FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

The Wilderness Notebook
Herb Gordon
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The Wilderness Notebook is Sierra Club outing leader Gordon's distillation of outdoor wisdom accrued through his fifty years of hiking, paddling, biking and camping his way across North America.

Unlike many "how-to" outdoor books, this book is extremely fun to read, owing to its flamboyant, almanac-like format and infusion of gentle humor. Sober, informative text on outdoor basics are bracketed by numerous, lighthearted sidebars containing folklore, anecdotes, nature notes and other assorted outdoor fables and foibles. The book appears to be aimed at both the neophyte outdoor person as well as the jaded veteran; the former should find it informative and inspiring, and the latter more entertaining, although it is hard to believe that even the most experienced trail-blazer won't find some new nugget of wilderness sagacity.

As enticing and enjoyable as this book is, however, uninitiated readers should apply some caution when actually putting Gordon's methods to practice. Gordon borrows much of his material from others, but there is not a bibliography present in the book, making verification of details difficult. Moreover, unless the reader has some prior outdoor experience, it is not always obvious which of Gordon's tips and tricks are appropriate for a specific type of outing. For example, equipment assemblages for backpacking are not necessarily identical to those for canoeing, car camping or biking, and the book would greatly benefit from more organization by outing type.

Nevertheless, Gordon's amusing style and reverence for the wilderness experience may be just the invitation some readers need to abandon the remote and the couch and hit the trail.

David Speas