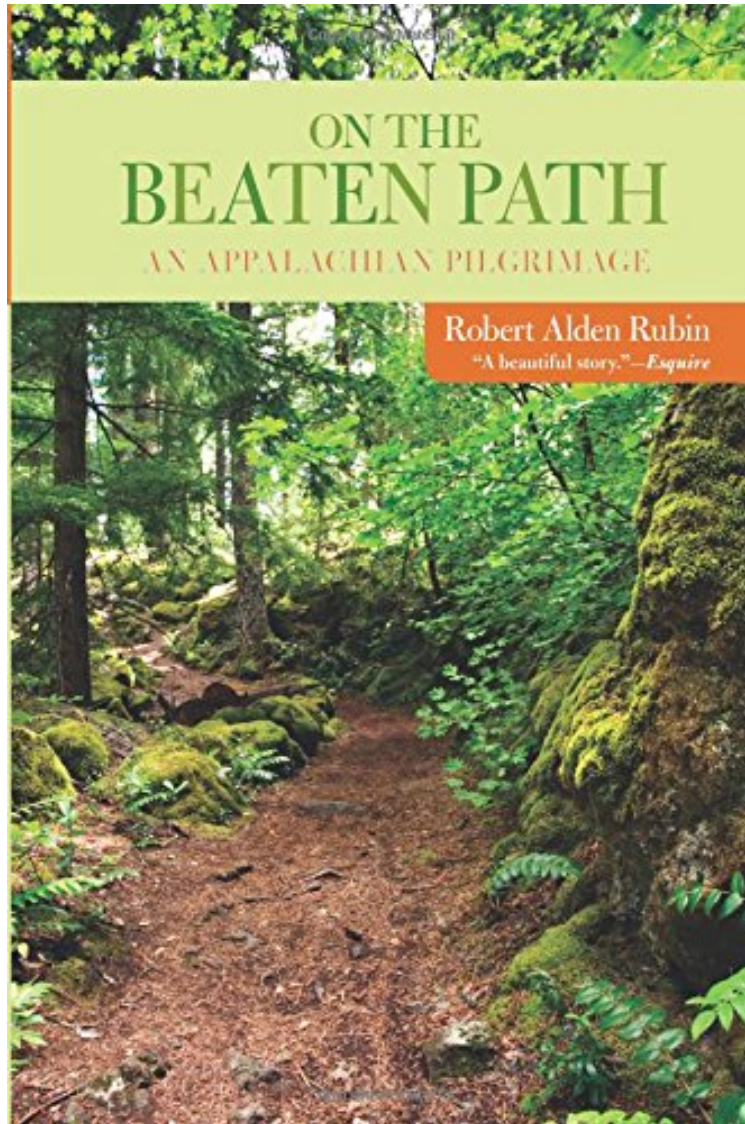


(Download free ebook) On the Beaten Path: An Appalachian Pilgrimage

On the Beaten Path: An Appalachian Pilgrimage

Robert Rubin

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Robert Rubin : On the Beaten Path: An Appalachian Pilgrimage before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised On the Beaten Path: An Appalachian Pilgrimage:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great trail story telling !By Kindle CustomerRobert, I would love to meet you someday! Very well told story and I could see your attitude and maturity changing as you traveled. I could see the anger dissolving after the hike began and hear the peace in your writing voice as you finished and after the trail! Definitely a good man whom I'd love to meet and love to hike with! He tells the story as a common man in very common shape as many begin such adventures with and clearly tells the hardships of such an undertaking. Also, I

appreciate the writing style and editing that only someone in the literary world could apply! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Looking for TransformationBy MerikeI had read so many books about walking the Appalachian Trail that I thought I would not purchase any more, but noting the excellent reviews of 'On the Beaten Path' I decided just one more. I am glad I did. Everyone's experience of the AT and the reasons for undertaking the venture, is unique. Robert Rubin was having a "mid-life crisis" and hoped that the challenge of the trek would produce some sort of transformation in him. He probably did not expect the level of guilt he would suffer throughout the journey over what he admitted was a selfish act. I liked the inference that the AT has now become the "beaten path", because so many people hike it every year. He brings to light just how close the AT is to civilization when he sees the tops of the two towers of the World Trade Center and realizes that the panorama of Manhattan is just beyond a single wooded ridge. The author also paints a graphic picture of the illnesses that befall the AT community, the torn knee ligaments, the stomach bugs, the health hazards of crowded mouse-lousy shelters, the strange effect on the bladder. But it is not all doom and gloom, the author has a beautiful command of the language and the descriptions of the environment he is walking through read like poetry. This is the first book where I have read the "Afterword" before finishing the book because I could not resist finding out whether he really did find what he was looking for. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Tale of a Pilgrimage, both lyrical and realisticBy Gail D. GrayI finished On the Beaten Path recently and have to say it's one of the most lyrical books on the AT experience I've ever read. I love Rubin's writing, as I should, since he was an editor before hitting the trail and made the journey after becoming disillusioned with his job, along with the difficulties editors face, which I know first hand. Slogging through lots of stories to find the gems and then once you do so, the pain of writing rejection letters, and even having to reject good writing simply because there's no room. Rubin's descriptions are poetic and vibrant, his approaches change as he is transformed by the trip and the spiritual nature, not in any heavy handed way, more the way one feels when they stand at a summit in awe of the vision stretched out before, above and below them. He can translate this into words and therefore into our minds and hearts. This is a book I'll read over and over. It is an end-to-end, shelter by shelter NOBO relating of the trek, which at this point in educating myself about the trail, I enjoy. It makes it easier for me to look up sections as Loner goes through each particular area so I can imagine what he's seeing. The human story is just as vivid as the nature and travel experience. Rubin honestly accounts the confusion and unsettled discomfort he feels and which drives him to the trail, despite the fact it is a hardship on his wife. We are allowed to come to an understanding, as he does, of how each hiker is transformed by the experience and via a ripple effect so are those in their lives. This remarkable weaving of many perspectives of the Trail helps us understand why some people "need" to make this journey. Some may see it as an escapist act, but in the larger vision, it is not a running away from the world but a running towards the true north authentic self. I agree with Bryson in looking at the attempted thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail as a sort of pilgrimage, something each culture needs as a sort of initiation, a coming to terms of what's important and how one must be transformed, an act which minds like Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell considered imperative to the growth of each person. While not as irreverent as Bill Bryson's "A Walk in the Woods", Rubin's book still has its funny bits, and while not as detailed as David Miller's book AWOL on the Appalachian Trail, with its organized info, I found On the Beaten Path less dry for a non hiker who is looking more for a story than for a tool to use to plan a hike. So far, I think Rubin's book is my favorite on the Appalachian Trail, a profound story on both an inner and outer level, of what he calls a pilgrimage. Rubin masterfully blends the powerful encounters of human nature and Mother Nature into a vivid portrayal of this monumental task.

An eloquent, wise, and witty account of how one man's six-month, end-to-end hike of the Appalachian Trail led him back home.

.com Why have we quit our jobs, left our wives, our husbands, our children, left school, interrupted perfectly good retirements, put off promising careers? Why come to the woods for half a year of rodents and rain? On April Fool's Day 1997, 38-year-old Robert Alden Rubin leaves his puzzled wife and a burnt-out career to become a pilgrim named Rhymin' Worm on the Appalachian Trail, joining a couple thousand other "thruhikers" on the way. Through 2,160 miles of shin splints, feet turned to hamburger, muscle revolt, intestinal distress, hantavirus, freezing and broiling weather, malnutrition, missing spouses and children, bear and bull-moose encounters, and serious injuries, he and his fellow travelers--a motley subculture if ever there was one--endure, even thrive. To the very end, Rubin is not sure why he's made this journey. But the combination of getting away from the "normal" world of work, commuting, suburbs, and capitalist culture and joining a group of outsiders in pursuit of a single goal seems to fill the space in his soul that the normal world carved out over the years. He emerges at the end of the trail, in Vermont, with an inkling of why he's on the path: We've walked this crooked trail to mend the crazing of our lives; we reek of sweat and smoke, wear Gore-Tex shells to turn the storm away, take on new names, our talk all aches, and boots, and food; and yet we yearn to strip the armor from our hearts, to wash ourselves in mountain rain and air until, like the wild columbine and black cohosh, we can be merely what we are, until out of the stone-strewn ground we bloom again, until the weathered sign on Baxter Peak points along the path to where we've been. On the Beaten Path is by turns somber, silly,

philosophical, historical, even mundane, but mostly, it's touching. Alden's courage to rescue his life from what could have been a featureless future is inspiring, and his honesty about his shortcomings makes his inner world accessible to readers who may not share his demons. --Stefanie DurbinFrom Publishers Weekly

In the thick of a midlife crisis, 38-year-old book editor Rubin decided to quit his job and hike the entire Appalachian Trail, from Georgia to Maine. Rubin is the first to point out the selfishness of his whim, which very likely cost him his career and his marriage. Not to mention that Alden was at least 75 pounds overweight at the beginning of his 2,000-plus-mile hike, "an athlete gone to seed." Nonetheless, the author set out, stubbornly walking off years of stress and confusion. Over the past 30 years, hiking the Appalachian trail has become something of a counterculture ritual, and Rubin both mocks and reveres his cohorts. He has plenty of vitriol for weekend RV adventurers who "would never get any closer to the wilderness than the blacktop out of town," for college kids who blow their trail money on beer and pot and for hikers whose "fastidiousness, organization, unceasing questions, discussion and analysis began driving [him] quietly nuts." The author is no less critical of himself, documenting his own unglamorous moments, which include foul moods, falls along the trail and a bathroom "accident" along the trail. Yet Rubin also cherishes the trail, and his honest, fast-paced account should inspire others to try hiking "the beaten path." (Apr.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From School Library Journal

YA-Rubin recounts his 2000-mile journey from Springer Mountain, GA, to Mount Katahdin, ME. The journalist, whose trail name was Rhymin' Worm, began as an overweight, dispirited, burned-out urbanite, yet completed this feat in one season. This is not a "how to" book for thruhikers or a history of the AT, although bits of both can be found here, including maps of each section. It is really Rubin's reaction to the life and lore of the trail and his search for what is true and valuable about his life. He introduces readers to Rock Dancer, One Ramp, Loon, Bigfoot, Grizz, Java Joe, and a host of other muddy, sweaty, ragged but determined hikers. Through dialogue and description, he introduces the fellowship of the trail and throws in plenty of trivia without breaking stride. He talks about the fetish for fashionable hiking gear, quotes Henry David Thoreau, and explains "trail magic" and "slackpacking." With the finer but less esoteric details of life without baths, through days of rain and bugs, he helps readers understand why many thousands start the trail, but far fewer are true thruhikers. With finesse, Rubin succeeds as an informed journalist, a backpack-hoisting hiker, and a philosophical observer. Hikers, dreamers, and pilgrims of all sorts will find this an entertaining odyssey.

Cynthia J. Rieben, W. T. Woodson High School, Fairfax, VA Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.