

Title:

Halloween In Siberia - Sort Of

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Summary:

Live in another country and you'll start to experience serious cultural differences. This is particularly true as I discovered with Halloween in Siberia.

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Article Body:

Live in another country and you'll start to experience serious cultural differences. This is particularly true as I discovered with Halloween in Siberia.

Russian Holidays

I loved living in Russia and the primary reason was people. Russians love to celebrate and they are big into holidays. In Chita, Siberia, practically everyday was a holiday. During communism, Russia celebrated the worker with holidays such as bus driver day, teacher day and so on. When the fun loving Russians dropped communism from the menu, they decided to keep the holidays and add new ones for the new political bent. While Oligarchs' Day isn't yet a holiday, practically everything else is. With the approach of Halloween, I was ready to go nuts and show them a little of the American spirit.

At the time, I was teaching roughly 12 classes a week on law and business at Chita State Technical University. This gave me the opportunity to put together a wing dinger of a Halloween party since the students would generally follow directions without question. Accordingly, I announced to each class that we would be building a haunted house at my place and with roughly 150 students, it was going to be the haunted house of all houses. No student had any questions, but I should have noticed the blank stares.

The morning after making my announcements, the Dean of the University approached me. She had some rather pointed questions about Halloween. Nobody had ever heard

of Halloween and no, children didn't trick or treat. After all, what kind of person would trick a child? Americans do this? Every year? And they try to scare the children?

Why?

The more we went back and forth, the more I started to wonder about Halloween. When I made the fatal mistake of bringing up the headless horseman, the gig was up. The Dean gave me that furrowed brow perfected by all administrators. There would be no haunted house on October 31st.

After all, October 31st was the guy who makes duplicate keys day!