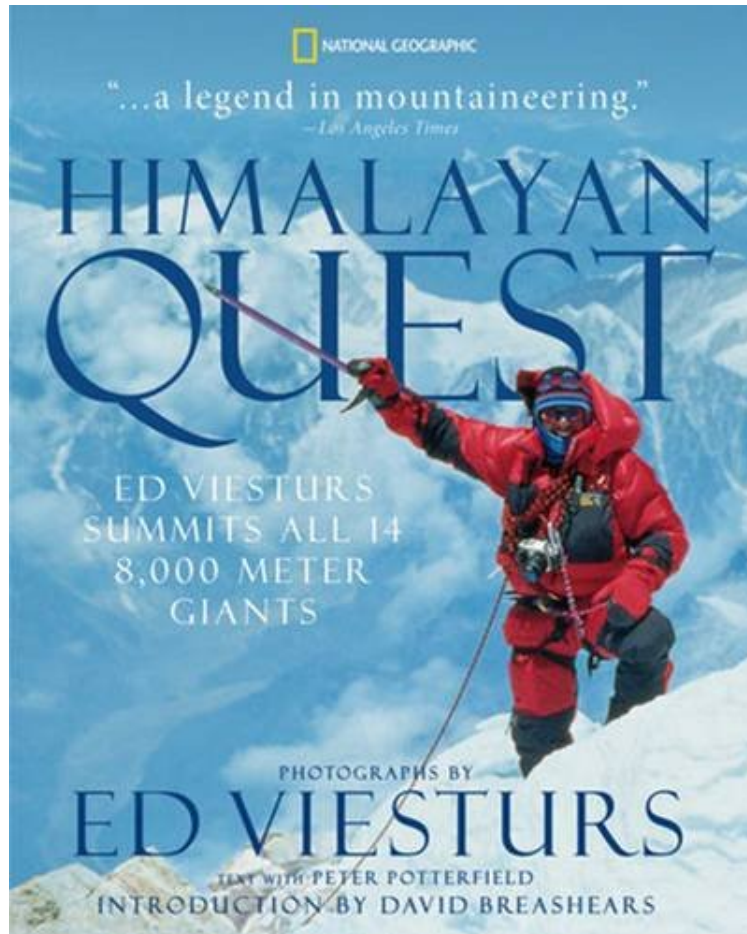


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Himalayan Quest: Ed Viesturs Summits All Fourteen 8,000-Meter Giants

Peter Potterfield

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Peter Potterfield : Himalayan Quest: Ed Viesturs Summits All Fourteen 8,000-Meter Giants before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Himalayan Quest: Ed Viesturs Summits All Fourteen 8,000-Meter Giants:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great Pics, Awe Inspiring Story By Wayne A. Smith In the words of my almost fourteen year old, "very cool pics." National Geographic has produced another book that sucks the reader in with incredible photographs and a good adventure story. Ed Viesturs is a rock star among mountain climbers - at least to those of us who know the activity through the printed page and film. His quest to summit all fourteen of the world's giant mountains (above 8,000 meters) without supplemental oxygen is chronicled in his own words (this book covers the first twelve of those mountains; the latter two he bagged subsequent to this volume). While the story is enticing and well written, the pictures are simply stunning. I've read quite a few books about adventures in mountaineering

(although my experience is entirely through the printed page), and I've not seen a better and more inspiring collection of top-of-the-world photography. Viesturs is also a solid descriptive writer who offers a good journey in his own words. While good writing can convey adventure and a sense of place, nothing beats photos like these for showing how stark, lonely and dangerous it is atop the world's highest peaks. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Almost Like Being There . . . By timcon1964 This volume should be regarded as an almost essential supplement to Viesturs' *No Shortcuts to the Top: Climbing the World's 14 Highest Peaks* (2006). The impressive photographs in *Himalayan Quest* complement the narrative descriptions in *No Shortcuts*. Viesturs contends that he is just a casual photographer, and that he had to forego many great pictures in order to concentrate on climbing. Nonetheless, his file cabinets are filled with enough slides for a dozen books. From these, Viesturs selected his favorites for this book. *Himalayan Quest* was published by the National Geographic Society, and reflects their customary fine work with pictorial images. All pictures are in color, and most are large format (there are 32 full page photographs, 6 page-and-a-half photographs, and 27 double-page photographs). Viesturs' pictures are presented chronologically in 12 chapters, each devoted to a particular mountain or mountains. Each chapter begins with a single page summary of the climbs it covers, and includes small diagram(s) showing the routes planned and completed on particular mountains. There is also a useful two-page map of the Himalayas. Reproduced in this book are panoramic views of the Himalayas' awesome topography, its massive peaks and precipitous slopes, as well as climbers and porters in action, and the precarious sites on which they pitched their tents. Each photograph is accompanied by a detailed caption describing its location, the activities it shows, and identifying important peaks in the background. Some peaks receive more attention than others. For example, two chapters (and parts of three other chapters) focus on Mt. Everest, two chapters deal with Annapurna, an entire chapter is given to Kanchenjunga and another to K2. In the years after *Himalayan Quest* was released, Viesturs climbed three more Himalayan peaks (Nanga Parbat, Broad Peak, and Annapurna). Thus, these later climbs are not treated in *Himalayan Quest*. (In *No Shortcuts*, Viesturs claims that snow conditions prevented him from reaching the summit of Broad Peak in 1997; but in *Himalayan Quest*, he reports that he reached the top of Broad Peak in 1997. Actually, Viesturs attained the summit ridge in 1997, but not the actual summit. Being somewhat of a perfectionist, he felt obliged to return six years later to conquer the few feet he did not master in 1997.) The value of *Himalayan Quest* is well summarized by Jim Wickwire: These images convey better than any words what it is like to experience the outer limits of human endeavor. If you want to get an idea of what it is like to climb the world's highest peaks, check out this book. (Amateur photographers may regret the absence of technical details regarding the equipment Viesturs used—for example, the make and model of the camera [the camera that appears in some views seems to be a Canon EOS Elan 35mm film SLR with a zoom lens], whether it had been specially prepared for cold weather operation, and the type and speed of Viesturs' film, etc.) 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Beautiful Pictures - Pithy Prose By J. Groen I can't overemphasize the excellence of this book. The pictures are beautiful! Of course, Ed Viesturs had the most beautiful country in the world to work with but he did a wonderful job of capturing it. I especially liked the breath-taking views that were taken going up the mountains - the views of Annapurna for example. I can see why this is such a deadly mountain when you see these pictures. Also, the picture taken at sunrise at 27,000 feet hanging from a ledge on K2. Then there is the picture of the Nanga Parbat Diemar face - Wow! I could go on and on... And, the prose is pithy - that is the most powerful word to use for it. There are three short write-ups at the beginning to set up the pictures, and excellent write-ups for each picture providing the context for it. In the write-up at the beginning, Ed Viesturs asks for our forgiveness for the poor quality of some of the pictures especially the one on K2 - is he kidding??? He is a humble man - no doubt - but these pictures are awe inspiring. And, I personally appreciate that he put the one at sunset on K2 in the book. When compared with the book by Reinhold Messner, which this one is no doubt similar to, I would highly recommend this book instead. Ed Viesturs provides the map on how he arrived at the top of each of these dangerous and beautiful mountains, just like Reinhold's book. But, unlike Reinhold's book, the prose is pithy and has a high level of humility. Also, I liked the map of where each of the mountains are located in Nepal and Pakistan that was provided. This was an extra treat. This is going to be one of my favorite books of all time. In Ed's section, he mentioned that he has many more pictures. I hope that he rewards us by publishing another book with further pictures. What a treat! I can't climb these mountains - but I can experience them to some level through this book and other writings of Ed Viesturs. Ed, thank you for this book, and keep publishing! I highly recommend this book for anyone interested in an excellent coffee table book. This will be a treat for your guests.

Now updated to include the triumphant culmination of a monumental quest to stand on the summits of all fourteen of the world's highest mountains, *Himalayan Quest* offers an unforgettable glimpse into the remarkable world of Ed Viesturs, America's best-known high altitude climber, and the breathtaking landscape in which he works. It is an unparalleled showcase of both the heartbreaking tragedy and the ineffable joy Viesturs has experienced while striving at the limits of human endurance. At the center of this extraordinary account of his mountaineering adventures are Viesturs' own awe-inspiring photographs from the top of the world. This collection of images will show readers the deadly beauty and haunting menace of the Himalaya. A unique, inspiring, and spine-tingling glimpse into the rarified world of the extreme climber, *Himalayan Quest* will appeal not only to Viesturs' significant fan base (fondly known as

Edophiles or Edheads), but also to outdoor aficionados and armchair adventurers everywhere.

From Publishers Weekly For mountaineers, the 14 peaks above 8,000 meters—all located in the Himalayan range near the border between China and India—have a special status. In 1986, Austrian Reinhold Messner became the first person to scale all of them without the use of supplemental oxygen. Viesturs is currently on a quest to become the first American to reproduce this astonishing feat. This book presents photographs from his expeditions on the 12 tallest mountains in the world. A world-class climber, Viesturs is blessed with an "unusual physiology"; his body's ability to process oxygen extraordinarily well allows him to remain unusually alert and vigorous even at oxygen-scarce altitudes. That clarity of mind is amply demonstrated in these stunning photographs. Viesturs emphasizes the difficulty of taking pictures at such heights and even charmingly includes imperfect shots (from a technical perspective) that have special meaning to him. Standout images include the vast, ridged, snowy valley framed by Everest, Lhotse and Nuptse; the "maze of crevasses" of the Khumbu Glacier in the Western Cwm; and the carpet of clouds draped across the several peaks of Makalu, Lhotse, Everest and Cho Oyu taken from the vantage point of Kanchenjunga. Replete with helpful maps, this book almost doubles as a travel guide; the lack of hotels doesn't make it any less informative for the tiny number of people eager to see these staggering vistas for themselves. No book consisting solely of prose could ever produce gasps like the pictures contained herein. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist A seasoned American guide much sought by organizers of commercial expeditions in the Himalayan Mountains, Viesturs has, when work permits, pursued a personal goal of ascending every 8,000-meter-plus peak in the range without using bottled oxygen. He will be the second mountaineer to do so if he succeeds in surmounting the only 2 on the list of 14 titans that have defeated him: Annapurna and Nanga Parbat. In the meantime, Viesturs offers this superb photographic record of his ascents since 1987 of Everest, K2, and the rest. Although he modestly disclaims being particularly skillful with the camera, Viesturs possesses an intuitive compositional appreciation for the grandeur of the scenery, for the play of sunrise especially. Moreover, his images viscerally show the vertiginous drop-offs at the summits. Viesturs' picture of Makalu shows his mates straddling its knife-edge top—standing would court an abyssal plummet. Admiring lowlanders will appreciate Viesturs' vistas. Gilbert Taylor Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "Viesturs is no ordinary climber; he's a legend in mountaineering." Los Angeles Times