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Alone Together: Sailing Solo To Hawaii And Beyond



Synopsis

What happens when a man of today's overconnected world sets off alone across the Pacific at the age of 71? Christian Williams, a veteran sailor and writer, planned a 6,000-mile voyage as a test of his own seamanship and endurance, and to fulfill a lifelong goal. But he found his focus quickly turning from the surrounding sea to all of us. Is anyone the same person when no one else is there? Do we dare to find out? In a new world of soaring seabirds, violent storms, and majestic emptiness, Williams discovered answers to questions he had never asked about who we are, why we sail, and the universal fear of being alone. *Alone Together* is a complete technical course in offshore sailing technique and yacht preparation, and a philosophical inquiry into what it takes to be truly alive in the 21st century.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an absolutely wonderful, joyful, hilarious book with jokes on every page. Williams has created a new form -- taking the reader along on his trip and talking him through all the intricacies of sailing (which is incredibly interesting and fun to learn if you're not much of a sailor - and probably even more fun if you are) but also going on wonderful tangents on literature, philosophy and a lifetime of reading and experience. I have never read a book like this - closest I can come is *Zen And The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, which was very important to me when I was younger. A word also should be said about the author's style - which is formal and friendly and very very funny. If you like Mencken, you will laugh a lot - though Williams is not as mean as Mencken and seems to have nothing but affection for his world. There are wonderful descriptions of loneliness, of storms, of

battered masts, broken steering wheels and impending hurricanes - and hilarious accounts of just sitting in the ocean bobbing up and down. For those who know Kauai, his insights there are pretty joyful also. The book is a wonderful celebration of a great adventure. It makes you want to get off your ass and do something extraordinary, but it doesn't make you miserable if you can't muster the courage. Very generous, very funny. A wonderful achievement. Highly recommended.

Christian surprises you en route. While he writes with a warm, sardonic style, you are convinced of his humility as he approaches even the simplest of tasks single-handing his first tack out of Marina del Rey. You empathize and feel with him because his style of writing is so personal, self-revealing, and utterly hilarious at times. You live with him from one can of peaches and rum to another, from broaching at sea, and ceaseless talking to himself and his imaginary literary figures aboard, along with his grimaces of stupidity to which every sailor can relate to. And yet, as he wages the final stages of his voyage, you discover his long and seasoned time at sea with well-known races and events to include the '79 Fastnet win which obviously had helped him for times in this voyage. I savored his YouTube video when it first came out, and purchased this book thinking it would be a re-hash of the video experience--hardly at all. An inescapable read which will go aboard my vessel to remind me firstly of how to write well, and secondly of how such stories stir those of us who sail yet dream of such a voyage beyond our lakes and shores. Hands-down, great!

An absolutely delightful read, very well written. Recommended to anyone with dreams of such an adventure, but particularly for those who actually sail from one place to another with land out of sight. Great common sense preparation, clearly expressed, not to mention a wonderful explanation of the title, "Alone Together."

I am a long time sailor who has paid attention to the nuances and aggravations of getting sound experience on an ocean-going sailboat. For this reason I rarely read books that spin the saga of being on a long passage alone on the high seas, especially those by amateur writers. But "Alone Together" is unique, and in many ways an astonishingly creative book. This is a read not only for sailors, but apt for those who want the satisfaction of risk and uncertainty, but haven't the intention or means to do so themselves. Think Walter Mitty among his pipe dreams. In passing, the reader not only enjoys the passage, but learns a good deal about how one comes to meet the myriad of challenges putting out to sea on a 32 foot sailboat. "Alone Together" is a book you won't likely put down for long. The author is a gifted writer with novel outlook and clear message -- on par with the

best of books about the sea. Anyone who is drawn to adventure and to nautical themes should take "Alone Together" to the beach this summer.

Ever wondered what it would be like to board a small boat and sail to Hawaii? The epic stories written by square jawed sailors who have spent their lives on the water can be fun to read but somehow they leave me wanting. I'm just an everyday guy with a day job and abiding fascination with the ocean and what lies beyond the current limits of my own courage. For this reason I fell in love with Christian William's intensely personal account of his solo sail to Hawaii. Blending the practical realities of open water sailing with musings on the nature of being alone, Christian draws you in as as a virtual partner on his quest and relates his experience as frankly and transparently as if you were there. The sailor in me appreciated his explanations of his sailing challenges and how he overcame them, from potentially serious problems to a smelly head (toilet). The philosopher in me appreciated his efforts to poke in the corners of his own psyche, balancing his evident love for his family with his momentary need for separation and self reflection. It's not often you find someone who is gutsy enough to attempt such a difficult feat but thoughtful enough to understand the subtly different restorative powers of a warm beer, a tot of rum, a glass of wine with pasta and a whiff of brandy - all while hanging on for dear life. If you want to know what it's really like to be alone in the middle of the ocean without the hollywood drama that normally accompanies such stories, I strongly urge you to give this gem of a book a read.

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