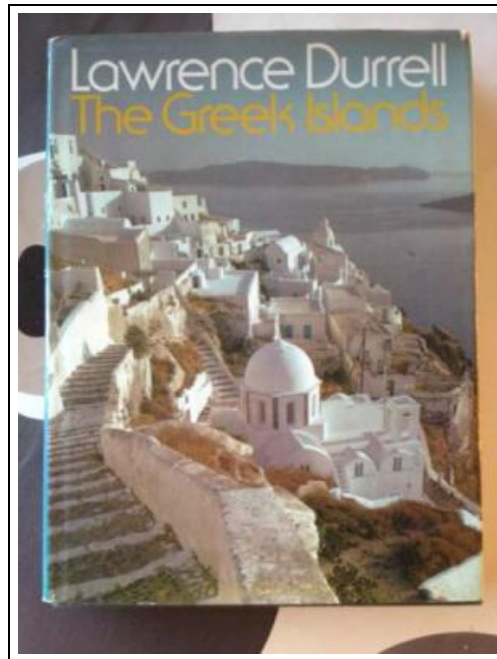


The Greek Islands



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Reviews

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(Christop Ferry)

THE GREEK ISLANDS



Faber and Faber. Hardcover. Condition: New. UNUSED, ACCEPTABLE, NOT EX-LIBRARY, with damp stain, 288 pages. (Lawrence Durrell is best known as a novelist, in particular for the four novels that make up his ALEXANDRIA QUARTET. In addition, he is both a poet and a travel writer. THE GREEK ISLANDS is much more than an ordinary travel guide. As he says, the modern tourist is already well provided for in that respect. How, then, would you describe this book? For starters, it is an island by island discussion of the physical characteristics, history, mythological importance, and peculiarities of each island. Durrell blends these together so well that, by the end of each section, you feel that you know what makes each island unique and that traveling there would be more like returning to the home of an old friend than making a first visit. Provided its own outlook, and together they give an unbeatable overview. Most of us see ruins, particularly on islands such as Delos, the legendary birthplace of Apollo, drink, dance, and shop on islands such as Mykonos, eat the food and drink ouzo and retsina wherever we go, but we don't go out of our way to meet the before the tourist came natives. Durrell talks of going to out of the way islands and villages where one finds a room by finding the mayor who, in turn, introduces you to someone who takes you into their home as if you were a friend of the family. To do this, you have to be more of a risk taker than most of us are. To summarize, Durrell presents a picture of the Islands that integrates a place, a people, an ancient history, a mythology replete with warring gods and goddesses, and a modern history, including wars and rebellions, and freedom...



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