

How to Feast, Russian Style

The Moscow Times Clubs latest gastronomic adventure

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On a rainy summer evening in Moscow, a group of food enthusiasts met at the Russian Pub at [10 Tverskoi Bulvar, Bldg. 1](#) for a modern day Russian Feast.

TMT Clubs and the Russian Pub are not strangers.

The last event here, a menu tasting, was a huge success that is fondly remembered by all the attendees. There are many Irish and English pubs around Moscow, but this is the first authentic Russian pub in the city. Shelves are filled with various tinctures, and the jam jar lights create a cozy ambiance. With a menu to suit any palate, it's a popular place to have craft beers, cocktails or a slice of Beef Stroganoff pie, a Russian twist on a pub classic. As their website states, they were inspired by a post-Soviet era homey and affordable restaurant that was in the same building. Traditional British pub food has been given a contemporary Russian face. Here you can order burgers with *salo* (cured pork fat) and the signature Red Square

cocktail.

This was the perfect place with authentic Russian cuisine to host a Russian feast. And the drink to accompany our feast was *Borshevka*.

Borshevka is the first gastronomic vodka in the world. What makes it gastronomic? First off, the name, which we immediately associate with the famous Russian soup borshch, hints at the key ingredients. The vodka is distilled from cabbage and then has an additional eight or nine ingredients added to it to make different flavors: Original, Mint and Spicy. What also sets this vodka apart is the way you drink it -- sipping it *after* you take a bite of your food, not throwing it down in shots. It is a vodka to be enjoyed. Lastly, it should be chilled to 18 degrees and no colder. If it's colder, it loses its depth of flavor. We were lucky enough to have Maxim Zagrebelny, *Borshevka* brand ambassador, to tell The Moscow Times Dining Club about it in person.

As we sipped on our Original vodka, we nibbled on herring on grilled potatoes with cream cheese and a classic mix of Russian vegetables pickled in brine: gherkins, garlic and cabbage. Some guests were taught by Alexei Semyonov, the chef at Russian Pub, how to drink a shot of vodka from an axe, a truly unique experience you'll have to come and try for yourself.

Link:

<https://themoscowtimes.com/articles/sample-pinball-and-cupcakes-in-sokolniki-park>

Alexei, who is the man behind all the culinary adventures and experiences at the Russian Pub, is a well-known chef in Moscow. He studied in Italy and Spain, and his food reflects a combination of different tastes and influences from other countries while still remaining Russian at the core. Starters were followed by the Mint vodka and *okroshka*, a cold Russian soup with diced fresh vegetables and ham that, as Alexei explained, divides Russian people into two categories: those who like their *okroshka* with kvas and those who prefer it with kefir.

To round off the evening with Spicy vodka, there was an unusual choice of pelmeni -- lamb, fish and three meats combined -- which were all thoroughly enjoyed.

At every tasting event the guests give a score for the food and drinks that they have tried. Here's what guests had to say about the three kinds of *Borshevka* vodka:

Borshevka Original: "Sweet to the taste!" "Clean and refreshing" "The taste surprised me!"

Borshevka Mint: "Couldn't really tell the difference between Mint and Spicy!" "So much going on! I like it!" "Heavier to drink than first".

Borshevka Spicy: "I like this one!"

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