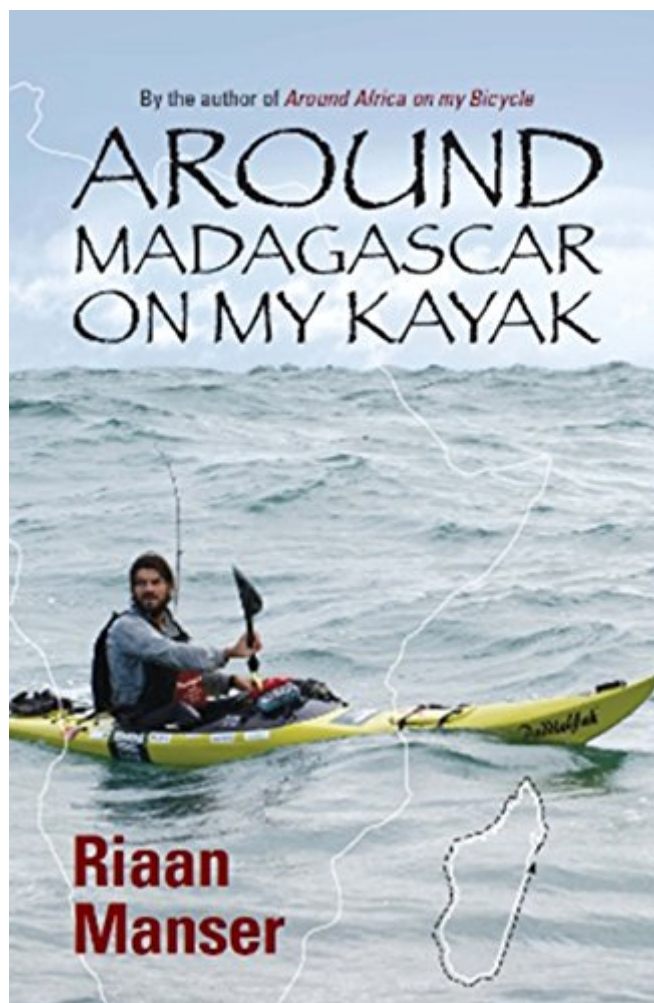


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Around Madagascar On My Kayak



Synopsis

In the last five years Riaan Manser has re-written the definition of tenacity and become the epitome of determination. Riaan rose to prominence when he became the first person to cycle around the entire perimeter of Africa. For over two years, he pedalled a mammoth 37,000kms through 34 countries; some of which rank as the most dangerous places on Earth. It was a feat that earned him the title Adventurer of the Year 2006 and made his resulting book, *Around Africa on my Bicycle*, a best-seller. In July 2009 Riaan again set another world first when he became the first person to circumnavigate the world's fourth largest island of Madagascar by kayak; another expedition achieved alone and unaided. This incredible journey, 5000km in eleven months, was considerably more demanding, both physically and mentally. Daily, Riaan had to conquer extreme loneliness while ploughing through treacherous conditions such as cyclones, pounding surf and an unrelenting sun that, combined with up to ten hours in salt water, was literally pickling his body. The perseverance, of course, brought memorable close encounters with Madagascar's marine life - humpback whales breaching metres away from his kayak, giant leatherback turtles gliding alongside him and even having his boat rammed by sharks. Riaan travelled around Madagascar during a period of the country's political turmoil, which gave him unrivalled insight into the exotic island's psyche and even earned him two nights in prison on suspicion of carrying out mercenary activities. *Around Madagascar in my Kayak* is packed with engaging stories and beautiful photographs and is set to become another best-seller.

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Customer Reviews

I just finished reading Riaan Manser's account on his epic circumnavigation of Madagascar. The feat of paddling 5000km cannot be underestimated of course, this guy has some guts and determination most of us would dream of. On the other hand, the written account of it left me a little cold. It seems like the writer sat down after cycling through Africa and thought what can I do now that has not been done before, will test myself and put my life in danger? Sometimes it looks like he is really going after some trouble as his inexperience comes through. And he seems like he is getting a fix out of it, repeating how this and that could lead to his death. This is no trip like the ones by Tim Lydon, Brian Wilson or Chris Duff for example, where a back to the roots connection with nature is sought after. Here, Manser paddles around Madagascar while dreaming of the next satellite tv to watch rugby and a plate of spaghetti bolognese to satisfy his appetite. The latter happens as he carries no food or water other than some Nescafe sachets and "energy juice"! He thus becomes dependent on the locals, the very people he often calls thieves or money beggars at best. He follows a routine where landings are always made at some village, trying to find some water, food and shelter (even asks for people to let him sleep in their porch!) while trying to avoid being jailed due to the political turmoil or having his stuff raided. The book is not helped by the written style either, I felt more like I was listening to the writer going through his day in day out adventures rather than writing a deeper insight on his extraordinary trip.

After reading the African bicycle adventure, this was a big disappointment. This trip sounded more like an extended holiday than a tough adventure. Also the holier-than-thou attitude, and little life lessons are getting a bit much! Not a great read... Would not recommend it.

I know one star says I hate it, and hate may be a little too strong of a word. Disappointed may not be strong enough though either. I would say that the concept of the book left me with high hope and this "adventure" story certainly is a let down from there. I can't speak personally on Riaan Manser as I've never met him but his portrayal of himself in the book certainly makes me happy I never have. Here is someone on an expedition that most paddlers would give their eye teeth to be on yet

over and over again the author seems to disregard the amazing chance he's been giving to see a part of the world in a way that few will ever get a chance to, to talk about getting to the next big village or city for a plate of spaghetti or to a TV to watch his favorite rugby team. If you want to read about a great life changing paddling experience read Chris Duff or Victoria Jason, if your interested in listening to a self indulgent author go through the motions day after day of paddling to get to the next village(where he has very little interaction with locals other then asking for food and shelter) simply to be able to put the "first to accomplish" stamp on this type of trip then feel free to buy this book. Its not the worst book I've ever read but certainly close to making that list. Even midway through the book I found myself thinking if I had to read Manser call himself an "adventurer" one more time, when he had yet to even have camped once on the trip, I swore I was going to quit! Unfortunately I kept reading and now wish I had saved myself the time and trusted my gut sooner.

Thoroughly enjoyed this easy read. As a paddler I'm in awe as to what Riaan experienced and at times had to endure.A breath of fresh air

I was with him in the boat and could feel the pain when he cut his soles on the reef. I felt the helpless anger when his camera and especially the footage was lost. I'm grounded this year, Riaan's book helped me to still have a wonderful kayak adventure

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