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An East European BOB

sweeper

- Gear reviews and tests - Emergency and survival -



Publication: Thursday 14 June 2007

Description :

Article on the construction on an East European Bug-Out-Bag

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I use the term "assembled" because very few items in my kits are made in Romania. If someone doesn't know where this country is, take a Europe map and look on the eastern part. Near Black Sea, between Ukraine and Bulgaria. My kits are (until now) two: an "Altoid Tin" which is always in my pocket (I don't leave my home without it!) and the bigger kit, still unfinished.

My "Altoid Tin" kit is modelled after Doug Ritter's "Don't Leave Home Without". Inside is a Swiss made Recta button compass (which has a nice bubble helping use), a heavy duty razor blade (I saw same blade in Penrith and BCB tins), 7 assorted sizes safety pins, a sewing kit (4 different sizes needles and different colours thread), another big sewing needle with Paracord inner thread, two halves of Esbit fuel tab, a condom for water carry, 3 bandages (1 big and 2 small, I use it as "butterfly" bandages), a cheap piezo lighter, a marine survival vest whistle and 1 meter (3 feet) copper wire, which I scrounged from an old lamp. It's wrapped with two - 3 feet pieces of 550 Paracord (I cut this length to use as laces in a emergency) and a 10 inches piece of duct tape.

The bigger kit is kept in a STR8 aftershave tin can. Inside is 6 Esbit fuel tabs, a Esbit star stove, 2 condoms for water storage, 2 effervescent aspirins, 3 butterfly bandages, a tea candle, a Light My Fire Army firesteel, a wire saw, a length of Paracord, a marine flotation vest whistle, a aspirin tube that contain a fishing kit and some cotton wool, an pencil with some duct tape wrapped, an Recta Gem key ring compass and a Rite in the Rain sample notebook (it was send me as sample, with a catalogue).



Supplementary I have always on my key ring Victorinox Huntsman SAK and a Sterling tungsten carbide "Superior Sharpener". In my pocket I have a Zippo lighter. When I live town I take with me a Survivor Brand "Emergency Sleeping Bag" in a pocket.

The second kit is still "on construction", because I can't buy all the items needed until now. Most of things I have for it was bring to me by a friend witch is student at Yale University (thank you a lot, Carmen!) and was ordered at Brigade Quartermasters.

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I have many knives, a Ka-Bar Next Generation Fighter/Utility 1221 (7 inch Bowie blade with plastic sheath), two Moras (a Clipper and a Mora 2000), a Nieto hunting knife and a Ralph Martindale "Crocodile" Brand "Paratrooper" (I asked for a catalog and a price list and these British nuts send me the knife as "sample" by mail!) with 10" blade and file pocket (including file) cordura sheath. I see on Old Jimbo's site an excellent article about Goloks, featuring No.2 Martindale Golok. "Paratrooper" has 432W code and is looks like a Parang, a Malaysian knife used to camp chores (by me). It has a large and heavy blade, ¼ inch thick, with a belly at the front which puts the weight forward, making it easy to use (there is another sharpened area on the spine, so turning upside down can be used like a mini Golok). I heard this model was created in WW2 years for use by the British Red Berets in the Burma jungle, but saw heavy use in the '60s by SAS patrols in the Malaya war. It's a very basic but very clever design. I use some paracord to wear the Ka-Bar knife upside down on left armpit like a pistol holster when needed. I think this plastic sheath is more useful than the leather one.



Kabar knife



Nieto knife



Martindale Paratrooper

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I use a Romanian military compass (beside Recta key ring), a Coleman "Peak-1" cooking pot (1 qt. size) witch is very useful as primary ration container, an IMPS-Net (used as hammock until now), a 4 person tent flysheet which I took from my Dad's old tent (I use as tarp/basha).



Esbit "star" stove and cooking pot

I use a Snugpak "Rocket" backpack, because it is modular and can be adapted easily to my needs (going 50 miles for a seaside weekend is one thing, going to see a girlfriend to 500 miles trip is another). I have three sleeping bags, two Snugpak Navigators and a cheap, Chinese-made summer sleeping bags. The Rocket is big enough to take in main body a Navigator sleeping bag and to keep enough space for clothes, food, water, toiletries and climbing gear.



Snugpak Rocket w/o side pockets



Snugpak

Rocketpack ready to go

Food. I always take with me a jar of honey which is a fantastic energy booster, home-made smoked sheep jerky and sausages , home-made tomato juice to drink and use as sauce base, eggs in a hard box, some white sheep's cheese, four quarts of water and I'm good to go. If I go for longer distances I take with me some bag soups (Swiss brand Nestle and Austrian brand Maggi are the most popular since a bag costs fewer than 50 cents in US dollars) and some cans of tuna and meat. Mixed with some spices and tomato juice and boiled makes a very good stew. But always I have jerky with me.