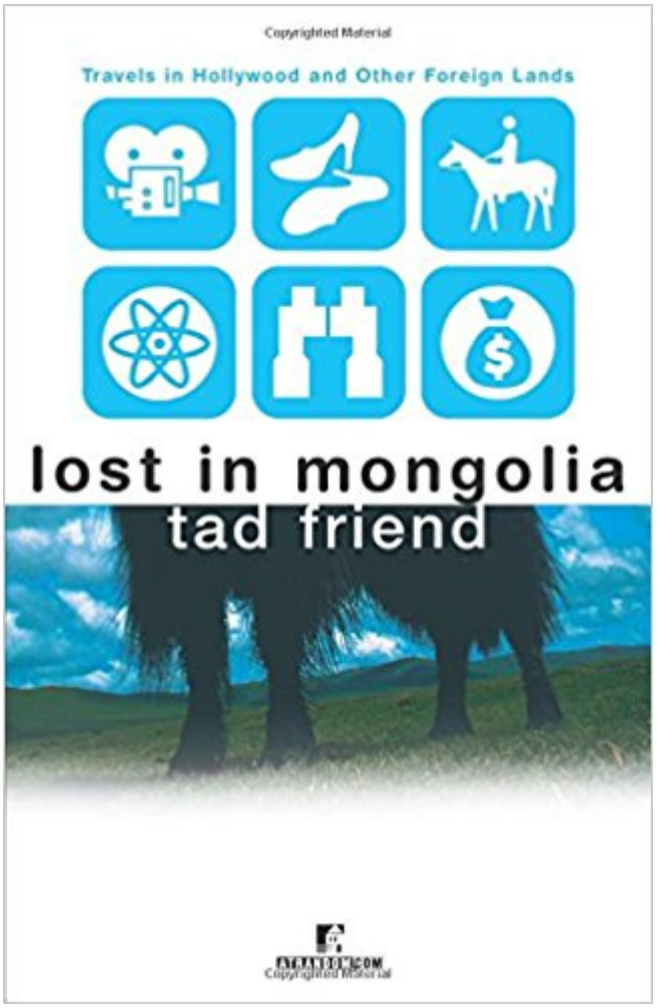
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Lost In Mongolia: Travels In Hollywood And Other Foreign Lands



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Synopsis

Find yourself in the midst of a heated battle over a sitcom laugh track. Learn to get away with spectacular crimes. Get lost with the reindeer people in the mountains of Mongolia. In Lost in Mongolia a collection of Tad Friend’s most original, witty, and wide-ranging articles and essays from The New Yorker, Esquire, and Outside we are taken on a cultural tour of global proportions. Friend reports from the entertainment mecca of Hollywood on topics that range from the life and death of River Phoenix to the widespread plagiarism of movie ideas, to why celebrity profiles are always dreadful. He critiques the larger American culture with articles such as White Trash Nation, In Praise of Middlebrow, and a brief rumination on what it means when your girlfriend steals and wears your favorite shirt. Readers will also journey to foreign lands and American outposts, as Friend goes on the trail of the Marcos dynasty in the Philippines, is harassed in Morocco, and digs up buried treasure in Sun Valley.Lost in Mongolia is a one-of-a-kind collection from a refreshingly candid and well-traveled journalist.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Travel pieces occupy only a third of this eclectic collection: before Friend departs for Morocco, the Philippines, or the Basque region of Spain (where he witnesses a heavy-lifting contest and finds that he can’t lift much), he trains his gaze on Hollywood and other mysteries of America, with hilarious results. Copyright Ã Â© 2005 The New Yorker

"No journalism about the entertainment business gives me more pleasure than Tad Friend’s. He is

unvaryingly smart, fun, funny and fearless, and a terrific reporter to boot." --Kurt Andersen, author of Turn of the Century"Tad Friend is the finest writer who has never done stand-up comedy working today. Reading these thoughtful, surprising essays is pure pleasure."--Steve Martin, author of Shopgirl and Pure Drivel

This collection of articles from various periodicals came out in 2001, so it reflects the 90’es. Quite a few of the articles have lost their fizz... There are three, on the other hand, worth reading even today:The case for middlebrow - is a thoughtful reflection on the divergence between entertainment and instruction in art (and I may add, in non-fiction as well). When Horkheimer and Adorno opine: "moments of happiness are without laughter...delight is austere." one knows that something is amiss in the world of highbrow. I can tell - non-fiction written in the 70es still conveyed enthusiasm and passion. Modern stuff is ruminations on sawdust.White trash nation - is even more cogent today than it was then (the author did not like Bill Clinton). "True trash is unsocialized and violent." White trash behavior is violent, because the person "has nothing to lose". Much of political discourse today is"white trash" - its intensity betrays the inner conviction that losing the Republic would not matter.Lost in Mongolia - is simply an extraordinary story. Out there, in Mongolia, there is a grave, slowly vanishing, and in any case far from any marking. This is its story.

Friend’s first collection suggests that the "New Yorker" staff writer would make a killer cocktail-party guest: His essays and articles range from the sobering (a moving postmortem on River Phoenix’s death) to the sublime (America’s early-90’s acceptance of white-trash culture). And while "Lost" focuses primarily on popular culture (a subject Friend approaches with a mix of fanboy enthusiasm and grown-up skepticism), it takes unexpected detours through the Philippines, Morocco, and, of course, Mongolia itself--where a routine travel story suddenly becomes a moving tribute to a curmudgeonly travel companion. A-.

Someone gave me "Lost in Mongolia" as a gift, assuming that my love for the New Yorker would translate into an appreciation of Mr Friend’s work. But Mr. Friend writes in that hipper-than-thou style so fashionable among young journalists these days that, frankly, I loathe. There is a self important smugness to Friend’s writing that suggests a certain barrenness of Spirit, no matter how fertile the terrain he visits. As for the celebrity profile--it is a sub-genre characterized by a potent mix of fawning and gotcha sensationalism. If this is the new generation New Yorker writer, color me bereft. I’ll stick with older writers for whom the life of the mind has a deeper reasonance.

Tad Friend’s gift as a journalist comes through on every page. Each piece in this collection has a fresh and original point of view. And Friend is a pleasure to read. His writing is smart, lucid and thoughtful. And he can be exceptionally funny.The travel story, Lost in Mongolia, is a gripping, sad journey. White Trash Nation is as hilarious as it is disturbing. And the chapters on Hollywood have forever altered the way I view television.

What a great book. Interested in Hollywood? Travel? Backstabbing in the media world? It’s all here, and brilliantly rendered. One of the many wondeful things about Tad Friend’s writing is the glorious sense of humor that sparkles on every page. This book is full of Friend’s wonderful comedic gift; the reader will laugh and learn in equal measure. I’ve given this book as a gift a number of times and have garnered nothing but raves. Do yourself a favor and buy a copy today.

"In LOST IN MONGOLIA, [Tad Friend] offers a glimpse under the hood of Hollywood’s sleek machine."

This book is poorly written and superficially researched with almost no basis in reality and overhyped and overjuiced. I want my money back!

bad writing. superficial. a waste of time.

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