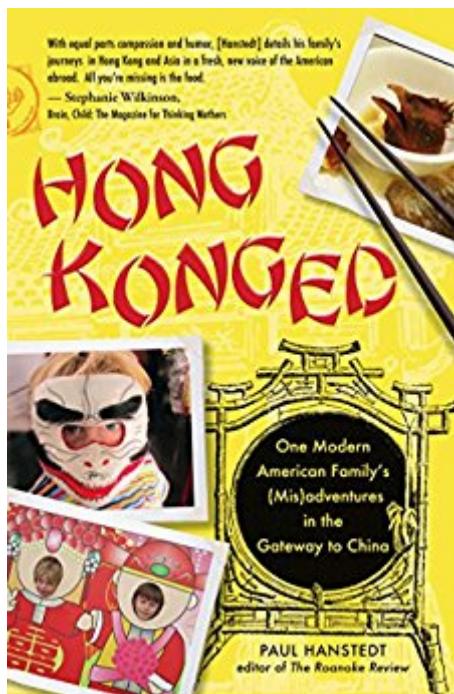


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Hong Konged: One Modern American Family's (Mis)adventures In The Gateway To China



Synopsis

In this alternately hilarious and heartrending memoir, acclaimed writer and editor Paul Hanstedt recounts the true story of his family's recent sojourn to Hong Kong. Hanstedt and his wife and three children--aged 9, 6, and 3--lived in Hong Kong for a year, a year beset by culture clash, vicious bullies, hospital visits, M&Ms, and the worst traffic jam you've ever seen. Through the eyes of the earnest if sometimes clueless Hanstedt family, you'll discover a world you've never known before. But in the end, Hong Konged is about place and family and what it is that makes us human--no matter who we are or where we live.

Book Information

File Size: 6023 KB

Print Length: 306 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 144054073X

Publisher: Adams Media (June 18, 2012)

Publication Date: June 18, 2012

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B0084IUDY8

Text-to-Speech: Not enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #585,378 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #44 in Books > Travel > Asia > Hong Kong #137 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel > Asia > China #361 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Ethnic & National > Chinese

Customer Reviews

This is some fine storytelling here. Many chapters were my favorites, but those I paused to note were 'A Day at the B*tch, B*tch, B*tch...' (...And I assume Beach was swapped out for the latter string of words). But, oh, how vivid...(both the stares I imagined Paul and Ellen received having to reprimand their children in public, and as well the chuckle I enjoyed with Paul by the end of this beach trip). Too funny. I Want a Wife I noted as well. None too surprising, just as I was assessing

what strengthened this marriage, right there on page 132 Paul got to summing up just what I was thinking. A give and take partnership is what made this relationship work. Other chapters that resonated; the wonton soup incident... and not for the simplicity of the tale getting a little boy to eat soup that really wasn't that hot, but for the way the story is doted on, clarifying the dexterity of these noodles, and the exchange between he and his wife, the staring family, and taking the script all the way to an ending I found as humorous as it was endearing. I found the friend's analogy on helping Paul and Ellen settle Will and Lucy in school also inspiring. Very inspiring in fact. And there is more... much more, such as the bullying incident(s), the birthday party, the Jade Chapter, along with the sights and sounds, the historical takes, the cultural perspectives (tastefully and respectfully enmeshed throughout the book); and if this is too much, then I must not omit the illustration of Hong Kong's rich tapestry, and plenty of photos to substantiate it all. I could go on and on describing these vividly wonderful chunks of stories rapt inside one superbly pleasing book--but to wrap things up nicely, this is one of the best books I've read this year! I highly recommend reading it.

Having grown up in the same small Mid-Western town as the author, and followed his blogs for a while now, I was truly excited to get my hands on Paul's book about his family's adventures in Hong Kong. I was not disappointed. Paul's writing has a way of weaving you into the experience. I could feel the heat and humidity, taste the food, enjoy the scenery... as well as feel their stress when coping with the challenges of living so far away from everything they truly know with three small children in tow. The most surprising element of the book to me was how this experience allowed Paul a clearer glimpse of who his children truly are. I would consider that the priceless benefit of the whole trip. I really enjoyed this book and would recommend it to all.

The title accurately represents what this book is about. If you bought this book because you thought it was a travel guide, please don't complain about it here.

Great kids and great adventures. Loved little Jamie, Lucy, and Will. More, please. Look forward to more adventures over time.

Having lived overseas myself for 2+ years, it is great to see how others lived their lives overseas too. People might think authors who are telling stories of their crazy overseas adventures are making fun of the people they are staying with but when one culture hits another culture, there needs to be a lot of laughter or one will start crying. There is so much that is the same about

humanity and so much that is different. The differences usually aren't so big that they are impossible but enough to make one's life be difficult. Paul Hanstedt spent a year in Hong Kong with his family and loves to relate all the experiences he had and those of his children who had the wildest time of all. The book is funny and caring and yes he is very impressed with the way his children handled it, after all they didn't ask to come but they did it anyway!

This is an interesting book concerning the life of an American family living in Hong Kong for a year. This book contains less information about the experience of living in a foreign country, and is richer in descriptions of the father's perspectives upon his children and wife. As such, this is a sympathetic description of a family life where 3 young children are involved. The story could have been set anywhere, it just happens to take place in Hong Kong. If you are interested in a book describing experiences and observations of life in a foreign country, this is not your book. If you wish to read a story of a warm and loving family, and the experience of family life and relationships, read this. You will enjoy the read.* I only gave this four stars because of the fairly deceptive title. The book is not so much about Hong Kong, as about family life with kids.

This book combines two things I mostly find insufferable: children and travel, so I didn't have high hopes. But much to my surprise I sorta loved it. I think it worked for me because the author doesn't try to glorify either child rearing or his Asian adventures. Instead he finds the hangdog humor in trying to travel overseas with sometimes difficult kids in tow. His descriptions of the people and the scenery they come across are beautifully rendered, frequently laugh out loud funny and I'm guessing give you a realistic impression of Hong Kong through an American visitor's eyes. And his portraiture of the three children (yes, as other reviews have pointed out, he does spend a good deal of time writing about the kids) is refreshingly honest. It's an idiosyncratic brood and Hanstedt himself comes across as a bit of a curmudgeon at times trying to deal with them -- like Mr. Wilson traveling with Dennis the Menace. Also, he seems to obsess about all the various catastrophes that could befall his family, so far from home and vulnerable. But I found that aspect of his narration really funny, mostly because I can relate to it. And fortunately nothing really bad comes to pass. At least nothing that you couldn't later laugh about in a book. Anyway, if you're looking for a straight up travelogue then, as other reviews have mentioned, this probably isn't for you. But if you're looking for an entertaining memoir (the Hong Kong backdrop being mostly incidental) then I highly recommend.

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