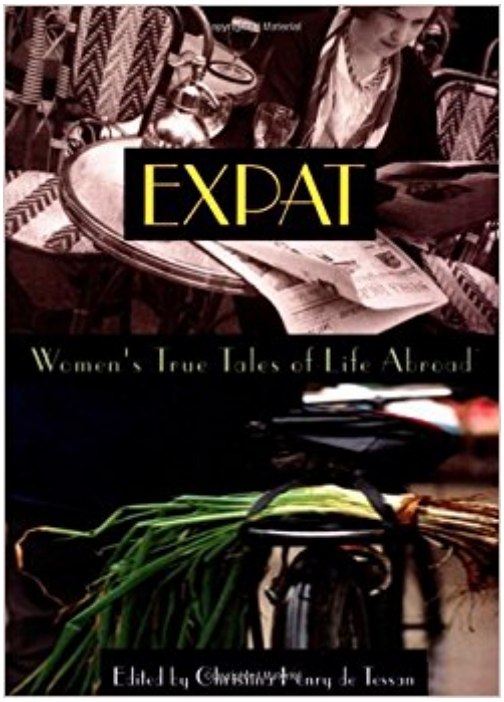
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Expat: Women's True Tales Of Life Abroad (Adventura Books)



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Synopsis

For generations, literary figures from Ernest Hemingway to Frances Mayes have fueled our fantasies about the romance of expatriate life. But itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s one thing to dream about living abroad and quite another to actually do it. In Expat a diverse group of women explores in vivid detail how the reality of life abroad matches up to the fantasy. Tonya Ward Singer craves a roasted chicken in China and must buy it alive and kicking. Karen Rosenberg reevaluates both her familyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Judaism and her own when invited to a Passover seder in a remote Japanese village. Mandy Dowd tries to teach the French about Thanksgiving. Emily Miller admits that in Italy she craves the Hollywood entertainment she generally deplores when on U.S. soil. Tall and fair, Meg Wirth tries hard to blend in, in Borneo—to no avail. Expat taps into the bewilderment, joys, and surprises of life overseas, where challenges often take unexpected forms and overcoming obstacles (finding Drano in Ukraine, shrimp paste in Prague) feels all the more triumphant. Featuring an astonishing range of perspectives, destinations, and circumstances, Expat offers a beautiful portrait of life abroad.

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Customer Reviews

Tourists merely visit, but expatriates get to live in another culture. Some of the women represented in this collection of 22 "tales" have lived abroad as students, teachers, or aid workers, while others either pursued career opportunities or fulfilled a romantic fascination with a particular country or

culture. Motivation aside, almost all have chosen to relate experiences of vulnerability and unease and a nostalgia for the culturally familiar. An expat living in appliance-deprived China recounts her craving for and courageous attempt at roasting a chicken, while another in Prague relates the challenge of finding fresh produce in order to cook a chicken stir-fry. Yet another, in the south of France, homesick for Thanksgiving turkey, describes the troubles she had concocting such a dinner for acquaintances. Others are disheartened to discover that not all Australians have an abiding love for Yanks, that not everyone in Greece, Borneo, or Japan speaks English, and that most cultures have distinctive cues or codes that the foreigner will inevitably misinterpret. Most of the reporting is of disillusionment and cultural dissonance-cautionary tales for all who believe the global village is America. Recommended for public libraries.Lonnie Weatherby, McGill Univ. Lib., Montreal Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

More than romantic adventure, living abroad means that 24-hour supermarkets, reliable fuel sources, and even blankets can’t be taken for granted, as the 22 contributors to Expat attest. Many of their stories focus on food. Tonya Ward Singer craves golden roasted chicken while in China, so she must purchase a newly killed bird and dress and cook it in a Chinese kitchen that is little more than a toaster oven and a slop bucket. Other contributors crave American pop culture. Emily Wise Miller finds herself eagerly anticipating lowbrow action-adventure flicks she wouldn’t deign to watch on TV in the States. Still others show the expat (short for expatriate) imparting American values while learning to appreciate new friends’ perspectives on life. For instance, in Egypt and among parents whom Westerners would think negligent, Laura Fokkena sees child rearing anew, as a matter of enjoying one’s family rather than heroically trying to mold children into predictable products. The collection engages us because these expats are humbled and transformed by their contacts with cultures different from their own. June PulliamCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved

I love the book- I had already read it, and purchased it as a gift for a friend. It’s a great collection of stories from women living all over the world, and inspired me to do more world traveling myself.In addition, the book did quite a bit of traveling of its own before it got to me- the postal service sent it all over the country a couple times before it got to my local post office, and after a month and a half the package arrived in less than peak condition. However, the seller wrapped the book well, and thanks that, it arrived in great condition. If I could take off points for the USPS’s poor service, I would, but I don’t think it would be fair to rate the book or the seller based on that.

Interesting to hear all the stories from these insightful women. As I ponder living abroad it provides me inspiration and courage.

This book is a collection of first-person experience narratives, written by women who chose to live the ex-pat life. The contributions from various age groups and cultural settings make each of the stories stand out. Yet, together they weave a very full picture of the heart transitions that occurred in the lives of people who accepted the challenge of leaving the familiar.I laughed aloud at the story of the first purchase of a live chicken for dinner, and I felt the pangs of loneliness experienced by another woman who struggled to make friends. I also shared the joy of those who found and treasured the beauties of cultures that they had not previously known.I am a woman considering retirement abroad. This book has helped me to set my emotional expectations more realistically than I would have done otherwise.

It is a nice collection of tales from around the world and how it is to be an Expat at that location. Funny insights into things that an expat might miss or why we recreate things that are important to us from our passport country. Aa very good read.

I read this for a company diversity-themed book club. Most of the chapters are really worth reading, making the book a definite buy. You'll be challenged to enjoy all of them, but everyone's taste and experiences are different. Plus, it really makes you thing about the life you take for granted, and where you call "home."

I don't like short stories or essays but I loved this book. Each story is just a few pages long and even though some writers were "long in the tooth" with too many metaphors or too poetry-like, I still enjoyed reading them (maybe because they were just a few pages long). I was vicariously thankful I hadn't been in some of their situations and other times, I wish I had. This is a truly delightful read that you can take to bed with you, read a story or three, and then dose off without having to remember what you had just read the next evening. I look forward to reading some of the other books with the same format that are listed in the back.

I usually end up giving multi-author collections three stars because some are great and some are so-so. However, I think this collection merits four stars. The pieces are very well chosen and give an

excellent overall view of what it might mean to try to be an expatriated American.There are twenty-two stories here, all by different female American authors who lived in places such as China, Borneo, Ukraine, England, Mexico, Denmark, Japan, and many other countries. Some of them don't really qualify as "expats," since they only stayed a few months, but most of them stayed several years.If you have any glamorous, romantic ideas about moving to another country, this book will give you a more realistic view of what it can be like to be the outsider by virtue of culture and language barriers. Even with all the difficulties, most of these authors ended up staying much longer than they had intended, so there's hope after a period of adjustment.

Expat: Women's True Tales of Life Abroad is a refreshing mix of points of view - motherhood, lesbianism, academia, the working world, religion.It is also a wonderful patchwork of unique and pleasing writing styles, diverse cultural experiences, and even varied outcomes. Some women stayed and fully embraced the countries they lived in. Some returned to the United States with a broadened vision of the world she thought she knew. But each woman continued on her life-path filled with new sight - a renewed acceptance of her spiritual or cultural identity, perhaps...or an enlightened recognition of her role as mother, partner, student, teacher, or daughter.As a traveler, a woman, a mother, and a former expat, I found myself nodding in agreement with so much of what I read in this book. When she finally sat back and watched her daughter flourish in Cairo, Laura Fokkena discovered a comfortable extended-family mothering atmosphere - somehow attentive yet intentionally disconnected at the same time - a far cry from the eagle-eyed, over-protective, Click-It-Or-Ticket parenting drilled into busy American families. This Egyptian philosophy I have vowed to make my own.Other contributors, too, wrote from places in their lives that felt familiar: Karen Rosenberg, who comes "from a family of reluctant Jews," followed a path from Amagi, Japan, back to her spiritual roots. Stephanie Loleng found her own Asian identity in Prague, where the food of home would have to be prepared herself. And Emmeline Chang, raised in the United States by Taiwanese parents, struggles to belong on either continent.And perhaps most recognizable, each woman in Expat expresses her frustration at linguistic difficulties. Each woman is a writer, after all, someone who depends on language - perhaps more than on people or money or timing - to make things run smoothly. And, certainly, as a foreigner, that taken-for-granted skill is slippery at best, even for bilingual expats. Editor Christina Henry de Tessan folds this phenomenon easily into her introduction: "...accustomed to being efficient, competent, articulate, and able to navigate the various logistics of American life," these women found themselves at sixes and sevens with everything around them.But armed with determination, great tolerance, a readiness for change, and

often dozens of books, they learn to color outside of the lines they used to know, to create themselves anew.

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