

Prison Officials Investigating Toga Party Held Behind Bars

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The  Moscow Times

Prison officials have opened an inquiry into an embarrassing photo report that shows prisoners throwing a Roman-themed party complete with togas and fake swords, as well as tequila and caviar, right in a cell.

The photos were leaked Monday by the tabloid news site Lifenews.ru, which [said](#) they depicted the birthday party of convicted robber Anton Kuznetsov, staged sometime after New Year's in a pretrial detention center in the Moscow region town of Serpukhov.

One grainy photograph, apparently taken with a cell phone camera, shows smiling, half-naked young men in improvised Roman attire with foil-covered toy swords and tridents making faces at the camera. One wears a foil crown, another a mask, and a sad-faced mustachioed man in one corner sports a fake lion's mane.

Other photos show the same men, changed into T-shirts and sport outfits, at a lavish table set with snacks and alcohol. Kuznetsov is seen spooning salmon roe from a bowl in one picture and receiving McDonald's food through the cell's food slot in another.

The photos were discovered on an account on a social networking site, the report said, without elaborating.

Lifenews.ru said Kuznetsov, 26, was the leader of the detention center's inmates while he was jailed there and later was sentenced to 12 years for robbery. A prison service source told the tabloid that the party could not have been staged without the authorization of the jail's administration.

Prison rules allow no birthday parties behind bars, as well as no cell phones and alcohol, the Federal Prison Service said in a statement Tuesday, RIA-Novosti [reported](#). The agency added that it had opened an investigation into the matter.

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