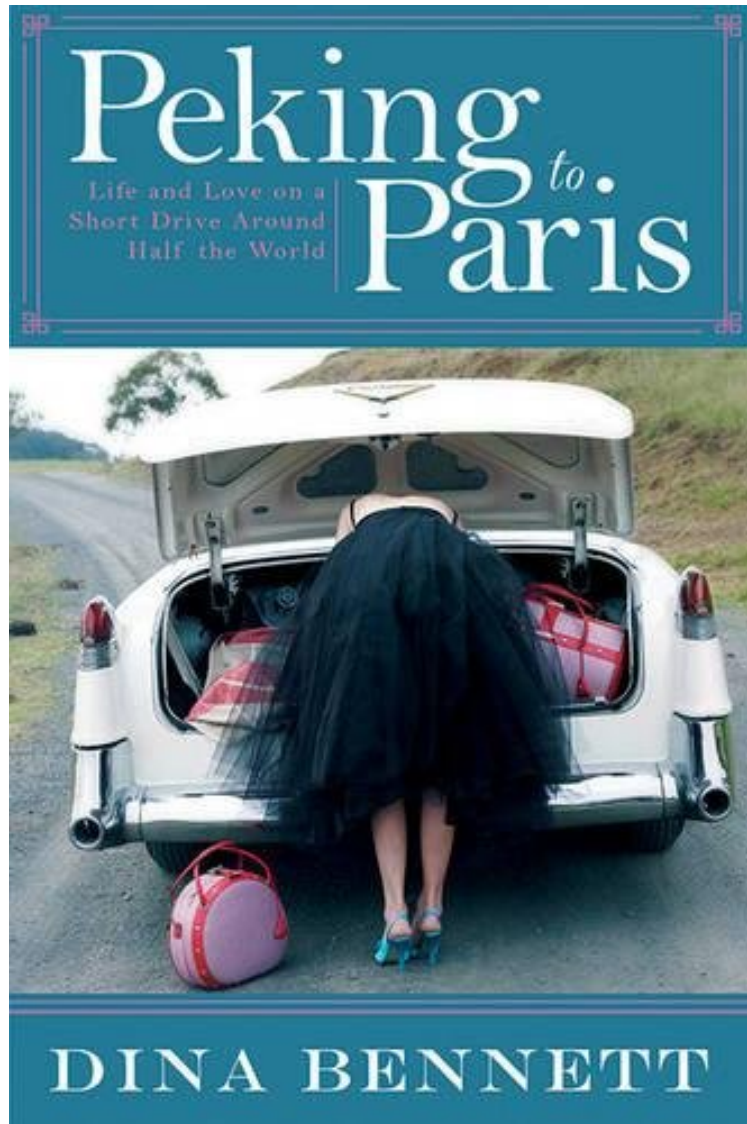


[E-BOOK] Peking to Paris: Life and Love on a Short Drive Around Half the World

# Peking to Paris: Life and Love on a Short Drive Around Half the World

*Dina Bennett*

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**Dina Bennett : Peking to Paris: Life and Love on a Short Drive Around Half the World** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Peking to Paris: Life and Love on a Short Drive Around Half the World:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Not Stellar, Definitely Not BadBy Denise SpoonerI read lots of travel lit I enjoy the adventures and insights about countries, cultures, and personal journeys that genre provides. Dina

Bennet's book is of middling quality. The car rally framework is a unique hook, engaging. From the effort to get their car ready for the grueling endurance drive, to the mechanical problems they encounter and work to solve along the way between Mongolia and Estonia, as well as the people they meet, it's all new topic terrain for most readers, I'm sure. But some elements of the trip are never fully explained or resolved, like why did people like James behave the way they did? Did Dina and Bernard remain friends with Sybil and Robert? What's the difference between people like those and Dina that makes the Sybils and Jameses repeat Rally participants and not the Dinas? In a book that overflows with analysis of feelings and temperaments, it would have been more interesting if the author went beyond explaining just herself and speculated or explained more about what makes Rallyites tick. That's what the best travel lit does: it explores the culture of a place, its history and development, as well as that of the primary characters in the adventure. I'm thinking of Bill Bryson, Paul Theroux, writers like that. This book is more along the lines of *Eat, Pray, Love*, a mix of memoir and travel, but the self-actualization resolution is not really present until the final wrap-up chapter. Until then there's a lot of lines of panic, self doubt, panic, self doubt, justification, worry, self doubt, worry, panic . . . . You get the picture. I don't doubt that Bennett felt that way along the trip. It just get a bit tiresome to read about it continuously. Finally, I congratulate the author on putting together the book. Writing a book is such hard work. While this isn't the best book I've read, that does not diminish my respect for people like Bennett who put together one and get it out there, and, in the process introduce me to a world I didn't know existed, like that of the Rallyites. I wouldn't recommend this, but nor would I dissuade some from reading it, particularly women who are struggling to build strength in themselves and their relationships. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Life, love and personal growth  
By Elizabeth Fenwick I loved this book, I really did. It IS about life and love as much or more than it is about the P2P rally. If there are any disgruntled women who feel she whines too much, they must be afraid to face themselves in the honesty of Dina's self portrayal. I related to her self doubt and anguish on so many levels...competency, acceptance, neediness, pride, and so on. She was very brave to put herself out there so transparently and honestly so those of us who cherish personal growth could savor her personal journey. I thank her for that. Dina's writing is beautiful...visual, concise, and flowing. It was a quick read as a result. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Two Stars  
By MARY C. CATE boring

In this thrilling journey from "Peking to Paris," a woman tries to save her car, her marriage, and her confidence from breaking down. In May 2007, leaving China's Great Wall is Car 84, one of 125 antique autos racing in the Peking to Paris Motor Challenge. The 1940 LaSalle is guided by Dina Bennett, the world's least likely navigator: a daydreamer prone to carsickness and riddled with self-doubt. She's married to the driver, a thrill-seeking perfectionist who is half-human, half-racecar. What could go wrong? Funny, self-deprecating, and marred by only a few acts of great fortitude, *Peking to Paris* is first and foremost a voyage of renewal. As Dina and her husband, Bernard, nurse their car across the Gobi, Siberia, and the Baltic states and south to Paris, she wrestles with nuts and bolts, along with the absurd hope that she can turn herself into a person of courage and patience. Writing for every woman who's ever doubted herself and any man who's wondered what the woman traveling with him is thinking, Dina brings you with her as she ducks rock-throwing Mongolians and locks horns with Russians left over from the Intourist era, endures a sandstorm facial, and is reduced to tears of joy over a bottle of red nail polish. It's a rollicking ride, one that shifts the line between possible and impossible, and gives new meaning to the phrase "off the beaten tourist path."

From Booklist If racing from Beijing (Peking) to Paris in an antique automobile sounds like a nightmare to you, then Bennett will be the perfect guide. Where travel memoirists tend toward the intrepid adventurer, Bennett is another sort altogether. She gets car sick. She stresses about having to read a map. She surveys her fellow racers with the emotional maturity of a high-schooler, desperately wanting to be part of the "cool crowd." At times, she's every bit as annoying as anyone would be after spending day after mind-numbing day riding in a perpetually broken-down car across relentlessly not-at-all-scenic terrain. If the reader, like Bennett, expects to encounter colorful characters along the way, she will, like Bennett, be disappointed to learn that she actually spends a disproportionate amount of time in auto-repair shops. But, ultimately, the race accomplishes what Bennett had hoped: she grows closer to her husband, Bernard, as they become completely dependent on each other in their two-person bubble. She even discovers a love of the road, proving it's all about the journey, not the destination. --Patty Wetli Selected as one of the top ten travel books for Spring 2013. (Publishers Weekly) Readers are giving a five-star rating: "Funny, scary and highly entertaining." "...[T]his intrepid traveler... exposes her emotional self with raw honesty." "I loved this book..." "[A] travel memoir that truly captures the stomach-twisting anxiety and elevating high of going on a trip." About the Author Dina Bennett was born in Manhattan. After five years as a PR executive, she joined her husband's software localization company as senior VP of sales and marketing. The two worked side-by-side until they sold the firm in 1998 and abandoned corporate life for a hay and cattle ranch. Since then she has untangled herself from barbed wire just long enough to get into even worse trouble in old cars on over 50,000 miles of far-off roads. She resides in Bend, Oregon.