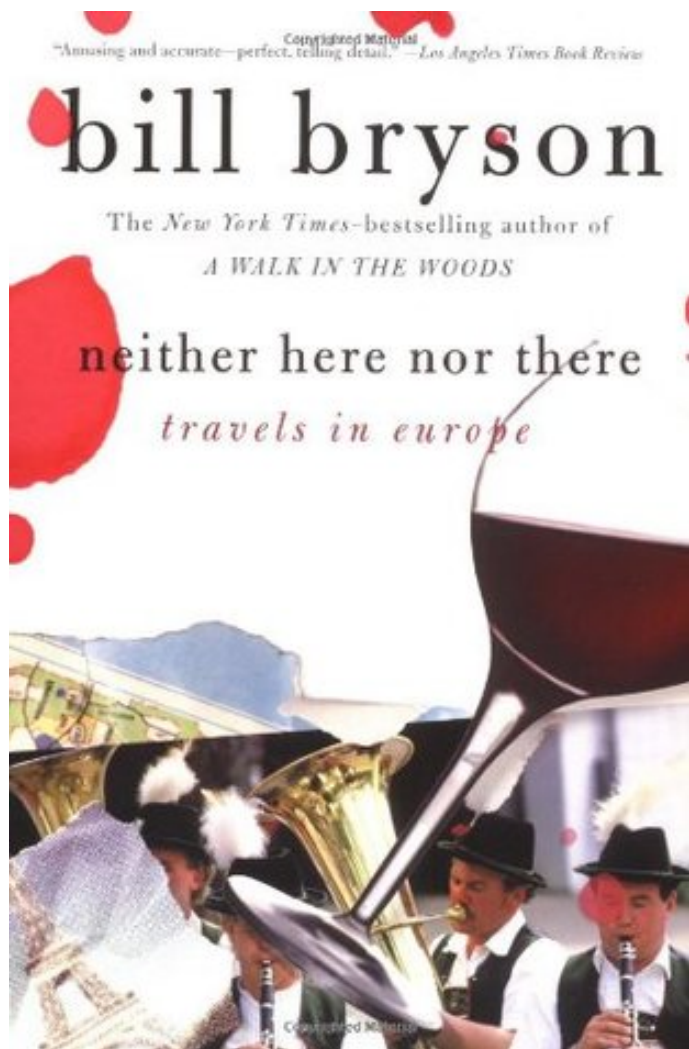

Bill Bryson

Neither Here nor There: Travels in Europe



Title: Neither Here nor There: Travels in Europe

Author: Bill Bryson

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Description

Bill Bryson's first travel book, *The Lost Continent*, was unanimously acclaimed as one of the funniest books in years. In *Neither Here nor There* he brings his unique brand of humour to bear on Europe as he shoulders his backpack, keeps a tight hold on his wallet, and journeys from Hammerfest, the northernmost town on the continent, to Istanbul on the cusp of Asia. Fluent in, oh, at least one language, he retraces his travels as a student twenty years before.

Whether braving the homicidal motorist of Paris, being robbed by gypsies in Florence, attempting not to order tripe and eyeballs in a German restaurant, window-shopping in the sex shops of the Reeperbahn or disputing his hotel bill in Copenhagen, Bryson takes in the sights, dissects the culture and illuminates each place and person with his hilariously caustic observations. He even goes to Liechtenstein.

Insightful reviews

Katie: Bill Bryson is amazing. He captures the essence of the peculiarities of travel.. of people in general. I read this before going to London (also read *Notes from a Small Island*- about England which was also excellent).. If you've traveled or want to travel, it's a great little book full of entertaining short stories. I read part of the 'Belgium' chapter to my grandmother (she's from Antwerp) and she nearly went off her rocker. No really, she almost fell off her chair laughing. :o) I recommend.

astried: I've realized from reading this book how thin the line between hilariously funny and whiny is. And Bryson has crossed the line. Or maybe I drew the line thinner just because he did the unforgiveable act of not liking Cologne (which is still the loveliest city for me). So you've been warned, this review is subjective and biased (oh dear, so much so) and when I said I don't like it doesn't mean you won't, you probably will.

Anyway, midway reading, I suddenly had this thought. Is it possible that Bryson only wanted to see the northern light and then run away from dreary end-winter early spring to bella italia? But he also need to get a book out of it, so he sprinkled some belgium, tiny bit of german (really? only aachen, cologne and hamburg?), netherlands, switzerland etc. and call it travel around europe. The problem is his heart was not on it. He went out off tangent most of germany & switzerland; don't get me wrong, I love his going off tangent on his other books, but here it feels just as if he did it because he didn't want to talk about whichever place he was, he didn't want to have to dig on the marvelous trivias that's part of his books' charm. He just whined and whined and whined in disguise of showing the real condition of tourist place in contrast to other travel books that drool and drip with honey. Italia he loved, so he talked about it. Though still not as well as he had talked about the Appalachian route or about Shakespeare.

Anyway, I don't think I'll re-read it nor will I bring it if I ever want to travel to Europe.

Rob Warner: You know the canonical essay question, "If you could meet anyone in history, who would it be?" My answer is Bill Bryson. He's a treasure. I'd love to watch him write. I imagine

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