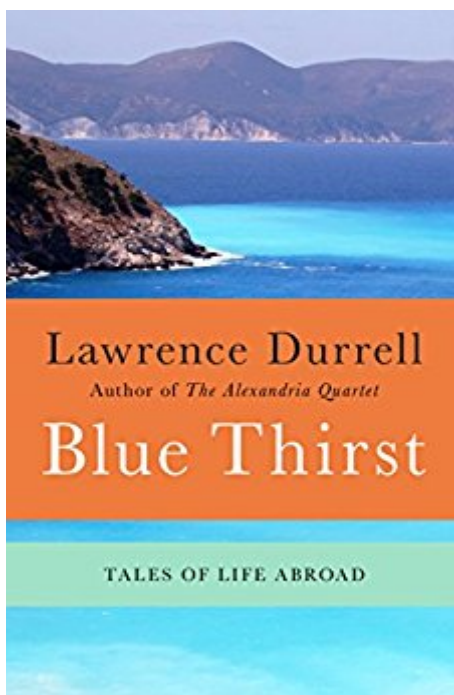


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Blue Thirst: Tales Of Life Abroad



Synopsis

A pair of lectures from one of the twentieth century's most mesmerizing speakers Lawrence Durrell was in his early twenties when, tired of the stiffness of London life, he took his family to live in Corfu. Interwar Greece, whose hard beds and mosquito swarms Durrell documented so tenderly in *Prospero's Cell*, was no more. In the first of this pair of lectures, given during a 1970s visit to California, Durrell recalls those days, talking of family, poetry, and the joy of the islands as no other writer can. When war came to the Mediterranean, Durrell was swept into diplomatic service, an adventure he recounts in his second lecture. Though a diplomat of the modern world, he served under men whose experience stretched back to the days before the telephone, when solutions for crises had to be devised by the ambassador, and not phoned in from London. These two lectures on long-vanished worlds are an elegant demonstration of the evocative power of Durrell's unmatched storytelling.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I really enjoyed this book, but I am a Lawrence Durrell fan from 'way back - and I do mean a long way back. I read the Alexandria Quartet about four decades ago and have re-read them since; but

for sheer lyrical prose enjoyment, his travel related books are among my all time favorites.

Although the events mentioned were long ago I could not help laughing at the tales of diplomacy, mostly gone off course!

Christmas gift for a family member.

A fan of Durrell's lyrical writing--he has talent to burn, although a puzzling taste for gratuitous sex at times--I dove into *Blue Thirst* with, well, thirst. To the uninitiated, this book is actually a volume of two lectures he delivered during his lifetime - essentially unedited, which is really as it should be. Here we see the person and not so much the writer--since lectures are written very differently from the way people write novels or books. We peer deeply inside his head and sometimes inside his heart, and we see what he is thinking and feeling as he travels abroad and as he works. Those are the two subjects of these lectures, which is really quite fascinating for someone who likes his writing. We see his sophisticated wit--a little quirky, a little off, and ultimately endearing. We see his fascination with people and with places, and his insatiable and perhaps rabid appetite for travel. We are also stamped indelibly with the realization that he really did have that writer's need to write, an almost Calvinist calling as it were--perhaps an odd allusion to make for a writer who sprinkled the *Alexandria Quartet* with lurid descriptions of amour. To understand his writing fully, it is a good idea to read this book. But do not read it before you have read at least one of his novels. That would be like reading Spark Notes before reading *Moby-Dick*. No. No cheating allowed! However, *Blue Thirst* is a down and dirty read, a very quick little read; I read it in one sitting, as you may very well do yourself. It is simply a page turner. You will feel as if Durrell is sitting right in the room with you, speaking just to you and you alone. And that makes it an invaluable companion to the rest of his writing.

Lawrence Durrell made two lectures that are the basis for this book. The work is his reminiscences of his work experience with the British diplomatic Corp. There is no story, just random talk to an audience with a few pictures. He refers to some pictures in his lecture but not all are included in this book.

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