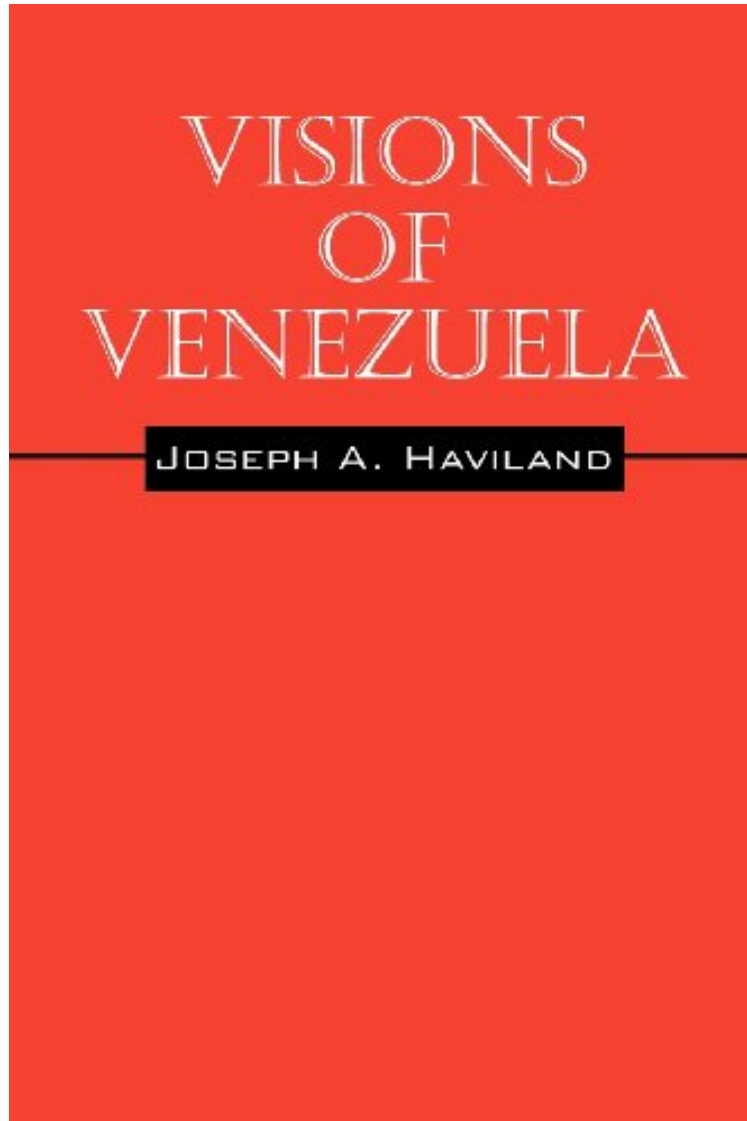



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Visions of Venezuela

Joseph A. Haviland

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Joseph A. Haviland : Visions of Venezuela before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Visions of Venezuela:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Tour of Venezuela Like No Other!By David, Cold Spring, NYForget the National Geographic travelogues; Throw out the maps and tour guides. This is a fascinating inside view of one of our most mysterious and controversial neighbors to the south. Joseph Haviland takes you on an engaging, intimate tour of the Venezuela few of us know. Along with his wife and teaching partner Alicia, Mr. Haviland uses humor and heart to explore a world where water is rationed daily, every bus has its own schedule, ants come free with

your hotel room reservation, and the image of president Hugo Chavez seems to blare from every TV screen 24/7. Delightfully honest, *Visions of Venezuela* is an eye-opening journalistic triumph and a journey you won't want to miss!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating stories from an American in Venezuela. By Art Fazakas

Mr. Haviland's book is a delightful, endearing collection of stories based on his life on Venezuela's Isla Margarita with his wife Alicia in 2007. Both were teachers from the United States who arrived without arranged teaching contracts. With vivid colors, language and a storyteller's gift, Mr. Haviland brilliantly brings to life the new friendships, discoveries, adventures and mishaps the couple experienced on the island. Few Americans in recent years have ventured into the world's largest oil producer (not Saudi Arabia!) with its tales of violence and anti-Americanism enflamed by the Chavez administration. This bold, inquisitive and determined couple - both teachers from the United States with rudimentary Spanish skills - set out to discover every aspect of Venezuelan daily life and culture - a goal Mr. Haviland richly describes in *Visions of Venezuela*. I truly felt like I was right there next to Joe and Alicia as they strolled the streets, shopped in the markets, fell in love with stray dogs, developed new friendships, learned to cook traditional meals, struggled with Spanish, and explored the countryside in often dilapidated, rickety buses and creaky vintage cars on dirt roads at terrifying speeds - especially on steep mountain passes where their drivers threw caution to the wind. (Mr. Haviland himself takes a turn at the wheel, to the dismay of his wife.) You will absolutely enjoy this book, and I highly urge you to buy a copy. Don't plan any other activity for the next few days, because this is one book you won't put down.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Must read for any adventurers, and let's face it, that is everyone of us!!! Pick it up and you won't put it down!

By johnny b wilford I loved it! It is the type of book you can put down, pick up, and start reading any other chapter without feeling you missed something! Although, I started reading it, and I could not put it down! I think I read it in two days, taking it everywhere with me. I guess me my wife are like Joe and his wife, we are adventurers! I live in Panama, and I have experience some of things he expressed in his book. I love his writing style, it draws me into his story, as if I am there with him! Maybe one day I can sit down with him and share stories, I believe I have lived many of the same adventures and I am ex-military (traveled to many countries, all with their own unique customs). I glad I ran across this book and I would highly recommend for any adventurer (and let's face it that is all of us) get one now, and enjoy it for years!

Stop! This is not your typical travel book on Venezuela; you won't find traditional reviews of restaurants, endless descriptions of places to visit, or rated accommodations. It's much, much more. An inspirational story about risk taking, *Visions of Venezuela* is about following one's muse, living life on the edge, experiencing every day as if it was your last. Everyone at one time or another has asked, "What if?" then returned to their regularly scheduled, myopic lives. Not this newlywed couple! Meet the Havilands, Joe and Alicia, who honeymooned on the windswept, palm tree punctuated Isle of Margarita in Venezuela and loved it so much that they went back to the same place to live and teach a year later. They were courageously living their dream: Venezuela or Bust! So, imagine if you will, this castaway couple selling everything they owned, including her beautiful emerald green Mustang convertible, putting their stuff in storage, and taking off to a foreign country, more than 4,000 miles away from their home, on a wing and a prayer, with their life savings and no job(s) waiting. That's what this companionable couple, both educators, did so daringly. Without any planned income and only a rented place to stay temporarily in Porlamar on the Island of Margarita, they threw caution to the wind and set sail on an adventure that made their family and friends marvel with delight. Little did this middle-age dynamic duo know that this was just the tip of the iceberg; it represented a new beginning of worldwide travel that would change their lives irrevocably, reeling them in hook, line, and sinker. It's a modern day Robinson Crusoe tale, couples-style, but instead of encountering cannibals, captives, and mutineers, Joe and Alicia met up with a plethora of unforgettable, compassionate people (both island natives and expats) and unexpected adventures that left them craving for more. It's a picture-perfect collection of entertaining anecdotes for both jetsetters and armchair travelers alike. Written in a sociable, conversational narrative, *Visions of Venezuela* is a must read, taking readers on a vicarious island tour de force. Fasten your seatbelts, turn your trays to the upright position, and prepare yourself for takeoff. This is your passport to travel into the lives of richly rendered characters, where you'll sight see the goings on of everyday island life on Margarita in this sybaritic symphony for the senses. Hear the barking dogs of Porlamar. Taste the gamey rooster soup from a road side stand. Smell the Caribbean lapping at your feet. See the shoeless, shirtless boy flamboyantly flying a homemade kite down a volcanic-red dirt road. Feel the warm, life-sustaining rain on your sun-kissed skin. And so much more. Leave your persnickety life behind, and take a much-needed vacation, one chapter at a time. You'll find the destination worth it, each and every time you pick up *Visions of Venezuela* to read. By book's end, it might even challenge you to make your own voyage of self-discovery and quite possibly land you in a faraway exotic place, where nothing is ordinary and anything can happen.