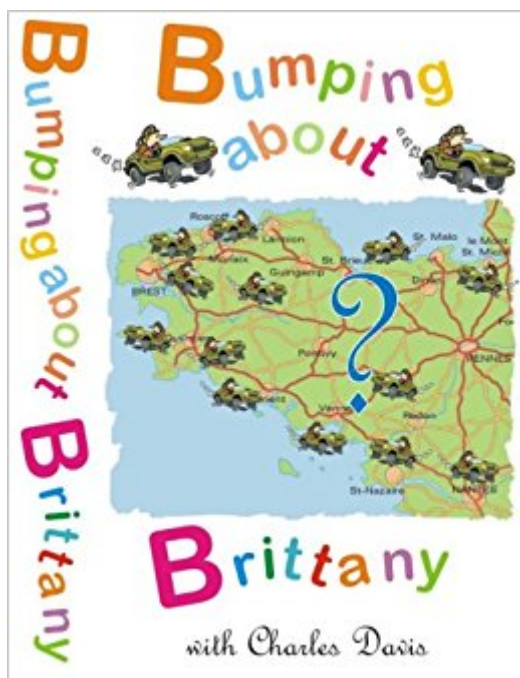


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Bumping About Brittany



Synopsis

Bumping About Brittany is a guidebook with a difference, a series of excursions into the cultural, physical and emotional heartland of Brittany that can be followed up on the ground or simply consumed in the comfort of your own home as a good read. Taken together, the twenty-five essays of which the book is composed, amount to a portrait of the region, of its history, it's landscape, its people, and the way they relate to one another and France as a whole. It is an introduction for visitors and new residents to the Brittany most tourists never see, not simply a litany of classic tourist attractions, but a celebration of the happenstance of travel, the chance encounters and oddities that crop up when we're wandering around, not quite aimlessly, but ready to enjoy whatever we find, even if it wasn't precisely what we were looking for in the first place. If you want to know where the theme parks are, you'll probably be disappointed. But if you want to know what the Bretons think of France and vice-versa, if you want to know how to climb an imaginary mountain, if you want to know why the slippers look a little peculiar, if you want to know what city invented International Non-Diet Day, how to be rude to a Parisian, where to search for little green men, which shellfish should go on the sex offenders register, why the pope provoked a scandal, who brews the best beer, where the President buys his cider, how to find the way to hell and back, the approved technique for nicking a garden gnome, and the correct word for suggesting something is a lot of old cobblers, then this might be the book for you.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Diamond in the rough, 7 Sep 2008 By J Todd (London England) - Reader Review Charles Davis

clearly knows Brittany well and in *Bumping About Brittany* he's come up with a beguiling mix of anecdote, history, and a liberal dose of what reads like outright fantasy. It's all very enjoyable, though, and on the whole very well written. I'm not sure all the excursions he describes would bear repeating, but he packs a lot of information in, and from what I know of the region, these essays should illuminate any trip to Brittany, even if you don't visit the places he describes. I reckon it would be best read before travelling as a kind of appetiser, though (speaking as someone who hasn't been to France for several years) it also works well as a trigger of happy memories. His humour is sharp, occasionally verging on the sardonic, but he never slips into that let's-laugh-at-the-funny-foreigners style of writing that mars so many English books about foreign places.

Brittany miscellaneous, 24 Aug 2008 By P R Spooner (Barcelona Spain) - Reader Review What an odd book! I used this author's walking guide to Brittany when we were there this summer (see my reviews), so I was interested to see what this 'bumping about' was. I haven't really come across anything like it before, a mixture of travelogue, practical guidebook, and essay, but I must say, it works. The print's a bit small, the pictures, too, but it's an entertaining and informative read featuring the sort of obscure facts and diverting anecdotes that you would never come across as a casual visitor. Haven't, of course, had the occasion to try following in the author's footsteps, but there's enough tempting material to persuade me we really must go back again. Combined with the *Walk! Brittany* book, you've got enough material here for several complete holidays.

Charles Davis loves his adopted home and so do we. Brittany has plenty of substance and distinct character and Davis uncovers a lot of important and quirky information that can add to an appreciation of its unique ambiance. While he can be witty and engaging, he can also be repetitive and occasionally grating. He can be very funny, but sometimes he is trying too hard. Some books go zipping along and you don't want them to end. The book would have benefited from some skillful editing, and might have been 20% shorter and a lot crisper. I can imagine he would be someone who would be great fun to meet in a pub-for an evening or so, but not every night. While there is a lot of interesting historical and cultural context, his Breton neighbors do not fully come to life as much more than stereotypes. Yet there are a few absolutely brilliant and empathetic chapters. All in all, a useful and worthwhile book for someone who has or looks forward to spending some time in this distinctive corner of France.

This is definitely the book for hikers, bikers, walkers etc. It is well detailed & also has helpful maps. Convenient size.

He manages to get to perhaps half of the "best of Brittany" which is really rather good. I got a bit weary of the endless attempts (and oft repeated) at being funny. It gets old fast.

Fun book, but the British humor, vs the French can be a little much.

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