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Conversational Cajun French 1 (French Edition)



Synopsis

This book focuses on everyday words and common phrases that can be understood everywhere Cajun French is spoken, despite the various dialects and subdialects. It teaches the Cajun words for the days and months, holidays, parts of the body, number, clothing, colors, rooms of the house and their furnishings, foods, animals, fruits and vegetables, tools, plants, and trees. In addition, there is a section of useful expressions and a list of traditional Cajun names. This audio enables even the beginning student working alone to learn enough to converse with Cajuns or at least enough to stay out of trouble in South Louisiana.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Cajun language has been passed on by word of mouth for more than two hundred years. The authors approximate that 60 percent of Cajun French vocabulary can be found in any standard French dictionary. The remaining 40 percent is comprised of words with origins in other languages or words that are unique to Cajun French. "Tabasco" is an originally Spanish word that has ensconced itself in the Cajun language to the point of almost becoming synonymous with the entire culture. Indian and African words, like "bayou" and "gumbo," respectively, have also found their way into the language. Furthermore, Cajuns often shorten words and run words together. In standard French, "*À cette heure*" means "at this time" or "now." When spoken quickly, this becomes "aseteur," which is how the Cajuns pronounce it. While complex, the Cajun language does not have to be complicated. Authors Randall P. Whatley and Harry Jannise, both Cajuns, believe that their language can be taught and written, just like standard French or Spanish. Their book,

Conversational Cajun French I, introduces the Cajun language to the reader. This companion CD, narrated by Whatley, provides the crucial pronunciation necessary to learn this beautiful, and until now, elusive, language.

Authors Randall P. Whatley and Harry Jannise, Cajuns who speak fluent Cajun French, originally developed this handbook for a series of informal conversational Cajun French classes for the LSU Union in Baton Rouge.

This is a review for the Conversational Cajun French two CD set. This is a pronunciation guide which follows along with the book sold separately. This material has a lot of words which are purely Cajun, such as the names for local fish and shellfish and is very valuable for a French learner who is trying to avoid European French pronunciation while learning. I gave it 4 stars instead of five. This was not because of the material nor its organization. I subtracted the fifth star due to recording quality since there is a muffled sound with loss of high frequencies so that some words are hard to distinguish. For the serious beginner I'd recommend cross referencing with Reverend Jules Daigle's CDs and book. Unlike Watley's slim and portable book, Daigle's book is one of those big thick hardbacks, hard to put into a carry-on bag so Watley is better for practice while traveling. Of course the best way to learn pronunciation, once a person learns a basic vocabulary is to talk to a French speaker, but people don't go around with signs on their heads identifying themselves as members of minority language communities. I've noticed though, as I've started to learn, I've started to meet more Cajun French speakers who are willing to help out with corrections. This practice among speakers is good for the community as well, since people get 'rusty' if they don't speak their language enough. There are native French speakers all along the Gulf Coast from Houston to Pensacola and beyond but they are becoming more isolated and getting older every day.

Cajun was spoken by my mother as a child but lost through the years from being punished when speaking it in school as well as it simply just fading away over the years. She is no longer around and I live all the way in the Pacific Northwest and very unlikely to run into a Cajun who speaks the language. This is a great tool to give me the basics. It really is best when accompanied by the CD's. Second time I bought this book and initially came with cassette tapes. Lost the book and had to replace it.

Very good and very informative it didn't explain that the book in this audio CD did not come together

you have to order them separately

Excellent product

Needs the written text as a companion.

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