

Nude 'Divine Shawarma' Ad Sparks Fury of Russian Church

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shaurmanezagorami / Vkontakte

Shawarma so good, it'll send you straight to heaven.

Russia's Orthodox Church will go to court against a cafe in the Urals city of Perm for using religious imagery in a shawarma ad.

The offending image shows a nude model posing in front of a halo of shawarmas and holding a doner sandwich to cover her breasts, with its caption urging readers to "succumb to temptation."

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The since-deleted online ad stirred more anger than hunger within the local diocese, which said it plans to sue the cafe owner, the Kommersant business daily [reported](#) Thursday.

"Obviously, we're not going to go on a crusade around the place, but we'll give an adequate

response [to the ad]. Shawarma is a Muslim dish. Why do they use our religion?" asked the regional church spokesman Andrei Litovka.

The national anti-monopoly watchdog's Perm branch later [said](#) it planned to inspect the cafe for violations.

The reaction of the church's national branch was more muted. Archbishop Dmitry Smirnov [said](#) that while the church opposes the ads, "there have been similar cases before."

The cafe, Shawarma Ne Za Gorami, [has](#) a number of creative if [racy](#) ads on social media.

"We're trying to create non-trivial content," Veronika Burdina, the cafe owner and creative mind behind the ads, explained. "There are well-established cliches online such as a 'divine shawarma.'"

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