



A Surfing Adventure in the Mentawai Islands: Where Indian Ocean power disturbs the sea of tranquility

Clive Woodward

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A Surfing Adventure in the Mentawai Islands follows a group ten surfers on an exciting surfing boat tour of the famed, yet isolated, Mentawai Islands that lie off Sumatra. The author puts the reader right into his reef booties so they feel they are with him chasing perfect surf, sharing laughs and facing fears on the sharp coral reef breaks.

The writer's evocative style lets the reader dive into the aqua blue tropical ocean tasting the salty water, feel the warmth of the hot sun and paddle into empty line-ups. The tale is entertaining for surfer and non-surfer alike. The descriptions of hunting surf and riding waves, away from the cares of the world give a real sense of the rhythm of the days and cycles of the swells as they pass by. But, A Surfing Adventure in the Mentawai Islands is much more than a trip diary. It also delves into the mystique and history of surfing itself. There are detours into interesting stories that include eyewitness accounts of events such as a massive typhoon that swept an island clean of its inhabitants a century ago, a duel to the death between a Pacific Islander, armed with just a knife, and a Tiger Shark before such traditions were lost, a surfer getting scalped on a sharp reef and the destruction of a surf charter boat in the 2010 Tsunami.

A fellow companion on the trip noted that, "Clive is not just a humble diarist and waterman, but also a raconteur, poet, philosopher, romantic and comedian all rolled into one". When combined with a cast of characters who are not your typical young professional surfer stereotypes and the longer book format, the writer's approach adds enjoyable dimensions and nuances to the story. If you enjoyed Willam Finnegan's Barbarian Days or Daniel Duane's Caught Inside, you will love this tale of surf travel and the life that surrounds it. Non-surfers who read it will at last understand why so many people travel the world to far way islands and dangle their legs into deep, dark water in the pursuit of waves. Surfers will savour a classic surf travel story well told and enjoy getting insights into some of the famous Mentawai surf spots.

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