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Russian motorcyclist travelling round the world visits Che Guevara Mausoleum in Cuba

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Moscow resident Oleg Kharitonov who is travelling around the world on his motorbike has visited the sculptural complex in Cuba's city of Santa Clara where legendary Latin American revolutionary Che Guevara is buried.

"Members of the local motorbike club, who accorded me a very warm welcome, visited the mausoleum with me. I also met with Russian compatriots living in Santa Clara and Cubans who studied in the Soviet Union," the 46-year-old traveler told TASS.

Che Guevara was Fidel Castro's closest associate and one of the leaders of the Cuban Revolution in 1959. In 1967, he was captured and shot dead in Bolivia, where he was trying to organize a revolutionary movement with a group of guerrillas. Only 30 years later the remains of Che and his comrades-in-arms were uncovered near the community of Vallegrande. They were transported from Bolivia to Cuba and buried in Santa Clara on October 17, 1997.

"Here, in Santa Clara, it becomes clear why Cubans consider Che Guevara their national hero. He was a great romantic who fought for the freedom and justice," Kharitonov noted.

Almost like in the motherland

Kharitonov admitted that he feels "almost like in the motherland" in Cuba. "Cubans are very close to us in spirit and mentality. Everyone is very happy when they learn that I came from Russia," the motorcyclist said.

Before coming to Santa Clara, the Russian had spent several days in Havana. There he met with the Russian Ambassador to Cuba Mikhail Kamynin and the Russian diplomatic staff. The meeting that was held in the embassy was also attended by Ernesto Guevara, the younger son of Che Guevara who is a motorcyclist as well.

In the coming days, Kharitonov will be travelling through the island. From Santa Clara he will head to Camaguey and then to Santiago de Cuba where he will visit Fidel Castro's grave. In late January, the traveler will return to Havana.

In early February the Russian will "rush" to Mexico, then to the United States and Canada, after which he will return to Russia through Alaska. Kharitonov says he has no clear route plan: he has to correct it all the time for various reasons.

Trip route

Kharitonov started off from Moscow on August 20, 2014. He crossed Russia from west to east, drove around Southeastern Asia and the Middle East, travelled the whole of Europe, then went down along the African west coast, starting from Morocco and reaching South Africa, and then moved to the New World.

Kharitonov has visited 70 countries so far. During his round-the-world trip, he ascended to an altitude of 5,360 meters in the Himalayan Mountains, travelled in 44-degree-Centigrade heat in Pakistan and covered more than 1,850 kilometers in 24 hours while travelling in Russia. The biker spends nights in his own tent, cheap hotels or at the homes of other Russians. He is supported, in particular, by the Russian Motorcycle Tourism Federation. The biker intends to return to Moscow in August 2018 in order to be able to accompany his daughter on her first day at school.

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