

## Travel to two new clubs in the Russian Far East



Vladivostok and Ulan-Ude, Russia • May 23 to June 9, 2013

Dear friends,

Join us and 20 adventurous ambassadors from around the world as we visit two new clubs in the Russian Far East.

We are so excited to be the exchange directors for this unique exchange to Vladivostok and Ulan-Ude. We had the opportunity to travel to Vladivostok after the Friendship Force World Conference in Hiroshima last year. The club members there are fantastic! We found the city fascinating, the hospitality beyond measure, and their plans for our arrival outstanding.

We also met several members of the Ulan-Ude club when they visited Chicago last winter. They, too, are lovely people and are developing an outstanding program for our visit.

We will begin with a homestay in Vladivostok, a city of 600,000 founded in 1859. We will be introduced to its history as a major port, railhead, and military outpost, surrounded by wilderness. Its environment is the only place on earth where sub-tropical and arctic flora and fauna mix. We'll also hike with the head of the Leopard Society through a recently created National Park and visit graduation day programs at a local English language school.

Then we'll travel from Vladivostok to our second homestay in Ulan-Ude, taking a 3000-kilometer ride on the famous Trans-Siberian Railway. The trip will take us through varied country: forests, taiga, steppes, and dramatic mountains. The 2½ day trip will afford us time to relax and appreciate the scenery.

In Ulan-Ude we will find a quite different city of 400,000, including a significant Mongolian minority. It is an important industrial, commercial, and political center, but also the headquarters for Buddhism in Russia. Because of the importance of this type of Buddhism, linked to Tibetan Buddhism, we will visit the largest shrine and temple in all Russia and tour its museum. We will also explore the 'old city,' see an Old Believer Orthodox Church, meet members of the Old Believers tradition in their homes and experience their food.

Then we'll travel to Lake Baikal, the oldest, most voluminous, and deepest lake in the world, holding almost 20% of the earth's unfrozen fresh surface water. The lake, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is home to 1700 species, 2/3 of which are found nowhere else on earth.

Throughout our stay we will make friends with and enjoy the receptivity of people both very like and very different from us.

**If you want to join us, you need to act fast. Space is limited, and you must have a Russian visa, which may take two months to acquire.**

Please complete the [Ambassador Application Form](#) and email it to us. We hope to hear from you soon!

In friendship,

Dave and Pat Meyer, FF Northern Illinois

davidcmeyer@sbcglobal.net

The cost is \$1965 USD — includes all fees (FFI, local clubs, admissions, etc.), transport in both cities, a second-class berth on the Trans-Siberian Railway from Vladivostok to Ulan Ude (4 to a compartment), and some meals. NOT INCLUDED: transportation to and from the exchange, travel insurance, and the cost of a Russian Visa. Advice and assistance on travel and visas is available upon inquiry.

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the [World of Friends Catalog](#).**

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