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Xenophobe's Guide To The Swiss



Synopsis

Mountain mentality Swiss farmers are tough, independent, hard-working, resilient, well-prepared for every kind of natural disaster, and above all staunchly conservative. These characteristics have been passed on to Swiss town-dwellers, who go about their day as if they too were farming a lonely mountain cliff. We can do better The Swiss stubbornly refuse to believe they are doing well and will even dispute the figures that prove it. So, like the poor donkey chasing the carrot, they pull their collective cart along ever faster, chasing the goal they passed years ago. Peak performers The perceptions of the Swiss being dull, staid, and boring while at the same time displaying a talent for ruthless efficiency and a limitless capacity for hard work are uncomfortably close to the truth. Likewise the clichéd impressions of high mountains, watches, cheese, chocolate bars, and gold bars are genuine. Degrees of unease The diversity of the Swiss is apparent in the degree to which they worry. The German-speakers do little else. The French-speaking Swiss are great visionaries and philosophers with noble thoughts and global dreams. They worry that their Swiss-German compatriots do not share these dreams. The Italian-speaking Swiss are less interested in the solid values of work and have a terrible tendency not to worry nearly enough.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The opening paragraphs of a "Xenophobe's Guide to the Swiss" set the tone for the rest of an irreverent, amusing and highly informative portrait of the Swiss people." --"Arts & Culture section at www.swissinfo.org "An enlightened new series, good natured, witty and useful. The Xenophobe's

Guides to different nations deserves a real cheer." --"The European "

'The diversity of the Swiss is apparent in the degree to which they worry. The German-speakers do little else. The French-speaking Swiss are great visionaries and philosophers with noble thoughts and global dreams. They worry that their Swiss-German compatriots do not share these dreams. The Italian-speaking Swiss have a terrible tendency not to worry nearly enough.' Xenophobia is an irrational fear of foreigners, probably justified, always understandable. Xenophobe's Guides - an irreverent look at the beliefs and foibles of nations, almost guaranteed to cure Xenophobia. (4 1/4 x 7, 64 pages)

This book is being read in an English speaking Group and I must admit that Mr. Bilton's way of describing the Swiss could be quite funny. Otherwise, there are things that cannot be said true in nowadays economical life. There are things that changed e.g. the way of living since modern things are being implemented and sort of clashes with tradition. Otherwise, it is a good thing that there are still a lot who holds on to the Swiss values and traditions. Modesty aside, I can judge this since I am a Filipina married to a Swiss for the past 43 years and living in Switzerland.

I'm proud of my Swiss heritage and just as proud to look in the mirror and laugh at my idiosyncrasies. The book was recommended to me by a "Swiss fan" and I really thank him for the excellent read. I chuckled and truly enjoyed the book. I'll have to obtain some "hard" copies to give to my friends. Ed Schaefer

I am Swiss and have to admit, Paul is a very good observer. He's describing living in Switzerland and its inhabitants in very humorous style.

We read this before visiting Switzerland & laughed our way through this accurate, young and cheek description of the Swiss. Can't wait to read the next Xenophobe's guide for the next country we travel. I'm kind of curious as to what a Xenophobe's guide might say about Americans.

This was a very enjoyable read -- it's a modest pocket-sized book and I finished it in a few days.

A real pleasure to read. And everything is a match! Even you do not have plan to meet these people in the near future, it is funny to read about them.

Has funny moments, but overall it's short, typo-riddled and boring. There are better books with the same general intent that won't make you regret your purchase

For anyone heading to Switzerland _ this should be required reading. The book has good information, presented in a humorous style!

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