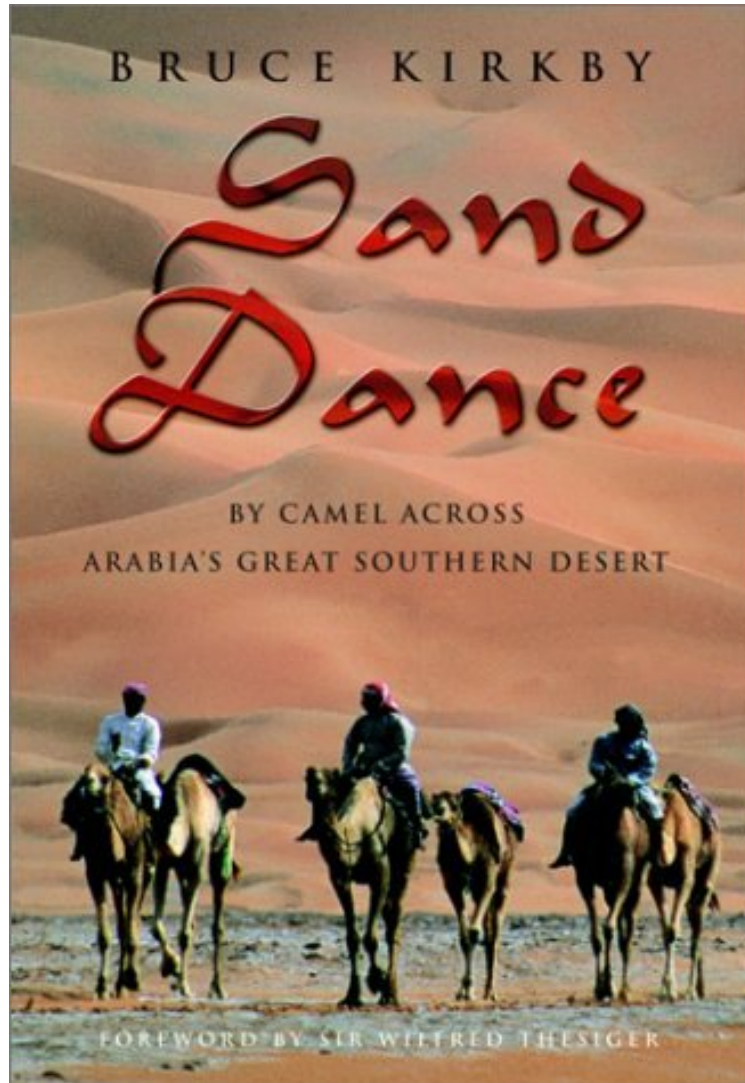


[Read free] Sand Dance: By Camel Across Arabia's Great Southern Desert

## Sand Dance: By Camel Across Arabia's Great Southern Desert

*Bruce Kirkby*

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**Bruce Kirkby : Sand Dance: By Camel Across Arabia's Great Southern Desert** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sand Dance: By Camel Across Arabia's Great Southern Desert:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Gripping action/adventure tale in the Arabian desert. By C. Hall I love reading about different cultures, especially of the experiences of someone new to a different culture as is the case when these three Canadian men decide to retrace an historic route across the Arabian desert as it was done 50 years earlier by an adventurer with camels, instead of the now used 4-wheel drive vehicles. I have also always been curious about camels, their temperament and what it would be like to work with them, and this book has much information

about the six camels used and camels in general. The vivid descriptions really put me in the scene, and I enjoyed the humor, as well. Highly recommended for those who would enjoy a 'nonfiction' Indiana Jones type story. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. wonderful read By Flightcrew I met this writer on a kayak trip. He was such a great guy as was his wife and two sons. I have bought everything he has written that I can find. Excellent, exciting, I'm impressed to the max. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Tumultuous Trek Across Arabian Sands By Jeannie Mancini Canadian adventure traveler Bruce Kirkby, known for his thrilling escapades that include Alaskan mountaineering, Himalayan treks in Tibet, White Water Kayaking, Bungee jumping, hikes through Pakistan, the Rockies and the Bavarian Alps, hitches up his wilderness gear and takes a complete turnaround into a different perilous direction, the desert. Together with two other Canadian buddies, they plot a course through the treacherous Empty Quarter of Southern Arabia. Known as the Ocean of Sands, The Empty Quarter is the world's largest sand desert. It is a parched wasteland, an unforgiving and foreboding stretch of shifting sands that encompass over 386,000 miles of desert. This desert holds more sand than any other place on this planet. It is a vast empty world of death, known to the ancient Arabic people as Al Khali. Kirkby's vision was to follow the route of early British explorer Wilfred Thesiger who was one of the first pioneers to successfully cross the Empty Quarter by camel, accompanied by men of the proud nomadic native Bedu Tribe in 1946. After a year of planning and working out the difficult logistics of the trip, the three men finally set out for the adventure of their lives. This fantastic journey will take them into a magical yet death defying land, and over towering mountains of sand that have been "sculpted by ancient winds, and lie in snake-like chains that run from horizon to horizon without end". They will endure roasting temperatures that can vary from 120 to 170 degrees, and can scorch anything alive in mere seconds. They will push their unruly camels along a route of hard rock and desolation where no vegetation or water hole can be found. Prior to their embarking, they had insisted that they travel unaided by modern conveniences or conveyances, and wished to be spirited through the desert by the stars and thrill of exploration alone while rocking atop ornery camels that do nothing but spit and kick. Locals pleaded with them to have Land Rovers follow behind them for safety and for backup supplies, yet these three Canadians refused. They were warned of the threat of death due to thirst, acres of non visible quicksand that could drag them down to world of Djinnns, they screamed in frustration that it was insanity to follow this quest. Bruce and his friends wanted nothing but to embrace the land, bond with the people and culture of Arabia, to marvel at the waves of dunes, and to sleep and cook by campfire staring up at the stars. Bruce's narrative of this harrowing yet often hilarious expedition into the unknown, was well written and accompanied by wonderful color photos giving the reader an up front and personal view of nomadic desert life. He compassionately unfolds the future of the Arabian people as they leave their heritage and old ways behind to keep up with the modern technology and the demands of current society. Today the people of South Arabia travel not by camel, but by jeeps and trucks, they carry barrels of water, use GPS to navigate the sands, and bring cases of Fanta Soda Pop to quench their thirst. Sand Dance is a memoir of Bruce's adventure back in time, fulfilling his dream to re-enact the traveling life of the ancient Spice Route traders or Victorian explorers, whose methods of trail blazing did not include cell phones, satellite communication, astronaut dehydrated food packs, or Land Rovers babysitting behind. This was a fun and insightful book in which I learned a lot about the desert world of South Arabia, it's Bedu people, and of both the wonders and hazards a trip like this can ensue. Lovers of adventure travel memoirs will highly enjoy this book and I give it two thumbs up.

For forty days and forty nights during the winter of 1999, three Canadians, Bruce Kirkby, Jamie Clarke, and Leigh Clarke, along with three Omani Bedu, travelled by camel across Arabia's great southern desert the legendary Empty Quarter. Journeying from Salala in Oman on the Arabian Sea, they headed north and east for 1,200 kilometres across remote and largely unexplored desert wilderness, where ranges of sand dunes tower to over three hundred metres in height. When they finally reached Abu Dhabi on the Persian Gulf, they were received as heroes. Theirs was the first camel crossing of the Empty Quarter in over fifty years. The expedition had historic roots, since the team sought to retrace for the first time the original 1947 crossing by world-famous explorer and adventurer Sir Wilfred Thesiger. In the years since Sir Wilfred's journey, Arabia and the Bedu have faced enormous upheaval. The discovery of oil precipitated rapid and irreversible changes to a nomadic society that had existed in relative isolation since the time of Mohammed. Travelling with their three Bedu companions, the team was afforded a rare glimpse of how these changes have affected the last of the Arabian nomads. During the desert crossing the team was determined to travel and live as authentically as possible, on camels, taking Arabic names and wearing traditional clothing, drinking their water from rank goatskins and eating mainly unleavened bread and dried camel meat. The cultural insights they were afforded are constantly fascinating but so are the cultural clashes, since the party was often followed by Land Cruisers full of well-meaning supporters who threatened to destroy the spirit of the journey. The expedition was also full of adventure and incident such as a hundred-foot descent down a narrow, snake-infested well, a three-day sandstorm, the sting of a desert scorpion, and the challenge of living with inescapable heat and nagging dehydration. The Empty Quarter Traverse received considerable media coverage, both nationally and internationally. In nineteen countries around the world, 22,000 school children enrolled in the team's Internet education program, and 4.8 million people visited the expedition Web site. The trek was reported widely and was the subject of a feature story on the CBC National and a

front-page colour photo story in the National Post. Now Bruce Kirkby has written a thoughtful and deeply felt account of this challenging expedition and has illustrated it with twenty-four pages of his stunning colour photographs. Anyone interested in remote areas of the world or stirred by the romance of old-fashioned adventure and daring will find Sand Dance constantly engaging.

Wonderful and richly rewarding [Sand Dance] is an immense achievement, as book and journey, one that made me gnash my teeth, laugh and weep for both sorrow and joy. And one that made me wish devoutly that I'd been there too. Globe and Mail Sand Dance is destined to become a classic. Its not only a fine literary work, its beautifully produced as well, peppered with Bruce Kirkbys evocative photographs and lovely touches of Arabic script. Highly recommended. Explore Sand Dance is a thrilling read for anyone who finds the desert, or the Middle East, alluring. Edmonton Journal From the Inside Flap For forty days and forty nights during the winter of 1999, three Canadians, Bruce Kirkby, Jamie Clarke, and Leigh Clarke, along with three Omani Bedu, travelled by camel across Arabia's great southern desert - the legendary Empty Quarter. Journeying from Salala in Oman on the Arabian Sea, they headed north and east for 1,200 kilometres across remote and largely unexplored desert wilderness, where ranges of sand dunes tower to over three hundred metres in height. When they finally reached Abu Dhabi on the Persian Gulf, they were received as heroes. Theirs was the first camel crossing of the Empty Quarter in over fifty years. The expedition had historic roots, since the team sought to retrace for the first time the original 1947 crossing by world-famous explorer and adventurer Sir Wilfred Thesiger. In the years since Sir Wilfred's journey, Arabia and the Bedu have faced enormous upheaval. The discovery of oil precipitated rapid and irreversible changes to a nomadic society that had existed in relative isolation since the time of Mohammed. Travelling with their three Bedu companions, the team was afforded a rare glimpse of how these changes have affected the last of the Arabian nomads. During the desert crossing the team was determined to travel and live as authentically as possible, on camels, taking Arabic names and wearing traditional clothing, drinking their water from rank goatskins and eating mainly unleavened bread and dried camel meat. The cultural insights they were afforded are constantly fascinating - but so are the cultural clashes, since the party was often followed by Land Cruisers full of well-meaning supporters who threatened to destroy the spirit of the journey. The expedition was also full of adventure and incident - such as a hundred-foot descent down a narrow, snake-infested well, a three-day sandstorm, the sting of a desert scorpion, and the challenge of living with inescapable heat and nagging dehydration. The Empty Quarter Traverse received considerable media coverage, both nationally and internationally. In nineteen countries around the world, 22,000 school children enrolled in the team's Internet education program, and 4.8 million people visited the expedition Web site. The trek was reported widely and was the subject of a feature story on the CBC National and a front-page colour photo story in the National Post. Now Bruce Kirkby has written a thoughtful and deeply felt account of this challenging expedition - and has illustrated it with twenty-four pages of his stunning colour photographs. Anyone interested in remote areas of the world or stirred by the romance of old-fashioned adventure and daring will find Sand Dance constantly engaging. About the Author Bruce Kirkby has pursued a life of adventure, undertaking major expeditions to remote locations around the globe. After graduating in Engineering Physics from Queens University, Bruce had a brief (six-month) office career, before his love of the wilderness and a craving for physical challenge tore him away. A professional guide, Bruce has spent much of the last ten years in arduous environments, leading whitewater rafting and canoe expeditions on remote northern rivers (including the Tatshenshini, Nahanni, Firth, and Burnside), jungle explorations in the Central American rainforest, and sea-kayak voyages along Belizes barrier reef. As a mountaineer Bruce has climbed throughout Canada and around the world, twice reaching the summit of Mt. McKinley (North Americas highest peak), and he was a member of the 1997 Canadian Mt. Everest Expedition. Three of Bruces journeys have been featured in National Geographic video documentaries, including a raft descent of Ethiopias legendary Blue Nile Gorge. His photographs have been featured in Outside magazine, American Photo, Macleans, Explore, and Mens Fitness. While not in the field, Bruce lives in Calgary, where he is currently organizing a one-hundred-day foot journey across Tibets remote Chang Tang Plateau.