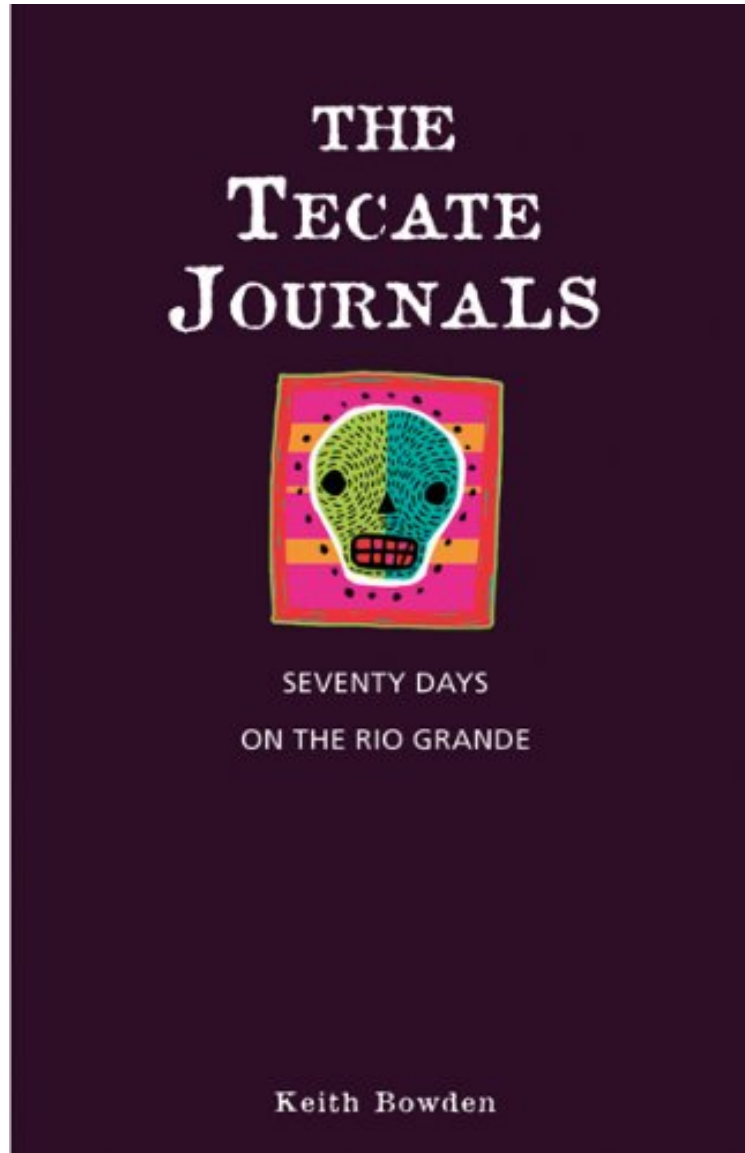


(Download) The Tecate Journals: Seventy Days on the Rio Grande

The Tecate Journals: Seventy Days on the Rio Grande

Keith Bowden

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Keith Bowden : The Tecate Journals: Seventy Days on the Rio Grande before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Tecate Journals: Seventy Days on the Rio Grande:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Bought for the river running but got hooked on the people of the riverBy Too Many HobbiesI bought this book after spending a few days on the Rio on a couple separate trips to Big Bend NP. The lower canyons have been calling my name so I figured this would do until I could get down there and run them myself. I thoroughly enjoyed reading about the biking portion and then he seemed to breeze through the

canyons portion that are most popular. I was then thinking about how I wasn't really looking forward to the portion of the book after the Langtry pull out. Boy did that change. The ended up being my favorite portion of the book. The interactions with people on both sides and his changing perspective of the Border Patrol and their job were intriguing. I would highly recommend this book to people that enjoy that part of Texas and/or find it fascinating. Also anyone wanting to learn more about the border (now that its a major political topic for people that have no idea about life in that area...) this will give you a unique perspective that isn't so much one side or the other but rather a look at both sides from the middle.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The wanderlust in all of us

By Howard

As of writing this review I am on a trip to Texas; I read this book on my flight and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Although I never floated the Rio Grande (and probably never will), I had visited Big Bend National Park, Del Rio, Ciudad Acuna, drove on the El Camino Del Rio when I lived in Texas years ago, and the book brings back some of those memories. More importantly, this is a well written book, you can enjoy it even if you have never seen the Rio Grande or even been to Texas. Keith Bowden is a good writer, although the book narrates his 70-day biking/canoeing/rafting journey, it never drags. It in fact flows like the river, has surprises at every turn. Near the end, you almost regret -- like the author himself -- that the journey had to end. It is also not merely a travelogue; it weaves encounters with the various people (Mexican fishermen, "undocumented workers", border patrol agents, etc.), personal reflections and some historical tidbits of the border and the two nations that it divides. If I had to nitpick one thing, it is this: Keith Bowden is not a naturalist, and the descriptions he gave of the natural environment are general and vague. But to say this is a "flaw" would be too harsh -- he never claimed to be a naturalist and this is not what the book is about. One repeated theme from the book is the abuse that people (Americans and Mexicans alike) gave to this river: it is polluted, trashed and mutilated. Although the book is never meant to be an "environmental study" or of the "nature writing" genre, the scars of this once mighty river are just too plain to see. Also, with the security around the border rapidly deteriorating, I doubt anyone (the author included) would attempt such a journey any time soon, probably ever again. I am glad that he had made this trip and shared it with us. A job well done!

P.S.: for those who liked this book, I also recommend Colin Fletcher's "River" and John Graves' "Goodbye to a River".

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. 21st Century Adventurer/Explorer

By James Boyd

I first encountered Mr. Bowden's book on the shelves of a local bookstore in the 'Texana' section. I read the back cover and was immediately captivated. I became even more captivated as soon as I started reading the book. As a matter of fact, I so much enjoyed this book that I have read it four times to date, and intend to start reading it again very soon! Bowden has an excellent writing style that manages to keep the reader's attention. It is clear, concise, witty, and he leaves many interpretations and opinions to the reader. What Mr. Bowden accomplished during his 70 day adventure on the fabled Rio Grande is beyond incredulous. It is a feat that had yet to be accomplished by any one soul until he did so a mere five years ago. Having lived on the Rio Grande most of my life, I really feel that he captured the pulse of the river in his various, though sometimes brief, vignettes along wildly contrasting segments of the river. In addition to the physical prowess necessary to navigate the 1,000+ miles of the Rio Grande along the Texas/Mexico border, Mr. Bowden demonstrated remarkable courage and determination that resulted in the completion of his quest to navigate the entire length of the river in Texas. His accomplishment is not only commendable, but it stands as a testament to the adventurous nature of the human spirit, and to the realization that great feats of exploration are still possible in our very developed part of the world. It is not necessary that the reader be an avid canoeist or river rafter to enjoy this book. It will appeal to anyone who appreciates the great outdoors and the spirit of true adventure, and the unknowns faced by one man as he takes the reader down this legendary river from the desolate lands of western Texas all the way to the lapping waves of the Gulf of Mexico.

[CLICK HERE](#) to download a sample chapter from *The Tecate Journals** More than a man-against-nature adventure--the author floats us along the border of political furor, cultural limbo, and dangerous human encounters*Touches on environmental issues, adrenalin-spiked action, and the author's ambivalence with his own cultural identity* A first work from a new voice that is parts gritty, elegant, and contemporary

The Rio Grande is a national border, a water source, a dangerous rapid with house-sized boulders, a nature refuge, a garbage dump, and a playground, depending on where you are on its 1885-mile course. That's why journalist Keith Bowden decided to become the first person to travel the entire length of the Rio as it forms the border between America and Mexico. This is his fascinating account of the journey by bike, canoe, and raft along one of North America's most overlooked resources. From illegal immigrants and drug runners trying to make it into America to the border patrol working to stop them; from human coyotes -- smugglers who help people navigate their way into the United States -- to encounters with real coyotes, mountain lions, and other flora and fauna, Bowden reveals a side of America that few of us ever see. The border between the U.S. and Mexico is, in many ways, a country unto itself, where inhabitants share more in common with fellow riverside dwellers than they do with the rest of their countrymen. With this isolated and colorful micro-world as his backdrop, Bowden not only explores his surroundings, but also tests his inner mettle along some of the most dangerous and remote riparian wilderness in North America.

"[Bowden's] account in *The Tecate Journal* is so unflinchingly honest and balanced, readers should check in

preconceived notions about the border and the two worlds on either side[Bowden] offers us a long, graceful ride along the Rio Grande and a glimpse into what is woefully regrettable about the river, but also what is achingly beautiful about it. Each daily entry in *The Tecate Journal* is another ripple on the water-another resonance-and a testament to the river's power to mesmerize writers who brave the journey and captivate readers who go along for the ride." (Conexion Weekly, San Antonio TX) **THE TECATE JOURNALS** is a first-rate adventure story, teeming with drug-running thugs, riverside eccentrics, vigilant Border Patrol agents, and tales of hard living on the Rio Grande. By examining such a misunderstood aspect of the American landscape, Bowden, like his literary ancestor Thoreau, has fashioned an epic that will last for generations. (Jay Atkinson author of *Legends of Winter Hill and City in Amber*) "Bowden's mtier makes him uniquely qualified to take this journey and write about it." (San Antonio Express News) "Though constantly in harm's way, the author meets no real harm and offers a vicarious adventure that's a pleasure to join, Pop another round of Tecate, por favor." (The Sacramento Bee) "[Keith Bowden has a] knack for evoking extremity in spare yet vivid language." (Austin American-Statesman) "The Tecate Journals is an impressive memoir about one man's single-minded affection and respect for a river he perceives as a living thing. He made that journey on the river, witnessed the complicated drama inherent there, and shared the story. Those of us who will never, ever make the same trip ourselves can begin to understand why Keith Bowden did." (San Antonio Express News) "It's a simple and candid adventure story made complex by twenty-first-century geopolitics." (Texas Monthly) "lighthearted but powerful tribute to the Great River." (Dallas Morning News) "An engaging diary of a man who knows no limits other than his own, and just how far he is willing to push himself to find inner peace." (Country Lifestyle Magazine) "This is a well-written narrative of an epic journey by bike, canoe, and raft along a dividing line between cultures and humanity. Well worth the reader's time." (The Oklahoma Observer) "Bowden's literary account of his river journey from El Paso to Boca Chica does a well-crafted job of documenting the complexities inherent in sharing a waterway with another country. More than a good adventure story, *The Tecate Journals* offers a concise, eyewitness account of the controversial border today." (Texas Parks and Wildlife Magazine) "Part cultural study, part environmental espionage, part adventure, this is a welcome look at one of the most heavily guarded yet mysteriously neglected waterways in the United States." (Keith Bowden Kirkus s) "When people come back into view [in the story], the book picks up speed, because Bowden the writer has a gift for capturing the quirks of border culture." (The San Diego Union Tribune) About the Author Fluent in Spanish, **KEITH BOWDEN** has found his place in the dry, cross-cultural expanses of the Texas-Mexico border region. Living in Laredo -- where he teaches writing at Laredo Community College -- Keith has spent countless hours both exploring the canyons of the Rio Grande River and snagging hot ground balls on the cross-border baseball teams for which he has played. He has also traveled extensively throughout Mexico and in South and Central America. *Tecate Journals* is his first book.