

Profile: Simon Khouri



Tell us about where you lived and what you got up to in Canada?

We moved around a fair bit. I started in Vancouver and stayed for four or five months making little excursions around the country on my time off – Vancouver Island, Yellowknife, Whistler. We arrived late in the winter and stayed through spring. Vancouver is at its best in the warmer months. The beaches are a great place to hang out and a lot of good bands come through.

Over the summer we moved into the Rocky Mountains. I got a job doing maintenance in a campground hours away from anywhere. The days were long and sunny and involved chopping a lot of wood, but also a lot of fishing, swimming and beers by the fire. We were living in a cabin in the woods by a lake in the middle of the Rockies, it doesn't get more Canadian than that.

As the weather got colder we moved to Revelstoke just before the town started to swell with all the other ski bums. We were out of money and had no jobs but we met some amazing people and made a lot of friends. It was possibly the best time of the whole trip. In the end I spent the winter bartending in a remote heliski lodge and split my time between riding the resort and heliskiing.

Spring again, the snow was melting and we had no plans so we built a bed in the back of our van and headed east across the prairies until we arrived in Montreal. We sub-letted an apartment near the university and I got a job as a pool boy. From here we made more excursions on our time off. Like Vancouver, Montreal is alive in summer with concerts. If you go, watch the fantasy role players at Tam Tams.

From Montreal we headed west again but this time drove across the states, spent some time in Wyoming and then north back to Revelstoke to meet up with friends.

What are some of the experiences that you had which made an impact on you?

The hardest times always led to the best experiences. I was made redundant from my job in Vancouver just as my lease was running out. I had no savings and no plans. I took it as a sign to move and so drove into the Rocky Mountains and straight into an amazing job and lifestyle.

Your Top 3 memories?

- 1) The opening day of Revelstoke Mountain Resort, we were all there... with faces sore from grinning.
- 2) Leaving Vancouver, it was a warm summer day and we were leaving the city behind, nothing but open road.
- 3) Discovering 'paradise cove' in Ontario

How did you find employment?

I applied for a lot of jobs and at times it was really disheartening not hearing back for weeks but eventually the calls came. On average it would take about 3 weeks to find a job in a new town.

Do you have any advice for someone who wants a Canadian adventure?

The best parts of our trip were unplanned... actually 90% of our trip was unplanned which made it really exciting. So maybe don't stress the details too much, it'll all work out.

Did you have a good experience going on Work Canada with IEP/SWAP and did you feel supported by them?

IEP got us sorted for Canada. They made it super easy and processed our paperwork quickly.

