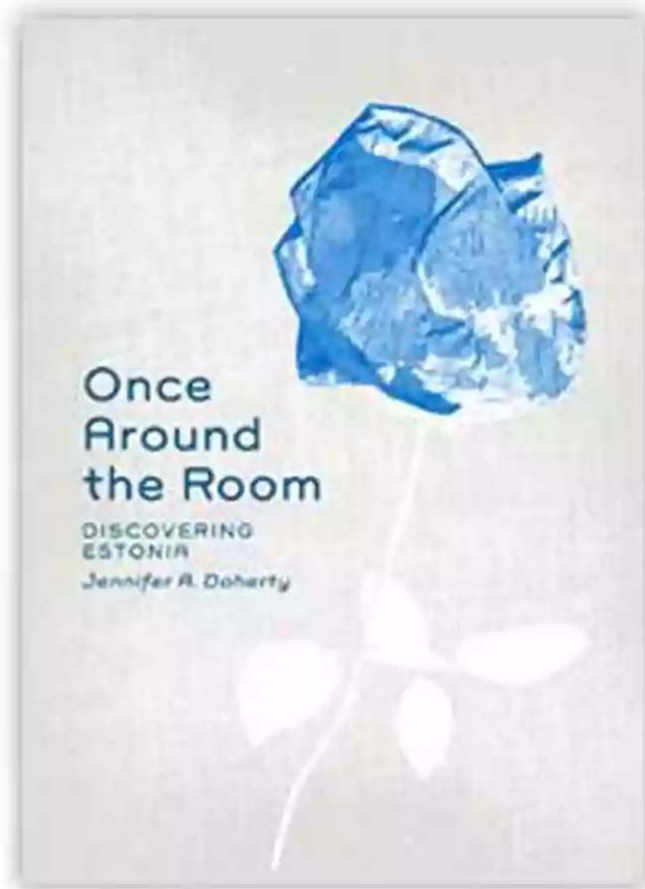


Once Around The Room: Discovering Estonia



Estonia, a small Baltic country located in Northern Europe, is often overlooked when planning a European vacation. However, this hidden gem has a lot to offer to travelers seeking a unique and diverse experience. From its rich history and culture to its stunning natural landscapes, Estonia is a destination that deserves recognition on every traveler's list.

Unveiling Estonia's History

Estonia's history dates back thousands of years, with evidence of human settlements dating as far back as 8500 BC. Throughout centuries, Estonia has been influenced by various kingdoms, empires, and ideologies, leaving behind a

rich cultural heritage. The country has experienced a complex history of power struggles, foreign occupations, and independence movements.



Once Around the Room: Discovering Estonia

by Jennifer Doherty (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 702 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 208 pages
Lending : Enabled



Visiting Estonia allows travelers to explore its medieval towns, which showcase the country's past. Tallinn, the capital city, is known for its well-preserved Old Town, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site. The cobbled streets, Gothic spires, and centuries-old buildings transport visitors back in time. Exploring the winding streets and hidden courtyards is like stepping into a fairy tale.

Another historically significant site is Tartu, Estonia's second-largest city. Tartu is home to the prestigious University of Tartu, founded in 1632, making it one of the oldest universities in Northern Europe. The city's old town is filled with charming buildings and enticing cafes, perfect for a leisurely stroll.

Estonian Culture and Traditions

Estonia has a distinct culture that is deeply rooted in its history, nature, and language. The Estonian language, which is closely related to Finnish, is

considered one of the most challenging languages to learn. However, every effort to communicate in Estonian is greatly appreciated by the locals, who are warm and welcoming.

Estonians have a strong connection to nature, and this is reflected in their culture and traditions. The country is known for its numerous forests, picturesque lakes, and untouched islands. One of the most unique traditions in Estonian culture is the practice of "going to the sauna." Saunas are an essential part of Estonian life, offering relaxation, purification, and a chance to reconnect with nature.

Traditional Estonian cuisine is worth exploring, with dishes like blood sausage, marinated sprats, and homemade bread being local favorites. Embarking on a culinary adventure while in Estonia opens up a whole new world of flavors and experiences.

Natural Wonders of Estonia

For nature enthusiasts, Estonia has an abundance of natural wonders to discover. Lahemaa National Park, located on the northern coast, is a perfect destination for hiking enthusiasts. The park consists of diverse landscapes, including forests, bogs, and coastal areas. Exploring the trails and encountering wildlife, such as moose and lynx, is a remarkable experience.

Saaremaa Island, the largest island in Estonia, offers visitors a tranquil retreat surrounded by stunning nature. The island is known for its beautifully preserved windmills, medieval castles, and pristine beaches. Enjoying a sunset on Saaremaa Island is a memory that will last a lifetime.

Modern Estonia

While Estonia proudly preserves its rich history and culture, it is also a modern and technologically advanced country. Estonia is famously known for its e-governance system, which allows citizens to vote online and access public services digitally. The high-speed internet connection and technological advancements have made Estonia a thriving hub for start-ups and innovation.

Tallinn, in particular, is home to a vibrant start-up community, earning it the nickname "E-Stonia." The city's modern skyline and contemporary architecture seamlessly blend with its historical charm, creating a unique visual experience.

Exploring the modern side of Estonia offers opportunities to discover trendy cafes, cutting-edge design stores, and impressive art galleries. The blend of old and new creates a fascinating juxtaposition that showcases Estonia's forward-thinking approach.

Embarking on a journey through Estonia is like uncovering a hidden treasure trove of history, culture, and picturesque landscapes. Whether you are captivated by the medieval charm of Tallinn's Old Town, mesmerized by the untouched beauty of Lahemaa National Park, or inspired by Estonia's innovative spirit, this Baltic country is sure to leave a lasting impression.

So, why not take the road less traveled and start planning your once-in-a-lifetime trip to Estonia? It's time to go once around the room and discover the wonders of this captivating country. Estonia awaits your exploration!

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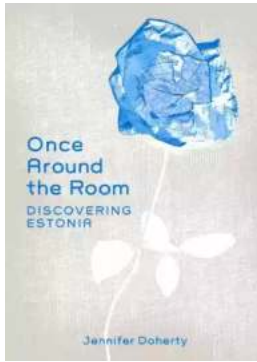
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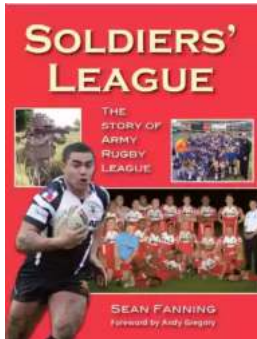


In the autumn of 1995, while still in college, Jennifer Doherty applied to a program that would change her life. Winning a spot on the International Four-H Youth Exchange program, an immersive homestay experience abroad, she left behind her rural Colorado ranching roots and a close-knit college community in the South to travel to Estonia for six months, staying with host families and learning the country's language, traditions, and charms.

Arriving in Estonia fewer than ten years after the fall of Communism, Doherty describes a country straining to catch up with the West while wrestling with its turbulent history under Soviet rule. Through her travels around the country and the Baltic region, striking contrasts emerge, captured in candid detail: women sweep the sidewalks in front of Soviet-era concrete apartment buildings with twig brooms while tourists hustle to the medieval Old Town a few blocks away.

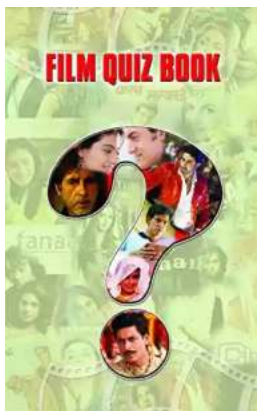
As it spirits readers around Estonia on a journey filled with long talks at kitchen tables, sauna soaks, blueberry-picking in the forest, and haymaking in the countryside, *Once Around the Room* offers an intimate look at the delights and quirks of becoming immersed in a foreign country. Chronicling the struggle to understand the philosophical and practical goals of cultural exchange as well as the struggle to strengthen one's faith in a foreign country, Doherty composes a

sensitive and poignant portrayal of the risks and rewards of fully immersing yourself in another culture, heart and soul.



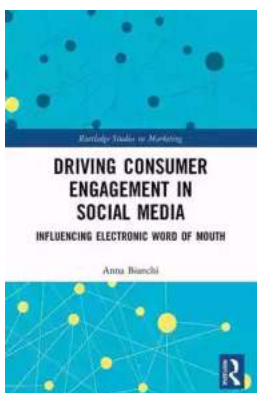
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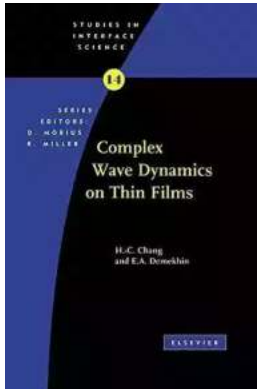
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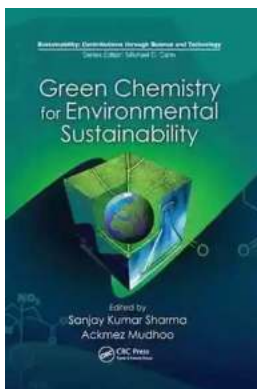
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