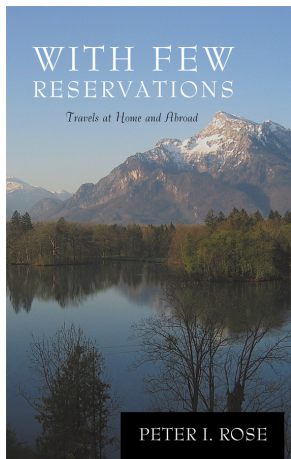


With Few Reservations

By Peter I. Rose

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With Few Reservations is a collection of 48 engaging commentaries that includes lively takes on what a travel writer does (“Eats, Shoots, and Leaves”) and vivid descriptions of what it is like to enjoy Austrian ambiance of in the Green Mountains of Vermont, Italian culture in a Swiss canton, the awesome scenery in Patagonia—in short, all of the delights and foibles of travel. Author Peter Rose tells of his own conversion experience in the Arizona desert, of playing gumshoe in Honolulu, of serving as a tour guide in Amsterdam, of visiting Sarajevo, of traveling across Europe by river boat, of windjamming off the coast of Maine and in the Mediterranean, and of savoring the unique flavor of other special places and experiences from Cape Cod to Cape Horn. He steps inside the travel business and offers a view from behind the scenes. Several photo essays vividly bring to life the places he describes and the fascinating people he met in his travels.

For nearly 60 years Peter Rose has been studying, teaching and writing about human encounters and interactions. Long anchored in Northampton, Massachusetts, where he is Sophia Smith Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Anthropology and Senior Fellow of the Kahn Liberal Arts Institute at Smith College, he is a world traveler—and a prize-winning travel writer. One commentator said of *With Few Reservations*, a recent book by this academic sojourner, “For those who love to read and love to travel, here are forty-eight engaging commentaries by a modern-day Mark Twain.”

Peter is the author of eight books—*They and We*, *The Subject is Race*, *Strangers in Their Midst*, *Mainstream and Margins*, *Tempest-Tost*, *Guest Appearances and Other Travels in Time and Space*, *With Few Reservations*, and the recently published *Postmonitions of a Peripatetic Professor*. He is editor of many others, including *The Ghetto and Beyond*, *Americans from Africa*, *The Study of Society*, *Seeing Ourselves*, *Nation of Nations*, *Views from Abroad*, *Working with Refugees*, *Professorial Passions*, and *The Dispossessed: An Anatomy of Exile*.

Preview:

*From the Prologue to **With Few Reservations***

“Eats, Shoots, and Leaves”

This opening commentary is about the lives and not-so-hard times of travel writers. Its title is not a redux of grammar Grinch Lynne Truss’s attack on those who misplace commas. I may be many things, but I am not a Chinese panda who eats shoots and leaves—nor is my wife. But we are members of a specialized subspecies of scribblers: journalists who spend short and very intense periods of eating (and sleeping and sightseeing), shooting pictures, and then rushing away from domestic venues and foreign climes with notebooks and heads full of ideas for writing knowingly about what are, more often than not, very short experiences.

I wouldn’t be surprised to learn that those who answer our queries, pose for our photos—or, more often, observe us as we snap away—then watch us fade into the sunset, scratch their heads and say, “What is it with those guys? They breeze into town, check out our restaurants, stay in our hotels, inns and B&Bs, take their pictures, and scoot.”

Many who do know what we are really doing there often speculate about what will be written about them. Those most au courant, mainly people in the hospitality business, hope to read glowing reports of our visits that are given the widest possible circulation. It is not an unrealistic expectation for, while trying to maintain objectivity, travel journalists more than other writers who also depend on a norm of reciprocity, often have a special feeling for where their bread and butter and less prosaic fare is coming from. In many ways, those who “do” travel are like all other writers who fancy ourselves as wordsmiths, but are also different from them.

Most journalists, especially investigative ones, like most social scientists (I’m one of those too, and sometimes have difficulty keeping my roles sorted out), are extremely cautious when they pull together their stories, reports and analyses based on lengthy research. They are rarely given to taking strong stands unless they can undergird them with unimpeachable data. While not averse to influencing readers, it is rarely a primary goal. This is not so for travel writers. For them (us, when I wear that hat), punditry is expected.

“Take my word, this Indonesian island near Singapore is a real find.”

“Too touristy.”

“Too isolated.”

“If you want a challenging adventure while enjoying creature comforts back in camp, this trip is for you....”

Praise for *With Few Reservations*:

5.0 out of 5 stars **Whitman With a Rucksack**, *Amazon.com*, March 16, 2011

Michael Capuzzo, author of *The Murder Room* and *Close to Shore*.

Peter Rose (the Hall-of-Fame Smith College scholar and travel writer, not the controversial gambler and singles hitter), is the rarest of travel companions—not a snarky globe-trotter but a joyous Walt Whitman with camera, rucksack, bottomless appetite for adventure and beloved wife Hedy at his side; an internationally known sociologist and anthropologist with the tongue of a poet and a heart of gold, a tireless sojourner across climes and hemispheres. From a romantic Vermont mountaintop to remote Patagonia, tribes of Sanibel, Florida retirees to penguins, Copernicus's 500-year-old sextant to moon rocks, the professor emeritus covers more ground than and gets his hands dirty like, yes, the other Pete Rose. After a few pages you're traveling along with him and Hedy, enjoying their good company and the world slightly better than it really is, for always there is the beautifully crafted, funny, wise, brilliant, good-humored, richly informing, wide river-over-rocks voice of the professor you never had and wished you did. I imagine I'd enjoy the Appalachian Trail with Bill Bryson once—but with Peter Rose I could go along time and again. Or try to. Look up and he's gone, the wiry, gray-bearded New Englander humping down the trail, taking it all in—history and culture, myth and lore, joy and anguish, side by side with Hedy.

Suzanne Wilson for the *Daily Hampshire Gazette* (Northampton, MA)

Peter Rose, a retired professor of sociology, adds an academic's penchant for insight and analysis to his innate curiosity as a writer who has traveled to many parts of this country and to many countries abroad. In these pieces, some previously published in the web magazine *SoGoNow.com*, *The New York Times*, *the Christian Science Monitor*, *Vermont Magazine*, and *Hampshire Life*, among others, Rose writes about a wide range of experiences, from searching for shells on Sanibel Island, to cruising aboard a luxury liner as it passed through the locks of the Panama Canal, to hiking in Patagonia, to walking through malls in suburban America, to discovering tiny, rural villages in Italy, to observing the appearance and behavior of American tourists in China.

Closer to home, Rose offers up his take on Cape Cod's amenities—and its social stratification that defines its complete mix of Brahmins, locals, outsiders, summer people, renters and temporary workers, among others.

And he writes about Northampton.

"My work and research have given me a legitimate excuse to travel and over the years I have truly seen the world," Rose writes. "Yet...I often suffer from a special kind of travel sickness. Once again, it never fails that there is a time when, like Dorothy, I want to go home. I long for the small, vibrant city of Northampton to which my wife and I came fifty years ago.' It is a place, he writes, that has become "a magnet for aging boomers and Gen-X yuppies, college students, street performers, Inghairs, punks, pacifists, feminists, straights, gays, and a pride of professionals...There are few cities like it in the United States or, for that matter, anywhere under the rainbow."

Rose is the author of six previous books; his last was *Guest Appearances and Other Travels in Time and Space*.

Jeffrey Lehmann, Emmy award-winning host and producer of the travel series *Weekend Explorer*

Peter Rose's academic background, extensive experience, and passion for travel makes his book, *With Few Reservations*, a must read for everyone from armchair traveler to world explorer.

Victor Blazquez, travel writer, producer and anchor of Mexico City's radio and TV program "La Fórmula del Turismo."

Peter Rose's splendid new book, *With Few Reservations*, will warm the hearts of travelers as they read his candid views and informative details of places and people in the U.S. and around the world."

Review by Joseph Yurt for *Reader Views* (September 2011)

For many years, Peter I. Rose lived two lives, one as a highly regarded teacher and researcher of sociology and anthropology, the other as a writer, photographer, editor and observer of travelers and their destinations. Seven years ago, Rose stepped down from his full-time academic responsibilities, although he continues to teach and do research on a part-time basis. But seemingly, he is still a robust traveler whose prolific output of travel essays continues to reflect his passion and enthusiasm for never ending excursions, both at home and abroad. Indeed, he seems to be enjoying the experience all the more, now that his jaunts include the full-time companionship of another academic sojourner, Hedy, his wife and partner of fifty-six years.

Rose's writing style in "With Few Reservations" mimics that of a sophisticated conversationalist, whose warm and charming manner would make one feel fortunate to have been seated next to him on a plane or at a dinner party. The eclectic mix of destination reviews and essays, reflections on travel writing and his life observations comprise nearly fifty stories, each from four to six pages in length. They are segmented in four groupings: American Potpourri; In Foreign Climes; Dreamers Holidays; and, Revelations. The ordering of the destination commentaries creates the sense of being on an open ended holiday where the itinerary is made up as you go. For example, in "American Potpourri," accounts of a few days visiting some of his favorite destinations in Vermont are followed by his visit to the Camelback Inn, in Scottsdale, Arizona for "Hot Rocks and Hedonism." The writings "In Foreign Climes," like those throughout the book, are richly personalized by Rose's previous visits to many of the old cities and sites that were part of his academic sojourns over the years. The span of time during which Rose has been traveling contributes to a wealth of observations on how these iconic destinations have changed, for better and worse, and how they have remained just as he remembers them from past visits.

The last two collections, "Dreamers Holidays" and "Revelations," contain the essays that resonated with me most. In "Schooner Heritage," Rose writes a wonderful account of the evolution of Windjamming, an adventurous experience for tourists to the mid-coast of Maine. These spirited and romantic adventures appeal to those who long to sail in one of the tall ships or who are drawn to the charm of the schooner-frequented towns with their numerous seafood restaurants and clam shacks and local shops and vendors offering nautical themed wares and wearable items.

In "Revelations," I especially enjoyed "The Guru of Gallivanting," conceived and created by Rose while he was confined to traveler's home incarceration by a broken ankle. "I was resolved to spend time reading — actually rereading — some favorite travel books and then write about them in a forthcoming column." In examining the stack of requested books brought home from the library by his wife, Hedy, Rose immediately was drawn by the magnetism of one of his favorites, Mark Twain's "The Innocents Abroad," "and never got much further. He offers a loving review of the book and of the writer, proclaiming Mark Twain to be "the Godfather of American travel journalism."

"With Few Reservations: Travels at Home and Abroad" is a well-written, engaging, and stimulating collection of commentary. Peter Rose has a highly developed ability to paint word pictures that draw the reader into his writing and see vividly in their mind what he is describing. Although the book's black and white photos, with a few exceptions, are a half-page or smaller, they are appealing and effective. For both dreamers and avid travelers, this book will provide an exceptional reading adventure.