

Edge of Humanity Magazine

Reindeer Nomads | Shelter & Farming | Chukotka, Siberia

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Travel Photographer [Holger Hoffmann](#) and Travel Writer [Sylvia Furrer](#) are the Edge of Humanity Magazine contributors of this documentary photography. From the project '[Stormy Nights in the Yaranga](#)'. [To see Holger and Sylvia's body of work, click on any photograph.](#)



In the winter, the days are short in Chukotka, and stormy winds sweep across the wide tundra in the far east of Siberia. The yaranga has provided the reindeer nomads with protection for centuries. It is kept open during the day and does not provide protection against the cold, but only against the wind. The structure's concept is very old and stormproof. It consists of three thick wooden main posts and four shorter T-shaped poles, as well as a wooden ring attached at half height. About 50 reindeer skins, sewn together, are stretched over it. The tensioning ropes are additionally secured with weights against the strong storm winds.



Once a day, a fire burns in the center of the yaranga for cooking. Even in extreme weather conditions, wood has to be collected from small, widely scattered bushes every two to three days, which can take several hours.



The reindeer farm consists of eight brigades formed during the Soviet time, each looking after about 1,500 to 3,000 reindeer.

Every bit of the reindeer is put to good use. Anything that cannot be eaten right away is placed on a plastic sheet and frozen within a few hours.





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By Holger Hoffmann and Sylvia Furrer



Nomads
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