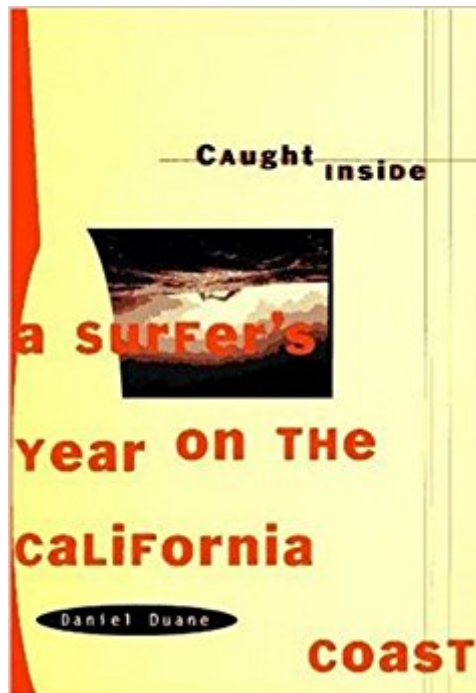




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Caught Inside: A Surfer's Year On The California Coast



Synopsis

Recounts a year of surfing in California, shares observations on Pacific shore ecology, and looks at the history of the state and surfing.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Tossing aside a mundane and meaningless job, Daniel Duane went to Santa Cruz, California, to surf for year. The book he wrote about it, *Caught Inside* is something of a *Walden* of our times. It's wonderfully written, weaving wave wisdom with literary and historical references. And it's not for surfers only: even readers who have never seen the surf will find themselves taken up in the book's rhythms. Duane sought the peace that surfing offers, and his impressions of surfing characters, sea life (otters, seals, and the great white shark everyone fears is right under you as you paddle your board), and the seasons by the sea are evocative and soothing to read. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Surfing enthusiast Duane quit his unfulfilling retail job in Berkeley, Calif., and moved to Santa Cruz, where he spent the better part of a recent year riding waves, exploring the coastline, researching the history of surfing and befriending and philosophizing with various locals who have arranged their lives around the quest for the perfect wave. The results of these pursuits are recorded here in quietly meditative prose that simultaneously deglamorizes the sport and seeks to imbue it with a kind of metaphysical profundity. Dedicated surfers, Duane discovers, tend to feel a measure of guilt about their willingness to give their favorite pastime precedence over career ambitions and family

responsibilities. At the same time, surfing yields unique and valuable opportunities for appreciation of and communication with nature. Duane is clearly anxious to justify an ostensibly hedonistic lifestyle, and his arguments on its behalf are not always convincing, but the deftly rendered observations and epiphanies make his own experience seem decidedly worthwhile. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I thought it was a real snoozer and I almost put it away on my bookshelf. I purchased the book because I thought it'd be a great read. Got halfway through and it picked up a bit and I began to somewhat enjoy it. I don't consider it a great read. I would've liked it had the author talked a little more about surfing and surf culture. I found that this book was just fair.

I can't swim, not really anyway. I can doggy paddle, I can float for a little while, I can even go from one side of a pool to the other if I have to (width not length). But after a couple minutes in the water I start to feel this weight on my chest, like the pressure of the entire ocean is pushing on me. Out of breath, I panic and realize the enormity of what surrounds me, the depth beneath me and the power that moves me. Reading Daniel Duane's "Caught Inside: A Surfer's Year on the California Coast" made me feel that way too, minus the panic. Mixing equal parts memoir, trail guide and history lesson Duane concocts a recipe that might not be for everyone and yet for those who have a taste for such things, what he has written will leave you changed. It's about surfing but it's really about being alive and noticing the world around you. It's about understanding the world as both science and art. It's about leaving home and finding something more. If you're looking for cover to cover eloquence in prose it isn't here. If you're looking for a pure surf story it isn't here either. I think that what we have in this book is an honest reflection of a year from a guy that's read some books and seen some movies, a guy who can think about masturbating and physics and pop culture and relationships. The book is full of quietly poignant moments about things like tide pools or teenagers staring at a bottle of beer and if that makes Duane a "wanker" like one fellow reviewer suggested, I think we should all strive to be wankers too. Anyway, it's been 5 years since I read this book last and yet I find myself thinking about it even now. As one person said to the author about the setting of the sun, it's just not the kind of thing you can look at once and say, "huh, I get it."

Great surfer memoir. Would love to read a follow-up.

The book's description on was more than enough to convince me to order a copy.

I read the preface as soon as it arrived and wasn't able to put it down until reading the final, evocative pages of the epilogue. Having grown up in the S.F. Bay Area, and traveled/surfed the same stretch of coast in the 70s that Duane writes about, I can attest to the honesty and authenticity of this wonderfully crafted piece of non-fiction that answers so many questions about the lure of the world's greatest sporting adventure. This book is everything it should be and more. Duane's style and delivery has a poetic touch that deviates from the stodgy conventions of other work I've read in the memoir genre. Every passage is written with purpose with words that stimulate all of the senses. From the descriptions of the Santa Cruz cliffs overlooking Steamer Lane up toward Natural Bridges, 4 Mile, Scott and Waddell Creek and on up through Davenport and Pescadero, Duane took me on a ride that reminded me of everything I love about that stretch of coast. The smell and taste of thick salty early morning Pacific fog and the muffled sound emanating from the lip of a thick glassy wave smacking into the flat water came to mind. Reading along in the warmth of my living room, the cold and camaraderie of surfing with friends in a secluded spot, away from the crowd, also conjured emotions of nostalgia. Duane's relationship with the people in the community of Santa Cruz and those he surfs with ring true and offer insights recognizable by anyone who's ever surfed California's Central Coast. Though local surfers probably might not appreciate it, Duane's story might just be the lure for others to come and experience the region. Additionally, interspersed in each chapter are snippets of well researched history about the people who've brought surfing to the forefront over the preceding century. Along with references to the testimonies of the observations about surfing from explorers, missionaries and likes of prominent figures like Mark Twain and Jack London. Tales of some of surfing's greatest personalities are also included (e.g. Greg Null and the legendary 50' wave ridden at Makaha). Also included throughout, are the gently delivered technical details of wave physics, influences of weather and tide, and surfboard design. All of it contributing to the subtle complexity of what it is to be a surfer. For anyone who's ever roughed the wax on their board with a handful of sand before paddling out, or anyone who's ever been held down in dark cold Central California water by a second wave in a set, *Caught Inside* is a must read. Others should read it for the pure beauty of place and Duane's exquisite writing.

One of the most honest and illuminating descriptions of surf culture and surf psyche I've come across. A recommended read for anyone looking to dive deeper into the psychology of the surfing

lifestyle and perhaps glean perspective from the stereotypically counterculture activity that is the california surfer.

To sit in freezing water with even colder air temperatures for hours waiting for a good wave is an exercise in discipline, although a lot of people would say that discipline is precisely what the quintessential surfer lacks. Author Dan Duane exhibits discipline and several other honorable traits in "Caught Inside," his thoughtful memoir of a year spent following a dream and accomplishing a goal. While some may scoff at what can be called the "surfer mentality," Duane goes deep beneath the surface and dredges up a lot of emotion and introspective philosophical sentiments about why he surfs (and why he does anything worth doing). Duane is well-read, intelligent and expressive, and the book is interesting, beautifully written and thought provoking. I would imagine that Duane's musings would be valuable, meaningful and applicable even to those who have never even seen the ocean, much less ridden a wave. PS to reviewer Christopher Seal - women surf too!

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