

Title:

Siberia, Russia Part 1 - Here I Come!

Word Count:

497

Summary:

"You must really hate this job." That's what my boss said when I told him I was moving from San Diego to Siberia for a year. In reality, I was bored and looking for something that would be completely and utterly new. Whether it was sunstroke or a developing tolerance to margaritas, San Diego just wasn't cutting it anymore. Heck, I hadn't even gone to the beach in nine months and it was only a few blocks away. Time to rediscover a zest for life.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

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As you are doing now, I trolled the Internet looking for that rare opportunity that would renew my vigor and let me brag to my domesticated friends. Pick coffee in the South Pacific? No, I already drink too much of it. Sail around the world on a container ship? No, I wasn't ready for involuntary self-reflection. Before I knew it, I had agreed to move to a city in Siberia known as Chita. Yes, I was going to be a professor at Chita State Technical University through a program put together by Siberian Intercultural Bridges. Donate - they need the money: <http://www.siberian-bridges.org>.

So, what does one take for a one-year stay in Siberia? Why, I'll just go buy a guidebook on Siberia and read the "what to take" section. My search of the local mega bookstore was disappointing. Shockingly, there were no guidebooks for Siberia. I was tempted to write a nasty letter to Lonely Planet and others until the bookstore clerk said, "You're going WHERE?" When she started giving me the "you must be a criminal on the run" look, it was time to go.

Fortunately, I was able to find experienced travelers that could provide me with

the details and items that were absolutely necessary. My girlfriend gave me the all-important electric blanket, a power converter and intimate details about what would happen to me if I should dare share it with another women. Grandpa gave me a World War II down coat that was about three sizes to big and made me look like a walking gopher. Family, friends and random strangers contributed further items and advice that would be critical to my survival.

Apparently rating my chances of survival at 50-50, friends and family put together a going away/never see him again party the day before I left. Of course, everyone brought Vodka as a humorous going away gift. The tide quickly turned, however, as all were asked/forced to try a "taste of Russia." Many of the events of that night will remain forever sealed in antiquity, but it should suffice to say that the wife of one friend went into labor which made it a very fun night and subsequent day for him at the hospital. Few got off so easily.

Gigantic backpack, electric blanket, hangover and I headed to the airport the next morning. But that's a story for part 2 of this nomad adventure travel series...