

Wanted: One-Room Flat

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Sometimes small ads become big ones. A one-room flat near Prospekt Mira was a friend's Google Chat signature earlier this week, and one click later, my eyes were spinning from the hairy nature of the interior.

There are stalactites of fur creeping down the walls, furry heads of small animals up by the ceiling and bits of fur dotted around the washing machine window.

Even the television is covered in fur too — a more worthy version of pop singer Valery Leontyev's television set, which comes in fake leopard skin print.

It looks as if a caveman on a date really wanted to show off his skill at hunting tiny animals by decorating his flat with his victims. It's definitely the kind of caveman who feels really unfulfilled and would rather decorate for a living.

Today all the photos of the flat were in Komsomolskaya Pravda, having spread around the Russian blog world.

The reaction of some of the KP readers reminded me of the finer discussions from the very first years of primary school of the “Urgghh, you smell!” type. Readers also squealed and said there must be fleas and flies and moaned that they were going to be sick.

Friends of friends once rented out their flat and made the mistake of never popping in to check up until they had upped and left. They walked into a flat painted black.

Erotic anime cartoons were also painted on the wall and fridge by a tenant.

This flat, up for rent for 40,000 rubles (\$1,300) a month, seems to have been decorated by its owner. Of course, there is always a possibility that it is a fake, created for viral publicity for a real estate agent or a fur dealer newly acquainted with the power of the blog world — but in a city whose *yevroremont* would never get a Schengen visa, anything is possible.

I was told recently that Muscovites going into flats in the far north of Russia are sometimes blinded with shock for seconds by the loud color schemes used, a loudness that does not necessarily express a lack of taste but more a necessity of having a bright area to make up for the black and white of the gloomy Arctic winter.

Now I have no way of knowing why this person, whom everyone has assumed to be a woman, has covered her house in bits of fur, but perhaps that also makes up for the lack of small fur pelts in her life outside the flat.

That owner is apparently not the only one with a surprising interior. An Argentine tour guide I bumped into by accident the week before smugly told me that my next door neighbor’s flat is actually a brothel. He didn’t say what the decor was like. Pelts probably.

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