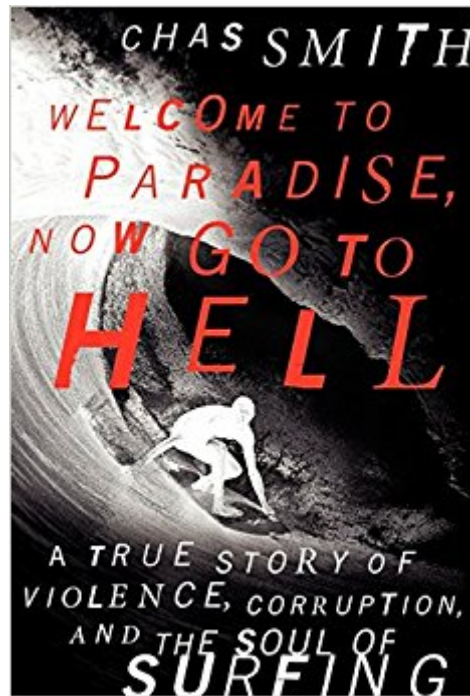


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Welcome To Paradise, Now Go To Hell: A True Story Of Violence, Corruption, And The Soul Of Surfing



Synopsis

A finalist for the PEN Center USA Award for Nonfiction *Welcome to Paradise, Now Go to Hell*, is surfer and former war reporter Chas Smith's wild and unflinching look at the high-stakes world of surfing on Oahu's North Shore—a riveting, often humorous, account of beauty, greed, danger, and crime. For two months every winter, when Pacific storms make landfall, swarms of mainlanders, Brazilians, Australians, and Europeans flock to Oahu's paradisiacal North Shore in pursuit of some of the greatest waves on earth for surfing's Triple Crown competition. Chas Smith reveals how this influx transforms a sleepy, laid-back strip of coast into a lawless, violent, drug-addled, and adrenaline-soaked mecca. Smith captures this exciting and dangerous place where locals, outsiders, the surf industry, and criminal elements clash in a fascinating look at class, race, power, money, and crime, set within one of the most beautiful places on earth. The result is a breathtaking blend of crime and adventure that captures the allure and wickedness of this idyllic golden world.

Book Information

Hardcover: 256 pages

Publisher: It Books (November 19, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0062202529

ISBN-13: 978-0062202529

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars— See all reviews— (129 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #496,804 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #125 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Outdoor Recreation > Surfing #755 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > True Crime > Organized Crime #1312 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Specific Groups > Crime & Criminals

Customer Reviews

The subtitle of this book is 'A True Story...' and it likely is mostly true. I think the author took some liberties with time and events but likely not in a way to alter it much. Any surfer has more than a passing familiarity with the North shore even if he has never been there for it is surfing's most sacred ground. All who have surfed there, or attempted to, or who have kept up with the scene are also aware of its peculiar form of unofficially sanctioned frontier justice. Some would call it localism, but this is a far more highly evolved system of justice, retribution and surf socialism that has evolved

around the world's most iconic waves in one of the world's most iconic tropical paradises, and Chas Smith has come to town to break it down for the lay reader....and does a really good job of it. After giving us a taste of who he is: Thrill seeker, Journalist, Crap stirrer, Dandy, Surfer, World Traveler, and so on, the author proposes to take us on a journey through the labyrinthine inner workings of North Shore's high stakes, big wave surf scene. The problem is one of a finite resource, the world's best waves; a discrete area, seven miles of prime surfing; a near-infinite source of filthy lucre, corporate purveyors of globally consumed surf-themed goods, a put-upon minority with huge muscles, steely nerves, amazing physical skill and few compunctions about resorting to violence; the self-proclaimed rulers of their beloved, besieged surfing kingdom. The solution is an unarmed mob, roughly organized into an elite cadre of enforcers meting out justice based upon a rough calculus that takes into account the respect one has earned on the North Shore, surf-cred, corporate sponsorship, indigineity, the ability to take it and dish it out, and social connections.

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