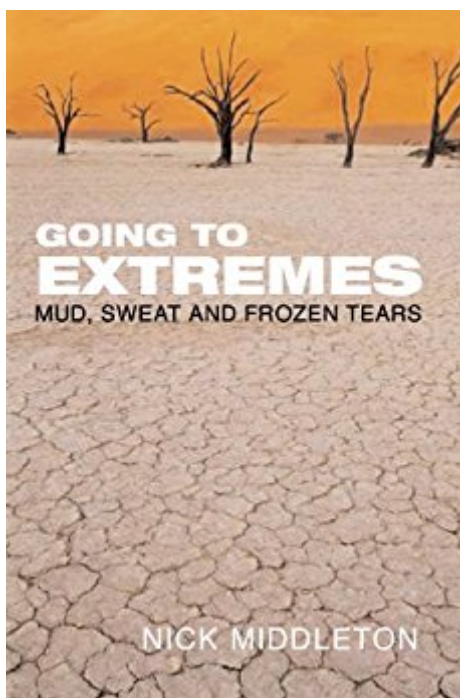


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Going To Extremes



Synopsis

In Going to Extremes writer, presenter and Oxford geography don Nick Middleton visits Oymyakon in Siberia, where the average winter temperature is -47 degrees and 40% of the population have lost their fingers to frostbite while changing the car wheel. Next he travels to Arica Chile where there have been fourteen consecutive years without a drop of rain and so fog is people's only source of water. Going from the driest to the wettest, he visits Mawsynram in India which annually competes for the title with its neighbour Cherrapunji. However, Nick discovers even here, that during the dry season, there is water shortage and one entrepreneur has started selling it bottled. Finally his journey takes him to Dalol in Ethiopia known as the 'hell hole of creation' where the temperature remains at 94 degrees year round. Here Nick will join miners who work all day with no shade, limited water and no protective clothing. The book and series consider how and why people lives in these harsh environments. How does Nick's body react to these contrasting extremes? He looks at the geographical and meteorological conditions. He meets local characters and discovers the history of these settlements to find out how they ever became populated. He looks at the way both the population, and the flora and fauna, have adapted physically to the climate, and also considers the psychological impact of living under such conditions.

Book Information

File Size: 3293 KB

Print Length: 272 pages

Publisher: Pan; New Ed edition (August 9, 2012)

Publication Date: August 9, 2012

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0330493841

ISBN-13: 978-0330493840

ASIN: B008VDQ8E0

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #452,625 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #17 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel > Central & South America > South America > Chile & Easter Island #38 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel > Africa > East #46 in Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Ecosystems > Deserts

Customer Reviews

As advertised

This book is a travelling adventure that starts as a completely simple idea and evolves into four journeys into places that you enjoy reading about, yet visiting them in person would probably not be as charming...

Loved this book got it after I saw the BBC tv show while in Europe. Great read wish I could buy the dvd's.

Love this book. I love anything travel and especially love interesting places. If you like to travel and learning about different cultures this is the book.

The book's topic and treatment of a travel log are very memorable and full of interesting observations from very unexpected places. However the reader cannot rely on humor, wit etc. which may be found in Bill Bryson style of writing. This is not drama but informative, curious probing and achieves a balance of excitement and enquiry. This is not for the reader looking for entertainment. If you dream or wonder about these extreme places (e.g. coldest, driest, etc) then this book is the next best way to experience these places. Great book for the reader seriously interested in these topics. Author did a great job - living as well retelling his awesome experiences.

While the four individual sections (Coldest, Driest, Hottest, and Wettest) are enjoyable, I was disappointed that Nick Middleton makes no effort to connect the sections or even come to any overall conclusions about why people live in such extreme realms. In addition, the sections themselves seemed occasionally padded. The Driest section is the worst offender, with a lengthy section on living at extreme Andean altitudes, which, while fascinating, isn't related to the main topic (this is ironic to me since it's the main reason I bought the book, having visited -- for twenty minutes -- the airport at Arica, Chile, enroute to La Paz, and being curious about this desert beachfront

place). The best section is the first (Coldest), being a rather vivid look at the peculiar adaptations the people in a Siberian town make to live with extreme cold, as well as some fascinating descriptions of the phenomena associated with a -50 degree climate. Perhaps the TV series it's based on is more enlightening, but since it's not out on DVD yet, I can't find out

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