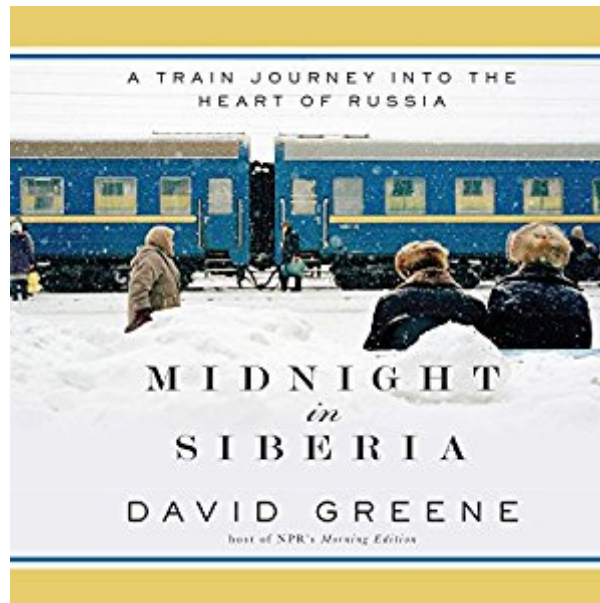


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Midnight In Siberia: A Train Journey Into The Heart Of Russia



Synopsis

After two and a half years as NPR's Moscow bureau chief, David Greene travels across the country - a 6,000 mile journey by rail, from Moscow to the Pacific port of Vladivostok - to speak with ordinary Russians about how their lives have changed in the post-Soviet years. Reaching beyond the headline-grabbing protests in Moscow, Green speaks with a group of singing babushkas from Buranovo, a teenager hawking "space rocks" from last spring's meteor shower in Chelyabinsk, and activists battling for environmental regulation in the pollution-choked town of Baikalsk. Through the stories of fellow travelers, Greene explores the challenges and opportunities facing the new Russia: a nation that boasts open elections and newfound prosperity yet still continues to endure oppression, corruption, and stark inequality. Set against the wintry landscape of Siberia, Greene's lively travel narrative offers a glimpse into the soul of 20th century Russia: how its people remember their history and look forward to the future.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Very interesting read. An inside look at Russia from an American perspective. The only issue I have with this book is that it reads like a book of short stories. Nothing ties it together beside the fact that the author recounts his experiences. A common thread or theme would have made it a better read. Greene tells tales from 2 journeys plus stories from when he lived in Russia while working for NPR. Nonetheless a very vivid account of modern day life in Russia. He describes Russian attitude remarkably.

Anyone looking to get a "view from the train" will be sorely disappointed. It seems Mr. Greene's purpose in relating his adventure (?) was to show us that underneath all their initial gruffness, the Russian people are warm and drink a lot of vodka. Travelling with the author is not unpleasant; it's just not very satisfying. About 60% of the way through the book, the author makes a comment that he has suffered through a score of hardships on his journey - unfortunately, he didn't seem to take the time to give the reader a good idea of what these were. Rather than giving us a personal insight into the people, the author has just given us a first-hand account. It's okay but it's neither entertaining nor enlightening.

Very interesting book which gives one a feel for Russian people. Russians want stability over all else. The author is a good writer but it was difficult to follow sometimes because he took two rain trips across Russia.

A thoughtful work that explores modern day Russia through interviews of everyday people found among the cities of the Trans Siberian railway. Just as expansive and enduring, it is also a journey into the Russian soul: what it has endured, what it expects, and what it does not. Even more fascinating for the Western reader is how many of Greene's interviews reveal why, despite hardship, corruption, and increased in personal freedoms, most Russians still prefer to stay. It made me appreciate my country and theirs in new ways.

What a grand train trip across Russia - from Moscow to Yaroslavl to Vladivostok with side trips as well. David Greene appreciates the people and their history, their present and prospects for the future. Lucky that David had Sergei as a colleague, interpreter, and friend on this journey. The variety of Russian individuals and families made Russia come alive. If the real people in the rural regions of Russia and the USA were in charge, there would be peace - no doubt.

An interesting read despite the author's dogged determination to judge Russia through his own Western lens. Sometimes I wished he would just lighten up.

This is the first time I've been able to appreciate the ways Russians think about life. It is a different perspective than ours, especially as suffering seems to color all aspects of life. I hope they get a brief respite in summer. At the same time, the people seem universally resilient. Mr. Greene's easy vernacular helps us to relate more easily with the everyday lives of people my generation has felt to

be threatening to our way of life. What I saw portrayed in his words are people greatly attached to their land and way of life. An admirable work that begins to illuminate Russians in a comprehensive manner.

A well written story of modern day Russia and her people. Sad and poignant at times but always entertaining and ultimately resigning one to not expect a happy ending. The author has a deep understanding of Russia and her people yet his journey is one of discovery for both him and his readers. He is able to take you along for the ride and lets you be a witness to his conversations and thoughts. A carefully researched and well written novel that anyone who has the slightest interest in Russia and her people should read. This is one book I read from cover to cover and made some discovery's into the soul of the Russian psyche.

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