

Sochi Notebook: Souvenirs Made in China

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SOCHI — Guram Toyev, a heavily bearded construction worker who has laid pipes to bring water to Olympic venues in Sochi for the past few years, was looking for souvenirs to take back home.

With a little more than a week left before the Feb. 7 opening ceremony, Toyev's job is almost over. In a few days he will reunite with his extensive family in his native North Ossetia.

I meet Toyev in a glitzy Olympic souvenir store, a temporary rectangular cubicle made of mirror glass in Sochi's main landmark, its Stalin-era Black Sea port.

"Where was this made?" he asked, looking at a blue patchwork cap with a huge Sochi 2014 logo. It cost 790 rubles (\$23).

"China," I said.

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