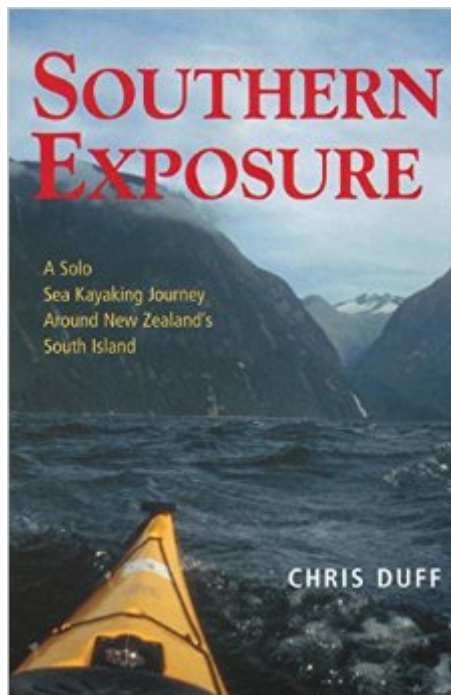


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Southern Exposure: A Solo Sea Kayaking Journey Around New Zealand's South Island



Synopsis

In this epic tale of sea-kayaking adventure, award-winning author Chris Duff places readers in the cockpit of his 18-foot kayak and lets them experience the full power and beauty of the South Pacific Ocean and the wild energy of the Tasman Sea as it thunders onto New Zealand's uninhabited west coast. Not just an account of human physical endurance and determination to attempt what had only been accomplished once before, this exquisitely written narrative reveals the philosophical and psychological life of a man who has chosen the sea as the master to sit before and to learn from. The intense and often terrifying sea journey is balanced by serendipitous meetings along the way with friendly New Zealanders and with the diverse wildlife of this tiny and remote island country. Southern Exposure is a force of writing that will captivate the armchair adventurer as well as the seasoned ocean traveler.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

By Bill Marsano. Chris Duff's photos, which are bundled together and whacked a little perfunctorily into the middle of this book, limp under the heading of 'snaps.' Duff belongs to the old school of kayakin' shutterbugs: compose any old how, so long as the bow of the boat is in the frame; shoot in any old light; and shoot, sometimes, any old subject. There's a darn nice snap of a Hooker seal here but what I really wanted was more pix of the damage (and later repairs) to his boat from the surf landing that nearly killed him. I'm just saying. (And the maps are even worse--clear, but seldom helpful.)Never mind: This is a book of writing. Duff seems to have had no specific reason to try a 1700-mile circumnavigation of New Zealand's South Island (it's not even a first) but he is no virgin.

He's looped the British Isles and then Ireland; he's paddled 8000 miles along the east coast of Canada and the U.S.; even now he may be paddling round Iceland. He, too, gets into a little gauzy mysticism about the Eternal Why and his place in the universe, but most of the time he's a little too busy for that stuff. South Island's coast is a place that goes from bad to worse, and it's instructive to listen in as Duff relates his tactics and strategies for dealing with bad weather and dangerous, even life-threatening situations: You can learn from this stuff as well as be staggered by it. And just for lagniappe there are those occasional moments of perfect weather and following seas that surf him along in solitary joy. These usually come along just after the notoriously perverse Tasman Sea has, as they say south of here, "prit-near" beaten him to a pulp. A particular pleasure of this book is the human aspect.

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