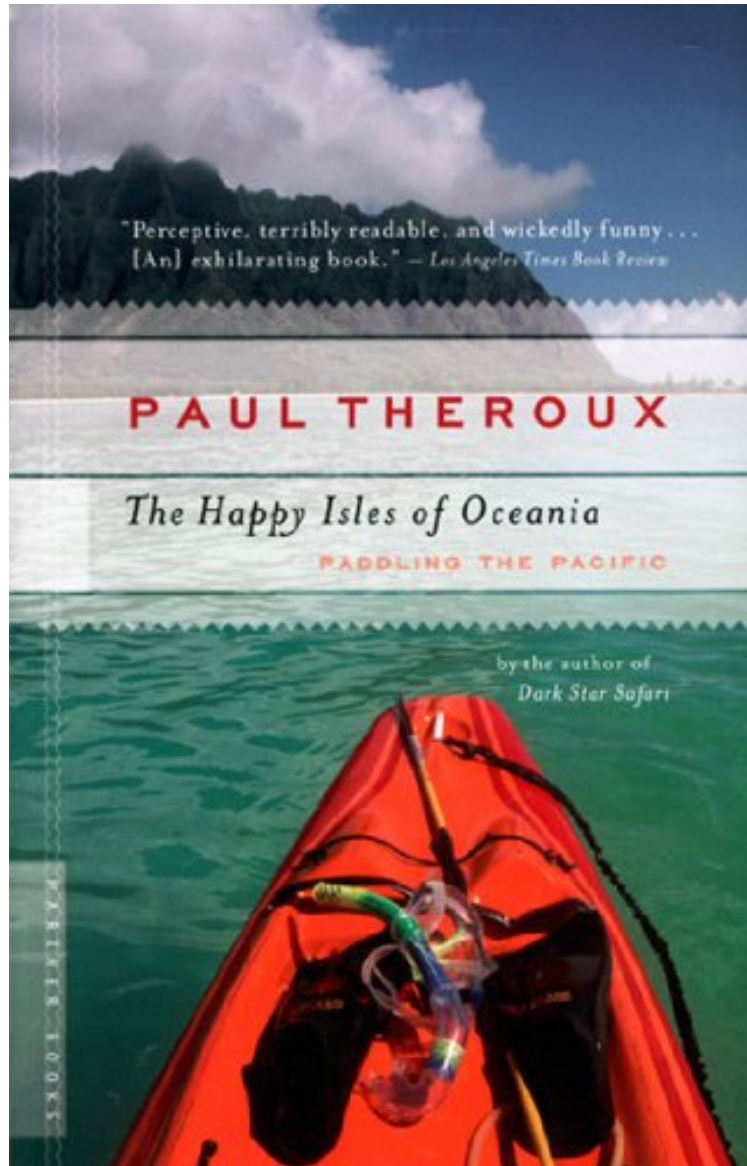


(Free and download) The Happy Isles of Oceania: Paddling the Pacific

## The Happy Isles of Oceania: Paddling the Pacific

Von Paul Theroux

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**Von Paul Theroux : The Happy Isles of Oceania: Paddling the Pacific** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Happy Isles of Oceania: Paddling the Pacific:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen4 von 4 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. This is really what travel writing should be...Von Ein KundeIn regards to travel literature, I was always a big Bill Bryson fan (and still am) due to the light-heartedness, familiarity, and humour. When I first picked up a Paul Theroux book I was

obviously a bit biased; however, after finishing it (*Riding the Iron Rooster*), I knew this was deeper and in some ways darker. Here was a man that wrote with a passion for getting into the absolute heart of a country, continent, or region, and the journey... and with what ideas! How about boarding a subway in Boston to finish the trip (all on wheels and public transportation!) on the southern tip of South America (*The Old Patagonian Express*); or this jewel here - having been lecturing *Down Under*, Mr. Theroux finds out he is to be a divorced man, so what's the rush to go home? He buys a canoe and travels the whole Pacific up to Hawaii, paddling around the islands. Just think of the names... The Cook Islands, Samoa, Fiji... what pictures do these islands conjure up in your heads? This is a need read for all fans of travel literature; and a sensational addendum is the novel "Hotel Honolulu" from Paul Theroux. Though fictional, it shows another side to Hawaii - one which I can confirm (as I worked there for 6 years in a very similar hotel with such people). I am sure if you are looking for travel writing that is more tell-it-like-it-is rather than let's-just-praise-everything-and-then-leave-for-the-comforts-of-home, this is your book, this is your man.

1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A travel novel about the author and not the destinations. Von Ein Kunde

The title 'The Happy Isles of Oceania' can only be ironic. In this book of Theroux's travels around Australasia and the islands of the Pacific, happiness is one emotion that is noticeable by its absence. The opening chapter on New Zealand, in which its inhabitants are variously described as frightful, scruffy and dirty, sets the tone for the rest of the book. According to Theroux, every Pacific island is inhabited by a lazy, mendacious, tardy, thieving and lying populace devoid of culture and manners. Fellow travellers to these islands do not escape the wrath of Theroux's pen as they are collectively dismissed as fat, ignorant, oafish and rude. Yet for all his criticisms of other people for being rude, racist, indifferent and obdurate, the clear impression from reading the book is that Theroux is the worst offender of the lot. Even though the book is over 700 pages long, little interest is paid to the description of his destinations in terms of the natural habitat and the flora and fauna; which I imagine is one of the obvious attractions of the Pacific. Instead the book concentrates almost solely on the author's brooding following a separation from his wife and on his utter disdain for all he meets. Sadly, my lasting impression was not one of beautiful sandy beaches, blue lagoons or vibrant coral reefs, but of a sad and bitter old man who would do well to paddle to a deserted island and not return.

1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Not much happiness here. Von Ein Kunde

Mean spirited and critical, Theroux's account of his voyage around the Pacific suggests he would have done better to stay at home. Polynesians are broadly depicted as lumbering, shiftless pickpockets with Theroux choosing to include a quite shameful story about a stolen travellers cheque which he countersigns for a Samoan woman. I taught at a college in Tonga in the early nineties and have visited most of the places Theroux covers, including Western Samoa. I only ever found the most gracious and noble people who went well out of their way to be of assistance with everything and whose fundamental decency I still recall. This anti-Jap, anti-Wog romp masquerading as a travel journal will be offensive to many people. Theroux's racism is subtle and it is all the more dislikeable for its subtlety. I came away from *The Happy Isles of Oceania* with a fresh view on Theroux as well a sudden, irrational impulse to take a shower. This clever, unpleasant book is not a literary island I intend to visit again.

**Kurzbeschreibung** In one of his most exotic and breathtaking journeys, the intrepid traveler Paul Theroux ventures to the South Pacific, exploring fifty-one islands by collapsible kayak. Beginning in New Zealand's rain forests and ultimately coming to shore thousands of miles away in Hawaii, Theroux paddles alone over isolated atolls, through dirty harbors and shark-filled waters, and along treacherous coastlines. This exhilarating tropical epic is full of disarming observations and high adventure.