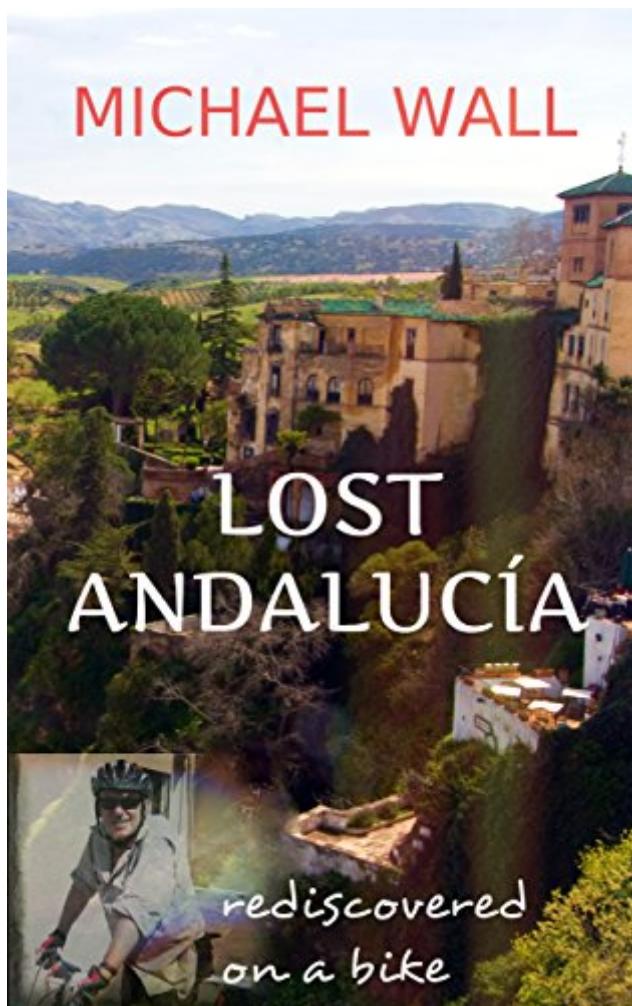


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Lost AndalucÃ‐a: Rediscovered On A Bike



Synopsis

Michael Wall was having a birthday. One with a zero. And he really didn't want a party. All he needed was an excuse that would ensure that he was far away from home on the fateful day. He finds the perfect solution in a lonely, little-known, 2000 km bike riding trail in Andalucía, Spain, called the TransAndalus. All he needs to do is to ride it. His quest will be a Quixotic one: he has no riding companion, he speaks no Spanish, and his experience of off-road riding is minimal. He has also only recently recovered from a traumatic cycling accident that smashed his pelvis, requiring seven hours of surgery and many months of rehabilitation. Furthermore, the birthday with the zero was his seventieth. Undeterred, he prepares the best he can, flies from New Zealand to Spain, purchases a mountain bike which he names Tortuga (the tortoise) and finds himself a "one crisp morning in early May" saddling up in the hilltop town of Ronda. He is determined, but still deeply ignorant of what lies ahead. He is also beset by trepidation. Lost Andalucía is the story of what happened to him as pedalled out through the fabled province of Granada, beneath the snow-clad Sierra Nevada, into the movie-set province of Almería, then north into Jaén province with its Renaissance towns. Turning west into Córdoba, riding down through the ports of Sanlúcar de Barrameda whose glory days are all but forgotten now, Cádiz, and Algeciras, he would finally face the tortuous climb back to the point from which he started. This is a highly entertaining tale of off-road cycling in far-flung places. This is an adventure story with a spattering of history and culture, and an undeniable whiff of danger. His was one hell of a ride.

Book Information

File Size: 5605 KB

Print Length: 257 pages

Publisher: Michael Wall (January 23, 2015)

Publication Date: January 23, 2015

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00SO0EA54

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #1,477,220 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #61 in Books > Travel > Europe > Spain > Andalusia #117 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel > Specialty Travel > Solo Travel #716 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel > Europe > Spain & Portugal

Customer Reviews

A wonderful, gruelling, sometimes lonely, journey through the hinterlands and coastal areas of Andalucia. An excellent commentary and history lesson where we share the adventures of a true adventurer. Michael shares his knowledge of the rich history of the area, bringing it to life as he passes through the towns and villages. The Civil War, the Spaghetti Westerns, the ghastly Mar de Plastico, the Inquisitors, the site of the 16th century watchtower Torre del Castilnovo which witnessed the combined Spanish & French naval forces being defeated by a smaller fleet under Admiral Nelson. And many more insightful studies of early times. The journey's amusing moments where local characters assist, delight, invade and oft-times confuse. The solitary moments, the camaraderie and the hardships on the 2,000km. I travelled the journey in the comfort of home, but felt I was there.

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