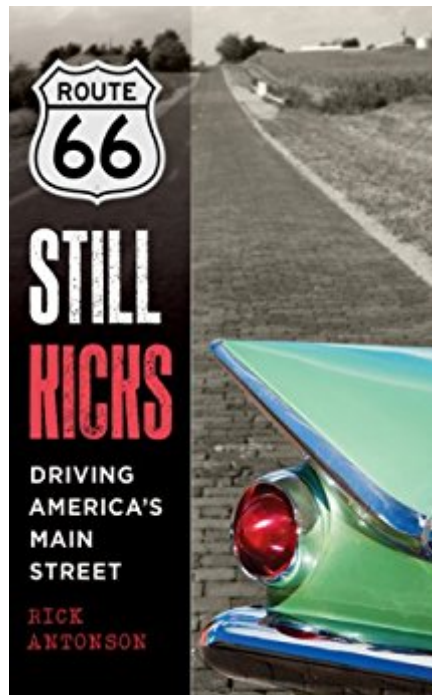




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Route 66 Still Kicks: Driving America's Main Street



Synopsis

“You’ll never understand America until you’ve driven Route 66—that’s old Route 66—all the way,” a truck driver in California once said to author Rick Antonson. “It’s the most famous highway in the world.” With some determination, grit, and a good sense of direction, one can still find and drive on 90 percent of the original Route 66 today. This travelogue follows Rick and his travel companion Peter along 2,400 miles through eight states from Chicago to Los Angeles as they discover the old Route 66. With surprising and obscure stories about Route 66 personalities like Woody Guthrie, John Steinbeck, Al Capone, Salvador Dali, Dorothea Lange, Cyrus Avery (the Father of Route 66), the Harvey Girls, Mickey Mantle, and Bobby Troup (songwriter of “(Get Your Kicks on) Route 66”), Antonson’s fresh perspective reads like an easy drive down a forgotten road: winding, stopping now and then to mingle with the locals and reminisce about times gone by, and then getting stuck in the mud, sucked into its charms. Rick mixes hilarious anecdotes of happenstance travel with the route’s difficult history, its rise and fall in popularity, and above all, its place in legend. The author has committed part of his book’s proceeds to the preservation work of the National Route 66 Federation.

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Customer Reviews

I was worried, from reading some previous reviews, about the level of bantering between the book's two travellers, but it proved to be neither excessive nor bothersome. This account, despite its occasional levity, is an almost Proustian search for places, a way of life, and a state of mind now forever lost in time. The vestiges of Route 66 and the businesses that remain on it (keeping in mind that many, like portions of the great highway itself, have fallen to ruin) are either, themselves, crumbling or are only a shadow of what they once were, thereby demonstrating that you can't turn back time. Many who can remember the America of this road's heyday, and who seek to revisit it (either in person or in a book like this) will likely be saddened (if not disappointed) by the inevitable impossibility of revisiting the past, but others (of a certain age) will enjoy the nostalgia resulting from at least making the attempt. Reading the book, this oldtimer sure did. Whether or not a younger reader will experience the same level of pleasure, however, is debatable given that this is NOT a look back at memorable things from THEIR personal past but (depending on their age) that of their parents or grandparents (or even their great-grandparents). It should also be noted that the author's coverage of cities and sights along the way is rather selective and haphazard; some things mentioned and initially sought remained unvisited and undescribed. Because the actual roadway or "route" of Route 66 was occasionally subject to change over the years, there are variations of it (some more interesting today than others). These two travellers strove to visit many of the oldest, now totally neglected portions of the road, sections bypassed and often dead-ended by such re-alignments. Doing so required them to exit the "newer" designated through-route to detour and backtrack. Some of these portions (now soggy mud and gravel, pot-holed macadam, or buckled concrete and no longer able to be ridden on) have little to recommend them and not much to describe apart from their desolation and the melancholy of their abandonment and decay. So, as much as this book successfully serves as a memoir of a two-week jaunt on this historic road by a Canadian and his travel buddy (in the process, seeing in the road a metaphor -- though NOT a negative one -- for America), it is not meant to be a detailed, comprehensive guidebook to all its variations or current "attractions." Thus, this is likely not the best book about Route 66, but it is certainly a very enjoyable one. ADDENDUM: I purchased this ebook as a "special" for \$1.99, but as much as I enjoyed it at THAT price, I don't know that I would have enjoyed it as much at \$9.99; I prefer my ebooks to be under \$5.00.

So glad to have read this book as I plan a cross country trip across the USA. Although we will be driving only a portion of it, this book gave great insights to the history of "America's Main Street". I can't wait to start my own adventure.

Very good book. I like the parts when the author takes you on a historical journey at the area they're driving through. My favorite part was in Oklahoma at Jobe's cafe(everyone that came in kept refilling our guys coffee cups & 3 of the patrons had the same name!) Interesting, funny, & informative! I've never had so much fun reading!

I like it! not boring to read good description of places along the route.

Worth reading. It made me want to drive more of Route 66 than I have. There is a great mural in Kingston, AZ about Route 66. I thought it would be mentioned. Still, a great read.

Very enjoyable, readable, and a good story! At times the side stories were more info. than I wanted but a good read.

Great book, I really enjoyed it !

I purchased this for my brother who hopes to some day travel route 66. He LOVES it! It has made him more excited to plan his trip!

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