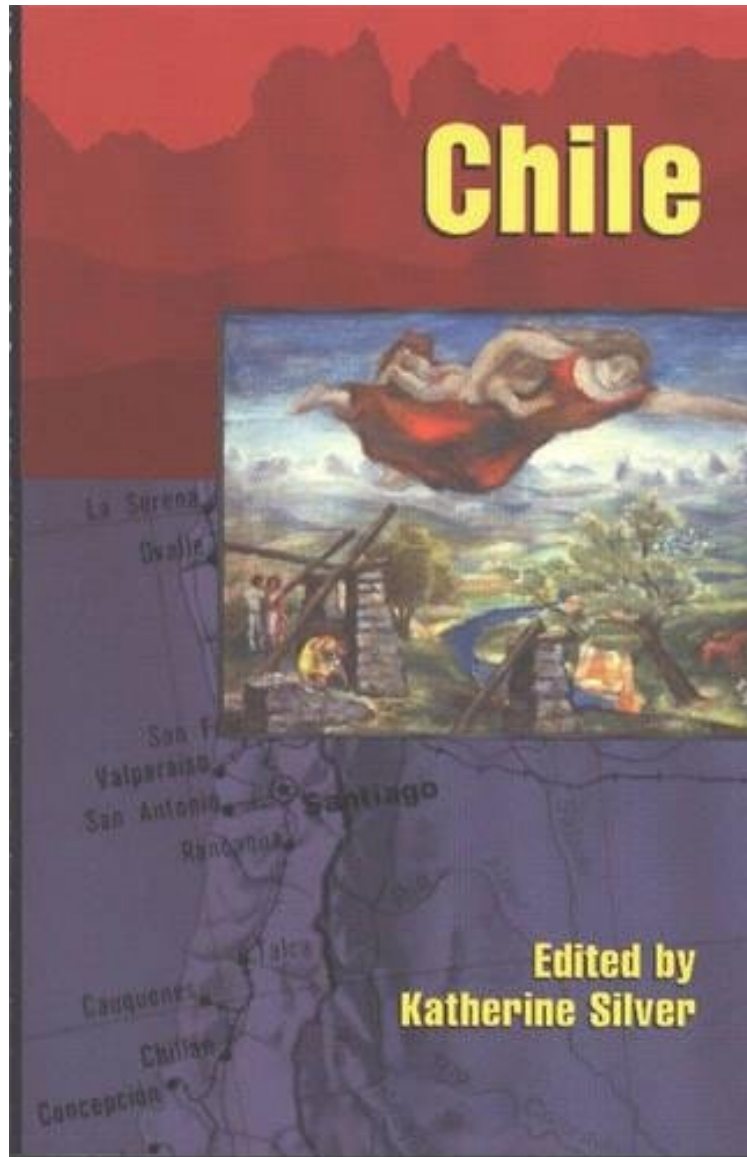


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Chile: A Traveler's Literary Companion (Traveler's Literary Companions)

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From Brand: Whereabouts Press : Chile: A Traveler's Literary Companion (Traveler's Literary Companions) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Chile: A Traveler's Literary Companion (Traveler's Literary Companions):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Added a lot to our tripBy MJI read it before my trip to Chile; my

husband read it after we got back. We both enjoyed it and felt that it added a lot of background to our trip. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book for our recent Chile trip. By elisse This was a great book to read prior to our recent trip to Chile; I definitely recommend it to anyone interested in Chile, or contemplating a trip there. Opened up literary doors I never knew existed... 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. An Introduction By Reader in Tokyo This book was published in 2003 and collected 20 works by as many Chilean writers. As far as could be judged, there were 9 short stories, 2 essays, and excerpts from 7 novels and 2 autobiographies. The oldest writers were Marta Brunet (1897-1967), described as co-founder of a regional school who wrote on landscape, rural life and the inner lives of characters, especially women. Pablo Neruda (1904-73), a major figure on the left, prominent in the poetry of his nation, Latin America, and the world. And Francisco Coloane (1910-2002), who wrote on men and the sea and has been compared to Jack London. The youngest were Beatriz Garca-Huidobro (1959-), Patricio Riveros Olavarra (1962-), and Tito Matamala (1963-). Others included Jos Donoso, Jorge Edwards, Adolfo Couve and Ariel Dorfman. Twelve of the works were translated by the collection's editor, Katherine Silver. Prominent prose writers omitted from the collection included Mara Luisa Bombal, a pioneer of surrealism in Latin America from the 1930s, Antonio Skarmeta, the popular Isabel Allende, and the exile Roberto Bolao. The earliest pieces appeared to be from Brunet and Coloane, dating perhaps to the 1950s, and from Neruda, whose memoirs were published in 1974. Others from the 1970s were Donoso and Enrique Valds. From the 1980s, a time of oppressive rule, there was nothing. The majority of works in the collection, two-thirds, came from the 1990s. A number of the collection's writers -- many of them on the left -- had gone into exile after 1973, when the democratically elected, Marxist Allende government was overthrown in a military coup; these included Donoso, Jos Miguel Varas, Patricio Manns, Dorfman, Osvaldo Rodriguez Musso, Marjorie Agosn, and Patricio Riveros Olavarra. Some of the stories referred to the Allende government, the dictatorship that followed, and the plebiscite in 1992 that had voted it out of office and begun the return to democracy. For this reader, the most interesting works by far in the book concerned Valparaso, as described by Neruda and several others with vivid sense impressions. The excerpt from Donoso, in which a writer attended the wake for Neruda's widow and noted the passing of time, adding some historical depth. Other stories suggested the atmosphere of the capital, Santiago. Neruda described a forest in the south ("Anyone who hasn't been in the Chilean forest doesn't know this planet. I have come out of that landscape, that mud, that silence, to roam, to singing through the world"). In Couve's story a lonely, rich widow wandered among the crowds in the seaside resort of Cartagena. And Luis Alberto Acua described a walk in the Atacama desert, with the sun pounding down. Most of these captured what the editor referred to in her introduction as the national characteristic of "lightness in the blood," an exuberance that shined through the deepest gloom. Aside from these, many selections seemed less interesting to this reader, remaining too much in the head of the narrator and lacking narrative power, and shedding less light on their regions. The works on Cuba, Brazil and Mexico in this worthwhile series seemed more revealing, to me at any rate.

The twenty stories in *Chile: A Traveler's Literary Companion* most of which are available here for the first time in English reveal that the nation that gave birth to two poets who won Nobel prizes in literature is also the home of many world-class prose writers. This collection evokes the diversity of the country's landscape and the complexity of its recent history. Contributors include Luis Alberto Acua, Marjorie Agosn, Roberto Ampuero, Marta Brunet, Francisco Coloane, Adolfo Couve, Jos Donoso, Ariel Dorfman, Jorge Edwards, Beatriz Garca-Huidobro, Pedro Lemebel, Patricio Manns, Tito Matamala, Pablo Neruda, Daro Oses, Hernn Rivera Letelier, Patricio Riveros Olavarra, Osvaldo Rodriguez Musso, Enrique Valds, and Jos Miguel Varas.

"All the short stories and excerpts included are tales of the human condition and demonstrate a love and respect for the country and its people." -- British Bulletin of Publications on Latin America, April 2003.