Eve itself, it still won't be too late to get your hands on an exceptional present. Alongside more stalls than physically possible to visit in an afternoon, visitors to the fair can enjoy performances from a flashmob, arts and crafts masterclasses and a temporary exhibition of contemporary art.

Main Telegraph. 7 Tverskaya Ulitsa. Metro Okhotny Ryad. Dec. 24-26 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. artflection.ru

Gum Christmas Market

Step into Christmas

Every year the GUM skating rink takes center stage on Red Square. After a spin on the ice, warm up with a cup of mulled wine and some roasted chestnuts at the festive market located directly behind the rink. Yes, it's a tourist trap, but there's nowhere more picturesque to browse for souvenirs. From woollen socks to scarves, gloves and Slavic-themed trinkets you can enjoy hunting for gifts under the glow of GUM's thousands of twinkling fairy lights. Musicians, dancers, jugglers and snow maidens will make appearances in resplendent garb Thursdays through Sundays.

Red Square. Metro Ploshchad Revolyutsii, Okhotny Ryad Through Feb. 28 10 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. daily. gum.ru

Central House of Artists Fair

Gifts galore

Artisans from all across Russia will flock to the Central House of Artists this December, bringing with them tapestries, batik paintings, ceramics, jewellery and much more besides. Given that the large majority of items are handmade in very small batches, you can guarantee you'll get your hands on something very special for your loved ones at the fair. Other wares include Christmas decorations — for your home or tree — and specialist books, personalized greetings cards and calendars.

Central House of Artists. 10 Ulitsa Krymsky Val Metro Park Kultury, Oktyabrskaya Dec. 9-25 11: a.m. to 8 p.m. cha.ru

Flacon Design Factory Market

For cool, crafty people

Achingly cool Flacon design factory is putting on another festive extravaganza this December. Called the "Station" Christmas fair, you can expect to find diverse, affordable and original gifts from all over the world and delicious festive drinks and snacks from various stalls. From clothing, and cosmetics to homeware and traditional Russian crafts, this two day yuletide shenanigan is the perfect way to splash some cash and do a good deed in the process— some of the proceeds from the fair will go toward charities including the Nastenka foundation, which supports children with cancer and the Ray shelter for homeless animals.

Flacon Design Factory 36/4 Bolshaya Novodmitrovskaya Ulitsa Metro Dmitrovskaya Dec. 17-18 Noon to 9 p.m.
www.facebook.com/events/824739634335405/

Formula: Hand-Made New Year

A celebration of hand-made crafts

This may be an unwieldy name for a Christmas crafts fair, but don't let that put you off. This hugely popular event is expected to attract more than 12,000 people this year with a staggering 300 vendors from across the Moscow region—and the country—bringing their wares to Sokolniki Park. Alongside hundreds of stalls, visitors can enjoy a special program of events and masterclasses— meaning you can learn how to make your own gifts for the next festive season.

Sokolniki Park 7 5th Luchevoi Prosek, Bldg. 1 Metro Sokolniki Dec. 9-11 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. formularukodeliya.ru

Vintage Marketplace

For festive fashionistas

Once a beautiful banya complex frequented by the likes of Chekhov and Tolstoy, the Khludovskiye Bani lay deserted for many years. Fast forward to the present day and a hip new event venue has breathed new life into the building. On December 17 more than 30 of the city's best vintage stores will gather for Vintage Marketplace, offering Muscovites the chance to pick up outlandish accesories, American denim and avant-garde evening wear. When night falls a sequin-bedecked after party will commence.

Khludovskiye Bani. 3/4 Teatralny Proezd. Metro Kuznetsky Most. Dec. 17. 12 p.m. until late. www.facebook.com/events/1826480830922728/

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