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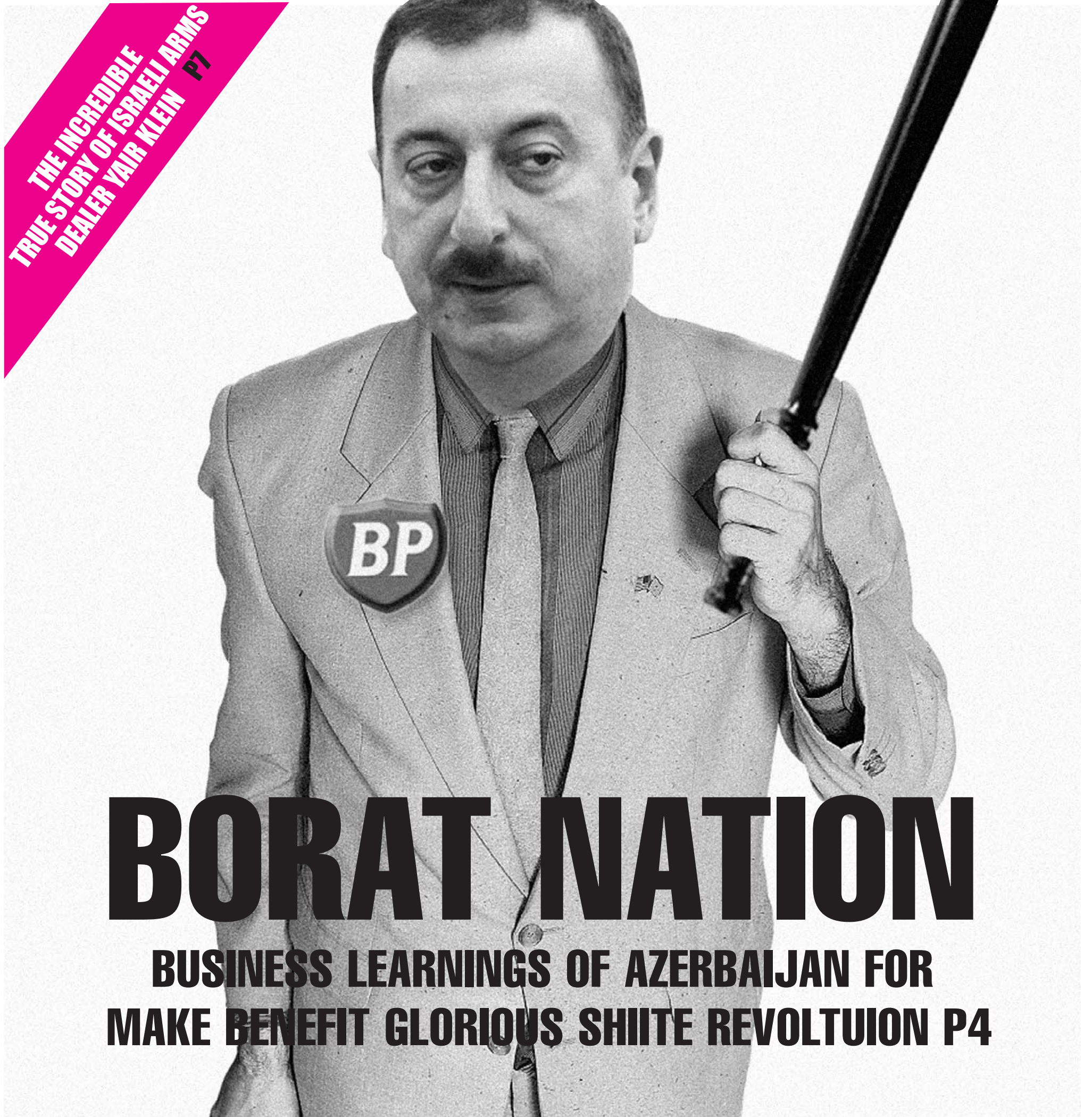


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JOHN MCCAIN: BIGGEST FAG IN WAR HISTORY

By Vlad Kalashnikov

I recently became a expert specialist in The Decline And Fall of The American Empire. I use the famous Gibbon title very sarcastically, because a specialist like me knows that what a historical obscenity it is comparing a laughable Chinese-sweatshop-manufactured American Empire, that lasted only from say 1991 until 2004, to the great 500-year-long Roman Empire (or Russian Empire, or many great empires, a class where Americans don't belong). History will not even remember this laughable American empire, which today disappears before our eyes.

Actually today's American Empire collapse happens so fast, it is like that construction crane in New York City that just collapsed into another building last week, because dumbfuck Americans don't even know how to build cranes these days.

That is the great American Empire: a hollow empire with a nice paintjob sold by a bunch of tricksters with big fat stupid smiles. Push that nicely-painted empire with just one little finger, and see it all collapse into a pile of trash.

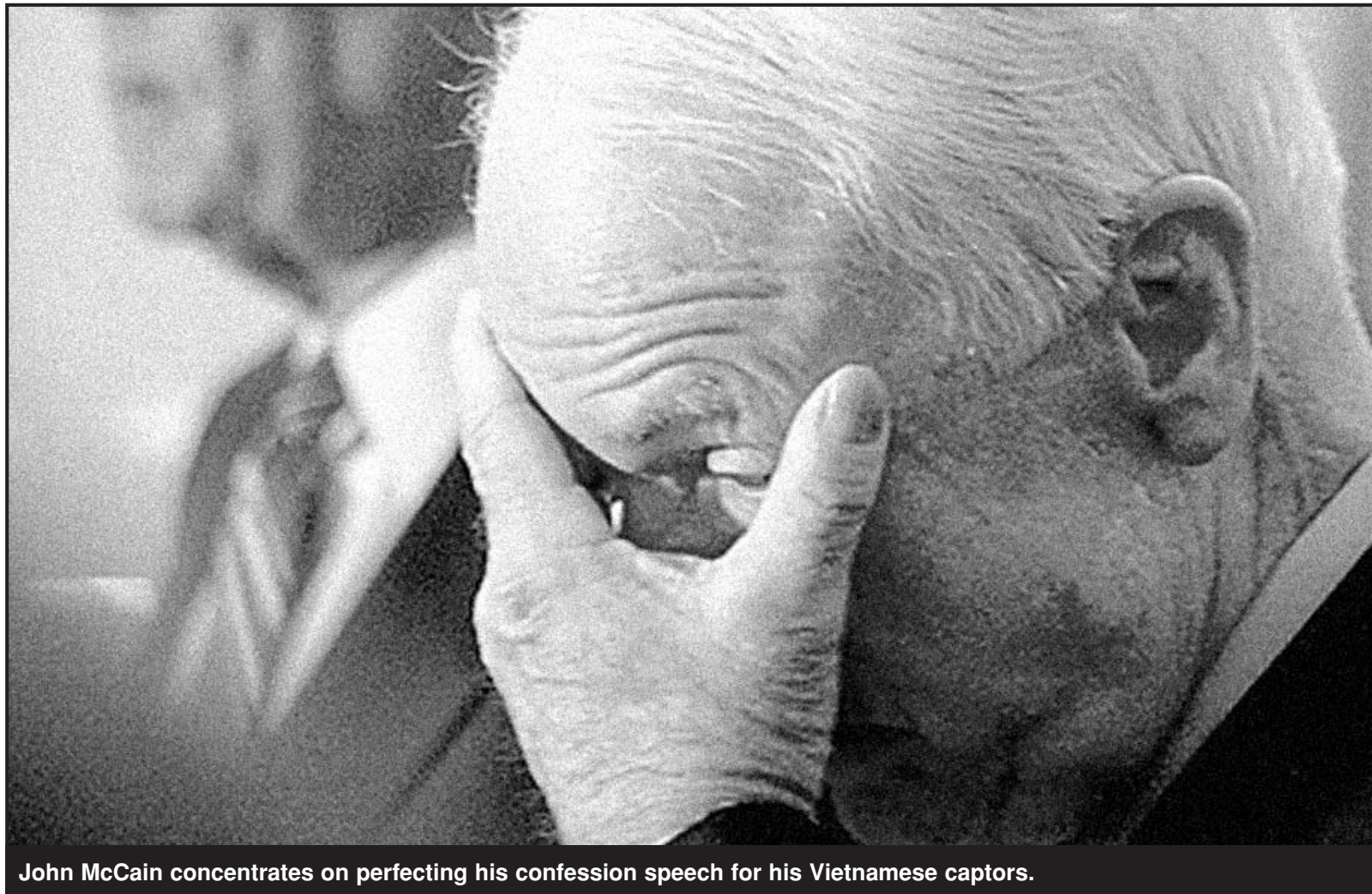
For me as outsider scholar coolly observing this process, what really pathetic is that collapsing imperial America has made a racist old pus-cheeks freak named John McCain into a "war hero." What was it this ugly old pus-cheeks did in wartime that make him a "hero"?

Let's look at John McCain's heroic war record. In Vietnam War, he was the very worst kind of murderer, flying modern jets over primitive, defenseless Vietnam, dropping bombs on women and children from the safety of his little cushioned seat. Probably comes back to the airdeck, gives high fives and "hoo-ah!"s to his fascist little friends, they all laugh, drink their shit Coors beer, not even caring about the suffering they cause to poor peasant families.

One day, some fucking Vietnamese guy shot "hero" John McCain down! How the fuck did a Vietnamese guy, primitive, backwards, in pajamas, shoot down a modern A-4 jet? He used a fucking slingshot? Bow and arrow? What it proves is John McCain was a shitty pilot, a loser, that is all. On October 26, 1967, "war her" McCain's A-4 was given a nice Russian surprise over Hanoi -- he was hit by Russian surface-to-air missile (score: Russia 1, McCain 0). McCain's jet fell into Truc Bach Lake on the outskirts of Hanoi.

McCain almost drowned in that lake. But a Vietnamese man, 50-year-old Mai Van On, ran out of his air raid shelter, took a pole, swam out to McCain, and pulled the "war hero" from plane wreckage. Vietnamese people were pissed off, they gathered around McCain in a mob and tried to kill the future "war hero," understandably. But Mai Van On saved him from the mob too. This guy is the real "war hero" because he took a real dangerous risk! McCain, "war loser," was rescued by his enemy who he tried to kill!

After he was saved, guards took McCain to a prison for interrogation. There, McCain proved to be as soft as those pus-cheeks of his.



John McCain concentrates on perfecting his confession speech for his Vietnamese captors.

Vietnamese naturally beat McCain up. That's not nice, but it is normal, you see what Americans do in Iraq and Guantanamo Bay just because of 3,000 dead Americans, imagine how they behave if Arabs killed 3 millions like USA did to Vietnam! So, how does an American "war hero" when he is getting beaten up by his enemy captors for confessions? In every culture in history, a "hero" either suffers horribly and doesn't break (like a Braveheart), or the hero kills himself first before they can.

But for Americans, weak-willed, a loser collapsing empire, a "war hero" means a weak fag who breaks down. McCain did not kill himself like real hero should. He later claimed he almost killed himself, he even had his head in a noose, but he was "too slow," that his Vietnamese guards grabbed him before he hung himself. Yeah, sure. It's like the guy who doesn't want to fight, so he yells, "Hold me back! Hold me back!" in the American movies. That is McCain's brave suicide attempt.

John McCain was not a war hero. He was a war traitor, according to all countries' martial cultures. He broke under beatings, confessed, he named names, he even denounced America over prison loudspeaker, to demoralize his fellow American prisoners, for Vietnamese propaganda and psychological purposes. Here is some things that he said, it is all on the internet, for any brainwashed American dumbfuck who cares to know some truth:

"I am a black criminal and I have performed the deeds of an air pirate. I almost died and the Vietnamese people saved my life, thanks to the doctors."

What is cool is that Vietnamese made him say a "confession" that really is just the truth. But they fucked with him like he's a pussy that they can play with. They probably thought that one up as a joke, right there: "Now, say 'I am a black criminal.' 'Ok! I am a black criminal! Anything else you want me to

say, sir?'" To a white fascist American guy in a racist Republican party, it's really eating shit to say to your fellow soldiers, over loud-speakers, "I am a black criminal." Vietnamese have a pretty good sense of humor!

McCain broke many times. When he was injured, he promised to give more names, if they take him to a hospital. Why? Because he was "afraid he might die."

This is your American "war hero." A pussy, very worst kind of pussy: he kills defenseless people when it is easy and safe, then, when he faces trouble, he breaks like that crane in New York City last week, collapses, takes down a lot of people with him crumbles, betrays his country like a pussy, then cries about it.

And to America, this guy, traitor and coward, loser of all-time losers, shot down by a Vietnamese slingshot because he doesn't know how to fly a fucking jet, and so fucking incompetent McCain don't even know how to kill himself, a loser pilot and a traitor prisoner in a war he fucking lost, only thing he did well was betraying his motherland -- This is a fucking "war hero"? In Russia, if a soldier taken prisoner, whatever the reason, he came back in shame, maybe shot, maybe put into a camp for five years or so. That is cruel shit, sure, but that's how a real martial culture is. For America, if you are so fucking incompetent and weak-willed fag as McCain, you are a "war hero."

That is why I call you pussies "Amerifags"! The empire has no clothes, and underneath, you have no balls, just eunuchs!

In a real country, not to mention a real empire, a war hero is a guy who conquered nations, crushed enemies, brought glory to his people and riches to empire, raised the pride and power of the empire. He is often not a good man, probably responsible for huge numbers of deaths, probably genocide if you look at history of "war heroes" in Romans, Greeks,

English, French, Spanish, Chinese empires, you name it. A "war hero" not supposed to be the guy who makes you cry, like it's a shit Hollywood movie, or an appointment with your shrink, that every mentally sick fucked-up American

requires, because they all suffer from mental disease and collapse, as well as sick perversions and sexual diseases. X

Vlad Kalashnikov writes the "Vlad's Daily Gloat" blog on The eXile site (www.exile.ru).

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THERE WILL BE KROV

***Blood, Oil, and
Borat in Azerbaijan***

By Alexander Zaitchik

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN — *This is it, I thought. I've found it. The Holy Post-Soviet Travel Grail...*

I stood atop a massive concrete block, several feet off the ground, deep in the Balakhani oil fields, just north of Baku, the seaside capital of Azerbaijan, a place just voted the most polluted city in the world. Before me, the rolling hills of the city dump smoldered, churning enough fume across the horizon to erase the boxy Baku skyline; beyond the dump, the Caspian Sea. Behind me, a fog-and-smoke shrouded world of abandoned oil derricks, ghost processing plants, and crumbling concrete structures with no obvious purpose. In every direction, garbage, scattered bones, and the decaying carcasses of street dogs, goats, and other mammalian vermin, who came here to scavenge and never left.

For connoisseurs of a distinctly Soviet desolation, Balakhani on a rainy day is a kind of travel delicacy, a place of aching and otherworldly Tarkovskyan beauty. Its perfection is completed by a billboard on the road into the wasteland, featuring the logo of the Heydar Aliyev Fund, named after the dead father of Azerbaijan's dictator, Ilham Aliyev. The sign says: "Come everyone plant a tree."

The only people with a good reason to visit Azerbaijan are the oil workers. What was I doing there? Even expats stationed in the South Caucasus avoid the country if they can. Every major foreign press desk save AFP is based in Tbilisi. Most NGO types in the region also tend to stick to the Georgian capital, which has become the Prague of Transcaucasia. The foreigners in Baku are thus an almost uniformly oily lot, just as they were a century ago, before the Red Army showed up to nationalize the oil fields and send the oil barons packing to Turkey and Iran. Sit on a bench along the posh shopping boulevards in downtown Baku and you'll soon spot the only two species of western Baku expat: the well-heeled consultant talking oil jargon to his Blackberry, and the Cockney-accented offshore rig worker. Both gather in the same British pubs to drink ale, watch rugby, and trade stories about the nominally Shia Azeri whores who are as much a part of the oil economy as BP.

After the dust settled on the Azeri Caspian carve-up, BP emerged the biggest foreign player in Baku. They got there with a lobbying effort famous in the annals of oil for its bottomless entertainment expense account. According to a 2007 *Daily Mail* expose (which the paper pulled from its site the next day under pressure from Downing Street) the company, under the direction of Lord Brown and MI6, spent 45 million pounds sterling over a whore-and-caviar fueled four-month period to sweeten up Heydar Aliyev, Azerbaijan's dictator from 1993 to his death in 2003, and his poorly tailored cronies. BP's "make big party time with you" approach to Baku's Power Borats paid off. There is now a chippy on the city's main shopping boulevard, just around the corner from O'Malley's Irish pub and its locally famous Yorkshire pudding. "The government doesn't deal with countries," an Iranian cafe owner told me. "It deals with oil companies. And BP has the biggest embassy."

At the time of BP's lobbying effort, Caspian oil deposits were said to be

large enough to shake the world, or at least OPEC. As CEO of Halliburton 1998, Dick Cheney articulated the conventional wisdom when he said, "I cannot think of a time when we have had a region emerge as suddenly to become as strategically significant as the Caspian."

That was then, anyway. These days the only place you'll find the region at the center of world events is in the new Xbox game "Frontline: Fuel of War" where American teenagers battle Russian and Chinese troops for control of Caspian oil in 2024. According to gaming critics, the game sucks, and not just because the makers missed a golden pun opportunity by not calling it "The Great Game."

What happened to all those hundreds of billions of promised barrels? As a Hungarian oil analyst explained to me during an Aeroflot delay at Heydar Aliyev airport, everyone understood the Caspian was being hyped from the beginning. "There was [utility] in making the world think there was more oil than there

is the ultimate "Borat" president. He's also the actual Borat president. In the Sacha Ben Cohen film, it is Aliyev's portrait that appears during the credits as a stand-in for Nursultan Nazarbayev, the real president of Kazakhstan.

If outsiders know anything about Ilham Aliyev, it is probably his designation as first dynastic successor in a post-Soviet country. His father, Heydar, a former KGB chief, consolidated power in the early 90s and handed it off to his son on his death bed in 2003. A dirty and bloody "election" followed. The Cult of Heydar has been actively maintained in death. Statues depicting the "Father of Azerbaijan" are still being built in parks throughout the country. Every city and town has a Heydar Aliyev Prospekt. Signs line the roads and announce entry into towns with the Aliyev's chin-stroking aphorisms (or "wise admonitions" according to an official Azeri site). Among them, each funny for different reasons: *One cannot relate great policy to tiny senses*

The foreigners in Baku are an almost uniformly oily lot, just as they were a century ago, before the Red Army showed up to nationalize the oil fields and send the oil barons packing to Turkey and Iran.

was," he said. The Caspian nation regimes wanted to make the West drool so much it forgot all about human rights and corruption; the oil companies wanted inflated proven-reserves numbers in order to jack up their stock prices. Win-win.

At its height, the Caspian hype-machine was a thing to behold. There was a time when you couldn't open a newspaper or magazine without reading an article about how the Caspian basin was a second Saudi Arabia with 200-plus billion recoverable barrels. But the reality turned out to be closer to North Sea Junior. To the extent estimates can be trusted, Azerbaijan's share of the Caspian booty is now estimated at between seven and 13 billion barrels. Hardly an OPEC-busting number, even when you figure in Kazakhstan's Kashagan field, the largest Caspian field with nine to 16 billion barrels. "Azerbaijan and the rest of them are incremental suppliers, that's all," explained the Hungarian analyst. "They aren't going to swing things or significantly relax tightness in the market."

Among other things, all the 90s hype resulted in building excess pipeline capacity, of which the heralded (and expensive) Baku-Ceyhan pipeline is a big part. The Clinton administration's high-priority accomplishment will, when all's said and done, wind up vastly underused, even when the Caspian fields are pumping at full speed in 15 years or so. But so much rhetoric was spewed for so long that when the day came in 2005 to smash the ceremonial bottle against Baku-Ceyhan, U.S. energy secretary Samuel Bodman felt obligated to continue the farce, declaring it "a day that will change the world."

This is true only if by "world" you mean the foreign bank accounts of a grotesquely corrupt kleptocracy managed by a dynastic dictator in a cheap suit.

Azerbaijani president Ilham Aliyev

and little profits ... All our natural riches belong to the people, and no one has the right to misuse them ... It is impossible to hide truth ... One's pulse should throb in accordance with one's Motherland ... In general the mankind has been existing and developing by creating and building-constructing ... We cannot use strength against nature.

Soon, a museum Aliyev built in 1999 honoring himself will be joined by a gleaming Heydar Aliyev Cultural Center in downtown Baku. Designed by trendy all-star London architect Zaha Hadid, the building is scheduled to open in 2009 featuring a concert hall, a library, an Aliyev family museum and—in a classic Azeri touch—underground parking for no less than 1,350 cars. The announcement of the tender for this Cult of Personality palace led architecture critic Hrag Vartanian to ask, "Is Zaha Hadid the new Leni Riefenstahl?" But more about Azerbaijan's human rights record in a minute.

Museums Azeris can choose to avoid. Not so the ubiquitous presidential billboards. They are everywhere in Azerbaijan, most of them faded by time and pollution to resemble the pages of a 1970s Intourist catalogue of Black Sea resorts. Peppering the country's roads are thousands of billboards displaying Aliyev in various poses. Sometimes he is alone, but more often he is shown having a serious discussion with his dim-witted son and successor, Ilham. The billboards depict the duo wading into adoring crowds, discussing the glorious future of Azerbaijan in front of power plants, and contemplating unknown subjects requiring subtle and sensitive minds, possibly the obvious cheapness of Ilham's gold watch. The son's sense of style and glamour appears to have been permanently molded by his playboy years in Turkish casinos.

Recently a new billboard has begun to pop up outside the capital that has lit up the Azeri blogosphere and sent Azerbaijan's opposition into a deep

depression. It shows not two Aliyevs, but three. Trailing behind Ilham is the little boy-dictator-in-waiting, Heydar Jr., a kind of Damien figure who may be the world's first non-Tibetan figurehead to warrant his own pre-pubescent procession propaganda. The text leaves little doubt about the message: "Independent Azerbaijan's yesterday, today and future!!!"

Ilham does his best to project a cosmopolitan image. Any meeting with visiting foreigners is heavily publicized in the state media. When a freelancer with *Forbes* met with Aliyev shortly after he assumed power, the leading pro-government daily plastered its front page with an image of the president being interviewed. And when Herbie Hancock headlined the 2006 Baku Jazz Festival, the following year's program opened with a two-page spread of Hancock and Aliyev sitting on couches with forced smiles on their faces. The text beneath the photo read: "Herbie Hancock: 'Your president is a very nice guy!'"

Someone else who thinks Ilham Aliyev is a very nice guy is Dick Cheney.

The U.S. Vice President's links to Azerbaijan date back to 1993, when the newly ensconced Heydar Aliyev made it a foreign policy priority to cultivate ties with politically connected world of Texas Oil. It was a natural alliance, one with a cultural element on top of the obvious political and economic logic. Houston and Baku are two of the world's greatest oil capitals, and two cities which deserve the "asshole of the [fill in large geographical location here]" moniker more than just about any place on earth. They are official "sis-

ter cities," and a team from Houston is currently advising the Azeri government on a planned Museum of Oil in Baku, based on the one in Texas.

Texas Oil was eager to return Aliyev's embrace. A friendship was quickly established and cemented in 1994, the year Aliyev inaugurated Azerbaijan's post-Soviet oil boom by signing the so-called "Contract of the Century" with western oil majors to develop the Caspian. As hoped, the Texas key opened the door to deeper cooperation with Washington. As David Case recounted in a 2004 *Mother Jones* article:

Amoco helped [Aliyev] score his first meeting with President Clinton, and oil companies pushed for a resumption of U.S. aid to his government (which Congress had cut off during the war with Armenia). A pantheon of U.S. policymakers-turned-consultants also chipped in on behalf of the regime—men such as Brent Scowcroft, James Baker, and Zbigniew Brzezinski, as well as then-Halliburton CEO Dick Cheney and

[Dick] Armitage, whose clients at the time included several Western companies looking to profit from the oil rush.

The "deep state" links developed in the early 90s are kept alive today through the Council of Advisors to the U.S.-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce, since 1996 the central forum for conducting serious U.S.-Azeri business. Past and present USACC board members include Dick Cheney, Henry Kissinger, James Baker, Brent Scowcroft, John Sununu, Richard Perle, and Richard Armitage.

Most of the USACC's business is low-key and conducted in private. But occasionally the group will bring out the black ties and notify the media. In December of 2006, the group hosted a

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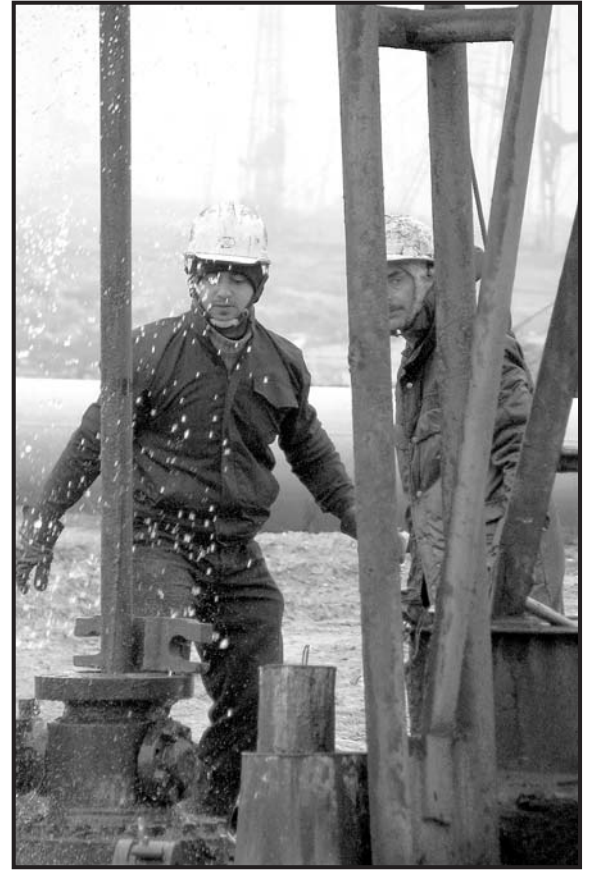
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The Balakhani Oil Fields

Baku has always been an oil town. Ancient Arab travelers noted how the locals were literally drenched in crude, burning chunks of oil-soaked soil for fuel and rubbing "white" oil into their skin as a therapeutic ointment. Only the industrial scale of the extraction is recent, dating to the late nineteenth-century when foreign investors arrived en masse, led by the Nobel Brothers. (It was Baku oil money, not TNT profits, which funded the first Nobel Prizes.) By 1900, the fields on the Absheron peninsula were pumping half the world's crude. Forty-three years later, it was Hitler's quest for these fields that he sent his Sixth Army to Stalingrad.

Nowhere does Azerbaijan look less like a 21st-century energy giant than in the Balakhani fields, just north of Baku. Here rusted and decrepit pumps squeeze the last barrels out of the nearly exhausted fields. Pump station fuse-boxes are held together with twine; derricks are held in place by rusted-out steel rope tied around random chunks of concrete. As Azeris like to point out, if it wasn't for the arrival of the Red Army in 1920, Baku may have developed as the Riyadh of Transcaucasia. Or maybe its Dubai. Anything but what Azerbaijan became.

— AZ



Photos by Alexander Zaitchik

lavish dinner at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium in Washington for Mehriban Aliyeva, the First Lady of Azerbaijan. The evening was co-chaired by James Baker, with a keynote address delivered by Senator Richard Lugar, who was present to receive the USACC Freedom Support Award.

To understand why the existence of a USACC Freedom Support Award is

the journalists.

In the run-up to the presidential election this October that Aliyev is certain to win, an already appalling human rights situation is getting worse for Azeri journalists. At the end of 2007, nine reporters and editors were sitting in jails, mostly for the "crime" of libel. Five have recently been released, but four remain behind bars simply for doing their jobs.

Azerbaijan.

"The stabbing of Agil Khalil is part of campaign of repression about the Azerbaijani press," says Emin Huseynov, Chairman of the Institute for Reporters' Freedom and Safety in Baku. "Every March before an election there is an attack on the press. Before the 2005 parliamentary elections, the editor of the *Monitor Journal* was murdered. The govern-

the opposition newspaper *Azadlyq* ("Freedom") to four years imprisonment for "hooliganism and causing damage to the health of a person" after he allegedly insulted a woman in the street. The judgment was read in a closed session. The case echoed the punishment handed to two journalists from the independent newspaper *Nota Bene*, who were found guilty of defamation in February and sentenced to two-year imprisonment and 18-months corrective labor, respectively, after they published articles relating to corruption within the Interior Ministry.

These cases fit a pattern of Azeri journalists subjected to criminal prosecutions for defamation and sentenced to jail. According to local activists, the state also targets businesses associated with opposition media outlets. In January 2008, the printing house Chap Evi, which prints media critical of the Azerbaijani government, was subjected to an unscheduled tax inspection without explanation.

When Kahlil was stabbed, the U.S. ambassador in Baku visited him in the hospital and called for an investigation. But opposition activists have long pleaded for more than just words. "The Western embassies here have been increasingly vocal about problems in the areas of press freedom and freedom of expression, but it would be more effective if they took more concrete steps like sanctions," says Huseynov. Last year a group of civil society figures appealed without success to the EU to get them to enact targeted sanctions of the sort they approved against Belarus, such as limiting the travel of certain corrupt officials and

freezing their foreign bank accounts.

As Huseynov and most Azeri opposition activists would admit, this is unlikely to happen so long as Azerbaijan remains a friendly oil supplier sandwiched between Russia and Iran. There is also the question of the West's ability to influence local politics here. When Western governments increased the human rights heat on Uzbekistan's Islam Karimov after the 2005 massacre of protesters in Andijan, he fought back. Tashkent threw the Americans out of a key airbase, withdrew from a regional NATO-mentored military alliance, and joined the Moscow-led SCTO. To top it off, Karimov only tightened the human rights abuse screws.

Whether or not the world decides to get serious about human rights abuses in Azerbaijan, there are signs that the Aliyev regime may not care about foreign cash the way he and his father used to. In 2006 the Turkish Electricity Company Barmek had its investment in Baku's electric grid nationalized by the Azeri government. That same year, the Dutch metal company Fondel was kicked out of the country. Foreigners have also been stripped of their shares in AzPetrol.

"Slowly, the power of Azerbaijan's oligarchs is increasing," says Huseynov. "Soon they will fear no one."

It seems that British Petroleum is the last pillar of Western influence standing in Azerbaijan. If human rights and democracy depends on BP, then you may as well do what some Azeris I witnessed are already doing—put on a burqa, pull out your Koran, and seek another way out of the Hell that is Aliyev's Azerbaijan. X

In the run-up to the presidential election this October that Aliyev is certain to win, an already appalling human rights situation is getting worse for Azeri journalists. At the end of 2007, nine reporters and editors were sitting in jails, mostly for the "crime" of libel.

a sick joke on par with the "plant a tree" sign in the Balakhani oil fields, you have to zoom way in from the bird's eye view of the Grand Chessboard and leave the executive suites of the oil majors. You have to talk to an Azeri who is tired of being robbed by the country's Borats to pay for ugly steel-and-glass monuments to the memory of Heydar Aliyev.

There is no shortage of cases to illustrate the state of freedom in Azerbaijan. There is Heydar Aliyev's one-time rival, Rasul Guliyev, who has been in forced exile in New York since 1996. There are the opposition party activists who are routinely beaten, jailed, and, according to Human Rights Watch, tortured. And there are

The last few months have seen an acceleration of unsavory incidents that are beginning to raise the profile of Azerbaijan in human rights circles. Most prominent among them, a reporter for the *Azadlyq* newspaper, Agil Khalil, was stabbed in the chest and left in serious condition while reporting on a shady land deal involving government officials. As with a similar case last year in which the editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Gyundelik Azerbaijan* barely escaped an assassination attempt, no police investigation has been opened.

According to Baku-based journalist Rovshan Ismayilov, the attempted murder was "most probably" carried out by "some forces within the government," possibly in contemptuous response to a recent State Department human rights report critical of

ment wants to instill fear and prevent dissident thinking."

Huseynov is also open to the possibility that the attack on Khalil was intended as a message to the West. "It is interesting that just two days before [the stabbing] the U.S. released its annual report on human rights practices," he said. "There is something to the theory that after such reports are released, attacks like this take place as retribution, to make the point that such reports [accomplish] nothing, and that our government has no obligation to listen to other countries."

Aside from direct violence, the Aliyev regime is fond of other methods familiar to watchers of post-Soviet petro-states. In a sign of the times, earlier this month a Baku Court sentenced the editor-in-chief of

INTERVIEW WITH A RUSSIAN SERIAL KILLER

Russia's #2 serial killer airs his views, opinions, worries...

By Yasha Levine

Alexander Pichushkin, the silver-medal serial killer known as "The Bittsevsky Park Maniac" recently gave the Russian tabloid Tvoi Den an exclusive interview, which we've translated for your reading pleasure. Until today, the man who almost bested Chikatilo had never been given a free platform to air his views, thoughts, and opinions to the world. Below, we are reprinting translated segments of the interview. But first, here's a little background on Russia's second most prolific serial murderer:

The 33-year-old balding supermarket shelf stacker was caught back in June 2006 and charged with 49 murders, all but one carried out over a five year period, all in Bittsevsky Park, one of many massive parks in Moscow's outer districts.

True to the FBI serial killer profile, Pichuskin admitted that he likes toying with cops. Riskier murders made him feel powerful, more powerful than the State. During the trial, he vainly bragged about how he carried out of all the murders.

He usually befriended his victims (he knew 20 of them from playing chess with them in the park) who varied in age and sex, by offering them to have a drink of vodka to mourn his dead dog, which he said he'd buried in a secluded area of Bittsevsky Park. Like Chikatilo, Pichushkin didn't rape his victims. He got his sexual kicks

from sexual substitution. But unlike Chikatilo, he wasn't about the slashing and cutting. He was more into skeletal penetration, skullfucking. After he got his victims wasted, he'd bash their head in with a hammer, then stick empty vodka bottles and twigs into the holes he'd made in their skulls. "I liked the sound of a skull splitting," he told prosecutors. But he mixed it up a bit: strangling a few of his victims, or even trying out a homemade single-shooter craftily constructed out a pipe. To get rid of the corpses, he'd dump the bodies into a sewer wells, sometimes while they were still alive. Many of the victims were never found.

When the police finally caught Pichushkin, he boasted that he'd killed 62 people, topping Chikatilo's body count by 8, making him Russia's most prolific serial killer. The police could only link him to 49, denying him this eternal fame. Was he angry? If the way he talked about his lawyer is any indication, then yes. Read on...

ON INCARCERATION

When I was brought to prison, I was not in a good mood. Now it's gotten better, I have completely adapted. They have ideal water here. It's so hot, I even have to dilute it with cold water. For all the time that I have been here, my hair was cut only once. Do you know how much time they give me to take a shower - five whole minutes!

ON HUMAN LIFE

Human life is not too long. It is cheaper than a sausage. My lawyer: I

would cut him open like a fish. I would have killed him like an insect, and I would receive much pleasure from the process. I would cut him up and make belts out of his flesh. But as for remembering everyone I killed, who and when and where, that, I don't remember. I don't even care to remember.

ON RELIGION & POLITICS

I was baptized when I was three-months old. The baptism took place, but I did not want it. Well, I do not think that someone ... is there. I can also say that I will not either read the Bible or write an autobiography. I have never prayed to God, never will. This is a beautiful fairy tale. For the weak, for those who sacrifice themselves to the State (Russian government). Men, as they age, increasingly dream that someone is there who is all powerful. Well, what is it? As for voting, in all my 33 years, I have never missed a chance to vote.

ON DREAMS

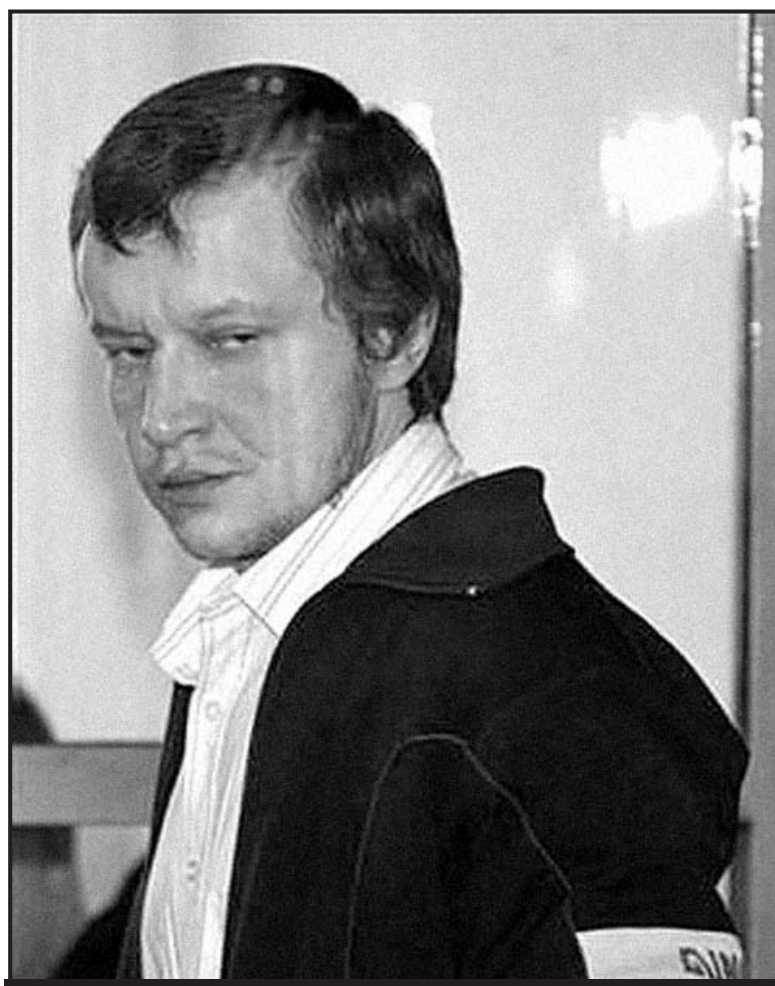
I have nightmares ... A dog. It lived with me a long time [he lured his victims by asking them to go mourn at his dead dog's grave in Bittsevsky Park with a couple of shots of vodka before smashing their heads in]. She died. It was my fault. I treated it, how to say, not very ... She could have been saved. It was a bad situation ... it left something in my subconscious.

ON LITERATURE

Of course I don't write. Only devki (plural of dyev, Russian slang for "girls") write. Journalists too, I suppose.

ON FRIENDSHIP

First of all, what is a friend? This is not someone who gives you one hundred rubles or lets you stay over for a night ... And secondly, my principle: to the grave, and that's it. Yes, I received more pleasure from killing people whom I knew personally. But I also found a way to get to strangers and that is not easy. Their relatives said that they would never go somewhere with a stranger. But to me they are flying, despite the difference in age. A youngster, Koryagin [one of his victims]... I was leaving the police office and I knew that everywhere was an ambush, but I remained free. Then I spit and got caught.



Sore loser. His dreams of killing 62 people, enough to cover every square on a chessboard and edge Chikatilo out of the coveted #1 serial killer slot, never materialized.

ON FORGIVENESS

No, I do not regret it. So much strength and time spent. Repent? I do not repent, this is again a dull formality. It will not change my sentence. Since I was young I dreamed ... Everything was different back then. And it all turned out the way I wanted it to. I knew that they had me nailed when they started pressing me about 12 victims, but then they all were surprised that I actually killed 60. I watched a show about me on TV. Denis, my classmate, told the camera: "When we learned that he had committed these crimes it was a shock." Others said I was a rare case - killing just for the sake of killing. There is no motivation: neither race nor sex nor religion. Even someone wrote: Pichushkin himself doesn't know yet

that the history of criminology is changed, that it didn't account for someone such as him, that he will go down in history forever ...

ON SPORTS

I have never watched football. No football, no hockey.

ON TRAVEL

I would like to live in Mexico. First, it is warm there, and secondly, there are forests. Maybe there I could live in a different way if I was there...

[After the Tvoi Den reporter told Puchushkin that Mexico doesn't have forests, he replied:]

Do you want to tell me there are no jungles? Like Freddy Krueger said, "Elm Street exists in every city." X



One of Mr. Pichushkin's female victims

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RUSSIA'S "OTHER" VIKTOR BOUT

WEAPONS, COCAINE, ISRAELIS AND OLIGARCHS

By Yasha Levine

Last Wednesday, while all eyes were focused on the case of international arms dealer Viktor Bout, I spent about five hours at the Moscow City Court watching the appeal case of another accused arms smuggler, Yair Klein. Known as Israel's most famous arms smuggler, Klein has been fighting extradition to Columbia, where he was tried in absentia in 2001 and sentenced to a 10-year prison term.

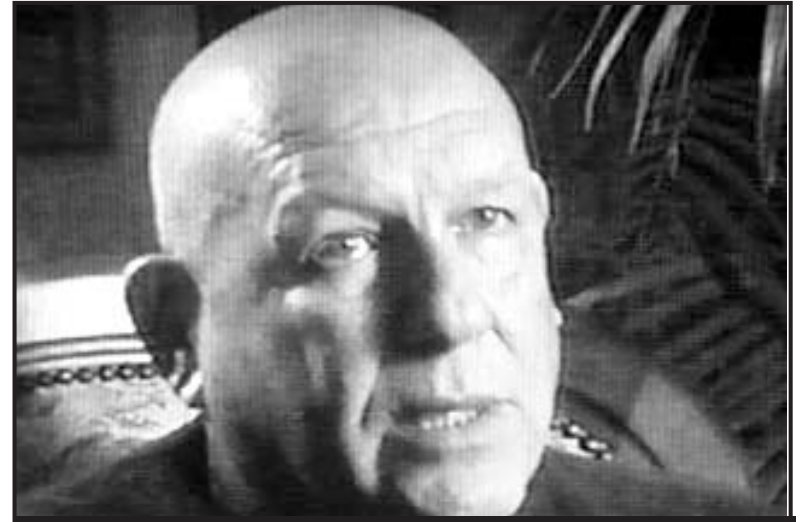
Klein was arrested in Moscow last August on an Interpol warrant as he boarded a plane to Tel Aviv. Now he

reporters present at Klein's appeal hearing. Other than a ponytailed Columbian journalist and two female staffers from the Columbian embassy, I had the pews all to myself as Klein was brought in to the courtroom, shackled and under guard. The Israeli's 64 years showed in the splotches on his bald head and hands, but you would never guess his age by his muscle mass index. His solid beefy build was visible even through his baggy sweater and cargo pants. After six months in a Russian jail, he was still built to harm, and he seemed in good spirits, smiling and joking with the young female interpreter brought in at his own expense.

armies of Sierra Leone. And he's never been shy about it. Klein has openly explained his activities in pretty much every media format: articles, radio programs, TV interviews, documentaries, and self-made promotional videos. Klein and his merry band of Israeli mercenaries even appeared in a 1989 PBS documentary boasting of their activities in Central America, including working with the Nicaraguan Contras, a CIA creation that was known primarily for massacre-and-run operations in poor defenseless villages.

I first became aware of Klein's case in December 2007, when I received a call from Mordechai Tzivin, Klein's Israeli lawyer, asking me to meet him at the kosher restaurant inside Moscow's Marina Roscha synagogue. He phoned me because I occasionally write for Ma'ariv, Israel's second-largest circulation daily, so he figured I might be useful in raising his client's profile. I met Tzivin for dinner in a corner table, where he explained the case to me in between taking calls on his two cell phones, barking the whole time in English, Hebrew, and broken Russian, depending on which phone he was shouting into.

During our conversation, Tzivin boasted of his long and deep connections in Russia dating back the Yeltsin years, when he managed to



Klein on Columbian TV a few months before his arrest in Moscow

Klein has equipped and trained some of the most notorious paramilitary outfits out there—from Nicaraguan death squads to the child armies of Sierra Leone.

stood just one court decision away from being shipped off in cuffs to Bogota, where he'd rot away in some mosquito-swarmed dungeon.

Given the international profile of the case, and the brouhaha involving Bout, there were surprisingly few

Klein is no Viktor Bout, but he is one of the better-known figures in the shadowy world of international arms dealers. Over the course of his career, Klein has equipped and trained some of the most notorious paramilitary outfits out there—from Nicaraguan death squads to the child

get a couple of Israelis off the hook for illicit diamond exports (one of them was pardoned personally by Yeltsin). He cursed the Israeli government for not doing enough to help his client. "They are abandoning a decorated war hero," Tzivin complained. "Israel never does this! There is something going on behind the scenes." He was sure that some kind of deal had been cut, something funny was going on. But what?

Yair Klein was born in British-occupied Palestine in 1943, the son

of hardcore Zionist settlers. He is a member of the Ariel Sharon Generation, a tough Jewish warrior mofo. A veteran of the IDF's special forces, Klein fought in the Six Day War, the Yom Kippur War, and was part of the 1972 team that rescued dozens of hostages held captive in a Libyan plane at Lod airport in Tel Aviv.

Klein entered the mercenary business in the early 80s, when he founded a private security firm called Spearhead. The timing was perfect. Israel soon invaded south Lebanon and Spearhead landed its first major contract training and sup-

SNAPPER SEASON COMING EARLY!



The eXile celebrated its 139th annual Groundsnapper Day event in the lovely folksy town of Dzherdzhinsk last week. As has been custom since the first American john came to a tochka under the reign of Alexander II (known affectionately to expats as "The Tsar-Libidinator"), last week, Moscow's expats gathered around the legs of Sveta Kuntzeva to see if Snapper Season would come early. As the custom goes, Punxsutawney Polina peeled off her winter pants and opened her legs to let the groundsnapper out of her burrow. As legend has it, if the groundsnapper is frightened by its own odor, then Snapper Season won't come for another 8 weeks. However, if the groundsnapper comes out of its burrow and asks someone to buy it a Mojita, well then, Snapper Season is just a few weeks away. Last week, good news came with Punxsutawney Polina's groundsnapper burst out of her burrow and ran all over the "salon," spraying everywhere and generally making a mess.

A great cheer went up, as Mayor Gosha of tochka #52 announced, "Nu cho, telki gotovi blya." With that, we at The eXile wish everyone a Snappertastic 2008 Snapper Season!

plying basic army gear to the Phalangists, the notorious Lebanese Christian militia responsible for shooting up the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps which left hundreds of Palestinians dead, and Israel's reputation tarnished around the world. According to a 2007 interview Klein gave on Columbian TV, his infant firm made \$2 million from that deal alone. He was off and running.

In the mid and late 80s, Klein made a number of trips to Columbia to arm and train local drug cartel militias. These militias formed the basis of the right-wing paramilitary death squads who squared off against the FARC guerillas (who were at the time being armed by Klen's Russian-Jewish competitor, Viktor Bout) and sometimes the Columbian government. One of Spearhead's Colombia employees, Lt. Col. Amatzia Shuali, later explained the company's role in Columbia to American public television: "Yair mentioned the Contras. I think here it's the same thing: the Americans won't interfere directly. We are willing to do it." (Klein maintains that Bogota was aware of his business activities.)

Klein's training activities had a big and bloody impact on Columbia. Local human rights activists accuse Klein of singlehandedly turning

tary helicopter in exchange for access to a Sierra Leone diamond mine. He was later arrested in Freetown on charges of supplying the rebel Revolutionary United Front with weapons and was served a death sentence. He got out in 16 months, cleared of all charges. (It's rumored that he was sprung out of prison in a joint Israeli-American black op.)

His most recent deal, involving armored vehicles, brought him to Moscow in the summer of 2007, and from there, to jail, where he's been sitting ever since.

Over his long and extraordinary career, Klein has always been able to count on powerful friends to get him out of trouble. But something had changed by the time of his latest arrest.

From the moment he was dragged to a Moscow prison, the Israeli government has treated Klein as if they'd washed their hands and wanted nothing more to do with him. The Israeli embassy in Moscow refused to provide Klein with even the most basic citizen services: no embassy representatives came to visit him in jail, nor was he provided with an interpreter. At the appeal hearing, Klein claimed unfair treatment,

wanted criminal. Even Russia looks good, coming off as a law-abiding country that plays by the rule of law, a responsible member of the international community.

The 64-year-old Klein, meanwhile, will be stuck in some foul shit-hole, getting some very late-in-life Spanish lessons as he struggles to survive until release.

Whoever was putting the screws to his client, Tzivin's job was to find a way around it and beat the extradition. To do so, Tzivin planned to dust off some old personal favors owed to him in Russia. He also had what he thought might be a secret weapon.

I didn't think I could be shocked by much after all of the details, but I was wrong. Midway through our meal at the kosher restaurant, we were joined by a tall orthodox Jew dressed in a top hat and black trenchcoat who had just flown into Moscow from Tel Aviv. He was introduced to me as Avigdor Eskin—one of the most notorious fringe-characters is Israel, famous for having staged a ceremonial death-curse against Yitzhak Rabin just a month before he was assassinated. Eskin was jailed for four months after the assassination for

As I shook this man's hand, I had no idea he was Avigdor Eskin, one of the most notorious fringe-characters is Israel, famous for having staged a ceremonial death-curse against Yitzhak Rabin just a month before he was assassinated. He was later jailed for incitement to terrorism.

inept cartel goons into highly efficient death squads. Bogota, which at first turned a blind eye to the right-wing militias, were forced to finally take action when government officials started getting knocked with alarming regularity and professionalism. In 1989, the shit hit the fan when a promotional video showing Klein and other Spearhead employees training drug cartel militias was leaked to the public, causing a PR disaster for Klein—and for Israel. Spearhead was operating under an Israeli government license, putting Israel on the hook. A subsequent investigation by the Columbian government exposed Klein's ambitious plans to set up a "freedom fighter" training camp on the island of Antigua. Along with a diploma, every graduate would be sent back to Columbia with his very own machine gun.

Klein and several other former Israeli officers fled as they were charged in Columbia. The government of Israel acknowledged Klein's activities and punished him with fines. While Klein got away with a slap on the wrist, one of his associates was discovered dead not long afterwards, stuffed into the trunk of his car, after he'd complained of being tailed by Mossad agents. It appears as if this associate took the fall for Klein's operation.

But even all this bad press didn't put a damper on Spearhead's activities. In the mid 90s, Klein was reported to have operated in the lucrative and gory business of blood diamonds: Sierra Leone and Liberia. The details, as always, are murky and hard to verify, but one of Klein's few known transactions in Africa involved an attempt to trade a mili-

including unlawfully restricted access to the telephone, newspapers, and his attorney.

According to his attorney Tzivin, Klein believes the CIA is to blame for his predicament. "It's possible America is leaning on Israel to give him up to the Columbians so they could have a trophy in the War On Drugs," explained Tzivin. Israel, which relies heavily on American aid, may have agreed and cut Klein loose as a favor to the CIA and the DEA. Tzivin was adamant that Israel would never otherwise sit back and allow Russia to extradite the Israeli war hero.

CIA or not, the reality is that Israel and Columbia have their own growing trade ties that could justify a decision to leave Klein out to dry. Just a week before Klein's appeal, Israel's Prime Minister Shimon Peres hosted Colombian Defense Minister Juan Manuel Santos at his residence in Jerusalem. Referencing the 1950s, when Columbia shipped weapons to Israel in defiance of international embargoes, Peres said: "In recent years the situation has come full circle, and Israel is able to repay Columbia in kind."

Repay indeed. In early March, Israel supplied Bogota with drone aircraft, arms, ammunition and electronic equipment for use in combating the country's drug lords (and guerrillas). Israel also has plans to refurbish Columbia's aging air force. Neither side wants Klein running around smearing Columbia and gloating about his own invincibility. It's not hard to see how his extradition is a win-win situation for everyone except him: Israel can develop its newly profitable relationship with Columbia, and Columbia gets a

incitement to terrorism and blamed by many for the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

In the half-hour since I was introduced to the world of Yair Klein, things just kept getting weirder.

Born in Moscow in 1960, Avigdor Eskin escaped to Israel as a teenager and drifted toward Arab-bashing extremists like Meir Kahane. After a string of brushes with the law as a young man, Eskin emerged as a prominent far-right wacko of his own right. In 1995, enraged by Yitzhak Rabin's signing of the Oslo Accords with Yassir Arafat, Eskin made a public show of laying a kabbalistic curse on the Prime Minister. He led a ceremony in front of the prime minister's house, and intoned a curse: "Angels of destruction will hit him. He is damned wherever he goes. His soul will instantly leave his body ... A disaster he has never experienced will beget him and all curses known in the Torah will apply to him. I deliver to you, the angels of wrath and ire, Yitzhak, the son of Rosa Rabin, that you may smother him. Put to death the cursed Yitzhak. May he be damned, damned, damned!"

According to kabbalah tradition, the curse supposedly became active 30 days after the incantation. True to the curse's power, Rabin was shot exactly 32 days later by Yigal Amir, an extremist settler steeped in the ideology of people like Eskin.

In 2007, Eskin was arrested in Israel for wiretapping the offices of Israel's most powerful ultranationalist extremist, Avigdor Lieberman,

Israel's Strategic Affairs Minister. The reason for wiretapping Lieberman was to get information on his powerful associate, the one-time Russian metals oligarch Michael Chernoy, who had to flee Russia for Israel, where he lost his vast metals holdings to RusAl oligarch Oleg Deripaska. Israeli police found evidence that Deripaska had hired Eskin to spy on his old associate so that he could smear him with damning kompromat, or "compromising material."

Eskin was still serving time in Israel for his wiretapping crime when he was recruited to help Klein. It's not clear how Eskin got out of jail for a crime that serious. If Tzivin is right, Klein still has some powerful people on his side. Eskin was the go-to man, as he's known for his ties to Russia's political and business elite. So Tzivin brought Eskin to Russia to help him work their Russian contacts on behalf of Klein.

Turns out, Eskin wasn't much help. A few weeks after he arrived in Moscow, on December 31, the Russian General Prosecutor's office announced that Klein would be extradited to Columbia, no matter what trump cards Tzivin thought he had up his sleeves.

At the hearing on March 12, the judge rejected Klein's appeal. Klein had wanted his lawyers to argue that his extradition was a CIA conspiracy, but his counsel refused and stuck to arguments more easily proved: 1) that Columbia's statute of limitation on Klein's crimes had expired; and 2) that Columbia couldn't guarantee his safety once he was extradited back. To prove the second point, his

lawyers cited a UN report that accused Columbia of serious human rights violations. The Russian prosecutor had a field day with that.

"Well, the UN has criticized Israel for human rights abuses, Serbia and Chechnya, too. You cannot take that seriously," he said with a smirk.

As the judges retired to their chambers to decide the case, Klein jumped up and started ranting about the CIA to his attorneys. I caught only snatches: "Rockets ... missiles bought to arm Taliban fighters in Afghanistan to fight the Soviets ... The CIA ... Americans ... The judge needs to know." But his lawyer cut him off.

As the judge read off the court's decision in Russian, Klein remained in suspense. The young interpreter he hired failed to keep up with the judge's pace and gave up trying to translate. Klein learned of his fate from his lawyer after a long delay, only after the court session had been adjourned.

"That was bullshit!" Klein's Russian lawyer cried. "There was no way she could have typed up that statement in an hour. It had already been prepared."

Klein has one more chance to appeal the decision with Russia's Supreme Court. His attorneys have already filed the request. But Tzivin may have already tapped all of his connections and played his trump cards. The bottom line: this strange and incredibly story looks like it's coming to a bad and quiet end for Yair Klein. As he struggles alone, forgotten and shunned by his home country and the various spy agencies who once used his services, one can only hope that his epitaph isn't summed up with the cheap ol' "crime doesn't pay" homily. X



Eskin, the man who put a death curse on Yitzhak Rabin

THE COMOROS: VIVE LE BOB!

By Gary Brecher

FRESNO, CA – It's time for something a little lighter, and nothing cheers me up like a tiny African state whose main export is coups. They're getting scarce now, these coup factories, and we'll miss them when they're gone. Democracy is pretty

THE WAR NERD

boring, to tell the truth, compared to a system where you know there's a new President when the radio station keeps playing the national anthem for 48 hours in a row, and the stray dogs hide under the house-stilts while the junior officers zoom around town in their M-60 mounted jeeps looking for signs of negative, unhelpful attitudes. That's my idea of an election cycle. For one thing it doesn't usually take so damn long--no primaries.

And so we set sail for the glorious Comoros Islands off the coast of East Africa, a little powerhouse coup-maker. It's had 19 coups since independence in 1975. You may have heard them mentioned in the news, because the islands are about to have the great honor of being the first sovereign state to be invaded by that military powerhouse, the African Union. Right now--that's Monday, March 17, or like us journalists like to say, "as we go to press," the Tanzanians, the annoying Swiss of Africa, are insisting the invasion will go ahead, with 750 of their fearsome shock troops in the lead. The South Africans are bummed about the idea and trying to get out of it, but you can't stop do-goodery like Tanzania's when it's on the rise.

That's the lesson of the greatest man ever to live and work in the Comoros: the French mercenary Bob Denard, who ran the place like a personal pleasure palace for more than a decade. He took over with sheer guts and a handful of mercenaries.

So if you'll excuse me, I'll hold off on puffing the glory of the African Union's first amphibious operation until I see it happen. I'm not sure I'll believe it even then, but I'll try. In the meantime I'd rather give Denard his props. The guy is a war nerd's dream.

To see why the Comoros was the perfect place for a star like Denard to shine, you have to know a little about the place. It's got the kind of mixed-ethnic history to make coups pretty much inevitable. They're one of those "crossroads of civilization" places, right where Arab slave traders heading down the East African coast would meet Bantu canoeing out from the mainland. Even the Persians held the place for a while. Then the Portugese stopped by, followed by the French.

Your social studies teacher told you this cross-cultural stuff is a wonderful thing, but what it really means is permanent gang fights. Add in the fact that the Comoros can get invaded from just about everywhere, like Ukraine on the Risk board, and you see how screwed the place is.

The Comoros is the only African country that belongs at the same time to the Francophone Club, the Arab League, and the African Union. French, Arab, African--not a good combination. Kind of like the arsonist's old favorite: cherry bomb, cigarette, can of gasoline. You flash your membership in those clubs at a cop to try to get out of ticket and he'd say politely, "Sir, please step out of the vehicle to be mercy-killed."

Nearly everybody has landed on these little volcanic outcrops, but nobody could hold onto them for long. First--not that long ago, maybe 1500 years back--came the

Polynesians, which is pretty impressive if you look at a world map. Those vine-tied outriggers could move! By the way, you know why Polynesians gain weight easy? Turns out it's because fat people can survive long sea voyages in open boats better. Seriously. That's my new line: I'm not fat, just adapted to marine migration.

The Polynesians set up their Tiki bars on the Comoros and on Madagascar, a few miles south. But they've held sway in Madagascar to this day, whereas the Comoros were too small to build up a population big enough to hold off invaders. In fact, the Malagasy showed their Polynesian solidarity the old-fashioned way, by raiding the Comoros for slaves. They weren't all hulas and fruity drinks, those Polynesian dudes. I remember Long Beach too well to ever fall for that crap. One on one, even the Brothers wouldn't mess with Samoans.

All that Samoan solidarity scared the local Comoran sultan so bad he couldn't wait to sign an agreement with the French for protection in 1841. The French were busy playing catchup with the Victorian Brits back then, ready to grab anything that didn't already have a Union Jack flying over it. Of course, those were usually the places the Brits had decided were more trouble than they were worth. Which definitely applied to the Comoros.

The biggest problem is that there are four islands, all tiny and overcrowded with multiethnic trouble. At the moment the problem is that one of the islands, Anjouan, is trying to defect from the big happy Comoran family. It's only following a local tradition; when the French tried to dump the place in 1975, only three of the four main islands voted for independence; one, called Mayotte, had a Christian population who didn't feel totally comfy in a 95% Muslim African country--buncha worrywarts, huh?--so they opted to keep sucking that Parisian tit.

This is where the fun starts. And it started fast. In July 1975 Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah formally declared Comoros an independent country. One month later, he was gone in the first of those 19 coups, replaced by--oh, who am I kidding? You don't need to hear the names of every Islamic frontman who held the Presidential chair for a few months. The real power was a French mercenary named Bob Denard.

Denard was da proverbial bomb. My only problem with him is that name, "Bob." That's just wrong for a French merc. And it wasn't even his real name; he was born a "Gilbert." I guess Gilbert to Bob is sort of a horizontal move, but if he was inventing names he could've done better. I mean, Pancho Villa started out as a "Doroteo." Doroteo to Pancho, now that's a real improvement.

Denard's gang of mercs who ran the Comoros for years had a much better name: the locals feared them so much they called them "The Horrors." They were all Europeans, too. Gotta give those Euros some credit: most of them have turned into techno-listening fags, but they still make the best mercenaries.

Denard started his career killing anybody in French Africa who was giving Paris trouble. The French government supposedly had a tradition until recently that the President was allowed to sign two no-questions-asked death warrants per year, as long as the names weren't French citizens. But that wasn't counting Africa. They ran more of a free-fire zone there, and Denard was one of their best shooters. Denard, who was a French rightwinger whatever that is, didn't hold to those namby-pamby restrictions anyway. When a bigtime French Prime Minister, Mendes-France, lost enthusiasm for the war against the Viet Minh, Denard tried to assassinate him. He fought special-ops in



When the Blue Helmets are busy: African Union troops to the rare rescue

the Algerian War, then settled in Africa when he realized what a land of opportunity it was for a guy in his line of work. He managed coups in the big places, like Katanga/Congo, but he was also willing to work the smaller venues like Benin and Gabon. He even branched out to the Middle East, directing black ops in Yemen and Iran.

But the Comoros were always nearest of Bob's heart, unfortunately for them. In 1977 he came back to the islands because the guy he'd put in power back in 1975 was turning pinko. Bob didn't like that, and neither did the French secret service. Soon after he and his "Horribles" hit the Comoros, the pinko President died somehow or other, nobody was sure. The autopsy said, "None of my business, please don't hurt me Monsieur!"

Those were the golden years. You tell me if this wasn't the ideal life Denard was living: he was head of the Presidential Guard, which had the official army terrified; he ran the country de facto; he owned most of the hotels on the island. He was the King without having to do all the dull stuff.

And back then you could do it with just a few good men. When Denard landed on the Comoros in 1977, he had less than 50 men. Of course once he was in power, he expanded his pri-

vate army to 500.

And like all good things, it had to end. The first serious trouble came in 1989, when Denard and his local puppet ruler, Ahmad Abdullah, decided to dissolve the army. This is always a danger zone for coups, any time you cut the officer corps' wages or mess with their various scams. Those guys are armed and not really all that dedicated to democratic reforms.

Sure enough, a "disgruntled" army officer walked into Abdullah's office, shot him dead and wounded Denard. The French government, which had one of those love-hate things with Denard, like in a French movie, evacuated him to South Africa and he recovered. But, *sacre bleu*, things could never be the same again.

In fact, when Denard tried to make a comeback it was just sad. In 1995 he came ashore with a pitiful 30 men in inflatable rafts. One week later, French troops landed, picked him and his men up and flew them back to Paris to stand trial. That's the kind of government gratitude you can expect if you're in what the Russians call "wet ops."

The trial was kind of weird, because the French accused Denard of staging the 1989 murder of his puppet, Ahmad Abdullah. Weird, because as far as I can see he didn't do it. Why would he have been shot if

he was directing the assassination? Maybe that was the plan: instead of charging him with the four Comoros coups he definitely ran, they trumped up charges for one of the ones he didn't do. At any rate, he got off on that one, but the magic was gone. When he tried another coup in 1995, he wimped out for the first time in his life, surrendered without a shot and went back to France. And even there they wouldn't let him alone. Those pesky human-rights types were multiplying like--well, like Comorans, who have one of the highest birth rates in the world.

In 2001 the Italians put Denard on trial, like it was any of their business. (Italy has one of the lowest birth rates in the world, by the way--you see the link between no kids and do-goodery.) He got off again, but a Leftist lawyer in France forced another trial in 2006, and this time Denard was convicted. By now, though, he was a senile old dolt and not worth taking to jail. He died shortly afterwards, in 2007.

But don't feel too sorry for ol' Bob. He saw which way the winds were blowing and converted to Islam soon after assuming power in 1978, and his legacy lives on in the form of at least eight kids. With at least seven different women. You can't take it with you but you can sure spread your genes around. Vive le Bob! X

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SWEENEY TODD: A BLOOD-GURGLING OPERA

by Eileen Jones

I never saw *Sweeney Todd* on stage, because I never see anything on stage, because I hate the stage. Theater makes me ill, always has. All those actors, I mean, right in the same room with you, acting at you, projecting their trained voices, sweating through their stupid costumes—it's horrible. Films were invented to put an end to all that.

But theatricality in film can be interesting, and the director of this film, Tim Burton, is Mr. Filmic Theatricality. *Sweeney Todd* is his meat, a musical with a lot of blood and violence and humor, a promising combination that doesn't come along every day. In adapting it, Burton apparently insisted on upping the level of gore. His characters look like animated flesh-dolls in a gloomy diorama, hacking away at each other. I always liked Burton. Admittedly, his bad movies are legion (*Batman*, *Mars Attacks!*, *Big Fish*, *Planet of the Apes*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*). But his few good ones still stand up, attesting to the deathless hope of escaping conformist hell in America through passionate self-expression, usually represented by weird clothes and big tangled hair and idiosyncratic artistic pursuits. It's a touching fantasy he can occasionally bring to life.

ter. We just want to get to the killing.

There's a lot of the killing too, with the melodic, mostly-sung score by Stephen Sondheim as high-toned accompaniment. Gaping wounds on full artistic display; gouts of blood spewing gorgeously; and plenty of time to admire what special effects can do with the insides of slashed human necks. It's rare that entertainment with such a lofty pedigree also offers generous portions of things people actually like: revenge, violence and viscera, a protagonist we can root for, occasional humor, nice tunes. Is that so much to ask? A little sauce on the raw meat we crave? Shakespeare didn't think so! (Unfortunately, that brings us back to the stage again.)

Considering the body count, the whole film is absurdly elegant. Burton was reportedly on a doomed quest for an Academy Award nomination for Best Director, and it shows. The art design/set decoration team, Dante Ferretti and Francesca Lo Schiavo, won Oscars for their color-wheel knowledge: the best way to showcase blood red is to set it against a uniform blue-gray pall with touches of black and white. Classy! Plus there's a line-up of fine expensive British hams—Alan Rickman, Timothy Spall, Sasha Baron Cohen—to play the nasty villains taking their seats one by one in the fatal barber's chair.

The chair itself is cleverly rigged to dump the bodies backwards



nice. The Sweeney Todd who became a folk hero back in 18th century London "penny dreadfuls" was out for pure profit when he set up his barber-chair-meat-pie system, and this continued through the 19th century stage drama and no doubt the 1928 British silent film, which I bet is worth a look. The writers of the revered 1979 play, Sondheim and Hugh Wheeler, supposedly came up with the revenge motive, and it's a good one, just right for the movies. Every properly-raised child knows that in movies the only sin worse than hurting the dog is menacing the baby and raping the nice young lady, so we can all root for Sweeney to kill, kill, and kill again. Almighty Walt Disney himself couldn't object to slaughter on these terms.

Not coincidentally, Tim Burton started his career at Disney Studios, working as an animator on dreck like *The Fox and the Hound*. What Burton always had to offer was a slight but important twist on Disney's family films. They're still heartfelt fables, yes, but not for smug reactionaries striving to preserve a grotesque legacy of "traditional family values." Burton was seeking to comfort the depressed children of those reactionaries, living in the suburbs. When you're a depressed child in the suburbs—as Burton himself was—you know the cure for your condition is not more enforced cheerfulness, more little league soc-

cer, more Kool-aid, more Fox and the Hound. Vampira in spidery black is what you long to see wiggling down the street; you wish Beetlejuice was your live-in uncle. And later on in life, if you don't get some practical outlet for your misery, you might find yourself wanting to set up a meat pie shop Sweeney Todd-style.

Here's Burton speaking directly on the topic of suburbia:

"I don't know if it's specifically America, or America in the time I grew up, but there's a very strong sense of categorization and conformity. I remember being forced to go to Sunday school for a number of years, though my parents were not religious. No one was really religious; it was just the framework. There was no passion for it. No passion for anything. Just a quiet, kind of floaty, kind of semi-oppressive, blank palette that you're living in."

I realize this seems like a mild condemnation. But take it from me, he's absolutely nailed a certain quality of insidious awfulness that blights many an American life. The worst of it is, it's superficially not-bad. You're hard-pressed to know how to fight the "semi-oppression" of "floaty" blankness. And you're perpetually shamed by the much more tangible suffering of others. You sometimes feel perversely envious of guns, and gangs, and wars, and mayhem, and then you're quite

rightly ashamed of being envious. And so the long days wear on.

The average suburban kid's seemingly irrational hatred of his supposedly safe, sunny home, family, school, and community is an odd, trite, embarrassing burden to bear. It's a great relief to turn to Sweeney Todd, with his obviously rational hatred of the cesspool of 19th century London. When Sweeney Todd broadens his revenge to include not only those who wronged him, but everybody he can get his hands on, we can revel vicariously in his singsong logic: "There's a hole in the world like a great black pit and it's filled with people who are filled with shit and the vermin of the world inhabit it and it goes by the name of 'London!'"

How I would've loved this film when I was a child! Instead of "London," I could've substituted the name of my own despised hometown, which also conveniently began with the letter "L!"

In the fight against deadly American blankness (or what Dr. Dolan calls "The Beige-ocracy"), the greatest cinematic warriors are the Coen brothers and David Lynch. But Burton is also in there trying to do his part. For this we honor him. X

Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street opens April 10th in Moscow.



The good films, in case you were wondering, are *Beetlejuice* and *Ed Wood*. *Pee-wee's Big Adventure* has its moments, too.

Burton movies often star Johnny Depp, and like many women, I'm all for the Depp. He's generally seen prancing around in some ridiculous get-up in a movie that's otherwise unwatchable (*Benny and Joon*, anyone?) but what the hell. The cheekbones alone are the stuff that dreams are made of.

This time out Depp is as lovely as ever in a fetching Victorian ensemble as *Sweeney Todd*, "the Demon Barber of Fleet Street," complete with Goth pancake make-up and a white skunk-streak in his hair. He sings a good deal, in his own voice, a pleasant light-baritone, and slits many throats, frequently at the same time. He croons his most romantic ballad to "My Friends," his nice, shiny, professionally-stropped razors. He's supposed to be bent on revenge, see, after a corrupt judge (Alan Rickman) had him transported to Australia on a trumped-up charge in order to take possession of the barber's beautiful blonde wife (Laura Michelle Kelly) and daughter (Jayne Wisener). That's the back-story, shown in hazy golden flashback, but it doesn't really mat-

through a trap door in the floor, down to the cellar to be ground up and cooked into meat pies. This is an added plus for "green" members of the audience, making the whole homicidal process seem efficient and environmentally sound. As the meat-pie-maker Mrs. Lovett says, "Waste not, want not."

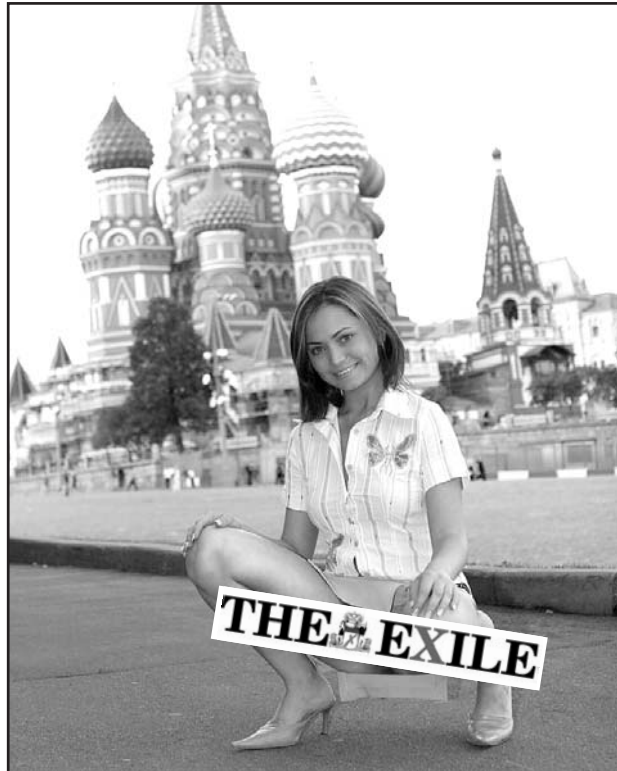
Helena Bonham Carter—Burton's girlfriend—plays Mrs. Lovett. She does her own singing too, pretty badly, proving once again that it helps to be the director's girlfriend, in case anyone ever doubted it. She looks good, though. That's a Burton specialty, making people look more beautiful in Halloween costume than any other way. She has a boy minion named Toby (Ed Sanders) who's understandably in love with her, and also understandably an alcoholic at age ten or so. He sings the prettiest song to her, "Not While I'm Around." The kid has the best voice in the cast.

The thing nobody will tell you about *Sweeney Todd* is what pleasant, soothing entertainment it is. Fun for the whole family, more wholesome than Disney, if only it weren't inconveniently rated R for "graphic bloody violence." The original material, it's reported, was not nearly so

SOAK UP THE SAVAGE LUST OF MOTHER RUSSIA!



According to Clausewitz, a pair of hot leggy dyevs in schoolgirl outfits is worth an entire tank division.



This girl agreed to flash her beaver specifically so that we could test out Face Control's new "Medvedev-friendly" snapper-censored technology. Stay tuned for results.



How! Me look like white man. Me take white woman, drink fire water, pow-wow all night long. Me happy.



Not sure why, but we decided to throw in an incredibly unremarkable photo of a typical Belarussian couple. Kind of depressing, ain't it.



Just as scientists were amazed to discover a new "hobbit" species that existed side by side with modern man until a few thousand years ago, so we are awed by the photographic evidence of what clearly appear to be close relatives of homo sapiens living in the Eurasian steppes.



One nice thing about the fact that Russian fashion trends tend to drag on for 10 years at a time is that the chicks-with-bangs look will stay.



They're saying, "Can you help us please? We both have these big wet juicy lips, and we really don't know what to do with them, they're just sitting here on our beautiful taut faces. We've tried sucking on these straws, but...it's not enough. Oh, what? You've got an American wife? Never mind!"



Khyerbee Ze Love Bag: why Disney movies about talking cars never took off in provincial Russia.



Again, employing our new "Medvedev-friendly" censorship technology, we fed this bum two bottles of cheap vodka, then snapped a photo of him with his unit hanging out, just so we could slap an Exile banner over it. It was an ugly site, and all thanks to the new president, you won't ever have to look at it.

Email your photos of Mother Russia to face@exile.ru and win prizes!

THE FORTNIGHT SPIN



By Jared Lindquist
exileradio@gmail.com

First up this fortnight is **STUCK MOJO**, who after initially being booked at the techno club Gorod has been moved to a much more appropriate venue: the teenage metal haven, Tochka (March 24, 19:00). But that doesn't change the fact that they're a ball-sucking nu-metal act with a stupid name.

More interesting on the metal front is Seattle's **HIMSA** (March 25, Tabula Rasa, 19:00), an aggressive technical metal act. They're supported by Philly metalheads **A LIFE ONCE LOST**, whose recent work has drawn comparisons to **PANTERA** and **LAMB OF GOD**. Locals **NOELANI** and **MEANING BESIDE** round out the lineup.

As March turns into April, the Golden Mask festival is once again upon us, promising two weeks or so thick with decent gigs. The first one worth noting is **PROTOTYPES** (March 27, Gogol, 22:00), a Parisian electro-pop band drawing on 60s rhythms. Fans of **STEREOTOTAL** are advised to mark the date in ink.

Next up at Golden Mask is French indie-rock trio **RHESUS** (March 28, Gogol, 21:00), a supposedly fun little indie rock band that's been compared to their countrymen **HUSHPUPIES**, whose recent gig at Ikra put team eXile to sleep.

A better bet on the 28th might be the ambient electro sounds of Germany's **ANTLERS MULM** (March 28, Dom, 20:00). The one-man band makes tense electronic music influenced by **KRAFTWERK**, minimal electro and dark ambient music. Bizarre-o electro act **LLOVESPELL** opens.

As a kid I tried hard to like **THE TIGER LILLIES** (March 29, Apelsin, 20:00), but their avant-garde cabaret vibe just didn't do it for me. They've worked with some cool people—including **ALEXANDER HACKE** of **EINSTURZENDEN NEUBATEN**, the **KRONOS QUARTET**, and even **LENINGRAD**—so I guess there's something there, but I still just don't hear it.

If you're wondering whether France has gopniks, look no further than Golden Mask's next offering: **R.WAN** (March 29, Gogol, 21:00) hails from the French rap group **JAVA**, who specialize in the sort of chanson that would probably not look out of place on a **SERYOGA** record. At the very least, he wears a

tabletkap.

Although Russians tend to have a strong suspicion of the Jews, let it not be said that they can't get down with them if need be. Case in point: Israeli psychedelic trance duo **INFECTED MUSHROOM** (March 29, B1 Maximum, 23:00). They're the highest rated psychedelic trance DJs ever by DJ magazine, if that sort of thing means anything to you.

If you've been following underground music over the past couple years, saying Berlin-based should be enough to give you an idea of what **BARBARA MORGENSTERN** (March 30, Ikra, 21:00) sounds like. If not, just think indie electro pop, indietronica, or whatever the buzzword of the moment is. If the names **APPARAT**, **ELLEN ALIEN** or **CONSOLE** mean anything to you, you should be in like Flynn.

It's only fitting that crappy Italian pop-punk band **VANILLA SKY** (March 31, Tochka, 19:00) took their name from that horrible Cameron Crowe movie: they became famous for making a "quirky" punk cover of **RIHANNA**'s megahit "Umbrella," that pales to the original. Kind of like Crowe's cover version of the movie...

Although post-rock bands are a dime a dozen in Russia, one of the more interesting ones is St. Petersburg's **KLEVER** (April 4, Aktovy Zal, 20:00), making a rare visit to the capital. While they have a rather psychedelic vibe, the real thing that differentiates them from all the other meandering vocal-less bands populating the scene is their reliance on Russian folk instruments such as the zhalejka to make interesting noise.

While I missed **NOUVELLE VAGUE**'s (April 4, B1 Maximum, 21:00) first visit to Moscow last year, apparently there was enough demand to bring them back and double the venue size. No big shock I guess, who couldn't get into French lounge cover versions of the **DEAD KENNEDYS**, **THE CLASH**, **DEPECHE MODE** and others.

Dark electro bands playing in Moscow are nothing new. Usually, they hail from Scandinavia or one of the darker corners of Germany. So it's unusual to see a dark electro band from the sunny climes of Mexico. Yet that's where **HOCICO** (April 5, Tochka, 19:00) claim to come from. Dutch industrial dude **GRENDDEL** opens.

If you've got nothing better to do with your sad life, go watch a 60-year-old **GLORIA GAYNOR** (April 5, B1 MAXIMUM, 21:00) lip-synch an extended version of "I Will Survive". Another option is to stay home and order Transpizza before hanging yourself. X

TOP PICKS



FEVERDREAM

Bilingua

March 29, 21:00

When Rotterdam's Feverdream was supposed to play in Moscow last fall at Projekt OGI, the eXile crew was out in force, only to have the door doofus tell us that some local folk band was playing instead, and that we shouldn't believe everything we read on the club's website. So we went across the street and drank ourselves stupid at Booze Bub instead. This time, we have much more reliable information that the abrasive Dutch indie trio — think Shellac, Q and Not U or Fugazi — will actually show up and take the stage. Locals Analog Sound open.



BACK TO CBGB

Ikra

April 2, 21:00

Nevermind the fact that New York's CBGB was a total fucking shithole dive that lived far beyond its utility, the club will forever be romanticized by everyone who wasn't there. As such, the promoters of this rock fest have seen fit to appropriate the club's name, for a display of Moscow's best and rawest rock bands. The mini-fest (actually about the same number of bands that would play CB's on any given weeknight) is nominally headlined by local Ramones-inspired punk band Lazy Bitches, while our favorites Rivushie Struny are one of the openers. Other participants include Barto, Thunderbirds, The Cavestompers and the Powlers.



HEADMAN

Solyanka

April 5, 23:00

The latest skeezy motherfucker to bring his new disco sounds to Moscow is German's Headman, who first started making waves in 2003 on the Gomma label. He's since been remixing a veritable Who's Who of underground rock and disco acts: Franz Ferdinand, Royksopp, Mylo and Annie, among others. This shows that either he has taste, or the guy he paid to write his bio is a good editor. Uber-hip local post-punkers Manicure opens.

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FRIDAY
March 21

ROCK

Okean Elzy
21.00: B 1 Maximum
Kalinov Most
23.00: B-2
Eight Legs (UK)
23.00: 16 Tonn
Nogu Svelo
23.00: Tabula Rasa
Die Krupps
20.00: Apelsin

JAZZ & BLUES

Nikolay Arutunov
& Funky Soul
21.00: Roadhouse
Jazz Piano
20.00: B-2

CLUBBIN'

DJs Jonny, Tuzov
00.30: B-2
DJs Carlos Tico,
SKAM
21.00: Karma Bar
DJs Volodya,
Budnyak
21.00: Krizis Zhanra
DJs Ladjak, Zig
Zag
21.00: Kult

DJs Ivanov,
Technic, Shevtsov
23.00: Fabrique

SATURDAY
March 22

ROCK

Sergey Babkin
20.00: Ikra
Leningrad
21.00: B 1 Maximum
Neils Children
23.00: 16 Tonn
Cherdak Ofitsera
22.00: Proekt OGI
Piknik
20.00: Apelsin

JAZZ & BLUES

Jazz Piano
20.00: B-2
Petrovich-

HarmonikaMan

21.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'

DJs Neytino,
Fenix, Losev
23.00: Fabrique
DJs Basic, Tuzov
00.30: B-2
DJs Ada, Ahmed
00.00: Karma Bar
DJs Volodya,

Valio
21.00: Krizis Zhanra
DJs Anatoly ICE,
Nikolaev
22.00: Kult

SUNDAY
March 23

ROCK

The Unsubs, Mass
Murder
19.00: Tabula Rasa
AKADO,
Dee_waste
18.00: B-2
Kommutator, Bio
19.00: Tochka
7Rasa
20.00: Apelsin

JAZZ & BLUES

Open Blues Jam
18.00: Roadhouse
SwingCounture
22.00: Proekt OGI

CLUBBIN'

Mighty Party, DJ
Ahmed
23.00: Karma Bar
DJ Shum
23.00: Ikra
Syndicate Records

21.00: Kult

MONDAY
March 24

ROCK

Memfis, Cherez
Luny
19.00: Tabula Rasa
Stuck Mojo
19.00: Tochka

JAZZ & BLUES

Jazz Piano
21.00: B-2
Dr. Nick
21.00: Roadhouse
CLUBBIN'
Latino non Stop
20.00: B-2
DJ Partyphone
21.00: Propaganda

TUESDAY
March 25

ROCK

Himsa, A Life
Once Lost
19.00: Tabula Rasa
Haleo
21.00: B-2
Nochnoy Prospekt
22.00: Proekt OGI

JAZZ & BLUES
The Jumping Cats
21.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'

DJs ZigZag,
Anatoliy
Gerasimov, Philla
21.00: Propaganda

WEDNESDAY
March 26

ROCK

Umka & Bronevik
20.00: Ikra
Steps Arizen,
Feniks, Brest,
IMHO
18.30: Tochka
Argument 5.45,
Ray
19.00: Tabula Rasa
Unesennie Vetki
22.00: Proekt OGI

JAZZ & BLUES

Vadim Ivashenko
& Bone Shakers
21.00: Roadhouse
Edelweis
21.00: B-2

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- 22.03 SUPERSONIK DANCE SERIES 2 (Megapolis fm party) – 22:00
- 26.03 MIUSHA – 21:00
- 28.03 The Moscow High Fashion Week Closing – 20:00
Fashion Party - Iskra Disco & freinds – 22:00
- 29.03 Iskra Disco & friends – 22:00



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21.00: Propaganda
DJ Spirin & Rock'n'roll Radio
 21.00: Ikra
Rob Dirton
 21.00: Kult

THURSDAY
March 27

ROCK
Drugly cats
 20.00: Tabula Rasa
Naehvichi & Daniel Kan
 22.00: Proekt OGI
News From Helsinki
 20.00: Ikra
Rave Ticket Sellers
 22.00: 16 Tonn
Aleksey Hvorostyan
 21.00: B-2

JAZZ & BLUES
Jazz Hall
 20.00: B 1 Maximum
Mihail Mishuris & Orchestra
 21.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
DJs Studinskiy, Sanches
 21.00: Propaganda
HomeListening DJ's
 21.00: B-2
DJ Shum
 23.00: Ikra
Ja Vybz dj sessions
 21.00: Kult

FRIDAY
March 28

ROCK
TequillaJazz
 23.00: 16 Tonn
Mara
 23.00: Tabula Rasa
Nochnie Snaipery
 20.00: Ikra
Bumboks
 23.00: B-2
Vasiliy Shumov&Tsentr
 21.00: B 1 Maximum

JAZZ & BLUES
Jazz Piano
 20.00: B-2
Dirty Dozen
 21.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
DJs Turbomax, Causelove, Loopin
 23.00: Fabrique

DJ Komotskiy, Gatek
 21.00: Propaganda
DJs Ariel, Tuzov
 00.30: B-2
DJ Zig Zag
 21.00: Kult

SATURDAY
March 29

ROCK
Paporotnik, Bumboks
 21.00: B-2
Kim & Buran
 23.00: 16 Tonn
Uta
 23.00: Tabula Rasa
Megapolis
 20.00: Ikra
The Tiger Lillies
 20.00: Apelsin

JAZZ & BLUES
Jazz Piano
 20.00: B-2
Old Fashioned Blues Project
 21.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
DJs Philla, Onlee
 21.00: Propaganda
DJs BodyRox & Alexandra Prince
 23.00: Fabrique
DJ Anatoly Ice
 21.00: Kult

SUNDAY
March 30

ROCK
Flip
 19.00: Tabula Rasa
Barbara Morgenstern
 21.00: Ikra
Soledad Orquestra
 22.00: Proekt OGI
Krec
 20.00: Apelsin

JAZZ & BLUES
Open Blues Jam
 18.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
DJs Anatoly Ice, Tony Key, Kuka
 23.00: Propaganda
DJ Shum
 23.00: Ikra
Syndicate Records
 21.00: Kult

MONDAY
March 31

ROCK
Vanila Sky
 19.00: Tochka

JAZZ & BLUES
Dr. Nick
 21.00: Roadhose
Jazz Piano
 21.00: B-2

CLUBBIN'
DJ Partyphone
 21.00: Propaganda

TUESDAY
April 1

ROCK
Praznik, Shluz
 19.00: Tabula Rasa

JAZZ & BLUES
Mihail Mishuris & Orchestra
 21.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
DJs ZigZag, Anatoliy Gerasimov, DJ Philla
 21.00: Propaganda

WEDNESDAY
April 2

ROCK
Laxy Bitches, Barto, The Powlers
 21.00: Ikra

JAZZ & BLUES
Beatles Party
 18.30: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
Javybz DJs
 21.00: Propaganda
Rob Dirton
 21.00: Kult

THURSDAY
April 3

ROCK
Umaturman
 21.00: Ikra
Joga
 21.00: 16 Tonn

JAZZ & BLUES
Jazz Hall
 20.00: B 1 Maximum
Dr. Agranovsky & Cherniy Hleb
 21.00: Roadhouse

CLUBBIN'
DJs Studinskiy, Sanches
 21.00: Propaganda
Ja Vybz dj sessions
 21.00: Kult

CELEB-RETARDS!



What would Jesus do if he was a born again dad of a celebrity?

DADDY'S GIRLS

The say that family is the foundation of society. Thank God we have so many exemplary celebrity families to light the way for the rest of us. Families provide guidance and support, and family can help you stay in or out of the tabloids, depending on your specific needs at the time. After all, isn't that really what it's all about?

And let's face it, some celebs need extra support, especially today's young female stars. The recipe calls for sugar and spice and everything nice — and when you add fame, lots of hard liquor, red bull and some crack cocaine, well... let's just say it's not pretty. Women are already crazy enough as it is, and these girls need extra special direction. That's where Daddy comes in.

OH BABY BABY

Currently the perfect example of "Daddy knows best," Jamie Spears has done what no other papa could do:



Crikey, it's Bindi Irwin. And she's not crying crocodile tears.

he made Britney's pink wig disappear. He made the scary voices with really bad fake British accents go away. He banished the evil scalp-eating extensions. He got in there and got his conservatorship on, cast out the malevolent papitude of Osama Lufti and hired bodyguards that actually do their job. That's right, Britney fans - there is hope once again. If this continues, Britney may eventually make that comeback people keep talking about. Now, if only he could get her to wear a bra!

JESUS RULES

As if Lindsay "Firecrotch" Lohan didn't have enough on her hands with her ambitious momager... Even before her stint at rehab, her ex-con born-again father has been searching for the limelight — strike that — reconciliation with his eldest daughter. These days, when he's not thumping his bible and speaking about how important his daughter's sobriety is, Michael Lohan is pitching reality TV show concepts starring... Michael Lohan. This puts a new twist on classic celebudad-famous daughter syner-

gy. The Tabloid Baby website summed it up nicely: "He began the year in prison. He ended the year co-starring as Joseph with a plastic Baby Jesus in a live-action nativity display in the middle of Times Square." Clearly, the road to vicarious stardom will be a long one for Michael Lohan. Keep praying!

DADDY KNOWS BEST (FRIENDS)

Thanks to the Attack of the Celebrity Reality Show, we were subjected to Hogan Knows Best, the tedious disaster that brought us Brooke Hogan. Le sigh. Somehow, against everything that is Natural and Good, Brooke Hogan's sort-of-career began to kind of blossom. We're not clear on exactly what it is that she does, other than wear chaps fashioned out of old jeans and pose for pictures at "events" in dresses custom-made for the big-boned daughter of a former "wrestling" champion. For now, we are all weathering the scandal of her parents' divorce: wouldn't you know it, Hulk Hogan allegedly cheated on his wife with Brooke's (now ex-) best friend. Unfortunately, what with Brooke's blogging about it every five minutes, this means an extension of her already overly-generous fifteen minutes. Hey thanks, Dad!

DADDY DIGS THE DOUBLE D'S!

Apparently when you are Jessica Simpson, you need the kind of support that lifts and separates, especially after your dad announces your bra size to the media. Creeping out everyone within range, Papa Joe - who manages his two D-list daughters - made a name for himself as number one skeezy dad a few years ago when he told GQ magazine about his eldest daughter's sexy funbags. "You can't cover those suckers up!" And truly, where would Jessica be without her father? Oh wait, her last album flopped, her last movie went straight to DVD, and no one's seen her in weeks! I guess it's time to start planning a strategic nip slip, right Papa?

CRIKEY! ISN'T SHE GOR-GEOUS?

There's no mistaking it: Bindi is most definitely the Crocodile Hunter's daughter. And little Bindi Irwin would be nowhere today if it weren't for her now deceased daddy, Steve Irwin. She already has her own show and has already hit the US morning and late night circuits. But how long will she be able to manipulate the pity and sympathies of the American public, guilting us into tolerating her effervescent vomit-inducing precociousness? We are powerless against the feeling that we should have compassion for a young girl who lost her father in a freak accident. (Ch-ching!) Never fear, she'll be all grown up before we know it. Bindi would make a great stripper name, don't ya think? X








Brooke Hogan farts in her father's general direction.

bar-dak n [Russ, бардак, brothel, chaos] slang (1997)

BARS & CLUBS

Things That Do & Don't Suck

The eXile decoding KEY

				
<p>= Fakhie Factor! will you do "it" tonight? ★ = no, even Abramovich couldn't score here ★★ = roll up in a Merc or wave yer passport around; otherwise, expect to do some talkin' ★★★ = pack pepper spray, cuz U need protection</p>	<p>= Feis Kontrol Factor! will U get past the thug manning the door? ★ = even fat embassy employees can get in ★★ = if you read FHM or Elle, you're fine ★★★ = if you can't have the art director killed, you're not gettin' in</p>	<p>= Foam Factor! Will cheap-o eXile readers be able to afford the beer? ★ = Up to 150R per beer ★★ = 150-300R per beer ★★★ = 300-3000R per beer</p>	<p>= Starvin' Silovik! This isn't a rating factor, folks. It means that under the new regime, there is no room for this establishment. The place is closed, gone, kaput. Siyonara.</p>	<p>= Remont Factor! Russia is constantly improving and restructuring itself under Putin, and this place is currently striving to maintain a socially responsible and modern interior</p>

1171



★★ ★ ★★

Cheers:
Ginormous new bar-club in the up-and-coming Savvinskaya Nab. Row, opened up by Kostya of Dacha fame, and the publisher of this newspaper and Ne Spat. Huge bar, with several sub-bars on the first floor and upper deck. Also live bands play on the upper deck, and you can hide out in the VIP there. Prices reasonable, music so far shows impressive range, from Peter Hook (ex-Joy Division/New Order) to DJ Ojo and others.

Jeers:
Feis kontrol wouldn't let in under-21 dyves, leading us to wonder: since when is this the fucking US?! Taxi

predators ream you here. Coat check too small to handle the large crowds--hopefully they have that worked out by now.

M: Sportivnaya
Address: Savvinskaya Nab. 21
Phone: 740-5583

Hours: As many as you can handle

Aktovy Zal



★★ ★

Cheers:
We caught a recent Saturday night gig packed full of bearded types and intelligent-looking chicks. Moscow's premiere indie spot! Aktovy Zal packs in non-stop local and international indie acts every week from Thursday

to Sunday. There ain't no other place you're gonna anything closer to indie than here.

Jeers:
Way out in the boondocks by the third ring means you really have to plan to go here.

Cover: cheap, depends on the concert

M: Baumanskaya
Phone: 265-3935

Address: Perevedenovsky per., 18

Hours: 8 to late, depends on shows

Apelsin



★★ ★

Cheers:
Concert hall has great sound, and gets some of the best shows in town, from indie faves like Mogwai all the way up to dinosaur rockers like Nazareth. Easily one of the best live venues in town. Has bowling and other things to keep you busy before or after a show. Concert hall has in's and out's so you can easily slip out to take in the courtyard of a neighboring gothic cathedral.

Jeers:
About a year ago it was pulling the best--by Moscow standards--bands and packing a crowd. Now it's so empty, the bartenders started bringing reading material to work. Sovok bartender alert! Bartender poured us a beer then refused to serve us because he didn't have change. Pack your 100R notes, cuz they can't break anything higher. Guards force everyone to leave 10 minutes after a show ends. Seems far from the solar system, even if it isn't. VIP seating insanely far from the stage, and one of the few places that has blocked views. Small entrance means you may be stuck in line to enter or exit.

Cover: depends on the concert

M: Barrikadnaya
Phone: 253-0253

Address: Ul. Malaya Gruzinskaya 15

Hours: 12:00 - 05:00

B1 Maximum



★★ ★

Cheers:
Still has no soul and can ruin many gigs with its vast cold vibe, but service is improving. You no longer have to stand 30 min. in line for an overpriced drink. Image of Gogol Bordello frontman Eugent Hutz piggybacking on B1's asshole bouncers when they tried to stop the fun is STILL the image of the year. Multiple bars make it easy to get a drink if the club is relatively empty, which is a mixed blessing. The Chemical Brothers show was a rare perfect match for this place, with the best light/video show we've seen in a while.

Jeers:
Lindquist and Levine tried leaving about 1 minute into NoFX's set but the concert was so oversold it took about 30 minutes to get the fuck out. What's more the whole eXile team got kicked out of the VIP zone because they ran out of VIP bracelets. We haven't seen bathrooms this nasty since Leningradsky Vokzal. Has absolutely no atmosphere whatsoever.

Cover: depends on the concert

M: Leninsky Prospekt / Shabolovskaya

Phone: 648-6777

Address: Ul. Ordzhonikidze 11

Hours: 18:00 - 06:00

B2



★★ ★

Cheers:
It took B1 Maximum to make B2 seem like a cool indie club. One of the only places to attract any sort of crowd on Sundays. Good place if U like 'em young and impressionable. Cheap, giant venue that kicks butt when it's full. Good live acts. Three different restaurants, including reasonably priced sushi, under one roof. Music doesn't impede conversation in the restaurants, but is loud enough to not have to make the effort to think of anything to say.

Jeers:
Easily some of the most sovok and least service-oriented staff in town. Prices may seem bizarre considering that this is supposed to be a dive rock club. Suffering from multiple-personality disorder. Empties out early even on weekends.

Cover: depends
M: Mayakovskaya
Phone: 209-9918
Address: Bolshaya Sadovaya ul. 8

Barfly



★★ ★

Cheers:
Recent 4AM visit saw off-duty Help bartenders gettin' down, so U know they mix the drinks well here! After a long n ight of drinking and not getting drunk, the whiskey-colas really starte hitting us here! Drunken dyev factor on the rise, and you know if a girl's partying here she's ready fo' anything! Asking the barman to get creative can have serious consequences... Killer underground dive run by the same folks who brought you den of debauchery McCoys. From the looks of it, folks'll be drinking just as much here. Part of the million-cock-tails-to-choose-from wave launched by Help. Little frames cover the walls with descriptions of the drinks available. Tasty and cheap menu that lets U decide what goes in your noodle dish.

Jeers:
eXile alert! Barfly is apparently so popular now that you have to book a table to get in. Yes, U heard us right: U have to book a table at a fucking dive bar. Service and noodles not at the level we remembered. Crowd can be Prague-like in that faux-boho sort of way. The best ad yet for NY's anti-smoking laws; an evening here is the equivalent of a three-pack a day habit for a year. Crowded, but little in the way of babes on recent weekend visit.

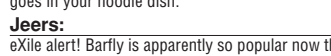
M: Chekhovskaya

Address: Strastnoi blvr. 6 str. 2

Phone: 209-2779

Hours: 24 hours

Bourbon Street



★ ★ ★

Cheers:
A good place to chill with one whiskey, one scotch, and one beer at the bar, or sit at a table with a friend or two, but don't come expecting to make friends or lift out of your depression. Lately it's been feeling even more dead than usual, but whatever, it's August. The management had a come-to-Jesus talk with staff after we busted them playing techno, making this one of the most customer-friendly bars this side of the NATO divide. This little still-undiscovered "neighborhood dive" offers some unusually wild entertainment when you least expect it. Deceptively humble veneer hides all sorts of sexual shenanigans which Ames and his chick both witnessed and participated in ... We were about to complain that the music's too loud, but then we remembered that's how dives oughta be!

Jeers:
Often has a "feised at Propka" vibe. Gets uncomfortably packed on weekends. xPat galore. Kitchen could use a little "umph."

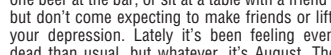
M: Kitai Gorod

Phone: 980-1058

Address: Bol. Zlatoustinsky Per. 7/1 (next to Propaganda)

Hours: nearly all of 'em

Booze Bub



★ ★ ★

Cheers:
Gets TOTALLY packed on weekends, making this an ideal pre-party venue for those hitting Tema next door. Pissed off that there's not a single Thurs. night go-to bar that actually has chicks? Then Bub's your answer. Recent Thursday night visit revealed a place packed with easy, desperate student and secretary dyves. Recently opened by the Help/Tema crew, which is a already a good sign. Located next door to Tema, if you need a break from the Duck-esque atmosphere there. Spacious bar and good cocktails. Combines the intimacy of an Irish pub with the spaciousness of a German Bierhall. Their beer really does taste better.

Jeers:
Sovok vest-wearing grampa tried facing eXile editors Zaitchik and Yasha during a recent visit. We're used to getting feised by goons, but this was something different, and somehow more humiliating. Recent Saturday evening visit found BB totally empty, but we were told that in order to sit down we would need to make a reservation a week in advance. WTF? Needless to say, we went somewhere that actually wanted our money. A tad bit phallicentric on a recent visit. May need some time to get packed full of the reasons we like to visit Help and Tema.

M: Chisty Prudy

Address: Potapovsky Per. 5, bld. 2

Phone: 621-4717

Hours: Round the clock

Cafe Royal



★ ★

Cheers:
Man, oh man! This was Katz's last review. Brings a tear to our eyes just thinking about it. What did she have to say about it? Well, it's a basement jazz/blues club with constant live acts. If you're into this kind of scene, then you'll probably like it. It's got a wide selection of food, rooms that you can rent out for parties. Royal's informal feel and the large schools of aging snappers it draws will make American women feel especially comfortable here...

Jeers:
...and we're not sure that's a good thing.

Cover: Depends on who's playing

M: Chisty Prudy

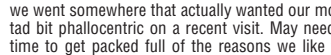
Phone: 607-0969, 607-9172

Address: Ashcheulov per., 9

Hours: 12PM to 6AM

Website: www.caferoyal.ru

Che



★★★ ★

Cheers:
eXile alert! eXile staff party introduced Zaitchik to his first batch of drunken dyves dancing on bar, tables and eventually winding down in his lap. Thurs. night crowd packs a solid mix of young office types and aging secretary molls looking to get down. Food's pretty good as

far as drinking fare goes, especially the tacos and some kind of S. American samosas.

Jeers:
Black Magic Woman and other Santana trash keep you praying for the techno DJ to come back on. A bunch of older bursetka-carrying semi-gopniks in spandex shirts manage to mix in with the office talent. Fish tacos were rotten. Ginormous bouncers try to keep everyone out, but apparently if you have a reservation it's no problem...

M: Lubyanka

Phone: 621-7477

Address: Nikolskaya Str. 10/2

Hours: 12pm-9am

Club XIII



★★ ★★

Cheers:
You can go home again! Girls will sometimes hit you just for being a foreigner! XIII's got a good thing going, with raunchy caberet shows, teetering ladies, and just enough face control to make you feel like you achieved something by getting in! Last Saturday XIII was on, catching a good niche somewhere between Fabrique and Leto, though closer to Fabrique (thank god). Selection of E'd out and liquored up chicks spotted here. Ames got corralled into a rather suggestive freakin' bout with a hot off-duty bargirl from a certain Swedish nightclub. The club that set the standard and opened the era of elitny giant nightclubs is back after a several-year hiatus. Top notch DJs, friendly girls, not quite as grotesquely elitny as Leto, makes this a good alternative to Fabrique, esp if you're tired of the latter's crowds and petty thieves.

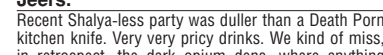
Jeers:
Recent Shalya-less party was duller than a Death Porn kitchen knife. Very very pricy drinks. We kind of miss, in retrospect, the dark opium dens, where anything could and did happen.

M: Chisty Prudy

Address: Myasnitskaya 13

Hours: Wed-Sun, 10pm - 6am

Denis Simachev Bar



★ ★★ ★

Cheers:
eXile alert! DS showed its humane side by waving wheelchair-bound eXile editor Yasha Levine through face control. At first we gave this place two stinky thumbs down, but now we've reconsidered. We now proclaim DS the best elitny dive in town! If you've seen the Sochi Olympics ads running on CNN, then you might recognize the Rice Rocket bike done up in a Russian folk design paint job that was featured in the ad and is now permanently chained to DS's entrance. Even Simachev is doing his part to make Russia's crack pipe Olympic dream a reality! One of Moscow's top designers opened this bar in his designer boutique.

Jeers:
Notice we changed the beer factor from one to two stars. DS has finally done what we've been expecting, they've doubled their prices. Manages to cram the most annoying elements of Moscow pafos into the space of walk-in closet. It's become Moscow's hippest weekday elitny hangout and the newest roost for Opera/Dyagelev/Krishna molls on their off night. Attracts dozens of rich Russian dudes doing the Planet of the Apes routine around their expensive cars and bikes outside.

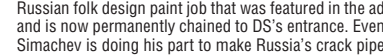
M: Teatralnaya

Phone: 629-8085

Address: Stoleshnikov Per. 12

Hours: 12:00-06:00

Duma



★★★ ★

Cheers:
There's a lot to like about this place, assuming you can find it. Fun young student crowd, no moving cars in sight, surrounded by quiet back streets, great music: heavy on 60s rare grooves, soul, and funk, nice patio, good food. In the summertime they put a ping-pong table outside. Neighborhood bar feel where everyone knows each other is weird to see, but feels good. No feis control. This might be the place where Krizis honeys retire. Tons of sweet dyves that all seem to be studying architecture. People here actually dance with joy in their faces. Very little bullshit. Caesar salad pretty good, too.

Jeers:
Known to blast annoying artsy French music at insane decibel levels. The last time we went we had to climb a fence or two to get there. Sometimes the hippie element is a bit thick and the riggers seem to be taking a liking to this place. And that just don't bode well...

Cover: None

M: Okhotnyi Ryad

Phone: 692-1119

Address: 12:00 - 6:00

Fabrique



★★★ ★★

Cheers:
Still the most babe-a-licious club in town, at least where you aren't expected to pay for special favors. Shocking incident confirmed Fabrique as an eXile favorite. A guy OD'd on drugs and was dragged out to the front of the club. Amazingly, while paramedics unsuccessfully tried to resuscitate the OD victim (not applying CPR), a group of hot rich chicks pulled up in the Merc and, deciding that they weren't gonna let a death and drug raid ruin their evening, stopped the car, opened the doors, and blasted techno while they danced and laughed. Think Propaganda circa '00, only with more space to move around. U might not get laid that night, but one date should do it. High student/expat factor, low pafus!



Jeers:
eXile alert! Eventhough Levine rode up to the club in a black Merc, he got feised because of his disability. Recent signs point to the fact that Fabrique is going down hill. Bored babe factor is on the rise. People standing around as if waiting for something to happen. We've given these guys way too many props to get feised here, especially when we're not fall-down drunk. Beware of thieves!

M: Novokuznetskaya

Phone: 953-6576/540-9955

Address: Kosmodamiyskaya Nab. 2

Hours: 18:00 - 06:00

DJ POLY

(10 years as Papa's house DJ)
is too shy to tell you he's celebrating his birthday on SUNDAY THE 30TH at MIDNIGHT

NOTE: THIS TUESDAY APRIL 1ST we are cancelling the Latino Party and will be having a new party for virgin women: our new party "THANKS FOR NOTHING" free drinks for all virgins

WED: LADIES' NIGHT
Male striptease contest
THURS: OFFICE PARTY
Specials & freebies: call for details
FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS
ALWAYS A BLAST Wet t-shirt contest

22 Myasnitskaya / Metro Chisty Prudi
755-95-54 / www.papas.ru

ME SOHO-NIE FOR PAFOS

A trip into the newest, most uber-elitny club

By **Dmitriy Babooshka**
pflanze@yandex.ru



I'm not an economist, just a humble club reviewer and a film star, but I consider Moscow's clubbing scene to be in a state of decay. So many nice venues have been shut down over the past year, I'm tired of counting them all. It doesn't matter if the club was for the student or oligarch crowd – everything from 30/7 and Too Drunk to Fuck, to the Millionaire club with its glitzy

CLUB REVIEW

parties, all closed down. And I'm not even counting the small shops, cafes or restaurants that now have "arenda" rent posters on their windows.

I'm curious about how it's going for new investors who bravely invest money into new clubs in Moscow. This is actually one of the theological reasons why I review clubs and examine their survival practices.

I was sharing these deep thoughts with my film-industry colleague Kostyan when we hit the town on a Friday night after a long hard working week. I got another new acting role, still small, but I took part in all four series that were filmed last week. Once you get into it, production seems to have no end! So I was ready for a well-deserved break to be celebrated with fun and glamour.

It was my lucky night because Kostyan was on the guest list for the new **SOHO ROOMS** so I had my one chance to get in. All my previous calls to the managers saying that I write for The eXile and they want me to review SOHO were either unanswered or rudely dismissed: "We don't need any PR, especially from your paper, we're doing okay without it." Oh, boy! I've seen so many places that did okay in the beginning and where are they now? Following

the concept that a real reviewer should be incognito, we headed to Savvinskaya Naberezhnaya to the address we already knew well for its lovely and spacious 1171 bar.

For the past four months Moscow in-the-know crowd was excited by the rumors of the new project opened by D'Lux promo group known for its teenage r'n'b projects like Infinity or Opera. Soho Rooms boasts a great concept featuring four rooms – a bar, dining room, dance floor and a swimming pool on the roof, which is due to open this summer.

A lot of my friends told me that SOHO's face control is one of Moscow's harshest, so you can easily understand why European clubbers already exchange legends about getting into our clubs. The front was jam-packed with elitny Mercs and we had to pay 1,000 rubles to park Kostyan's modest Range Rover, not because we wanted to show it off, but because there wasn't a single open space to park it within a mile!

The entrance to SOHO is guarded as tightly as Luzhkov's ass. Six guards on the back row, four in the front with the hugest guy asking "Are you on the list?" There is no facekontrolshik outside. Security reports your identity first and after approval from the invisible man over the radio you may be allowed into the "upper world." Not many people from the queue joined us. A well-dressed dude ahead us was advised by security to "go home and change his shoes." After what I witnessed at the entrance, I was expecting to see something like Studio 54 inside, only better.

Well, it was very glitzy inside. So glitzy that at first you get blind by the Swarovski chandeliers and other expensive lighting equipment. Then you notice high-quality leather couches and solid elements of the interior. Then you notice dressed-to-kill charming dyevs either smiling at their oligarchs or smiling at you in case they are on their own. The first impression we got from the club was that it reminded us of MOST. So it was a time to check the real quality, which is always my mission.

We were hungry and after few chilling and skillfully-served drinks (mojito – 550 rubles, pina colada – 300 rubles) in the bar room we joined the crowd of gourmands in the dining room.

The crowd inside the dining room (as well as in the club) could hardly be called "bohemian" in my opinion. It looked more like a bunch of strippers were invited for a company Board meeting. Men in suits with lifeless eyes (except for the lucky ones riding Charlie) were accompanied by their soul-and-body-for-money blond arm candy girls.

One of my Canadian friends, when I asked him if he liked living in Moscow, said it was nice but he saw too many smokestacks in town. I was surprised with his answer and asked for details. The explanation was simple – in Canada they don't have any factories or other industrial facilities inside the city limits, all of them are at least 30 kilometers away by zoning laws. In Moscow we have all sorts of factories and chimneys even inside the Garden ring if you take a close look.

So the excellent view from Soho Rooms windows afforded us a good panorama of Moscow's smokestacks. You can enjoy seeing massive plant with five huge chimneys and the smoke coming out of it across the embankment. According to the press-release it is called "wonderful river view."

Each dish we ordered from Soho kitchen (run by Tim, a fantastic chef from Washington) came with an orchid flower. The waiter told us that "these flowers are inedible." Tim is known as a real artist with food, in the haute American cuisine way. I personally prefer haute European cuisine, but everyone was very impressed, and I understand that Mark Ames is a big fan of Tim's food, so I'll keep my mouth shut here.

In my the opinion restaurant like a dance floor. Nice to see all these girls with shiny lips (and may be imagine some of them during routine sex with your girlfriend) but better keep a distance to keep you balls safe and money secure.

I was dating a girl like this a year ago and our romance lasted about one month. One of the things Ilona asked me on our first date was, "My last boyfriend was spending ten grand a month for me, what will be your contribution be?" All the time all she would talk about is the price of her dress or some cashmere sweater and where she bought it. Then she disappeared one morning because the presents I brought her were not expensive enough.

Well, as my friend told me, this kind of girl will always wind up with more money than you. Though Ilona's blowjobs anywhere anytime, from a restaurant we'd visit to a car then on the elevator – that will stay in my loving memory forever. So, my friends, if you're interested in these kinds of romances and have enough cash to pay for your sins, Soho Rooms is the right place for you. But hurry up, soon this place may not be there! Or my reviewer sense is wrong.

Club: Soho Rooms
Address: 12, Savvinskaya nab.
Phone: 988 7474
M: you don't
Hours: bar and restaurant – 24/7, clubbing on weekends

Gradus Bar



★ ★★ ★★

Cheers: The bar is so massive it could fit at least two soccer fields in this basement, which was built in 1913. eXile's official club reviewer Babooshka's sources say it used to host Stalin's private movie theater. A lot of semi-provincial babettes and bilan-topped dudes. Most of the chicks are highly depressive secretaries or hard-working accountants-types who would love for you to lay some pipe on them, and are not unlike the chicks who frequent the cafe disco in Babooshka's aunt's village. The bar boasts not only a great selection of beers and German wurst but also two dance floors and a very expensive set of music equipment for live shows.

Jeers: Plays music that even Medvedev would like.

Address: 26, Sretenka Str.
Phone: 607-07-13
M: Sukharevskaya
Hours: daily, 12.00 – 00.00

Help



★★ ★ ★

Cheers: eXile alert! Ignore previous comments about weekends being hit or miss: every Friday and Saturday (and an increasing number of weeknights) is packed full of drunk sluts dancing on the floor, on the tables, and on the bar. While the rest of Moscow's bars and clubs are turning gay, thank God there's one place still keeping it real for the homophobes. Non-dyke lesbo activity has been steadily on the rise. One time, upon sitting down, a girl from a neighboring table came over and said: "I'm sorry, I lost a bet" and then proceeded to get up on her table and do a striptease! Later we saw two babes practically fucking on the dancefloor, and the night ended with a flat-chested chick flashing us repeatedly. Great place to start or end a bender. The director is a serious cocktail aficionado (and award-winning barman) who has come up with a variety of unusual and at times frightening cocktails, all reasonably priced. Casual woody interior, relaxed crowd, decent service. Long Island Iced tea for 150r. Try the "red hot slammer." Bartenders often seen at tables whipping up fresh concoctions, slamming glasses on tables, and lighting things on fire.

Jeers: During our last visits, the place was half-alive. But then, it was 6pm... But that shouldn't be an excuse. Unmixed White Russians almost caused an unplanned puking session. Nachos were weak. 200 cocktails might overwhelm the indecisive types. We spotted a table of mungy Lonely Planet type expats.
M: Belorusskaya
Phone: 995-9535
Address: 1st Tverskaya-Yamskaya 27, bldg 1
Hours: always

Hot Dogs



★★ ★ ★

Cheers: It's hard to believe, but the scene is back on the scene, reborn in a new name, a new coat of paint, but with a new name, a new coat of paint, but we're not sure just yet, but we're hoping for a new era of human growth hormones that'll keep it young beyond its years. Rest assured, the working girls are still waiting for you to lay down your pipe.

Jeers: The sinks and faucets weren't hooked up when we were there.
M: Kurskaya
Phone: 917-0150
Address: Zemlyanoy Val, 26
Hours: all the ones you'll ever need

Ikra



★★ ★ ★

Cheers: Finally an indie/hipster bar hits town that's more or less tasteful to boot. Gets everyone from today's new kids on the block to ageing giants still worth checking in on—bottom line: tons o' interesting acts, every month, without fail. And there's no better place to watch/heckle a small gig than in Ikra's small hall, more intimate than NYC's Knitting Factory but gets the same caliber or bigger gigs. Food surprisingly edible.

Jeers: Finally gave us club cards, but make us wait at the bar for a manager every time we try to use it. WTF!? Added hookah menu just to fuck wid us. Gets unbearably hot and stuffy inside when there's a packed gig like the recent Kid Koala show. Surly bartenders sometimes can't be bothered to pour you a beer.
Cover: Up to 600R depending on the event
M: Kurskaya
Phone: 505-5351
Address: Ul. Kazakova 8A

Justo Banya Douche



★★ ★★★ ★★★

Cheers: Located on the grounds of an old banya, JBD is the latest addition to the Moscow's indie-elitny club scene. Harder to get into and more expensive than Solyanka, it still manages to retain a "casual is cool" attitude, even if people's threads cost more than we make in a month. To prove that Russian elitny is turning indie, Babooshka picked up a chick with nothing more than a 300 ruble drink and a MacBook. But for all it's indie charm, it doesn't mean you'll get through face control unless your driver dropped you off on your E500 Merc.

Jeers: Who's going to jeer hot elitny Russian Chicks in vintage-looking jeans and tight ironic tee's?
Cover: None
M: Lubyanka
Phone: 625-6836
Address: Teatralny proezd 3
Hours: daily from 6pm, concerts on weekends at 9 pm.

Kalina Bar



★ ★★★ ★★★

Cheers: Fancy-assed bar on the 21st floor with a fantastic panoramic view of Moscow. Chic clientele, lots of 30-something yuppies and the odd gauche New Russian to spice things up. Somebody tried their sushi and said it was not bad.

Jeers: Very expensive. Techno music so loud you'd think you were in a provincial Azeri restaurant. This is a bar, folks! People are supposed to be able to at least hear what the

person next to him is screaming.
Club: Kalina Bar
Address: 8, Novinskiy Boulevard (Lotte Plaza, 21 floor).
Phone: 229-55-19
M: Smolenkaya
Hours: 11:00 – 06:00, daily



★★ ★ ★★

Cheers: eXile alert! Katz nearly had to beat the dirty sluts piling up onto her man with a stick. And she would have too, if the dude wasn't such a pushed out wanker and fell back from the action himself. The place is so jam-packed with salivating sluts hungry for male action, you'd think you were in a bad porno horror rip off. All they got to do is get a whiff of your pheromones and damn do these girls move! The only way to sate them is buy them round after round of cheap-o booze. Oh yeah and there's serious Latin Dance stuff going on.

Cheers/Jeers: The cover charge. Damn, what's up with dat. What time iz we livin' in? To get to the overflow gardiob, you have to walk about two kilometers through a dark and winding underground tunnel. You might never find your way back!
Cover: 200R for chicks, 300R for dudes on weekends (liberal face control)
M: Kuznetskiy Most
Phone: 624-5633
Address: Ul. Pushchennaya 3 (just down from Hola Mexico)
Hours: Thurs.-Sun.: 21:00 - 6:00

Krizis Zhanra



★★ ★★ ★

Cheers: eXile alert! Well, we be gosh darned! We hadn't been here for anything other than peaceful lunch since last spring. We're happy to report that place hadn't changed a bit. KZ still packs in the young and available babes that say "yes" almost as if we had paid for it. eXile editors no longer embarrassingly halted at the door by Krizis' notoriously Nazi face control. Nash seems to have finally solved the problem. This place continuously packs in babe-o-licious dyevs almost any day of the week and they love rock n'roll! No joke, folks: we had to see it ourselves to believe. Some eXile insiders claim it's the best place in town to meet a wife. The place to meet a girl you can spoon with... plenty of approachable babes, but they require a little wooing. Very impressive crowd, including lots of single hipsters and one chick in a Kajagoogoo outfit. They've done a surprisingly good job recreating the atmosphere of the ol' KZ, creating a pafus-free zone for all you bo-hos, without the dirt and grime of Lyotchik. Combines student-y types with intellegensia, upwardly mobile yuppies and a smattering of expats. Less pressure to get wasted than at Bourbon St.

Jeers: If you're not as well-connected as an eXile editor, you will still experience face control at the Nazi Level from Thurs. to Sun. Techno music gets progressively loud as the weekdays approach Friday. Because it's a non-pafusny kinda place, there're plenty of cows mixed in with the talent. Reminds us of our Golden Days of love and youth and springtime, which then reminds us of the fact that we're old. Long Islands, although cheap, rank somewhere between "bizarre" and "non-alcoholic fruity ass" on the scale of things. Can be a bit boring if no concert is happening.

Queers: Every Thursday
M: Chisty Prudy / Kitai Gorod
Phone: 623-2594, 778-2234
Address: Pokrovka 16/16, str. 1
Hours: 24/7

Krishna



★★★ ★★★ ★★★

Cheers: After a good run this winter, the eXile's luck may be up here. Or maybe we just look especially Chechen with our summer tans and long beards. And furry hats. In any case, we've been faced on repeat by the Obergruppenfuhrer at the door since July. We're hoping that'll change with the coming of fall and the return of our pale faces. If you can get in, then note that the place is packed with amazing wildlife—the whole range of fauna is here. Main dance floor on the rooftop, partly covered, is where the action is, but the downstairs darker dancefloor may be where you'll get luckier. The chill-out space is one of the plushiest in town.
Jeers: See above.
M: You don't
Address: Naberezhnaya near Hotel Ukraina
Hours: 19:00 - late

MOTORHOME



★ ★

Cheers/Jeers: In the words of Jared's little brother Eric Linqvist: "This place was decked out like some sort of futuristic, rated R version of Chuck E. Cheese with a huge bar and rows of racing simulation pods lining the walls. Instead of gay furry muscots, the place was packed full of Russian go-go dancers in sexy racing outfits doing lesbo shows on the freakin' bar. I mean, damn!" That's right, it's a club specializing in hi-tech F1 racing simulators. Those crazy Muscovites! What'll they come up with next? Play broths for kid birthday parties? On top of that, the place got billiard tables and is jam-packed with flat screens showing like 20 different sporting events all at the same time. No need to chat chicks up while getting them drunk enough to go home with you. Here, you can just race them until they pass out behind the wheel. Thank god for video games.

Jeers: The place just opened. Developing...
M: Novoslobodskaya
Address: Novoslobodskaya 20
Hours: till 1 a.m.
Phone: 789-8854
Web: www.motordom.ru

MOST



★ ★★★ ★★★

Cheers: Fancy-assed new oligarch lair, reportedly funded by 90s-oligarch Mamut, once known as the banker to the Yeltsin family. And it shows. No stops are pulled from the multi-zillion-dollar display of cars out front, to the heinously overpriced food upstairs, to the way-outta-your-league 'garch-hunting babeage downstairs, where the music and dancing are.
Jeers: Jeering Most is like jeering the oligarchs themselves.
M: Okhotnyi Ryad
Phone: 660-0705
Address: 6/3 Kuznetskiy Most

Hours: Club open Fri to Sat 8pm to 6am. Restaurant open from 8am till last guest on weekdays, 24 hours on weekends.

Papa's Place



★★ ★ ★★

Cheers: Still redefining the meaning of "packed with drunken sluts." Someone forgot to tell them that it's not the 90s anymore. No-holds-barred wet T contest shows more skin than most strip clubs! Proof that there's still a place in Moscow where the dyevs are plenty and not afraid to drink. We haven't had this much fun since Putin came to power! Papa's four-day ninth birthday bash took so much out of us, our lives are on vacation till next year. Absolutely friggin' packed full of sluts and drunk eXholes, with everyone drinking. This is it folks, no unsurmountable face control, no eXtreme prices, tons of approachable offerings and now they even have America's finest brew available: Bud. Thursday "Office Night" rawqs: free food offerings, like the awesome pizza, and an advantageous chick-to-unit ratio. We also saw one of the drunkest Neanderthals of our lives here, devouring his pizza while his dyev girlfriend slapped him and pulled his ear to leave. Latin dancing nights are the ONLY game in town on Tuesday! Our last visit saw a mix of sluts and balding guys, and if they can score surely U can too!

Jeers: The "special" green St. Patrick's beer was just plain-o bottles of cheap Holsten in green bottles. The crew of creepy drunk midgets pretending to be leprechauns they had running around did not consist of any midget dyevs. U may need to beg for an invite to office party night, due to its popularity. Latin night downside: U may have to dance to have a chance. There's such a thing as too packed with sluts... like when you have to wait 30 min just to pay the cover. Wouldn't let Rudnitsky in on Halloween in his sportivnyy costum, as the okhronnik really believed he was a Caucasian bandit.
Cover: 150R on weekends, free-ish during the week
M: Chisty Prudy
Phone: 755-9554
Address: Myasnikskaya Ul. 22 (inside Johnny's)
Hours: Always

Propaganda



★★★ ★★ ★

Cheers: eXile crazy dyev alert! One eXile editor snagged a chick here that demanded he hit her in the face, and she loved every cheekbone-crushing smack. Meanwhile, another member of the eXile editorial team pulled a barely sane art studentka that dragged him on a Moscow stripclub and whore-banya tour. Other clubs come and go, but Propaganda's somehow managed to stay packed all these years with the right mix of grunge, glamour and, most importantly, student dyevs that haven't yet learned they should hate you if your watch ain't expensive enough. And yes, this is the only place in a city of 12 million that is packed on Thursdays. The best place in town to get gals' digits, even if they won't go home with you immediately. The food rawks, and the prices are right. Maybe we're getting old, but we find ourselves here ogling the biz-lunch crowd much more often than the disco crowd.

Jeers: When the fuck did Propaganda become elitny?! Recent Friday night visit ended at the door when we were told the club was having a private party. After accusing the promoter of lying to us, we were told: "Whether I am

lying to you or not, it is still a private party." Be ready to enter light ribbed-sweater territory, where the line between metrosexual and flamin' fag is awfully thin. Going after you've had a few too many sets the stage for some eXtremely painful rejections. Girls here drank more in the Yeltsin era.

Queers: Sunday nights are 'gay' nights
M: Kitai Gorod
Phone: 624-5732
Address: Bolshoi Zlatoustinsky per. 7
Hours: Sun-Thurs 12:00-06:00, Fri-Sat 'til 08:00

Prosto Bar



Cheers:
 Is the grimy industrial zone around Belorussky vokzal slowly turning into the new, less arty, more elitny Vinzavod. Or is this club just an indie version of Papa John's? We're not sure, but they sure do pack a lot of hot young dyevs ready to boogie all the way to your pad. Cheap booze, cheap and decent food.

Jeers:
 Euro pop.
M: Belorusskaya
Phone: 257-0717
Address: 17, 1-ya Yamskogo Polya Ul.
Hours: 11:00 - till last guest

The Real McCoy



Cheers:
 eXile alert! McCoy's has entered the 22nd century by installing the eXile's toilet-stall newspaper stands! Folks, now you can read the eXile while vomiting out your Long Island Iced Tea...all 8 of 'em! Buns McGillicuddy recently spotted doing shots with mullet-master Dima Bilan! Pay your respects...and pay the price for all that fun 'n shame 'n shitfaced inebriation. We'd been staying away out of concern for our livers, but one Friday night was enough to realize why livers are overrated! This place has so many hot and drunk sluts that you don't have time to focus on one before the next demands your attention. Newbies in Moscow have been known to go into catatonia when they enter this place. We admit: Thursday nights are hit or miss, although recent visits have leaned much more to the "hit" side of the equation. Perhaps the best place to be reintroduced to Moscow night life after spending the long New Year's holidays in the de-sexed Western world. THE most dangerous place to go for weeknight nightcaps! We defy you to leave after just one drink. Hell, we defy you to leave after two! More 10PM last calls have turned into 3AM "oh fucks" than we can count! McCoys is the closest thing to a guarantee this side of Night Flight. Always some table of desperate sluts here, even when it's otherwise empty. Often features the kind of drunken madness that was banned by the Geneva Convention. They let you pass out at the tables! Chances are if you wake up in Yugo-Zapadnaya with a bunch of Mexicans in a hail storm, you were at McCoys the night before. If there's a way to get kicked out, we haven't found it! Packed 'til late.

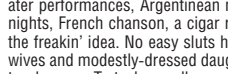
Jeers:
 Are they trying to push a blow habit on us by feising us for drunkenness at 4am? Don't go here sober—the human fauna might be startling. Some sluts so ugly, even the jumbo Long Island won't make you want them. Getting a drink on a weekend night requires a half-hour of screaming and waving money at the bartender. Occasionally packed with people we would really rather never run into again. Don't even think about heading onto the dance floor with an open drink in hand.
M: Barrikadnaya
Phone: 255-41-44
Address: Kudrinskaya pl. 1 (in the towering Stalin dom)
Hours: Always

Restovratsaya



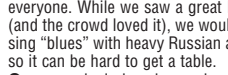
Cheers:
 Babooshka was taken here by a slightly older rich chick who owned a couple of clothing stores. He'd never been to a place like this, where Russia's aging—and affluent—intelligentsia go to spend their evenings. Wait, this should be going into jeers...
Jeers:
 No DJs or go-go dancers, only jazz jam sessions, theater performances, Argentinean milonga dances, blues nights, French chanson, a cigar room and well you get the freakin' idea. No easy sluts here, only aging trophy wives and modestly-dressed daughters of Conservatory teachers or Tretyakov gallery advisors. What kind of 19th century aristocracy bullshit is this?
Address: 7, Leontyevskiy pereulok
Phone: 290-59-69
M: Tverskaya (10 min. walk)
Hours: 17:00 – 05:00, daily

Road House



Cheers:
 You wouldn't know it, but there's a genuine neighborhood blues joint in Moscow that sort of reminds us of the kinds of blues bars you'd find in mid-sized cities in America like Fresno or Dayton. And we mean that in a good way. Live blues every night, cozy atmosphere, absolutely no pafos or feis kontrol, cheap drinks and food. 30% discount for journalists, doctors and single chicks! Lots of bliny, decent amount of groups of music chicks in tight jeans and 80s hairdos, tasty "Pork Barbados" for only 190r. Check out their music program and give it a shot, esp if you live in the area.
Jeers:
 The whole "real people" suburban blues thing is not for everyone. While we saw a great Norwegian act playing (and the crowd loved it), we would expect some acts to sing "blues" with heavy Russian accents. Gets crowded so it can be hard to get a table.
Cover: only during shows, depends on act
M: Sportivnaya
Phone: 245-4183
Address: Ul. Dovatora 8 (close to metro)
Hours: noon-midnight

Sakhar



Cheers/Jeers:
 This is another one of those elitny-indie hybrid clubs. eXile's official club aficionado Dmitry Babooshka says

this place is not to be missed. There's a lot of teen action here, but of the progressive kind, meaning she'll be impressed even if an iPhone is the most expensive accessory you own. How else do you think Babooshka get to screw a young dyev in a telephone booth? So far, that's the best argument we've heard for getting an iPhone.

Jeers:
 No one on The eXile staff (except Babooshka) has one.
M: Sukharevskaya
Phone: 607-2838
Address: 235/25 Sretenka St.
Hours: Thu - Fri: 12:00 - 09:00

Silver's



Cheers:
 eXile alert! Yasha nearly got whacked by a dude who looked like a cartoon version of an Italian mafioso from Miami for snickering at him and his aging Russian troll. You'll hear more of the Queen's English here than at Oxford... Packed on weekends that you might have to listen in from the doorstep. Steve has created the favorite hangout for British castaways in town, with a lively pub feel to it any day of the week. We also hear they're gonna have the occasional curry night, featuring Steve's famous five-alarum curry. Rumored to give beluga caviar away as bar snacks. Biz lunch so filling, you'll have trouble finding room for a pint of Guinness! Easily the biggest one in the center, with a different hardy soup every day! It changes daily, and 2 of the 3 courses are always frickin' great (be warned, sometimes they try to slip a Russian salad in). Their newest corned beef sandwich (140R) packs in beautifully with a few pints of nitrogenated Kilkenny. The fish & chips are tasty and most under the rule of real-live Irishman Steve, so you're guaranteed real-life Western service with no excuses. Extra note: Food is oddly delish, esp the 150r biz lunch. We were served a heaping of beef stew and mashed potatoes. Serve cheap, cholesterol-heavy breakfasts as well. Always serviced with a smile by a rotating crew of cute barmaids.

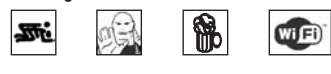
Jeers:
 You might get accosted by Russian students looking to practice their angliisky yazyk. Word's gotten out, and it's tough to find a seat for lunch. Don't come here to hunt for chicks—there ain't any. This is a place where English-speaking expats with beer-bulges come to gripe, banter, and watch free SkyTV. Irish aren't known for their good burgers, and neither is Silver's. Small setting means it can get packed evenings.
M: Okhotny Ryad
Phone: 290-4222
Address: 5/6 Tverskaya Ulitsa (go down Nikitskaya Per.)
Hours: 8 till late

Sixteen Tons



Cheers:
 eXile alert! The eXile's 10th anniversary party took place here, and folks, we are damn glad we did it. No place could have handled the crowd rush, and the mad drunken mob of eXholes, half as well as Sixteen Tons did, with its superb bar staff, excellent sound system, great stage, and eXhole-friendly management. Thanks to Pasha, Andrei & crew for pulling it off. Shockingly high babe factor at the disco following gigs. Not that we got laid or anything...or even that we would want to. Upstairs has some of the top shows and a good mix of dyevs and serious music aficionados. Downstairs, a range of scalliwags ranging from oligarchs to eXpats to divorced mammas to starving journalists. Management not averse to fights outside.
Jeers:
 Club named after the average weight of the dyevs. Not much to do upstairs when there isn't live music.
Cover: Devs: R100 weekdays, R150 weekends; Guys: R150 weekdays, R200 weekends
M: Ul. 1905
Phone: 253-5300
Address: Presnenskiy Val 6
Hours: 18:00 - 6:00

Solyanka



Cheers:
 eXile alert! Solyanka's newly-minted restaurant just might be the best new place to eat since we discovered Dantes way back in 2007. The 270r biz lunch offers a tasty 3-course evro fusion meal (menu changes daily) that's a damn bargain for Moscow these days. Hosts a strange dyev mix, ranging from semi-bydlo to full on hyper-elitny. They arrive when doors open and don't leave 'til closing time. Ever since Mix went the way of the Dodo, Solyanka's hipster crowd has been getting infused with late 20s/early 30s secretary/office worker type dyevs. And that's just fine by us. If you now the type, then you know that they are willing to take it anytime, anywhere. All you have to do is notice them. Case in point: Last weekend Levine and Rudnitsky had to beat off three 30-year-old chicks that wouldn't leave them alone until they surrendered their phone numbers. And all this because L & R were speaking English! Mental note: must start coming here more often. A shining example of the latest club trend: The indie-pafosny hybrid. If you're tired of the same ol' Krizis, but can't stand the Fag Nation Propka scene, then Solyanka is the answer to your prayers. Semi-intelligent dance music, fairly priced drinks and a bunch of barely legal linged-out indie chicks that can't afford them.
Jeers:
 Windows PC users given hostile looks by MacBook/iPhone-toting hipsters. On club nights, place is harder to get into than Dyagelev. An eXile editor got feised over the telephone last weekend, even after Tofer gave Solyanka a heartfelt blowjob review. Closes at midnight on all weeknights other than Thursdays. Went back to the 90s practice of charging for entrance. Some chicks have a "I'm one year away from becoming a Rai groupie" feel to them. So snatch 'em up before they hit seventeen and become way out of your league.
M: Kitay Gorod
Phone: None
Cover: 300 rubles, or something
Address: Solyanka 11/6

Sorry Babushka



Cheers:
 eXile alert! Just confirmed. Sorry Bab's 3am Fri/Sat night drunk dyev index is way off the charts. This place is set to become one of our favorites, especially now that they gave us a 50% discount card! From the looks

of things, they've also given tons of hot girls the cards, turning Sorry B into a pre-party magnet for gals looking to quench their thirst at the right price. Packs a good crowd on weekends and offers plenty of macking ops. Girls friendlier than most, and by that we don't mean they're ugly.

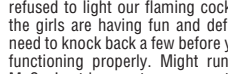
Jeers:
 Recent menu update for 2007 has upset the balance of one of the best Caesar salads in town. Seems like everyone here only converses with each other via ICQ message sent between laptops. Weird hippie/Buddhist contingent mixed in with model level babes threw us off a bit. Portions getting smaller. 50% discount card might be more of a curse—we're getting a little sick of this place. Got a Prada-lite vibe. Not quite sure what the name means, and we're not sure they know either. You could easily break an ankle on the unexpected step near the bar. The food, a bargain for card-holders, probably ain't worth your rubles if you aren't as kewl as us.
M: Kitai Gorod
Phone: 784-0615
Address: Slavyanskaya pl. 2

Tema Bar



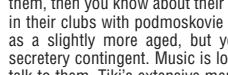
Cheers:
 eXile alert! Folks, Tema Bar's two-year anniversary was a sight to behold, reaffirming, once again, that on weekends this place transforms into what the Boar House used to be... but more wholesome. And to prove it, one of The eXile's editorial team picked up a chick that night just by standing at the bar and nodding yes. Previously, Yasha demonstrated by getting the digits of a nice Jewish girl, while at the same time successfully wooing a blond shiksa to bed with him... Recent anniversary par-tay was a who's-who of the anti-pafos, pro-alcohol'n'fun tusovka...along with fun-luv'n' babes, many of whom took it upon themselves to dance on the ginormous bar. Congrats, guys! If you love Help but wish it had more of a party scene, Tema is THE place to check out! One of a very, very few places in town where everyone's having a good time. Dyevs become unbelievably approachable around 1am after having downed a half-dozen tropical cocktails. Multiple sets of gals doing the fake lezbo thing to turn you on. One of the cocktails requires donning a Soviet Army helmet and getting whacked over the head with a ski! Dima of Help fame has opened another, bigger cocktail bar, this time smack dab in the center of Moscow! Great central drinking option, especially if you're sick of OGI. Mammoth cocktail menu impresses chicks. Nice value and prices.
Jeers:
 Some of the surliest bartenders in town. One actually refused to light our flaming cocktails on fire. While all the girls are having fun and definitely available, you'll need to knock back a few before your beer goggles start functioning properly. Might run into old flings from McCoy's at inopportune moments. Food not exactly all that.
M: Chisty Prudy
Address: Potapovskiy per. 5
Hours: 24

Tiki Bar



Cheers:
 The legendary team from Tema Bar & Help are behind this place: Moscow's first and only tiki bar. If you know them, then you know about their magical ability to pack in their clubs with podmoskovie student dyevs, as well as a slightly more aged, but yet so easily bangable secretary contingent. Music is loud, so you won't have talk to them. Tiki's extensive menu of fancy polynesian drinks is packed with copious amounts of booze will get the job done and leave enough money in your wallet for you to order a cab in the morning so that you never have to see your one night stand again. eXile's official food critic Tofer Lamont got way too wasted on their fruity cocktails and was too busy chashing another kind of tail to remember much about the food. He thinks he may have had some nachos with some pasta.
Jeers:
 How can you jeer a place that packs a full house of fine, totally non-indie dyevs that will sleep with you because it'll mean they won't have to wait for the metro to open?
M: Barikadnaya
Address: Sadovaya-Kudrinskaya st., 3A
Phone: 741-2203
Hours: 24

VinoSyr – Wine & Cheese Bar



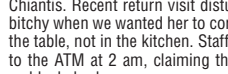
Cheers:
 Tofer was blown away by this Italian/Spanish wine bar when he first reviewed it. With an ok bottle of Spanish red starting at 600r, tasty tapas-style cheese ad cold cut plattes averaging 300r, a low key setting featuring a live jazz pianist and wine tasting nights every Wed, this place seemed out of place in Moscow. Cheap AND good? Did we die and wake up in the more Western-friendly Medvedev era? Gotta try it to believe it.
Jeers:
 Dangerously high water content in one of the cheaper Chiantis. Recent return visit disturbed us. Waitress got bitchy when we wanted her to cork and pour the wine at the table, not in the kitchen. Staff tried to force us to go to the ATM at 2 am, claiming the credit card machine suddenly broke.
Address: Malyi Palashevsky pereulok 6
Phone: 739-1045
Metro: Pushkinskaya
Hours: Everyday from 6 p.m to 6 a.m.
Web: www.vinosyr.ru

VinoSyr – Wine & Cheese Bar



Cheers:
 eXile alert! The OG 911 in the hotel is still open! Which means U don't have far to go if you make friends. Imagine Shandra but in a small, cozy setting the size of some minigarch's living room. Lots of girls all eager to pay attention to you. Strip stage right in front of your face, couches, and rooms upstairs (one has karaoke) where you can take your favorite dancer. Drinks aren't overpriced, and the kabinety are free on Sundays, which is good news for cheap-O expats. Also entrance is for now at least free.
Jeers:
 While not expensive, if you're an English teacher or an editor of the eXile, then this place is out of your range.
M: Leninsky Prospekt
Phone: 507-2727
Address: 15 Kosyguina (in the Korston hotel)
Hours: 21:00 - 06:00

Voodoo Lounge



Cheers:
 Whoa, are we sorry Voodoo fell off our radar screens: here's the antidote to Pafusny Moscow: cheap drinks, tons of approachable student babes, and action that's rawkin' before midnight! Don't let the cover turn you off: unlike just about every other club in Moscow, Voodoo packs a crowd early. Summer patio should be opening soon, increasing the snapper party significantly. Recent birthday party visit revealed HUGE Lolita factor and low White God factor, meaning U could get lucky! Lots o' ladies, very few snobs; high marks on accessibility, but U gotta dance. Ames tried out a Latin dancing lesson here and almost got beat up by a chick.

Plenty of young sluts lookin' for luv. Stays packed all night long. Voodoo has become part of the must-do "circuit" for everyone from hormone-charged eXholes to Latino-luv'n' teenies.

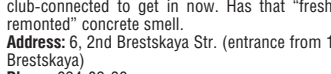
Jeers:
 Things slow down early... around 3. These girls need a lot of space to dance—if you get too close, you might get hurt. If you don't respond well to Slavic pheromones, then beware the 80 factor. Snideman impersonators rumored to get in without paying cover. Girls think that all you want is their number. Too many men with greasy ponytails and Hamas sympathizers.
Cover: 50R for broads, 150R for dudes (weekends only)
M: Belorusskaya
Phone: 253-2323
Address: Sredny Tishinsky pereulok 5/7
Hours: 18:00 - 6:00

Yello



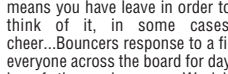
Cheers:
 Continuing the trend in "intelligent" elitny/indie/pafosny clubs, Yello opens in exactly the same spot where the boho/bearded intelligentsia/rocker "Klub na Bretskoy" used to be, signalling that in 2008, the beard is being replaced by the bilan. Good Pina Coladas.
Jeers:
 Club opens up officially in February, so you gots to be club-connected to get in now. Has that "fresh, just-remotented" concrete smell.
Address: 6, 2nd Brestskaya Str. (entrance from 1st Brestskaya)
Phone: 694-09-36
M: Mayakovskaya
Hours: Officially to be opened in February though they have parties almost every weekend. Available for banket.

Zhest



Cheers:
 eXile alert! We'd forgotten how cheap Zhest was until a gig last Friday when we were able to buy a round of drinks for four for under 1,000 rubles. Do you see how we upgraded Zhest's fahkie-faktor from 1 to 2 stars? That's because of a research mission the eXile editors embarked on recently, revealing that if you stand around the bar talking English, drunken indie chicks will hit on you. Even though (or especially if) their boyfriends are right behind them. Some of the chicks were even hot. Ames had a blast playing sugar daddy, as only a poverty-stricken old man can, buying cheap mugs of beer for little nose-ringed dyevs. This OGI-affiliate has a much more basement indie feel than the other OGIs, which are crawling with bearded pseudo-philosophers. Cheap-O, meaning it should fill up with foreign student types, English teachers and MT employees.
Jeers:
 They closed the bar inside the concert hall, which means you have leave in order to get a drink. Come to think of it, in some cases that could be a cheer...Bouncers response to a fight is to deny entry to everyone across the board for days. Guess they'd rather be safe than make money. Weak bar in the concert area. No air conditioning and other environmentally friendly facilities.
M: Lubyanka
Phone: 628-4883
Address: Bolshaya Lubyanka 13/16 str. 1
Hours: 24/7

Zoloto



Cheers:
 This place may be opening the newest hip industrial tusovka neighborhood near the Belorussky train station. eXile club reviewer Babooshka went there, he says he picked up like three young chicks while in mourning for a childhood friend that got run over. But he's usually full of shit.
Jeers:
 None that Babooshka told about.
Address: 35, 1st Lyusinovskiy per.
Phone: 237 6652
M: Dobrynskaya
Hours: 24/7

EROTIC

911 Club



Cheers:
 eXile alert! The OG 911 in the hotel is still open! Which means U don't have far to go if you make friends. Imagine Shandra but in a small, cozy setting the size of some minigarch's living room. Lots of girls all eager to pay attention to you. Strip stage right in front of your face, couches, and rooms upstairs (one has karaoke) where you can take your favorite dancer. Drinks aren't overpriced, and the kabinety are free on Sundays, which is good news for cheap-O expats. Also entrance is for now at least free.
Jeers:
 While not expensive, if you're an English teacher or an editor of the eXile, then this place is out of your range.
M: Leninsky Prospekt
Phone: 507-2727
Address: 15 Kosyguina (in the Korston hotel)
Hours: 21:00 - 06:00

Bordo



Cheers:
 Holy shit! Bordo done went and added a sauna, so you can get so fresh and so clean while you're gettin' dirty! Might contain the highest concentration of perfumed flesh per square inch on this planet! Deviates from the single-mindedness of Safari and Ishtar... meaning that the owners didn't skimp on details like air conditioning. That's right folks, you can actually come and enjoy yourself here before you go about your business. Oh, and did we mention, the ladiez are slamm'n! It's comfortable, well-ventilated and all-together less seedy than just about any other full-service establishment in town. Karaoke in VIP rooms means that you can tell the

girl you take that you own a talent agency and think she's got potential.

Jeers:
 The veneer of civilization is something that our Editorial Board has consistently come out against in the past. Could this place be haunted by the ghost of the Expat Club?
M: Kitai Gorod
Phone: 917-4545
Address: Pivcheskyy per. 4 str. 1
Hours: All of them!

Divas



Cheers:
 eXile alert! A former Hungry Duck beau-from-Ames'-past is now a dancer here! Who says dating Ames doesn't pay?! Conveniently-located ad in this very paper for info on parties and discounts.

Jeers:
 Like all strip clubs, you wind up spending a lot more money than if you had stayed home to search for porn on the net.
Cover: 700R
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 609-00-65; 609-00-54
Address: Strastnoi Bulvar 10/2
Hours: 21.00 - 6.00

NIGHT • FLIGHT



Cheers:
 eXile alert! Happy 16th, NF! A Sweet Sixteen party never looked so freakin' hot. NF should receive a medal for the amount of foreign investment it's brought to Moscow. Still the best place to remember what keeps you in Moscow. Vodka bar in the back offers about 30 types of vodka, ranging from affordable Stoli to Kauffman Luxury (at R1000+ a shot!). What can we say that hasn't been said... even on slow nights your jaw will be dragging along the floor due to the sheer quantity of available babe-age. Prices have gotten relatively cheaper, when compared with inflation elsewhere. Congratulations to the fellas that put Sweden back on the map—if only they could conquer our home country, we might move back to America! So packed with awesome babes who want to get to know you (because you're so damn interesting), excellent service and genuine class. There is no single better way to spend your hard earned money than at Night Flight, even if it's not hard earned! If you have only one night in Moscow, make sure this place is on your list. Women so hot that you just want to keep them in a padded chest in your basement. No shame in showing your face: the Swedish-managed staff is discreet, professional and attentive. THE favored place for married men on business trips to visit—many have given this place "two hastily removed wedding rings up!"
Jeers:
 Girls start at least \$300 these days, and drive a tougher bargain. Bring back the crisis days! Lots of silicon on display these days, so you might want to try the merchandise before you buy it. If you bump into your boss, just say that you've come for the food [sic].
Cover: 800R, including one drink
M: Tverskaya
Phone: 629-4165
Address: Ul. Tverskaya 17
Hours: Club 21.00 - 5.00; Restaurant 18.00 - 5.00

Jeers:
 Girls start at least \$300 these days, and drive a tougher bargain. Bring back the crisis days! Lots of silicon on display these days, so you might want to try the merchandise before you buy it. If you bump into your boss, just say that you've come for the food [sic].
Cover: 800R, including one drink
M: Tverskaya
Phone: 629-4165
Address: Ul. Tverskaya 17
Hours: Club 21.00 - 5.00; Restaurant 18.00 - 5.00

Shandra



Cheers:
 Club's constantly packed with between 25 to 50 strippers of every ethnicity imaginable: Russians, Asians, Africans, even one that looked a little Mexican. Our last visit showed them to be so thoroughly quality-controlled that even our intern was impressed. Pretty good food and the ability to order the emergency I'm-out-of-money-light for your table which alerts strippers to stay clear of your area. Yes folks, Shandra *does* care about your dignity. An eXile operative met a stripper who spoke perfect English and even read The eXile. Now that's quality.
Jeers:
 Look, just because we can't afford it doesn't mean we have to knock it, or does it?
M: Sukharevskaya
Phone: 208-0982
Address: Prosvirin per. 7
Hours: 20:00-6:00

Jeers:
 Look, just because we can't afford it doesn't mean we have to knock it, or does it?
M: Sukharevskaya
Phone: 208-0982
Address: Prosvirin per. 7
Hours: 20:00-6:00

Violete



Cheers:
 eXile alert! Has no qualms about letting in 2-drunk-2-fuck eXile editors at 3am! Cocktails mixed well, and the stogie menu really hit the spot. Yasha even managed to get one of the babe's digits! The newest addition to the Ho-ing bordello scene, Violete is exactly the place to go if you've already done Ishtar and Safari enough and you're looking for roughly the same thing but in a newer, non-sticky, cool setting. Violete has it all: scores of hot, friendly nekkid chicks, VIP kabinety with Karaoke offerings, and a highly libidinous purple hue.
Jeers:
 We had such a good time sitting at the bar that we pretty much forgot to go look at the strippers taking their clothes off.
M: Novokuznetskaya
Phone: 959-3320
Address: Raushtskaya Nab. 4/5
Hours: Evening til morning

EATS REVIEW

GOURMAND ALERT!

By Mark Ames



True gourmands constantly lament the fact that despite the boom in Moscow's high-priced restaurant scene, there still are only a handful of restaurants (at best) that cater to true lovers of creative dining. Moscow's dining class is far more interested in the crowd, the setting, and getting tried-and-true dishes than in challenging their tastebuds.

I, of course, am different. The confidence I show in my tastes proves that I have superior judgment to yours, which is why I publish my opinions, and you try to imitate me.

Here's my first bit of advice to Muscovites if you want to pretend that you are an aspiring gourmand, Go To **NAVARRO'S**. I'll repeat that: Go To Navarro's.

Last week I took a very special lady to Navarro's for Valentine's Day, and damn if we weren't the most satisfied pair of lovebirds on this blue planet of ours that we all must share. It's the first time I visited Navarro's since last year's summit meeting with radical Communist Viktor Anpilov, when we wolfed down a mind-boggling Sunday Brunch spread and washed it down with the spiciest Bloody Mary's you'll find in these parts, not to mention an array of fresh oysters, meats, and Southwest dishes.

Chef Yuri Navarro is a humble hero of Moscow's culinary scene. You can taste the love and pride that he puts into every dish. Like a true artist, Yuri is a guy who loves creating great food, and wants to share his creations with an audience.

We cheered the orgasmic slices of raw salmon in lime and cilantro that we ate as appetizers, and writhed in ecstasy from the wonderful main courses: a perfectly prepared, juicy chicken dish with sweet potatoes (540r), and a light serving of Chilean Sea Bass over creamed spinach (640r).

My only complaint is the loud Latino live music: the acoustics in Navarro's aren't suited for Moscow's notoriously 11-volume-dial musicians.

Other than that, I can say that Yuri's Valentine treats made me a star in my special lady's eyes.

"Thank you so much Mark, it was wonderful!" she told me as we left, roses in her hands.

"Yeah? Does this mean I get anal?" I asked.

And you know what? She wasn't angry at me for asking.

Muchas gracias, Navarro's!

M: 1905 Goda
Phone: 259-3791
Address: Shmitovskiy proezd 23, bldg. 4
Hours: 8:30AM to 3AM or until the last guest

fag-a-licious"—for art fags that is. For the rest of us, this place is pretty darn good. Started by the people behind FAQ, this place had dependably good food and cheap-o, well-mixed drinks. It's affordable evro-fusion that tries to have some class. Oh yeah, and the plexi-glass floor of the balcony means you can see girlie panties just by looking up from your barstool.

Jeers:

The place has a high artsy I-don't-have-a-dimabilan-dimabilan factor. Time Out has called this the new home of the LiveJournal set.

M: Chekovskaya/Pushkinskaya
Phone: 650-3971

Address: Bolshaya Dmitrovka 32

Hours: 12:00 - 24:00
www.artefaq.ru

The Apartment

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Cheers:

Hip wine-bar downstairs, kewl SoHo-style loft upstairs. Menu's not pretentious, but everything's damn good. A welcome break from Novikov copy-cats that are always trying for impossibly complex food to show off that they know ingredients like broccoli di rape. For most of us, their Thanksgiving feast was a first introduction... and most of us agree, it was absolutely d-lightful! In a novel approach in Moscow, Apartment is going for ambience over food. While everything we ate rocks, the menu's supposed to fit the place rather than visa-versa. The chef's a fish specialist trained in France, and you can feel safe eating it here. They've almost made a cult of freshness here. Chill, homey mood, even if this is a favorite among the elite. Great leather chairs and a ghetto for cigar smokers.

Jeers:

We know this is an up-n-comin' hood and all, but it's a pain in the ass to get to. Welcome to new Moscow, where if you want to eat well, you've got to drop a C-note.

M: Kievskaya

Phone: 518-6060

Address: Savinskaya Nab. 21

Hours: 12:00 - last client

Dantes

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Cheers:

Yasha's totally neg review a few issues ago was way off. Hands down, Dantes is the best new affordable restaurant in Moscow. It has the best fried noodles this side of the Great Wall and at 300 rubles, cheap by Moscow standards, too. The 170 ruble house red isn't that bad. They serve decent evro food and sushi to keep your date happy. Open 24 hours. Has WiFi. Get here before they jack up the prices.

Jeers:

Skimpy eurofag Steak & Eggs breakfast less satisfying than a negative-calorie rice cracker. They charge 300 rubles for four pieces of dim sum. The Caesar salad is not recommended. We had the most unsavory pork dish the day after Putin named Medvedev his successor. Also, the little potato spheres served on the side were too dry and the bread stale. Is Dantes losing its touch, or has food stopped tasting so good now that we know the Putin-era is coming to an end?

M: Lubyanka

Phone: 621-4688

Address: Myasnikskaya 13-3

Hours: always

Eat & Talk

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Cheers:

Located in the lobby of a small business center, this place is a good choice for biz lunch or grabbing a night-cap at 5 a.m. It has three big things going for it: location, big buffet, and vibe. Situated next door next to ZhurFak, E&T is constantly filled with cute journalism students. Free wifi, accessible plugs and central location. They just opened a new, nicely designed Irish pub down the hall that is the only place in town to get Guinness Extra Cold.

Jeers:

The seats in the VIP room looked like their were designed for getting some serious work done on your laptop, but turned out to be way too high for comfort.

M: Biblioteka

Phone: 961-3101

Address: Mochovaya 7

Hour: 24/7

El Parador

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Cheers:

When you have a hankering for jamon, the thinly sliced leg meat from the Iberian black pig, this is the place to go. The chef may have a Russian passport, but his heart is Spanish. The jewel of the desert menu is the rich and almondly Tarta de Santiago. Eat it and weep tears of Spanish butter.

Jeers:

Flamenco musicians take to the small stage only after at 8pm, which is good if you're on a date and don't are willing to endure anything but conversation, but annoying if you're just trying to eat.

M: Tverskaya

Phone: 650-1623

Address: Tverskaya ul 12/2 (entrance on Kozitsky)

Hour: Lunch 'til dinner

Guylian Cafe

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Cheers:

eXile alert! Totally not the sucky ass-flavored food you remember! New menu is simply delightful, thanks to director Chantelle and three-star chef Peter Goosens. Will satisfy all your Flemish desires. Waterzoi Soup (375r) quite possibly the best soup in this city. Coquilles St. Jacques scallops dish (650r) simply orgasmic. Large selection of Belgian beers.

Jeers:

Although everything on the menu is good, there's a strong chance you'll end up eyeing your date's dish with envy, wondering if it's somehow better. Furniture lame and reminiscent of 70s Woody Allen movies.

M: Teatralnaya

Phone: 928-7602

Address: 8/10 Neglinnaya Ul.

GQ Bar

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Cheers:

New place to go for those of you sick of Vogue Cafe. Probably the trendiest place in town for those who are willing to throw down loot and not care about it. True gentleman Ames was impressed by the food's quality, and found it fun to eat Evro-food with chopsticks. Three enormous halls should make it E-Z to get a reservation.

Jeers

Way pricey. eXile editors can't afford to eat here unless someone else foots the bill. For being a bar, there sure aren't many people drinking themselves stupid. Then again, with Grey Goose running 380R a shot, who can afford to? You might run into Russian movie stars and their entourage on your way out of the pisser.

M: Tretyakovskaya

Phone: 956-7775

Address: Balchug Ul. 5

Hours: 24 hours

Los Bandidos

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Cheers:

Excellent hamon (690R+) and more than one great paella (de pollo for 790R, and de cordero for 890R). It's a spinoff of the famous Spanish restaurant of the same name outside of Marbella; the head chef in Moscow is an import from there. Real Andalusian cured hams that hang from hooks from the ceiling, highly professional service without being intrusive. Gazpacho delicisio, but at 12 dolares its loco.

Jeers:

Pulled the old "we're out of all the wines cheaper than 3100R, sir" ruse on our last visit. Who would want to eat Spanish food unless it's a tapas bar in New York or LA? Wildly overpriced but solid quality that makes you feel like you're in a fancy, overpriced West European restaurant rather than one here.

M: Tretyakovskaya

Phone: 953-0466

Address: Bol. Ordynka 7

Hours: 12:00 - the last chico

Mulat Tomas

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Cheers:

eXile alert! Great place for quiet late-night dining in style. Get started with the free and tasty bread, then move onto the gigantic soups (c200r), which was more than enough to fill some of us up. For those still hungry, the veal mignon (790r) was divine, and the spaghetti with seafood (490r) got high marks. The sexiest new restaurant/cafe/tusovka in Moscow, opened up by the good folks who brought us Ketama, Shyolk, and the late Mesto Vstrechi. Here you enter a den of sin, with plush blue velvet and heavy draw-drapes to close your booth. Delicious, simple menu at reasonable prices. Try the soups, the fresh-baked breads and pirozhki, delicious salads, nice choice of mains. So far no complaints, expect it to be a popular place soon.

Jeers:

Although service was more or less great and unobtrusive, the waiter had the tendency to disappear at the moments you really needed him. Don't go here with your ex-wife. Or your wife, for that matter, unless you're the type who still sleeps with his wife. We prefer the meat mains to the fishy mains.

M: Chekhovskaya

Phone: 694-6252

Address: Bolshaya Dmitrovka d.17

Hours: Always

Ogni

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Cheers:

Ogni comes from the Discreet Charm folks, and it's already drawing a strong crowd of 20-something professionals. Kamchatcka Crab salad (300r) was a hit, as was the fact that they serve you .5l mineral waters for 60r.

Jeers:

Otherwise the food is nothing to email home about. Rudnitsky was so incensed by the New Yuppie crowd of once-interesting Russians behaving as dull and bland as Americans that he went out and got married just so he could have a wife to beat.

M: Sukharevskaya

Phone: 207-1222

Address: M. Sukharevskaya pl. 8

Hours: Always

Pilsner Urquell

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Cheers:

eXile alert! Recent thumbs-up for the reliably greasy and good-sized portions at fair prices. Zaitchik praised the Cvickova meat 'n dumplings extravaganza (390r), while we found the smoked chicken a bah-gain at 325 rubles, though we didn't feel too hot afterwards. This chain is expanding quicker than Flounder's waistline! Newish Pokrovka location just like the original: good, cheap beer, and lots of greasy beer food. We really dug the semi-spicy sliced chicken dish (275r). Just about the only place in town where you can say, "Czech, please!" Cheapish new Czech pub at a prominent Mayakovskaya location is solidly mediocre... just like you'd expect from the Czechs. Stick to the sausages and beer (0.5l for 75-110R), and you should have a good time of it.

Jeers:

For some reason patrons here seem to be in a frantic race to lower Russia's life expectancy even lower than the current 58 years, as nearly every client smoked not just four cigarettes, but also cigars and pipes! Can't someone just gone these idiots who smoke

pipes?! What fucking century do these assholes think we're living in?! Agh! Coming here frequently will turn make your belly look American. Rude hostess nearly tackled us on our way up the stairs because we neglected to tell her that we had friends waiting for us. Our 'medium rare' steak was burnt to a crisp. When was the last time you craved Czech food? Exactly.

M: 1: Mayakovskaya, 2: Kitai Gorod

Phone: 1: 251-2023, 2: 624-7003

Address: 1: 1st Tverskaya Yamskaya 1, 2: Pokrovka 15/16

Hours: noon-midnight

The Real McCoy



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Cheers:

eXile alert! We think we saw the famed baguette de Paris sandwich back on the menu...but we left too drunk to remember. Service has been more-or-less prompt on recent weeknight visits. Always surprises us that the food is so good! And you can easily do dinner for two with booze for under 1,000R! Portion gigantotized, filling you up without letting you down. Kickin' business lunch deal. Succulent salmon filet made Schrek feel like he was back living next to the Pacific Ocean. Spaghetti carbonara was good by Italian standards—for 210 rubles, and at 5:30 in the morning! You can also get big slabs o' meat (R400-R700) that actually come rare if you want 'em to. Don't try anything too fancy and you'll walk away completely sated. Did we mention it's the best bar in town?

Jeers:

eXile alert! Former fave 3 Amigos sampler plate now totally sucks ass. Chicken wings absolutely inedible—we think they may have spent more time on the grill than on the actual chicken. Service so bad on a recent Saturday afternoon visit, we were forced to call the manager from our cell phone in order to get a waiter to stop watching soccer and take our order. We have the feeling that the high quality of the food probably doesn't hold up at drunken 6AM visits. High US embassy spook factor. Spicy the Mexican food is not. The chick-pea and lamb soup (R180) needs to meet a blender.

M: Barrikadnaya

Phone: 255-41-44

Address: Kudrinskaya pl. 1 (in the Stalin sky-scraper)

Hours: Always

Tapa de Comida



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Cheers:

eXile alert! If you're looking for a different summer veranda to dine at, definitely give Tapas a try. Two big thumbs-ups for the Gazpacho (140r) and the Sangria, which rawqs. Pig out on the gigantic Mixed Grill, a steal at 1100 rubles when you see the portions we're talking about. Two of us still had to take a doggie bag. The food here's great, with our favorites including the salmon sevice (R190), the beef filet salad (R400), and the rabbit. Great sliced meats and a surprisingly good cheese plate (R 480) well worth it, featuring the not-to-be-missed drunken goat cheese. Downstairs in the tapas room rawks! Totally laid back atmosphere where you can simply point to what you want at the tapas bar. Plenty of Spanish tapas and, for your chauvanistic Russian friends, plenty of Ruskyy-style tapas. Best bits include various sliced meats (although chirozo could be spicer...), smoked salmon, fresh-made bread, and a shrimp dish whose name we don't remember. The format seems to be a real hit among eXpats, and we counted three tables of 'em on a recent visit. As always with places run by the folks at McCoy, killer cocktails... but you might actually be able to walk rather than crawl out of this one. Great drinks menu, including smooth cognac like "kheres" for only R120/75g and tasty, funky sangria by the liter.

Jeers:

Things to avoid: salmon suffle, the chicken liver, and drinking here until 4. Tapas only served on the first floor.

M: Tsvetnoi Bulvar

Phone: 208-2007

Address: Trubnaya ul. 20/2 str. 3

Hours: Always

Uncle Guilly's

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Cheers:

We admit we've been neglecting Guilly's ever since Goodman opened, but we wuz wrong! Thanksgiving Day meal proved the Guilly crew still can toss together a great American experience, with tasty food and attentive service that can't be beat. Plus, since it wasn't all-you-can-eat, you'll fit through the door on your way out. Guilly's burgers are the best in Moscow fer sure; forget what you heard about Hard Rock and Starlite. Killer steaks are the new favorite of Moe Snideman, Esq., who's on Atkins to slim down before a big case. Some new sandwiches, with the meat-heavy Dagwood winning two thumbs up (only don't forget to hold the fried egg). Tasty black bean soup! On the Ruskyy side of the equation, the hearty Solyanka is peerless (and this in a city seemingly awash in solyanka). That "All-American" burger continues to win hearts, minds, and stomachs with its seemingly limitless charms.

Jeers:

Thanksgiving meal was capped with... fruit cake! We decided to have a shot of absente instead. 100 rubles for those little sampler Cokes? This is not a nice uncle! Gave free cherry pie to Americans and U.S. Embassy employees for President's Day.

M: Pushkinskaya

Phone: 229-2050

Address: Stoleshnikov per. 6, str. 1

Hours: 12.00 - 24.00

Indian

M: Mayakovskaya

Phone: 299-5519

Address: Ul. Sadovaya Triumfalnaya d. 2/30 Str. 1 (across from the Am Bar&Grill)

Hours: 11:00 - 02:00

Prado

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Cheers:

eXile alert! Newbie Zaitchik snubbed his nose at the only elitny restaurant the eXile recognizes by showing up late at the eXile staff party and leaving early. He preferred warm snapper to the dozen cold seafood salads laid out on the table. Can we blame him? Yes. We used to think saying you come here for the food is like telling someone you read Hustler to protect your First Amendment rights... until we ate here. It's really freakin' good, folks. We're not sure if that means that the dames who hang out here hoping to get picked up by mini-garchs are finally starting to develop taste or what, but the food's great. Big ups on the risotto and filet mignon. Prado did its part to minimize electricity use during the cold spell by making even its most elitny clients wait in an unheated cloakroom! Waytago, fellaz! So elitny they don't even have a sign out front. Unless you count all those stretch Mercs and BMWs with smoked windows a kind of sign. Inside, the place is packed full of the beau monde of Moscow. It's so gauche—including huge lamp covers that look like giant bronze sponge contraceptive—that it works. Amazingly enough, the food is excellent and reasonably priced. If they let you in, that is. Delicious raw tuna salad (400r), and surprisingly good Risotto with Asparagus and Shrimps (450r), a dish almost no one gets right in Moscow.

Jeers:

Eight bucks for a beer? Are you fucking kidding?! You won't exactly feel comfortable here. Packed with single aging molls in expensive gear sipping from one pot of tea for four hours just to be in Prado. We also spotted a guy wearing sunglasses, white 70s Bee-Gees clothes, playing backgammon and generally acting cool while ordering almost nothing. Don't these people work?

M: Kitai-Gorod

Phone: 784-6969

Address: Slavjanskaya Ploschad 2

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Cheers:

We were treated to a meal here by an Anal-Lister who shall remain nameless for the next 6 months! The place to go for oligarch sightings (there's a schul next store). We were seated next to Freidman last week. Roof garden done right. Say what you will about Novikov, he finds great chefs. Even the shashlyk's frickin' great. Best mojito ever. The high-priced hos tawling for sugar-daddies even give bums like us the once-over by virtue of the fact that we got a table.

Jeers:

Uppity waiter had to be reminded to refresh our drinks. Folks, this ain't something you wanna be doing for a \$100 biz lunch. The \$50 duck was dry, which just ain't cool. You'll want to get out of your Zhiguli gypsy cab about 20 meters before the entrance or you'll be a laughing stock.

M: Pushkinskaya

Phone: 736-91-31/32

Address: M. Bronnaya 8/1

Hours: 12:00 - 24:00

Apple Restaurant

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Cheers:

The Apple Bar and Restaurant is open to non-guests at the Golden Apple, "Moscow's only boutique hotel," and it's a good thing, too. This sleek space is perfect for a mellow and delicious dinner. An imaginative and tasty take on the European fusion menu, the Apple is strong on seafood and offers more pumpkin themed dishes than any place in town. Great cocktails, attentive staff, good music. Their Raspberry Lamponi was our favorite cocktail last summer.

Adzhanta



Adzhanta is an eXile alert! A few certain friends of The eXile not known for their culinary sophistication gave this place two overpriced samosa's up. Rita the Russian date agrees. She says: "I simply love this place! Who knew that Indian food tasted so much like Russian food. I mean, we even have the same national dishes. Indians have Biryani, we have Plov. They have Samosas, we have Xachipuri. Next time, I'm gonna come here with my girlfriends. It's so expensive and has such good remont!" Good bellydancing at a non-obnoxious volume has been reported. They also take American Express so you can blow your companies cash on overpriced meals.

Jeers:
Too freakin' expensive, even if it is situated in a stand-alone palace. For your money, Maharajh is still the best bet in town. Rita asks: "I like it, but why do all the waiters have to be dark-skinned? Isn't this a high class restaurant."
M: Ulitsa 1905
Phone: 609-3925, 609-3701
Address: M. Gruzinskaya 23
Hours: 12.00 - midnight

Darbar

Jeers:
Hands down still far and away the best Indian restaurant in Moscow, despite some new and fainthearted competition. The menu features both southern and northern dishes, and the Keralan owners make sure the Indian chefs get everything right, especially the yummy dosas. Most of Moscow's major embassies gets their Indian catering here (including the Indian embassy), so you can be sure it's good enough for you. And the stunning view from the roof of the Sputnik--their new location--takes a night here to the next level. A rooftop bar/deck is in the works, so stay tuned...

Jeers:
The music that accompanies the dancers that pop out of the wall every half hour is a little loud. But at least it's over in two minutes.
M: Leninsky Prospekt
Phone: 930-2925, 930-2365
Address: Leninsky Pr. 38 (Top Floor of Hotel Sputnik)
Hours: 12.00 - midnight

Juggernaut



Jeers:
eXile alert! Now with the self-service section, you can eat plenty of meatless grub, some actually quite good, for very cheap. It's now gone up in our esteem. This place is great for dinner, but it's the huge and delicious desserts that really bring you back. Unlike a lot of veggie places, Jugg wants you to have a good time. With prices that max out at less than \$6, even our junkie friends can now afford to stay well-fed and fit.

Jeers:
Many patrons have that kind of depressed, sallow complexion that makes us want to b-line it to Mickey-D's for a Big Tasty. The place has a grim Berkeley vibe until dinnertime, when the staff perks right up and the portions get bigger. Lack of booze takes the whole health-food thing a bit too far. We could really do without the overweight belly dancers.
M: Kuznetsky Most
Phone: 928-3580
Address: Kuznetsky Most 11
Hours: 10.00 - 23.00

Khajuraho

Jeers:
Killer Indian food, with tons of vegetarian options, and lots of copulating statues spread throughout the dining room. What more could you ask for? How's about some of Moscow's best belly dancers? Host to Dr. Dolan's tear-filled going away party, when we tried most of the menu, and loved it all. We especially recommend the palak paneer, tandoor dishes and just about anything with lamb in it.

Jeers:
Food was rather on the bland side on our last visit. Ear-shattering music accompanies a belly dancer who isn't much of a babe. How is it that Moscow's good so many great Indian options when just about every other ethnic joint in town deserves an ass? We resent having to make choices, and they don't bode well for Putin's attempt to restore order in Russia.
M: Ul. 1905 goda
Phone: 256-8136; 256-7202
Address: Shmitovskyy proezd 14
Hours: 12.00 - 'til the last guest

Maharajah

Jeers:
eXile alert! Folks, if you're jonesing for takeout and you live in the center, then don't even bother going anywhere else. We picked up in 15 minutes, and our culinary karma was elevated to the highest levels for several mouthwatering hours afterwards. Try the succulent and elegant servings of Chicken Tikka Masala (595r) and the less-spicy but succulent Chicken Tikka (560r). As always, superior service, reaffirming our two turban rating. Hail the reigning Rajnish! New dishes like the Chana Palak, spinach with chick peas, ruled, while old fave Chicken Vindaloo had us working up a massive sweat. Service here is impeccable. An Indian friend tells us these are the best curries in Moscow, and we have to agree. Prices may be a little more than U'd like, but the quality can't be beat. Attention lactose intolerant readers: will make the palak paneer (R360) with potatoes (saag aloo) instead of cheese if you ask nicely. Great butter chicken (R510) and black lentil dal (R250). Samosa (R70 each) might not be Darbar-quality, but it's not on Leninsky, either.

Jeers:
Told us with scorn that there are cheap items on the

menu when we asked if they had a biz lunch. It's in a basement. Naan is not great.
M: Kitai Gorod
Phone: 621-9844; 621-7758
Address: Pokrovka 2/1
Hours: 12.00 - midnight

Tandoor

Jeers:
Last visit gave us a dinner that is about as transcendental as they come. Packed full of Indians, eXholes, and the occasional Russian. Recent visit confirmed a big turban up on the palak paneer, samosas, and the awesome murg malai chicken tikka. Biz lunch a rockin' good deal for R300, with more savory courses than we can count...and we've never tried the executive version. The prawn masala (600r) is fantastic, succulent, and the Rosh Josh lamb dish (460r) makes us realize thea even if the lion lies down with the lamb, we'll eat that lamb, so long as it's prepared this way. Excellent kebab platter and palak paneer. Serves Kingfisher beer, though it ain't cheap. Lemon rice and stuffed breads earn all four of Vishnu's thumbs up! Madras chicken (420R) spiced to your tastes is so good, we don't know why you'd want to order anything else. Excellent service makes you feel like a Raj overlord.

Jeers:
Cost of plain, steamed rice is upwards of \$5, which is roughly the same cost of an entire acre of rice fields. Expat presence means you might be forced to listen to two British old maids fight over the bill at the next table. Naan bread with peas a little lame; stick to garlic nan. The toilet in the concert hall area is pretty foul.
M: Mayakovskaya
Phone: 299-8062
Address: Tverskaya ul. 31 (inside the Chaikovskyy concert hall, near Deli France)
Hour: 12.00 - 23.00

Vostochnaya Komnata

Jeers:
eXile alert! Better call for reservations first--recent Friday night visit found the place packed to the rim, with lines of people waiting to get inside. As annoying as that was, it's certainly a step up from seeing Sushifags standing in line for Gyno-taki and Yuckitoria! Our ideal meal starts with some khachapuri, continues with some falafel, and then ends with some curries. Reaffirm two turbans way up on the hummus and the nan-like pita. Murg valai tikka, marinated chicken tandoor, a great bargain at 200r. Easily the cheapest Indian food in the center, and tasty too! Sex Machine gave good marks to the Murg Masala Curry (180R), and the Palak Paneer (180R). Nan bread a mere 30R, and among the best in town. Middle-Eastern menu has nice hummus (100R) and above-average falafel (30R).

Jeers:
Belly dancer not "all that." Sitting near the bar does not get you quicker drink service. Long Island Ice Tea mysteriously served sans ice. Brought our appetizer out later after we'd already finished our mains. Tabbouleh was weak. Dishes tend to be spiced for the Russian palate unless you tell them in advance to spice it up.
M: Smolenskaya
Phone: 937-8423
Hours: 12.00 - 24.00
Address: Smolensky Ploschad 3 (Smolensky Passazh, down the pereulok on the right)

Italian

Cantinetta Antinori

Jeers:
Currently Moscow's most modny eatery; Novikov called it his first "real" restaurant. We're not quite sure where that leaves Yulki Palki. Just about everything we ordered earned high marks, but we do wonder why the hell it cost so much. Franklin per person if yer...
Jeers:
Be prepared to be a little disappointed no matter how much money you're willing to spend. Even with reservations (on a Tues., no less!), we were stuck outside in a thunder storm... and the hostess showed no sign of remorse. She musta thought we were hardly worthy of getting rained on at this place. Why anyone would risk getting feised at a restaurant is beyond us.
M: Smolenskaya
Phone: 241-3771
Hours: 12.00 - 24.00
Address: Denezhny per. 20

Capriccio's

Jeers:
This multi-level Italian joint is really two restaurants in one: a lounge pizzeria at street level, and a warm and cozy traditional Italian eatery downstairs. The young Russian chef is serious about his Italiano, and the pasta and Italian desert menus are solid across the board. Lots of Italian wines to choose from, which are better than similarly priced French wines. The seafood dishes are especially out-of-this-world good.
Jeers:
The pizza is mediocre. Upstairs you may be surrounded by people eating sushi. Our butter was a little hard.

M: Sukharevskaya
Phone: 518-1380
Address: Prospect Mira 5
www.cappriccio.ru

Dorian Gray

Jeers:
Some people just know Dorian Gray as the Italian place where that guy got shot in the middle of dinner rush

back in the late 90s. These days the hearty Italian restaurant with the literary British name is a more subdued place, where the only thing dying a Sicilian death is your hunger. This is the real southern Italian deal, straight through the gloriously sushi-less menu and on into the kitchen, which the knowledgeable Croatian owner keeps stocked with prize Sicilian chefs. Moscow's O.G. Italiano cucine, the food at Dorian Gray is so authentic and so fresh that it has no right to be this affordable. It's not cheap, but it's not expensive, either. Quality Italian for the people--that should be their motto. Situated right across from the Kremlin on the water, Dorian was one of Vladimir Putin's favorite lunch spots before he became a famous pop star. And it's still full of government heavies at midday, including a certain Mr. Medvedev. The one time we saw him eat here, he was enjoying a pasta dish with pesto and (real) Sakhalin crab and some squid capaccio. We ordered the same thing and were glad we did.

Jeers:
They make the bread every few hours and serve it fresh with a choice of oils and butters, including a tuna butter so good it's hard not to fill up on bread before the main. Putin sometimes still seen eating here poorly disguised in Groucho Marx nose-mustache-and-glasses.
M: Tretyakovskaya
Phone: 238-6401
Address: Kadashevskaya 6/1

Gusto

Jeers:
Claims to offer fine dining in a casual atmosphere, right on Kamergersky! English-language menu a nice touch. Pizzas looked tasty.

Jeers:
Where to begin...our ravioli reminded us more of pelmeni. Pasta cooked to Russian standards of toughness. Both our tagliatelli in beer sauce (340R) and our date's spaghetti with chicken (330R) were sitting like rocks in our stomach after an hour. Has awful live music cranked to 11. For your money, you're better off heading next door to Pinocchio.
M: Okhotny Ryad
Phone: 209-6922
Address: Kamergersky per. 5

La Grotta

Jeers:
We used to like this place for its reasonable prices, its unpretentious atmosphere, and the fact that other Italians liked it too...

Jeers:
So we went there recently for the first time in years, and found that the times at La Grotta have a-changed indeed. Prices were absurd, the atmosphere depressing, and worst of all, three items we ordered weren't available. So we got up and left. Atsa da matta for you!
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 694-30-57
Address: Bolshaya Bronnaya 27/4

Mario

Jeers:
Recent visit had awful service and just about the cheesiest, shittiest lounge singer we've heard in years. Penne with salmon wasn't all that. Almost got shot by jittery guards after walking too close to a client. Customers fond of bringing in their groomed poodles in designer pakety.
M: Ulitsa 1905 Goda
Phone: 253-6505
Address: Ulitsa Klimashkina 17
Hours: 13.00 - midnight

Mi Piacce

Jeers:
It's clean and they have wi-fi that sometimes works.
Jeers:
Imagine a third-rate Middle American "Italian" restaurant in some shitty suburb, then triple the prices, half the portions and the quality, and voila! You have Mi Piacce. If you are a regular here, then you should be sterilized.
Address: More Mi Piacces in town than tochkas, so we're not going to list them.

Pasta Della Mama



Jeers:
eXile alert! 390R biz lunch not only features huge portions, but it just might be the tastiest home-style Italian meal you'll get around these parts. Add to that blazing fast internet, comfy seating and bottemless fresh baked bread with butter and you got yourself a perfect recipe for a biz lunch. This place is from the Goodman's folks is sort of like a mid-sized-town US Italian family restaurant, only at prices closer to Moscow's. Fresh made pastas, daily specials. Good Jerusalem Artichoke Soup, good Spaghetti Bolognese (though a bit sweet), oddly tasty lasagna if you don't mind the noodle-deficiency in the recipe. Good sized portions.

Jeers:
Didn't bother renovating previous restaurant, Borgo. Overpriced and a bit pretentious for what it is. Service a bit spotty. Crowd tends to the pafos. One foul woman talked loudly in bad English the whole time to her suit-or/boss. Don't bring bread automatically. When we

asked for Tabasco sauce, they brought us Tabasco Soy Sauce, noting they don't carry the hot pepper sauce. Soy sauce in an Italian joint???
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 730-5600
Address: Spiridonovskyy Per 12/9
Hours: 12.00 - midnight

Pasta Project

Jeers:
Good place to take a date when you want to be cheap but appear to be very "modern" since you order via a computer. Whatever PP's flaws, at least they use fresh ingredients and don't smother anything in mayo. Homemade pasta joint takes the P-Dog one step further and has FULLY automated menus with touch screens and all! Helpful pictures help you decide whether you'll be getting something tasty or something that looks fruity. Salad got OK marks, as did broccoli soup.

Jeers:
If you hit the "ice" button on the touch screen, you'll get a single cube. They refuse to leave good enough alone, like when they add fried mushrooms to what would otherwise be a perfectly fine mesclin salad. Another example: pesto comes with mozzarella, as if parm ain't pafusny enough. No draft beer. Menu seemed a little short on pastas. Calls itself "territory of healthy food." The only pasta we tried - tagliatelle bolognese - was a little on the bland side.
M: Kitai-Gorod
Phone: 928-6767
Address: Pokrovka 1
Hours: 11:30-23:30

Sesto Sensa

Jeers:
New Italian joint from the guy who brought U people's favorite Verona. Large portions. Fair prices. Good looking deaf chicks who are "hard of hearing" serve you. The food is neither bad nor great, but it's value-friendly at least.
Jeers:
But it ain't all that in the flavor department. Verona is still much better. Nice gimmick to have deaf people serve you, but it meant our order got fucked up.
M: Taganskaya
Phone: 911-3653
Address: Novospassky Per. 3, korp. 1, entrance from Ul. Bolshie Kamenshiki
Hours: Noon to midnight

Spago

Jeers:
It's had its ups and downs, but Spago was recently recommended to us by a genuine I-tie, and he's right. The new chef, who hails from Rome, cooks the most perfect pasta you'll find in Moscow. The best we tried was Spaghetti A.O.R. (350r), with olive oil, garlic and spicy peppers, though almost as good was the Pacchetti in a red sauce with cherry tomatoes, basil, and fresh parmesan shavings (400r). Why can't anyone cook pasta like this, so simple, yet so delicate. The ham appetizer with focaccio (500r) was pleasing, though the minestrone, watery and frozen-vegetable-y, disappointed. Heinekens for 100r.

Jeers:
Portions very Euro-small. Be careful about taking a date here, she might order from the pricey meat menu, which could give cheap-O expats a minor stroke.
M: Kitai Gorod
Phone: 621-3797
Address: Bolshoiu Zlatoustinskiy Per d. 1
Hours: Noon to midnight

Verona

Jeers:
Only place in town to find a good cannoli. For Italian standards at impossibly low prices, this place can't be beat. The superb \$3 penne arrabiatta alone is worth the trip across town. Massive prosciutto appetizer (almost) always satisfies. Pizzas also damn good--try the cheese-less Marinara with super-spicy garlic tomato sauce.
Jeers:
eXile alert! An eXile executive had her handbag stolen from the back of her chair here. Be careful! Can be very crowded, meaning if you even get a seat, you'll be stuck in the smoky, bright front room, rather than the dark, less-miserable dining room. Main dining hall doesn't open until seven on Sundays--they make you wait in the cafe. Limited wine list. Those massive parmesan chunks that come with the prosciutto seem like a big waste to us. Dessert selection extremely unpredictable.
M: Proletarskaya
Phone: 912-0632 / 276-4150
Address: Vorontsovskaya ul. 32/36

Hours: 11.00 - 23.00

Latin

Acapulco

Jeers:
Thank you Acapulco! There ain't that many places out there that still fit into our image of Russian restaurants: terrible, overpriced sloop that, at its best, reminds you of the concoctions that you'd whip up in 7th grade Home Ec. class. The tacos (R290) come in a star-shaped hard shell reminiscent of Chevy's mini-taco salads! When we asked for a spicy masking agent, they brought us mayo with red pepper mixed in!
Jeers:
Who needs Jeers with Cheers like these!
M: Park Kultury
Phone: Kultury
Address: Zubovskyy bul. 27/5
Hours: 12:00 to 24:00

Hemingway's

Jeers:
eXile alert! Legendary Chris is back on the scene, with a promise to keep the British rugby fans out for good (see Jeers). An eXile editor found himself in a state of beaner-gas bliss after scruffing down their burrito/taco combo last weekend. Two stinky thumbs up! Half-off burgers on Tuesdays means you can get a helluva meal with beers for under \$20. Considering the depth of the falling \$ these days, that some serious value. A short while back, Hemingway's got itself a new and improved expanded menu. While keeping all the Tex Mex dishes you've come to know and crave, they've expanded their salad offerings and added a whole new steak and fish section. And the number of tasty appetizers, desserts and cocktails has swelled to oceanic proportions. If you're into seafood, then you have try their grilled scallops (340r). The grilled trout (650r) is a bit expensive, but what the hell, you're probably making a butt load of money working some boring consulting job. Wash it all down with Hemingway's patented absinth B52 shooter, the only cocktail we tried that makes absinth slide down your throat like butter. If you're in the mood for some Tex Mex, Hemingway's is still the only bet in town. Brought to you by Chris of the legendary Flegmatic Dog. The delux Tex Mex nachos, are piled high with cheese, beans and guac, are heavy enough put down a 300-lb. Mexican wrestler. If you're too much of a pussy to weather the Burrito Taco combo, there's he endangered Chilean Seabass (490r) rocks, and the vegetarian Hemingway wrap. Both lite and good. The margaritas (180r) are perfectly mixed for your lady.

Jeers:
British rugby fans. Salsa could still use a bit more umph.
M: Park Kultury
Address: Komsomolsky Prospekt 13 (where La Hacienda used to be)

Navarro's



Jeers:
eXile alert! See our expand-o-update on pg 20. We just sampled Navarro's amazing weekend brunch, and folks, you won't find a better place in Moscow. Everything from succulent oysters to fresh tamales, babaganoush to freshly-sliced pork shoulder, paella, and a huge dessert spread, all for 1200 rubles. Also if you like spicy Bloody Mary, then definitely try the version at Navarro's, and you'll sweat your hangover away. Yuri Navarro, long an eXile fave, now has his own namesake restaurant not far from Santa Fe, and folks, everything here lives up to the name. Wide-ranging menu offering excellent tapas, ceviche, grilled fish and meats, salads, and even huevos rancheros for breakfast. You should start at the bar and try as many tapas, without even bothering to choose. You might come across the succulent Tiraditas de Salmon, marinated in lime, cilantro, and garlic. Fantastic quality, great desserts, all in all a place to go if you're the gourmand type or just looking to relax.
Jeers:
So far, no jeers...
M: 1905 Goda
Phone: 259-3791
Address: Shmitovskyy proezd 23, bldg. 4
Hours: 8:30AM to 3AM or until the last guest

Old Havana

Jeers:
eXile alert! We just found another reason to go here: the kickin' bar. Live Latin music, tons of babes gettin' juicy, and a great place to pick up off-duty Night Flight/Metelitsa whores. Old Havana is new-ing up their menu with some muy delicioso items! Our favorites included the breaded langostines with a mango sauce, the massively tasty chicken stuffed with a pistachio filling, scallops, and the yummie duck salad. Now you can eat more upscale Cubano food or the more simply Cubano...and still enjoy the rippin' good cocktails and the wild shows. Good place for date parties. Last visit roundly praised all the dishes, as well as the hand-rolled cigars (1,000-1,500R). Impressive show, full of dark-skinned AfroCuban babes. Bar area packed full of drinkers and dancers, making this a one-stop party joint on weekends. Delicious food at surprisingly cheap prices, enchanting interior, the music and dance show is enthralling (especially on weekends). Two rooms, either the low-key bar area with a live band, or the wild show room, which is good for dates but not for conversation. Avocado Salad (130R), Santiaguera Pork (310R), rice with black beans--all the authentic stuff from real Cuba is there. Already attracting the limber Latino community and Russians who love that whole Latino night thing. Also try the yucca plant and the platinos. Have their own hand-rolled cigars, kick-ass mojitos, the most authentic ones in Moscow!

Jeers:
Our mains were a bit cold, but the staff was willing to put them in the microwave for us. This isn't a place for quiet conversation. It's more like a people's Cuban restaurant, which is a plus for us, but not for the Salnikovs of this world. We can't really complain about much. Except maybe that the dancers were so caliente that we couldn't look at our dates anymore.
M: Volgogradskaya Prospekt
Phone: 277-0578
Address: Talalikhina Ul. 28
Hours: 24/7/265

Pancho Villa



Jeers:
eXile alert! Recent late-night visit shows that Starlife is not the only choice in town when you're hungry at 3AM! Massive nacho plate got rave revues. New Pancho Villa a vast improvement over former digs, with funky layout and much more space. Andreas is back in action, whipping up some of the most authentic Mexican food this side of the Iron Curtain. Who are we kidding though: it's the 2-fer-1 happy hour that goes from midnight til

19:00 that won our loyalty. Best margaritas in town, and sexy Mexican babes to serve them. The chili is Moscow's best, though a bit overpriced at \$12 a bowl. Giant aps plate for R870 with various quesadillas, empanadas, wings and dips a great way to start off, and good for four or more. Great off-the-menu marbled beef that Andreas comped us after last production. Breakfast alternatives have Starlite worried, with a breakfast burrito for just 120R and huevos rancheros for 90R....

Jeers:
No Mexican options on the b-lunch menu. How is that Taco Bell can have a complete \$0.69/79/99 menu, and Pancho's can't even serve a biz lunch with tacos and refried beans? Last couple meals weren't up to our first. Word out now is that this Pancho isn't quite the Mexican fantasy that its former spot was. Our one breakfast foray didn't wow us. Happy hours only good on weekdays. Tequila pouring babes hard to resist. Endless Desperado loop on TV gets a bit tiring.
M: Oktyabrskaya
Phone: 238-7913
Address: Bolshaya Yakimanka 52

Santa Fe

WiFi
\$\$\$
Cheers:
Recent stabbing murder of Italian businessman outside reminds us of Old Moscow. Full of handsome New Russian types; large bar area serving up wicked drinks. Chef hails from East LA, which should tell you something good. Once you're through here, you can head around the side to Hippopotam, and breathe your salsa breath on someone you love.
Jeers:
Recent stabbing murder of Italian businessman outside reminds us of Old Moscow. Food lacking in substance, though not in pricing.
M: 1905 goda
Phone: 256-2126
Address: Mantulinskaya 5/1, str. 6
Hours: noon - 02.00

Sombrero
WiFi
\$\$
Cheers:
Cozy basement Mexican dive offering all the Mexican favorites. They got tacos, burritos, fajitas and quesadillas all at reasonable prices. Their soups are grande: the cream of corn (190r) or the pozola (240r) are human-gous enough to ruin your appetite. Wines reasonably priced. Quesadillas (290r) quite possibly the largest we've seen in Moscow. Good tortillas with the fajitas (470r). Offers a 20% discount on the menu during the

day.
Jeers:
Were out of the only Mexican wine on offer, not that we'd ever be stupid enough to order it. They forgot to spice the dishes. B-lunch composed of typical Evro shite.
M: Novoslobodskaya
Address: Sushevskaya Ul. 21
Phone: 8-499-972-1271
Hours: 12:00-01:00

German

Bavarius
\$\$
Cheers:
The best and most authentic Jerry food and Biergarten in this gottverdammten Town! And probably the best damn biz lunch while we're at it. U could do much wurst than the sausage plates for under 10 bucks. Huge portions, good prices and excellent bread as well. A liter or 4 of Franziskaner Weissbier will erase any worries you might have in this crazy world. For a naughty breakfast option, try the Weisswurst with sweet mustard, a pretzel and a mandatory Weissbier.
Jeers:
Uncomfortable wooden seats. Why the hell can't restaurants just offer comfortable seating?! If you order still water, you'll get a tiny dropper of Evian for 101 rubles. Facken zie!
M: 1: Mayakovskaya; 2: Frunzenskaya
Phone: 1: 299-4211; 2: 245-23-95
Adr: 1: Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya 2/30 str. 1; 2: Komsomolsky pr. 21/10
Hours: 12.00 - 0.00

Jeers:
Occasional loud and obnoxious estrada performances served to you for an added fee, which you must pay. Freakin' expensive. Unless you're chauffeured here on a black Merc, you WILL feel like a field negro. We guarantee it.
M: Mayakovskaya
Phone: 775 2476
Address: 1st Tverskaya-Yamskaya 3

Russian

Cafe Pushkin
\$\$\$
Cheers:
THE place to take visiting relatives footing the bill for a taste of passable Roosky food. Schreck described breaded veal as closest thing to Sublime in months. Two babes dining alone at the next table were a close second. If you've got the dough, all-in-all the most impressive "haute rus" cuisine. Black caviar with bliny (\$23) melts in your mouth. Excellent solyanka (\$9), pelmeni, and main courses.
Jeers:
It's so cilivized here you'll get paranoid that Russia has suddenly become like Switzerland. Paying something like sixty bucks for four shots of Russkii Standart real-

ly brings out our Jew-guilt. Oversized menu makes deciding impossible; overbearing. Grilled lamb (\$17) chewy and not particularly flavorful. Packed full of quasi-cultured Russian bobos and foreigners with over-lydressed dyev-dates. Why pay this much for local food?
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 229-5590
Address: Tverskoi bulvar 26A
Hours: noon - midnight

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\$\$\$
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M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 229-5590
Address: Tverskoi bulvar 26A
Hours: noon - midnight

Jeers:
Like we said, not cheap, portions not large, so Old-Europe-phobic Americans might need a little adjustment here. If you thought western l-bankers were a pre-98 phenom, you haven't been to Scandinavia recently. Hummus conspicuously missing from the menu recently, although we've been told it'll be back.
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 937-5630
Address: Palashevsky Mal. per. 7
Hours: 12.00 - 24.00

Gorki

\$\$\$
Cheers:
Russian food in the style of a 60s Soviet restaurant for the party elite. Waiters treat you as if you're a politburo chief, and also manage to stay out of the way—a nice change in this city. Another reminder that Stalin had it all figured out... The best beef stroganoff we've ever had and believe us, we've had a lot. Other dishes get high marks too. Definitely the best choice now for upscale cuisine a la Rus.
Cheers:
Occasional loud and obnoxious estrada performances served to you for an added fee, which you must pay. Freakin' expensive. Unless you're chauffeured here on a black Merc, you WILL feel like a field negro. We guarantee it.
M: Mayakovskaya
Phone: 775 2476
Address: 1st Tverskaya-Yamskaya 3

Version 1.0

\$\$\$
Cheers:
A stone's throw from Red Square, this place tries harder than just about anyone in town in the decor department. The virtual reality banquet hall is surely the most futuristic dining room in the city. The bar list claims to be the longest in town, and we're inclined to believe it. Excellent mojitos. The food is solid mid-range fare, a Russian-Evropsyky fusion served vertically on fancy plates. Bar goes snap, crackle, pop on weekends and turns into a hotbed of semi-pafusness by drawing a multitude of middle-class student chicks who desperately want to look like they belong on the pages of Glamour magazine. V 1.0's newly expanded dance-floor/DJ area has increased the place's nite life stats to the point that we're considering moving this listing to the clubs section...
Jeers:
After the novelty and the acid wears off, you start to wonder if the virtual reality room isn't a bit retarded and/or creepy.
M: Pl. Revolyustii
Phone: 647-1303
Address: Varvarka 3 (Gostinny Dvor)
Hours: Good ones.

Scandinavian

Night Flight

\$\$-\$\$\$
Cheers:
eXile alert! There's a new chef in Night Flight's kitchen, and that means a new reason to "go there for the food." Which we did. The new menu is both creative and elegant, serving up still some of Moscow's best culinary delights. We started with Kamchatka crab roll pistachio salmon roe (450r for a medium-sized plate), an amazingly rich, delicious concoction for the crab-lover in you. Next we tried the Asparagus creme scallops soup (230r for a taster bowl), made exactly as thick and rich as it should be. The chicken/noodle/veggie wok dish perfectly captured the oily goodness of properly fried chow mein. Our favorite had to be the main course, a thick juice Reindeer steak cooked rare, served with foi gras potato dumpling (750r for the "starter" size). While most game is usually, er, gamey, this reindeer meat tasted like it came from Texas, making us wonder how Santa Claus manages to keep himself from cooking Prancer and Vixen after having to look at their tasty loins every Christmas Eve. We finished off with a suprisingly tangy, delicious homemade Cactus Sherbert, which we highly recommend. As always, the wines were expertly chosen, making Night Flight still one of Moscow's very best places for genuine wine lovers. The most surprising wine had to be the Hugel Riesling from Alsace (2900r for a bottle), while the Ironstone Reserve California Zinfandel went perfectly with the bloody reindeer meat. With superior wine selections, as well as expert and discreet service, and views of the hottest babes who seem interested in you, this place still ranks as Moscow's finest dining.
Jeers:

Honestly, there's nothing at all to jeer here.
Entrance fee - 800 rubles
M: Tverskaya
Phone: 229-41-65
Address: ul. Tverskaya 17
Hours: 18.00 - 05.00

Scandinavia

\$\$-\$\$\$\$
Cheers:
eXile alert! This place cooks up some "gourmet-shit," as Samuel Jackson might say. A Crayfish Bisque (380r) to die for, fantastic duck and succulent Lamb Entrecote, all done simple and to perfection. Killer Scandi-style quesadillas are great for table to share while you're waiting. Big ups to the chicken cesar, too. Our other favorite Swedish restaurant. Re-affirm the buy on the Caesar Salad, our newest fave in Moscow, packed full of Romaine and shrimp. Large fine de claire oysters, flown in fresh thrice weekly, brought the Atlantic sea to our taste buds. As always, cocktails are first rate. One more reason to hit the bar: the famous Summer Cafe Burger is now available year-round in the cocktail lounge! Yippee! Service impeccable a always. Indoors now offers biz lunches from R290! Babe-o-licious waitresses. Bloody Marys so tangy they'll make you wish you had a hangerover. Moscow's sleekest urinal.
Jeers:
Like we said, not cheap, portions not large, so Old-Europe-phobic Americans might need a little adjustment here. If you thought western l-bankers were a pre-98 phenom, you haven't been to Scandinavia recently. Hummus conspicuously missing from the menu recently, although we've been told it'll be back.
M: Pushkinskaya
Phone: 937-5630
Address: Palashevsky Mal. per. 7
Hours: 12.00 - 24.00

Steaks

El Gaucho

\$\$\$\$
Cheers:
We've been lax on trying this place since we had Doug's, but now that he's gone, we decided to try Argentinean steaks and folks, they wuz good! Forget Goodman's, El Gaucho has the best steaks in town. Sure, they're pricey, but you do get what you pay for. Coal grill they bring out with each steak keeps your meal warm. We've eaten here twice so far, and both times we felt like we would never have to eat again. Mayakovskaya location THE place to take someone you wish to impress.
Jeers:
The Paveletskaya branch isn't all that swanky. Different branches have different menus. We can't afford to eat here more than once a year.
M: #1: Mayakovskaya, #2: Paveletskaya, #3: Krasnie Vorota
Phone: #1: 699-7474, #2: 953-2876, #3: 623-1098
Address: #1: Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya 4, #2: Zatspeysky Val 6, #3: Bolshoi Kozlovsky Per. 3
Hours: 12.00 - 23.00

Goodman

WiFi
\$\$\$
Cheers:
eXile alert! The burger that we're about to mention, yeah the tasty one that's we wanted to rock your world. Well, it's now two times in a row that they've been out of beef patties. Tverskaya has been out of them. Although Goodman's burgers are pricier than Scandinavia's at 450r without toppings, they're damn tasty and quality. The chocolate cake (270r) is better than most of our sexual experiences of the last few years. Ribs shockingly good and slide off the bone so easily you can eat 'em with a fork. Plus, they're a relative bargain at \$24. Our favorite steakhouse. They actually cook the meat as you request it, never overdoing it! Tries to be a local version of the Palms, including weary middle-aged waiters and caricatures of local famous people (including a startling likeness of our boy Sam) on the wall. Ribeye (\$34) is huge and hugely satisfying.
Jeers:
We're still waiting for a better-priced version, with better Palms-like service, of this place, but until it comes, we have to give props to Goodman's. Better make reservations on Tverskaya, as biznes is booming. Barrakadnaya branch feels like it's on the third floor of a mall, and it is.
M: a) Pushkinskaya b) Barrakadnaya
Phone: a) 937-5679 b) 981-4941
Address: a) 23 Tverskaya b) 31 Novinsky bul
Hours: 12.00 - 'til the last customer

Steak's

\$\$
Cheers:
Located in the old Le Club. Mid-priced. Not sure what the hell they're aiming for here, but perhaps we tried it too soon after opening. Nothing memorable.
Jeers:
Should be named "Sucks."
M: Taganskaya
Phone: 915-1042
Address: Ul. Verkhnyaya Radischevskaya d. 21
Hours: noon-midnight

Torro Grill

\$\$
Cheers:
Moscow's newest meat-lover's restaurant sets itself apart from the rest with its remarkably reasonable prices, kick-ass Argentinian grill, and meat offerings that break out of the usual steak offerings. Besides

Ribeye steaks, they offer awesome sausages, juicy chicken, a mouth-watering pulled-pork sandwich, and one of the best bowls of bean soup in Eurasia. Definitely have the freshly brewed pale ale. From the good folks who first brought us Goodman's, expect Toro to become a bigtime fave.
Jeers:
It's located in a mall.
M: Universitet
Phone: 775-4503
Address: Prospekt Vernadskogo d. 6 (in the huge new mall), 2nd floor next to the movie theater
Hours: noon-midnight

Thai

Thai Thai

\$\$-\$\$\$
Cheers:
Centrally located, decent Pad Thai and Pad kee mao noodles dishes, fine service, said to have a real Thai chef, definitely has a nice Thai hostess.
Jeers:
Tom Yong Goon soup way way way too salty. Not as good as Blue Elephant, but not as overpriced either.
M: Chisty Prudy
Phone: 510-1813
Address: Ul. Pokrovka 4
Hours: 11.30 - midnight

Tibetan

Tibet Restaurant

\$\$
Cheers:
With the legendary Doug Steele now at the helm, Tibet has been reincarnated to higher level of consciousness. The drab 90s decor has been replaced with something more befitting of the Putin era. But the change isn't just skin deep, it's spiritual, too, man. In addition to their kick ass Spicy Chicken Wings (eXile's personal favorite), Tibet now offers a Spicy Fried Potato dish that actually really spicy. The Mustard Sesame Chicken, the Pork With Pepper, Chicken Auido, as well as the Chicken Chili Noodles are some of the "must-try" menu modifications. But what's truly blessed is that we have been assured that Tibet will continue stay within their previously established Val-U range.
Jeers:
That would be like bad karma.
M: Okhotny Ryad
Phone: 692-0267
Address: Kamergersky per. 5/6
Hours: noon - 23.00

Delivery/Sandwich shops

13 Sandwiches

\$\$
Cheers:
eXile alert! We just ate another massive round of 13 Sandwiches, and the entire eXile staff can never go to shite "sandwich" dives like Pyat Zvezd again. Every sandwich is masterfully thought out, huge, and original, including the roast beef favorite. If you miss genuinely inventive sandwich culture, then pine no more. 13 Sandwiches is the answer to your problems. Seriously. The Proscutto di parma, soproasata, grilled bell peper, provolone and mayo panini was a big hit with us, unlike any sandwich we've had in the FSU. Popular choices include the Kamchatka crab meat, arugula, sliced avocado sandwich, and the Roast Beef panini. They also offer a range of veggie delights, and now warm meals. Reasonably priced, good portions, quality ingredients, perfect for a business lunch. We're def going back.
Jeers:
They were playing incredibly loud Russian MTV shite when we visited.
M: Tsvetnoi Bulvar
Address: Ul. Trubnaya 21
Phone: 106-4996

Johnny's

\$
Cheers:
The pizzas are, if not the best, then right there at the top. With the people-viewing that goes along with it, this is one of the great after-hour places to stop for a bite. Great gelato with constantly changing flavors! Good place to take your provincial date, who'll think it's "klass" and won't bust your wallet. Afterwards, head downstairs into Moscow's happeningest disco, where you can ditch the provincial date.
Jeers:
Don't get tempted by the cakes/baked goods, or we'll have to say, "we told you so." Sometimes you can smell the sweat wafting up from Papa John's.
M: Turgenevskaya
Phone: 755-9554
Address: 22 Myasnikskaya
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FRESH FROM THE BLOGS



"Vood you like to make a deposit, American boy?"

GIRLS OF EXPO BANK

Last week, Britain's Barclay's Bank paid \$745 million to buy Russia's Expobank. Why would one of the world's top banks pay nearly a billion dollars for a Russian bank with just over \$100 million in assets?

We've found out why. Below we're publishing Expobank's gift calendar for its clients (read: Barclay's), featuring its hottest employees ranging in age from 20 to 32. Among the models are its chief economist for VIP clients Anna Pogodina (Miss March) and her boss Yulia Kovyneva (Miss April). Miss February, Evgenia Trusilova, a sales manager, is placed on a page with the slogan, "We work according to your personal needs." Indeed.

Barclay's, a British bank, took one look at the English women it was stuck with, then took a look at the Expobank calendar, and decided, "We're buying that Russian bank, we don't care what it

costs!"

According to a press release passed on to The eXile, the calendar project was personally overseen by Expobank's chairman, and the girls were all photographed by his wife, Elena Boksa. A bank representative explained, "We wanted to make a nice surprise for our clients. We wanted them to know that the people working with them are not only specialists but also beautiful women. Expobank tries to discover something unusual and creative in everyone."

—Mark Ames

CHASING THE DRAGON ON A RUSSIAN BUS

Is dealing smack in Russia going mobile? If the latest string of bus driver arrests is any indication then the answer is "da." In the past two months alone, several bus drivers have been arrested for selling heroin while on the job. Here are some of the bus-busts that've gone down this year so far:

*The most recent bust occurred in Moscow on March 6, when police arrested a driver as he pulled in his bus into his terminal stop. As it turned out, the perp had been working that bus route for some time now, trading baggies of smack for cash with passengers-in-the-know without even bothering to get out of the driver's seat. Pending an ongoing investigation, the police are short on details, but they did indicate that the suspect had to be subdued with force after he resisted arrest. Lab results confirmed what his pinhole eyes had already implied: he was getting high while on the job.

* A week earlier, a bus driver in Kaliningrad got nabbed for exactly the same racket. It worked like this: a customer would give the driver cash upon entering as if he was buying a ticket and get his stuff as soon as the bus cleared out of passengers.

* Three weeks before that, on January 14, another Moscow bus driver was caught dealing heroin. Unlike the previous two, this guy conducted his business outside the bus, selling smack at bus stops. At the time of the bust, he had 2 grams of heroin in possession, a paltry amount we might ad. Lab tests confirmed that he was getting high from his own supply. But the fact that he was a junkie selling to support his own habit didn't seem to eat into his business. According to the cops, he was slinging about 200 grams a month, netting 250,000 rubles (10 grand US!) over and above his official salary.

What's interesting to note is that none of the news reports made any mention about these drivers' safety records. I guess that shooting up and driving didn't make them any more prone to accidents than their colleagues. It's a fact that doesn't reflect well on Russia's bus drivers, not to mention the country's attention to road safety. Maybe this is what drove them to self-medicate in the first place.

Anyway, if you ever need to score some smack in Moscow but don't have the connect, just tap your friendly neighborhood bus driver. He might be the one to hook you up.

— Yasha Levine

BELARUS EXPELS "BEASTLY-LOOKING" AMBASSADOR

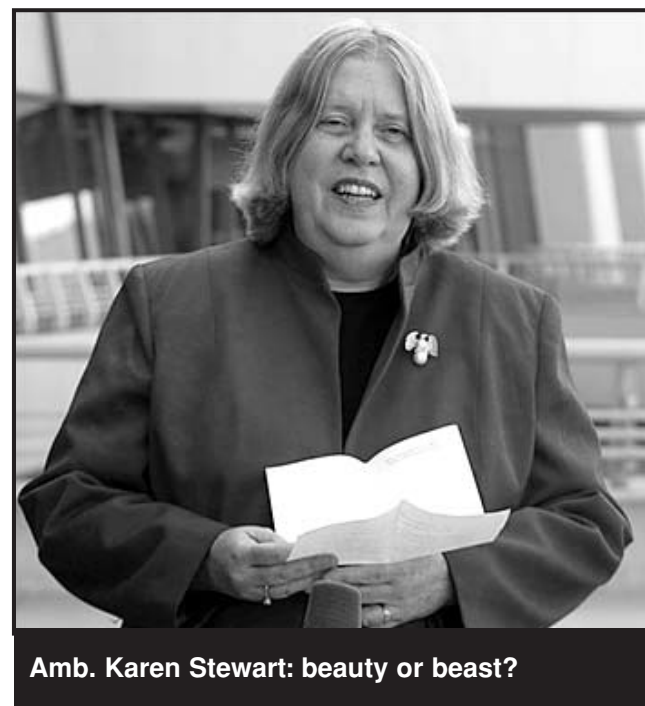
Belarus expelled U.S. Ambassador Karen Stewart today for being "inhumanly ugly," and demanded that Washington appoint a new ambassador who "doesn't make us vomit on-sight."

Belarus authorities used the diplomatic cover of an alleged dispute over Western visa restrictions to finally expel the ambassador.

"We've been negotiating with Washington for months now to appoint an ambassador who looks at least vaguely human," said one Belarussian official. "However, they were intransigent. Clearly they were using her ugliness as a weapon to try to force us to buckle under."

U.S. State Department Spokesman Tom Casey expressed skepticism. "I don't know what the Belarussians are talking about. Ms. Stewart is one of the most attractive women in our government," he said, noting that "compared to other State women, Ms. Stewart is considered a centerfold!"

— Mark Ames



Amb. Karen Stewart: beauty or beast?

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