

American Admits to Smuggling

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NEW YORK — A Latvian-born woman who has drawn comparisons to Russian spy Anna Chapman has pleaded guilty to charges that she tried to smuggle high-tech rifle sights to Russia, according to the U.S. Attorney's office.

Anna Fermanova, 24, pleaded guilty in a federal court in Brooklyn on Friday to a single felony count of violating the Arms Export Control Act, spokesman Robert Nardoza said. She is out on bail and faces up to 57 months in prison when she is sentenced April 29.

Fermanova was caught at New York's Kennedy Airport in March with the sights stashed in her luggage, prosecutors said.

Her attorney, Scott Palmer, had said she bought the sights for her father-in-law to use at a Moscow gun club. Palmer said Fermanova has been studying to become a cosmetologist.

News reports and web sites have compared Fermanova to another Anna — admitted Russian spy Anna Chapman.

Chapman, 28, was among suspects who pleaded guilty last year in New York to charges they

were part of a headline-grabbing spy ring. She was sent back to Russia as part of a spy swap.

Thanks to photos and information gleaned from social-networking sites, Chapman became a tabloid sensation.

Fermanova, who was born in Latvia and grew up in Texas, had been under house arrest at her parents' home there. A judge loosened the bail conditions to allow her to travel between Texas and New York for her case.

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