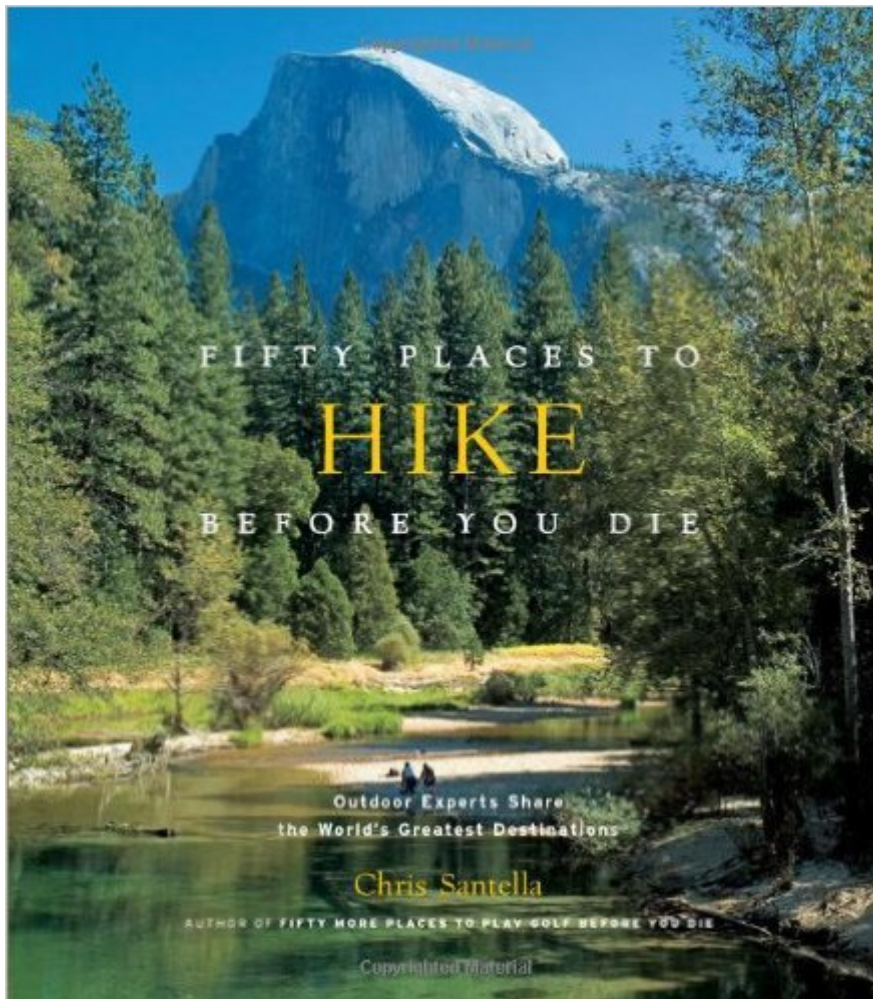


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Fifty Places To Hike Before You Die: Outdoor Experts Share The World's Greatest Destinations



Synopsis

Fifty Places to Hike Before You Die is the latest offering in the bestselling Fifty Places series. Chris Santella, along with top expedition leaders, explores the world's greatest walking adventures. Some, such as the Lunana Snowman Trek in Bhutan and the Kangshung Valley Trek in Tibet, are grueling multiweek adventures at high altitudes. Others, such as Japan's Nakesando Trail, move leisurely from village to village, allowing walkers to immerse themselves in the local culture. Whether it's climbing the Rwandan mountains to view mountain gorillas or strolling through bistros along Italy's Amalfi Coast, there's a memorable hike at everyone's level within these 50 chapters. With commentaries from expert trekkers and insider tips that lead the reader off the beaten path, Santella has again captured the special characteristics that make these must-visit destinations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

While travelers of humble means will only be able to dream of visiting many of these exotic locales, the book serves as a moving inspiration for at least embarking on a handful of these excursions. The photography is jaw-droppingly beautiful and as with other books in the series, the author's collaboration with experts in the field is a refreshing contrast to "traditional" hiking guides. The book is not meant as a tactical "how to", but as a motivational resource to get your dreams in motion. So if you want a kick in the pants to make that special trip seem more real, "Fifty Places to Hike..." is for you!

The book title implies more than it delivers. It is quite superficial and lacks substance. Most hikers need more details on the hikes, which this book does not offer. A much better book is "Classic Treks" by Bill Birkett. Classic Treks: The 30 Most Spectacular Hikes in the World This book offers a detailed route for each trek, including time estimates and proposed itineraries.

I think it speaks highly of conservation efforts in the United States that 19 of the 50 places you should hike before you die are in the US. But after reading the book (and it took me months, this is not a book to be read straight through) I have to wonder if a) these truly are the best 50 hikes in the world and b) what are the hikes? Each of the 50 hikes in this book is a separate chapter and author Chris Santella is actually more of an editor. He collected short essays and photographs from outdoor writers and compiled them in one volume. Each chapter is about 3-5 pages of text within the book, and usually includes a photo. What is not included is a map, or a detailed route description. Perhaps this is because many of the authors are also employees or owners of guide services and are hoping that hikers/trekkers will flock to their businesses after getting what is essentially free advertising in this book. So what to make of the book? Yes, I did get some ideas of places I wanted to visit but I haven't really changed my hiking goals, which is still to thoroughly explore the whole state of California and the trails within it. It is priced like a coffee table book, but the plates are not quite sharp enough for that, and it's not quite the right size. The text is small and the writing more personal than practical. I guess it is OK, but not what I would use for any sort of actual trip planning.

2.5 stars really. This book can't make up its mind whether it is an armchair hike book or an actual guide. It's neither rich enough visually to be an armchair book nor detailed enough to be a real guide. The 50 hikes each have 3-4 pages of text and usually a single full-page photo. Utterly inexplicably, some of the hikes lack even the single photo. The text is rather superficial, having about 2/3 glowing praise of the area and 1/3 mention of trails--though no mileages, maps, or other useful information like that is given. Let's face it, if I hit 10 of these spots in my lifetime, I'm probably doing OK, so I purchased this largely as a "read and dream" book rather than one providing actual logistics. Therefore, I was left rather disappointed with this book.

I checked out this book and "Fifty Places to Bike before you Die" from our local library before deciding to order them. Both my husband and I thought we should own them. I like that the books include places from around the world. It's doubtful we will ever do all 50, but should we ever be in

one of the countries listed, we've already got an alternative to check out besides the usual tourist stops. There was one hike listed that we have already done several times and we agreed with the author's assessment. To me, that's a good sign. It's also just fun to read so see what's out there. In response to some reviews that these books are blatant promotions, I disagree. I would rather hear from the experts. On some of these adventures we may want a guide, but on others, in places we know fairly well, the book has given enough information to go on our own with maybe a little more research. To me it would be impossible for the author to scour the globe in search of 50 places worth visiting. Talking to the experts seems to be a much more logical way of compiling the information.

The authors wanted to write a book that is not bogged down with minutiae about the walks they describe. They set out with the idea that well known experts gives a description of their favourite hike. Fair enough. But all you end up getting is this narrative by the contributor and too little detail on other things that you might want to know. The flowery prose the contributors give is all good and well, but most hikers do want a bit more info. Also, although there are quite few lovely photographs in the book, but there are really not enough. I find pictures to speak louder than a thousand words, and I would quite easily base my decision to undertake a trail just by looking at a photo. Quite a few hike descriptions are not accompanied by photos. In a nutshell- this book contains too little info, but it is still worth reading. Maybe.

Gave this as a gift to a co-worker who is an avid hiker and he liked it. I did not get a chance to read it myself, but after flipping through the pages, and I could tell it would be a good read and very interesting. Hopefully my co-worker is able to tackle some of these must-try hiking trails!

Nice third person descriptions of the expert's trail experience. Some of the the photographic selections are poor choices. For example, the photo for Colorado: Maroon Bells is vague and inaccurately captioned, certainly not the most photographed perspective of the Maroon Bells. A photo of Trailrider Pass, where the expert's story unwinds, would have been more appropriate. The photo of the Matterhorn for the Switzerland: Haute Route story seems a cop out for all the other awesome sights offered up during this 2-week trek. However, the ultimate failure of this book is not a single map. Come on, how can you do a hiking book without maps??

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