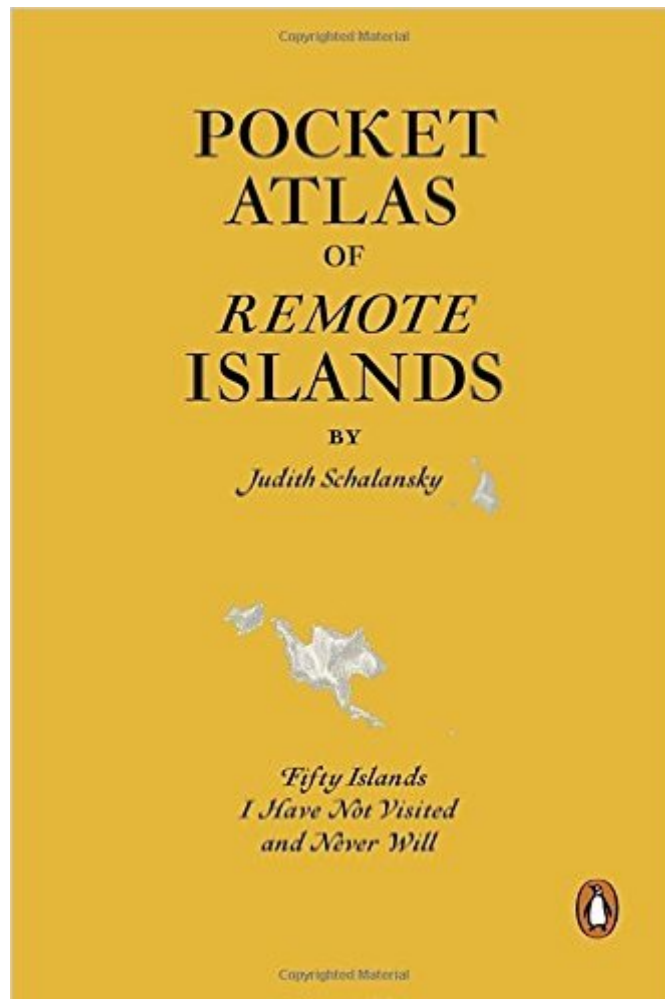


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Pocket Atlas Of Remote Islands: Fifty Islands I Have Not Visited And Never Will



Synopsis

A lovely small-trim edition of the award-winning Atlas of Remote Islands. The Atlas of Remote Islands, Judith Schalansky's beautiful and deeply personal account of the islands that have held a place in her heart throughout her lifelong love of cartography, has captured the imaginations of readers everywhere. Using historic events and scientific reports as a springboard, she creates a story around each island: fantastical, inscrutable stories, mixtures of fact and imagination that produce worlds for the reader to explore. Gorgeously illustrated and with new, vibrant colors for the Pocket edition, the atlas shows all fifty islands on the same scale, in order of the oceans they are found. Schalansky lures us to fifty remote destinations "from Tristan da Cunha to Clipperton Atoll, from Christmas Island to Easter Island" and proves that the most adventurous journeys still take place in the mind, with one finger pointing at a map.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a great idea given the number of armchair travellers out there who probably dream of remote and inaccessible island escapes. Judith Schalansky has here compiled a list of remote islands and she provides a small map of each one that gives its place in relation to nearby 'civilisation' and also its distance from one of the other remote islands she has selected. There is then a brief snippet of story or snapshot of an event that occurred on each island. Now some of these islands aren't exactly unknown, they are just remote. She discusses Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean and Ascension Island in the Atlantic for example. Other times she has selected an island whose name you may not be familiar with but which is in an archipelago whose name you probably are familiar with (such as Fangataufa which is, apparently, in French Polynesia). Others are places your high

school geography teacher probably wouldn't have heard of such as Peter I Island. The main downside I found was the overly whimsical selection of stories and anecdotes about these places. There is, quite simply, not enough room in two small pages for the author to repeatedly hit the mark in terms of providing enough of a snapshot in time to really suck the reader in. And while it all comes down to personal taste it feels like sometimes just a straight two page summary of the island would be better than some excerpt from a story isn't long enough to really convey any message or feeling to the reader. Unless the author was hoping to inspire people to google these places and do some further research of their own. At the end of the day, despite the above caveat, this is a safe bet for a little gift for the armchair traveller you know. Or for yourself if you are that way inclined. It will certainly get you thinking about just how you could tick off even just a few of these places.

Charlene's Review: The Pocket Atlas of Remote Islands is a small book with a whole lot of information. Mainly comprised of islands I've never even heard of, Ms. Schalansky has gathered information from all over to offer a glimpse into the locale and lifestyle of each island represented around the globe, from Lonely Island to Semisopchnoi. Included are detailed maps of the islands, along with longitude and latitude, and when it was discovered as well as if it is currently inhabited. I never knew there were so many uninhabited islands. The stories she has gathered are local lore, as well as known facts. Several of the stories are dark and dangerous, with Ms. Schalansky describing it this way: "Paradise is an island. So is hell." From the criminal colony on Norfolk Island, to the penguin infested Macquarie Island, the sexual abuse scandal on Pitcairn Island to the detonation of a french hydrogen bomb on Fangataufa where no one was allowed to step foot for six years, this atlas goes a step beyond the norm. Though many of us will never likely travel to these locations, it was enjoyable to read about different lifestyles and climates. It really was a bit like taking a trip, albeit in my own comfy bed.

Witty, imaginative, and yet sound with regards to the facts and mysteries of our world. Delightful short excursions to the unexplored parts of the mind and the globe; like listening to radio in the old days, the imagination is always more complete than the experience of traveling, with none of the thirst. Bought for a 15 year old standing on the brink of discovery.

I had such high hopes for this book. Countless islands have incredible stories attached to them, and I assumed this book would be a collection of the best of them. Instead, this book presents halfheartedly descriptive snapshots of the islands contained within - some less than a hundred

words. If this is journalism, it's the laziest I've ever seen. If it's storytelling, it's some of the least compelling I've ever seen. The Wikipedia page for most of these islands is far more interesting than its counterpart in this book.

To me the book is about Fifty fantasy islands. I just love drifting through time-warped travel books, trekking over old maps, and going on exotic safaris through old travel stories and novels. "Pocket Atlas" fits right in with my dreamscapes. One of the remote islands that the author lists, I have actually visitedâ "Deception Island, Antarctica. It was amazing. This island put a spell on me of which I am still under. I like the little size. The size makes it feel like it is a little bible.

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