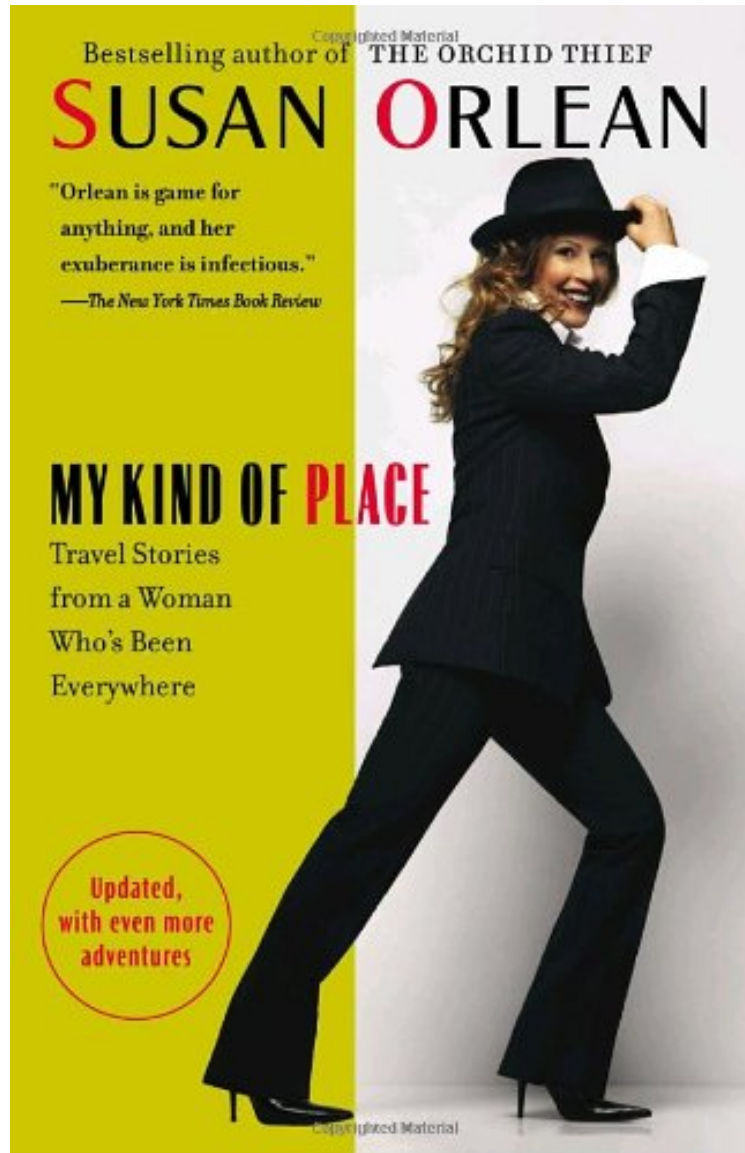


# My Kind of Place: Travel Stories from a Woman Who's Been Everywhere

Susan Orlean

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**Susan Orlean : My Kind of Place: Travel Stories from a Woman Who's Been Everywhere** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised My Kind of Place: Travel Stories from a Woman Who's Been Everywhere:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Inspirational guided tour of a woman who has been every where.By

NMamzIverGreat book and one I use for class on a weekly basis. It's a great non fiction book and it has turned the way I read from fiction to nonfiction. I love this book, it's hilarious, serious and a very interesting and provocative informational book. I find it very inspirational.4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Don't judge a stiletto by its coverBy Nancy R. PeckDon't let the cover of this book fool you. Susan Orlean does NOT travel to the many crevices of the earth in stiletto heels. At a wedding/skeet-shooting party in Scotland, she "was tripping around in rubber flip-flops." In Hungary, she walked around the Thermal Hotel Aqua in rubber thongs and "dangled from a sort of traction device at the deep end of the thermal pond."In all honesty, despite the cover's subtitle--Travel Stories. . .-- some essays are not necessarily tourism tales. One certainly could not plan an itinerary with this read. But don't let that taint the experience. As Orlean would say, the educational paths she leads us on are journeys in and of themselves. She delves into the world of the offbeat with class, going places I certainly would pass up in this lifetime. The Southern Charm Beauty Pageant, Thomas Kinkade's Signature Gallery mega-art reproduction enterprise, and the Midland, Texas Petroleum Club to name a few. She has done all of it with respect and gratitude. She even finds fascination within the SkyMall, that catalogue tucked away between the knees and the airline barfbag. You've got to appreciate this woman's stamina.For those among us who are guilty of skipping The New Yorker articles and heading right for the cartoons, these essays will be fresh reads. Though not mentioned on the cover, 85% of the book's writings have appeared in that publication. But for the uninitiated among us, the reader will find a lot packed into this bundle. In fact, Random House could have taken these random essays, created a second book out of the last section and removed an awkward conflict of theme and genre in the process.And though the book's title is on the weak side and less than memorable, the essays reflect an individual who is hardly forgettable. Her observation skills are entertaining. She includes background history and cultural notes--all appreciated. She carries on a satisfying combination of journalistic curiosity, objectivity and wit. So, don't judge this particular book by its cover. Susan Orlean has so much more to offer inside.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Used book, Could have been priced at a cheaper priceBy Megann HorsteadThe books is disappointing content wise, but apart from that, this book was pretty decent for a used book. It was not excessively written or highlighted in. The book definitely arrived on time, but perhaps the book could have been listed for a lesser value. I looked around and there are other sellers that may have sold for that lesser value.

Susan Orlean has been called a national treasure by The Washington Post and a kind of latter-day Tocqueville by The New York Times Book Review. In addition to having written classic articles for The New Yorker, she was played, with some creative liberties, by Meryl Streep in her Golden Globe Awardwinning performance in the film Adaptation.Now, in My Kind of Place, the real Susan Orlean takes readers on a series of remarkable journeys in this uniquely witty, sophisticated, and far-flung travel book. In this irresistible collection of adventures far and near, Orlean conducts a tour of the world via its subcultures, from the heart of the African music scene in Paris to the World Taxidermy Championships in Springfield, Illinoisand even into her own apartment, where she imagines a very famous houseguest taking advantage of her hospitality.With Orlean as guide, lucky readers partake in all manner of armchair activity. They will climb Mt. Fuji and experience a hike most intrepid Japanese have never attempted; play ball with Cubas Little Leaguers, promising young athletes born in a country where baseball and politics are inextricably intertwined; trawl Icelandic waters with Keiko, everyones favorite whale as he tries to make it on his own; stay awhile in Midland, Texas, hometown of George W. Bush, a place where oil time is the only time that matters; explore the halls of a New York City school so troubled its known as Horror High; and stalk caged tigers in Jackson, New Jersey, a suburban town with one of the highest concentrations of tigers per square mile anywhere in the world. Vivid, humorous, unconventional, and incomparably entertaining, Susan Orleans writings for The New Yorker have delighted readers for over a decade. My Kind of Place is an inimitable treat by one of Americas premier literary journalists.From the Hardcover edition.

From Publishers WeeklyOrlean (The Orchid Thief) hasn't so much been everywhere as she's been everywhere no one else has thought to go. In this collection, she focuses not on cities but on singular locales and events. She zooms in on an African music shop in Paris, a grocery store in Queens and a fertility blessing ceremony in Bhutan. Belying the book's bland title, Orlean's essays are rich in color, metaphor and crafty language. For example, in Iceland, "the wind never huffs or puffs but simply blows your house down." Orlean's subtle humor infuses her writing as she uncovers strange beauties: a taxidermy convention is "a surreal carnality, but all conveyed with the usual trade show earnestness and hucksterism, with no irony and no acknowledgment that having buckets of bear noses for sale was anything out of the ordinary." Orlean uses the word "travel" loosely; "I view all stories as journeys," she explains. Indeed, many of the final pieces aren't grounded by place, but they nicely round out an insightful collection by an exceptional essayist. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From Bookmarks MagazineOrlean is best known for The Orchid Thief, which was recast as the movie Adaptation. These essays similarly cast ordinary people in a most extraordinary light, from parents of beauty pageant girls to Cuban farmers. Critics dont call her one of our best essayists for nothing. Orlean approaches her subjects with intense curiosity and fairness, has an unusually good ear for language and dialogue, and arrives at perceptive conclusions about human

behavior. Still, *My Kind of Place* is an uneven collection. Most critics found the first two parts ("Here," for pieces set in U.S., and "There," for abroad) clever and insightful. But the last part, "Everywhere", due to some rather self-indulgent pieces, flagged. Finally, some critics felt the cover photo belies Orleans adventurous spirit. Perhaps that shouldn't matter; few essayists traverse such varied terrain with such clear eyes. Copyright 2004 Phillips Nelson Media, Inc. From Booklist

New Yorker staff writer Orlean is an adventurous journalist with a great instinct for offbeat stories, a playful sense of humor, and a dynamic prose style. She was portrayed by Meryl Streep in *Adaptation*, a film loosely based on her first book, *The Orchid Thief* (1998), then affirmed her verve and demonstrated her versatility in *The Bullfighter Checks Her Makeup* (2001), a collection of lively profiles. Now, in this enormously pleasurable gathering of canny, vivid travel pieces and sprightly essays, Orlean proves herself to be an incisive chronicler of places as varied as Midland, Texas; New York City's immense and struggling Martin Luther King Jr. High School; and beautiful, hard-to-reach Bhutan. Besides her clever descriptions and charming candor, the most salient feature of Orlean's travel writing is her enthusiasm. Always determined to accentuate the positive, she discerns a bright side to her experience climbing Mt. Fuji in pouring rain and impenetrable fog, and enjoys the World Taxidermy Championships in Springfield, Illinois. Havana, Paris, Bangkok, and a grocery store in Queens all come to scintillating life under her keen gaze. Happy to serve as the "reader's proxy," Orlean hopes that her writing about intriguing places will make readers "feel more open" to the world's splendid diversity. Donna Seaman Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved