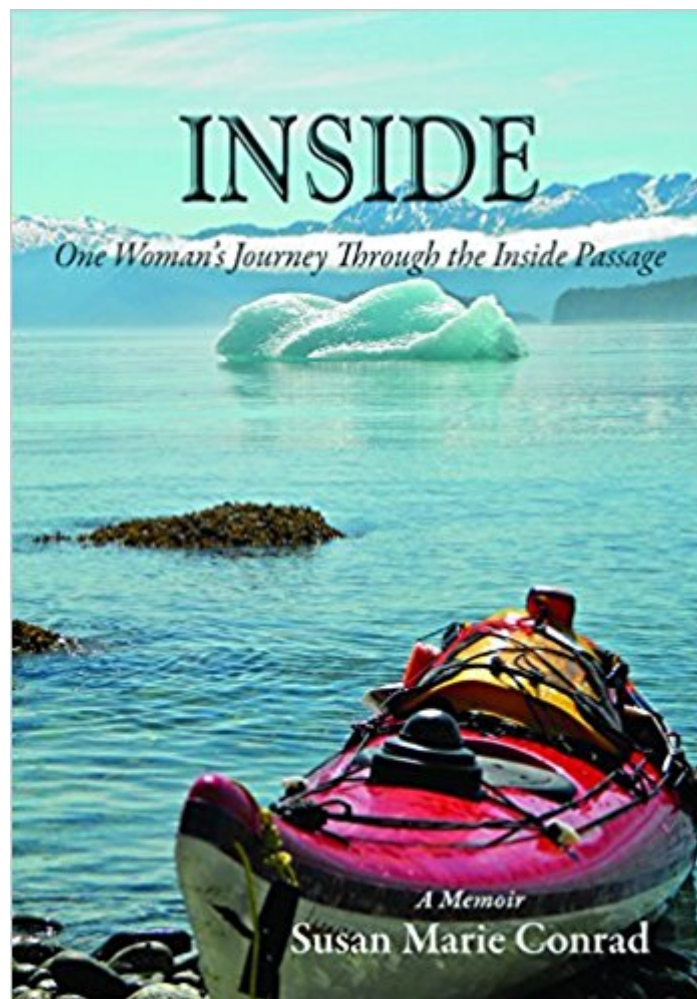




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Inside: One Woman's Journey Through The Inside Passage



Synopsis

The Ocean is calling me. This is my Journey. With these words, in the spring of 2010, Susan Marie Conrad scaled her world down to an 18-foot sea kayak and launched a solo journey that took her north to Alaska. With no sense of where she belonged in space and unreconciled feelings of a painful childhood following her, she decided that instead of running away, she would run toward her dreams. Her adventure took her along the western coast of North America, through the Inside Passage--a 1,200-mile ribbon of water--in a journey of the sea and soul. The expedition took her deep within herself, humbling her, healing her, helping her to discover the depths of her own strength and courage. On her way from Anacortes, Washington, to Juneau, Alaska, she grappled with fear and exhaustion, forged friendships with quirky people in the strangest places, endured perilous weather and angry seas, and pretended not to be intimidated by 700-pound grizzly bears and 40-ton whales. She lived her dream.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Susan Conrad writes of the things that make solo sea kayaking challenging, rewarding and life changing. The tides are not always in her favor and the crossings are not all sun drenched and paddled with ease or certainty. At times her fatigue is as palpable as the taste of salt from tears or sea spray or both. When Susan reaches her goal, the reader will understand there is so much more to a solo endeavor than the physical act of paddling 1,100 miles.--Chris Duff, expedition paddler and rower, author, *On Celtic Tides* and *Southern Exposure*" I had the privilege of meeting Susan Conrad

before she set out on her journey. Her excitement about the coming venture was contagious. As we said goodbye I was not a little envious of all that lay before her. And she does not disappoint. Inside: One Woman's Journey through the Inside Passage is a singular epic. It is a brave story. One of personal triumph, of heart break, terrifying challenges, soulful introspection and sheer joy. It is also a moving story about the power of friendship. Her words flow off the pages, carrying the reader along on the current of her adventure. I highly recommend this book to anyone who wants to read about real adventure, personal challenge and experience, through her evocative writing, the wonders and beauty of the Inside Passage." --Milbry Polk, co-author of *Women of Discovery* and founder of Wings WorldQuest

"It's not often that a person possessing the ability to sea kayak the Inside Passage solo is also capable of putting into words the extraordinary mental, physical, and emotional challenges faced daily on this incredible journey. Susan Conrad, author of *Inside: One Woman's Journey Through the Inside Passage* is one of those people. By skillfully blending sometimes painful memories of her life's trials and tribulations, with stories of the hardships and accomplishments she faced on her 1,100 mile kayaking adventure, she reveals valuable lessons for every outdoor lover seeking to find balance between themselves and nature. The life changing decisions, impassioned frustration, numbing exhaustion, and internal obstacles that we all face on our life's journey are eloquently mirrored here in one woman's Northwest Pacific Coast odyssey." --Denis Dwyer, expedition paddler, author of *Alone in the Passage: An Explorer's Guide to Sea Kayaking the Inside Passage*

"Susan Marie Conrad's new memoir's title, *Inside: One Woman's Journey through the Inside Passage*, is a bit of a misnomer: it is not a "woman's" book. It's a book for everyone. Conrad's narrative is engaging and unpretentious. She comes across as refreshingly transparent. The book is an easy read. Conrad's memoir isn't just a self-discovery, pull-yourself-up-by-one's-bootstraps story. It's an adventure story and a love story." --Robert H. Miller, author of *Kayaking the Inside Passage: A Paddler's Guide from Olympia, WA to Muir Glacier, AK*

"Susan's mostly solo experience reads like a rite of passage, a personal challenge destined to turn her life around from its gritty beginnings and events she would rather have never experienced to a positive new awakening. I enjoyed reading Susan's second expedition. By 'second' I mean her book about the trip, because I know that writing it must have drawn as much energy, taken as much time and pulled as much on her emotions as the paddling trip itself. She reveals her background; some ghosts she was determined to come to terms with. She reveals her hopes and her fears. She reveals the emotion that spending so long in such an impartial environment invokes. She shows her backbone. Hers is the story of a deliberate passage from one place to another, from one life into another, burying old ghosts and creating the foundations for a happier future." --Nigel Foster, kayak

designer, instructor and author of numerous books including *On Polar Tides* and *Encounters from a Kayak: Native People, Sacred Places, and Hungry Polar Bears*/"Her 1200 mile kayaking expedition from Anacortes to Juneau in 2010 has adventure, introspection, beautiful descriptions and poetic language that capture the imagination and make the pages turn quickly" she's a powerful, courageous woman who happens to be a gifted paddler and a gifted writer."--Penny Carter, *The Paddler*, Fall 2016"Magic and gratitude. That's what comes through in Susan Marie Conrad's sea tale of her solo kayak adventure through the Inside Passage from Anacortes, Washington to Juneau, Alaska.... Susan's book is an entertaining, enjoyable read.... In the end, Susan rises to what she calls the 'biggest challenge for all humans', that of becoming comfortable with the conditions of the mind in the face of unfolding reality.... Susan's story takes her individual journey and makes it relevant to the reader on many levels... Inside is magic." --Nancy Soares, *TsunamiRangers.com*"[Susan's] story is an illuminating and inspiring one. She shares both the highlights of her trip and those low moments when the rain seems to last forever and her gear stays soggy and damp. Conrad's writing style is smooth and conversational, and, throughout my reading experience, I felt as though she were personally telling me her story. I enjoyed every minute of this action-packed and exciting memoir. "--Jack Magnus, *Readers' Favorite*"Within these pages of eloquent writing and striking photos, readers will sleep to songs of humpback whales, thrill to spectacular scenery, delight in the generosity of strangers, and share in the author's joy as she discovers the courage and the deep gratitude that comes from experiencing the best and the worst of Nature and humanity. This is a book we highly recommend." --Chanticleer Book Reviews

Susan Conrad grew up on a small farm in upstate New York, where she nurtured her sense of adventure amidst 500 acres of hayfields, stonewalls, and deciduous forests. By dint of exploring the mountains of Colorado, Oregon, and Montana, she eventually discovered the dynamic and addictive environment of coastal British Columbia and Washington State, where she still thrives as an adventure-seeker. Susan is a writer, photographer, personal trainer, kayak instructor, and outdoor enthusiast. Her tenacious exploration by sea kayak has fueled her stories of the natural world for decades. She's "fifty-something" and plans on habitual escapades from Puget Sound to Alaska well into her nineties. She lives with her second-half-of-life partner, along with a ridiculously large dog, and two normal-sized cats in Oso, Washington. Learn more at susanmarieconrad.com

Disclaimer: Susan is a dear friend, so I'm biased. I witnessed her hard work and persistence in both paddling the Inside Passage and writing this book. Her memoir is a tale of both her inner and outer

journey while paddling 1,200 miles of challenging ocean waters and attempting to synthesize 50 years of living *Inside* - which has its own unique challenges. *Inside* has been called "'Wild' by kayak," but frankly I think Susan's story demonstrates far more self-awareness and awareness of the natural environment around her than *Wild*. Not to mention MUCH more preparation. Without such careful preparation, a person could easily suffer a fatal mishap on a journey like this. Susan has accomplished things most of us only talk about doing. She is one of the most accomplished and impressive women I know; yet she is also kind, humble and down to earth. I enjoyed getting to know her inner world better while reading *Inside*. I also loved her tale of adventure and roughing it in the wilds of the coastal Pacific Northwest, interspersed with intriguing people and places. A gifted photographer and visual artist, Susan has a knack for colorful, quirky written descriptions that capture the imagination and make me want to see these places in person. She also demonstrates a concern for protecting these wild woods and waters, and a deep respect for the humans and creatures who inhabit them. I am honored to call her a friend and proud of her for sharing this beautiful book with the world.

Just finished Susan's book... what a wild ride she had on the IP, and what lessons it teaches you as it fills your tank with courage and determination to last a lifetime. To overcome not just the kind of fear that comes from overcoming dangerous events or sudden challenges, but the kind of fear that circles around you when you are alone and in the dark and overcome by conditions in a wild place all by yourself. That's a much more challenging kind of fear. But to kayak the IP, you have to rise to that challenge. It was fascinating to read how Susan managed that on her trip. We did the IP the summer of 2009 and the again in 2010 in our power boat, and we saw kayakers from time to time and even gave one shelter for a night when the weather was god-awful along the BC coast and he was bordering on hypothermia. We knew it was a tough paddle (it was hard enough in a power boat), but I hadn't fully realized how challenging it was to have to find a place on shore to sleep every night. We anchored out in some small cove each night, and had to worry about wind and wave when it blew, but that was nothing compared to dealing with the minimal campsites (sometimes none on big tides) and bears. There were nights when I was worried about dragging anchor in howling weather and thought it would be so nice to be ashore. I won't wish for that again! Not after experiencing what that can really be like in Susan's book. I now have a great appreciation for what it takes to paddle that route. Everyone who travels that route on a small boat and has to find shelter each night also shares many of the same experiences and passed by the same places and

challenges. But it is so, so much more intimate and personal and intense in a kayak. Like Susan, we have also listened to Humpback whales sleeping (which she does an extraordinary good job of describing) along with the crazy antics they sometimes resort to. And the deranged but delightful behavior of Orcas in Alaska. We also worried about them surfacing under our boat -- but we weighed many tons. Imagine how that worry must feel in a tiny kayak! Now I know. It's been more than a half decade since we made our last trip on the IP, but this book made me feel as if I was there again. It brought back all kinds of memories and experiences and made we wish we were doing it again. There is magic on the waters of the PNW and up along the BC coast and SE Alaska. Sometimes punch you in the face and ruin all your plans kind of magic, and other times its sublime and beautiful magic beyond my ability to describe. Yet Susan managed to capture so much of that in her book. Highly recommended read if you have ever traveled the IP by boat and want to feel what it was like doing it on your bottom. I think you have to have done it to understand it, but if anyone can convey the experience, it's Susan and this book.

I'll be honest that I was a bit scared when I started the book. I'm a book snob (I like good writing), I sea kayak and I also know Susan personally. What could go wrong? I'd read early snippets and really liked what I read. Then when I received and started reading the book Susan's writing immediately drew me in!!! Good sentence structure, great flow.....ok enough of that. The fact is that this is a great read, full of adventure, adversity, laughs, tears.....it has it all plus it's very well written. Few people have the guts to paddle 66 days alone in an environment so remote and full of peril. But this slender, tough, genuinely lovely lady planned and executed something she'd wanted to do for a long time. This adventure story is as good as it gets with a heroine you'll grow to love and admire. I think the reader will also come away with a new appreciation for the power and beauty of nature in its rawest form. The wind, water, bears can be one moment docile and the next moment dangerous and on the Inside Passage it can all change in a blink. Susan is currently doing a book tour and if you have a chance to see her and her presentation, don't miss it.

While I live in the beautiful Pacific North West. This book caught my attention and is not the typical book that I read. In fact it is the first one that kept me reading it to the end. At times I felt like I was there with her seeing the majestic beauty and feeling the fear while she was navigating through the dangerous waters. And the serenity of sleeping to the melody of the sleeping whales. Susan must be a very strong and determined person to have taken on this journey. I know she is very detailed and did her diligence in preparing for her soul finding trip. While the only kayaking I have done was my

family celebrating my daughter birthday on Lake Union in Seattle on a warm day. Thank you Susan for succeeding in your journey and sharing your story with the world! Robyn

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