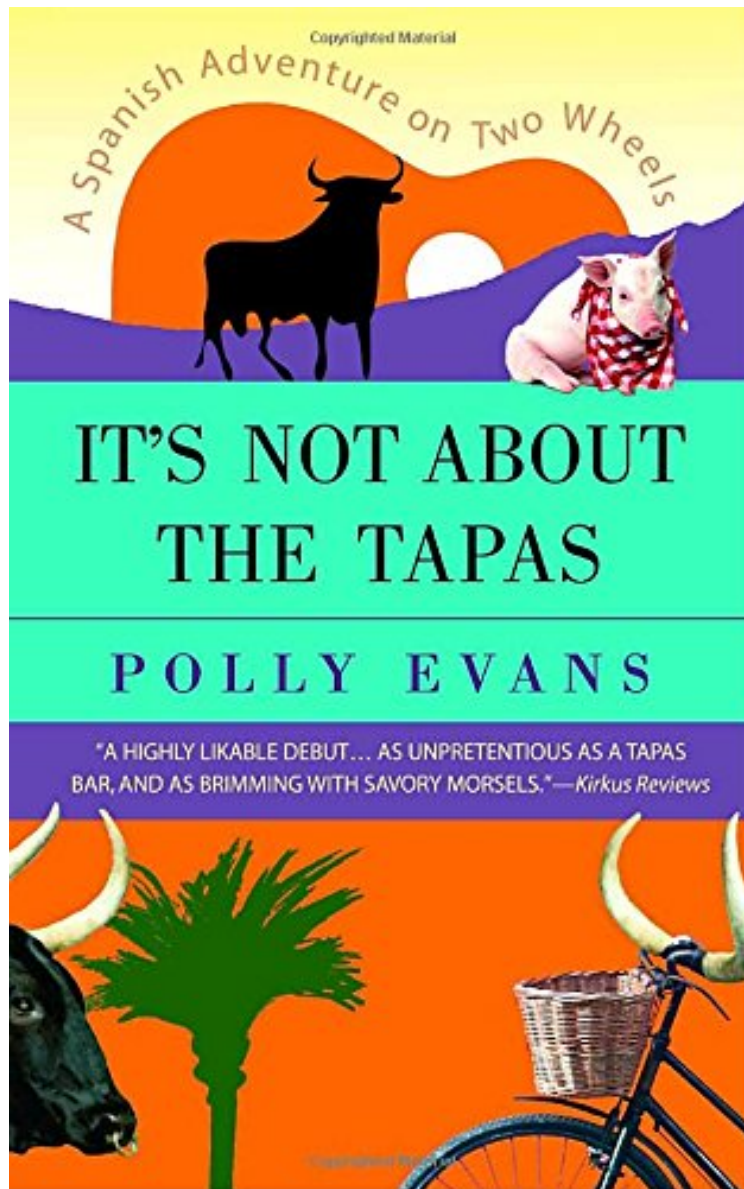


[Free] It's Not About the Tapas: A Spanish Adventure on Two Wheels

It's Not About the Tapas: A Spanish Adventure on Two Wheels

Polly Evans

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Polly Evans : It's Not About the Tapas: A Spanish Adventure on Two Wheels before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised It's Not About the Tapas: A Spanish Adventure on Two Wheels:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. She goes to bike through Spain...By Michael ValdivielsoBut in fact she does as much riding in buses and on planes as she does riding her bike. In some ways this reminded me of her

book about China. While she knew the language, somewhat, she really didn't plan ahead. For example, where does she decide to start her bike tour? In Northern Spain, at San Sebastian, a lovely city and a lovely landscape. It is right next to the sea and a nice place to stay if you want to hop over to France on the weekend. The thing is, Northern Spain is all mountains. So she has to bike mountains. And she didn't practice bicycling before coming to Spain either. True, she looks good afterwards - just check out the photo on the back cover - but most of her time is spent complaining about going up and down those mountains, how rude the Spanish seem to be, the food, the hotels, the towns, the roads. Once she complained about a waiter and seemed proud of the fact she left no tip. But the last time I was in Spain I was told you don't tip. Yes, I have been to Spain many times. And maybe it is not fair for me to review this book. I stay with family, get home made meals, have them around to help with the language and so on. And I did find the history in the book interesting even if it seemed to go all over the place. Chocolate, bull fighting, Franco, oh my! And I didn't know there were such things as pig dogs - dogs who seem to protect and herd pigs. So, yes, I learned some things and sometimes even I laughed along with her. But a few times I just shook my head and wondered why she bothered to visit Spain? I would get it out of the library or get it used if you really wish to read it.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. interesting look at Spain By Just Me Polly Evans offers a mostly engaging look at Spain. I felt that the book gave a good, accurate look at what it is like to visit Spain and enter its culture. Some was appealing, other parts, like the punitive attitude toward mistakes, did not make a longterm visit to Spain appealing. I found the book useful in my decision on what country to plan a long term trip to. I also enjoyed Polly's struggles with a long bike trip, and her perseverance. She shares the good and the bad, and what it's really like. She does not whitewash the country or herself. An honest read. I read the book, and sold it, but would buy it again if I was considering a trip to Spain in the future.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. It's Not About The Tapas By Reider Having recently spent three weeks in Spain and one of those weeks cycling from Burgos to Santiago de Compostella I enjoyed the author's exploits and identified with many of her experiences. However at times I found some of her imagined conversations irrelevant and annoying so I found myself frequently putting the book aside.

Single, stressed, and living amid the hustle and hurry of modern Hong Kong, Polly Evans had a vision: of mountains and orange groves, matadors and promenades—and of a glorious, hassle-free journey across Spain by bicycle. But like any decent dream, Polly's came with its own reality: of thighs screaming with pain and goats trying to derail her, of strange local delicacies and overzealous suitors. In fact, like any great traveler, Polly had bitten off more than she could chew—and would delight in every last taste of it. Exploring the country that gave the world flamenco, chocolate, sherry, Franco, and Picasso, Polly takes us from the towering Pyrenees to the vineyards of Jerez de la Frontera, spinning tales of conquistadors and kings, vibrant history and mouthwatering cuisine. In the end, this hilarious, irreverent, always engaging memoir of a journey on two wheels unveils a lot about one modern woman, even more about an utterly fascinating nation, and countless reasons why it's better when you do it on a bike.

From Publishers Weekly This story of a frustrated young editor who jumps ship from her deadline-laden job in Hong Kong and escapes to a biking adventure in Spain is spiked with moments of hilarity and broad humor. "I set myself the target of a thousand miles and six weeks in which to cover them," she writes. "If my tour took a few ups and downs, if I felt the need to let out the occasional primal scream, well, in Spain nobody would notice. They're used to craziness in Spain. In fact, they positively celebrate it." Evans arranges her route through towns large and small (San Sebastian, Barcelona, Ronda, Oropesa, etc.). Her odyssey of pedaling, chowing and searching for quaint local color often reads like a picaresque, and her book has the same penchant for sharp caricature. Writing of a small town, she observes: "A group of old men stood around the bar, their heads in a cloud of smoke, a carpet of cigarette butts at their feet, and discussed the issues of the day... 'So, we'll see you at the park bench for the three p.m. sit-and stare session?'" Elsewhere, she describes a rural woman carrying a sack of logs: "I had the strong impression she had chopped them herself, quite possible with a mighty slice of her hard, bare hand." Readers who enjoy this vein of humor will delight in her book, and to her credit Evans often turns her wit upon herself. At one point she notes that her trip has made her look like a "toasted whippet, something to do with being both gruesomely gaunt and burnt to a crisp." Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist A young Englishwoman leaves her unfulfilling job in Hong Kong and bicycles across Spain. From Basque country through Castile, Evans finds the Spanish hospitable, a nation rife with good food and dancing. Almost immediately she discovers that she lacks the physical stamina for riding her heavily laden bike through the Pyrenees' highest mountain passes. Nevertheless, she presses on, and her clothes grow too large for her newly lean physique. At her best when she leaves her self-involved narrative to give readers the opportunity to absorb the history and cultures of Spain's diverse regions, Evans' eye records delightfully unique sights, such as a group of vacationing female Spanish pensioners with their uniformly black garb and their bright, colorful hair rinses. With a young American writer, she learns about the flamenco tradition but never discovers a verifiable version of flamenco's origins. She finds vestiges of last century's civil war, but comes across few willing to talk about that grim era before democracy was restored. Mark Knoblauch Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved "Fast-paced but reflective."—People Magazine "Cheeky.... I'd never let Evans

plan a trip for me, but I found myself more than willing to go along for the ride. ... Evans' derisive wit ... is in the best British tradition of xenophobic sarcasm, parliamentary put-downs and Monty Python moments."—The Literate Traveler in San Francisco Chronicle