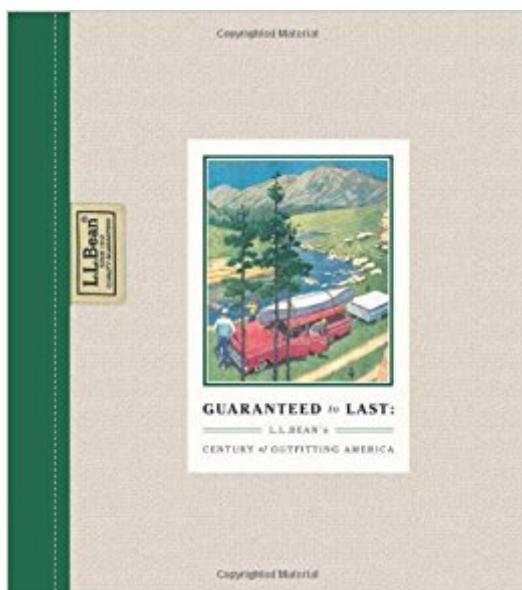


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# Guaranteed To Last: L.L. Bean's Century Of Outfitting America



## Synopsis

L.L. Bean's story is also America's story. The ideas and events that drove the company's development are all related to what was happening in the wider world. From the rugged, individualistic legacy of Teddy Roosevelt in the 1910s to soldiers' experiences in both World Wars, from the "back to the land" movement in the 1960s and 1970s that brought millions of people to the wilderness for the first time to the Preppy Handbook craze of the 1980s when the styles of New England suddenly enthralled the nation, *Guaranteed to Last* tells a complete and fascinating story that will engage every reader. At the heart of the book is a fresh telling of the fascinating L.L. Bean story—the tale of how an unknown hunter, working with \$400 in borrowed capital, invented a new kind of shoe and, marching to the beat of his own drum, remade the outdoor industry. And it's a story about how the company helped America learn to love the outdoors. A brisk narrative based on fresh interviews and research by Jim Gorman, a leading travel and adventure journalist, traces the most important incidents in the company's history, as well as the defining products and the most memorable people. The book will feature scores of photographs, illustrations, and pieces of ephemera, including fascinating images of L.L. Bean hunting in Maine in the 1910s; the earliest mailers and catalogs that defined the look and voice of the company; personal correspondence to L.L. Bean from every era; snapshots of ordinary Americans outfitted in their L.L. Bean gear; and much more. It is both a celebration of 100 years of L.L. Bean, and a look at the essential qualities of the brand that will guide its next century.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Jim Gorman is an award-winning book and magazine author. He's a contributing editor to Backpacker and Popular Mechanics magazines, and his writing has appeared in Men's Health, Runner's World, This Old House, Country Living, National Geographic Adventure, Better Homes & Gardens, Endless Vacation, Bicycling, Boy's Life, and elsewhere. He writes primarily about the environment, outdoor exploration on foot and mountain bike, health & wellness, home & garden, and energy conservation. Jim's work has won a variety of awards, including a National Magazine Award (2003) for "Wild In The Parks," National Geographic Adventure Magazine; Travel Writer of the Year Award from the Caribbean Tourism Organization for "Wild Beauties," Endless Vacation Magazine; and the Pluma de Plata (SilverQuill) Award for Best Travel Writing on Mexico from the Mexico Tourism Board, for "Zacatecas: Desert Rose," also in Endless Vacation Magazine. He was also a National Magazine Award Finalist in 2005 for "Grail Trails," National Geographic Adventure Magazine. Prior to his career as a freelance writer, Jim was an editor at Backpacker Magazine, the website GORP.com, and the environmental journal World Watch.

Item as represented

GREAT BOOK - GOOD READING FOR ANYONE WHO SELLS PRODUCTS AS WELL AS ENJOYS AN OLD FASHIONED STORY ABOUT ONE OF AMERICA'S HERO'S.....WE NEED MORE PEOPLE LIKE LL BEAN TODAY

Bound in the classic L.L. Bean canvas complete with Bean's quality guaranteed label, "Guaranteed to Last" is certainly much more than just a book. It's an archive of L.L. Bean's New England roots, community, and its birth from a hunting boot. "Guaranteed to Last" was released commemorating L.L. Bean's 100 years in business, and the timing couldn't have been more fitting. Reading of both the successes and obstacles L.L. Bean faced as well as their plan for the future is inspiring at a time when many doubt the viability of the American business model. The story of Leon Leonwood Bean is that of the quintessential entrepreneurial spirit that is mythologized in the American dream. Bean found a niche market (of which he was a part) identified a need, and invested himself in a solution. Alongside L.L. Bean's story are timelines, newspaper clippings, letters from Bean's first fans, and countless photographs. These artifacts bring to life each moment in Bean's journey from a man who just needed a reliable pair of boots to the creator of New England's most cherished brand. They push the story along at comfortable pace by complimenting it with details about production process or the life of a New England outdoorsman. The result is an inspiring look at authentic and

lasting American entrepreneurship coupled with the engaging imagery and creativity of your favorite coffee table book.

Guaranteed to Last not only taught me about the history of L.L.Bean [the company], but reading about L.L. Bean's life and beliefs inspired me to get back outside. Reading it, I suddenly wanted to see the beauty of Maine, to go hiking, to get out into nature and embrace it. (It also made me really believe in Bean's products; I ordered a pair of Bean boots & a Chamois shirt upon completion of the book, but that's another story). It's a tale of innovative thinking, commitment to quality [and to customers], and a love of the outdoors.

This is a fascinating look at LLBean and the first hundred years of the Company which he founded. A well written narrative by Jim Gorman is complimented by images of historical marketing materials, merchandise, photos and letters from the LLBean archives. A couple of my favorites are a letter from baseball hero Ted Williams offering to buy the company, and a thank you note from the war department thanking LL for his assistance designing boots for WWII soldiers. I highly recommend this to fans of LLbean, business people interested in understanding how a company can evolve over time while staying true to its core values, and to anyone with an interest in American history. After a great read, don't put it on your bookshelf. It will start many conversations as a table top book.

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