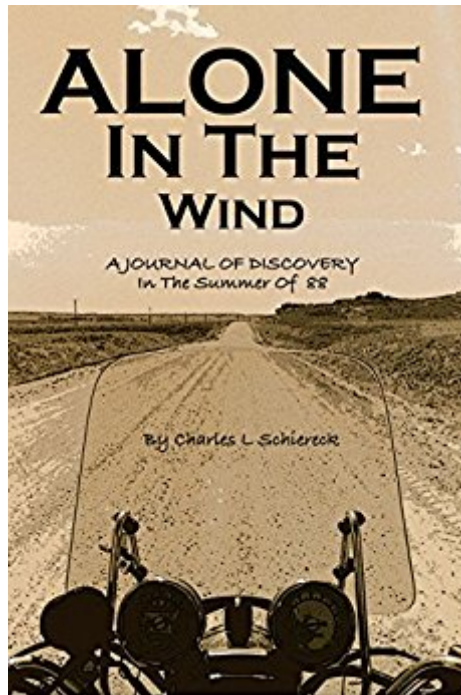


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Alone In The Wind: A Journal Of Discovery In 'The Summer Of 88'



Synopsis

In the long hot 'Summer of 88', the author packed up his motorcycle and pulled out of the garage with no destination or return date in mind. 1988 would prove to be the worst drought since the 'dustbowl' of the 1930s. Yellowstone would burn, Ronald Reagan would shake his fist at the 'Evil Empire', and the author, oblivious to it all, hit the road and never looked back. That trip would consume the entire summer, logging over twelve thousand miles from sea to sea and back. 'Alone In The Wind' is the account of that trip, with pictures, maps, historical & geographical notes, and rolling narrative. A few selected excerpts: The early evening sun is bright red and except for wind slapping the tents, all is quiet. Other campers are talking in subdued tones. The scene has a timeless quality I can't explain. Maybe it's how I'd picture an Oregon Trail camp. Everybody too exhausted to do more than whisper, anticipating the day ahead, trying to forget the ones behind. Kurt Vonnegut might have written that the Custer annihilation occurred solely to provide me with a ranger to give advice on the coming storms. That irony rattled around in my helmet for the next forty miles. Chewing mindlessly I stare at passing trucks with red eyes. This has been an endless, grueling day. A far cry from the mystical experience that other writers claim. The bone numbing reality of motorcycle touring is exhaustion, dehydration, disorientation. Vacant eyes seem to be nothing more than rubber stoppers that keep my liquefied brains from spilling out over my face. Carved out by the tides, the cave is probably underwater for most of the day. At the entrance is a rock with a well-formed depression at the top. Without thinking I dump both bottles of Atlantic Ocean into that shallow basin, move deeper into the cave and sit. There's a lot on my mind, and it all seems to be demanding immediate attention. The mission will be accomplished. The oceans will unite. It will take a few hours, and I won't be here to see it, but this is a better way. Letting the sea take it on its own terms seems more fitting. Heat was the real problem. Both the heat of a western summer day and the heat thrown off an air-cooled engine that's being pushed to its limits. While it was never transcendental, the passage was always very real, very immediate, and unforgettable. Thinking back to the other riders that I met, it seemed the same for them as well. They were all worn down with fatigue and loneliness - while at the same time brimming over with confidence and satisfaction. I won't forget them.

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Customer Reviews

This retelling of the authorâ™s trek across America, by motorcycle, is an amazing piece of work. It is by no means written to appeal to biking enthusiasts, alone. On the contrary, the author tells his story with a charm and wit that will appeal to men and women, young and old. And what is that story? It is a story about America, spliced here and there with just enough history to entertain you. But mainly, âœAmericaâ • is revealed in the telling of the story itself, an America that existed in 1988, which some will fondly recognize and others will never know existed. The author has no axes to grind, except maybe his own. There is a light âœcoming of ageâ • feeling to the events that unfold, but mainly, I heard pure joy and openness to possibility in the authorâ™s voice, even when the going got rough, as it often did, for various reasons. I think the part that stuck most with me was being dropped into this adventure, as the author was, in 1988, without the aid of cell phones or any other devices that keep us so connected (and yet not connected) to everyone else, leaving us to connect with the land, the people, and ultimately, ourselves. Whether you ever contemplate a trip like this or not, much less take one, the story has a lot to offer. It is America, frozen in the lens of the authorâ™s words and pictures, as it existed in a seemingly simpler, and infinitely happier, place and time.

This is a great traveling book story. Almost everyone can identify with a "road trip" and this is one of

the ultimate ones. Since I have been to all or many of the places and remember my own feelings and good times (and not so good). It is great for the detail and descriptions of the location, the weather and the situation. Easy to put yourself into the authors boots. Also, the decisions the author makes are not without the normal internal tormenting, should I or shouldn't I. An easy read which is great for bringing everyone back in touch with their own "wanderlust". Highly recommend. It also rekindles the spirit for new adventures!!!! Well done.

I've read many books on the subject of motorcycle touring. This one is among my favorites. Another author who I can't remember now once said "True freedom offers no guarantee of comfort.". While I've never taken a trip as grand as this one, I have done a couple trips on my bike and found so many things that I could relate to in this book. While time has marched on over the last 30 years or so, and we all have access to things that we couldn't have even imagined in 1988, what really surprised me about this read is the things that have remained the same. Many of the places that the author visited and still there and haven't changed much. What sets this book apart from so many others on the subject is that you don't just get a description of what he was seeing, but also what he was feeling at the time. As anyone who has taken a trip on a bike will know, it's not all peaches and cream.

I read this book after travelling cross country in an RV. I loved the fact that our route almost exactly mirrored the one in the book. It was like travelling west all over again except 30 years later. The author's description of the hushed atmosphere at Custer's Battlefield (now the Little Bighorn Battlefield) was exactly what I felt as I walked thru the fields along with hundreds of other tourists. This well written chronicle of a lone motorcyclist traveling in the 80's will make you want to take the trip yourself.

A wonderful account of traveling across the country by motorcycle, before smart phones, GPS devices and other, modern gadgets made this journey less adventurous today. Having ridden to many of the same places the author references in his account, I could easily relate to the trials and tribulations explained in this story that any solo motorcyclist must face when heading out on the open road. This book is the real deal. Even if you aren't a motorcycle rider you will enjoy how the author relates his travel experiences and feel like you were on the road with him without ever leaving the comfort of your easy chair.

WOW.....This was an absolutely wonderful story! It was inspirational and humorous. I truly enjoyed following the author's trip across the USA, along with the historical notes and pictures, including his anecdotes and very descriptive comments. I was genuinely impressed with his intuitive theory of people 'not changing' but instead, how they 'are transforming', which appeared at the very end. This is indeed a very gifted individual.

This book was a pleasant surprise as both a travel journal and a journal of personal change. It did an excellent job conveying both the adventure and the hassles of the open road in a mix of anecdotes and internal musings as the author followed his path and deviated from it. For me, the book also provided a very unique "alternate view" of the 80's and I found myself doing a lot of "where was I when he was doing this"..It's an enjoyable read on the Kindle and when I picked up the print version during a deal, I enjoyed it even more.

One year ago I took off to Alaska on my Yamaha Royal Star Venture. After touring Grand Canyon I unfortunately had a stroke in Williams, AZ which put an end to the trip. I am recovering great and I read Charles's book to help with the process. It was a great read and allowed me to go on the "long ride" while recovering. I am riding a Spyder RT now and am thinking again about that Alaska trip.

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