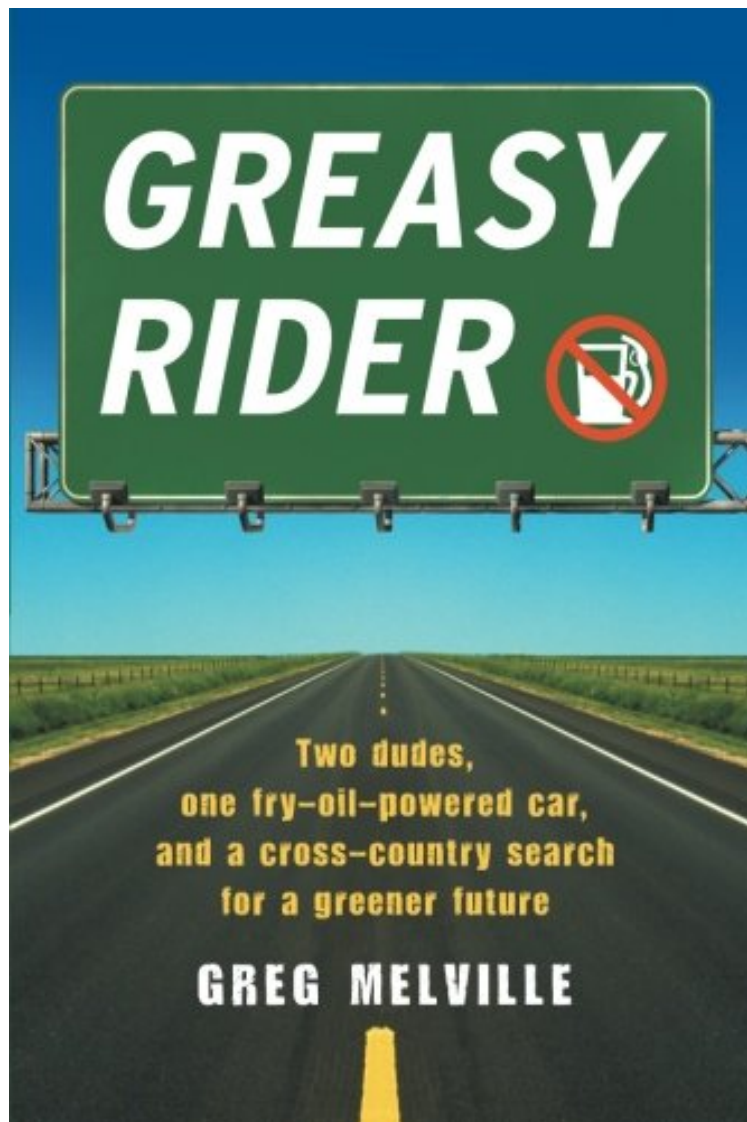


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Greasy Rider: Two Dudes, One Fry-Oil-Powered Car, and a Cross-Country Search for a Greener Future

Greg Melville

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Greg Melville : Greasy Rider: Two Dudes, One Fry-Oil-Powered Car, and a Cross-Country Search for a Greener Future before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Greasy Rider: Two Dudes, One Fry-Oil-Powered Car, and a Cross-Country Search for a Greener Future:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Okay Book About EnvironmentBy D. DahlbeckI had to read this as

part of a college class, and it is not bad. The author weaves research and his agenda into stories about his road trip across the country in a way that makes it entertaining and informative. He does get preachy at times, and definitely writes like someone who knows the people he is referring to (wife and friend) will be reading the book, but on the whole I did not dislike reading it. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Two Stars By Alfred E. Newman, carrying on the good fight It would have been better if the author knew more about his subject. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good book By Teacher in MI Easy, quick read. Melville's style and mission are noble. Book will make you question some of your practices and purchases.

Is it possible to drive coast-to-coast without stopping at a single gas pump? Journalist Greg Melville is determined to try. With his college buddy Iggy riding shotgun, this green-thinking guy-who's in love with the idea of free fuel-sets out on an enlightening road trip. The quest: to be the first people to drive cross-country in a french-fry car. Will they make it from Vermont to California in a beat-up 1985 Mercedes diesel station wagon powered on vegetable oil collected from restaurant grease Dumpsters along the way? More important, can two guys survive 192 consecutive hours together? Their expedition on and off the road includes visits to the solar-powered Google headquarters; the National Ethanol Council; the wind turbines of southwestern Minnesota; the National Renewable Energy Lab; a visit to one of the first houses to receive platinum certification for leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (Leed); an "eco-friendly" Wal-Mart; and the world's largest geothermal heating system. Part adventure and part investigation of what we're doing (or not doing) to preserve the planet, Greasy Rider is upbeat, funny, and full of surprising information about sustainable measures that are within our reach.

From Publishers Weekly Early on in this eco-travelogue, mechanically-disinclined magazine writer Melville notes, "I simply needed to look at my reflection in the rearview mirror to realize that nearly anyone can operate and maintain a french-fry car." Indeed, it turns out Melville is easily able to convert a diesel-engine Mercedes into a vehicle powered entirely on fryer oil, collected (usually for free) from restaurant grease dumpsters. Joined by his college friend, Iggy, Melville embarks on the first oil-powered cross-country road trip. There isn't really much suspense to the quest, especially once it's clear that they can use oil purchased at the supermarket. Unfortunately, greasy restaurant backlots don't make for great anecdotes, and the duo's banter isn't as funny or insightful as Melville seems to think. What keeps it from reading like a padded magazine article are Melville's side trips: he learns how Fort Knox has converted to geothermal heating and cooling, investigates just how eco-friendly Al Gore's mansion really is, and talks to representatives of various "green" U.S. Government agencies. These insights, and the simplicity of his grease-powered transport, propel an otherwise slight read into a thought-, and perhaps action-provoking lesson in alternative fuel. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist *Starred * From its punny title, to its unique premise (a man decides to drive from coast to coast in a car powered by used french-fry oil), to its serious message (you, too, can be more environmentally conscious), to its easygoing writing style, this is just a splendid book. The author blames his wife for the genesis of his cross-country quest: it was her idea to buy a diesel vehicle and convert it to run on vegetable oil Rudolf Diesel demonstrated his original engine in 1900 by running it on peanut oil, part of his plan to encourage drivers to generate their own fuel sources. Anyway, Melville took his wife's idea and ran with it or, more precisely, drove with it, teaming up with an old college buddy and setting out to drive a converted 1980s Mercedes from Vermont to California. Its an exciting and occasionally nail-biting adventure, but the author keeps the book from being a simple road trip by delving fairly deeply into the whole ecological, pro-environmental, self-sufficiency theme, taking the reader along on visits to such interesting places as Google headquarters, a wind farm, a renewable energy lab, and a green home. Melville, a freelance journalist who has written his share of travel pieces, is a lively stylist, and the book is both entertaining and educational. --David Pitt "A lot of interesting data . . . about renewable energy's promise and pitfalls." --New York Post "Melville has a breezy, unpretentious style as well as the ability to work in the occasional edifying digression-a brief history of wind power, for instance, or a discussion with a professor about cellulosic ethanol-without disrupting the book's brisk, novelistic pace. At trip's end, Melville explains to his pal that they have proven something important: "If two goobers like us can actually get in a car and drive across the country without fossil fuels or putting a lot of carbon into the air, the answers for sustainability are easier than people think." --Audubon Magazine "Melville's tale of a cross-country drive in a decades-old Mercedes converted to run on used cooking oil is... a hopeful, goodhearted portrait of those he meets be they Minnesota wind farmers or hippie diesel mechanics who are getting a head start on building the post-carbon future, a tomorrow fueled by a refreshing optimism, as well as by grease." --Newsweek An amusing and informative look into alternative fuels, conservation, and what individuals and corporations . . . can do about climate change. --SEED Magazine An entertaining combination of On the Road and An Inconvenient Truth. New York Times Book