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A Winter in Arabia

Freya Stark

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Freya Stark : A Winter in Arabia before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Winter in Arabia:

13 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Beautifully detailedBy A. MorganI had never heard of Freya Stark when I purchased this, but it was a great book. I had to adjust to the pace, because it really is an old fashioned account of the pace and culture of travel in the 30s, but it's a wonderful insider's account of passing through a Muslim society before cultures were all "opened up" to one another. When you get into it, it's easy to appreciate the details that are included and the slower pace, and pulls the reader back to a time when people appreciated simple things and took the most care with such pastimes as handwritten letters and travel journals. The focus is on the personalities and day to day activities of the travelers and Ms. Stark's ingenuity and finesse in navigating the social challenges of being a British woman abroad, alone, before that was expected. Very interesting.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. but it's shaping up to be a really good read. Freya's recounting of her travels through Yemen ...By MichaelI haven't finished this book yet, but it's shaping up to be a really good read. Freya's recounting of her travels through Yemen are providing me with some keen insights into Arab culture. The society seems to be conservative and isolated from the rest of the world.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating bookBy Michael GordyThis is a fascinating book. A must read for anyone who enjoys travel writing, is interested in the history of the Middle East, or just wants to read about some-one who thumbed her nose at the "establishment"! Well written too.

One of the most unconventional and courageous explorers of her time, Freya Stark chronicled her extraordinary

Travels in the Near East, establishing herself as a twentieth century heroine. A Winter in Arabia recounts her 1937-8 expedition in what is now Yemen, a journey which helped secure her reputation not only as a great travel writer, but also as a first-rate geographer, historian, and archaeologist. There, in the land whose "nakedness is clothed in shreds of departed splendor," she and two companions spent a winter in search of an ancient South Arabian city. Offering rare glimpses of life behind the veil-the subtleties of business and social conduct, the elaborate beauty rituals of the women, and the bitter animosities between rival tribes, Freya Stark conveys the "perpetual charm of Arabia ... that the traveler finds his own level there simply as a human being."

It is her ability to sketch out the situation for us, along with her affection and sensitivity to this distant culture -- so far from the Europe in which she grew up -- that makes her such an affecting companion on this new journey of her. --
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