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## LETTER OF THE WEEK

### A BANDERA OF LOSERS

Dear War Nerd,

Given the information below - the dates for and sizes of foreign troop presence in Ukraine throughout 2008, when would it be most likely to expect President Medvedev to attack Ukraine. Will the Russians begin from Crimea?

Regards,

Steve Bandera

-- Forwarded message --

From: Steve Bandera Date: Fri, May 9, 2008 at 9:53 PM

Subject: 2008 Foreign Troops in UA

Nearly 3,000 foreign troops (2,940) will spend more than three months (142 days) on the territory of Ukraine throughout 2008. But Russia will still maintain the largest foreign troop presence in Ukraine, with its Black Sea Fleet based in Crimea.

Back in April, the Rada approved the multinational list of joint military exercises to be held in Ukraine throughout the year. An April issue of the Army's Narodna Armiya magazine published details of the exercises, including a sample of the modern military hardware Ukrainians will see: 60 light wheeled vehicles, 15 ships, 12 airplanes, 12 helicopters and 2 submarines. This list is far from complete, as details of the armaments and hardware are only provided for 4 of 11 exercises (see second table).

Conspicuously missing from the report are the names, dates and numbers for bilateral air defense exercises with the Rossiyska Federation. So who knows how many Russian airplanes and pilots are in Ukraine at any one time? Not to mention the 25,000 service men of the Russian Black Sea Fleet and its 388 maritime vessels (including 14 submarines).

Dear Mr. Bandera, Ukraine? What's that? Isn't that the mythical land where whores supposedly come from? Look, we'd like to believe that there's a "The Ukraine" out there just as much as the next john, but we're a real-world paper dealing with real-world problems. And right now, our problem is that there are so many real-world whores from Lugansk, Krivy Rog, and Zhytomyr, that it's driving the whore price down here to below-cost prices. How can the Moldavians compete in such a cut-shaft market? Hopefully the WTO will get involved—whore dumping practices like these are exactly the kind of thing that could set off a tariff whore. I guess what I'm trying to get at, Mr. Bandera, is that maybe we should stop gaming various whore scenarios, and instead, start working together to create conditions for long-lasting sluts. That way, all mankind could benefit. Women would lose out badly, but mankind would live in peace and harmony. And really, ladies, isn't being a slut worth the price of peace? Think about the children. Yes, the children.

### AMERICAN GERBILO

Dear War Nerd,

Thanks for your column. I just read the article about Tibet and noticed that you tend to accredit the common vision of buddhism and zen as religions of peace, human brotherhood etc. I was somehow surprised to find this lieu commun in your column, since such assertions, though true for the contemporary, Western, versions of buddhism (did I say 'commercial?'), most probably won't apply to the original, indigenous, buddhism.

Indeed, it looks like buddhism and its zen sect are as belligerous as any other religion, (there were religious wars and prosecutions of non-buddhists communities orchestrated by buddhists, etc). One of the latest and more noticed study of the question (one that goes straight to the point, thus starting a debate within the buddhist and academic circles) is Brian Victoria, Zen at War, Weatherhill, NY and Tokyo, 1st edition 1997.

Best,

Rouslan

French expat, Moscow

Dear Monsieur Rouslan, Richard Gere replies, "Due to your malicious smear of the Buddhist religion, you have just ensured that in your next life, you will be reincarnated as a gerbil. And I know of a certain sphincter that's got your gerbil-incarnation's sorry name on it, Monsieur Rouslan Le Gerbil. Until we meet again, I bid you adieu, adieu, a-doo-dee-doo-doo. Get it? 'Doo-doo.' Cuz you know...you-gerbil, me-sphincter. That whole thing. Yeah, well, I'm doin' my best here folks. I'm not a comedian by training, so just cut me a little slack here. As you can see my career isn't going too well these days, but hey, I'm out there trying, and that counts for something, don't it? I mean, give me credit for using the whole gerbil-sphincter thing in my routine. Cuz from what I hear, audiences really appreciate it when a washed up star shows that he can make fun of himself. So that's what I'm testing out here in

[sic]. You know, this whole making-fun-of-myself thing, showing that I can laugh about the one thing that is most embarrassing for me. See, when I do that, people say, 'Hey, Richard Gere doesn't have an ego like all those other elitist Hollywood types. No, he's a regular guy, just like you and me. And you know what? I like this new regular-guy Gere. Heck, I'd buy his memoir if he had one, I'd rent his self-deprecating kitsch videos and find some way to give him my money and my time and perhaps even my daughter for a night, not to mention my daughter's pet gerbil. Hey, that's funny! I should tell Mr. Gere that joke!' Yeah, that's right buddy, go on trying to laugh with me, go on trying to think that you and I have some sorta common understanding. Get yourself all nice 'n comfortable with the new self-deprecating Richard Gere. It's only a matter of time until you too will be reincarnated as a gerbil. You, and everyone else who's ever slighted me, or gotten in my way, or just generally pissed me, Richard Gere, off. You'll all be reincarnated as gerbils, and I swear as Buddha is my witness, I will shove every last reincarnated one-a-ya up my flappy sphincter! I'll stuff you all in there so tightly that...oh god, this is starting to kinda excite me. I'll shove every last one... Er...scuse me for a moment, I, uh, gotta do some meditating'. Keep doing what you're doing, folks. I got some important spiritual matters to attend to."

### WEIRD SCIENCE

Hey Gary,

I just saw a History Channel program called "Dogfights of the Future". I hope you will be able to view it and give your opinion of it. Its a very one sided documentary about the F-22, F-35, Reaper UCAV, Airborne Laser; and how they are supposed to be superior and kicking ass in the future, 2020 or so. Problem is, they are painting scenarios against generation 4 planes like the Rafale, Su-30, Su-27, Mig 29, Mig 35. Sure they kick ass but I don't think its a fair docu-

mentary.

Appreciate it much.

Joe

Dear Mr. Joe, You know what'd be cool? It'd be so cool if, like, they had these digital-animated graphics of dogfights between, like the F-35 and the Starhound Class Viper from Battlestar Galactica? Or no no no, wait! Okay, what about a Reaper UCAV and a Starhound Class Viper versus a Cylon Raider and an Airborne Laser. Wouldn't that be cool? Or no, what if we had...wait a minute. Do you smell that? Anyway, what if you had like a Sukhoi...hold on, something smells funny. What's that stale urine odor that suddenly wafted over this letter?

### AN OFFSPHINCTER AND A GERBILMAN

Vlad,

I am a Canadian working in Croatia and your blog is a big hit over here let me tell you. What you wrote about McCain was absolutely priceless. The viewpoint you presented in contrast to the common American one was hilarious. Which brings me to my question...

I was watching Top Gun, which is about as propaganda-ish as you can get, and it made me wonder. What is your perspective on all these 80s American movies where the Soviets are the bad guys that always get defeated by Americans? I would really love to hear what you have to say on this, because I'm sure many inbred Oklahoman fans would welcome this insight from yourself!

Ryan

Dear Mr. Ryan, Richard Gere replies, "I object to your slanderous depiction of 'An Officer And A Gentleman' as 'propaganda.' It was a film about transformation of character, about the triumph of the spirit, and the powerful bonds that tie a working-class gerbil to an egotistical sphincter with a prostate of gold, and how these two seemingly far-apart beings fuse together, raise each other up to new heights, and squeeze hard until the gerbil suffocates. And as it suffocates, it starts to quiver, thereby causing the sphincter to pulsate, dilate, and then expel the gerbil's corpse. That's not propaganda. That's a human story for the ages, Ryan, something you clearly just don't get.

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### DEMANDING NERDITE

Dear Gary,

I'm a big fan of your articles. I already preordered a copy of your book (I hope it contains at least some new stuff!). I'd like to know your opinion about Myanmar and the western charity organisations. After Myanmar was hit by a big storm the governments refuses western aid. I'm not sure if this is a really dumb or a good decision.

On one hand it would be good for the government if someone else cleans up the mess. The Myanmar people would be happy, the western countries would smile and willingly donate more money and the army ... err ... government could collect a lot of the aids. But on the other hand the people might come into contact with westerners and the westerners could infiltrate the society. But rather more important: If the government refuses any aid they get the bigger press. Westerners will donate more money which the government can collect.

What is your opinion on the current situation in Myanmar?

btw. I'd like to see a column about Chinese influence in Africa. China finances so many wars in Africa now. They deserve some credit!

Best Regards,

David Rattenburg

Dear Mr. Rattenburg, Since you've ordered a copy of the War Nerd's book, you shall be granted a personal audience at the War Nerd's throne. Here is what His Nerdness has to say about Myanmar and Western aid, in response to your request. Ready? Here goes, straight from the war-se's mouth: "The." Wow. Damn. Did you catch that? He said "the." And the thing is, he meant it. Pretty exciting isn't it, how you can just buy a War Nerd book and then voila! He grants you a word in return. And not just any word, but a definite article of speech at that. Can we let you in on a little secret? If you want His Nerdness's time and energy, you're going to have to do more than just one pre-order. Say you bought like 10 books? Well, then you'd get a whole paragraph, something you could keep and show the kids. Buy 100 books? In the War Nerd's sultan-like way of doing things, that'll buy you a small column. Or what War Nerd might call "a love letter straight from my fucking ergonomic keyboard, fucker."

### BLYA-BLYAH-BLAH

Dear Editor,

Greetings! There was a photo a few issues back of a fat, drunken man with the caption "Nu chyoy blyah!" Maybe it was in the Face Control section with other photos, but I can't seem to find it on your site. A friend of mine is obsessed with the word "blyah(d)" and all variations thereof. Is there any way I could get that photo with the caption? Maybe you've got a JPEG of it? He wants it framed, but in the paper it's quite small.

Sorry for the trouble.

Thanks,

Kevin

Dear Mr. Kevin, Hey wait a minute pal. We're the ones who ask for jpegs here, so butt out. Your job is to sneak your mobile phone under your mom's covers, snap a photo of her snap-... Wait, how do you say that? "Snap a photo of her snapper." No, that's not right. Too alliterative. We're just asking for snapper jpegs here, not trying to compete in some literary contest. Point being...wait, what were we saying?

### YASHA UNMASKED!

Hello Yasha,

How are you? Hope you're doing fine. I had a perfect chance to read a couple of your stupid articles in "The Exile", on different topics. Actually, I was deeply "impressed" by what you had written there, especially about Russia and Russian people, Russian culture and so on. And I have only one-million-dollar question to you, Yasha: "If you are now a freakin' American whore, what a heck are you writing about Russia, idiot?" Thank you for your time, Yasha. Looking forward to hearing from you!

With Love,

Johnny!

Dear Mr. Johnny, The reason why Yasha is writing about Russia is because he is a CIA agent working in collusion with Mossad in order to destroy Russia, steal its resources, and keep its people weak and helpless. You stopped his plan just in time. Good work, agent "Johnny." For rooting out this foreign spy, you shall be rewarded with the Ministry of Light Industry, and all the tariffs, licenses and agreements that fall within this ministry.

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# THE CLANFATHER: MEET THE NEW BOSS

By Mark Ames

After the Great Russian Shakeup this past Monday, pundits and analysts added up the personnel scores in the Clan War tournament, and came to pretty much the same happy conclusions: the "liberals" won out; the siloviki lost; the Clan War that characterized the last couple of years of Putin's power is essentially over; and Putin is the big winner. Investors are cheering. The forces of light have triumphed over the forces of darkness. Hallelujah.

What's missing from this reading, which relies on the same disastrous good-guys/bad-guys filter that's warped the West's understanding of Russia from day one, is an appreciation of exactly how things changed.

The most important things to remember are: 1). The Putin regime has always been ideologically liberal, no matter which Gref, Kudrin, Illarionov or Nabiullina got the Kremlin migalka on a given week; 2). The Clan War ain't over, it's just morphing, as it has for decades and will continue to; 3). "Putin strengthened his position"? That's supposed to be a revelation? Why blow me down!

First, a word about the supposed "liberal-silovik" battle. A couple of weeks ago I was over at Edward Limonov's apartment, griping about how Russia's "liberals" like Yavlinsky, Khakamada, Ryzhkov, Nemtsov and the rest were still incapable of going into hard opposition against the Putin regime. I suggested to Limonov that the liberals wouldn't break clean because on the one hand, they were hoping that the supposedly-liberal Medvedev might offer them a sweet post, and that on the other hand, the liberals weren't prepared to risk their bourgeois lifestyles in a confrontation

with a much stronger power.

"It's much more simple than that," Limonov said. "The Putin regime is a liberal regime, so it's natural that liberals like Khakamada or Nemtsov do not seriously oppose it. Just look at Putin's economic program: Low taxes, concentration of wealth in oligarchs' hands, strict budgets. The Kremlin's ideology is basically the same as that of Nemtsov's and Khakamada's, so of course it makes no sense to confront them as my organization does. They can only argue over the details of this liberalism, over who should own what and how it should be implemented."

Limonov is right. Even Putin's crackdown on democracy follows the script for post-Pinochet liberalism, as

try steeped in clan culture.

And that brings me to the Clan War, and its supposed ending. First, a little history on the whole "Clan" concept in Russian politics. The tendency in Russia to staff your fiefdom—whether it's your company department, or your Kremlin *vertikalny vlast'*—with "svoi" or "your people" isn't something that just started under Putin, despite the Western media's late discovery. Indeed the same Russian sociologist whom the Western media relied on to unmask the siloviki's rise under Putin's term—Olga Kryshstanovskaya—first coined the expression "The St. Petersburg Clan" back in the mid-1990s, when describing Anatoly Chubais' powerful clan of free-market

mayor [remind you of someone?—Ed.] before being brought to Moscow in 1991 to help execute economic policy.

"...[T]he 'clan-state' assumes the communist state's former monopoly on power and control over resources. While occupying multiple institutions, members of the clan maintain dense and multiplex ties. Members of the clan are dispersed, but, as Russian sociologist Olga Kryshstanovskaya (1997:2) put it, '[they] have their men everywhere.'

"...Under the clan-state, the clan uses state resources and authorities (to the extent they can be separately defined in a given instance) but also keeps state authorities far enough away so that they cannot interfere

not only freebasing some seriously powerful rock cocaine, they're also forgetting that a lot of blood has been spilled in the clan turf battle. Kudrin's former deputy Sergei Storchak is still sitting in jail, growing out his beard like the Unabomber; so are several top-ranking generals from the Anti-Narcotics Committee, who were arrested last fall along with powerful Petersburg businessman/scary-guy Vladimir Barsukov; before them, a number of FSB bigwigs were arrested or fired; and most recently, the powerful Investigative Committee imploded spectacularly with the firings of that organ's two senior deputies.

In other words, there are a lot of pissed off people out there. They're not going to abandon the clan culture

**"It's much more simple than that," Limonov said. "The Putin regime is a liberal regime, so it's natural that liberals like Khakamada or Nemtsov do not seriously oppose it."**

Naomi Klein brilliantly showed in her book *The Shock Doctrine*. Just as Georgia's leader Mikhail Saakashvili is a liberal, even though he sent his shock troops wilding on opposition protestors, exiled his political opponents and shut down the opposition media. All of this talk of "liberals" on the ascendant or on the decline in the Putin Era is nonsense. Liberals *are* the Putin Era. And so are the siloviki, who still constitute the same 70-percent of the Russian elite today as they did last week, before their supposed decline. The reason they're there isn't because of some deep ideological desire to create a neo-Fascist state, but rather, because that's who Putin grew up with, and Putin rules a coun-

loyalists. Difference was, Chubais was our guy, so the media completely ignored Kryshstanovskaya's damning studies of the original all-powerful, ruthless, venal St. Petersburg Clan.

To see how eerily similar Putin's Russia today is to Boris Yeltsin's Russia, read this quote from a 1998 article written by Dr. Janine Wedel, an East Europe expert at George Mason University:

"The St. Petersburg Clan traces its roots to the mid-1980s, to university and club activities in what was then called Leningrad. The chief figure in the group, Anatoly Chubais, is currently the second most powerful man in Russia after President Boris Yeltsin. Chubais was St. Petersburg's deputy

with the clan's acquiring and allocating of resources, but close enough to insure that no rivals can draw on the resources...The strength of the clan lies in its ability to circumvent, connect, override, and otherwise reorganize political and economic institutions and authorities."

And the clan system didn't start there—Yuri Shchekochikhin, the liberal Duma deputy/*Novaya Gazeta* muckraker who was poisoned to death in 2003, first made his name in the late 1980s by exposing the Soviet system's "informal rules of clan logic and the secret prices for all official functions," to quote from an RFE/RL profile.

So when analysts talk about how Russia's "clan wars" are over, they're

anytime soon—they're just going to work the system in what they hope is a more advantageous way.

If you take ideology and simplistic morality out of this clan dynamic, then what you have today is one of those moments in flux, when clans adjust and regroup according to the new dynamic, and reassert themselves as the situation solidifies.

This isn't a battle between good liberals and bad FSB revanchists. To quote from *Zero Effect*, "They're just a bunch of guys." The main difference is one of temperament: some of these guys are scarier than others. But they're all in it for the same reasons, and they're all operating under the same rules. X



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# THE EXILE'S 2008 HAPPY

## THE FABLED TOCHKA

There're many tochkas all around Moscow. To get there, slowly repeat the following to any bombila: "tochka." Don't be shy, just repeat after us: "tochka pozhaluista." (Would you like to have the number and address of a whore salon close to your house? The eXile has many options that will suit every taste. Call us and please have your credit card ready.)



## THE MOSKVA RIVER

Take a dip here in this famous spot where the father of Russian democracy, Boris Yeltsin, once fell into the river and nearly drowned during one of his suicidal drinking binges.

Time: 30 minutes (but only 30 seconds in the Moscow River, the maximum amount that human flesh can survive)

## MOSKVICH HOTEL

When you first come to Moscow, you'll entertain notions of staying in a centrally-located hotel. Then you'll look at the prices, feel extremely light-headed for a few seconds, and when the fibrillation attack ends, you'll opt for a hotel somewhere a bit farther out. As in all the way out in Tekhstilshchiki, a rough bumfuck district in Moscow's south. There, you'll check in to the glorious Moskvich Hotel, whose slightly-less-exhorbitant prices mean you'll only have to sell off one of your children to medical experiments in order to pay the tab.

What you'll need to register here: bank account statements, and birth certificates proving that the child you plan to sell does indeed belong to you.

Time: Too much

## PHARMACY THAT SOLD US OPIATES

Visit the apteka outside of the Marino metro exit which used to supply the Friends Of Exile with all of their considerable opiate needs. Go on a "vomit stain hunt," searching for famous puke points marking where the eXile editors who simply could not wait until they got home inhaled entire sheets of Tramadol XR.

Time: 12 hours high, 48 hours crash



## THE HUNGRY DUCK

Visit this living monument to a time when being a foreigner counted for something. Known as Ground Zero for the "White God Factor," today the Hungry Duck is the Chernobyl of night clubs, whose mutant patrons still haunt its spooky vomit-soaked ruins. Head out to the balcony where legend has it an eXile editor anally violated a young dyevushka, simply because he felt like doing it. Augment your experience by reading a copy of the eXile's "Go Dollar!" issue from September, 1998.

Time: Doctors recommend that that you not spend more than 6 minutes in the Hungry Duck. Seniors and children should avoid it.



## THE BILL BROWDER EXPERIENCE

Moscow offers the chance to spend an afternoon living just like one-time hedge fund honcho Bill Browder lived. First head to the Chinese Garden restaurant in the Mez Center and order yourself Browder's favorite, crispy duck. While feasting, gaze over at the White House where Putin now rules from. Challenge yourself to come up with even greater praise for Putin than Browder once managed, if such a feat is possible. As you wrap yourself another hunk of crispy duck and plum sauce, say to yourself, "If only Putin knew what they did to Bill Browder, surely he'd intervene to have him taken off the Interpol's Most Wanted list."

Time: 90 minutes



## BEREZOVSKY ASSASINATION ATTEMPT

In the charming old section of Moscow known as "some old section," with its candy-colored two-story houses and winding old streets, you can visit the very spot where Boris Berezovsky survived an assassination attempt when rivals placed a bomb underneath his Mercedes and set it off, decapitating Berezovsky's driver, but leaving the future human rights crusader unscathed. Re-enact the moment when FSB goon (and future human rights crusader-cum-polonium-martyr) Alexander Litvinenko arrives on the scene, and agrees to be hired out by Berezovsky.

Time: 30 minutes



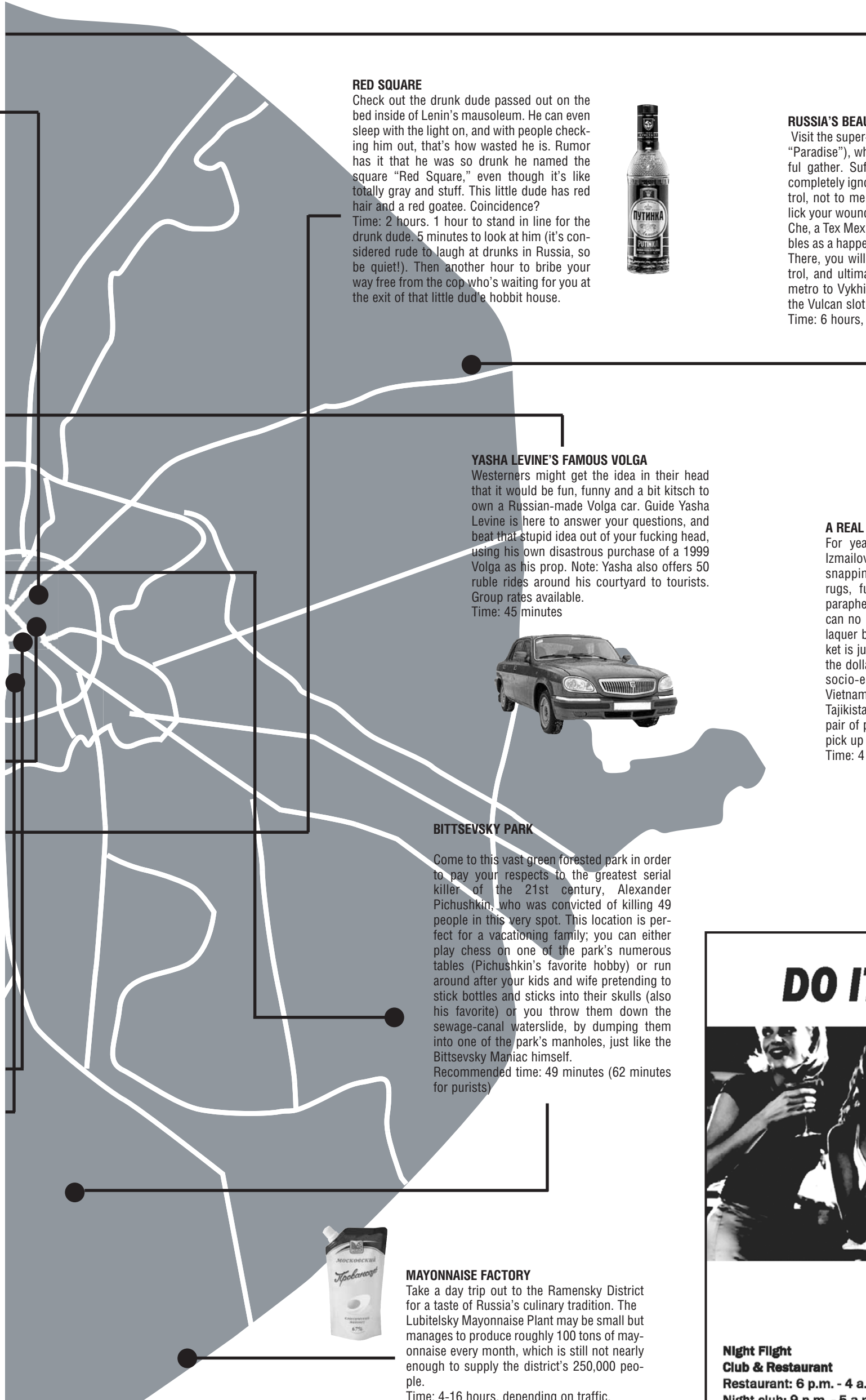
## PUTIN'S DIRECTORIAL DEBUT

You know President Vladimir Putin as the steely ex-KGB agent who brought his country to heel on a mixture of authoritarianism and order. But did you know that in 1999, Putin tried his hand at directing? That's right, visit the famous apartment above the ElDorado restaurant on Bolshoi Polyanka, where then-Prosecutor General Yuri Skuratov was filmed having a 2-on-1 hardcore sex session by then-FSB-head Vladimir Putin. This early stab at amateur-voyeur hardcore was such a hit with President Boris Yeltsin--who popped his first chubbie in 20 years--that the ailing leader named Putin as his successor.

Time: 1 hour=4000r, 2 hours=6000r.

# PLANET GUIDE TO MOSCOW

It's May, which means Tourist Season for Moscow. On top of that, 50,000 British soccer fans will be descending upon this fair city towards the end of the month, bringing with them their delightfully crooked-toothed smiles, and their downright freakishly ugly womenfolk! In order to serve U, the Tourist, we are offering this special impossible-to-follow guide to Moscow's must-visit sites.



**RED SQUARE**

Check out the drunk dude passed out on the bed inside of Lenin's mausoleum. He can even sleep with the light on, and with people checking him out, that's how wasted he is. Rumor has it that he was so drunk he named the square "Red Square," even though it's like totally gray and stuff. This little dude has red hair and a red goatee. Coincidence?

Time: 2 hours. 1 hour to stand in line for the drunk dude. 5 minutes to look at him (it's considered rude to laugh at drunks in Russia, so be quiet!). Then another hour to bribe your way free from the cop who's waiting for you at the exit of that little dude's hobbit house.



**RUSSIA'S BEAU MONDE**

Visit the super-high-end Moscow club Rai (or "Paradise"), where Moscow's rich and beautiful gather. Suffer the indignation of getting completely ignored by the strict elite face control, not to mention the other clubbers. Then lick your wounds, unwind a bit, and head to to Che, a Tex Mex bar/restaurant which also doubles as a happening middle-class party scene. There, you will also get ignored by face control, and ultimately denied. Finally, catch the metro to Vykhino and blow your last \$100 in the Vulcan slot hall. What a night!

Time: 6 hours, but it will feel like 60.

**YASHA LEVINE'S FAMOUS VOLGA**

Westerners might get the idea in their head that it would be fun, funny and a bit kitsch to own a Russian-made Volga car. Guide Yasha Levine is here to answer your questions, and beat that stupid idea out of your fucking head, using his own disastrous purchase of a 1999 Volga as his prop. Note: Yasha also offers 50 ruble rides around his courtyard to tourists. Group rates available.

Time: 45 minutes



**A REAL RUSSIAN FLEA MARKET**

For years now, Western tourists have put Izmailovo on their list of places-to-shop, snapping up matrioshka dolls, Dagestani rugs, fur hats and Soviet-era posters and paraphernalia. Sadly, if you're American, you can no longer afford the shashlik, let alone a laquer box. For you, a more appropriate market is just up the road at Cherkizovsky, where the dollar-poor American fits right in with his socio-economic peers from Uzbekistan, Vietnam, and...well, not China, not anymore. Tajikistan, sure. There, you can buy yourself a pair of pointy shoes and a murse, and maybe pick up a leopard-print skirt for the missus.

Time: 4 hours.

**BITTSEVSKY PARK**

Come to this vast green forested park in order to pay your respects to the greatest serial killer of the 21st century, Alexander Pichushkin, who was convicted of killing 49 people in this very spot. This location is perfect for a vacationing family; you can either play chess on one of the park's numerous tables (Pichushkin's favorite hobby) or run around after your kids and wife pretending to stick bottles and sticks into their skulls (also his favorite) or you throw them down the sewage-canal waterslide, by dumping them into one of the park's manholes, just like the Bittsevsky Maniac himself.

Recommended time: 49 minutes (62 minutes for purists)

**MAYONNAISE FACTORY**

Take a day trip out to the Ramensky District for a taste of Russia's culinary tradition. The Lubitelsky Mayonnaise Plant may be small but manages to produce roughly 100 tons of mayonnaise every month, which is still not nearly enough to supply the district's 250,000 people.

Time: 4-16 hours, depending on traffic.



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# FROM LEBANON TO IRAQ: WE'RE IN DEEP SHIA NOW

By Gary Brecher

**F**RESNO, CA — OK, we've just gone through a really exciting time in world military moves, so let's test your strategic IQ. What's the relation between these three recent developments:

1. On May 9, Hezbollah took over West Beirut against feeble resistance.

2. The Iraqi Army, such as it is, is now moving into Mosul in a major anti-al Qaeda operation.

3. At the end of March, the Iraqi Army attacked Sadr strongholds in Basra and East Baghdad, and got its ass kicked.

If you want some clues, you can read my account of event #3 in detail from my April 2nd column:

[http://www.exile.ru/articles/detail.php?ARTICLE\\_ID=18297&BLOCK\\_ID=35](http://www.exile.ru/articles/detail.php?ARTICLE_ID=18297&BLOCK_ID=35)

## THE WAR NERD

The other clue that might help is that Sadr's Mahdi Army in Iraq is totally based on Nasrallah's Lebanese Hezbollah, so—to kinda give it away a little—in just over a month's time, you've got two Shia militias stomping the better-armed and -funded old-style powers in Arab countries a thousand miles apart. Kind of a trend.

Item #2, the move on Mosul, is the trick question here, because there are no Shia to speak of up there; the Iraqi Army is moving against Al Qaeda in Iraq up there. What's the connection?

As you chew on that food for thought, let's fill in the details on what happened and why in this week's sudden Shia-ization of what the media always call "fashionable West Beirut." "Fashionable"—I love imagining these Shia puritans with Kalashnikovs and RPGs stalking through rubble filled with confused airhead supermodels: "Like...hel-LO? What are you...I mean...doing here anyway? In that ugly Kevlar vest which doesn't match your beard at all, I mean YUCK, and that so-eighties gun accessory...don't you realize I've got a SHOOT today?" The Hezzies don't get her babble, but they hear the word "shoot" and it all goes to pieces very fast. That's one of the first things a supermodel's got to learn: don't say "shoot" around a nervous militiaman who thinks women should wear black hefty bags, head to foot, even when showering. Or "if" showering; for these boys, Sharia tops hygiene every

time.

Hezbollah took their beach trip on May 9, but it wasn't announced to anybody in the media. The Lebanese elite was stunned. This was not supposed to happen. It would be like West LA being overrun by Baptist gangs from Bakersfield. And there was nothing the cool Lebanese could do about it but sneer and whine and blog. Boy, did they blog. In the blogosphere battle, the West Beirut coolsters won hands down. Out on the streets, though, it was all Hezbollah. They came, they saw, they burned down a TV station that had been broadcasting anti-Hezbollah stories...and a couple of days later, they left. It wasn't like your classical military maneuver; these are commuter troops, and what they did was pack their weapons—mostly rifles and RPGs, some of the rifles looking surprisingly new and expensive—in the trunks of their little fuel-efficient sedans, and head back to the slums of

South Beirut. No word on whether traffic was snarled by the sudden withdrawal: "KBRT's traffic helicopter, Beirut's only traffic reporter with look-down-shoot-down capability, brings you this update: avoid the Shia-town expressway, which is jammed with weekend Hezbollah visitors evacuating the capital...."

Like I said, this wasn't supposed to happen. It's part of a pattern that isn't supposed to be happening all across the Middle East: the Shia militias are kicking serious ass. In the past few weeks we've seen weirdly identical moves by weak central governments in Iraq and Lebanon to push back against Shia militias: in Iraq, al-Maliki's government, acting as a front for al-Hakimi and the Badr Brigades, tried to "assert itself" against Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army in Basra and in Sadr City; and now the weak interfaith committee trying to run Lebanon moved against Hezbollah, firing their security chief at the airport and cracking down on Hezbollah's private communication network, which apparently has 100,000 private telephone lines running.

Nasrallah, the mullah who runs Hezbollah, called that crackdown a "declaration of war" against his boys and sent them out onto the streets of West Beirut, where the rich Sunni Muslims live.

Militarily, it was over pretty fast. There's no armed Sunni group in

Lebanon that can stand against Hezbollah. The BBC is now calling Hezbollah "by far the strongest force in Lebanon," which may seem pretty obvious now but is a huge surprise to all the so-called experts. You see, the Shia aren't supposed to count at all in Lebanon. The Lebanese constitution lays down that the President has to be a Maronite Christian, because they were the big players in 1943 when the thing was written. The Prime Minister has to be a Sunni Muslim, because they were next. Nobody else counted for much, except maybe the Druze. But the Shia weren't consulted at all, because they were nothing—a bunch of hicks down in the southern and eastern boonies.

Since then a lot of those hicks have moved into Beirut, and the ones who stayed home made a name for themselves by having a lot of babies who grew up to be the best guerrilla fighters in the country. They forced Israel out of Southern Lebanon in 2000 and took on the Israeli armed forces one-on-one in 2006, and came out of it looking like heroes.

Since then, the Hezbollah leader, Nasrallah, who's pretty obviously a smart dude, has parlayed his victory into national popularity. He didn't let his people gloat too openly—instead of the yellow Hezbollah flag, he told them to wave the Lebanese red-white-and-green (the one with the tree, even though there ain't hardly any of those trees left in the place any more, just like the California Grizzly on our flag).

What really pisses off the "government" in both Iraq and Lebanon is that the Shia leaders—Nasrallah in Lebanon and Sadr in Iraq—are starting to break into the crossover market: after Hezbollah scored the first respectable showing against Israel by any Arab guerrilla army, you'd see Druze and Sunni and even a few Maronite kids saying "Go Hezzies!"—usually in a safe quiet voice, where nobody'd hear, but they were saying it. And that spelled death for the old godfathers who run these places, especially Lebanon. Lebanon is like NYC without the money: it's all sleazy politicians and gangs profiting from ethnic grandstanding politics. They call the system "zuama," godfather-ism. And the key there is, you've got to be able to control your ethnic group, your gang. So guys like Walid Jumblatt, the chieftan of the Druze, go psycho when they see rival Druze politicians deserting to Hezbollah. Jumblatt's business is using his people as a bargaining chip; if they're going to start shopping around for better deals, he's as doomed as a smalltown hardware store watching the new WalMart go up.

Don't start thinking these godfathers are the good guys. You can think of Hezbollah as the bad guys if you want, even though I admire the hell out of them, but just don't think those old-school godfathers are the good guys here. Jumblatt, for example, is on record saying he cheers when US troops are killed in Iraq and it can't happen often enough for him. He backed the Syrians when they occupied Lebanon, then broke with them over his cut; he massacred thousands of Christian villagers in Central Lebanon in the 1980s. When he comes into a room you can hear blood sloshing around his ankles, and that goes for every big player in Lebanon.

They're a lot like the old Italian mafia, in fact: they've still got the big government connections, but they don't have control over the streets any more. But Hezbollah does, for two familiar reasons, the same ones traditional military types don't like to mention: demographics and civilian aid.

Demographics first: like I've said before, the Shia suddenly found themselves as the only ghetto boyz in a rich, spoiled neighborhood. While all the other "Cedar Revolution" (aka "Crock of Shit") Lebanese were partying on the "fashionable" beach, the Shia were living in slums, pumping out lots of kids, hearing about martyr-



Iraq Police Academy 6: Doin' The Mosul Shuffle!

dom and finding out up close and personal what it feels like to get shelled, bombed and sniped. They raised a whole lot of kids who were natural soldier material, with your classic Shia martyr complex and a don't-give-a-fuck slum attitude that was straight outta Karbala. All they needed was a movement they could actually believe in, and they'd slice through the rich-boy gangs like a scimitar through hummus.

Hezbollah provided the Shia with the cause they were looking for. You can say what you want about the Hezzies, but unlike most other Lebanese movements, including Amal, the other big Shia party, Hezbollah is NOT in it just for the money. They actually believe the stuff they say, and they prove it by getting their hands dirty rebuilding blasted slum neighborhoods, handing out food to the hungry, and trying to bring water and electricity to Shia dumps that never had them before. That kind of actual concern for the poor is just about unheard-of in these places, and it inspires fanatical loyalty when people see it happening for the first time in their lives. Sadr's people are the only ones who manage to get food, water and electricity to the huge stinking Shia slums in Iraq, and Hezbollah has an even longer record of putting in the money and time, like Mao said a guerrilla army should, on civilian projects. So for example, after the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah campaign, there was a lot of grumbling, even among Shiites in Lebanon, that Hezbollah's glorious fight against the Israelis had left a lot of ordinary Lebanese with bombed-out houses as souvenirs of that divine victory. Instead of dealing with these subversive complainers the usual Arab way—making a gross, gory example of the loudest naysayers and continuing to pocket all that Iranian aid money—Hezbollah actually went out and rented the heavy equipment, cleared the rubble, and put up new apartments.

So it's not that much of an oversimplification to say that Hezbollah built a movement and an army from the bottom up, and then took it into battle last week against a bunch of traditional top-down gangs whose "gunmen" were in it only for the money. You don't have to ask who won a fight like that. Just imagine Valmy, where French troops who really believed in the republican revolution went into battle against old-style degenerate European troops. A wipeout. The hired guns who were supposed to protect West Beirut just fled, while the Hezzies popped up all over that expensive beachfront like Bugs Bunny's instant Martians popping up out of every manhole.

And where was the Lebanese Army that we're funding, you ask? Keeping very, very quiet. Maybe waving a nervous "Hi!" to the Hezbollah fighters as they got out of their cars and started walking toward the Mediterranean.

The Hezzies had no armored vehicles, but they had RPGs which they actually know how to use, and against the Lebanese Army's Thrift-Store mix of light armored vehicles, RPGs work all too well.

It's kind of an exciting time, militarily, when a bunch of weekend soldiers can carry a weapon in the trunks of their cars, weapons that will actually intimidate troops in APCs. Morale trumps light armor every time. (Air power and MBTs are another story.)

The Army only intervened when it was time to give Hezbollah everything it wanted: the right to a separate comm network, and the rehiring of their Airport Security dude. As for the latter demand, I'm not saying smuggling was involved or anything but somebody's got to get those West-Beirut party kids their E and coke, and having your man in charge of airport security sure would make it easier to bring in da stuff, whether it's Semtex or pure Bolivian. If the guy was worth going to war for, he must be doing something pretty darned important.

Once their demands were met, Hezbollah packed the weapons in the trunks and headed home for supper. That was another very smart move. One thing you can sort of figure out without being Einstein is that this is not a good era for military occupations of other tribes' territory. What you want is to impose your will militarily, then get out before you become the occupier. That's exactly what the Hezzies did—wish we could learn a thing or two from them.

So Lebanon right now has a simple box score: Hezzies everything, Old Bosses nothing. Now, let's zip to the other side of the Middle East and see how the Iraqi game is going. About the same, actually. Weirdly the same. What just happened in Lebanon happened six weeks ago in Iraq: weak central government tries to "assert itself" against rising Shia militia, gets smacked down, then after the smack-down, the Shia militia hands back territory. In the case of Iraq, it was a Shia government, so this was all Shia-on-Shia violence, Maliki's army vs. Sadr's militia.

There's still a lot of argument about whether the US pushed Maliki's government into this or tried to stop them from attacking. I hear from sources in Iraq that US officers advising Maliki warned him that his "army" (basically Badr Brigade vets wearing Iraqi National uniform) weren't good enough to take on Sadr's militia on their home ground, but woke up to find the armored columns already moving south to Basra and east into Sadr City. They should have stayed in bed, as the saying goes, because if they'd had another nap—say an hour or so—they'd have seen the same columns breaking all speed limits coming back to base, stomped to within an inch of their lives.

And now for the odd item out: what's Mosul got to do with it? There are two things going on. At a tactical



South Beirut or Sadr City: Can You Tell The Difference?



level, it's simple: Mosul and Al Qaeda in Iraq is a target that the Iraqi Army might actually be able to handle. They need a morale-building fight against a softer opponent after getting their asses kicked in Basra and Sadr City, and the Sunni jihadi nutcases are an easy target. There aren't many of them, they're foreign imports with no neighborhood base (they've alienated just about every Sunni Iraqi alive), and they're more interested in dying than fighting. A counter-insurgency officer's dream opponent.

There was a story last week that showed why the Iraqi Army would rather fight Al Q than keep battering its head against the Sadrists in East Baghdad. This Iraqi officer was whining, "The Shia in this neighborhood PROMISED us that they'd let us patrol in our vehicles and tell us where the IEDs were buried, they PROMISED, and then within ten meters of leaving our base three IEDs went off under us! It's not fair!"

That's what happens when you fight people who have the neighborhood behind them, and that's why it's way, way easier to go to Mosul to track down some nerd-gang of Saudi dweebs who took up Jihad 1A because they flunked Engineering or they're

scared of girls or something. Dying solves a lot of problems for people like that.

But if you really consider the Mosul operation on another level, that's where it gets a little more interesting. It's part of a pattern of what Cheney, that strategic genius ("Shit, Iran is RIGHT NEXT to Iraq? Why didn't you tell me? No wonder we're having all these problems!") expected to happen: he figured that the Shiites' military energy would wear itself out in a civil war against Al Qaeda Sunnis, both in Lebanon and in Iraq, rather than making problems for their pro-American governments and us. That was the Cheney Plan, except it didn't happen. Al Qaeda just doesn't have the support in the 'hood to take on these neighborhood militias, either in Iraq or in Lebanon. But there was a funny little footnote: Al Q has officially declared war on Hezbollah in Lebanon and "ordered its operatives to defend the Sunni community in Lebanon" according to this story:

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=54916&sectionid=351020203>

The trouble with being a James-Bond-y international conspiracy like Al Q is that there's no way on earth you can compete militarily with

local, broad-based militias like Hezbollah. Commuting from the Shia slums to West Beirut is one thing, but the notion that Al Q's International Brigade can all fly into Lebanon undetected and assemble to march on the Hezzies is too far-fetched and idiotic even for a Bond flick. The notion they'd beat Hezbollah if they could manage to mobilize a force against it is even more ridiculous. The Hezzies even scare the IDF, and the IDF has wet dreams about facing Al Q. The rankings are pretty clear, and getting clearer, and they add up to something simple: in Iraq and in Lebanon, two countries the Western powers have operated on like they were diabetics with Medicaid, the net result of all the slicing and cutting is victory, hands down, for Shiite militias that didn't even figure in the big plans. They just weren't supposed to be part of the equation, and now they're on top.

And that's assuming it's all being decided by Washington. Suppose we entertain, as they say, another idea: suppose it's true that the Lebanese Hezzies are just "puppets" of Iran the way Cheney keeps saying they are. Well, if that's true, then...lessee here: Cheney woofs on and on about attacking Iran and just coincidentally these Iranian puppets just casually take over Lebanon, one of the few supposedly pro-Western Arab states. And they do it without even breaking a sweat. Like saying, "Hello Meester Cheney, joost a leetle reminder, we know zee game about a t'ousand times better dan yoooo, sir!"

There are two possibilities: Cheney is an Iranian mole, and he's laughing his head off chewing pistachios, kicking back on his prayer mat in front of the flatscreen, something I've been arguing for awhile now—or he's the stupidest human being ever to step out of his league—which would be Wyoming, Little League. Girls' Softball to be exact. X



An Amal Shia militiaman poses alone with a mask: No match for the Hezzies!

He's fat, lives in Fresno, does data-entry, and drinks too much Diet Coke. He called the Iraq war move by move called the Lebanon war for Hezbollah long before anyone else called the Madrid bombings for Al Qaeda when everyone else was still blaming the poor Basques.

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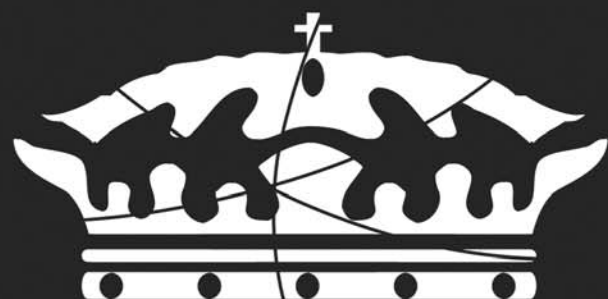
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# SCANNING MOSCOW'S TRAFFIC COPS

Courtesy of Sergey the Tweaker



We're happy to introduce a new column in which we publish Moscow's raw radio communications, courtesy of a Russian amateur radio enthusiast. It isn't important how we know him, what is important is that Sergei doesn't sleep much and gets out of his house even less. That leaves him plenty of time to use the police scanner he rigged up in his 8th story apartment to eavesdrop on everyone below. He can get a clear read on most of Moscow's northern sector, from the Garden Ring all the way out to the MKAD, and can intercept everything short of encrypted FSB channels. This issue, Sergei gives eXile readers a peek into the secret conversations of Moscow's traffic police, the notorious "GAISHniki." And boy, ain't it fun being a man in blue! It's just like in *Super Gaishniki*, that new Russian TV show: explosions, chicks and high-speed chases. Plus, the sweet fat bribe at the end of the day.

### TECHNICAL NOTES:

The following transmissions, picked up roughly a month apart, are between dispatchers at a GAI command center named "Irkutsk" and the various patrol cars assigned to it. Four digit numbers usually (e.g. "Zero Zero Four Seven") correspond to patrol cars, while two digit (e.g. "Zero Zero") refer to particular dispatchers.

### COMMUNICATION A

2:00 am, Sunday, March 30, 2008

Irkutsk, Irkutsk. Respond to Volgogradsky Prospect. We have kids gathering, they are gathering for street racing.  
 Confirm? Not confirm? What do you have.  
 I'm here. Will get get back in a minute.  
 Hurry up.  
 Yes  
 Are you there? Is the youth there, or not!  
 Yes.  
 Well, take appropriate measures. I'm dispatching more ... [static]  
 [Sirens] Is it blocked?  
 What's happening over there?  
 [Sirens] Irkutsk ... [static]  
 Four Seven One Eight, Irkutsk calling ... [static] ... What is your location?  
 We are at ... [static] ...  
 Four Seven Four Nine, where are you?  
 [Static] that's where he is.  
 What is he doing there?  
 You ask him what he's doing there.  
 Four Seven Four Nine to Irkutsk.  
 There's an accident on your territory. 100 m [static] near Krylatsky.  
 I'm on it.  
 Attention everyone working Irkutsk, attention everyone working Irkutsk. Write down a car theft: [static] 3104 [static], Volga 3104 red color. License plate is Konstantin 944 Elena Semyon 177 region ... [static] ... attention [static] ...  
 Irkutsk what time was the theft?  
 Fifteen minutes ago  
 Attention everyone working Irkutsk. One more theft [static] ... Cherry [static] ... License plate is Khoriton 426 Maria Elena 177 region.  
 Attention everyone working Irkutsk, attention everyone working Irkutsk. Annul the "chetvyorka" theft. I repeat annul.  
 Pizdets [static] ... I remembered [static].  
 Irkutsk calling Four Seven Four Nine.  
 I hear you Irkutsk.  
 I found them, it's a Daewoo and another *innomarka*, yes?  
 [Static]  
 Where is it?  
 [Static] automobile and pay more attention.  
 [Static] Six Four calling Four Seven Four Nine? You there?  
 Here.  
 Tell me, please. In front of the streetlight on Krylatsky, what's the address there?  
 You pass the streetlight and it is before Krylastky, about 500 meters before.  
 Vitaly is there.  
 In front of the streetlight?  
 At the streetlight that's at Krylatsky, there's ... [static]  
 At [static] ... Fifteen [static] ... There are about 15 people with clubs [static] ... They are trying to break through [static] ... There are a lot [static] ...  
 Do you need our help?  
 Four Seven One Eight, where did you get this information?  
 We are here? Nothing is going on.  
 Those people probably calmed down...  
 What, calm?  
 [Static]  
 Take that person out of the "pyator-ka."  
 Where is the driver that was driving the car?

### COMMUNICATION B

7:30 p.m., Sunday, May 11, 2008

[Static] where are you located?  
 Why do you ask? I left for a bit.  
 What is the reason?  
 To pick up blanks  
 Did you ask permission? Who allowed you to leave your post?  
 No one.  
 [Yelling] Why did you leave your post! You better get back at once! You have some work to do, some protocols to fill out. Turn around now.  
 Yes. Zero Zero.  
 Seventy Four Nine, Seventy Four Nine. Check this car. Ulyana 511 Khoriton Olga 97 ... [static]. Vladimir Vladimirovich ... [static].  
 Check this car: Olga 865 Ulyanka Khoriton 96  
 063 Second Third. Can you guys check these cars faster?  
 I dictated it to you.  
 I can't hear you, just barely.  
 [Static]  
 Put this through the computer. Olga 865 Ulyana Khoriton [static] Date of birth: 11 05 80.  
 Gotcha general.  
 Check this car. Roman 665 Anna Vladimir 99  
 Seven Four. What did you get on that car? [annoyed]  
 Hey are we gonna look at the car or what?  
 Check this car: Tatyana Olga Tatyana 136 Vladimir Vladimir 199  
 Six Six, Four Zero Five calling ... [static]  
 Are we gonna check that car?  
 One One One's computer hasn't worked for two days already  
 Can we put this through other routes?  
 [No answer]  
 Irkutsk Irkutsk, Seven Four Zero Six calling.  
 [No answer]  
 Irkutsk Irkutsk, Seven Four Zero Six calling.  
 [No answer]  
 Irkutsk Irkutsk, Seven Four Zero Six calling.  
 I'm busy right now, at an accident.  
 Irkutsk, Zero Six is processing an arrested person with OVD.  
 Who is processing?  
 Zero Six Four Two, don't forget about the BMW, white color  
 Checking it out  
 Zero Six Six, Forty Seven Zero Three calling  
 Zero Six Six, Forty Seven Zero Three calling  
 Zero Six Six, Forty Seven Zero Three calling  
 Accident at [static]. Volva and Audi are in the middle of the road  
 Attention calling to stop BMW black color with tinted window. License plate 196 or 198.. [static].  
 Four Seven Zero Three calling Forty Three  
 Dictate  
 Calling Forty Three  
 Dictate! [angry] Dictate!  
 Olga 744 Elena Ulyana 177,  
 Forget that. We are working on the BMW, silver.  
 Zero Two, don't forget about the BMW.  
 Who is standing there?  
 [No answer]  
 Who is standing there? [yelling]  
 What the hell! You'll be punished!  
 Irkutsk, Irkutsk. We have a casualty a Nissan and motorcycle at [indecipherable]. Nissan and motorcycle, alleged casualty. Repeat, alleged casualty.

# HIPSTERS RIDICULE PROVINCIAL BLOGGERS

By Roman Muradov

These days, all the cool Russians talk about how stupid and time-consuming blogs are. It seems the wonderful and frightening days of commenting each other to death are gone. All the ex-livejournaling hipsters will tell you that now their blogs are either ironic, or that they're just too lazy to delete them. All the while, it appears that blogging has recently spread to the next layer of not-so-cool Russian masses, and the results are truly disturbing.

One particular site going by the name of LiveInternet (www.li.ru) has become the laughing stock of the more progressive sectors of the Russian web. It appears that a huge community of provincial bloggers has been united on this site by one single purpose: to make Russian boys and girls look good, at least virtually.

The concept of this community is simple. You post a photograph of yourself taken with a friend's mobile phone (no posing here, the picture would naturally contain a wall carpet, lots of filthy pots and cups, half-finished bottles of Coca-Cola and beer and someone much uglier than you for the contrast) and ask someone to photoshop it to perfection. Along with the usual requests like removing blemishes and red eyes, these provincial bloggers have a rather odd list of requests to experienced Photoshop hands that seem to repeat themselves over and over. I've noted a few:

**1) Draw angel wings.** While this is pretty common for underage girls, you can find lots of moms and menacing gopniks wishing for an angelic touch.

**2) Change background to something romantic.** This one usually applies to drunken orgy shots, revealing half-used mayo packets and 2L bottles of Klinskoe beer.

**3) Add Fun Text.** Here are some examples: "Laddi Madonna", "Leshia Lightning Bolt" and "Mego Pozitiff". (They spell it out just like that in illiterate English.)

Those that volunteer their photoshop skills don't get paid for their work. So what's in it for them? A sense of community, *cho blya*. They get rewarded with a shitload of "simpy" and "laffki." These text comments, which mean "sympathy" and "laughs," respectively, are the de facto currency of the li.ru crowd. They take their cash very seriously and act like these laffki are a scarce resource. So if you promise to give "mega laffki" to anyone who photoshops you up, but then only deliver "bigg laffki," you'll be sure to cause a scandal. But this type of thing is common and provokes protracted commenting wars. Go figure, I guess they like the drama.

All of this was going on in the simple, irony-free land of LiveInternet, until Russia's urban hipsters got a whiff of it. Sick of posting ironic gopnik photos on their blogs, the hipsters descended upon the pristine, irony-rich fields of li.ru like a swarm of rabid locusts. They flooded the community with fake requests for photoshop touch-ups, trying to outdo each other with ironically ridiculous requests. It was a sad sight to see. I was sure these vapid hipsters would snuff out another great Russian tradition, consigning it to the dustbin of history, much like they did to the great gopniks. But I underestimated the dumb tenacity of our provincial cultural heroes. When I checked the site months later, I learned that the site is as busy as ever, and totally authentic! They didn't realize they were being mocked, and probably wouldn't have cared even if they did. This just goes to show that even cynical elitist assholes can't stop pure Russian souls from having honest fun. Alas, not all is lost in Russia. The future lies in the provinces!! X



This li.ru user wants someone to write "I love men" on this pic and then create a GIF animation with in which the letter "n" is slowly crossed out. She is willing to give one "impu" for it. We're not sure what that is.



This girl requests an "emo design, with pink skulls and other such stuff." She also wants to sign this pic with "I'm not EMO... (sniff)." She doesn't indicate how many laffki she's willing to dish out for this job.

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# LITERARY FRAUDS STRIKE AGAIN ... AND AGAIN

By John Dolan

Say you meet me at a party and I tell you that when I was 7 years old, I killed a full-grown military officer, then ran off and was nurtured by a pack of wolves. Would you believe me or begin edging away quietly, keeping the snack table between us at all times?

Or say I'm a healthy-looking, articulate young white woman, and I tell you I used to work for the Bloods in L.A.—a full-time gun-strapped gangbanger. Would you believe me or laugh in my unbruised, orthodontured face?

If you said you would believe these stories, then please stand by—the process of natural selection will be along for you in a moment. More likely you scoffed at the idea you'd fall for such obvious crap.

But hordes of otherwise intelligent readers did believe those ridiculous stories, as told in two recent "memoirs" later shown to be invented: Misha Defonseca's *Surviving With Wolves* features a child killing an SS officer and being saved by wolves, and Margaret B. Jones' *Love and Consequences* is a gang "memoir" by a white girl from a nice, stable family. "Misha Defonseca" was born Monique de Waal, a Belgian Catholic girl. "Margaret B. Jones," supposed author of *Love and Consequences*, is actually Margaret Seltzer, a white woman who grew up with her intact biological family in California's San Fernando Valley. She has none of the Native-American ancestry she claims, nor did she grow up with the black foster brothers she describes in her book.

The way Seltzer's hoax was revealed shows the gap between mainstream and literary value. When Seltzer's sister read about these claims to infamy in *Love and Consequences*, she was outraged and started phoning everyone she could to reveal that it was all lies.

She considered her sister's claim an insult to the family. Only within the world of the self-serving memoir is a background in violence and petty crime a thing of value. And this value is quite real, as shown by the huge success of Janet Fitch's novel, *White Oleander* (1999), which tells a very similar, ostensibly autobiographical story of a white L.A. girl drawn into the underworld.

Of course, when you see a picture of Seltzer's notably white face, your natural reaction is to ask, "And people believed she was a Blood? How could anybody fall for such nonsense?"

People fall for literary forgeries for several reasons, all of which are very embarrassing to the victims (which is why there's always such rage against the poor forger). Improbability is crucial to these stories, a glamorous improbability, with heroes or heroines who survive exotic forms of suffering that people do not, in fact, survive.

The first ingredient is exotic, glamorous pain. We all suffer, but most suffering is not glamorous. Audiences don't want to hear about the kind of suffering they actually endure. So to a medieval peasant sufferings like cold vermin, beatings and plague would not have been exotic or saleable. Those

people wanted stories about what they didn't have, like enough to eat or a warm palace to sleep in. They told tales of palaces that fell into the possession of plucky orphans and magic tables that always overflowed with food.

If you read their stories, you'll find the suffering in the first paragraphs: "So-and-so was an orphan who was beaten every day and fed on what the pigs left. Then one day, she found a magic (noun of choice here) ...."

Fast-forward a few hundred years and you find us, the doughy descendants of those wretched peasants, so stuffed with food that we obsess on losing weight. Magic tables constantly filling with roasted goose are the last thing we want to hear about.

Only now do stories about cold and hunger without happy magical endings become popular, because that form of suffering is, for most of us, a nice distraction from the actual sufferings we undergo.

So naturally, writers, always desperate and cunning, start thinking: wouldn't it be great to make myself the hero(ine) of a story of modern suffering that was no fault of my own? That'd really have them sobbing at my feet and bring in the money too.

Jones and Defonseca found different but similar routes to a solution, fixing on suffering that was glamorous, familiar and yet exotic to their office-bound readers: the Holocaust and the L.A. gangsta life.

It's important to realize here that the "suffering" of these stories is erotic to the reader, just as the vision of a magic table always full of food was erotic to a medieval audience. And by looking at what forgers feed their gullible readers, we can see how cultures change.

The success of Jones' and Defonseca's books suggests that, to a modern American book buyer, it would be glamorous to be a gang member or be raised by wolves. This is a very recent change; wolves were the villains of the older European folk tales. People who lived in the Northern forest were scared to death of wolves. As people concentrate in cities and wiped out the wolves, wolves become glamorous; glamour and scarcity, linked as always.

The ethnic background concocted by "Misha Defonseca" is also very revealing of social changes. Very few Europeans pretended to be Jewish before 1945. It was, indeed, rather more common to pretend not to be Jewish. The fact that Misha, born into a Belgian Catholic family named de Waal, lied to make herself Jewish reflects the impressive success of American Jews in the latter half of the 20th century and the special status accorded to the Holocaust and its survivors. What's truly remarkable about the author's ethnic shift is that Monique de Waal's parents were in fact heroic Resistance fighters and really were murdered by the Nazis. But "Misha" decided that Belgian Catholic resistants were not saleable and made herself a Jew.

Misha's publisher, Jane Daniel, said, "It's almost impossible when you are up against a Holocaust survivor. That mantle became a bullet-proof vest or a Teflon coat with an assumed air of moral superiority."

Of course Daniel is hardly an innocent herself. In fact, she's the defendant in a huge lawsuit brought by



Straight Outta Sherman Oaks: Margaret Seltzer wears the scars of literary ambition on her weary Kiehl's-treated eyes

Monique de Waal, or whatever you want to call her, claiming that Daniel cheated the writer and failed to honor her responsibilities as publisher. Don't expect good guys or innocents in stories about literary fraud. There are none. Everyone, even the reader—especially the reader—is complicit in such frauds.

But Daniel is right about the dangers of doubting any claims by Holocaust survivors, or even people who tell stories on their behalf. When Steven Spielberg was asked what right he had to make Schindler's List, he flat-out lied and said that he had been persecuted for being Jewish at his high school in Saratoga, California. When journalists went to Saratoga to follow up on this claim and came up empty, they didn't call Spielberg on it—they just dropped it. Cultures tend to punish harshly those who puncture sacred narratives and reward those who buttress them, no matter how flimsy the claim or unqualified the storyteller.

So you'll always find the sleazy literary forger being blessed by the most sanctimonious priests, secular or religious, in any culture. Take Oprah, who famously canonized forger James Frey on her show, then excommunicated him for lying to her. She was apparently scheduled to interview the author

of Misha before the charade collapsed. Oprah is to the contemporary dullard what the religious hierarchy is to most earlier cultures; she separates the wheat from the chaff, the worthy from the unworthy.

Until the 20th century, many forgers exploited the religious hierarchy in the same way Frey exploited Oprah. One hilarious example is of a cunning French impostor who landed in London, hungry and penniless, in the early 18th century. Quickly sizing up the possibilities for a glib liar, the new arrival claimed he was "Psalmanazar," a Taiwanese refugee. "Psalmanazar" was actually a young man from the South of France, one of those European drifters who, like the young Rousseau, traveled the continent exploiting the missions of one or another Christian sect. When he reached England, he cleverly put his "Taiwanese" act to work by having a well-timed epiphany upon hearing the central tenets of Anglicanism.

Psalmanazar must have enjoyed hamming it up as he pretended to listen to the tedious quibbles that validated the Anglican creed over Catholic and Calvinist "heresies," but he pretended that the light of natural reason had shone clearly on the version espoused by the state church of his new homeland. He made quite a nice

living off that little testimonial and was even hired to teach the Taiwanese language—which he knew not one word—to Anglican missionaries.

Forgers are always there to prop up wobbly yet precious beliefs. But as the audience's desires change, the particular beliefs and stories forgers tell change too. Take James Frey's *A Million Little Pieces*. When this silly tale of drugs, rehab and redemption came out in 2003, I was the first reviewer to call it a tissue of lies.

It wasn't that I'm such a clever critic; it's just that I'm one of the few Americans willing to say out loud that I love drugs, have used lots of drugs and had a great time on them. So, as an outsider, I could see how cynically Frey's story was designed to reinforce the popular lie that drugs always lead to destruction. We have all known lots of successful, functioning drug users (though many are still closeted), but almost all of us have learned to blank out that knowledge when we sit in front of the TV and listen to another sermon on the evils of drug use. So a writer who invokes "drugs" as the villain of the piece is almost as safe as one like Misha, who invoked the most villainous villains of all, the Nazis.

Forgers count on a gullible, pious audience, though the pieties invoked

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# SUMMER GUIDE TO RUSSIAN MOVIES

may not be explicitly religious. Often, they're broader, older patterns of myth that we know at heart aren't true but want badly to believe. Misha's story, for example, clearly plays on the old nonsense that good will triumph over evil, even when "good" is a 7-year-old child and "evil" a full-grown SS officer. In a fight like that, it's not hard to see what would happen: child dies horribly, so is in no position to write her memoirs.

Frey's story of (fake) debauchery redeemed by stern self-discipline confirms Americans' beloved, fatuous beliefs that people change in mid-life and that self-discipline can overcome anything.

That's all most readers of such tripe care about: the cultural bottom line, the ideology the story backs up. I discovered this when I tried to point out that Frey was a lousy writer who knew nothing about the drug world. Nobody responded to those arguments. The only thing that interested either his supporters or his detractors was whether Frey's claim to have redeemed himself without the help of Alcoholics Anonymous was helpful or destructive. Pro-AA readers excoriated Frey for leading readers from the True Path; advocates of the old bootstraps approach thought Frey was preaching the true gospel. The fact that he couldn't write and didn't know shit about drugs didn't matter to anyone.

Of course, some forgeries change the mix of ingredients: a little more erotica, a little less propping up of tenuous tribal myths. Margaret Jones' lurid stories of the wild life among the L.A. gangs focused mainly on telling the horrible details of this "suffering" in such detail that her more timid, office-slave readers could salivate over them at leisure. And at the same time she helps prop up the culture's cherished myth that drugs equals death, with lines like this: "One of the first things I did once I started making drug money was to buy a burial plot." And by displaying her own unmarred face on the book jacket, she tells readers, as did the equally unscarred James Frey, that with enough gumption the protagonist can not only escape the life of sin but erase the marks it tends to leave on everybody else who goes through it.

And along the way, ah, what an

opportunity for extended, voluptuous descriptions of sin, glorious sin! Of course this has always been a common feature of preaching; it was pretty much the only way the prim Victorian audience could get its verbal pornography without guilt. Only the nature of the sin changes. When preaching to an audience truly familiar with a life of nonstop violence and treachery, most writers move quickly over the details. They know their listeners are all too familiar with them and don't really want to hear more than they need to sweeten the coming redemption.

But to a middle-class readership so timid it's afraid of second-hand smoke, caffeine and sex outside of marriage, *la vida loca* is pure erotica. "Oh, tell us at length about how you wallowed in such career-risking sin!" As wolves get scarce, they get sexy; the same thing applies to guns and cocaine. We live in a remarkably fogey-ish era, and the stuffer we get, the more we need to hear about people who snort, fuck and shoot without thought of what it might do to their permanent record.

This is the key: the life we actually lead, the life shown only in rare moments of brave art like the TV series *The Office*. This new kind of indoor suffering, which does not involve physical violence or privation, is the suffering that drives authors to go to the huge effort and risk of making up tales of more glamorous forms of suffering. They do it because their kind of suffering is not recognized yet: the suffering of not being famous in a culture that values only a few famous people, with the rest reduced to adoring, starved spectators. The suffering of being one of those slavish spectators will be understood, I suspect, a century from now. People of the 22nd century will look back, shake their heads and wonder how lives like those lived by the cast of *The Office* could be borne at all.

And when they do, their culture's desperate literary entrepreneurs will come up with their own forgeries, exploiting this older, more glamorous and scarce form of suffering. They will write fake memoirs with titles like *I Was A Claims Adjuster in Tacoma* or *Three Years in a Tract Home Near Dallas*. And their audience will shiver with horror and settle down for a nice, long read. X

## THE LOTTERY

An outcast transfer student finds love and takes down the school's cool and mean "Rublyovka" clique with his freestyle rap and beat-box skills.  
**Cultural Crutch:** *Heathers* meets *Zhara* by way of *Dangerous Minds*.  
**Opens:** May 22



## THE GAME

A film about the glorious triumph of Russia's national soccer team in the 2010 World Cup.  
**Cultural Crutch:** *Mighty Ducks* meets *Rambo II* by way of *Air Bud: Golden Receiver*, with a little bit of *Free Willy II: The Adventure Home* thrown in for good measure.  
**Opens:** May 29

## THE FLY

A tough girl from the provinces takes up boxing at a local gym to cope with her impoverished life. She turns out to be a surprisingly good boxer, able to stand her ground during her village's drunken mass brawls. She's also a surprisingly good sterva, working up every guy she meets into a rockhard frenzy, including her coach and her African sparring partner.  
**Cultural Crutch:** *Million Dollar Baby* meets *Lilya 4-Ever*.  
**Opens:** June 19



## D DAY

Russian adaptation of *Commando*. Schwarzenegger is replaced by a beefy Russian, the commando's American mountain home by a woodsy village in Iran, the hot black stewardess by a fine Russian one, and the Latin American setting by Vladivostok, Russia's "San Francisco."  
**Cultural Crutch:** None needed, not even command of the Russian language.  
**Opens:** July 3

# AL-DILBERT



## IN BRIEF

### CAUSE OF RUSSIA'S TRAGIC HISTORY REVEALED

**MOSCOW** (*Passport*) — Historians, philosophers and novelists have for centuries struggled with one of the great questions of mankind: Why did Russia veer so tragically away from the democratic path of the rest of Europe?

The answer, according to recent archeologist findings, is that Russia is built on an ancient Indian burial site, one which was never supposed to be disturbed.

"When Prince Rurik founded Russia, he foolishly decided to build this state on the sacred bones of dead Lakota Sioux Indians," explained Dr. Sha Gui, who headed a team of archeologists mapping out Russia. "By violating those bones, the ghosts of these Indians cursed Russia with 1000 years of 'sovereign

democracy."

Yuri Trutnev, the Minister of Resources for Russia, agreed with the findings. "It is Russia's curse, and Russia's fate. The only way to undo this curse and appease the Indian spirits is, of course, to nationalize the sacred land that is currently held by Shell, BP-TNK, and other foreign companies," he said. "While it grieves me to have to nationalize these sacred oil and gas deposits currently owned by our Western friends, I'm afraid we must respect the Indian spirits, or pay the price. Because you know, those Indian spirits—really scary stuff. I'm talking pets coming back to life, cars that drive on their own, rigged elections—brrr! It's really...you know, frightening."



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## THE FORTNIGHT SPIN



By Jared Lindquist  
exileradio@gmail.com

I don't tend to mention the dozens of bands that write to me every issue, begging for coverage. Primarily because most of them suck. However, local expat trio PERTH struck my fancy, as just the sort of sludgy trash rock this city is missing. The Australian/Canadian/Armenian group formed late last year, and has recently started playing gigs. Definitely a band to watch, especially if you fondly remember the sludgy rock of old AMPHETAMINE REPTILE and TOUCH & GO bands.

Although THE SKATALITES (May 20, Apelsin, 20:00) combine two things I am generally not a fan of – ska music and old people – I do have to give them props. As one of the original Jamaican ska bands of the 60s, not only have they kept on playing for four decades, but they've inspired thousands of bands. Most of them are shitty, though. But maybe there were a couple good ones in there. Or is that wishful thinking?

So, uh, the BACKSTREET BOYS (May 21, Olimpisky, 19:00) are in town. I have no idea if they have original members with them or not. I find it hard to imagine anyone cares. Even here.

Moving on, as one of the founding members of FRONT LINE ASSEMBLY, BILL LEEB has a pretty unobtainable record in electronic music. And yet he continues to work on his side project, DELERIUM (May 21, Ikra, 21:00), which further cements his reputation. Initially started in the late 80s as an ambient outlet, over the years, the duo has become much more danceable.

Over the last few years, JASON WEBLEY (May 22, Gogol, 21:00) has built a reputation as a DIY singer, mixing folk, punk and gypsy. Kind of like a one-man GOGOL BORDELLO or something. It seems like every time he tours, I get emails from friends telling me how great his gigs were, and yet I've never managed to make one. This tour brings him not only to Moscow, but also to Norilsk! So if you happen to be above the Arctic Circle, definitely check that out.

If there is one city in the world where closeted gays can get together to camp it up for LIZA MINELLI (May 22, B1 Maximum, 21:00), surely Moscow is it.

Summer festival season kicks off with the annual STOP THE SILENCE FEST (May 23, Gogol, 17:00). This year, the fest features Americans THE PAPER CHASE, an experimental Texas indie band who has had a rather long and distinguished career in the American indie underground, drawing regular comparisons to bands like DRIVE LIKE JEHU, LES SAVY FAV and UNWOUND. Support is provided by Latvian garage rockers MONA DO BO, as well as locals HOT ZEX, SILENCE KIT and KOSMOS.COM.

The last time PLACEBO singer ROISIN MURPHY (May 23, B1 Maximum, 21:00) came to town, she cut her face open headbanging on Ikra's stage. Apparently enough people are interested in seeing a repeat, that they had to move the show to a much bigger – and less intimate – venue.

Having grown up the son of a DJ, MATTHEW STYLES (May 23, Solyanka, 23:00) had music in his blood. So it's no surprise that over the years he has started remixing, and playing parties. His deep house style should suit anyone who fondly remembers Propaganda circa five years ago. Did you get my irony?

I'm fairly certain that KISS (May 24, Olimpisky, 19:00) had already completed their farewell tour. I guess this must be part two or three or four. You've either already bought tickets, or you couldn't care less. I am in the latter group.

Those of you in a trashy garage rock sort of mood are in for a treat with this double header: early in the evening you can catch MOTHERFATHERS, RIVUSHIE STRUNY and INQUIZITORIUM (May 24, Dom, 20:00), before a quick metro ride to catch a late show by THE KING KONGS and THE CAVESTOMPERS (May 24, Proekt OGI, 22:00). Basically, an evening of cheap-o beer, loud rock, and distortion.

Remember a few years back when there was supposed to be a Swedish rock revolution, led by THE HIVES? Well, MANDO DIAO (May 26, Apelsin, 20:00) were part of that. Although the band started jamming in the mid-90s, it wasn't until 02 that they managed to release their first album. They've always been overshadowed but they can stand on their own two feet as energetic rockers.

The next little-known post-rock band to arrive in Moscow is England's iLIKETRAiNS (May 28, Art Garbage, 20:00), who have been creating epic soundscapes based around historical events for five years now. Fans of GODSPEED YOU BLACK EMPEROR, YNDI HALDA and the like would do well to check them out.

I'll be straight up with you – I never really got into COIL, but I understand they have quite a cult following. If you're in that cult, you'll be pleased to know that founding member PETER CHRISTOFFERSON will be hitting town with his Thailand-based project SOISONG (May 28, Ikra, 21:00), a collaboration with Russian expat IVAN PAVLOV. The duo makes computer music, combined with decadent and dark vocals, and a Southeast Asian approach to instrumentation. The project doesn't plan to tour much, so if you check this out, it's probably something you can lord over your friends back home.

For some reason, metalheads HORSE THE BAND (May 29, Tochka, 19:00) get called Nintendocore. I guess it's because they employ cheesy synths as well. On record they sound pretty boring, but apparently they really go nuts live. GENETIX and WHO IS CHARLY support.

I thought YA SLEVA SVERKHU (May 29, Dom, 20:00) had broken up, so this will certainly be a good chance to catch them again, for perhaps a final time. Perhaps they're just on hiatus, though, as I recently saw some of the band members perform in USSSY, an experimental noise band that will be supporting VOGULOV TARUTS VERMO opens.

One of the more famous underground DJ groups, DJ FOOD (May 29, Ikra, 22:00) return to Moscow for what is sure to be a great show. Anyone interested in their trademark turntablism would do well to check this out.

If day one of Avant Fest (see Top picks) finishes early, it's definitely worth checking out Canadian electro band CRYSTAL CASTLES (May 30, 16 Tons, 22:00), who have made a reputation for remixing bands such as BLOC PARTY and KLAXONS in their 8-bit fashion. If day two finishes early, day one participants DEVOCHKI NE HOTYAT (May 31, Proekt OGI, 22:00) are playing a solo show that is sure to be fun. X

## TOP PICKS



### BROKEN SOCIAL SCENE

Ikra  
May 25, 21:00  
The Toronto music scene has long been described as incestuous, for the rate at which bands change members with one another, and how many musicians are in more than one band at the same time. Yet it was from this background that Broken Social Scene came into popular awareness six years ago, with the release of their fantastic album, "You Forgot It In People". The album mixed classic indie rock with an expansive and experimental sound, winning over fans everywhere and making many year-end best of lists. It's been three years since their most recent record came out, and it looks the band is in a regrouping phase, after some of the members experimented with solo records. This is probably the Moscow indie scene's most eagerly-awaited gig of the year so far.



### AVANT FEST

Proekt Fabrika  
(Perevedonovskiy Per. 18)  
May 30, 21:00, May 31, 15:00  
This summer's first big outdoor indie festival is in its fifth year, and promises to be no less interesting than in previous years, when it brought Xiu Xiu, Mudhoney, and others. Day one of the festival features a short schedule headlined by London electro/post-punk band White Rose Movement, who mix the style and attitude of bands like Joy Division with the new romantic imagery of bands like Duran Duran and Depeche Mode. Support is provided by local favorites Dot Dash and Devochki Ne Hotyat. Day two is an all-day affair, headlined by Austin, TX instrumental post-rock band Explosions in the Sky, often compared to Mogwai or Godspeed You Black Emperor. Support is provided by local heavyweights Silence Kit, Everything is Made in China, Klever and many others.



### BLAST FEST

Winzavod  
(4th Syromyatnichesky Pereulok 1, str. 6)  
June 1, 14:00  
How many times have you found yourself thinking that Krizis Zhanra would be so much better if it had less douchebag guards and more outdoor concerts? If that describes you, then Blast Fest is right up your alley. Headlined by mid-90s Britpop greats Supergrass and ex-Suede vocalist Brett Anderson, the fest promises a day in the sun not unlike an evening in the club. Obviously, Blast will be playing, and the rest of the festival's line-up reads like a who's-who of who's played Krizis: the UK's Vinny Vinny, Punk TV, My Silver Revolver, Moi Rakety Vverkh and Bajinda Behind the Enemy Lines. Those looking for a fun day in the sun could do much worse.

**CORRECTION:** Last issue, we incorrectly stated that Krizis Zhanra's Blast Fest Music Festival being held at VinZavod begins on July 1. In fact, the festival starts one month earlier, on June 1. We apologize and are fortunate enough to have caught this mistake in time. Sincerely, The eXile Bar-Dak Team.

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**FRIDAY  
May 16**

**ROCK**  
Delfin  
21.00: 16 Tonn  
Pep-si  
23.00: Tabula Rasa  
**French Whore Named Babette, Headphones, Indigo**  
23.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra  
**Lyapis Trubetskoy**  
22.30: Tochka

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**Jazz Piano, Vyacheslav Gorskiy**  
23.00: B-2  
**Staraya Gvardiya, Mishuris**  
21.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**DJs Carlos Tico**  
21.00: Karma Bar  
**DJs Seregin, Budnyak**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra  
**Javybz DJs, Epik Soundsystem: Gatek, Old Dog Nikolaev, Komotsky**  
21.00: Propoganda

**SATURDAY  
May 17**

**ROCK**  
**Segodnya noch'yu**  
21.00: Tabula Rasa  
**Nike Borzov**  
23.00: B-2  
**Blast, Stone Shades, Monsieur Sanbeyovich**  
23.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra  
**Goose (UK/Belgium)**  
22.00: 16 Tonn  
**Die Arzte (Germany)**  
20.00: Apelsin

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**26 Gerts**  
21.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**DJ Valio, Galaher**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra  
**DJs Ada**  
21.00: Karma Bar  
**DJs Soulmate, Onlee, Da Vinci**  
21.00: Propaganda

**SUNDAY  
May 18**

**ROCK**  
Maio

19.00: Tochka  
**Umka i Bronevik**  
21.00: Ikra  
**Private Radio**  
20.00: Tabula Rasa

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**Anastasia Glazkova**  
21.00: B-2  
**Open Blues Jam**  
18.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**Sunday R'N'R Lounge**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra  
**R'N'B&Hip-Hop, DJs Marcus, Lyube**  
23.00: Karma Bar

**MONDAY  
May 19**

**ROCK**  
**EVA, Nonna Mordukova, Equal Minds Theory, Shibo**  
19.00: Tabula Rasa

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**Dr. Nick & Friends**  
21.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**Latino non Stop**  
20.00: B-2  
**DJ Scientifique**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra  
**DJ Partyphone**  
21.00: Propaganda

**TUESDAY  
May 20**

**ROCK**  
**The Skatalities**  
20.00: Apelsin  
**7th Day (Ukraine)**  
21.00: 16 Tonn

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**"The Jumping Tuesdays": Jumping Cats**  
21.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**DJs ZigZag, Anatoliy Gerasimov, Philla**  
21.00: Propaganda  
**DJ Cross**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra

**WEDNESDAY  
May 21**

**ROCK**  
Delirium (Canada)

20.00: Ikra

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**Gorodskaya Suet**  
19.00: B-2  
**Hard Day's Night Parties**  
19.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**Old Dog Nikolaev, DJs Ladjak & MC Big Bad Ragga Man**  
21.00: Propaganda  
**Home Listening DJs**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra

**THURSDAY  
May 22**

**ROCK**  
**Drugly Cats**  
20.00: Tabula Rasa  
**Where are You Liam, Dustveil**  
21.00: 16 Tonn

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**Aleksey Samarin Band**  
21.00: B-2  
**Roking Dad**  
21.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**DJs Studinskiy, Sanches**  
21.00: Propaganda  
**DJ Ivan Tchizevsky**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra  
**DJs Carlos Tico, Amie, Marcus**  
21.00: Karma Bar

**FRIDAY  
May 23**

**ROCK**  
**Inwave Bootleg: Tittsworth (US)**  
22.00: 16 Tonn  
**Uma2rman**  
21.00: Ikra

**Feedback, My Silver Revolver, Blast**  
23.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra  
**Neschastniy Sluchay**  
22.30: Tochka  
**Brainstorm (Latvia)**  
20.00: Apelsin

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**Belleville, Miriam**  
21.00: B-2  
**Grassmeister, Mishuris**  
21.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**DJs Carlos Tico, Alarm, Amie**  
21.00: Karma Bar  
**Javybz DJs, Epik Soundsystem**

21.00: Propaganda

**SATURDAY  
May 24**

**ROCK**  
**Mara**  
21.00: B 1 Maximum  
**Mertvie Delfini**  
21.00: Tabula Rasa  
**Types, Crupier**  
23.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra  
**Delfin**  
23.00: B-2  
**Brainstorm (Latvia)**  
20.00: Apelsin  
**Markscheider Kunst**  
21.00: 16 Tonn  
**W.K?**  
20.00: Ikra

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**Dirty Dozen**  
21.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**Kavinsky (France)**  
23.59: Ikra  
**DJs Philla, Da Vinci, Dolshik**  
21.00: Propaganda  
**DJ Galaher**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra  
**DJs Ada, Amie**  
21.00: Karma Bar  
**DJs Jonny, Tuzov**  
00.30: B-2

**SUNDAY  
May 25**

**ROCK**  
**Broken Social Scene (Canada)**  
21.00: Ikra  
**Royal Hunt (Denmark)**  
20.00: Apelsin

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**Open Blues Jam**  
18.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**DJs Anatoly Ice, Miami, Tony Key**  
20.00: Propaganda  
**Sunday R'N'R Lounge**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra  
**DJs Marcus, Lyube**  
23.00: Karma Bar

**MONDAY  
May 26**

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**Dr. Nick & Friends**  
21.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**DJ Partyphone**  
21.00: Propaganda  
**DJ Scientifique**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra

**TUESDAY  
May 27**

**ROCK**  
**Tequilazzz**  
20.00: Apelsin

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**"The Jumping Tuesdays": Jumping Cats**  
21.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**DJs ZigZag, Anatoliy Gerasimov, DJ Philla**  
21.00: Propaganda  
**DJ Cross**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis Zhanra

**WEDNESDAY  
May 28**

**ROCK**  
**Soisong (Peter Christopher of Coil & Ivan Pavlov)**  
21.00: Ikra  
**DSH DSH**  
21.00: 16 Tonn  
**Kasta**  
20.00: Apelsin

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**Blues sittin' -in**  
21.00: Roadhouse

**CLUBBIN'**  
**Old Dog Nikolaev**  
21.00: Propaganda  
**Home Listening DJs**  
21.00: Ex-Crisis

**THURSDAY  
May 29**

**JAZZ & BLUES**  
**Mindi Albair, Acapella Express (US/RUS)**  
20.00: B 1 Maximum

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# 13 TOXIC TALENTS: HOLLYWOOD'S WORST POLLUTERS

By Eileen Jones

Everybody complains about celebrities, but nobody does anything about them. People, it's time to stop fretting about whether we're a celebrity-obsessed culture—we are, we have been, we're going to be—and instead take practical steps to clean up the celebrity-obsessed culture we've got. Rather than furtively following the exploits of assorted clap-ridden Britneys and Parises and Lindsays while pretending we're not interested, let's attack the problem head-on. What we need are fewer and better celebrities. When it comes to stars, we've gotta have 'em, so why not make sure they're prime stock?

In order to control a star population that's gotten seriously out of hand, we follow the established procedure:

1. Roundup
2. Health Inspection
3. Thinning the Herd
4. Birth Control Injections
5. Tag and Release

Let's say we've already accomplished Step 1, with the use of helicopters and high-powered rifles, and our celebrities are now milling around in their enclosure. Step 2, Health Inspection, poses some specific problems. How do we judge the health of a celebrity? Not personal health, that is—nobody cares about that—but star health. A star is healthy when it's capable of fulfilling the function of a star, which is to be fascinating, so fascinating it casts an attractive glow on everything around it, the movie it's in, the talk shows it appears on, the people it dates, the products it shills for, etc.

Right away we know how to start Thinning the Herd, don't we? Somehow we've allowed a slew of low-wattage bores to become celebrities and hang around for years eating free food. Now they've got to go: Ben Affleck, Halle Berry, Jude Law, Ashley Judd, James Franco, Beyonce, Jennifer Lopez, Demi Moore, Kevin Costner, Ethan Hawke, Charlize Theron, Kate Hudson, Matthew McConaughey, Patrick Dempsey, Keanu Reeves...well, there are too many to name. But fortunately they're dumb and slow; we can pick them off at our leisure.

Before we can even take aim at yawn-inducing Richard Gere, though,

we've got a crisis to deal with: an outbreak of Mad Star Disease. It's a pernicious menace threatening the entire celebrity herd—nay, even the human population could be at risk! More infectious than syphilis, this toxic fungi infiltrates the celebrity host's brain and, if left untreated, spews its poison spores out of every orifice, increasing the celebrity's innate obnoxiousness a thousandfold, and covering everything near them in repulsive stinking rot. Nothing infected stars touch can stay attractive for long: not gorgeous co-stars, not spectacular film and TV projects, not the noblest cause ever espoused by humankind. Even restaurants and clubs they go to, just for the opening, are tainted forever.

We've seen the dread symptoms of Mad Star Disease at work in a hundred cases. Here are thirteen of the most dire:

(Please Note: If you've been exposed to any of these celebrities and feel your brain softening and your innate obnoxiousness increasing, get tested immediately. Expect long lines.)

## THE EXILE'S THIRTEEN TOXIC TALENTS:

### Oprah Winfrey

Mad Star Disease might never have been diagnosed if it weren't for Oprah Winfrey, who's been contagiously awful for so long, the whole world was forced to recognize it. "Oprahfication" is one euphemism for her grim pathogenic effects. She secretes a neurodegenerative goo that slimes everything she touches and, like so many carriers, she insists on touching EVERYTHING: movies, talk shows, reality shows, magazines, charities, politics, no area of public life is safe. Books that once seemed interesting get chosen for her infamous Book Club and become repellently stupid overnight. Celebrated guests on Oprah gibber and drool, and every member of her TV audience is afflicted with the pop-eyed staggers. Even Barack Obama, who's above all earthly taint and therefore immune to the disease, looked slightly less beautiful after Oprah's endorsement. (Just so you know, in case it'll help you decide how to vote, he's a member of a more highly evolved alien species that's come to earth to help us move beyond racial prejudice, as foretold in Star Trek.)

### Nicolas Cage

Note how the disease is eating his

face. He looks like the skull of Gomer Pyle. This has rendered him incapable of impersonating a human being, with serious consequences for any movie he stars in. Look at the trailer for the upcoming Pang Brothers film, *Bangkok Dangerous*, in which he's supposed to play a top assassin who gets involved with normal people, a flat-out preposterous premise. Nobody's going to let this leprous freak near them.

### Seth Rogan/Jonah Hill

Apparently the same person somehow projecting younger or older through trick photography, Rogan/Hill displays a nasty variation of Mad Star Disease known colloquially as "Pig-man Syndrome." This refers to the symptoms of swollen pink flesh combined with compulsive exhibitionism responsible for so much plump male nudity in contemporary Hollywood comedies (*Knocked Up*, *Superbad*, and more coming out every day). Additional symptoms include obscene rants, gross misogyny, general tiresomeness. Audiences now pay a high price for a few dirty laughs courtesy of writer-director-producer-disease carrier Judd Apatow. Cover your eyes for the pig-man horrors of Jason Segal in *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*.

### Barbra Streisand

One of the first recorded sufferers, Streisand may have originally contracted the disease from her early cannibalistic practices, eating ground-up personal assistants. Since then she's been a veritable Typhoid Mary, poisoning whole songbooks by some of the greatest American composers and rendering countless films unclean. It is believed she infected young Jack Nicholson on the set of the 1970 musical flop, *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*. (No kidding, he plays her would-be boyfriend.) This just shows how long the disease's incubation period can run: Nicholson didn't start displaying symptoms till after *The Shining* in 1980.

### Jack Nicholson

He wasn't always the ubiquitous fat toad in sunglasses you see now. Before the onset of Mad Star Disease, he was young, lean, exciting, and an actor. The toxins have so taken over his system, already undermined by decades of cocaine-and-floozie abuse, that today he's capable of nothing more than sitting in the front row at the Academy Awards, or on the floor

at Lakers' games, chuckling mindlessly. Which is still preferable to attempts at acting in films like *The Bucket List*.

### Tom Cruise

He's in the last stages of the disease. The overt symptoms include twitchy rants, stumping for Scientology, spasmodic couch-jumping, and irreversible idiocy. His sudden decline has been so appalling it's obscured the fact that he's been a pox-ridden carrier for years. Young female stars in extended contact with him have all begun displaying symptoms of the brain turning to sponge. Health inspectors are holding out hope for Penelope Cruz's recovery, but Katie Holmes is despaired of.

### Nicole Kidman

Obviously, she caught it from Tom. By most accounts she was a fairly wholesome creature, for an actress, before she met him. That is, until she was, what, 23? And then slowly but surely she succumbed. Now the disease is so far advanced her face is frozen, her eyes shoot venom, and she's in movies like *Bewitched* and *The Hours*.

### Angelina Jolie

The strange thing is, she was diagnosed years ago, when her symptoms included knife-wielding, blood-sporting, press-pandering, dreadful films, and omnisexual urges including incestuous brother-love. Then she was "turned around" by Brad Pitt, according to several authorities, and once again she seemed to cast a starry glow on every exotic child she adopted. But don't be fooled. All the pious charity work in the world can't disguise the mad gleam in the eyes. Just look at her eyes! Then look at her films! That's sponge-brain at work!

### Madonna

We live in fear of what she might embrace next, now that she's blighted pop music, yoga, Kabbalah, *Evita*, bisexuality, and British accents. (Luckily we don't care what happened to Guy Richie.)

### Elton John

Though he may look like he's got the worst case of gout since Henry VIII, that's only one of the ways Mad Star Disease presents itself: in a swollen-to-bursting-point appearance (see Pig-man Syndrome, above), accompanied by extreme wackiness and a refusal to go away. What do you

think really killed Anna Nicole Smith? William Shatner, John Travolta, and Kirstie Alley will also require close monitoring.

### David Mamet

Only now do scientists realize that the weird stilted speech patterns of the characters in so many Mamet plays and scripts (*House of Games*, *Oleanna*, *The Spanish Prisoner*) represent how distorted the world actually SOUNDS to someone suffering from advanced Mad Star Disease. Imagine the torment! Recently, the famous writer "came out of the closet" as a right-wing conservative, shocking nobody. This is another frequent symptom of Mad Star Disease, making unnecessary announcements to the press. Elton John once announced that he was gay.

### Jim Carrey

There's no mistaking it, is there? The crazed beady eyes, the appalling facial and bodily contortions—oh wait, that's Carrey being funny. And we have to confess that the repulsive effects of the sickness actually did help make him funny, one of the rare cases of Mad Star Disease improving a celebrity. In *Living Color*, *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*, *Dumb and Dumber*? Great. But *The Majestic*, *The Number 23*, and other attempts to be a serious actor or a romantic lead? The sooner he's put down, the better!

### Michael Jackson

No more speculation about what's wrong with this guy. Now we know.

Of course there are many, many others who will have to be culled as well—Mariah Carey, Sean Penn, Woody Allen, Anthony Hopkins, Robin Williams, M. Night Shyamalan, Michael Douglas, Catherine Zeta-Jones—we're looking at YOU. However, there are a few infected celebrities who have been receiving treatment and appear to be recovering. We're especially pleased with Alec Baldwin's progress in overcoming grotesque, disfiguring symptoms of Mad Star Disease: the tell-tale bloat, the frothing rants, the bad movies. In spite of all this, we can't afford to lose him, he's just that fascinating—have you SEEN him on 30 Rock?

Moving on to Step 3. Once we're done Thinning the Herd, we can proceed with our healthy star stock. Let's see, who've we got left?

Well, there's Johnny Depp. That's ONE. X



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BARS CLUBS

Things That Do & Don't Suck

The eXile decoding KEY

Table with 5 columns and 1 row, defining symbols for various bar features like 'Fakhie Factor!', 'Feis Kontrol Factor!', etc.

1171

Cheers: Ginormous new bar-club in the up-and-coming Savvinskaya Nab. Row...

Cover: depends on the concert M: Savvinskaya Nab. Row...

B2

Cheers: It took B1 Maximum to make B2 seem like a cool indie club...

Cheers: Feis kontrol wouldn't let in under-21 dyevs, leading us to wonder...

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...

Cover: depends M: Mayakovskaya Address: Bolshaya Sadovaya ul. 8

Barfly

Cheers: Recent 4AM visit saw off-duty Help bartenders gettin' down...

Cheers: exXile alert! Barfly is apparently so popular now that you have to book a table...

Apelsin

Cheers: Concert hall has great sound, and gets some of the best shows in town...

Cheers: About a year ago it was pulling the best-by-Moscow standards—bands and packing a crowd...

Bourbon Street

Cheers: A good place to chill with one whiskey, one scotch, and one beer at the bar...

B1 Maximum

Cheers: Still has no soul and can ruin many gigs with its vast cold vibe...

Cheers: Often has a 'feised at Propka' vibe. Gets uncomfortably packed on weekends...

Booze Bub

Cheers: Recent Shalya-less party was duller than a Death Porn kitchen knife...

Gets TOTALLY packed on weekends, making this an ideal pre-party venue...

Jeers: Sovok vest-wearing grampa tried facing exXile editors Zaitchik and Yasha...

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...

Jeers: and we're not sure that's a good thing. Cover: Depends on who's playing

M: Chisty Prudy Address: Ashcheulov per., 9 Phone: 607-0969, 607-9172

Che

Cheers: exXile alert! exXile staff party introduced Zaitchik to his first batch of drunken dyevs...

Jeers: Black Magic Woman and other Santana trash keep you praying for the techno DJ...

M: Lubyanka Address: Nikolskaya Str. 10/2 Phone: 621-7477

Club XIII

Cheers: You can go home again! Girls will sometimes hit on you just for being a foreigner!

Jeers: The bar is so massive it could fit at least two soccer fields in this basement...

Jeers: Recent Shalya-less party was duller than a Death Porn kitchen knife...

M: Chisty Prudy Address: Myasnitskaya 13 Hours: Wed-Sun, 10pm - 6am

Crazy Milk

Cheers: It's one of those places, you know, the kind that's like a good film...

Jeer: Milk should not be crazy, but rather pasteurized. You might think you've died and gone to middle manager heaven.

M: Dobryninskaya Address: Bolshaya Polyanka ul., 54/1 Phone: 230-7333

Denis Simachev Bar

Cheers: exXile alert! DS showed its humane side by waving wheelchair-bound exXile editor Yasha Levine through face control...

Jeers: Notice we changed the beer factor from one to two stars. DS has finally done what we've been expecting...

M: Teatralnaya Address: Stoleshnikov Per. 12 Phone: 629-8085

Duma

Cheers: There's a lot to like about this place, assuming you can find it...

Jeers: Known to blast annoying artsy French music at insane decibel levels...

M: Okhotnyy Ryad Address: 692-1119 Phone: 692-1119

Fabrique

Cheers: Still the most babe-a-licious club in town, at least where you aren't expected to pay for special favors...

Jeers: exXile alert! Eventhough Levine rode up to the club in a black Merc...

M: Novokuznetskaya Address: Kosmodamianskaya Nab. 2 Phone: 953-6576/540-9955

Gradus Bar

Cheers: The bar is so massive it could fit at least two soccer fields in this basement...

Jeers: Plays music that even Medvedev would like. Address: 26, Sretenka Str.

M: Sukharevskaya Address: daily, 12:00 - 00.00

Help

Cheers: exXile alert! Well, we be gosh darned! We hadn't

Cheers: eXile alert! Ignore previous comments about weekends being hit or miss...

Jeers: During our last visits, the place was half-alive. But then, it was 6pm...

M: Belousskaya Address: 1st Tverskaya-Yamskaya 27, bldg 1 Phone: 995-9535

Ikra

Cheers: Finally an indie/hipster bar hits town that's more or less tasteful to boot...

Jeers: Finally gave us club bars, but make us wait at the bar for a manager every time...

M: Kurskaya Address: Ul. Kazakova 8A Phone: 505-5351

Justo Douche

Cheers: Located on the grounds of an old banya, JBD is the latest addition to the Moscow indie-eltiny club scene...

Jeers: Have become a "members only" establishment. Were served foul \$25 "fresh" bloody marys...

M: Lyubyanka Address: Teatralny proezd 3 Phone: 625-6836

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...

Jeers: Very expensive. Techno music so loud you'd think you were in a provincial Azeri restaurant...

M: Smolenskaya Address: 8, Novinskiy Boulevard (Lotte Plaza, 21 floor) Phone: 229-55-19

Karma Bar

Cheers: exXile alert! Katz nearly had to beat the dirty sluts piling up onto her man with a stick...

Jeers: The cover charge. Damn, what's up with dat. What time iz we livin' in? To get to the overflow garden...

Krizis Zhanra

Cheers: exXile alert! Well, we be gosh darned! We hadn't



**V DAY WEEKEND:  
RAVING WITH  
WWII VETERANS**  
*Vodka, E and shashlik at  
another dacha weekend*

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



For Russians, your birthday is kind of like New Year's Day, when you reconsider everything you've done in your life, and start wondering if there's any good you could do for the world. For my recent birthday, I decided to go over my list of all the good, bad and ugly achievements I have made over the past 29 years. Not surprising, the "good" list was way too short. So I started to

**CLUB REVIEW**

think of the most effective ways for that I could wash my karma laundry. One of the big new elitny trends is to "do good." Most of the conversations among Moscow's tusovka include stories about lent (going 40 days without meat, booze or sex—or so they claim), participation in animal protection funds or support for some virtual orphanage in the middle of nowhere. I don't really believe that all these newly-rich crooks suddenly became saints, but still I always try to listen to them patiently.

I have never participated in any charity at all, and I have only a very vague understanding of this concept. On the one hand, I know a few people who made fortunes using charity programs back in the mid-1990s. On the other hand, I remember getting some charity—American ham, which they gave us at school, together with Tampax for the girls (that was the first time I saw this thing!), all part of what they called "humanitarian aid." I guess ham and tampons were two different sides of the same coin.

Since then I always had this idea in my head that charity was just another invention of rich Americans who have so much money that they don't know where to spend it. Not all Russians in my opinion are rich enough (or open-minded, depending on your point of view) just to give away their money for some virtual cause.

Excuse my gross generalizations but to be perfectly honest, I don't trust any charity funds whatsoever, because I know how people make money there. This line of reasoning brought me to the conclusion that, if I'm going to do something good for my karma, I need to arrange something small but practical and put in on my "good" list.

Luckily, I started planning my good deed on the eve of a particular holiday which offered me lots of opportunities to be good. I'm talking about May 9, the day we kicked Nazi Germany in their balls. I know, they don't use the term "Nazi Germany" anymore, replacing it with politically correct "Victory Day," and some of you American readers are taught at schools that you won the WWII. Actually we Russians won it, and most Russians are proud of that fact even though it happened long ago. Perhaps we just have a certain stamina that most countries don't have.

Anyway, my mission on Victory Day was not to discuss historical questions. A couple of my friends and I met in the newly opened **PAPARAZZI BAR** which occupies an ancient basement on Pyatnitskaya Ulitsa in old Moscow, to discuss our plans for making the town better. Sipping through a very long list of reasonably priced drinks (a shot of Absolut for just 90 rubles!) and listening to the famous DJ Arkady Air's set, we came up with an idea: wouldn't it be really cool to make a party for veterans, so that we could hear some of their stories and show them that we appreciate them on the day that is theirs. The Paparazzi Bar had a good vibe and real charm, but the veterans would probably be shocked to see the packed basement with its crowd of half naked ravers, their eyes aglow. So we decided it would be best to take our charity somewhere else, outside of town.

Those of you who live in Moscow and have never visited Peredelkino should be ashamed. Moscow doesn't have a huge number of cultural sites (compared to Saint Pete's for example) so visiting this village for famous Soviet writers and checking out their estates makes for a great way to spend a weekend.

Through some of my good connections, my friends and I were able to book the fantastic dacha of Korney Chukovsky, a famous Soviet-era children's writer, who owned a vast tract of forest along with his gorgeous

Peredelkino house.

It was a bit weird when the plump museum keeper with a shiny bald head started telling us the history of the house, and said that the place is "actually for adults," and then pointed to another area and said, "Here is the famous lawn where Chukovsky used to make bonfire parties with children." Am I just so paranoid that I see hidden pedophiles everywhere?

We didn't have any children around us on that day so I had nothing to worry about. But we did have a lot of very old veterans. I am not going to tell you how we got 60 vets on the lawn (it was not an easy task, as they all were busy, and we had to have really a good reason, so the veteran committee approved our party as acceptable and sent their troops our way) but the number of young guests who also came along was well over 200.

So with a ratio of 4 ravers to 1 veteran, we treated them like royalty: offering shashlyk that we prepared on the spot, special *pokhodnaya kasha* (to keep the military lyrics), giving away numerous gifts from different companies and showing them our music performances that we'd prepared just for them. We actually didn't spend a penny on anything — after our persuasive calls we were given everything for free.

It was a very pleasant day as two far-apart generations partied together as one, and most of the vets, many of whom are over 85, were lively and full of spark. It was not boring for us either, as all the bushes were full of young people in action, and overall, the crowd mixed it up well.

I was not too much into drinking with my buddies or chasing girls that day. I was more interested living history by seeing and talking to the Russian vets. I had a very interesting conversation with the former colonel of military intelligence who told me how he brought his own war trophy from Germany—a V12 Horch 670 cabrio—and drove it around for next 20 years, and other stories about life in Moscow in the 1950s. Then I had a drink with Nikolai Stepanovich, a former airborne officer, with his thrilling stories about the 10-to-1 ratio of girls to guys in post-war Moscow.

After this day I realized that there are some ways I can do charity. It should be something fun, tangible and pleasant for everybody. And it should be good for my karma, of course.

**Club:** Paparazzi Bar  
**Address:** 3/4, Pyatnitskaya Str.,  
**Phone:** 953 1620  
**M:** Novokuznetskaya  
**Hours:** 11:00 – till last guest, daily

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 baby-o-luscious 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 Kajeogoo 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 a 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 fryt ass" on the scale of things. Can be a bit boring if no concert is happening.  
**Queers:** Every Thursday  
**M:** Chistyev Prudy / Kitai Gorod  
**Phone:** 623-2594, 778-2234  
**Address:** Pokrovka 16/16, str. 1  
**Hours:** 24/7

**Krisha**



**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 Obergruppenführer 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 chillout 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 Linquist: "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 mascots, 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 brothels 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:** Okhotniy 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:** Doug's in, but we still have a tough time convincing the *okhranik* to let us in for free! 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 livers are on vacation til next year. Absolutely friggin' packed full of sluts and drunk eXholes, with everyone drinking. This is it folks, no unsmountable face control, no extreme prices, tons of approachable offerings and now they even have America's finest brew available: Bud. Thursday "Office Night" rawogs: 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 Tuesdays! 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.  
**Cover:** 150R on weekends, free-ish during the week  
**M:** Chistyev Prudy  
**Phone:** 755-9554  
**Address:** Myasnitskaya 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, glam-our 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 oogling 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 tight 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

**Rai**



**Cheers:** If we didn't always get comped drinks here, we'd probably have a much better understanding of how a place that's open a total 12 hours a week can afford to stay open in Moscow. Once saw Yeltsin's grandson harassing a defenseless DJ here! Second rate NHL star Eric Cole went on record saying this is the best club ever. Good place to show guests that there's a fundamental difference between going out in the US and going out in Moscow.  
**Jeers:** Don't bother unless you're going with a regular or want to shell out a few G for a table. Girls here won't even look at us as if we're beneath them.  
**M:** If you're even asking, you won't get in  
**Address:** Bolotnaya Nab.  
**Hours:** 00:00-06:00 Fridays and Saturdays

**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 over-rated! 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. 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! McCoy's 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!  
**Jeers:** Are they trying to push a blow habit on us by feis-ing 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.  
**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—intellegentsia 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 pafus or feis kontrol, cheap drinks and food. 30% discount for journalists, doctors and musicians! Lots of bliny, decent amount of groups of single 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**

**LEGENDARY SAFARI LODGE**  
ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX  
STRIP-CLUB  
KARAOKE  
RESTAURANT  
**247-07-96**  
Park Kultury  
Zubovsky boulvd, 27/5

**NEW LOCATION**





★★★

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.

No one on the eXile staff (except Babooshka) has one. M: Sukharevskaya Phone: 607-2638 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 doorway. Steve has created the favorite hangout for British castaways in town, with a lively pub feel to it any day of the week.

M: Okhotny Ryad Phone: 290-4222 Address: 5/6 Tverskaya Ulitsa (go down Nikitskaya Per.) Hours: 8 till late

Sixteen Tons



★★★

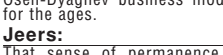
Cheers:

eXile alert! If you think of passing this place up next weekend, don't. Even if the concert upstairs sucks, the first floor fills up with so much indie babage, it's kinda hard to believe that you're in an Irish bar. Indie's in! They're there for the music, even if you're there just for them... Maybe the eXile's 10th anniversary party that took place here caused all this? Without a freakin' doubt about it folks. Last summer, the place handled the mad crowd rush, and the mad drunken mob of eXholes, like professionals. No one could have done it half as well as Sixteen Tons did, with its superb bar staff, excellent sound system, great stage, and eXhole-friendly management.

M: 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 number of dveys and serious music aficionados. Downstairs, a range of scalliwags ranging from oligarchs to xPats to divorced mamas to starving journalists. Management not averse to fights outside.

M: Kievskaya Address: Saviinskaya Nab. Hours: 18.00 - 6.00

Soho Rooms



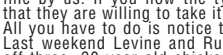
★★★

Cheers:

At last a club we can't get into that looks like something more than a circus tent. Everything about this place feels expensive, like the investors said to hell with the whole Leto-Zima-Osen-Dyagilev business model and built a club for the ages.

M: Kievskaya Address: Saviinskaya Nab. 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 big lunch offers a tasty 3-course evro fusion meal (menu changes daily) that's a damn bargain for Moscow these days.

M: Kitay Gorod Address: Saviinskaya Nab. Hours: 18.00 - 6.00

Phone: 221-7557 Covers: 300 rubles, or something Address: Solyanka 11/6 Hipster Blog: s-11.ru

Sorry Babushka



★★★

Cheers:

eXile alert! Sunday nights at Babushka are the place to see your favorite club waitresses get liquored up... that's right, this is the place they go to unwind after a tough weekend of work!

M: Kitay Gorod Address: 784-0615 Address: Slavianskaya 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 picked up a chick that night just by standing at the bar and nodding yes.

M: Kitay Gorod 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 pod-moskovie student dveys, as well as a slightly more aged, but yet so easily bangle secretary contingent. Music is loud, so you won't have talk to them.

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 reeved it. With an ok bottle of Spanish red starting at 600r, tasty tapas-style cheese and cold cut platters 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.

M: Malvi Palashevskiy pereulok 6 Phone: 739-1045 Metro: Pushkinskaya Hours: Everyday from 6 p.m to 6 a.m. Web: www.vinosyr.ru Hours: 18.00 - 6.00

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 factor significantly.

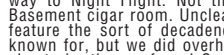
tried out a Latin dancing lesson here and almost got beat up by a chick. Plenty of young sluts lookin' for luv. Stays packed all night long, Voodoo has become part of the must-do "circuit" for everyone from hormone-charged eXholes to Latino-luv'n' teenies.

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 BO factor. Snide-man 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.

M: Belorusskaya Phone: 253-2323 Address: Sredny Tishinsky pereulok 5/7 Hours: 18.00 - 6.00

WALL STREET BAR



★★★

Cheers:

New two-level bar for financial types, opened by some local stock brokers. Talk about the trickle down effect! Perfect place to take a client on his way to Night Flight. Not that we have clients.

M: Kropotkinskaya Phone: 12:00 - till last guest, daily

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 Brestskoy" used to be, signalling that in 2008, the beard is being replaced by the bilan. Good Pina Colodas.

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.

M: Lubyanka Address: Pivchesky 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 at in this very paper for info on parties and discounts.

M: Pushkinskaya Phone: 609-00-65; 609-00-54 Address: Strastnoi Bulvar 10/2 Hours: 21.00 - 6.00

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.

M: Dobrynskaya Phone: 237 6652 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.

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.

M: Potapovskiy per. 5 Phone: 917-4545 Address: Pivchesky 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 at in this very paper for info on parties and discounts.

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 Stol 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 felias 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.

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.

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.

M: Novokuznetskaya Phone: 959-3320 Address: Raushskaya Nab. 4/5 Hours: Evening til morning

CONCERT.RU ЗАКАЗ, ДОСТАВКА БИЛЕТОВ 644 2222 BLAST FEST 2008 SUPERGRASS (UK) BRETT ANDERSON (UK) PUNKTV (РОССИЯ) BLAST (РОССИЯ) МОИ ПАКЕТЫ В ВЕРХ (РОССИЯ) 1 ИЮНЯ 14:00 ВИНЗАВОД АРТ-ЦЕНТР «ВИНЗАВОД» 4-й Сыромятинский пер., д. 1, стр. 6 ПОДРОБНОСТИ НА WWW.RIFFAGENCY.RU ВХОД ТОЛЬКО ДЛЯ ЛИЦ СТАРШЕ 18 ЛЕТ. НЕ ЗАБУДЬ ЗАХВАТИТЬ С СОБОЙ СВОЙ ПАСПОРТ.



# EATS

**KEY** \$ = UP TO \$15.00 \$\$\$ = \$30.00 – \$50.00  
 \$\$ = \$15.00 – \$30.00 \$\$\$\$ = \$50.00 – ∞  
 (for one salad, entree, and one cocktail per person)

## African

### Adis Ababa

**\$**  
**Cheers:**  
 The only Ethiopian restaurant in Moscow is also its best. Authentic oils and spices mean legit 'Thopian goodness in every dish. The Ghoulash Adis Ababa just about had us planning a vacation to the Horn. Every dish is spicy and filling; including decent vegetarian selection. Hoegaarten on tap. Friendly staff will occasionally play Ethiopian funk.  
**Jeers:**  
 We're not sure what it is about Ethiopian food, but for some reason you just don't really get the urge to go very often.  
**M:** Kurskaya  
**Phone:** 916-2432  
**Address:** Zemlyanoi Val, Dom 6

## American

### Correa's

**\$**  
**Cheers:**  
 eXile alert! New Correa's branch opened up near Mayakovskaya. Recent tasting affirmed a thumbs-up on the brunchfast goods. Also, the babeage factor seems to get higher and pain-ier every weekend. They've added a couple of new slammin-good omelets to their repertoire, including a great spinach and mozzarella baby that we thoroughly enjoyed. Great lunch option if you're not too hungry... all three sandwiches

our table ate had us in nirvana! 5+ for the smoked turkey and goat cheese 'wich. A most awesomely delicious Buffalo Mozzarella salad (290r). Every item is a delight; in fact it might be the best breakfast offering outside of the US, if you're into the American breakfast thing (and only a barbarian wouldn't be). We tried the goat cheese and black bean omelet, and yes, it's Moscow's best. As for the dinner meals... First, the marinated olives 'n artichoke hearts. Second, the juicy Roasted beet salad with pesto, aged goat cheese and pine nuts. We didn't know beets could be so good! Third, the Terriyaki Chicken Pita with avocado and cilantro—best damn sandwich in Moscow. Fourth, the entrees. The grilled salmon with orange-soy glaze and fresh snow peas is an amazing, juicy, fresh cut that will leave you very pleased, while Strip Steak with berry-glaze and thick cut guacomole salad will satisfy your meat jones. Deli items a hit with oil-windfall Russians.

**Jeers:**  
 For some reason babes with babies make this their favorite weekend brunchfast spot. If like us your idea of a good breakfast does not include looking at some way-too-thin-and-hot chick trying to show off her baby (the new accessory of the Russian elitny class), then like us, you'll be slightly annoyed. When we tried to order an Erdinger beer from the menu, waitress told us "we haven't had that for quite some time." Ordynka location hidden in a business park, of all places. May make you feel a little too delovoy as you search for the entrance. Seating area too small. Place has become so popular that you need to reserve hours in advance.  
**M:** 1: Belorusskaya; 2: Tretyakoskaya, 3: n/a, 4: Paveletskaya 5: Mayakovskaya  
**Phone:** 1: 933-6157 2: 725-5878, 3: 729-2585, 4: 969-2113, 5: 789-9654  
**Address:** 1: Bolshaya Gruzinskaya 32; 2: Bolshaya Ordynkaya 40/2 (through the shlangbaum), 3:

Rublevo-Uspenskoe Shosse 85/1, 4: Ul. Sadovnicheskaya 82 bld. 1 5: Ul. Gasheka 7/1  
**Hours:** 8.00 - 22.00 weekdays, 9.00 - 22.00 week-ends

### Flat Iron Grill



**\$\$**  
**Cheers:**  
 This place is located in the Marriott Courtyard hotel. If you're already staying there and absolutely cannot leave the premises, then there's no reason not to eat here. After all, it's right in the lobby and the hamburger is pretty good, and if you like fried chicken, then the Caesar salad ain't bad either.

**Jeers:**  
 The WiFi isn't free.  
**M:** Okhotny Ryad  
**Phone:** 981-3300  
**Address:** Voznesensky Pereulok 7  
**Hours:** All of them

### Hard Rock Cafe



**\$\$**  
**Cheers:**  
 Legendary burger (600r) perhaps the greatest burger this town has ever seen. Giant Angus patty, with bacon, cheese, and onion rings. Mmmmm, we you can taste your arteries clot! Hot damn, folks, that thar's a hell of a breakfast special! For an amazing 100R you get three eggs any style, bacon, sausage and toast, and potatoes! Move over, Starlite! We nit you shot, folks! Also the breakfast burrito (180R) got high marks from Dr. Dolan. We had their burger and we rank it tied with Starlite for Moscow's best, save Scandinavia's gourmet burger. Huge portions, great setting that will impress your outside-the-Third-Ring date. Nachos massive and satisfying, good club sand. Non-stop music vids mean that you won't have embarrassing silent moments with your date.

**Jeers:**  
 New menu seems to have jacked up the prices, while leaving the portions the same. All-VH1 all the time video system makes us pine for the days of Creed. They get you with the 60R "American coffee" that's espresso 'n' water. There's always something... A lot of stuff, like the bacon, too salty. A lot of songs, like Creed, too shitty. Heavy American tourist presence. Place so packed now you'll probably have to wait.  
**M:** Smolenskaya

**Phone:** 244-8970  
**Address:** Stary Arbat 44  
**Hours:** 24/7

### Starlite Diner

**\$\$**  
**Cheers:**  
 eXile alert! The Starlite burger has been rocking our world for a few weeks in a row. Not sure if it's the looming snapper season or what, but the patty just seems softer, juicier and has just the right thickness. Starlite at Mayakovskaya has reopened after a minor fire, and is now more Starlite-y than ever before. Was the fire in anyway connected with the newly installed eXile newspaper racks in their bathroom stalls? We just order water and stare. Discovered bagels hidden on the breakfast menu and, even if they're frozen Lenders, we ain't complaining. Get them with bacon for a tasty kosher treat! Re-affirm two howlin' pastel coyotes way up on the Southwest chicken wrap! New eXpand-O breakfast menu has our mouths a-waterin'! Thumbs up on the Florentine Omelet with spinach and feta. Lotsa other items look good too, like the Kamchatka Crab omelet and the pecan pancakes. Best place in town for a late night pre-bedtime burger. Is it just us, or did the omelets get incredibly tasty again over the past month? The best place to watch issues of international significance unfold. Seriously beefed up the ham&cheese! Two important points: Some of Moscow's best burgers and best breakfasts. eXile staffers agree: late night plate of nachos are vastly preferable to clubbing. The chili may not be world famous but it is yumilicious and Moscow's best. Mongolicious omelets that even tames the violent temper of Morris U. Snideman, Esq. Stomach-expanding breakfast burritos a good alternative. Milkshakes huge again, and orgasmic. Try the coffee-chocolate-oreo mix.

**Jeers:**  
 Starlite burger ain't a 100 percent surefire hit. Previous visit revealed an undercooked, soggy patty that had a cooked-in-microwave feel to it. Kid-filled Sundays remind us why we've forced so many girls to have abortions.  
**M:** #1: Mayakovskaya #2: Oktyabrskaya #3: Universitet  
**Phone:** #1: 290-9638; #2: 959-8919; #3: 783-4037  
**Address:** #1: Sadovaya Bolshaya ul. 16; #2: Ul Korovy val. 9; #3: Pr. Vernadskogo 6  
**Hours:** 24 hours

## Arab

## Fossil

**\$**  
**Cheers:**  
 This place could be Moscow's best Arab option. Our first round of tasting eXposed us to delicious hummus (190r), succulent babaganush (210r) and mouth watering kebab. We'll be back, so be sure to stay tuned for updates...

**Jeers:**  
 Total lack of a dye presence that would make the Hezbollah proud. The spinach pastries seemed to be experiencing microwave-induced soggygness. They play what could be the worst restaurant in Moscow, a blend of soothing arab techno and bad 80s music. Luckily, it ain't that loud.

**M:** Chistye Prudy  
**Phone:** 626-4570  
**Address:** Ul. Myasnitskaya 24/1 str. 1

## Asian

### Aromatnaya Reka

**\$**  
**Cheers:**  
 eXile boku alert! This place serves it up real and tasty every freakin' time. Just tried the fresh spring rolls and they are the best in town. While the pho won't rock your world, it will keep you coming back. Meee sooo huuungry! AR's housed in a now-defunct "Americana" gay/transvestite cabaret, but don't be fooled by its new location. The waiters may be effeminate, but the cuisine is straight Viet Cong. Tasty springrolls, good noodles, pho and just about every other Vietnamese dish is as close as you'll get to perfection this side of Laos. Ho Chi Minh would be proud. And the food's so reasonably priced, even the Vietnamese could afford to eat here.

**Jeers:**  
 If we jeered, we'd only be showing that Americans are sore losers. So we'll go ahead and do that by saying: Don't bother ordering the steamed spring rolls or the grilled eel wrapped in spinach.  
**M:** Baumanskaya  
**Phone:** 267-3190  
**Address:** Takmanov per. 11

## Spicy

**\$\$-S**  
**Cheers:**

28 мая (среда) 20:00

# iLiKETRAiNS (UK)

Восходящие звезды британского инди-рока

# Art-Garbage/Запасник

Клуб «Китай-город», Старосадский переулоч, д. 5  
www.art-garbage.ru

Спец. гость The Decomposers (Rus)

МИНЗДРАВСОЦРАЗВИТИЯ РОССИИ ПРЕДУПРЕЖДАЕТ: КУРЕНИЕ ВРЕДИТ ВАШЕМУ ЗДОРОВЬЮ



## EATS REVIEW

### THE BATTLE OF VINOGRAD

By Field Marshal von Paulus



Field Marshal Friedrich Paulus, commander of the German Sixth Army trapped in Stalingrad without adequate forces or supplies

Against mein better judgment, I heff followed mein fuhrer's orders to rewiew **VINOGRAD**, despite ze fact dat they heff no schnitzel. It is difficult for me to understand ze ironic approach zat ze take, and more difficult to understand how de manager can get away wit ze handle-bar mustachio zat e insists on vearing. De new-ish cafe, brought to you by ze volk who formerly ran ze Real McCoy, is located not far from de Belorussian front, in a basement near Zen Coffee. It is equal parts bar and restaurant, vich does not lend itzelf to zis rewiew format. But, zince I do not heff ze spine to refuse a direct order, I will heff to deal wit my impossible order, as it is better zan taking mein own life.

Winograd is no place for ze good German soldier. In fact, I am

glad zat so few of mien troops from ze 6th Army survived, because I do not savor ze sought of zem reweling in a place zuch as zis. Vich goess to show you zat perhaps mein fuhrer was more far zinking zan I zought. Zis in turn impliess zat perhaps I should not complain about zis assignment. But zis type of relativizm is exactly vat I vished to avoid. Oi vey!

I am also predisposed to dizlike Winograd because, while it iz wery weasonably pwiced, ze beer is avfully expensive. So, while a Jameson viskey costs a moderate 180 rubles unt Russian Standard wodka costs just 100 rubles, ze cheapest beer iz 230 rubles. Zey are celebrating ze wictory ower my people every day here vit zer ridiculous prices!

Ze food iz also difficult for a straight zhooter zuch as myself to understand. Zey have a similar menu to Ze McCoy's, except like everyzing zes days, ze portions are slightly smaller and ze quality slightly better. Zey have some Tex Mex und some pasta dishes, but I decided to try de 350 ruble grilled chicken, vich I liked in spite of myself. Ze grilled weggies that came wiz it vere weri tasty, und ze chicken itzelf vas nice and juizi.

Unfortunately, ze DJ spoiled mein appetite. Dis is not your typical progressive hoess zat belongs in ze stylich Moscau restaurants zat vould blend in Berlin or even mein Vaterland in Frankfurt. But no, zey had to give ze "turntables" (I heff ze quotation marks because in fact he used ze CD mixer und ewen de ipod) to ze Albanian. I vould razer heff un single division of Romanians zan an entire battalion of ze Albanians! Zis DJ who plays his funk music ewery Thurzday vould gif me no peace! I vould razer be locked in ze vindovless basement und raped by mein pater for 18 years zan forced to listen to zis Albanian again. Zat vould be pleasurable compared to heffing to listen to ze Albanian DJ at ze vindovless basement in Winograd. In fact, I vould beg for zis treatment! Please, pater, please! Ich bin sehr erfreut!

**Winograd**  
Metro: Belorusskaya  
Telephone: 251-7700  
Address: Lesnaya 1/2  
Hours: 24

## Balkan

### Mehana Bansko



\$\$

#### Cheers:

eXile arson alert! Last we've heard, this place was charred like an over-grilled pork rhind. Strong buy recommendation for Mehana's business lunch, perhaps the best in town ruble for ruble. Four hearty courses; they don't scrimp on the portions. Even non-terrestrial-meat-eaters can find something satisfying. Stuffed eggplant one of the few non-asslike veggie options in Moscow. Killer spicy sausages, and what may be the best okroshka in town. Try the chushka bereg—red pepper stuffed with cheese. Pork marinated in vodka and soy a hit with Russkies.

#### Jeers:

Don't touch the Bulgarian pastries, for the love of God! The fact that the veal stuffed with bacon and peppers looks like a dildo doesn't hide the fact that the dish is a bit bland.

M: Smolenskaya

Phone: 244-7387

Address: Smolenskaya 9/1

### Yugos



\$\$

#### Cheers:

With Budva dissolving like Tito's Yugoslavia, we've transferred our loyalties to Yugos, easily the most popular Serbian food for Serbians in town. It's one of those places where you'll be glad they list the weight of the portions... we're talking serious piles of meat here, folks. Whole cow farms get sacrificed here on an average night. Serbian habit of shouting greetings across the dining room adds to authenticity. The pleskavitsa (R280) and the chevapchichi (R220) lovingly grilled and famously tasty. If you order in advance, they'll prepare a four-person banquet for less than 1000 rubles, and we're betting there's enough food to feed 8. XXXL-sized chef shows that she's not one the chef, she's also a customer. Best shopsky salad (R99) we've ever had in a place that hasn't been bombed by NATO. Atkins dieters will think they died and went to heaven.

#### Jeers:

Kind of a hassle to get to. Gypsy concerts on Fridays might be a little much. War criminals welcomed. Fries tasted like they'd been chewed up and spit out already.

M: Taganskaya

Phone:

Address: Nikoloyamskaya 40/22 str. 4

## Cafes

### Bookafe

\$

#### Cheers:

The best cafe food in Moscow, hands-down. We've liked everything we tried here, and believe you us, we were expecting to sneer. The blinding Juicyfruit colors may be annoying, but they attract plenty of quality dyevs. The spinach and pesto salad is an expensive favorite (450r), the quesadillas (230r) are larger and tastier than you'd think, and even the cheesecake rocks. Dyevs say that the sushi is good, and they offer free wi-fi and plugs o'plenty.

#### Jeers:

We'd jeer the pretentious photography and design books, except that they're a good way to keep your date entertained without having to talk to her.

M: Tsvetnoi Bulvar

Phone: 694-0356

Address: Sadovaya Samotechnaya 13

Hours: 11:00 - 02:00

### Respublika

\$

#### Cheers:

This hip little pink-colored cafe in the second-floor bowels of the Respublika book and music store is easy to miss, or overlook. But the soups, salads, and pasta dishes are surprisingly solid and the milk shakes are delish. The coffee goes especially well with the free wifi. Worth sitting down for a few the next time your picking up a CD. People do still buy CDs, right?

#### Jeers:

Only Japanese beer on offer. Sometimes film crews are hanging out to film some precious bit for MTV.

M: Mayakovskaya,

Phone: 251-6527

Address: 1st Tverskaya-Yamskaya 10

Hours: 11:00 - 23:00

### Kvartira 44

\$

#### Cheers:

The perfect boho alternative to Mayak if you're in the Nikitskaya hood, Kvartira 44 has an appropriately musty feel and second-hand furniture motif to go with its high bearded-intelligentsia-clientele

factor. Offerings are cheap and not all that good, but it's a therapeutic way to escape the usual crass 'n flashy Moscow-Boomtown places.

#### Jeers:

Like we said, High Bearded Intelligentsia Factor, as well as weary women with shawls around their shoulders. Also too many journalists and yuppies who believe that they're actually complex and artistic. Can be crowded.

M: Pushkinskaya

Phone: 291-7503

Address: Bolshaya Nikitskaya 22/2

Hours: 12:00 - 02:00

### Vinograd



\$\$

#### Cheers/Jeers:

See special guest Nazi Field Marshal review!

M: Belarusskaya

Phone: 251-7700

Address: Lesnaya 1/2

Hours: Round da clock

## Caucasian

### Dioscuria

\$

#### Cheers:

Stick with the basics—lobio, eggplant roulette and dolma—and you can't go wrong. Ruble prices unaffected by Moscow boom, making Dioscuria one of the greatest bargains around! Almost as cheap as Guriya, but thrice the quality. One taste of their sturgeon shashlyk or Adzharian khachapuri (with a fried egg in the middle) and you'll be hooked. The delicious lavash bread comes piping hot, perfect for sopping up leftover juices.

#### Jeers:

Wild fluctuations in quality remind us of the Nasdaq. Recent lulya kebab served blackened on the outside, raw on the inside and apparently deep fried. Still has deafening live music sung on weekend evenings. Menu doesn't quite have all the favorites (meaning dolma); sometimes the backroom mafia feel is a bit too realistic.

M: Arbatskaya

Phone: 291-3759

Address: Nikitski Bulvar dom 5, str. 1 (through the post office arch off Novy Arbat)

Hours: 11:00 - 23:00

### Genatsvale

\$\$

#### Cheers:

eXile alert! Ames recently visited here, comping a free meal from wealthy retired tourists. The Arbat location is pretty gauche, but it's also pretty tasty. Bill came to \$40 a head, but the food was as good as any Georgian fare. Recent visit reaffirms that Genatsvale is good, but the prices have doubled. Delish veal shashlik. Quick service, excellent hachapuri (100R), decent harcho (120R) and mighty succulent chicken shashlik (180R). Excellent prices, a great Val-U. Also serves a massive variety of lamb and pork dishes, including ribs, knuckle, shashliki, and things we've never heard of.

#### Jeers:

Prices have shot way up. Hot red lobio tasted like canned Rosarita refritos, only not as good. Lamb chunks in harcho tasted like buffalo chips. Monster PA speakers blast at night; to avoid it, you have to sit at dwarf tables in the back. Expect tables packed with black-clad Georgians giving 10-minute toasts in which all guests have to stand with tired arms holding up shaky glasses of vodka.

M: Kropotkinskaya

Phone: 202-0445

Address: Ostozhenka 12/1

Hours: 11:00 - midnite

### Metekhi

\$

#### Cheers:

eXile alert! Reaffirm on food here after recent visit. Tasty shashliki, among the best khachapuri, esp the "Metekhi Khachapuri" with 2bl cheese. Still an eXile favorite. Came here with a Georgian born in Metekhi, and it made him homesick. It's THAT good, folks! Red and green lobio that actually contains fresh ingredients. All the taste of the best Georgian places without the slow service and gloomy decor.

#### Jeers:

Lamb shashlik a bit too fatty. Not easy to find - it's on a small side street. Cheery decor may make you feel this can't possibly be a Georgian restaurant.

M: Tsvetnoi Bulvar

Phone: 200-0837

Address: 1-i Kolobovskiy Per. 11

Hours: 11:00 - 23:00

### Tiflis

\$\$-\$\$\$

#### Cheers:

eXile alert! Recent all-things-Georgian ban means you can't get any Borjomi or Kindzmaurali! Not even if you try bribing the wait staff. Recent sending-away party confirmed that Tiflis is probably the best Georgian restaurant in town, especially with the outdoor terrace. Everything is high-quality, especially the various

shashliki, satsivi, lobio... The favorite Georgian restaurant for those foreigners who are rich enough to believe that they'll get in on the Gazprom share thing. Serve generous portions of everything; prices higher than Metekhi but worth it.

#### Jeers:

Sadly, they the Georgian beverage ban did not extend to chachi. Service can be so incredibly slow you'd think you could fly to Georgia and back and serve yourself more quickly than these turtles. Might make you pre-pay if you're dining late. No little puppet figures of Georgians paying bribes to Moscow cops in the metro. Place often packed. They get mad at you when you try to catch the fish in the fountain in the upstairs dining room.

M: Park Kultury

Phone: 8-499-766-9728

Address: Ostozhenka 32

Hours: 12:00 - 00:00

## Eclectic

### City Grill

\$\$-\$\$\$

#### Cheers:

eXile alert! This might be the only place in town you and your Russian dyev can agree on. Thumbs-up for the Caesar Salad (185r). Our Russian date enjoyed the California Rolls (295r). Good option when you're sick of Starlite but don't want something too fancy. Delicious salads and dumplings. Has quietly become one of our favorite places when it comes to finding that point between interesting food, good prices, and cool atmosphere. Try the tuna roll salad, the Thai stir-fry, and anything with duck. Cute waitresses, strange chrome bathrooms, and plenty of lookers. Good biz lunch.

#### Jeers:

They pack you in a bit too close, meaning you can't reveal state secrets without everyone listening in. Service is still sometimes a bit off. Don't order the milkshakes. They could use a shake up of their crappy Belgian beer list.

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

\$\$-S

#### 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! 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: Slavyanskaya Ploschad 2

## European

### Aist

\$\$\$\$

#### 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 trawling 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. Bronaya 8/1

Hours: 12:00 - 24:00

### Apple Restaurant

\$\$\$

Holy shit! A new Chinese/Thai place calling itself Spice! Could this be the answer to our prayers?

#### Jeers:

No! Place should be called ass-y, as the only feeling we were left with was sadness over our utterly bland meal. Not one piece of food had any flavor to it whatsoever, let alone any spice. Couldn't find the Thai portion of the menu and later heard a rumor that it sucked so bad, they dropped it almost immediately. Too bad they didn't do the same for the Chinese part. There's a good chance their kitchen is infected by the assiness of Pourboire up the street.

M: Belorusskaya

Phone: 766-2222

Address: Ul. Krasina 27, str. 1

### Maki Kafe

\$

#### Cheers:

One of the top spots in central Moscow for surprisingly delicious food at surprisingly not-ridiculously-expensive prices. Good place to take a dyev-date. The Thai coconut soup, milkshakes, salads and even sushi rolls rank high with us or dyevs we've been there with. And oh does Maki have a lotta dyevs to maki upi. Not that we ever would, but if you're one of those peacocking pickup artist douchebags, then you'll find plenty of girls here to laugh at you. High ceilings, spare wood interior make this unlike most pseudo-mod shitholes. All in all, we likes it.

#### Jeers:

People tend to think this place is better than it is. Just have reasonable expectations. In life, as well as in Maki visiting.

M: Pushkinskaya

Phone: 692-9731

Address: Glinshevskii Pereulok 3

Hours: Mon-Thurs 12:00 - 00:00, Fri-Sat 12:00 - 05:00

### Vietcafe

\$

#### Cheers:

Rockin' Vietnamese food in the very center! Hard to pronounce anything on the menu, but we'd have a hard time complaining about it either. Fo ga (160R) and pho bo (180R) soups were giant-sized and rocked our world. Mains weren't too shabby either. Babe waitresses in elegant Asian gowns gave us chubbies.

#### Jeers:

B-lunch is Evro. Why would you want to go to a Vietnamese place and eat evro? We failed to find the promised chicken and pork in our Fo Sao Tkhit, instead finding it stuffed with shrimp (which wasn't so bad). If you really want good Vietnamese, you have to go to a rynok.

M: Okhotny Ryad

Phone: 629-1104, 629-0830

Address: Gazetny Per. 3

### Yoko

\$\$\$\$

#### Cheers:

The fish is of high quality, but...

#### Jeers:

if Yoko's chefs were true to their craft, they'd give Novikov a karate chop below the belt for breaking with world sushi regulations and miniaturizing Yoko's entire menu selection. Be warned, Yoko's sushi portions are two times smaller than you'd expect.

Address: Soimonovsky proezd, 5

M: Kropotkinskaya

Hours: From 12:00 till last guest

Telephone: (495)506-00-33, 506-55-33



## 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.

**Jeers:**

You can’t afford a room in the hotel but have to eat next to people who can.

**M:** Teatralnaya
**Phone:** 928-7602
**Address:** 8/10 Neglinnaya Ul.

## ArteFAQ



**\$\$**

**Cheers:**

Like Tofer said in last issue’s review, this place is “art 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 girлие 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

**\$\$\$**

**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

**\$\$**

**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:**

Slimpy 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:** Myasnitskaya 13-3

**Hours:** always

## Eat & Talk

**\$\$**

**Cheers:**

Located in the lobby of a small business center, this place is a good choice for biz lunch or grabbing a nightcap 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

**\$\$**

**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 almondy 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 converstion, 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

**\$\$**

**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

**\$\$\$**

**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

**\$\$\$**

**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 deliciouso, 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

**\$\$**

**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

**\$\$**

**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

**\$\$**

**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 Mayakovsky 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 foul cigarettes, but also cigars and pipes. Pipes! Can’t someone just gong 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



**\$\$**

**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 gigante-sized, filling you up without letting you down. Kickin’ business lunch deal. Succulent salmon filet made Schrek feel liike 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 total sucks ass. Chicken wings absolutely unedible—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 chickpea 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



**\$\$-\$\$\$**

**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 seviche (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 Ruscky-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

# Indian

## Adzhanta

**\$\$**

**Cheers:**

eXile alert! A few certain friends of The eXile not know 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

**\$\$**

**Cheers:**

Hands down still far and away the best Indian restuarant 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



**\$**

**Cheers:**

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

**\$\$\$**

**Cheers:**

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 got 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:** Shmitovsky proezd 14

**Hours:** 12.00 - ‘til the last guest

## Maharajah

**\$\$\$**

**Cheers:**

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 reining 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

**\$\$-\$\$\$**

**Cheers:**

Last visit gave us a dinner that is about as transcendent al as they come. Packed full of Indians,



## Italian

### Cantinetta Antinori

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**Cheers:**

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 ya gotta wonder why the hell it costs so much. Expect to drop a Franklin per person if yer drinking.

**Jeers:**

Be prepared to be treated like dirt, 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

\$\$

**Cheers:**

This multi-level Italian joint is really two restuarants 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. Upstaris you may be surrounded by people eating sushi. Our butter was a little hard.

**M:** Sukharevskaya

**Phone:** 518-1380

**Address:** Prospect Mira 5

**www:** www.capriccio.ru

### Dorian Gray

\$\$

**Cheers:**

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 mid-day, 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:** Kadashvskaya 6/1

### 'Gusto

\$\$

**Cheers:**

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 h our. 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

\$\$

**Cheers:**

We used to like this place for its reasonable prices, its unpretentious atmpohere, 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

\$\$\$\$

**Cheers:**

Mama mia, the risotto here is unbelievable-a! And so are a-the prices-a! If money is no object, or you have a friend to whom money is no object but a date who is hard to impress, you can't do much better than this mega-oligarch magnet. Snideman reiterated his legal opinion that Mario's is still the best restaurant in town, citing in his brief the tuna carpaccio and lobster. Still THE place for oligarchs and oligarchabies.

**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

### Pasta Della Mama



\$\$-\$\$\$

**Cheers:**

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 suitor/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:** Spiridonovsky Per 12/9

**Hours:** 12.00 - midnight

**Address:** Pokrovka 1

**Hours:** 11:30-23:30

### Sesto Sensa

\$\$

**Cheers:**

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

\$\$\$

**Cheers:**

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 Paccheti 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 Zlatoustinskii Per d. 1

**Hours:** Noon to midnight

### Verona

\$-\$\$

**Cheers:**

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

\$\$

**Cheers:**

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 minitaco salads! When we asked for a spicely 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:** Zubovsky bul. 27/5

**Hours:** 12:00 to 24:00

### Hemingway's

\$\$

**Cheers:**

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

\$\$

**Cheers:**

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:** Shmitovskoy proezd 23, bldg. 4

**Hours:** 8:30AM to 3AM or until the last guest

### Old Havana

\$\$

**Cheers:**

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 deliciosos 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 large 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

### 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 civilized here you'll get paranoid that Russia has suddenly become like Switzerland. Paying something like sixty bucks for four shots of Russkii Standart really 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 overdyressed 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

### 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

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**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-Evropsky 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 foie 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 surprisingly 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! Yippe! 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 hangover. 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 I-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: Krasnye Vorota  
**Phone:** #1: 699-7474, #2: 953-2876, #3: 623-1098  
**Address:** #1: Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya 4, #2: Zatsepsky 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. Barrikadnaya branch feels like it's on the third floor of a mall, and it is.  
**M:** a) Pushkinskaya b) Barrikadnaya  
**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. Verkhnaya Radischevskaya d. 21  
**Hours:** noon-midnight

**Torro Grill**

**WiFi**  
**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: Krasnye Vorota  
**Phone:** #1: 699-7474, #2: 953-2876, #3: 623-1098  
**Address:** #1: Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya 4, #2: Zatsepsky Val 6, #3: Bolshoi Kozlovsky Per. 3  
**Hours:** 12.00 - 23:00

**\$\$**  
**Cheers:**  
eXile alert! Torro just opened up at a new and highly accessible location! Check out the review on page 13... 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 bright time fave.

**Jeers:**  
You'd jeer if you were a vegetarian.  
**M:** 1) Universitet; 2) Proletarskaya  
**Phone:** 1) 775-4503; 2) 671-7346  
**Address:** 1) Prospekt Vernadskogo d. 6 (in the huge new mall), 2nd floor next to the movie theater; 2) 3 Krutitskiy per., 11  
**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 Yung 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:**  
eXile alert! This just in from our last visit: "Holy fuck is this place tasty!" 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 Prosciutto di parma, sopresata, 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 Myasnitskaya  
**Call Lena at 795-3376 fax us at 245-1415 or email us at editor@exile.ru to give or receive some sweet lovin'.**

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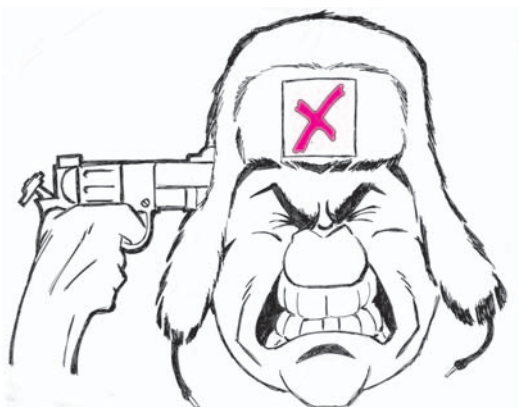
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