

**Title:**

Eastern Russia - Vladivostok, Khabarovsk and Magadan

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**Summary:**

With an incredibly large land mass, Russia is really many countries in one. In this article, we take a look at travel destinations in the Far East.

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**Article Body:**

With an incredibly large land mass, Russia is really many countries in one. In this article, we take a look at travel destinations in the Far East.

**Vladivostok**

A naval port city on the Pacific Ocean, Vladivostok has a passing resemblance to a run down San Francisco. Home to the Pacific Fleet of the Russian Navy, the city has lost a little of its luster as spending on the military has dried up. Like San Francisco, the city is built on the hills surrounding a harbor with the center of the city sporting a nice collection of architecture from the pre-communist era. The city is dotted with parks and scenic points overlooking both the harbor and Sea of Japan. Although the center of the city is very clean the surrounding suburbs have unbelievable industrial pollution problems. As the saying goes, "A nice place to visit, but you wouldn't want to live there."

**Khabarovsk**

The largest city in Eastern Russia, Khabarovsk is the headquarters of the Far Eastern Russian Military Command. The city is built on merge of two large rivers, the Amur and Ussuri. Vying with Vladivostok, the city is a major tourist hub for Asians flying into Russia and has a corresponding open atmosphere. Although Khabarovsk is primarily a military and industrial city, it is a good launching place to pursue inland activities such as fishing, exploring and hiking. The city is also an excellent location to pick up the Trans-Siberian Railway for the trek to the west.

**Magadan**

The town of Magadan is located in the far north of Russia on the Pacific Ocean. The town is very remote and can be classified as the stereotypical frozen Russian town in the middle of nowhere. So, why would anyone visit Magadan? The town has played a major role in the suppression of Russians throughout history.

Under Stalin's rule, Magadan and the surrounding area was the final stop for many exiles. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of political prisoners and "undesirables" were sent to Magadan to be dispersed to labor camps mining for gold. Indeed, the only road to the town is known as the "road of bones" for the prisoners who died building it.

Today, a large memorial stands in Magadan in memory of the dead. Trips can also be arranged to visit the decrepit gulags and labor camps used so mercilessly by Stalin during the Red Terror. Ironically, the town has also gained a reputation with hunters and anglers as a launching point as game is plentiful in the area. Much like Auschwitz, a visit to Magadan serves to remind visitors of the evil man will visit upon his fellow man.

The cities and towns of Eastern Russia are nothing like those found in the west. Having lived in Russia for a year, however, I believe they are a better representation of the conditions in Russia as well as the soul of the country.