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Micronesian Blues



Synopsis

His plane nearly crashed, the cops he'd been hired to train almost killed him, and he ingested a substance that bore a close resemblance to elephant snot -- all during his first two days on the job. *Micronesian Blues* tells the true story of former L.A. street cop Bryan Vila's hilarious road to cross-cultural enlightenment as a police chief in the far Pacific islands of Micronesia. Through lively narrative laced with wry humor, it chronicles his adventures and misadventures on Saipan, Ponape (now Pohnpei), Truk (now Chuuk), Palau, Yap, Kosrae, and Kwajalein. Trial and error was the name of the game in this dubious paradise, where Bryan had to learn the rules -- or make them up -- as he went. Yet he embraced island life, succeeded in his new role, and ultimately found himself profoundly changed by his experiences in Micronesia and the lessons he learned there.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Other than being able to point to it on a map, I knew almost nothing about Micronesia when I started this book, and I enjoyed learning about the culture there, as well as the specific challenges that

came with doing police work in a foreign country. The police work added an additional interesting aspect that you don't find in most travelogues. Some of Bryan's stories are hilarious, some are suspenseful, and some are touching. I had a hard time putting this book down! Bryan has a great attitude and the conversational style of this book was a delight to read. It is also worth mentioning that Bryan is nothing but respectful for the local cultures he worked with. Everyone traveling, living, and working in foreign countries should aspire to "build bridges that go both ways". I really hope that there might be another volume of stories someday...

I read this book when I was visiting Chuuk and Pohnpei and found it to be a perfect compliment to my visit. I was even able to meet one of the book's characters Bill (and his family) when we stayed at the Truk Stop in Chuuk. My only critique of the book is that it might have been good to use pseudonyms for the characters because they are real people and you wouldn't want any harm to ever come to them.

As a former resident of Micronesia, I found Bryan's work a very accurate and entertaining chronicle of his experiences there. For me, it was like a trip back in time, renewing my own memories of those beautiful islands and the wonderful people that live there. I recommend *Micronesian Blues* to any reader that appreciates adventure mixed with humor in an exotic environment. Very, very good read.

If you enjoy reading the experiences of those that have traveled the South Pacific, this one is great! Mr. Vila gives a great account of his time spent in and around Micronesia. In my opinion, he did everything right. He was respectful and empathic towards the people and their customs. He didn't have any derogative remarks about the indigenous people and went out of his way to learn and accept their languages and cultures. Mr. Vila's book is right up there with one of my favorite authors, J. Maarten Troost. The only negative is that he only wrote one book on this subject! Time for another trip, Mr. Vila! I want to hear more from you, please!

I read this book for a "post-conflict" college course and I was pleasantly surprised that I enjoyed reading it. It was a very easy and smooth read that kept me interested in Bryan's learned lessons about developing a diverse country's police force. Even beyond the educational aspect of the book, I would suggest this book to anyone interested in an adventure book.

What a well written book. You see the hardship these islanders but up with. The book makes you laugh and cry. Bryan hit so many points of the real problems of dealing with such multi cultural islands. Well done and very good reading for all. Been there saw it! Shame on the world for what has been done to the islands.

Some 30 plus years later many of the characters are still around in Pohnpei. It was also interesting to read the perspective of someone so involved in early law enforcement, knowing what issues persist in the different states and countries. It was an easy enjoyable read, but might not be so interesting if you haven't spent time here.

Great treatment, through the lenses of an American police trainer, of the late Trust Territory period of Micronesia, when the territory was in the throes of transitioning to independence.

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