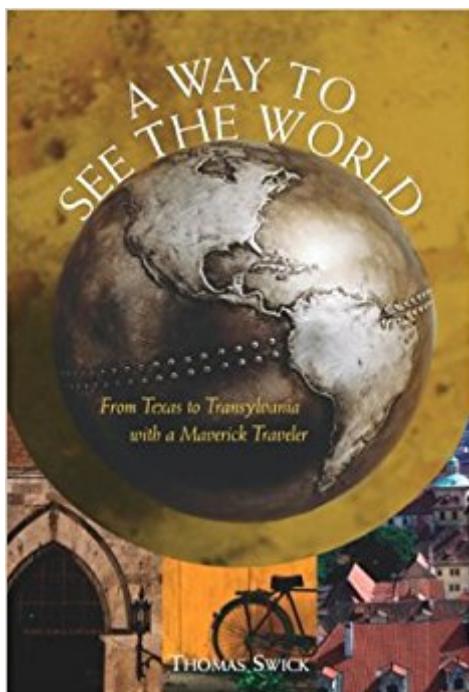


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# A Way To See The World: From Texas To Transylvania With A Maverick Traveler



## **Synopsis**

Take a journey of discovery to the unsung places on the globe.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

As travel editor for the South Florida Sun-Sentinel, Swick travels all over the world, writes about it and sees the proof of his journeys in the Sunday papers. Although his job could easily spark considerable envy among readers, the author possesses a healthy sense of proportion when talking about his profession: "[Travel editors] lack seriousness of purpose and, in a chronically superficial profession, depth. In a dilettante's game, we are the ultimate gadabouts." Swick proceeds to take them around the world to countries and cities that he has no good reason to visit and no overarching thesis to prove or disprove—he just wants to go. He traipses from Columbus, Ohio, to Normandy, France, and on to Szeged, Hungary. His chapter on Vietnam doesn't begin with any assumptions, except a desire to hang out and do what travel writers do: meet people, see the sights and spend time in cafes chatting with locals. Similarly fascinating are his trips to Turkey, which seems at once friendlier and more terrifying than it should, and Minnesota, where Swick conducts a few sharp interviews with the state's battling giants: Gov. Jesse Ventura and Garrison Keillor. Swick is an enjoyable companion: knowledgeable but not too wordy, a fellow who knows when to describe the passing countryside and when to let the people who actually live there just talk. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"If you would care to quote me as saying that it 'elevates the pseudo-philosophy of travel to the level

of inspired and inspiring serendipity' I would be honoured."--Jan Morris (author of *A Writer's House in Wales* and *Pax Britannica*)"Swick is an enjoyable companion: knowledgeable but not too wordy, a fellow who knows when to describe the passing countryside and when to let the people who actually live there just talk."--Publisher Weekly

Personally, this was my first book for this genre'. Didn't care for it much, but most of my classmates (Graduate level) did. Swick writes his travel stories with dialogue, which is missing from most travel genre's. This is really a different style and the dialogue brings his story-telling to life. If you don't mind the pretentious and sometimes pompous this is a well-written book. Swick also believes that the people in travel writing are often forgotten aspects--this is written from the perspective of a traveler...not a tourist. If you love story-telling, this is the book for you.

Tom Swick has been one of my favorite LITERATE writers from when he had a travel column in our Florida newspaper. This book was witty and gritty, and one of my friends I just spoke to (today) read it -- and is traveling to Transylvania mainly because the book inspired her. Just watch out for vampires....

Great

Reviewed by Olivera Baumgartner-Jackson for Reader Views (1/07)Being professionally involved with the travel industry for years, I've met my share of travelers and my share of tourists. Same thing applies to travel writing - some writers are tourists, some are travelers. Thomas Swick is without a doubt a traveler. His "A Way to See the World" is subtitled "From Texas to Transylvania with a Maverick Traveler" which immediately gives you an inkling on the scope of his writing. What the title does not convey is how deeply Mr. Swick explored every place described within this marvelous book. He delves into the usual topics of history, landscape and culture; and while all of those are great reading, in my opinion he truly excels when describing the people and their everyday lives. No matter where his travels take him, be it to Cuba on a cultural exchange, to the Croatian seaside, a carnival in Trinidad or the one in Mobile, Alabama, a dinner with cartoonists in Russia, a baseball game in Chicago, the last leg of Oregon trail or searching for Hungarians in Transylvania, Thomas Swicks discovers the people and talks to them. More importantly, he lets them talk when they so desire. And he listens real well. His explanations are brief and only added when necessary. He discovers real people everywhere he goes, even on board of a cruise ship and

in a tennis tournament in Miami. His observations are keen and detailed and he captures the spirit of each place wonderfully well. Take, for example, this brief scene during the carnival in Trinidad: "At nine the next morning - five hours after the soca stopped - eight middle-aged Germans sat eating fried eggs and tomatoes on the terrace. 'Winston, what time is it?' one of them asked the manager. 'Time? I don't know. It's carnival.' Then Winston went and put on some calypso." Or this absolutely brilliant description of Americans: "Restlessness is in our genes. It shows itself in everything from our national literature - 'Moby Dick,' 'Huckleberry Finn,' 'On the Road' - to the short life of the average address book. [...] It seems no coincidence that our largest export company is Boeing. From a historical perspective, no other country could have beaten us to the moon. If, as is said, England is people and France a civilization, the United States is an experiment in perpetual motion." Each of his stories in "A Way to See the World" is different and every single one is wonderful reading. Take them with you on your next trip, keep them in your car for when you have to wait somewhere or devour a whole book in one sitting when you are too broke or too busy to get on the road yourself - in each and every case they will open your eyes to how life-changing, exhilarating and wonderful travel could and should be. Received book free of charge

Thomas Swick's *A Way To See The World: From Texas To Transylvania With A Maverick Traveler* isn't your usual travelogue of wild and woolly adventures; for Swick chooses no ordinary path for his journeys. His accounts are unconventional at the least; from attending a hobo convention in Iowa to his search for James Thurber's spirit in Columbus, OH and his entry to the forbidden Cuba on a cultural exchange program. Colorful observations of counter-culture and local color provide a first-person journey which is stimulating, fun, and never too predictable. A fine armchair adventure awaits.

Delightful! Thomas Swick's writing is elegant, his observations about the places I've been to are perfect, and his descriptions of places I haven't seen make me feel like I've just been there. Highly recommended.

Tom Swick has written not just an exceptional travel book, but an exceptional book. Period. Horizon broadening, mind opening, amusing, pure pleasure.

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