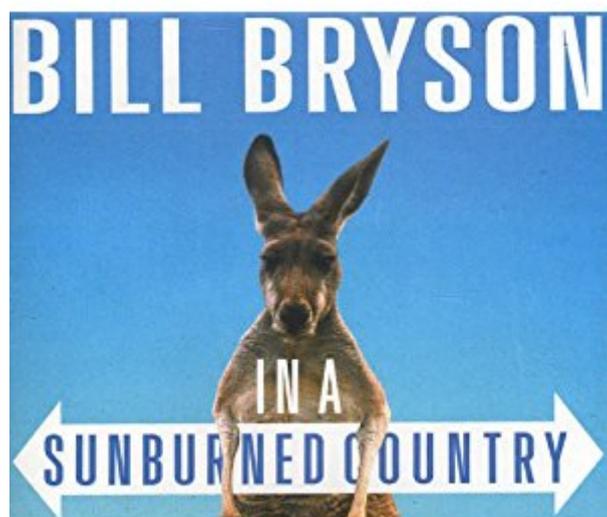


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In A Sunburned Country



Synopsis

A CLASSIC FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF ONE SUMMER Every time Bill Bryson walks out the door, memorable travel literature threatens to break out. His previous excursion along the Appalachian Trail resulted in the sublime national bestseller *A Walk in the Woods*. In *A Sunburned Country* is his report on what he found in an entirely different place: Australia, the country that doubles as a continent, and a place with the friendliest inhabitants, the hottest, driest weather, and the most peculiar and lethal wildlife to be found on the planet. The result is a deliciously funny, fact-filled, and adventurous performance by a writer who combines humor, wonder, and unflagging curiosity. Despite the fact that Australia harbors more things that can kill you in extremely nasty ways than anywhere else, including sharks, crocodiles, snakes, even riptides and deserts, Bill Bryson adores the place, and he takes his readers on a rollicking ride far beyond that beaten tourist path. Wherever he goes he finds Australians who are cheerful, extroverted, and unflinchingly obliging, and these beaming products of land with clean, safe cities, cold beer, and constant sunshine fill the pages of this wonderful book. Australia is an immense and fortunate land, and it has found in Bill Bryson its perfect guide. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Thank you, thank you, thank you, Bill. As a proud Australian, it has been a never-ending source of irritation that Australia is forever portrayed as a land of beer-swilling "yobbo"s who say "cobber" and "fair dinkum" rather a lot. For instance, 'The Simpsons' - usually such a witty, clever and insightful

show - completely missed the point in their Australian episode. Finally, someone has managed to capture a bit of the character of this great country. He releases it from the shackles of the Paul Hogan stereotype. This is a terrific read. Bryson has, mercifully, gone well and truly off the beaten track to explore many different parts of Australia - the cities, the outback, the tropics, and everything else in between. But as ever with a Bill Bryson book, more than the destination itself, the pleasure is in getting there. Laugh-out-loud moments abound, though perhaps more in the restrained way of "A Walk in the Woods", as opposed to the guffaw-fest that is "Neither Here Nor There". You don't have to be at all familiar with Australia to appreciate and enjoy this book. I am, sadly, one of those Australians to which Bryson refers that has never seen Ayers Rock / Uluru myself. In fact, I have never been to the majority of places Bryson visits. It was a revelation for me, too. Bryson once again recounts numerous historical and trivial anecdotes which, together with his unique view of the world, elevate this book well above the mere travel genre. This is insightful, this is informative, this is FUNNY. Perversely, my only criticism is perhaps that he likes Australia a little too much. God knows, I'm so pleased that he does. However, he is, I believe, at his best when distressed.

Bill Bryson is best known for writing very humorous travel books, and "In a Sunburned Country" is indeed a funny account of his travels in Australia. Those who love Bill Bryson's books for their humor won't be disappointed. But unlike most people, I like Bill Bryson best when he's NOT trying to be funny, and my appreciation of this book is mostly due to the great amount of very interesting information presented. Bill Bryson amazes you with loads of information about the geology, the animal life, the plants and insects, the history, the statistics, the folklore, etc., etc. The many dangers: poisonous snakes, poisonous insects, poisonous jellyfish, crocodiles, sharks, and rip currents - they're all out to get you. The inhospitable deserts, the beautiful beaches, the huge distances; Bill Bryson gives you a feeling of what it's all like. The book goes into detail about many aspects of Australian life that are fairly unknown, including the discovery (and re-discovery) of Australia, the settlement by British prisoners, the early expeditions to explore the interior, the gold rushes, the outlaws, and the devastation caused by rabbits and other imported animals and plants. Bill Bryson talks about the many unusual animal species found only in Australia, including giant earthworms that grow up to 1 meter (and can be stretched to 4 meters) and the platypus, a cross between a reptile and a mammal. He talks about Australians and the Australian society, and the situation regarding the native people, the aboriginals. Bill Bryson doesn't cover all of Australia from the geographical point of view, and the parts he does cover are somewhat random.

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