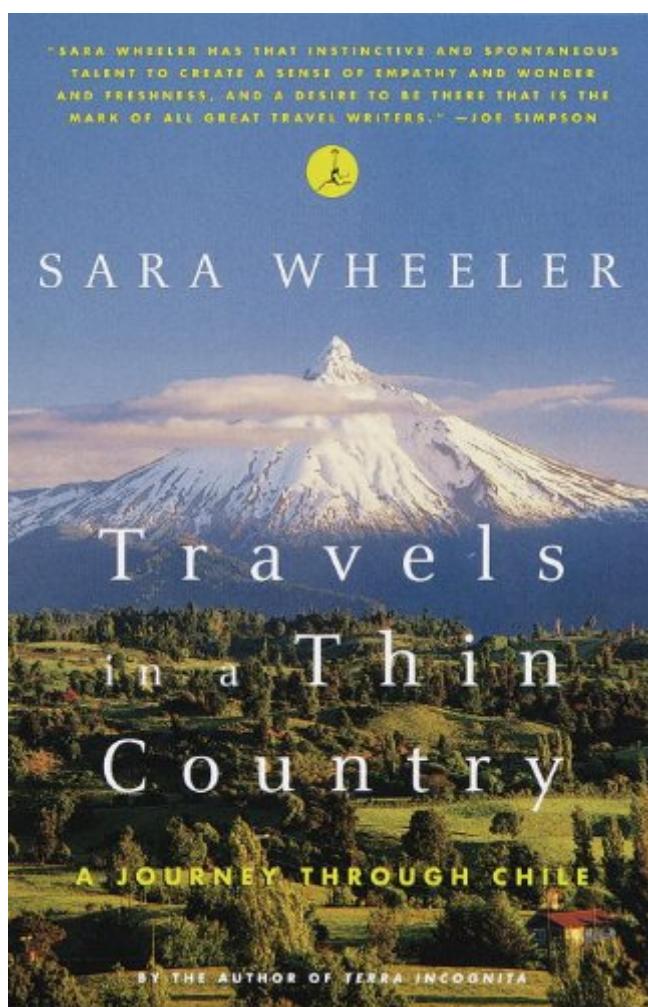


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Travels In A Thin Country: A Journey Through Chile



Synopsis

Squeezed between a vast ocean and the longest mountain range on earth, Chile is 2,600 miles long and never more than 110 miles wide--not a country that lends itself to maps, as Sara Wheeler discovered when she traveled alone from the top to the bottom, from the driest desert in the world to the sepulchral wastes of Antarctica. Eloquent, astute, nimble with history and deftly amusing, *Travels in a Thin Country* established Sara Wheeler as one of the very best travel writers in the world. From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

This a well-written and interesting travelogue. I did enjoy it, but prefer to read travel memoirs by ordinary people who do not have the advantages that Ms Wheeler has all along her journey. She has wealthy and influential contacts which the average traveler just does not have. Staying in a million dollar hacienda must be nice, but how many of us can actually do that? I will stick to the memoirs of the average traveler struggling to find their way in a strange land.

I felt deceived by the cover of this book which was of the famous spires in Torres De Pines. Sara

spent one day in the park and devoted one page in her book to the part of Chile I was most interested in. She spent a lot of time in impoverished villages, and even two weeks living in slums of Santiago. It seems she was intent on being a traveler rather than a tourist. In her romp sponsored by the Chilean tourist board and the U.S. Navy and the help of a few well-placed friends in London she did see the country. A lot of time was spent on the politics and corruption of the government. Obviously, extremely well-read and informed about the regions and history the book is educational. Sipping Piscos and hanging in clubs seemed to be a favorite pastime. Even though I had hoped for more on the Lakes District, a place I would like to visit, and the famous Torres des Pines, I was pulled forward by her descriptive powers and back-handed sense of humor. Perhaps, it should have been titled Brit on the Road in a Long Thin Country with a picture of her driving a Hertz Hummer on a rough track.

Good for the Solo Adventurer! read this book as I explored Peru on my own an many years older than Sara. The connection of place and experience was energizing. If the book has any flaws, it is that we are left with so many unanswered questions about Sara. How did she end up in all the places she eventually landed, many quite luxurious, with whose help? I was very enchanted by her determination to do this journey and her refusal to leave any of the length of Chili unconnected during her visit. You learn a lot as a reader by reading this book.

To accompany Sara Wheeler on her journey through Chile, from the norhern desert to the icy tip of Antarctica, it's bestto pack a good map as well as a Spanish and English dictionary. It's easy to get lost. Is she still in the Andean foothills or did she double back to Azapa valley? She hitchhikes here andthere, with questionable companions, giving little thought to the readers who must follow along. Wheeler is quite capable of lyrical writing. When she describes the five-storey tenement inhabited by friends, one can almost smell the garbage spilling from the plastic bags. However, such writing is rare. Too often she substitutes ten dollar words for real insight. It's hard to get excited about the Island of Quinchao described as "green and undulating, with an occasional excrescence of shingle-tiled extravagance." Wheeler has little knack for what might interest readers. She wastes several pages on a tedious visit with policemen that ends in a silly prank involving a stuffed beaver while devoting barely a line to the tantalizing prospect of obtaining water from sea mist. Historical and political events are inserted here and there likethe mud puddles she encounters - and are just as clear. Isabelle Allende's novels were the first to whet my appetite for Chile. Unfortunately, Wheeler nearly killed my desire to travel there. On page 264 Mark, a fisherman, says of the far

southern ElventhRegion 'Civilization is a thin veneer down here.' Wheeler'sbook is a thin veneer over the country. Chile deserves a writer with the skill to dig deeper into its soul.

Can be better researched. A bit disappointed at how random her travel was arranged, and how many travel companions she was sharing this trip with rather than actually exploring the country and discovering it with more introspection.

I read this while traveling in Chile, and found some of the background and history very interesting. I also was interested in the author's story, though it mostly was about "who I traveled with next." After a while it just went on too long, and I didn't finish it.

I'm lovin' this book! Not through reading it yet, but so far, it's been great. She puts in a lot of history in such a way that you don't mind reading historical facts. I've been to many of the places mentioned, and it's nice to learn more in depth about locations than just how they look. In my younger years, I would have liked to do what this author did.

Going to Chili thought it would give me more information. More diary than info.

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