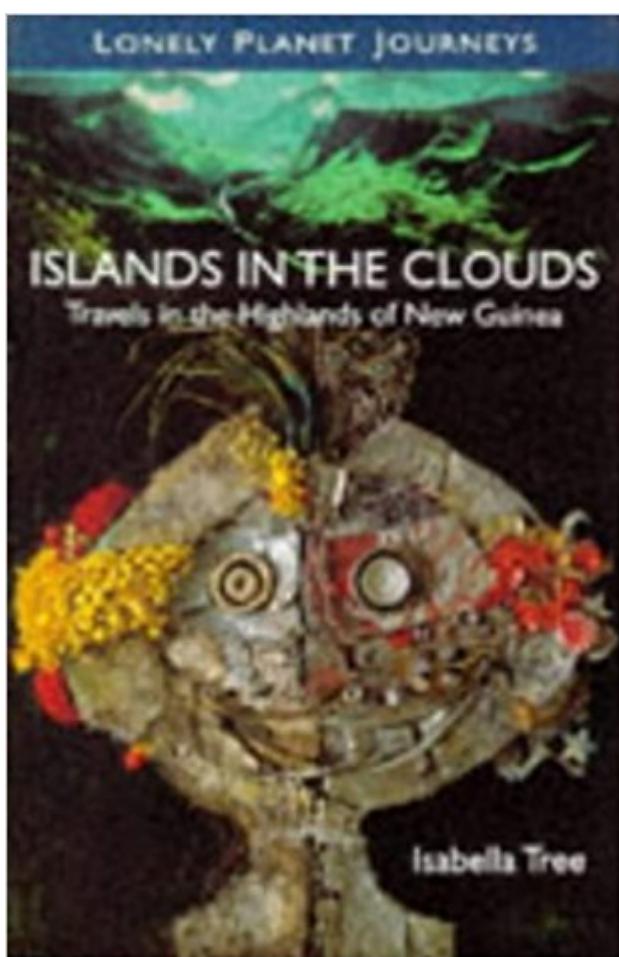


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Islands In The Clouds: Travels In The Highlands Of New Guinea



Synopsis

An account of the author's journey to the Highlands of Papua New Guinea and Irian Jaya. Travelling with a Papua New Guinea Highlander, she is introduced to his complex world, a world that is changing rapidly as it collides with new technology and the island's developing political systems.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The island of New Guinea is hardly the most hospitable place in the world. Dozens of live volcanoes punctuate the mountainous terrain and tremors shake the island daily. So high are the mountains of Papua New Guinea that this most tropical of islands actually boasts snow on its highest peaks. Not until the middle of the 19th century did Europeans pay much attention to a land that apparently offered little in the way of natural resources; when the Dutch finally arrived in 1848, they claimed only the western half of the island. By the beginning of the 20th century, all of New Guinea had been claimed, but only the coastal regions were settled or explored. No one knew that hidden amidst the forbidding peaks of the central highlands were one million tribal people and the island's most fertile lands. By the time Isabella Tree arrived in Papua New Guinea, the highlands and its people had been discovered by the West, and their lives were rapidly being transformed--not always for the better. In Islands in the Clouds, Tree takes the reader on a remarkable journey through this extraordinary, perilous land. Weaving historical events into present experience, Tree limns a moving portrait of New Guinea--its people, culture, and its rapidly vanishing way of life.

Islands in the Clouds is one of the better travelogues to come out as part of the Lonely Planet Journeys series. Tree gives a good overview of the history, sociology and culture of the highlands of Papua New Guinea in an well-paced, beautifully written tale. Adding to the value of the book is its Tok Pisin glossary, which makes for a nice introduction to the pidgin/creole language of PNG.

I've been to Papua New Guinea, and I found this a very enjoyable read. Isabella Tree lets you get to know the people she meets, and her writing style really takes you along with her. This is just a short note to say "give this one a try."

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