

At a Glanz...

Traveling Across America: Part One



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Long Island is great, but sometimes you need to see what else is out there. In April

of 2006, I packed up all my stuff and headed west...to Vegas! Today I'm going to tell you of my harrowing trip across America: Part 1.

I was headed to Vegas for a life unknown. I had virtually no money, no job, but a plan. The plan was to play poker and hopefully win the World Series of Poker. The smaller goal was to get a job and supplement my income by playing a lot of poker. But I didn't realize before I got to Vegas, I had to deal with America.

All of my belongings were in my car. Two TV's, all my clothes, and anything else you can think of. I had \$2,000 in cash on me, and virtually nothing in my bank account. After my family bought me breakfast at IHOP on Sunrise Highway in Lynbrook, I was on my way. Interstate 80, we were going to be friends for awhile.

I drove through Jersey and Pennsylvania like I owned the road. Thoughts of grandeur filled my head as I giddily embarked on my biggest journey yet. You learn a lot when it's just you and the road, and I learned that I am not a very comfortable highway driver.

Dozens of cars turned into hundreds as they flew by me in the center and left lanes. By 5 p.m. I was gripping my wheel so tight every time another trucker would speed past me. At around 7 p.m. I realized, much like you can't win a major poker tournament on the first day, you can't make it to Vegas in one day. So I stopped in Cleveland and slept in a very old, out of the way hotel.

I woke up very early the next morning and looked at the map. I knew my route by I had no idea how long it would take to get from point A, to point B. So at around 5:15 a.m. I said, "Richie's going to Des Moines!!" Iowa here I come.

I got on the road and I was hoping yesterday's jitters would go away. But alas, by 7 a.m. I realized it wasn't jitters, I just hated the open road. I was never so happy to hit traffic like I did near Chicago. Finally something that reminded me of New York!! As I sat in beautiful traffic, I thought, "Why in God's name am I going to this evil place called Vegas anyways?? I love New York, they should make a saying that says, "I love New York!" I should coin it and become a millionaire."

But Richie G. is no quitter so I'll have to wait to coin that phrase later, I'm going to Vegas. As the traffic dissipated and the road opened up, I renewed my vow to make it to Des Moines. By 3 p.m. I was shot but still two hours away from my goal. I told myself people work till 5 p.m. so I'm at work and not quitting till I reach Des Moines. Finally I arrived and I was in Iowa. I laughed as I thought, "Who woulda thunk that Rich Glanzer is in Iowa??"

I hadn't yet stopped and toured the states I passed, and I was bummed about not staying in Chicago. But I decided that before I go to my hotel and pass out, I'm going to go to a local Wal*Mart and see the people of this state with too many vowels.

The people were great, very friendly and they spoke the same language I spoke! My God there are Americans here!! Yes, they spoke at a slower rate than I did, but I understood them perfectly. It was a Christmas miracle in April. I bought a Bruce Springsteen CD and headed to my hotel. I was about to learn, not every state is as nice as Iowa. That story coming next month.