

WORLD OF WANDERLUST

NEW TRAVEL NARRATIVES AND MEMOIRS

EUROPE

La Bella Figura: A Field Guide to the Italian Mind by Beppe Severgnini 945.093 SEVERGNI

A blood-born Italian, Beppe explores authentic Italy in this zany editorial of da boot, revealing another face to the culture of pasta, pizza, and Pavarotti. This is not a book for tourists or even armchair tourists, but a tour-de-force perspective on one of the world's most beloved destinations.

Ghosts of Spain: Travels Through Spain and Its Silent Past by Giles Tremlett 946.08 TREMLETT

Tremlett's description of Spain bears a striking resemblance to Hemingway, reflecting how the land's diverse heritage now influences the culture and customs of its people. Though much is a historical tour chronicling the peninsula's warring legacy, Tremlett's trek from the Barbary coast to Barcelona shows a modern nation—though fringed with climate of terrorism—that's now largely demobilized from its dynamic past.

The Geography of Bliss: One Grump's Search for the Happiest Places in the World by Eric Weiner 910.4 WEINER

Norwegians may enjoy the world's highest standard of life but they're far from the most joyful people on earth. Or so says Weiner in his fascinating quest to investigate who and where the world's happiest people are. A self-labeled grumpy-gus seeking "un-unhappiness", Weiner is a good read if only for the laughs. Largely restricted to Europe and Asia, the book is a realization that happiness is less about where and how a person lives.

In Europe: Travels Through the Twentieth Century by Geert Mak 940.5 MAK

Translated from the Dutch, this compact memoir follows Mak to each corner of Europe examining the continent from a millennial perspective. The interspersed vignettes seem to strive toward a more singular theme despite the dozens of destinations visited and compiled into a single memoir.

River of No Reprieve: Descending Siberia's Waterway of Exile, Death, and Destiny by Jeffrey Tayler 915.704 TAYLER

Russia is time-tested land but Siberia is no land to test with as seen in this description of veteran explorer Jeff Tayler's 2,400 mile voyage up the Lena River to the Arctic circle, a journey commemorating 300 years since the first of the Cossacks achieved a similar feat. It is an expedition seeking evidence of a new, unified Russian Federation and of a people no longer alienated by a desolate landscape and culture. This narrative shares an unmitigated parallel to Conrad's Heart of Darkness.

SEE ALSO: Four Seasons in Rome by Anthony Doerr, B DOERR; Living in a Foreign Language by Michael Tucker, 945.651 TUCKER; French at Heart by Marlene Ramsey, 945.37 RAMSEY

AMERICAS

American Vertigo: Traveling America in the Footsteps of Tocqueville by Bernard-Henri Levy 917.304931 LEVY

200 years after Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville forever forged his impression of American Democracy, another compatriot retreads similar grounds in this outside-in memoir of the States. Levy offers up observations on the good, bad, and backwards while trekking through the heartland and visiting with political pundits, entrepreneurs, movie stars, police, prisoners, and many more.

Charm City: A Walk Through Baltimore by Madison Bell 917.5260444 BELL

Novelist Madison Bell describes each section of her diverse hometown, one perhaps not associated so much with 'charm' despite its nickname, Charm City—rendered so in 1974 to beef up tourism and revitalize the historic districts. Baltimore was one of the first coastal cities to profit from a renovated waterfront, a move which inspired a nationwide trend.

Dishwasher: One Man's Quest to Wash Dishes in All Fifty States by Pete Jordan 648.5 JORDAN

Dishwasher Pete works dirty jobs (actually the same dirty job) so he can live the slacker lifestyle. At a variety of eateries, take-outs, and dives across America he plies his trade letting the reader in on his 'career's' subtle nuances like free food, downtime, relocation convenience and availability.

**I Feel Earthquakes More Often Than They Happen: Coming to California in the Age of Schwarzenegger by Amy Wilentz
917.9404 WILENTZ**

Wilentz investigates the Golden State's aura in travels all up the coast in now Governor Schwarzenegger's tenure, a period she labels loosely as the "New World's new world, America's America". A New Yorker by birth, Wilentz is good at revealing California to someone who's heard all the fuss but never actually seen it up close.

**Jackpot Nation: Rambling and Gambling Across Our Landscape of Luck by Richard Hoffer
795.0973 HOFFER**

To someone born yesterday, it's hard to conceive of 'gambling' in most parts of the US as 'illegal'. Or so Hoffer would have you believe in his travels from north to south, east to west, big towns and little cities, offshore and onshore looking at one of the most prominent vices of our age. Incorporating the online element, Hoffer believes that Americans may spend more money on Gambling than on all other forms of leisure entertainment combined.

SEE ALSO

Louisiana Voyages by Martha R. Field, 818.409 FIELD; **The World in A City** by Joseph Berger, 917.47 BERGER; **Havana: Autobiography** by Alfredo Estrada, 972.9123 ESTRADA; **Mexican Days** by Tony Cohan, 917.2 COHAN; **The Soul of Baseball** by Joe Posnanski, 796 POSNANSKI; **Way Off The Road** by William Geist, 973.930207 GEIST

EAST ASIA

**China Road: A Journey into the Future of a Rising Power by Rob Gifford
951.06 GIFFORD**

Journalist and public radio correspondent Gifford illuminates the land and people of modern China in a cross country trip from the factories of Shanghai to the border of Kazakhstan. A fluent mandarin speaker, he focuses on China's economic revolution seen as he makes a point of interviewing men and women from industrial boomtowns in the east to the agricultural heartland of the interior.

SEE ALSO:

Fried Eggs with Chopsticks by Polly Evans 951 EVANS; Inside the Red Mansion by Oliver August 951.05092 AUGUST; Shadow of the Silk Road by Colin Thubron 915.8 THUBRON

MIDDLE EAST

Children of Jihad: A Young American's Travels Among the Youth of the Middle East by Jared Cohen 915.60454 COHEN

While still at Stanford, Rhodes scholar Cohen lived largely abroad actively adventuring through the world's most volatile regions. His growing interest in the divide between Islamic fundamentalism and Western tradition soon found its essence within the religious standards and paradigms prevalent in Islamic youth culture. In this book he independently treks through areas where this livelihood was most influential, infiltrating the minds, ambitions, attitudes and outlooks of Islam's future generations.

SEE ALSO:

Journey into Islam by Akbar Ahmed 297.090511 AHMED; **Live from Jordan** by Benjamin Orbach, 956.054092 ORBACH; **Kabul in Winter** by Ann Jones, 958.104 JONES; **In Arabian Nights** by Tahir Shah, 916.40453 SHAH

AFRICA

Chameleon Days: An American Boyhood in Ethiopia by Tim Bascom 963.06092 BASCOM

This author was only three when his missionary parents were transplanted to Ethiopia at a time when the strife-ridden country was undergoing another insurgent period. Bascom recounts how he and his brother were witness to riots in their school and attacks to their mission station forcing the family to relocate.

The Caliph's House by Tahir Shah 964.38053 SHAH

Renovating a palace in Casablanca seemed like a nice idea until author Shah and his family moved in to stay. After placating the previous guardians' 'ghostly' ties to the place, they were utterly unprepared for the abrupt climate change of Moroccan culture. A lack of restoration professionals soon necessitated visits to Tangiers, Libya and other remote Saharan locales.

Down the Nile: Alone in a Fisherman's Skiff by Rosemary Mahoney 916.20455 MAHONEY

A fine line rests between daring vacations and curious stupidity, one Mahoney seems to jump back and forth across as she rows down Egypt's Nile River . . . in a rowboat . . . alone . . . at night. With aid from a few compassionate strangers and a self-numbed conscience, she braves

crocodiles, undercurrents, the heat and other 'compassionate strangers' (she's not muslim) as she rows the 120 miles from Aswan to the delta.

SEE ALSO:

Lose Your Mother by Saidiya Hartman, 306.36209667 HARTMAN; Middle Passages by James Cambell, 916.04 CAMPBELL; Men of Salt by Michael Benanav, 916.604329 BENANAV

OCEANIA

Getting Stoned with Savages: A Trip Through the Islands of Fiji and Vanuatu by J. Maarten Troost 919.59504 TROOST

Troost, author of Sex Lives of Cannibals, returns to the South Pacific where he and his wife share a home in Vanuatu, a former British colony comprised of 83 separate islands. Later the couple moves to Fiji where Troost's wife gives birth to their first child. The descriptions of native customs, volcanoes, and life in paradise are all smartly left out of order providing the narrative a dose of candor inside the humor.

Island of the Lost by Joan Druett, 919.399 DRUETT; The Shark God by Charles Montgomery, 919.504 MONTGOME; Tales from the Torrid Zone by Alexander Prater, 910.913 FRATER