

A Tourist In The Arab Spring (Bradt Travel Guides (Travel Literature))



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Synopsis

In the aftermath of the Arab Spring, war reporters rushed to publish accounts of the uprising. Tom Chesshyre took a different approach - he jumped on a plane and became the first to return to the region as a tourist. The result is the fascinating, street-level tale of a journey through lands fresh from revolution – Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. Chesshyre heads for tourist sites that few have seen in recent years, as well as new 'attractions' like Gaddafi's bombed-out bunker in Tripoli. In a book both touching and humorous, he describes being abducted in Libya, listening to the sound of Kalashnikovs at night and talking to ordinary people struggling to get by. On the second anniversary of the Arab Spring, this is the ideal time for this book.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'Account of a trip through freshly revolutionised parts of Egypt, Libya and Tunisia paints the region as one of the most fascinating on Earth.' Time Out 'A fascinating, often humorous, insight into a world in the midst of revolution.' Food & Travel 'With no brief other than curiosity, and equipped with nothing more than courage and compassion, he discovered that word of mouth was his best entry visa into the confidence of people whose lives had been so disrupted.' The Times 'A good read about not quite 'wish you were here' territory... yet.' Wanderlust 'The author is honest to admit he hasn't a clue, but his journey across these lands has the freshness of someone who hasn't just read the newspapers, but has been there and talked to the people, none of whom have a clue either.' Good Book Guide 'The result is the fascinating, street-level tale of a lay traveller's journey through

lands fresh from revolution.' The Middle East 'This witty, perceptive book provides a fascinating read for lovers of thoughtful, imaginative and well-written travel literature.' Mail on Sunday 'A charming travel companion, entertaining and engaging'. Times Literary Supplement 'A compelling account of travels through terrain strewn with the relics of ancient civilizations, but set within the thoroughly modern context of burgeoning young democracies at a turbulent stage of their growth... a valuable alternative take on momentous events in a fascinating part of the world.' Richmond Magazine

Tom Chesshyre is staff travel writer on The Times. Since joining the paper in 1997, he has been to 80-plus countries on assignment.

For people who like the travel narrative genre, this book will be very appealing. While many such books rely on humor or absurdity in describing their travels, this author is much more sensitive to the people and sites he encounters. He comes as a tourist without a political agenda but not adverse to talking to the people about the huge changes that occurred throughout the region. His visits to local historic sites are revealing since many are unknown to most of the world. The book is a good mixture of personal encounters and geographical/historical descriptions all of which are told in a very readable, captivating way. I found the author more interested conveying a feeling for the people and places he visited rather than how those things affected him, a common trap for travel writers. The author does a great job of getting beyond the headlines and giving us a glimpse of how life goes on AFTER a revolution.

It's interesting and alarming at times but I struggled with the way it was written. The sentence construction and flow of thoughts was not to my liking.

Another fast paced and hugely enjoyable narrative full of colourful and interesting people and places. It charts Tom's breakneck travels across North Africa's in the wake of the Arab Spring; where in the guise of a tourist he gets behind the seismic political changes that have occurred recently in the region. Tom asks the questions and reports the answers of those who have lived through oppression and are now experiencing the first promise of freedom. Littered with characters that have been gagged throughout their entire lives and are finally feeling able to speak out with some degree of comfort and safety. If contemporary history sometimes passes you by then here is a book that pieces together the key events and timeline that saw the demise of corrupt and often inhumane dictatorships. History will decide if the Arab Spring is in fact a False Dawn. A sequel that

determines if the economic benefits, equality and personal liberties that are promised actually materialise is certainly one for Tom's future Title List!

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