

Top Foodie Festival 'Omnivore' Comes to Moscow

By [Ezekiel Pfeifer](#)

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Omnivore attracts the world's best chefs, such as Rene Redzepi, from Danish restaurant Noma, here giving a class at the festival's version in New York.

Moscow is a conservative town gastronomically, but slowly, surely, a small contingent of food hipsters has formed, eaters eager to have Roquefort replace the cheddar on their burgers and to try purees of things other than potatoes. This week a culinary event is coming to cater to their intrepid taste buds.

The Omnivore Food Festival, which began in Deauville, France, in 2005, sees young chefs get together to show off their skills. Live food-porn shows otherwise known as master classes will run all day Tuesday through Thursday at Gostiny Dvor, and special menus will be available at local restaurants.

Omnivore, which means somebody who eats anything, is known as being a venue for the young and headstrong, a meeting place for rebels with the cause of creating innovative

cuisine.

The inaugural edition has booked space for a small clutch of cliché-eschewing chefs working in Moscow, as well as a heavily credentialed crew of international stars to join them. Local attendees will be led by the bear-visaged Renaissance man Alexei Zimin, who is co-owner of popular restaurant Ragout and editor of the food magazine Afisha Yeda. Also taking the stage will be the self-taught chef of basement foodie haven Delicatessen, Ivan Shishkin, who in two years has gone from car journalist to one of the Moscow restaurant world's anointed few by turning out playful but well-prepared comfort food.

Shishkin participated in the festival in Deauville in February, where he made rye wontons with fried pickles and pinecone jam. Shishkin will kick off proceedings in Moscow on Tuesday with, he promises, a perfected pinecone jam and a mousse made from the Russian cheese tvorog. His master class will start the festival on Tuesday.

Those flying in will include Carlo Mirarchi, a New Yorker just voted one of America's 10 best young chefs by the Food & Wine magazine; and Petter Nilsson from Paris restaurant La Gazzetta.

Tickets to festival events are available to the public, both online and at the door, so don an apron and go learn the essential techniques they'll be teaching, such as how to make parsley-root chips. Some master classes are free but most are not, with prices starting at 550 rubles (\$18). A day pass costs 3,290 rubles.

For those who won't be able to attend the master classes, you can still make reservations at participating restaurants — Ragout, Delicatessen, Bar Strelka, Dome and Coffemania at Trubnaya Ploshchad — which will have special menus made in concert with the visiting international chefs on certain days from April 20 to 24.

Omnivore runs Tuesday through Thursday at Gostiny Dvor, 4 Ulitsa Ilinka. Metro Ploshchad Revolyutsii. www.omnivore-moscow.com.

Ezekiel Pfeifer writes the food [blog](#) Beyond Borscht on The Moscow Times web site.

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