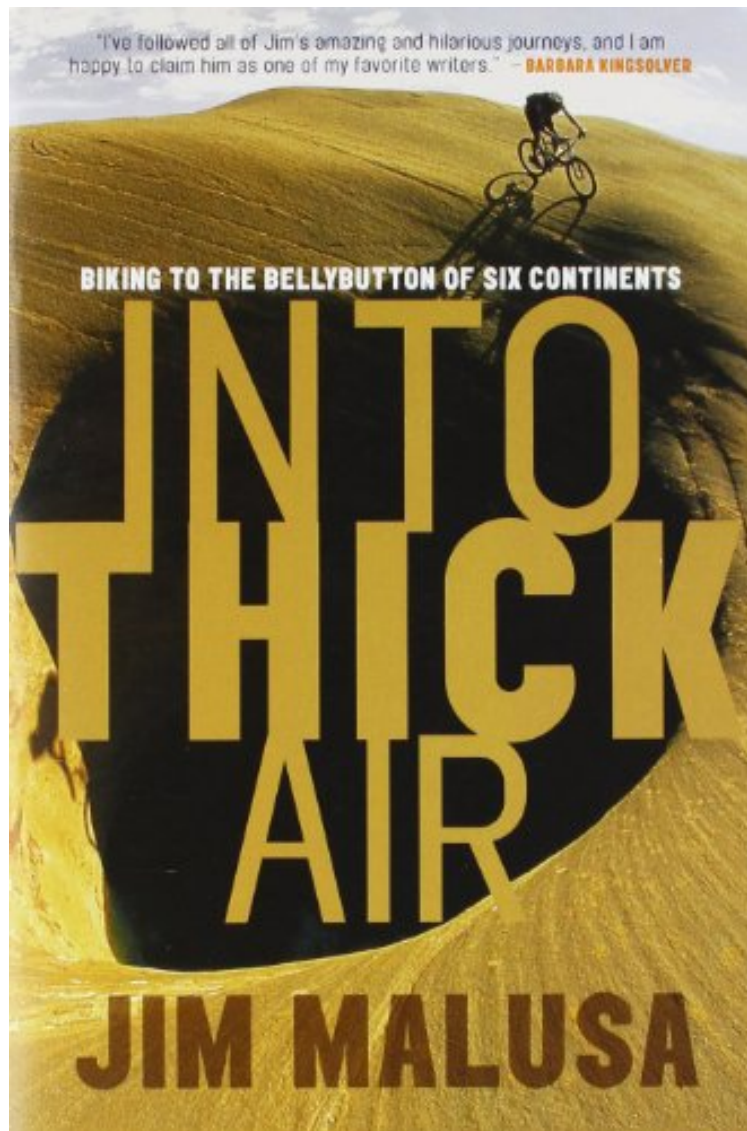


(Download pdf) Into Thick Air: Biking to the Bellybutton of Six Continents

Into Thick Air: Biking to the Bellybutton of Six Continents

Jim Malusa

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Jim Malusa : Into Thick Air: Biking to the Bellybutton of Six Continents before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Into Thick Air: Biking to the Bellybutton of Six Continents:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Writer Overcomes Roadblocks to Bike to the Lowest Places on EarthBy Cindy SaloJim Malusa is only able to reach escape speeds with a Patagonian breeze at his back or on the last curve down to the Gulf of Aqaba. He presents an irresistible target as he pedals to the lowest points on six continents. His book, Into Thick Air, is equally hard to pass up.People seem to lie in wait for Jim. An Afar man who teaches English in Djibouti, an Australian family that lives in a dust bowl shack with whip snakes in the outhouse and a pedal

radio for communications, and a Russian wedding party filling the only caf in town, all ambush him and force their hospitality, food, water pipes, and drinks on him. The drinks often contain alcohol, which both delays him and slows his progress when he finally wobbles away. Jim faces many obstacles in his travels--missing his young family, battling headwinds, and struggling up hills--but only fails at one: resisting the temptation to stop and talk. And eat. And drink. A Jordanian family welcomes the American bicyclist passing their house. They show him every photograph they own, feed him goat soup, dress him in local clothing, entertain him with card games, and give him breakfast after he spends the night. By then, they knew each others stories, because, [g]uest and host knew that they would only have this day, so they had to tell everything about themselves that day. Jim must have used each of his nine Arabic phrases more than once during the visit. Other characters that catch the authors eye and impede his progress include a four-pound rat-dog with a fogged-over eye; a Coptic priest who is a Mr. Natural look alike; a hyena, the slouching prince of poor posture and worse dental hygiene, that he imagines he hears from his sleeping bag at Wadi Rum; and a Russian musician who follows the international dress code of accordion players and appears to be from a neighboring planet. If youre looking for a book on bicycle maintenance, this isnt the book for you. On the other hand, there are useful tips: a good weld on the frame of your bike can hold from Moscow to the Caspian Sea (verified by Jim), and installing a second inner tube, and a second hole in the rim for the valve stem, will let you repair a flat without tools: just pump up the second tube (unverified). If you want to know the best times to visit the most famous museums in the world, this isnt the book for you. If youre looking for a guide book to five star--no, four star-- noOK, if you require any stars, or hot water, in your hotels, this isnt the book for you. If youre looking for a fact-dense history of the areas Jim pedals through, this isnt the book for you. On the other hand, he does provide intriguing factoids that could bolster street cred in the right circles: Henry David Thoreau endorsed celibacy, Moscow was twice burned by invaders in the 16th century, and the Las Vegas, NV Yellow Pages devoted 92 of those pages to Entertainment, Adult the day he visited. This is biologist Jim Malusas first book. Several of the journeys originally appeared on Discovery Channel Online. In his quotidian life, he hasnt strayed far from home. Jim still lives in Tucson, where he grew up and studied writing with Ed Abbey. His story telling skills are no secret in his home town: he is one of Barbara Kingsolvers favorite writers. My only warning is to think twice about reading Into Thick Air if those close to you already question your grip on reality. Your chuckles, guffaws, and belly laughs will confirm their suspicions. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Pretty good read By Paul Panamarenko I haven't finished this yet, but it is a fairly good read. I had just finished reading "Miles From Nowhere" by Barbara Savage, "Just Ride" by Grant Petersen, and "Two Wheels and a Map" by Bob Neubauer, which were all fantastic reads! I probably blazed through those in about a month, so I may have hit the ceiling in terms of cycling books. I will say that the book is good so far, but as far as world travel cycling literature goes, the book "Miles From Nowhere" is a cut above the fray. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Hemingway said, To write well, take a blank ... By Frankly Hemingway said, To write well, take a blank piece of paper and leave off the BS. or something to that effect. The once blank pieces of paper in this book are Filled With BS. A Very Difficult book to read.

With plenty of sunscreen and a cold beer swaddled in his sleeping bag, writer and botanist Jim Malusa bicycled alone to the lowest point on each of six continents, a six-year series of anti-expeditions to the anti-summits. His journeys took him to Lake Eyre in the arid heart of Australia, along Moses route to the Dead Sea, and from Moscow to the Caspian Sea. He pedaled across the Andes to Patagonia, around tiny Djibouti in the Horn of Africa, and from Tucson to Death Valley. With a scientists eye, he vividly observes local landscapes and creatures. As a lone man, he is overfed by grandmothers, courted by ladies of the night in Volgograd, invited into a mosque by Africas most feared tribe, chased by sandstorms and hurricanes yet Malusa keeps riding. His reward: the deep silence of the worlds great depressions. A large-hearted narrative of what happens when a friendly, perceptive American puts himself at the mercy of strange landscapes and their denizens, Into Thick Air presents one of the most talented new voices in contemporary travel writing.

"...his descriptions of desert landscapes can be extraordinary...You can almost feel the dry gusts turning Malusa's lips into cracked leather." --New York Times Sunday Book "It's unlikely that biking to the lowest places on Earth will earn him a mention in history books. But he is a great storyteller." --The Globe and Mail, Toronto Malusas intrepid curiosity enlivens his over-the-road tales. Booklist