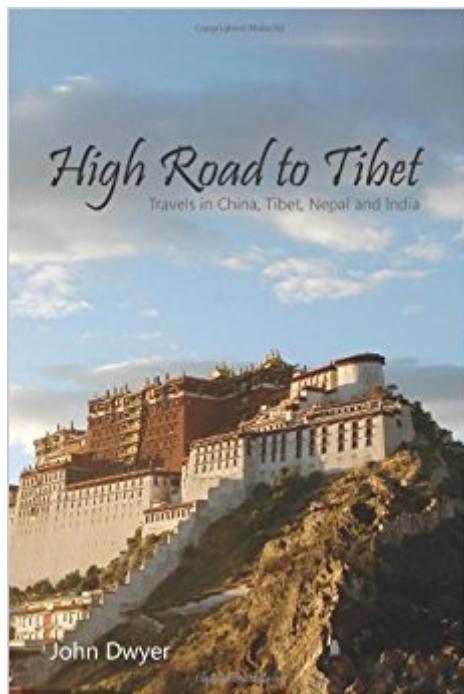


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# High Road To Tibet



## **Synopsis**

John Dwyer travels through Asia's most interesting and wildest regions. Follow his adventures as he passes through the sunken gorges of the Yangtze river, drinks snake blood in Chengdu, gets smuggled into Tibet illegally, watches mysterious ceremonies in Buddhist temples, reaches Everest Base Camp, climbs amongst the awe-inspiring Himalayas, and watches the dead being burned by the banks of the Ganges.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

You [John Dwyer] really do give an authentic feeling of the contrasting atmospheres as you move from place to place. --Dervla Murphy, best-selling author of "Full Tilt: Ireland to India With a Bicycle" If you really want to find out about Asia, this book is a must buy for you. --Bibi Baskin, Television and Radio Presenter It takes a very good travel book to make a Corkonian want to leave his hometown - but one such book is High Road To Tibet. --Ronan Leonard, Evening Echo

On my thirteenth birthday, my mum gave me an illustrated world atlas as a present. Little did she know the effect that it would have on me. As I turned each page, I was mesmerised by the pictures of distant countries and exotic peoples. I wondered what it would be like to walk along the Great Wall of China, to watch Tibetan monks at prayer in Tibet, to gaze on the dizzying peaks of the Himalayas, to admire the snake charmers in India, or to marvel the Terracotta Warriors in China. I spent hours leafing through that atlas in contented silence, studying each fascinating page with wonder. When I went to bed that night, I made up my mind to go and see those places for myself. My love of travel was born that day. Before I was old enough to journey to those places myself, I

satisfied my wanderlust by reading about the travels of others. I cycled the rocky roads of Asia with Dervla Murphy in Full Tilt, experienced the magic of old Tibet with Heinrich Harrer in Seven Years in Tibet, and explored the newly opened China by train with Paul Theroux in Riding the Iron Rooster. During my travels through China, Tibet, Nepal and India, I finally discovered what it was like to gaze on the majestic peaks on the Himalayas - it was absolutely fantastic. Please join me in High Road To Tibet as my childhood dreams become a reality.

John Dwyer writes in a light and breezy manner on his travels through Asia - the book is a pleasant, quick read - but it is also frustrating for the lack of immersion in the fascinating places he visits. There is so much more to Xian, Chengdu, Lhasa, Tibet and Kathmandu than is presented in this book - and so much is missed in John's fleeting visits to these places. And what possessed him to take that appalling bus trip into Tibet, just to escape paying the permit fee - I expect there was no saving given he was fleeced by the agent and bus driver on the fare for his illegal entry. So much time wasted, and surely time is a highly precious commodity on a journey such as this - no-one should be tempted to follow his example. We hear much of meals and big nights out - but the wonders of the landscape and descriptions of place on the journey to Everest base camp are lost in nonsense about iPods and soundtracks for the roadtrip. No sense of awesome in all this. The description of the trek into the Annapurna sanctuary is better, you feel the stress and sense the beauty - the real highlight of this book. It was surprising to read that John's Asian adventure took place over 10 weeks - where did the time go - there must have been more to the trip that's missing from the book. John refers to his reading up on places when he arrives - perhaps that's where the problem lies, not enough planning, too many opportunities missed. The book lacks the sense of wonder and joy of a new traveller and misses the depth of a seasoned traveller. All up, a disappointing read - not much new here. At best, the book highlights the virtues of local transport - presenting it as do-able and a rich experience where you can savour both the journey and the destination. Finally, very disappointing that the Kindle version does not include the map or photos that are included in the Look Inside preview.

I don't like leaving a bad review for any author, unless the book is horrible. This book wasn't horrible; it just wasn't that good. Having traveled to both Nepal and Tibet in '09, I was looking forward to reading another traveler's insights and experiences of those areas. What I realized after reading the book, is that my own trip was more interesting. What made my trip interesting was the interactions with the people and the experiences of their culture. Maybe the author just didn't

connect in the way I did. As a whole, the book lacked the detail I was hoping for.

Irishman John Dwyer writes in an enticing easy style that engages the reader's attention. He exchanges well with people he meets in China, Nepal, Tibet and finally India. For three months he travels with a ``Must do'' list. He scores most but sometimes only just. His last wish was to see the Taj Mahal in Agra, India, was almost foiled by fog. It cleared to the delight of a photographer companion whose wish was to capture the famous Mausoleum with a camel. The experience contrasts markedly with seeing the outdoor cremations on the banks of the Ganges. Earlier on he exceeded his wish list when he meets a delightful woman in Lhasa he would later marry. (What a romantic place to meet one's partner. I hope he tells us more of that story) He visits the infamous Tienanmen Square where demonstrators were brutally mowed down in 1989. More enlightening was experiencing the famous Terracotta Soldiers - the broken army. He experiences some horrendously uncomfortable bus journeys which are compensated by the Himalayan destinations - even Mount Everest. Seeing the majestic giant among its regal siblings is something he will never forget. Later he joins a group hiking in the Annaopurnas in central Nepal. I enjoyed reading about his choice of accommodation, the food, and what he and his companions would drink when relaxing during an evening. Occasionally he is enjoying wonderful alpine regions sadly close to conflict and pending civil war. He is harassed by souvenir venders, those selling hash, beggars and even zealous rickshaw operators. Dwyer enjoys a variety of cultures and religions he encounters and writes about them with a consistent sensitivity. For a couple of weeks this has been my bedtime reading. It is a challenge to find a replacement as absorbing.

This book interested me because I've traveled in China and Tibet myself, and I was interested in another perspective. Dwyer's style is easily readable, and he has a good sense of humor about his travels. I did wonder about his choice of entry into Tibet - just how tight was his budget, and his stubbornness about the same, in choosing to sneak into the region, versus paying for the necessary permits? Sometimes he writes less about things I'd like to hear more about, so there are a few gaps in his narrative that he could've written more about.

I thoroughly enjoyed the book, having myself, in 2009 at age 66, traveled to several locations that John visited.. He was **TOO** kind about the road side potty stops, however. They were **GHASTLY** from a ladies point of view. I loved the feeling of being with John as he traveled to Lhasa and Taj Mahal which I was unable to travel to. His descriptions were excellent. I felt I was with him. I liked

his writing style and fluid way with words. I recommend this for all ages.

I thouroughly enjoyed this book! I read it in one sitting as I couldn't put it down. And no we are not related! I bought this book on my kindle and did not see the Authors name until the very end of the book in which i was quite pleasantly shocked! Mr. Dwyer if a very gifted writer and makes you feel as though you are right there with him on his travels. I have definately added these countries to my travel bucket list! I enjoyed his writing so much that I am in the process now of reading his other book The Klondike house which I'm enjoying just as much! If you love to travel and cant find the time to do so The high road to Tibet is a great alternative to "get away"! I look forward to his future publications!

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