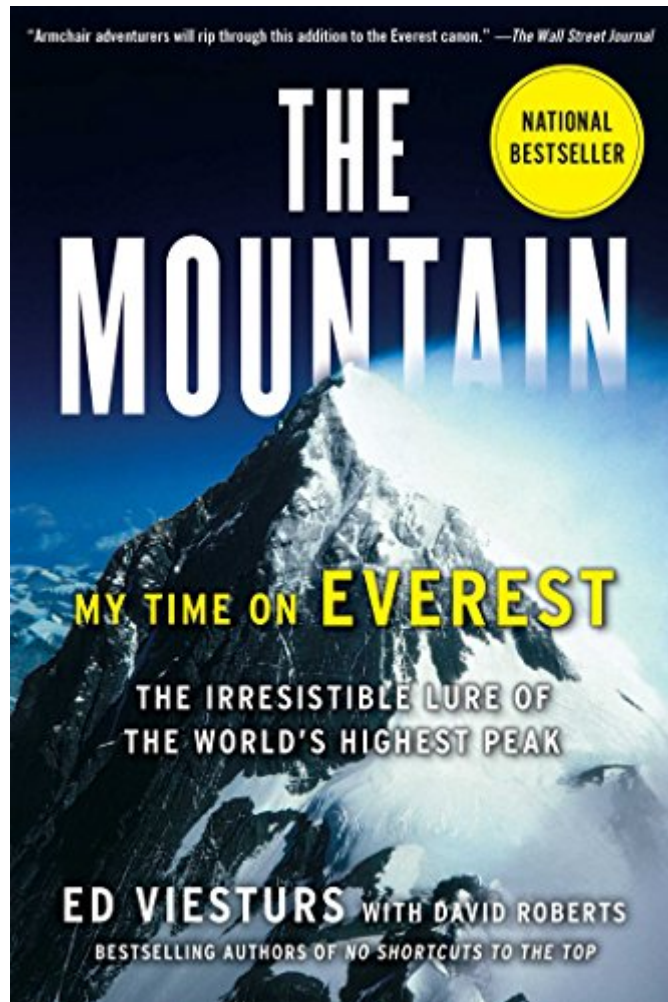


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The Mountain: My Time On Everest



Synopsis

In national bestseller *The Mountain*, world-renowned climber and bestselling author Ed Viesturs and cowriter David Roberts paint a vivid portrait of obsession, dedication, and human achievement in a true love letter to the world's highest peak. In *The Mountain*, veteran world-class climber and bestselling author Ed Viesturs—the only American to have climbed all fourteen of the world's 8,000-meter peaks—trains his sights on Mount Everest in richly detailed accounts of expeditions that are by turns personal, harrowing, deadly, and inspiring. The highest mountain on earth, Everest remains the ultimate goal for serious high-altitude climbers. Viesturs has gone on eleven expeditions to Everest, spending more than two years of his life on the mountain and reaching the summit seven times. No climber today is better poised to survey Everest's various ascents—both personal and historic. Viesturs sheds light on the fate of Mallory and Irvine, whose 1924 disappearance just 800 feet from the summit remains one of mountaineering's greatest mysteries, as well as the multiply tragic last days of Rob Hall and Scott Fischer in 1996, the stuff of which *Into Thin Air* was made. Informed by the experience of one who has truly been there, *The Mountain* affords a rare glimpse into that place on earth where Heraclitus's maxim "Character is destiny" is proved time and again.

Book Information

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General

Customer Reviews

There's something about the highest point on earth that beckons the romantic in all of us "even though there's nothing at all romantic about this peak. Summiting Mt. Everest requires absolute fortitude, determination and courage "which is underscored by the chilling truth that not every one who attempts to climb Mt. Everest makes it back. In Viesturs' and Roberts' hands, *The Mountain* is a story that manages to be both personal and global. Viesturs offers his take on many of the historical climbs of Everest, as well as his own poignant moments "such as, when during the filming of the IMAX movie (the highest grossing IMAX movie to date), he paused to pay homage to the frozen bodies of his friends Rob Hall and Scott Fischer, who had died making the ascent a year earlier. Another plus are the excerpts from Viesturs' diary, which add to the "you are there" flavor of the book. So do some of the brutal details that don't otherwise get a lot of press: the agonizing sore throats many climbers suffer, for example, as a result of breathing the cold, thin air; or their dry, hacking coughs, harsh enough to break ribs or bring up larynx lining. *The Mountain* is not a romantic account but plainly reveals the darker underbelly of the legend. All in all, a fascinating read "even for non-climbers, like me. Recommended. Thanks to Touchtone for providing me a free copy to review. All opinions are mine.

Another great book by Ed, however he goes into detail about routes and cols and other parts of the mountain but we have no map. It was very frustrating to have to use other books to locate these places. Otherwise great book.

The Mountain is one of Ed Viesturs' best books to date. He does an excellent job of mixing historic and recent accounts. While some people might prefer a more conventional chronological approach, this approach seemed to make the book a little more interesting. There was a little bit of recycling from his previous books but it was kept to a minimum and was mixed in with plenty of new material. One thing that seemed to stand out a little more in this book than Ed's previous books was his depiction of his summit days. In this book he seemed to really focus on how truly brutal those days are. In the past he wrote about his summit days and how he pulled them off but this time it seemed like they he made an effort to explain what really goes into them. Overall anyone who has an interest in Everest, the Himalaya, Adventure, or mountaineering will really enjoy this book. It moves at a good pace.

Ed Viesturs knows Mount Everest as well as any man, living or deceased. By his own admission, he spent two-and-a-half years of his life on or near the summit of Mount Everest. Life in Everest Base Camp and the related camps is described in precise and considerable detail, along with many Everest expeditions. Viesturs is most famous for his successful ascent of all 8,000-meter peaks without oxygen. As he notes, however, while ascending any mountain is not mandatory, returning is. Bragging rights aside, Viesturs and his collaborator, David Roberts do a good job of describing what world-class mountaineering is all about. The names of many mountain climbers and many expeditions are mentioned in "The Mountain: My Time on Everest." The attentive reader may become overwhelmed by the number of names and expeditions mentioned, going all the way back to Mallory and Irvine. While the index is quite useful, it would have helped if the authors had put together an appendix listing selected expeditions with key leaders, climbers and sherpas who were on them. Viesturs ranks among the top mountaineers in the world. His conditioning and technical skills have kept him alive and healthy where lesser mortals have been severely injured or died. He's also had some pretty good luck going for him. As the saying goes, "a man makes his own luck." To that end, Viesturs has shown exceptionally good judgment by on more than one occasion, turning back within a few hundred feet of reaching the summit. All too often among climbers when conditions change, "summit fever" takes over against one's better judgment. As Viesturs states in "The Mountain," "the mountain will still be there."

Sort of a strange book that isn't quite what it claims to be. I expected more of a personal account of Viesturs's Everest climbs. Instead, about two-thirds of the book is simply a rehash of previous expeditions, from the British attempts in the 20s up to the present day. Trouble is, most of this stuff is readily available in much more detail elsewhere. If you've read Unsworth's Everest, you've already trudged over most of this ground, with the exception of a couple of the later expeditions, and there are many other fine books covering the individual expeditions. What you have here is a breezy, once-over-lightly overview of the history of Everest that's only slightly enhanced by Viestur's perspective. The remaining third of the book that does deal with his own climbs is somewhat disappointing too, as he's often reduced to saying (in effect): "I won't go into this in any detail because I've already covered it another book." One wonders exactly why this book was written. It smacks of a publisher's idea for recycling old material. On the positive side, it's a pleasant enough read, and if you haven't read much about the history of Everest, this would probably be a fine introduction.

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