



Winter on the Road

Welcome to the first ever Roadtrippin With Rachael newsletter! This newsletter will be sent out every week on a Sunday for at least the next four months. You can expect to see extra stories and behind the scenes information from the trips I have posted on my vlog, as well as helpful hints for road tripping and travel in general. In the spirit of the weather this weekend, this first newsletter is about road tripping in cold climates/winter conditions.

This weekend I went to the coast for a brief overnight trip, intending to visit family over Friday and Saturday and head back to college on Sunday. I knew ahead of time that we were in for some snow on Saturday, but figured the worst would pass by the time I would leave. Boy, was I wrong!

Besides repeatedly losing power throughout the day and night, we woke Sunday morning to find almost every major route between the 101 and Willamette Valley blocked by fallen trees and downed power lines. Since I was headed North I knew I could take the only available route—the 18—but my family weren't so lucky. They were planning on heading South and so were stuck for another night.

Unfortunately, I knew I would have to risk the icy roads if I wanted to get back to University in time for school. It was time to gather my supplies.

The first thing I needed, the first thing anyone needs for a winter road trip, was a pair of snow chains for my tires. Fortunately, I had already purchased some years ago, and they've been sitting unopened in my trunk ever since.

After a couple google searches on how to use them, I considered what else I should bring. The roads were icy enough that I knew I ran the risk of running off of them and getting stuck somewhere, so I wanted to bring an emergency overnight kit. Of course, I've been thinking about making a kit for weeks, but never got around to it. Thankfully, I managed to scrounge up a few essentials.

For those of you who are planning ahead here's what I would recommend. A blanket is nice no matter the weather, but you can also get special thermal blankets, which pack light and are designed for emergency situations. A couple of plastic water bottles and snacks that will last for a long time— energy bars, individual packets, etc— will keep you hydrated and your energy up. A flashlight will also be helpful if you ever break down in the dark. And personally, I also brought a book, because I'd never want to be stuck somewhere without one. Other items to include might be a poncho, powerbank, and first aid kit.

In the end, my trip over the pass was fairly uneventful. I kept a steady 25mph the whole time, the car secure from the extra traction the snow chains provided. However, I did see at least three cars in ditches, which made me all the more grateful to be extra cautious and have supplies.

Here's to a safer winter!

Rachael



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