The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Souvenirs to Bring Home From Tatarstan

Gifts to get in Kazan

June 01, 2018



Legion-Media

In the capital of Tatarstan, you can expect to find different shopping opportunities than in the rest of Russia. Here you'll want to pick up traditional Tatar clothing and snacks to take back for family and friends.

Traditional headwear

For starters, make sure to try on a tubeteika, a traditional men's velvet hat that often features fine embroidery. These hats can be found all across Central Asia, but every nationality has its own specific variation. For women, there is the kalfak (also made of embroidered velvet), which resembles a smurf hat in shape.

Footwear

Another part of the traditional Tatar costume are ichigi, or lightweight leather boots. Many

are quite colorful, with red, blue and green patterns, and they are made for both men and women. For around the house you can also nab a pair of slippers. Some are made from leather and some from felt, and you can find the same decorations as on the ichigi. You might also come across slippers with upturned toes, which are believed to have originated in the Far East.

For a sweet tooth

In Russia, Tatars are known for having delicious food, and perhaps the most iconic dish (which happens to be eminently transportable) is chak-chak. This highly addictive sweet is made of fried dough balls drenched in honey. It is now available all over Russia, but the best, of course, can be found in Tatarstan.

Food and drink

In Tatarstan, horse culture is highly developed and Tatars, traditionally, were highly dependent on their steeds for both transportation and food. And since Islam forbids pork, the Tatars made their salamis, or kazylyk, out of horse meat. The moratorium on alcohol was less effective, however, and Tatarstan and Bugulma balsams, made from herbs, are widely available and make great gifts.

Cat facts

There is a legend in Kazan that Empress Elizabeth once heard there were no mice in the city, which she attributed to the diligent work of the city's cats. The musophobic empress ordered a number of the cats to be brought to St. Petersburg as residents of the Winter Palace, which was under construction at the time; to this day, the cats still live in the palace (though they are now confined to the basement). In honor of the cats, there is a monument on Ulitsa Baumana, and cat dolls make popular souvenirs.

Souvenir spots

You can find a wide selection of these souvenirs in the Kazan Kremlin, right near the entrance to the Kul Sharif mosque, and on Bauman Street.

For football fans

Kazan is also the host city to the Rubin football team. Get your red, white and green Rubin swag (coincidentally, also the colors of the Tatar flag) at the Central Stadium.

Ulitsa Tashayak, 2A Metro Kremlyovskaya store.rubin-kazan.ru +7 (843) 292 5070

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/06/01/souvenirs-to-bring-home-from-tatarstan-a61924