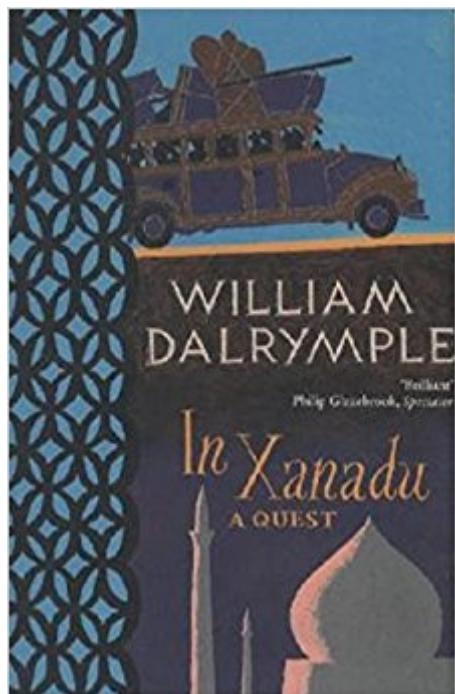


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In Xanadu



Synopsis

This is an account of the quest which took William Dalrymple and his companions across the width of Asia, along dusty, forgotten roads, through villages and cities full of unexpected hospitality and wildly improbable escapades

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

‘Brilliant’ Spectator ‘Glorious’ Patrick Leigh Fermor ‘Dalrymple is probably the best travel writer of his generation’ Daily Mail ‘The future of travel writing lies in the hands of gifted authors like Dalrymple’ Sara Wheeler, Independent

‘William Dalrymple has written a delightful book of travels ... a brilliant debut.’ - PHILIP GLAZEBROOK, Spectator ‘A splendid piece of British eccentricity with all manner of echoes: Freya Stark, Peter Fleming, Robert Byron ... Dalrymple is plainly either brilliant, or bonkers, or both.’ - ALAN FRANKS, The Times ‘In Xanadu is so uncommonly satisfying because of the rare skill with which William Dalrymple blends his ingredients: history, danger, humour, architecture, people, hardship, politics.’ - DERVLA MURPHY, Literary Review ‘Superb ... The vivid, engaging, and often hilarious account of an amazing 12,000-mile quest, His marvellous book - rich with the sights, smells, history and feel of Asia - will become a classic.’ - Sunday Express ‘This is travel writing in the grand tradition, with a true whiff of high adventure. Dalrymple recounts his saga with a fine mixture of humour and erudition, and with the exuberance of youth.’ - Evening Standard ‘Bright,

sharp, laconic and outrageous, his is an adventurous account of hippies and mad mullahs, mosques and sacred tombs, dangers and celebrations, Dionysian rituals and rich discoveries. It is full of life and very funny.' - Sunday Times, Books of the Year 'Outstanding ... William Dalrymple is a natural writer. His models are, perhaps, Peter Fleming and Evelyn Waugh rather than more serious travellers, but he's a better scholar than either. Best of all, he has the gift of comedy ... In Xanadu marks the arrival of a new star.' - Sydney Morning Herald 'In Xanadu leavens adventure story and scholarly history with farcical dialogue and high-spirited buffoonery. It's a fast, furious, funny read ... clearly the stuff bestsellers are made of.' - SUNIL SETHI, Times of India 'Rarely does one review a book which so obviously marks the start of a splendid career. Brave and exultant, rich in esoteric knowledge and a sense of the ridiculous ... it is my guess that William Dalrymple will become one of the great English travel writers.' - Eastern Daily Press

The writer is a Scotsman, a student at Cambridge, who undertakes to follow Marco Polo's route to Xanadu. Polo did it in the year 1271, Dalrymple does it in 1989. Observant, detailed, interesting---customs, and oh the people and the noise! Excellent writing style, essentially a travel book BUT a travel book par excellence!

This review will be short with no spoilers for prospective readers. My first Dalrymple book was "A City of Djinns", which is really more of a memoir of his one year in Delhi, India. "In Xanadu" is much more of the conventional travelogue that recounts the journey taken by Dalrymple and his companions, tracing Marco Polo's journey along the Silk Route to Kubla Khan's summer palace - Xanadu. Dalrymple's style is unique and sparkling with wit and humour. His skill with words is a delight when he describes some of the most beautiful and quaint places along his route while managing to keep the reader's attention during some of the more bleak stretches. In Xanadu allows the reader to experience and almost makes tangible some of the remotest parts of the globe that he or she is not likely to ever visit. And that is its greatest achievement.

In Xanadu is a fascinating, very, very interesting, and very, very funny book! I loved it! Dalrymple is a terrific writer and in this book he is a very brave young man. And he has two very brave young women as traveling companions. Read it and enjoy it and be glad you never have to make a trip like this.

Great

A great combination of history, adventure and humor. Well written, entertaining and informative. I recommend the Kindle version because I needed to look up about one word every two pages.

Part history part travelogue and I will add, that anything written by William Dalrymple about India will be informative and interesting.

Dalrymple is a bird dog who tracks his subject, follows in his footsteps, sniffs out his moods, sorts through details in order to tie up knots, and all the while tells a good story of his own. He is a thoroughly responsible travel writer and a first-rate journalist, and even the opinions interjected in the text are worth noting, not as someone else's caprice but as a reliable source.

Fascinating account of college-age Dalrymple's adventures traveling Marco Polo's Spice Road. His two different female traveling companions (a friend on the first part of the trip and his girlfriend joining him on the last part) experience a lot of hardships, too, more so than Dalrymple, just because they were women.

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