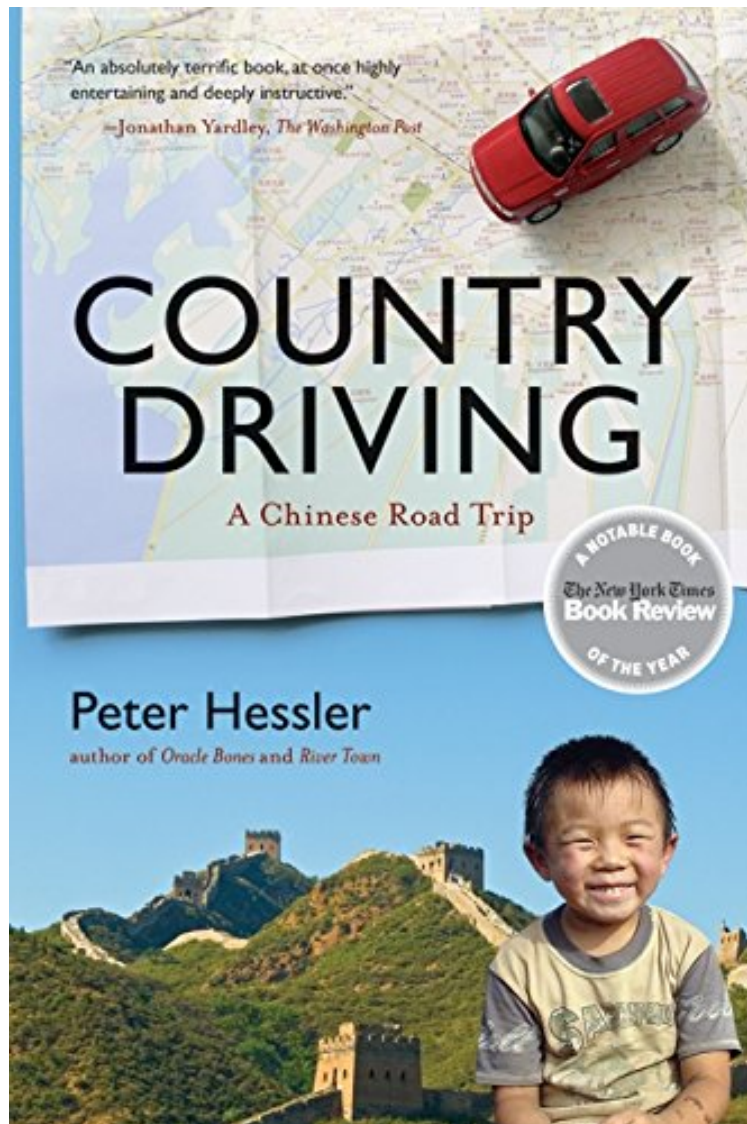


(Download) Country Driving: A Chinese Road Trip

Country Driving: A Chinese Road Trip

Peter Hessler

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#112792 in Books Hessler Peter 2011-02-08 2011-02-08 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x 1.01 x 5.311, .0 #File Name: 006180410X448 pages Country Driving A Chinese Road Trip | File size: 68.Mb

Peter Hessler : Country Driving: A Chinese Road Trip before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Country Driving: A Chinese Road Trip:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Informative but uneven By David I. Cahill Hessler's most recent tome takes the Great Wall as its theme. He spends the first part of the book covering much of the extent of the Wall along neighboring roads by rented car. In the second part, he shacks up in a village outside Beijing for an extended stay with a peasant community hemmed in by rapid social change. In the third part, he hangs out in a small factory in Zhejiang Province that makes bra parts in order to observe the mindset of startup entrepreneurs. Hessler has many virtues as a

writer. Instead of pronouncing generalities he tends to focus on what is immediately at hand, on the particular, and the cliché count celebrating the Communist Party's achievements and condemning its excesses and outrages is kept to a minimum. He is usually engaging and at the same time very thorough, delving deeply into all aspects of each new topic that comes his way, backed up by much homework (with I assume financial backing for his research needs from Harper, his heavyweight publisher). On the subject of amusingly inaccurate Chinese road maps, for instance, he goes into engrossing detail on the history of Western and Chinese cartography - something a lesser writer would lack the curiosity or patience to pursue. And there is always something new to learn, such as the "strange stones" (soft rocks that have been carved into various objects) market Hessler unwittingly chances upon. The shops are all scams, set up to entrap customers into believing they are at fault for destroying the rocks and forcing them to pay for them. This attention to detail also makes the book a long one (a smaller publishing firm might have hacked off substantial passages to reduce printing costs), and there are more than a few longueurs, notably in the somewhat static and uneventful middle section in Sancha village. Page after page of the minutiae of several peasant families' lives may be fresh for the average reader unfamiliar with the country, but as a longtime China resident my own reading experience is obviously different and admittedly more jaded. I found myself putting the book down a lot, until the pace picked back up in the third part of the book, with the attention focused on the ups and downs of the bra parts business - though Hessler's notorious lack of erotic interest in Chinese women should forewarn readers not to expect much discussion of the object bras are designed for.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It's like I was there
By Kurt Robertson
I lived in China for 1.5 years while I taught English. This is the second Peter Hessler book I have read. The first, River Town, was a significant emotional experience that reminded me of my own experience and the great Chinese students I knew. Country Driving was no less captivating and took me to villages and people similar to those whom I visited and met during my China travels. Each page was a human interest story or lesson in China's vast geography or fascinating culture. Peter knows how to invite on the trip and make it personal. Finishing the book was like saying goodbye to a close friend.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. If you read only one travel book, this is it.
By Chris Wing
Wonderful. A grand tour of China on a curious man's budget. Eye-opening to say the least. Eye-popping even. You will learn that China is worth the trip. But I'd stay off the beaten path, like Mr. Hessler did. Good stuff. I lost my first copy and replaced it to keep it on my shelf for another read.

One of The Economist's Best Books of the Year
From the bestselling author of Oracle Bones and River Town comes the final book in his award-winning trilogy on the human side of the economic revolution in China. Peter Hessler, whom the Wall Street Journal calls "one of the Western world's most thoughtful writers on modern China," deftly illuminates the vast, shifting landscape of a traditionally rural nation that, having once built walls against foreigners, is now building roads and factory towns that look to the outside world.

.com Best Books of the Month, February 2010: There is, as everyone knows, no place in the world changing as fast, and at such scale, as China. Accounts of the upheaval can be breathless and even alarming, but Peter Hessler is the calmest and most companionable of correspondents. In his reporting for the New Yorker and in his books River Town, Oracle Bones, and now the superb Country Driving, he's observed the past 15 years of change with the patience and perspective--and necessary good humor--of an outsider who expects to be there for a while. In Country Driving, Hessler takes to the roads, as so many Chinese are doing now for the first time, driving on dirt tracks to the desert edges of the ancient empire and on brand-new highways to the mushrooming factory towns of the globalized boom. He's modest but intrepid--having taken to heart the national philosophy that it's better to ask for forgiveness than permission--and an utterly enjoyable guide, with a humane and empathetic eye for the ambitions, the failures, and the comedy of a country in which everybody, it seems, is on the move, and no one is quite sure of the rules. --Tom Nissley
From Publishers Weekly
Starred . In his latest feat of penetrating social reportage, New Yorker writer Hessler (Oracle Bones) again proves himself America's keenest observer of the New China. Hessler investigates the country's lurch into modernity through three engrossing narratives. In an epic road trip following the Great Wall across northern China, he surveys dilapidated frontier outposts from the imperial past while barely surviving the advent of the nation's uniquely terrifying car culture. He probes the transformation of village life through the saga of a family of peasants trying to remake themselves as middle-class entrepreneurs. Finally, he explores China's frantic industrialization, embodied by the managers and workers at a fly-by-night bra-parts factory in a Special Economic Zone. Hessler has a sharp eye for contradictions, from the absurdities of Chinese drivers' education courses (slow-speed obstacle courses are mandatory, while seat belts and turn signals are deemed optional) to the leveling of an entire mountain to make way for the Renli Environmental Protection Company. Better yet, he has a knack for finding the human-scale stories that make China's vast upheavals both comprehensible and moving. The result is a fascinating portrait of a society tearing off into the future with only the sketchiest of maps. (Feb.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.
From Bookmarks Magazine
Fluent in Chinese, Hessler had the enviable opportunity to immerse himself in China's culture while training a keen eye on its incongruities and absurdities. His informal writing style and finely honed storytelling abilities create both unforgettably poetic and laugh-out-loud funny scenes. Part

memoir, part travelogue, and part social history, *Country Driving* contains fascinating anecdotes and historical asides. Though the topic of China's frenzied progress has been explored before by others, as well as Hessler himself in his previous books, his personal connection to the land and its people results in a fresh and compelling account--hailed as his best book yet by the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*.