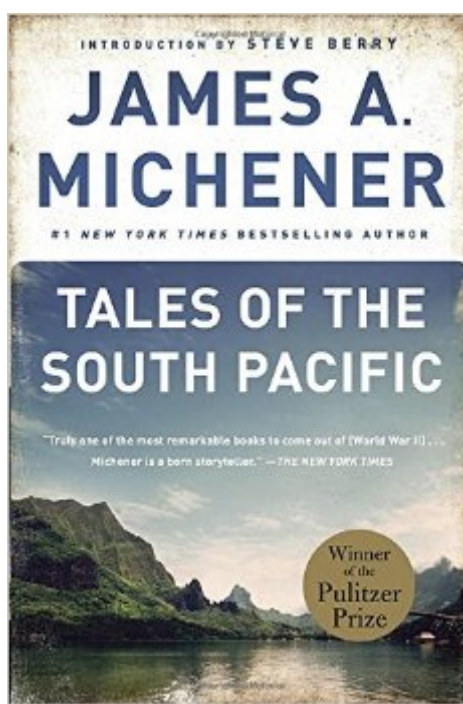


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Tales Of The South Pacific



Synopsis

Tales of the South Pacific is the iconic, Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece that inspired a Broadway classic and launched the career of James A. Michener, one of America's most beloved storytellers. This thrilling work invites the reader to enter the exotic world of the South Pacific and luxuriate in the endless ocean, the coconut palms, the waves breaking into spray against the reefs, the full moon rising behind the volcanoes. And yet here also are the men and women caught up in the heady drama of World War II: the young Marine who falls for a beautiful Tonkinese girl; the Navy nurse whose prejudices are challenged by a French aristocrat; and all the soldiers and sailors preparing for war against the seemingly peaceful backdrop of a tropical paradise. Praise for James A. Michener and Tales of the South Pacific "Truly one of the most remarkable books to come out of [World War II] . . . Michener is a born storyteller." The New York Times "Riveting and emotional . . . Ever since James Michener wrote Tales of the South Pacific, the dreamers among us have been searching for our own Bali Ha'i." The Washington Post "Atmospheric . . . [Tales of the South Pacific marks] the beginning of Michener's long exploration of what happens when cultures connect, or fail to." Los Angeles Times "Few writers changed the face of American fiction as profoundly as did James Michener." San Francisco Chronicle

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Customer Reviews

The omission of this work from the academic canon is another comment on the discriminatory but hardly discriminating state of literary studies today. Michener is far more than a captivating

storyteller, collector of colorful characters, painter of vivid natural imagery, and documentor of the orchestrations of world warfare. Each of the "tales" comprising his carefully-constructed epic narrative is at once thematically and stylistically related to the other smaller narratives and at the same time artistically whole in itself. If the reader has expectations of a single-minded patriotic paean to the fighting men of the South Pacific, a close reading of the early chapter, "Mutiny," should dispel any such illusions. Here, as throughout the book, Michener uses nature and the ocean as a test, a touchstone, and a foil--exposing the folly not just of warring nations and military campaigns but of arrogant, imperialist civilizations and many of their prideful citizens. Tony Fry, his anti-authoritarian, compassionate "hero," commits a subversive act that links him with the mutineers on board the Bounty and casts the American command in the role of Bligh and Hitler! In the next story, "Cave," Fry emerges as a war-time philosopher whose meditations on courage move him to acts of selfless, Christ-like charity. In "Boar's Tooth" Fry is able to overcome his resistance to a primitive religious ritual involving pain and sacrifice as he contrasts it with the empty and self-serving practices of modern religion.

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