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Sex Toys Craze Sweeps Russian City After Release of '50 Shades of Grey'

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Residents of the Urals city of Yekaterinburg have flocked to local sex stores to stock up on whips, handcuffs and other S&M toys following the release of the erotic film "50 Shades of Grey," a news report said Thursday.

The U.S. film, which follows the foray of an innocent young female student into the thrilling and sometimes painful world of kinky sex, has prompted a spike in demand for accessories such as silk ribbons for binding and bondage ropes since it was released in Russia on Feb. 12, according to the local news site Ura.ru.

"It's usually very rare that we see any demand for BDSM [bondage, discipline and sadomasochism] goods," Dmitry Shchepin, commercial director of the company Casanova 69, which sells erotic toys, told Ura.ru.

"People usually come in and ask the sales assistants to show them an assortment and tell them about it. The showing of the film '50 Shades of Gray' has given rise to a palpable surge for that kind of [BDSM] product, and now people have started to come here specifically

for that," Shchepin was cited as saying.

"They come in couples, though the greatest influx has been women," he added.

Some movie theaters in Russia have refused to screen the film, based on the book of the same name, over its sexual content.

News agency TASS reported last week that several theaters in the southern city of Vladikavkaz would face fines from the movie's distributor for refusing to show it, and theaters in the predominantly Muslim republics of Ingushetia and Chechnya have also reportedly refused to show the film.

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