



Singapore Salvation

Jennifer Burge

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“Revealing account of the destruction of one woman’s personal and professional identity amid Asia’s cultural quicksand”

Read the unvarnished truth about the expat lifestyle in Singapore Salvation.

The "extremely entertaining" Jennifer Burge understands the challenges of life abroad. A professional trailblazer with a wanderlust affliction, she refused to give up after documenting the pitfalls of taking her career from the United States to Europe in her first memoir, *The Devil Wears Clogs*. Instead, the story continues where we left her--in the Netherlands on the eve of her move to Singapore. On arrival, she is confounded by the subtle complexity of Asian cultures, her understanding of local tradition is a mirage, appearing and disappearing with each new interaction.

Moving to Southeast Asia when the rigidity of European life began to wear on her seemed to be the perfect solution. A sophisticated modern condo in the heart of a developing nation was the answer to her prayers—or so she thought. The entrance of the Global Financial Crisis compounded the already-challenging international job search to an unprecedented level. Living in her fourth country without her professional status or a peer network leaves Jennifer to question her identity. Solo travel across Asia allows her to create an authentic one.

From the Back Cover:

Singapore, shining example of modernity and development in Asia? Or “Disneyland with the Death Penalty”?

I was ready to leave Europe, but knew nothing about Asian culture. Landing in Singapore was a crash course. Learning the difference between North Americans and Europeans was kindergarten compared to East meeting West. I'd left my job just before the grand entrance of the Global Financial Crisis, and Singapore was fiercely protecting its own. I was no longer branded with a corporate identity and I wasn't anyone's mother. Not only did my external landscape undergo a radical transformation, my internal one was left in ashes. I had to go looking for it in Tokyo, Cambodia, Vietnam, and New Zealand—places I never expected to find myself. When I did, no one was more surprised than I.

Singapore Salvation Details

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Author : Jennifer Burge

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From Reader Review Singapore Salvation for online ebook

Arf2D2 says

I *think* this memoir is supposed to be about a Western woman discovering another culture. Instead, it reads like a spoiled brat whining about how circumstances aren't quite to her liking.

She proudly expounds on the importance of a good wine selection as a criteria for the only airline she would choose to fly.

When faced with hardships, such as no heat, she immediately fixes it herself. Oh, wait. no she doesn't. She calls her husband, who is in another country. When he points out that he is, in fact, in another country and cannot help her, she blames him for her hardships. After all, she doesn't speak the language (despite having lived there for years). (Can you say Ugly American?)

In another instance, the author bemoans her lack of available funds. Was it because she had to pay the rent? Buy food? Medical bills? Nope. Nope. and nope. She was short on money because she had done too much traveling lately. Poor baby.

In yet another instance, she grudgingly invites a friend to join her on her trip, but only because she feels obligated to (and she feels no shame in admitting this).

At numerous points throughout this book, I felt like telling this woman to grow up, stop whining, and just get on with it.

Joe Russell says

The author has done it again! Her writing style makes you feel like you are right next to her taking in all the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of these exotic destinations. She also gives us the insight into her internal and external struggles of trying to work and live within the confines of a different culture and trying to determine what she truly desires!

Ilonita50 says

I received this book from Goodreads First-reads, thank you!

The cover is intriguing and complex, giving me the idea it has various stories inside. It was a little different than from what I expected it to be but I did enjoy it a lot.

This book is a memoir of moving to Singapore in South East Asia from The Netherlands and trying to find her space, the book also includes personal short travels to neighboring countries in the region, trying to adopt to newest culture, find a job and make friends..

I am happy I got the chance to read the author's perspective of living in Singapore and the way we share same year for first trip to Spore and her honest writing makes me like the story, also compare my own experience and knowing how different it was two years later when I went there again...

Although I have a different opinion about living in Singapore and what one can do there, it didn't bother me from enjoying the book. It was a great & sad to read how many companies according to writer lacked the proper business structure in terms of project management. But it felt great to share the same feelings for

entering the Kinokuniya bookstore there, knowing what the store offers to readers and how they make the consumer feel about their stores.

Not to even mention how much the country itself has changed since then. Singapore has gone far more more expensive than at the time the writer was surviving/trying to blend in there. It has become a little absurd in some ways for citizen's and it has also gained more popularity/ acknowledgement where it is on the map & popular skyline, shops from foreigners, lol..

The author has beautifully blended within the book short glimpses about her short trips to Bali, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand. I would have done the research before heading for each of the destination of their culture and customs, so to be more familiar and respect their ways, but I am not the author. The story also draws a little of personal life struggle when one is earning and another partner is not.. She had high hopes for living in Singapore and I think the writer went through/ experienced the so called "culture shock" which has different affects to each of us and affects us differently in every other country. There would be no similar views of how one may or may not find the very opposite of the culture, either you feel the connection or you don't. Either you learn to enjoy it or you feel and outsider in every corner and long to find "Your" place. This is one way how the author writes her memoir of her experience.

The writing is smooth and if not disturbed one can read it in evening's time.

Caroline says

This was an improvement on her first book, and it includes some interesting descriptions of her travels in Asia and Australia but often does not go into enough detail to fully 'enter the scene' with her. The personal side is honest about struggling in her marriage and with depression (which at times makes the book itself depressing to read), but we also see her grow from being surprised/disappointed at things that are normal in developing countries to finally starting to embrace the less-than-luxurious travel by the end.

Nada Loughead says

I enjoyed The Devil Wears Clogs so wanted to continue reading Burge's world exploring journey and career craziness. Singapore doesn't disappoint - honest and engaging - she takes you on many personal and vacationing journeys. Look forward to her Australian tales. <http://www.bookcrossing.com/journal/1...>

Jo says

Great sequel to The Devil Wears Clogs - more devilish characters pop up in Singapore Salvation -- some easily forgotten, others not so much -- But Jennifer manages to deal with all of them while making time to travel throughout Asia. She colors her adventures of eastern countries with honesty and does not sugar-coat some of the more seedy aspects in various places. She gives the reader an open view of the good and bad -- now when others of us travel to those places, we know what to look out for -- Jennifer also gives us a look at life in Singapore and the difficulties she faced in both career and home life -- But she overcomes the odds that seem to be against her to get where she wants to be -- Australia -- I'm looking forward to reading about that!

Alessandra says

The enjoyment garnered from being absorbed in the life light reel of Europe in Jennifer's first memoir continued into Singapore Salvation. A stripped back honest account of the many valleys, self examinations and mountain highs while living a modern day nomadic lifestyle in the Far East. The vivid narrative and noise of the many cities called transcended the previous to where I would be and want to be. Anticipation awaiting the pen of her Australian experience.

Jeanette says

I was pleased to have won this book in a recent Goodreads First Reads giveaway.

This is different to my usual genre and did surprise me as to how much I enjoyed reading Singapore Salvation. I have not read any of the author previous books, but shall be keeping an eye open for more. I rarely write what a book is about for fear of spoiling for others, but I do recommend.

Anna R says

This book is very honest - and that's about the only complimentary thing I can say about it. The author shares with the reader her thoughts, travel impressions, frustrations and relationship issues. She is way more intelligent than the average and stereotypical 'expat wife', however as she travels through South-East Asia, her perceptions are very superficial.

The book starts on an excited note, with the author extolling the joys of business class travel in detail for a few pages. I don't think she realises that most readers would have a good idea what business class is all about, even if they haven't flown business before, so this seems just like good old fashioned bragging.

While living in Singapore, Jennifer does not make an effort to study and understand the culture and society she chose to live in.

I lost count how many times in the book she says "I had no idea that..." .

She lands in Singapore knowing absolutely NOTHING about the place ("I had no idea there were Indians in Singapore"). Well, with so much time on her hands, why didn't she try to understand the place better: there are fabulous opportunities to learn. The Peranakan Museum, for example: a guided tour with a native volunteer would give a newcomer like her a wealth of information about the social fabric of Singapore, its history, art.... Did she visit the amazing Asian Civilisations Museum? Did she visit all the colourful neighbourhoods such as Joo Chiat Rd, Tiong Bahru, Kalang, Kampong Glam...Did she take any interest in the history, architecture and culture of the multiracial society that Singapore is? The colonial history, the pre-colonial times? The mythology, religions, mentality, customs?

And no, Jennifer, your sandals would not have been stolen from in front of a Hindu temple. Not in Singapore.

It is true that our perceptions of a place depends not so much whether the place is beautiful or fascinating,

but whether we are happy in our personal and professional lives when we happen to live there. Jennifer hated Singapore (except for the bars and restaurants).... because she had suddenly found herself without a job and without a clue about what to do with herself. Not an envious position to be in. But didn't she prepare for that eventuality at all before arriving in Singapore? Did she believe that as an American she would just walk into a job? No Plan B??

The author is not really a professional writer, so we have to forgive her errors of style, plot, syntax etc. etc, but what I found really disturbing is the enormous amounts of alcohol she drinks... And then she complains about having gained weight (and somehow doesn't know why). I had this image of her while reading the book: dishevelled, hot, perspiring, frustrated, and either drunk or hungover. She sometimes sounds like an 18-year old backpacker on gap year, not a 40-year old professional woman.

I am Australian and I hope the author has found purpose and happiness in Queensland, and that now she understands why we have quarantine laws... I am looking forward to Jennifer's next book and her take on Australia. I just hope to find some more depth in her perceptions and writing.
