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Dining Out in Moscow: The Best of 2016

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Make a night out something special at Brisket BBQ **Brisket BBQ**

Whatever⊠ 2016 brought to Russia and the world, the year delivered at least one ⊠terrific benefit: a slew of great cafes, coffee shops, and restaurants ⊠in Moscow. This year the emphasis was on fast and cheap (and delicious),⊠ Asian (can't get enough of it), and innovative Russian (stretching the ⊠boundaries of Slavic cuisine). Another great thing: more restaurants and⊠ dishes for vegans, vegetarians, and folks with food allergies. Here are⊠ our staff's top picks for the year. But look back in our archives for ⊠another hundred or so new and recommended eateries. Happy dining!

Chicken Run

Best new fast food
Chicken⊠ Run is the first place in Moscow where you can get gourmet quality food⊠ on the cheap. Tender chicken breast with quinoa garnish will only cost ⊠you 370 rubles, as will the chicken tandoori style with potato mousse ⊠and smoked cheese. Chicken liver salad with honey and mustard sauce is ⊠also great (290 rubles), as well as fried sweet corn with soy sauce or ⊠mashed potatoes with pesto (120 and 150 rubles). Plus there's craft beer⊠ and

home-made lemonades with unusual favors like aloe or orange and ⊠almond (150 rubles). Note that after 6 p.m. Chicken Run turns into a ⊠sit-down rather than self-service restaurant.

Wine & Crab

Best classy night out
Masterminded⊠ by the trailblazing twin Berezutsky brothers, Wine & Crab caused ⊠quite the buzz when it opened its regal terrace this summer. The ethos ⊠here is to do one thing and do it well — although there are actually a ⊠staggering seven types of crab on the menu. From a Kamchatka crab salad ⊠to King crab phalanx — that's the legs to you and me — each dish is a ⊠work of art in terms of presentation alone. Pair with a bottle from the ⊠monumental wine list for a very special date night.

Severyane

Best new Russian cuisine
Severyane⊠ is the latest collaboration of Ilya Tutenkov and Uilliam Lamberti, a ⊠stellar culinary duo. The chef is Georgy Troyan, last year's winner of ⊠the Silver Triangle award as Russia's best chef. Severyane uses a huge ⊠traditional Russian oven for grilling everything. The starters menu is ⊠very innovative: try lamb tongues with beetroot and horseradish sauce ⊠(700 rubles). The not-to-miss main dish is pike perch grilled in the ⊠Russian oven served with cabbage and marinated radish (750 rubles). All ⊠the garnishes also come grilled in the Russian oven — the best are ⊠celery and cauliflower (300 rubles each). Try some of the Severyane's ⊠trademark cocktails (from 350 rubles), and don't leave without one of ⊠the desserts, like persimmon with oatmeal ice cream (350 rubles).

354

Best and highest view in Europe

A⊠ new project by two restaurant empires — Chaikhona #1 and GINZA, 354 is ⊠not just another "top of the world" bar. First, at 354 meters it's the ⊠highest restaurant in Moscow and the highest open patio-transformer in ⊠Europe. Currently it has been transformed into the highest skating rink,⊠ but will turn back into a patio come spring. One floor below is the ⊠restaurant Ruski with an innovative Russian menu, including potato ⊠pancakes with marinated smelt fish (korushka) for 320 rubles, ⊠traditional dumplings (vareniki) with potatoes and fried onions (370 ⊠rubles), as well as millet porridge with pumpkin and crab (370 rubles) ⊠and home-made vodka infusions (270 rubles). While feasting, make sure to use the viewing platform!

Brisket BBQ

Best for meat-lovers
This⊠ year Fyodor Tardatian and Maxim Livsi, best known for the "black" Ferma⊠ burger, finally made it into the big leagues. They opened Brisket BBQ ⊠together with Arkady Novikov, Moscow's most famous restaurateur. It's a ⊠Texan style barbecue with meat prepared in a special smoker. The main ⊠dish is the eponymous brisket — a whole dish of brisket (750

rubles), a ⊠smaller portion with mashed potatoes and gravy (650 rubles), or a ⊠"brisket burger" (430 rubles). There are also Texan sausages: chicken ⊠and cheese or beef and pork (each for 420 rubles). You can get BBQ Trio:⊠ half a portion of brisket, one sausage and a pile of pulled pork (860 ⊠rubles) — try all the specialties at once.

Kazbek

Best for Georgian-food lovers
Andrei⊠ Dellos — the man behind Cafe Pushkin, Turandot and the ubiquitous MuMu ⊠cafe chain — opened Kazbek this year to much fanfare. Inspired by his ⊠childhood holidays in the Caucasus, the restaurant aims to make you feel⊠ like the guest of honor at a Georgian family feast. The kitchen is ⊠headed by young Tbilisi chef Mamiya Jojua, and with Jojua's mother as ⊠sous-chef, it's very much a family affair. Order a perfectly golden ⊠Adzharian khachapuri bursting with cheese and crowned by an egg and pair⊠ with a glass of fruity red. The waitstaff wear charming traditional ⊠costumes in a nod to Old Georgia.

Bao & Bar

Best quick eats
Bao⊠ & Bar is an ode to the humble pillowy steamed buns popular across ⊠Asia. The bao come in seven varieties, each more sticky and delicious ⊠than the last. Portions are small but prices are low, encouraging you to⊠ try a variety of dishes from the menu. The winner has to be the pork ⊠belly bao with kimchi, crispy onion and hoisin sauce, but that should ⊠still leave you room for a steaming bowl of ramen or some teriyaki beef.⊠ The airy, plant-filled interior is a joy to behold.

Surf Coffee

Best coffee in town
Surf⊠ Coffee started in a mysterious place far from Moscow — the management ⊠won't reveal where. The chain then started spreading around the country ⊠and finally came to the capital this year, bringing a sunny seaside mood⊠ Moscow clearly lacks. Their first Moscow outlet on Myasnitskaya Ulitsa ⊠is a little more than a beach hut decorated with bamboo and surf boards.⊠ They now also have outlets at Artplay Design Center and on the Arbat. ⊠Surf's flat white is one of the best in the city and, at 150 rubles, one⊠ of the cheapest. There's also a menu of smoothies. Surf Coffee promotes⊠ a healthy lifestyle and has its own clothing line.

Tehnikum

Best for foodies
Tehnikum⊠ is a new restaurant by the White Rabbit group and its chef and founder ⊠Vladimir Mukhin. Tehnikum was conceived as a more accessible version of ⊠White Rabbit, which recently became No. 18 on the list of the world's ⊠top 50 restaurants. The first thing you see when you enter Tehnikum is a⊠ huge mural of a kitchen by popular street artist Dmitry Aske. The menu ⊠is very innovative. Start with cold salad with avocado, radish, and pear⊠ (350 rubles) or grilled pastrami with cilantro and Japanese ponzu sauce⊠ (650 rubles). For the main dish try delicious duck breast with Chinese ⊠black venere rice and pear (850 rubles). And as a dessert order Georgian⊠ dumplings made with mascarpone and mango (350 rubles).

Cutfish

Best for sushi fanatics
Contemporary,⊠ slick and achingly stylish, Cutfish is one sushi joint that Moscow ⊠should be proud of. The beautifully crafted hand rolls show the ⊠obsessive precision of the kitchen, but the other items on the menu are ⊠equally enticing, particularly the perfectly pink duck breast with apple⊠ puree. It's a little on the pricey side, but the service and food won't⊠ disappoint. Think minimalist decor, an open kitchen and lashings of ⊠wasabi.

Groot

Best for vegetarians
Named⊠ after a sentient, extraterrestrial tree-like creature from the ⊠"Guardians of the Galaxy" series, Groot is out to prove to diners that ⊠raw food needn't be guinea pig food. Head chef Alexei Malykhin keeps his⊠ dishes free from anything processed, but they still taste great. Pair ⊠the "El Macho" burrito (black beans, peppers, pineapple, fresh guacamole and salsa) with a detox smoothie for a guilt-free start to the day. The⊠ earthy tones of the interior perfectly match the restaurant's ethos.

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