

Amazon.co.uk

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **China: a treat curled up by the fire or for the beach!**

By Callianneon 5 December 2016

Format: Kindle Edition Verified Purchase

Andy Smart's Grandma's eating habits... The less said about them the better, except it must have prepared him, to a degree, for some of his experiences when he took the bold step of leaving England and his mid-life crisis and travelling to China. Real travellers, be warned; you need a strong stomach! Virtual travellers, like me, stay home and read his book. I suppose the best way of describing it is a diary; I was never sure if the author intended to publish it, warts and all, but long before the end I was glad he did. China is an alien culture to western eyes. This book sweeps away much of the mystery with vivid descriptions, of the country, its people, and their way of life.

Just Turn Left at the Mountain also reveals a lot about the man himself, and who can fail to be intrigued by that? Some of it is recounted in the early chapters and, frankly, waiting until mid-life to have a crisis shows remarkable staying-power. Clearly, that tenacity is what took Andy Short on his remarkable three-year journey round China and across its borders to explore Mongolia, Tibet and South Korea before he... saying more would spoil the story for others and that would be criminal. Treat yourself: escape into a different world.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **A very funny and entertaining read**

By Patricia Buntingon 25 August 2016

Format: Kindle Edition

I really enjoyed reading this book. Not only is it very informative about life in China and some of its neighbouring countries, the author has an appealingly witty and humorous style that carries the story along well. His many 'Britishisms' are a treat.

After the present-day introduction, we are taken back to three years earlier and the events in the UK that lead Andy Smart to 'up sticks' and travel across the world to start a new life in China. The book is written in the style of a diary, or travel log, made over the three-year-period during which he travels around China and bordering countries before eventually settling down to his new life. The diary/log entries are made on a regular basis, which makes them seem so much more meaningful as he pours out his thoughts and feelings at the time of writing. Some of the things he describes relating to Eastern culture, customs and personal habits may seem distasteful (or even appalling!) to Western readers, but Andy Smart's honesty does him credit and he makes no attempt to soften the image or scene. The descriptions of bus journeys and Eastern food are particularly eye-opening.

There are several typos and other minor mistakes in the book and I feel it would benefit from a thorough edit. Nevertheless, I followed Andy Smart's travels with great interest and found his descriptions superb. He succeeds in bringing China to life in all its vibrancy and colour... and noise!

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **An insightful, madcap jaunt around China**

By Jacquion 10 March 2016

Format: Kindle Edition

This book is a real genre departure for me but I fancied something different and decided to purchase the first edition containing strong language. The book is essentially the travel diary of a man rapidly approaching middle age who decided to invest his redundancy money back-packing around China looking for adventure. The book was written on the go and the author has remained loyal to his

original diary and sequencing without over-doing the editing or sanitising the language. This approach has paid off giving the book a witty, fast-paced feel and offering the reader a chance to experience the journey almost as if they were there. Just Turn Left at the Mountain is stimulating, enjoyable and at times surreal, but above all interesting. It's not for the faint-hearted; the author never shies away from describing things as he sees them, no matter how gruesome – but his boundless enthusiasm brings China to life and it is now on my wish list of places to visit.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Smart by name and smart by nature!**

By [The booktrail](#) on 11 February 2016

Format: Kindle Edition

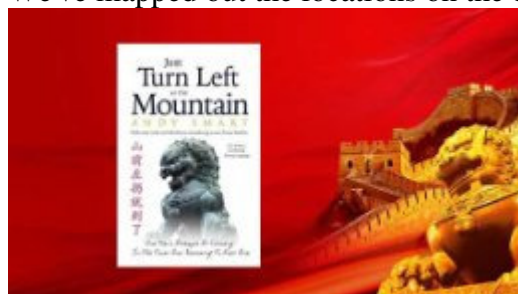
The phrase Smart by name and smart by nature really describes this journey as Andy takes us on a very personal, poignant and very witty tour of China and Asia.

The locations are numerous and far too many to mention in this travel guide/review. But oh! the things you will see and the places he takes you! The most interesting accompaniment is Andy's witty commentary as he meets some fascinating people, describes his daily goings on and says what's in his heart.

The Far East comes to life – from his wanderings in Mongolia, an encounter with a rather fearsome waitress and some Asian hornets (not sure which gave the most painful sting) There's a bumpy and dangerous bus journey, a romantic 'adventure' and where does a man go if he seeks a real thrill? Ghost hunting in Cambodia or into the infamous 'no man's land'? Both!

Andy is the ultimate guide. And then some.

We've mapped out the locations on the [booktrail.com](#)



5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **What a journey!**

By [Julie Bonifacinoon](#) 4 January 2016

Format: Kindle Edition

What a journey! The author delights us with a true vision of the real China, its landscape and its people. I'm still laughing at his first experience of a haircut in China. I felt I was there with him, savouring the sights, sounds and smells of this country so far and so different from ours. I highly recommend this book. Well done.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Brilliant adventure that is funny and informative**

By [Jerome Jackson](#) on 10 April 2015

Format: [Kindle Edition](#)

One day Andy Smart decided to do the kind'a thing many dream of doing but would never be so bold, and that is - leave it all behind and travel half way round the world to China. That's how you do mid-life crisis! Having lost his job, Smart had nothing to lose, and from the moment he arrived his adventures were gripping and funny. Scene after scene I was laughing out loud and wondering whether all this really happened (I suspect it did). The dating sequence in particular was quite brilliant.

Smart's great writing made me feel like I was coming along for the ride as he headed for the Himalayas to discover what wonders lie beyond. We get to see many fantastic locations and meet interesting people, and Smart has taken care to give us insight into alien cultures. Although the book is funny pretty much throughout, it is also powerful and endearing, thanks to the author's human touch. Along the way you will see the best humanity has to offer, and you will laugh at our idiosyncrasies without prejudice or guilt.

If you want to be educated about the Far East, if you want to laugh out loud, if you want adventure, and if you want an ultimately positive experience, then Just turn Left at the Mountain is the book for you. It is a wonderful memoir that would make a wonderful movie, and I must take my hat off to the author, first for his boldness in embarking on this adventure, and second, on his brilliance in sharing it with us.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **An entertaining read**

By [orangutan](#) on 30 December 2014

Format: [Kindle Edition](#) [Verified Purchase](#)

I really enjoyed this book - very entertaining. The descriptions are vivid and the narrative pace keeps you turning the pages. The variety of different adventures is also a bonus - from his ill-fated romantic encounter at the start, through the trips into the wilds of Tibet and Mongolia, and expat life in Yangshou, southern China, and Seoul, South Korea. I've also learnt to be very afraid of Asian hornets - so get out of the way pretty quickly when they fly into one of the offices where I work!

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Insightful & Enjoyable**

By [baz](#) on 13 December 2014

Format: [Kindle Edition](#) [Verified Purchase](#)

A thoroughly enjoyable book that paints a great picture of the trials and tribulations of a journey through foreign lands. Offers insight into pieces of Chinese culture that only come from experiencing it. A book that makes you smile, laugh and captures the many emotions one experiences when life brings you new experiences. A great value book well worth a read, if your travelling to China it will provide many insights into what to expect, if your not then you'll still enjoy the journey through self that travelling through a foreign land can bring, Buy read and enjoy :)

4.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★ **discover china**

By [phil ackerman](#) on 1 December 2014

Format: [Kindle Edition](#)

Great book. Particularly memberable are the descriptions of the food and the bus journeys. The book is written in a personal way.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Very nice book. Story is written in very funny way...**

By Ondrej Marko on 22 October 2014

Format: Kindle Edition Verified Purchase

Very nice book. Story is written in very funny way and you feel that you are part of it. I found myself looking in to map where all that places are and how it may be to go there and see it on my own eyes. Definitely good book when you are planing your new loooooooooong holiday.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **A beautifully written book**

By Obsessive eBook Reviewer on 6 October 2014

Format: Kindle Edition

A beautifully written book which depicted China so vividly I felt I was there every step of the way, and left me yearning to visit the country for real. It is wonderfully informative and entertaining and I have no hesitation on recommending this to anyone with even a vague interest in this grand nation.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **A very good and enjoyable book**

By Maciej on 20 August 2014

Format: Kindle Edition Verified Purchase

A very good and enjoyable book, both entertaining and informative. Would recommend to anyone interested in the topic or just looking for a good book. Well worth a thorough read.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Hilarious and essential reading for anyone heading East, or not!**

By Soda Farrington on 16 July 2014

Format: Paperback

Having finished this book I'm now left wanting more! I feel as though I was actually there & would recommend it to anyone thinking of travelling or working in the East. It didn't pull any punches but really felt honest and genuine. Many parts had me laughing out loud!

The authors style of writing was refreshing and down to earth & hope he will write more!

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **A beautiful vision of the East without the need of your ...**

By peter j rogers on 12 July 2014

Format: Kindle Edition Verified Purchase

Well what can I say about my first ebook. Probably one of the most in depth and addictive life searching journey you could wish for. A beautiful vision of the East without the need of your own eyes and saturated in a complete spectrum of emotions. Excitement, determination, apprehension, fear, happiness and sadness to name a few. Would you have the guts to embark on such a journey? Some will never know, I suppose.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Honest**

By pamela on 15 June 2014

Format: Kindle Edition Verified Purchase

Excellent powers of description, sometimes stomach churningly so!!

Funny and warm, really get a feel of something personal you're looking into.

Ok so there's a few typo`s but who cares when it's this good.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Enjoyable read**

By Marion Burton on 17 April 2014

Format: Paperback Verified Purchase

Very good read enjoyed it a lot also as it was a free download very good value for money. Thank you Andy Smart x

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Loved it**

By Crafter on 7 April 2014

Format: Kindle Edition Verified Purchase

I read a book recently that had been suggested as the book to read about China - I much preferred this one. A few technical issues getting back to the book from the glossary but not enough to detract from the book. I loved the pace, the occasional sequencing oddities and the regular bits & pieces in no particular order providing short anecdotes. A few typo/editorial issues but this didn't affect the pace or reduce my interest.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Corking Read**

By Mark N. Waters on 2 December 2013

Format: Kindle Edition

Pacey fun and well crafted this travelogue motors along with great insight, humanity and moments of laugh out loud humour. Highly Recommended

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Entertaining and humorous**

By Susan C on 24 September 2013

Format: Kindle Edition

I am so glad I chose this book to download and read. Not only a very useful travel guide but a very humorous account of all the situations the author encountered on his travels.

I would definitely recommend this book as the wit and style of the writing has kept me entertained and kept me coming back for more each night.

4.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Did you really eat that?**

By Rachel Thompson on 4 March 2013

Format: Kindle Edition Verified Purchase

Sometimes a bit too revealing but in places very thought provoking! This book is a revelation to us wannabe travellers, especially those of us who like to be clean this book can leave you feeling a bit crusty at times. Really enjoyable narrative and packed with information, tips and the endless joy that is Chinese red tape. Looking forward to the next instalment.

If you know someone that wants to go east, make them read this book.

5.0 out of 5 stars

★★★★★ **Please Sir, Can I have some more?**

By Ms. C. Costello on 17 January 2013

Format: Kindle Edition

I don't have a Kindle...yet! But having read the first few pages of this book, I have decided that this needs to change. I can't wait to read about Andy's travels, trials and tribulations. If the first few pages are an indicator of what's to come, I want some more. Humorous, gritty and real...just like the man himself!

Amazon.com

★★★★★ Extraordinarily Descriptive

By [Evelyn F](#) on September 1, 2016

Format: [Kindle Edition](#)|[Verified Purchase](#)

If you want to know what China and its' people are like day to day, this book is a must. The author is extraordinarily talented and has a unique way of describing situations and scenes. I don't often laugh out loud when reading, but did many times with this book. It gets pretty tense at times too such as his three day bus ride out of Tibet and his time in Cambodia. I don't know the author but you can easily imagine his energetic and enthusiastic personality by the way he writes.

★★★★★ Wonderful Read~

By [Cindy Knoke](#) on November 18, 2016

Format: [Paperback](#)

Excellent, compelling read! A must for any person who loves travel, and for those who want to arm chair travel and be both educated and entertained. Highly recommend~

★★★★★ A real adventurers yarn

By [Bruce Stevenson](#) on June 10, 2016

Format: [Kindle Edition](#)|

Andy Smart tells a great story of leaving the UK and immersing himself in Asia. Sort of a diary like account with a raw edge to it, stuff that will make you laugh out loud. It's a honest account of a "real adventurer" someone who wants to get inside and experience a foreign culture. Not a package backpacker sniffing around the fringe, but someone who gets right inside. Worth a read if you think you have what it takes to resettle yourself to a place like China. Take my hat off to this guy.

★★★★★ Discovering the real China

By [Jae F](#) on January 21, 2013

Format: [Kindle Edition](#)

I love this book. An amazing survey about China today from the real experience of the author, travelling around the country and living there for years. To know China is not easy, but this book helps me to understand much better this fascinating country through episodes and incidents and an impressive gallery of characters. Congratulations!!

★★★★★ itchy feet

By [good old boy](#) on December 20, 2012

Format: [Kindle Edition](#)

funny & heartfelt a fresh insight into S.E. asia covered before from the point of view of the backpacker/lonley planet type "traveler"

★★★★★ I highly recommend this book X

By [Avid Reader](#) on October 5, 2014

Format: [Kindle Edition](#)

This backpacker's journey through China is fascinating and informative, describing this amazing country in depth and remaining funny throughout. It is well written and I became attached to the people and places as I was reading. Smart has lived an interesting life and I'm grateful he shared his experiences. I highly recommend this book.

★★★★★ **Great Book....**

By Sylvia B on March 20, 2015

Format: Kindle Edition Verified Purchase

I really enjoyed reading this book....I did not want it to end.....

★★★★★ **A brilliant and humorous foray into Eastern culture X**

By Obsessive eBook Reviewer on April 3, 2015

Format: Kindle Edition

Just Turn Left at the Mountain follows the adventures of Andy who decides to escape his dead-end lifestyle and head off to China! We get to join him as he attempts to settle into a fascinating culture, learning much along the way in an often humorous manner. The journey takes us to many locations in this vast country (and beyond) from the mundane to the majestic, and it is never less than interesting every step of the way. Andy continuously finds himself in unexpected circumstances, including at one point managing a Mongolian holiday camp, and this sense of not knowing what is coming next makes the book a real page turner. I really felt like I was being educated about all aspects of Eastern culture, whilst being entertained by a master story teller, and the reading experience has exacerbated my own desire to visit this part of the world. The writing quality is never less than excellent, and by the end, I was left wanting more. Just Turn Left at the Mountain is a great book which I cannot recommend highly enough and thoroughly deserves the 5 star treatment. Great work!