

London Mayor Issues Maslenitsa YouTube Greeting for Russians

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The  **Moscow Times**

London Mayor Boris Johnson released a Maslenitsa [video](#) greeting on his official YouTube channel on Wednesday, inviting Russians to Trafalgar Square to mark the holiday but cautioning them to "drink in moderation — and certainly not on the underground."

Russian-speaking audiences are sure to be amused with Johnson's Russian skills: He opens and closes the video in Russian, albeit heavily accented.

"Hello friends, I am Boris Johnson! Mayor of London! How good!" he says.

Inviting Russians to celebrate Maslenitsa — a Russian holiday marking the beginning of spring — at Trafalgar Square with blini and pirogis, he wishes them a "fantastic Maslenitsa" but urges against drinking on the London Tube.

He also boasts of improvements in the city of London over the past year and calls it "the

greatest city on Earth" before quickly clarifying "with no disrespect to St. Petersburg or Moscow."

"We are all in London so much looking forward to seeing what Russia puts on in Sochi in 2014," he says, adding, "Wild horses wouldn't keep me away!"

In closing, he reverts back to Russian, taking on a stereotypical Hollywood accent ala Schwarzenegger, and says in a tone that is simultaneously threatening and spirited: "Pancake Week walks, meets spring, and sees winter off!"

There are an estimated 400,000 Russian expats living in London, including quite a few Russian billionaires. The city is often jokingly referred to as Moscow-on-Thames.

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