



Journeys of Discovery: Cultures, monuments and the natural world

Robert Muirhead

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My journeys of discovery took me to Pol Pot's grave in Cambodia, to the mysterious Plain of Jars in Laos, to the depths of the Amazonian jungles and the 4,000 islands of the Mekong, to the teeming wildlife of the Pantanal in Brazil and to the heights of volcanic peaks in Ecuador and Chile. Travel with me across the arid Atacama Desert, the sublime altiplano, and the great sand dunes of Sossusvlei in Namibia. My journeys were by bus and car, by river boats and canoes on lakes and great rivers, by a bamboo train, by horse and on foot. I camped in the Okavango delta in Botswana. I stayed on a kibbutz in Israel, jungle lodges on the Amazon, farms in Namibia and Ecuador, and a former palace in Brunei. Read about my moving pilgrimages to the Second Boer War Battlefields in kwaZulu-Natal in South Africa and the battlefield of Kapyong in South Korea. Journey with me through the Holy Land in Israel and the tiny Muslim nation of Brunei, as well as the magnificent sacred sites of the vanished Mayas and Incas in Latin America. See impressive Christian Cathedrals in Latin America and the monuments and sculptures of vanished civilizations in Central America, Cambodia and Laos. Be moved as I was at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, and by the depravities of the Khmer Rouge at Toul Sleng in Phnom Penh. Learn about the variety and tenacity of spiritual beliefs: the various forms of modern Christianity, Islam and Judaism; Buddhism and Hinduism; as well as the vanished indigenous beliefs of Latin America that have also been incorporated into Catholicism, and the 'pagan' belief in spirits that still exists in Laos and elsewhere in South-east Asia. Meet the people I encountered; the prostitute who came to my door in Panama, the little girl who treasured the pen I gave her in a remote village in Cambodia, my guides and drivers who shared their lives and beliefs with me as we drove through their countries.



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