



The Lost Continent: Travels in Small-Town America

By Bill Bryson

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The Lost Continent: Travels in Small-Town America By Bill Bryson

An unsparing and hilarious account of one man's rediscovery of America and his search for the perfect small town.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

A travelogue by Bill Bryson is as close to a sure thing as funny books get. *The Lost Continent* is no exception. Following an urge to rediscover his youth (he should know better), the author leaves his native Des Moines, Iowa, in a journey that takes him across 38 states. Lucky for us, he brought a notebook.

With a razor wit and a kind heart, Bryson serves up a colorful tale of boredom, kitsch, and beauty when you least expect it. Gentler elements aside, *The Lost Continent* is an amusing book. Here's Bryson on the women of his native state: "I will say this, however--and it's a strange, strange thing--the teenaged daughters of these fat women are always utterly delectable ... I don't know what it is that happens to them, but it must be awful to marry one of those nubile cuties knowing that there is a time bomb ticking away in her that will at some unknown date make her bloat out into something huge and grotesque, presumably all of a sudden and without much notice, like a self-inflating raft from which the pin has been yanked."

Yes, Bill, but be honest: what do you really think?

From Publishers Weekly

Journalist Bryson decided to relive the dreary vacation car trips of his American childhood. Starting out at his mother's house in Des Moines, Iowa, he motors through 38 states over the course of two months, looking for the quintessential American small town. "Some of Bryson's comments are hilarious--if you enjoy the nonstop whining wisecracks of a 36-year-old kid," determined PW.

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From Library Journal

An expatriate American now living in England chronicles a trip around the United States in which he describes American foibles to the British. The first two chapters capture the tedium of a family vacation and the daffy absurdity of life in the author's home state of Iowa. Midwesterners will grab friends to read choice bits, saying "see." But after these wonderful opening chapters, the author's comic tricks become repetitive: "then I said this outrageous thing; no, not really, but . . ." While the sometimes irrelevant statistics are interesting, they, too eventually become tedious. As the book grinds on, it descends into a litany of "then I went here, and next I went there." Browsers reading the opening bits will snatch it off the shelves, but many will return it unfinished. (\$100,000 promotion; 50,000 copy first printing).

- *Nora Rawlinson, "Library Journal"*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Richard Glass:

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