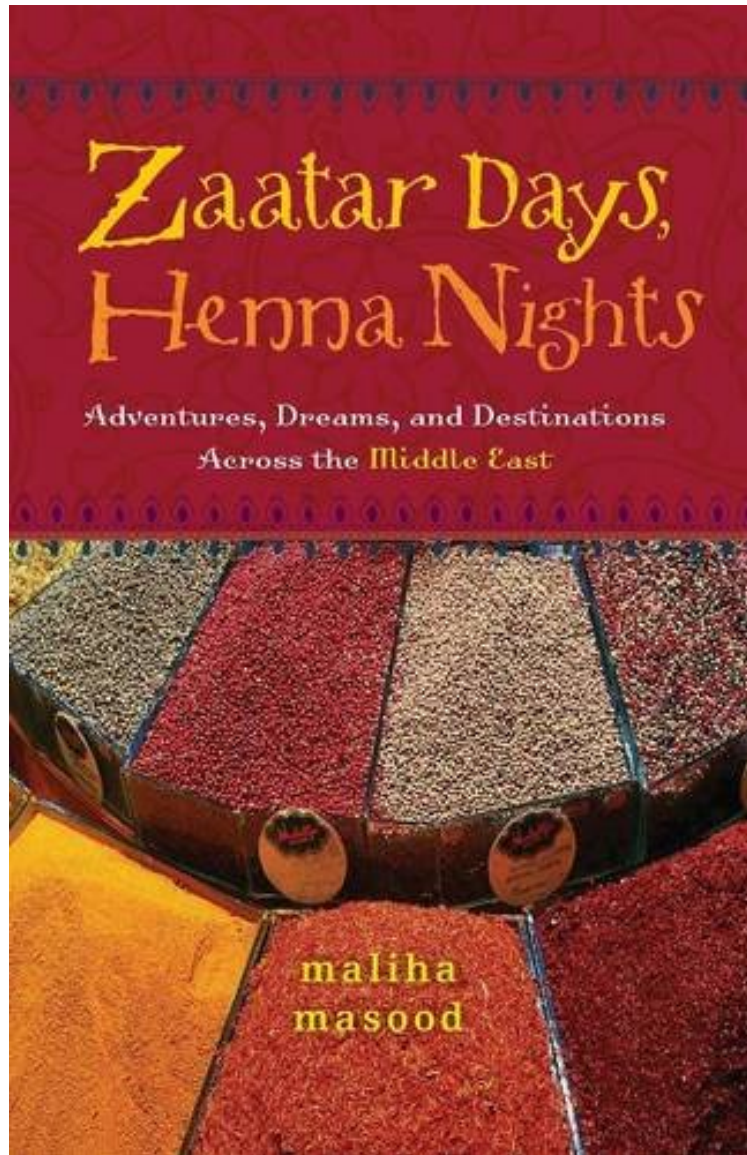


[Free download] Zaatar Days, Henna Nights: Adventures, Dreams, and Destinations Across the Middle East

Zaatar Days, Henna Nights: Adventures, Dreams, and Destinations Across the Middle East

Maliha Masood

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Maliha Masood : Zaatar Days, Henna Nights: Adventures, Dreams, and Destinations Across the Middle East before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Zaatar Days, Henna Nights: Adventures, Dreams, and Destinations Across the Middle East:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Journey To RememberBy LaurenthefreelancerI enjoyed the

journey that this book took me on. I really wasn't prepared for the book. I loved the drive, the ambition and the risk of this woman. I personally wouldn't travel alone, but she did. She encountered various people, places and scenarios. The book gives you a chance to go to all the different places you want to go but can't for whatever reason. I really did enjoy the speed, the writing and the destinations she went on. I think it was a time of self-development for her too!

5 people found the following review helpful. Riveting and Unique Travel ReadBy Gail BirchI enjoyed Maliha Masood's debut travel memoir that takes you through the Middle East with her unique perspective - that of an adventurous backpacking Muslim woman traveling alone, sans male escort - on a journey of self-discovery. As she makes her way through the ancient capitals of the region, she visits local mosques, makes friends, and has a couple of harrowing 'close calls'. What makes this book different from so many Middle East travel books, is the path that she takes at every turn. Hers is the back alley, the roof-top terrace, the women's prayer hall, and the midnight bus. As she goes in search of clues to her own identity, she shares a world-full of friendly and not-so characters, and doesn't hold back on criticism when warranted. Her voice is refreshing, devoid of prejudice, and true to the trusting innocent that she was on this journey. The story is especially poignant since she returned home to the U.S. from her travels just weeks before 9/11. Highly recommended.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Traveling in the Middle EastBy Lavish BookshelfMaliha Masood was a 28 year old single woman, already burned out from her tech career and still living in her parent's basement when she decided to discover life in the Middle East. Born in Pakistan, but raised for the most part in the United States, Ms. Masood decided that a focus on the modern-day Arab culture just might help her understand herself as a product of two worlds. Traveling for several months from Egypt around to Turkey, Ms. Masood meets characters from all walks of life and, a few times, learns way more than she bargained for. *Zaatar Days*, *Henna Nights* really captured all of why I read travel narratives. As a Pakistani Muslim woman raised in the U.S., Ms. Masood was able to navigate the Middle East in a way that I never could. She was able to meet people and explain cultures both as a traveler and as a bit of an insider. I enjoyed reading of souks, imagining the smells and sounds. Her descriptions of mosques and Muslim prayer time were enlightening. I envied Ms. Masood's time spent in the famous Wadi Rum region, envisioning the desert beauty and the ancient ruins. Travel requires some inherent trust of strangers, but what didn't sit well with me was that Ms. Masood seemingly approached a few situations with an almost reckless abandon. In spite of travel security warnings, she continued her travels in Turkey where she was detained and accused of being a spy. Another time she and her friend were drugged inside a strange man's home. Still another time she was shortly imprisoned in different man's home and held as a potential new wife! In spite of the scary situations, I liked this book. Or maybe, perhaps, because of the scary situations, I liked this book. Ms. Masood took on the Middle East in her own way, right or wrong, and has given me an unique insight into a region of the world I may never get the chance to see in person.

When twenty-eight-year-old Maliha Masood, a burned-out dot-commer from Seattle, bought a one-way ticket to adventure and rejuvenation, she found it in the most unlikely of places: the Middle East. With an infectious love of adventure, a zany sense of humor, and serious questions about her Islamic faith, Pakistani-born Masood begins an unforgettable journey. She camps in the Sahara with a Bedouin "desert fox," is mistaken for a spy in Turkey, takes a lesson in beauty from a Kurdish family, and falls in love with a poet. She experiences souks and mosques, open-air lingerie bazaars and nightclubs grooving to hip-hop. In a region associated with terrorist havens, Masood meets ordinary Muslim men and women navigating the politics of culture, religion, and identity. *Zaatar Days*, *Henna Nights* offers a street-savvy take on the contemporary Arab world that's seldom seen on the evening news. This is a story of discovery and faith, of making bonds and breaking stereotypes, and of finding oneself where one least expects to.

From Publishers Weekly Disillusioned with her daily routine-phone tag, email, multitasking-Masood leaves her job and her family in Seattle and sets off for the Middle East from whence she came. This travelogue follows Masood, strapped into an REI backpack and sporting a well-thumbed Lonely Planet guidebook, as she travels from Egypt and Jordan to Syria and Turkey over the course of 10 months, hoping "to come to terms with a truer me, a more essential self that couldn't entirely be placed amid the bullet points of my resume." A Pakistan-born Muslim American in her late 20s, Masood finds herself blending into her environment-visiting mosques regularly, making friends easily-without entirely fitting in, a dichotomy ethnic Americans often grapple with while abroad and the ambitious, fascinating topic Masood excels in exploring. Unfortunately, Masood is less interested in describing sights and sounds-the dusty air of Egypt, the bustle of Turkey-and in so doing may fail to hook readers more interested in exotic locales than self-discovery. Though there's much here that's stimulating and relatable, fans of travel writing may feel they've been invited on the trip, but denied the pleasure of losing themselves in it. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.