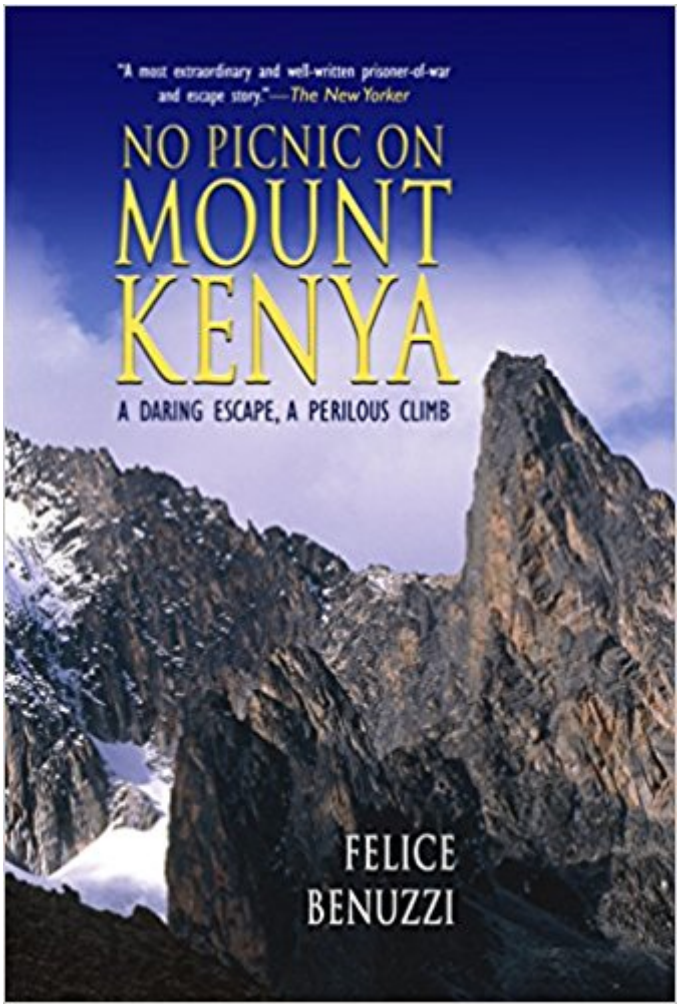
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No Picnic On Mount Kenya: A Daring Escape, A Perilous Climb



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Synopsis

In 1943, Felice Benuzzi and two Italian compatriots escaped from a British POW camp in equatorial East Africa with only one goal in mind--to climb the dangerous seventeen-thousand-foot Mount Kenya. No Picnic on Mount Kenya is the classic tale of this most bizarre and thrilling adventure, a story that has earned its place as a unique masterpiece of daring and suspense.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ethiopia, 1941. Felice Benuzzi was a junior officer in the Italian Colonial Service, stationed in Addis Ababa, when the British thwarted Mussolini’s ambition to build a colonial empire in East Africa. Benuzzi, along with thousands of other Italians, was captured and interned in a POW camp near the foot of Mount Kenya, where he and his countrymen languished indefinitely, waiting out the war and the desperate boredom, passivity, and isolation of prison life. "In order to break the monotony," he writes, "one had only to start taking risks again." But the isolation of the camp precluded the possibility of escape to a neutral country: "I thought, then at least I shall stage a break in this awful travesty of life. I shall try to get out, climb Mount Kenya and return here." So begins No Picnic on Mount Kenya, a first-class adventure story full of courage, humor, and exquisite detail. Benuzzi and two fellow prisoners spent six months secretly hoarding food; sewing clothing, shoes, and tents; and scavenging for scrap metal to hammer into ice axes and crampons. After escaping, they braved the multiple risks of capture, wild animals (including elephants and rhinoceros), starvation, frigid weather, and some of the most challenging climbing conditions in Africa. The men ascended 16,300 feet to Mount Kenya’s Point Lenana, hoisted a homemade flag, and then returned to the misery of

the camp. Benuzzi and his comrades never cared that their freedom was fleeting: they climbed Mount Kenya to reaffirm their humanity in the face of a barbaric world war. The gallantry of this gesture sets No Picnic apart from typical mountaineering stories of risk and self reliance. --Svenja Soldovieri --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A most extraordinary and well-written prisoner-of-war and escape story. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Very unusual and unexpected. A part of WWII history that I had no prior knowledge of. Written by an Italian years ago make the language sometimes different that I am used to. But I enjoyed the story. I learned about Africa and about the war. I had a friend living in Kenya at the time, so the name of the book got me interested. I like survival stories generally.

I have had this book for many years having read it before a photo safari I took to Kenya back in 1991. While there, our guide told us it is required reading in Kenyan schools. It is full of amazing feats both in the characters' escape from a WWII prison camp as well as their adventures and survival while climbing the mountain. I bought it as a gift to a family member who has also been a mountain climber.

Tremendous story! Should be a major motion picture! The language is a little awkward, from time to time, due to a combination of the fact that it was written 50 years ago, by a gentleman who is not a writer by trade, and who is writing in a foreign tongue. All in all, it does not detract one iota from this remarkable story about the will of the human spirit to seek adventure, and ultimately to be free. A classic "why did we climb it? because it was there!" story.

Most climbing books are rather boring, even to climbers. There's something about climbing that just doesn't translate well to books. But even though I've never had to break out of a prisoner of war camp just to go climbing, Benuzzi's story just seems more familiar and human than any other climbing story I've ever read. I can imagine myself on his climb, feeling like he was feeling. I don't know if a non-climber would get quite as much out of it, but the story is funny and the adventure is exciting, so give it a shot.

This is what I try to find in mountaineering, a new view and an escape. Very motivational

This is a well written story that painted a vivid picture about life in a WW2 POW camp, and a rare adventure on Mt. Kenya. Full of details about what led to the climb, the climb itself, but most of all, the spirit of the the men involved. This tale is much more than a book about climbing mountains. It is a story, universal to all men.... the need to live life to it’s fullest, no matter the circumstances. My only wish would be that the author’s paintings of this "picnic" had been included. I know they must be somewhere!!

An extremely well-written book, especially considering the author was not writing in his native language. A crazy idea about climbing a mountain by 3 novices; crazier still under the circumstances of escaping from a POW camp with the intention of returning. I bought the book after having read the story in National Geographic "Adventure" of 2 experienced & well-outfitted mountaineers who re-traced their steps. The original is better!

Bought for our monthly book group read. Enjoyed the book and it was a great discussion at our meeting.

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