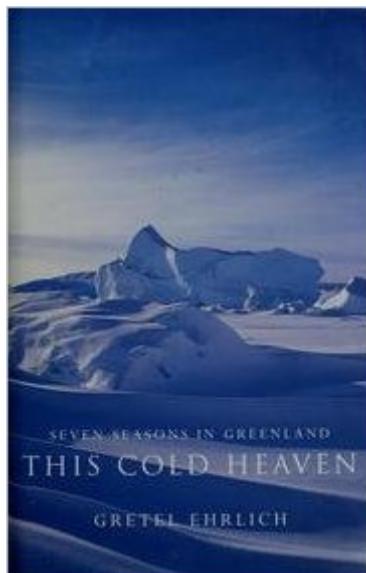


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Seven Seasons In Greenland - This Cold Heaven



Synopsis

In a tribute to the far latitudes, Gretel Ehrlich travels across Greenland, the largest island on earth. All but five per cent of the island is covered by a vast ice sheet, an enduring remnant of the last ice age. Despite a uniquely hostile environment, it has been inhabited continuously for thousands of years. Greenlanders retain many of their traditional practices: some still hunt on sleds made from whale and caribou with packs of dogs; others fashion harpoons from Narwhal tusks; and entranced shamans make soul fights under the ice. Ehrlich mixes stories of European anthropologists who have recorded the ways of the Inuit, with artists who have lived briefly on Greenland's fringe in order to try to capture its extraordinary pure light. She travels across this unearthly landscape in the company of men and women who have a deep bond with it, and with them she discovers the realm of the Great Dark, ice pavilions, polar bears and Eskimo nomads. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Hardcover: 400 pages

Publisher: Fourth Estate; 1st Eng edition (2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1841157228

ISBN-13: 978-1841157221

Package Dimensions: 9.3 x 5.9 x 1.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 44 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #3,358,610 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #21 in Books > Travel > Europe > Greenland #8944 in Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Writing > Travel

Customer Reviews

'A passionately written account...It could well be one of the last portraits of a land and a way of life that is about to be lost forever.' The Times 'Beautifully written...her book is a celebration of place and people that makes almost nostalgic reading as the planet warms, icebergs melt and the Inuit - and seals and polar bears - wonder how long their way of life will last.' Financial Times 'A lyrical but marvellously unsentimental account.' John Burnside 'Her enthusiasm is infectious and her indomitable determination to make a record of a culture under threat is admirable.' Evening Standard --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gretel Ehrlich is the author of many works of non-fiction, fiction and poetry, including *A Match to the Heart* (Fourth Estate 1995) *The Solace of Open Spaces*; *Heart Mountain*; and *Islands, the Universe, Home*. She divides her time between California and Wyoming. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This woman truly loves the high north, with all its paradox and ambivalence . . . Ehrlich paints the beauty and complexity of northern Greenland (before reading this book it never occurred to me to think of Greenland as HAVING a "north" and "south"!) and the struggle a tiny minority are having to maintain their ancient -- and sustainable -- ways of life. I'd classify this first of all as a love story between woman and land, but it is a love story in which the sentient observer is aware of the problems with the beloved, and yet still remains committed. This is not a "been there, seen that, got the T-shirt" travel book -- Ehrlich is drawn to Greenland no fewer than seven times, in various seasons, and she lives with the people in traditional housing (including tents on the ice). She encounters the brutality of bureaucracy as well as the incredible hospitality of the Inuit -- and at the same time she does not shrink from the pervasive alcoholism and domestic violence that are a sad feature of northern life, nor does she neglect to mention the impact even in Greenland of the growing pollution in "the south" (i.e. North America). Her thesis is essentially Romantic in a philosophic sense . . . subsistence living was/is hard but authentic. The coming of modernity, with its internet connection, TV, store-bought goods, etc., has removed both the means and the incentive for a life of integrity. She leaves it to the reader to see the Greenlandic experience as paradigmatic of the wider world. Read this book - it will lift your heart and trouble your mind, and leave you wanting more.

Extremely well written and interesting. Gretel paints a picture in the readers mind. The landscape and the people come alive for the reader and create a lasting visual presence in the minds eye.

This amazing book opened my eyes to the Inuit culture and homeland in a most unexpected way. I really bought it hoping to learn something about Inuit kayak hunters, but that aspect of Inuit hunting life is not heavily covered in the book. Instead, the author takes us on many wonderful journeys by dogsled and gives the reader a most fascinating viewpoint - right behind the dogs. We experience the hard but thrilling life of the skilled Arctic hunter as described by an articulate passenger in the sled, and in that way we come to know the people of the north country in a most sympathetic way. I

recommend this book to anyone who loves beautifully written adventures. They are here.

An awesome read. Exactly what I had hoped this would be. A wonderful narrative of the lands I wish I could visit (or even live in), despite the harsh climate conditions...

Gretel Ehrlich's wonderful book has been a nightly treat, savored at the fireside. Since the lives of the Greenland Inuit are so remote from daily experience, it takes quite a bit of adjustment to enter into their perspective. Ehrlich accomplishes this through an obsessive, recurring immersion, reminiscent of her hero Knud Rasmussen. She went back to Greenland seven times, for goodness sakes! The focus she achieves through these revisitings, and our chance to re-encounter characters and experiences, builds a powerful emotional bond. I felt a real loss when I had to say goodbye to these characters for the final time. This is a deceptively beautiful, powerful book.

Another "travelogue for the soul." This author does these incredibly well. If you're into this kind of thing and don't like lightweight "new-agey" stuff, read Gretel Ehrlich.

I read this book to learn about the land (and ice!) of Greenland before we go there next year. And I learned a lot, from a lady who's spent time with the native Greenlanders in their villages and on their excursions in summer and winter. The book is well-written and kept me involved in her experiences all the way through. Now we know more of what we will see next year.

Since I am obsessed with Greenland, this book was totally fascinating. And real.

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