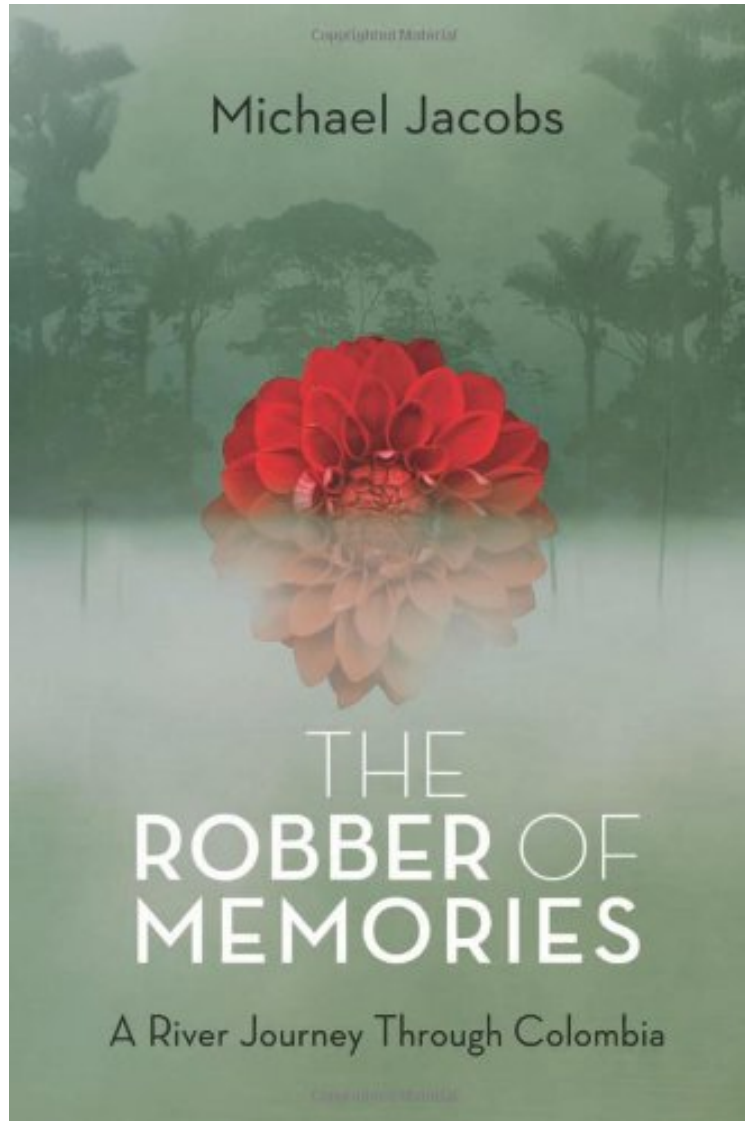


## The Robber of Memories: A River Journey Through Colombia

*Michael Jacobs*

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**Michael Jacobs : The Robber of Memories: A River Journey Through Colombia** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Robber of Memories: A River Journey Through Colombia:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Take an Unusual River JourneyBy Stephen Maurer KashThis book was well written and especially entertaining for a person interested in life along Colombia's Magdalena River. Four stars is a generous rating because a person not interested in the region where the story is set might find the book boring

and feel that it hops too much from point to point. The ending was very good, however, and it really pulled the story together, making it an arguably four-star story.<sup>2</sup> of 2 people found the following review helpful. Vibrantly written By Anne U. Walker As one reads this book, a love of Colombia and an understanding of its history shines through. I liked how Jacobs develops the theme of memory throughout the book. The vignettes of people and places are jewels<sup>2</sup> of 3 people found the following review helpful. Read it! By britgirl I first came across Michael Jacobs in his "Andes" which was excellent too. You come away from the book not only getting a real feel for Colombia (and I lived there for 7 years so feel I can express an opinion on this) but feeling you have made a friend in Michael.

Magdalena, a river that courses through the heart of Columbia, connects a violent past with the countrys uncertain present. British writer Michael Jacobs struggles to reconcile his love for the land and its people with the dangers that both still present. Determined to eliminate modern conveniences from his journey, he begins traversing the river by tugboat. He makes an exception for a cell phone that maintains a sporadic signal at best, in efforts to keep in touch with his mother suffering from deteriorating health. Jacobs cannot help but notice the irony of his mothers dementia and his travels through Colombian townships with the worlds highest incidence of early-onset Alzheimers. While navigating the mysterious river and unfamiliar territory both emotionally and geographically Jacobs comes across Gabriel Garcia Mrquez, whose own faltering memory shows a growing obsession with the Magdalena River of his youth. When Jacobs and his companions are apprehended by FARC guerillas who turn out to be as quirky and affable as they are intimidating, life begins to imitate the magical realism of Mrquezs signature works. Shortly after being released from captivity, the FARC camp is bombed by the Colombian air force, leaving no likely survivors among his oddly likeable captors. Exploring themes of adventure, endings, and the utter pointlessness of it all, Jacobs can only forge onward in his reflection of the mystical river.

From Booklist The erudite and graceful travel writer Jacobs takes us down Colombias longest river, the Magdalena, and it is a thrilling and fearsome ride. From the wonderful opening scene in Cartagena in which the author meets the aging Gabriel Garca Mrquez, himself long-fascinated by the river, Jacobs delivers not only an adventure story and a travel narrative, but also an excursion into memory itself, about which Garca Mrquez, of course, has dealt eloquently. It is a preoccupation of Colombians, and the river is referred to by them as a robber of memories. In telling us why, Jacobs poignantly and seamlessly weaves in his mothers coterminous descent into dementia. Jacobs odd encounters with FARC guerillas add dimension to a text that stands with Paul Theroux, Bruce Chatwin, and, even, in some ways, Mark Twains *Life on the Mississippi*. --Mark Levine An acclaimed travel writers eerily hypnotic journey deep into the heart of Colombias most mysterious river A well-rendered travelogue and a profound excursion into what it means to remember and forget. Kirkus "The erudite and graceful travel writer Jacobs takes us down Colombias longest river, the Magdalena, and it is a thrilling and fearsome ride Jacobs delivers not only an adventure story and a travel narrative, but also an excursion into memory itself a text that stands with Paul Theroux, Bruce Chatwin, and, even, in some ways, Mark Twains *Life on the Mississippi*." Mark Levine Booklist