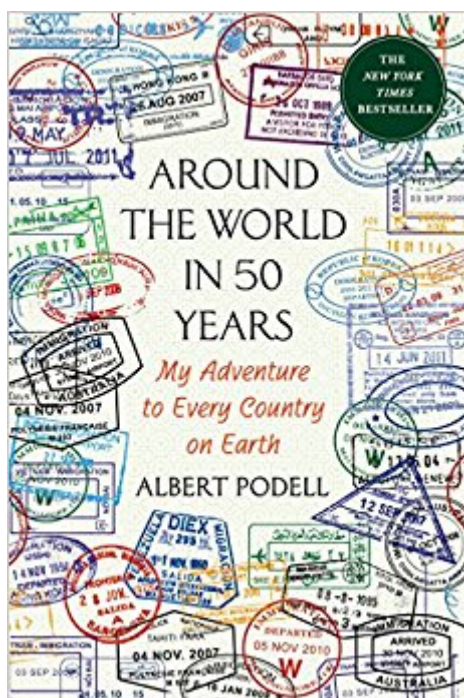


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Around The World In 50 Years: My Adventure To Every Country On Earth



Synopsis

The New York Times Best Seller—“Amazing . . . the most original travel narrative ever written.”—*CounterPunch* Around the World in 50 Years is the inspiring story of an ordinary guy who achieved two great goals that others had told him were impossible. First, he set a record for the longest automobile journey ever made around the world, during which he blasted his way out of minefields, survived a serious accident atop the Peak of Death, came within seconds of being lynched, and lost three of the five men who started with him: two to disease, one to the Vietcong. After that, Albert Podell set another record by going to every country on earth. He survived riots, revolutions, civil wars, trigger-happy child soldiers, voodoo priests, jihadists, robbers, corrupt cops, and Cape buffalo. He traveled through every kind of earthquake, cyclone, tsunami, volcanic eruption, snowstorm, and sandstorm that nature threw at him. He ate everything from old camel meat and African field rats to dung beetles and the brain of a live monkey. And he overcame encounters with crocodiles, hippos, anacondas, giant leeches, flying crabs—and several beautiful women who insisted that he stop this nonsense and marry them. Around the World in 50 Years is a remarkable and meaningful tale packed with some of the most memorable, frightening, and hilarious adventure stories you have ever read.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Part travel adventure tale and part madcap farcical comedy, where Hunter S. Thompson meets Anthony Bourdain.”—*Chicago Tribune* “His writing is breathtaking. . . . This is substantially more than a travel book. It is one man’s nearly lifelong, worldwide

adventure. [Booklist](#) "The author's tales are unquestionably entertaining. . . . There is never a dull moment." [Kirkus Reviews](#) "It's like Crocodile Dundee produced by Monty Python and directed by Woody Allen." [Tony Wheeler](#), founder of Lonely Planet

ALBERT PODELL has had successful careers as a magazine editor, director of photography, advertising executive, freelance writer, adventurer, author, attorney, theatrical investor and producer, and philanthropist. He recently became the oldest person to visit every country in the world and one of the very few people to ever achieve this feat. He is a graduate of Cornell University, was a graduate fellow in international relations at the University of Chicago, and holds a J.D. from NYU.

This amusing, amazing tale of an adventurer who was determined to visit the 196 countries (more or less) on our planet is a must-read for the intelligent armchair traveller! Albert Podell must be a little mad to think up -- and finish -- this arduous and often very dangerous task he set himself. His travels to all points on the compass do jump about in time here and there, but it is such an enjoyable read that one doesn't really mind if it's 1990 or 2011. He takes scary risks but is single-minded in his quest to get to all 196 countries, disregarding (almost) all civil wars, bandits, kidnappers, border clashes and often the lack of a visa. He describes man's inhumanity to man, which is mind-boggling (and on-going). I thoroughly enjoyed his wit, perseverance and shrewd observations. He also succeeds well in interweaving historical, archaeological and psychological facts into his fascinating travel tales, in such a way that one is kept informed, and one's general knowledge expanded, but one is never bored. Sometimes I laughed out loud, and sometimes I thought, you fool, how could you want to go to that country? Of course not all 196 countries are dangerous, but his African adventures open the eyes to the mess in which most African countries north of the Equator find themselves. He is almost prescient in predicting the dangerous advance of militant Islam into so many countries -- and we know that is happening now, in 2015. He also sees clearly the evidence of global warming or weather change, and is worried about it. In fact, he observes so many things that we, the readers, never knew about. You will enjoy this book, which is sometimes a rollercoaster ride, while at other times he describes natural beauty with almost, not quite, lyrical prose. But I would also dare to say it's only a book for the curious and the intelligent -- the reader who wants-to-know. It's not *A Year in Provence*. It's not just a travelogue either. I found it vastly entertaining and living in South Africa as I do, it gave me much food for thought (although S A is not really described and he

only mentions Johannesburg, which he called, I think, something like "the city with the highest crime rate ..." of what, I cannot recall. That is impossible, when one reads what he experienced in points north!) I was sorry when I got to the end, and will be investigating whatever else he wrote.

I just finished the book and I knew precisely before I checked, the specific gripes people would have in posting their reviews of the title. In a quasi defense of Podell I will hopefully draw a little attention to some key facts I feel people might be overlooking. Yes, Podell eats a monkey brain. In writing of it though he isn't exactly pleased by this and he certainly wasn't encouraging folks to go out and pop the cap off the nearest macaque. It's important to remember that different customs prevail abroad and part of that occasionally means compromising some of your own. Travelling the world while rigidly adhering to American social and cultural expectations would seem to me to defeat the purpose. Had he demanded monkey brain or even expressed a desire to try it I would understand the point. Sometimes things happen too fast for one to figure out how to politely maneuver around something without gravely insulting their hosts, something that is far more important to consider in the middle and far east than the west in most cases. Following that, I will concede that the book does spend a lot of time discussing Podell's occasionally romantic soirees. I think he could have a healthier view of women, but this travelog also spans decades with a significantly different social landscape than the current one in this regard. Were this a travel diary penned by a woman this aspect would no doubt be seen as telling the story of one female's journey through exploring her intimacy and discovering the power of her own sexuality. There is definitely something about the ephemeral nature of travel and the wealth of new sensory experiences that come with it, that seems to set the stage for romantic encounters among like minded wanderers. I don't think it's fair to label him a lecherous old man for succumbing to this impulse, but it could have played a less prominent role in the story telling without detracting from the overall picture. The complaint that "Every third world country sounds the same" is simultaneously a demonstration of one's own inexperience and an insult to the people who live the lives we can only read about. The sad reality is that large swaths of the earth are devastated by poverty, war, hunger, corruption, and disease, and the landscapes left behind by these scourges are often all too similar. I don't envy the task of finding a glimmer of prose to scribble down for so many of these places, but Podell usually succeeds. This is a book on travel as it would be written by the Dos Equis "most interesting man in the world". It is at once an interesting read, a glimpse into places I have often wondered about but will never have the courage to visit, and a meditation on the rigors of travel and aging as someone who refuses to quit. Life is much cheaper, shorter, and much less fair in many parts of the world, I think it's important to keep

that perspective while reading about them.

An interesting story of one man's travels, but focuses mostly on those hard to reach countries. And he did it all the hard way - camping out, crossing countries to reach other countries, none of that just landing at an airport to say you've been to a country. I wish the author had given his impressions (and the reason for his travels) for all of the world's countries, not just the difficult African and Oceania ones. I'd have liked to have known his take on Finland just as much as I'd like to know his take on Nauru or Tonga. And what the f--- were those jumping spider crabs on the beach in Algeria? Scary!

Yes, we started traveling more or less at all the same time, and after traveling to more than 120 countries and lived in 5 since 1962, had to read the book as soon as I saw the title. What can I say, I am envious! Great travel experiences! Interesting and exiting way of presenting them. I also learned that at my age I should be happy to belong to a the cruise type of traveler and that most of the remaining countries needed to accomplish his total, are totally out of my reach, as they have become too dangerous to travel to, as well as difficult to reach comfortably. Loved the book for the traveling as well as for historical facts totally new to me. Thanks Albert Podell!

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