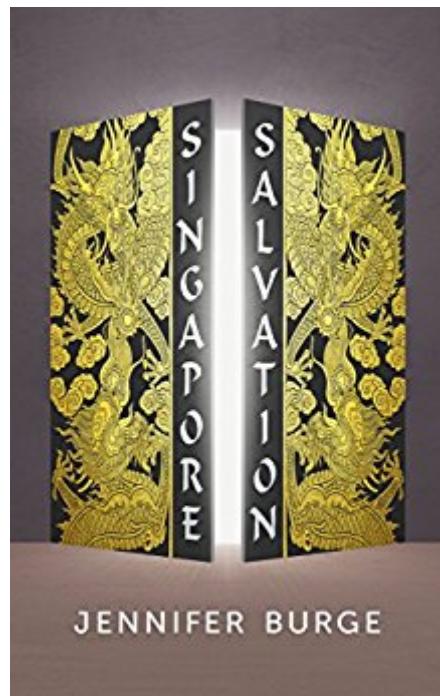


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# Singapore Salvation



## Synopsis

“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.

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## **Customer Reviews**

You know the phrase about living vicariously through someone else's experiences. Well, if you'd like to move to Singapore and go through all the experiences associated with that, but you don't want to physically make the move, grab this book! Author Burge has done it again, but with even more finesse. Burge takes you with her in such an intimate fashion that it's almost difficult to discern whether or not she had the experiences or whether you did. While reading this book, I felt as though I were walking down the streets of Singapore with her, finding interesting places and mundane, like a grocer who sold food that was familiar to a westerner. I felt alien in a strange land and I felt the wonder and fascination with the city and the people. But unlike Burge, I never left the comfort of my sofa; I let her do all the hard work for me but reaped the benefits of her travels and discoveries. Burge's books are ideal for the "armchair traveller". Brava on another book well done! And thanks for the journey. Where are we going next?

Jennifer has done it again -- given us a realistic view of places most of us have not heard of and may never see -- although now we will all be compelled to one day visit many of the places for which she has paved the way. Along with her colorful observations of travels throughout Asia she also gives honest insights on living in Singapore and how difficult and unglamorous it can be - even with the shiny surface the country shows outsiders, it is evident that it is all just superficial. Finding her way through that along with all of the obstacles she faced with both career and her personal life, Jennifer shows all of us that you just have to keep going and bad situations can have a way of working themselves out -- it's just better when it all works out in your favor! Excellent job Jennifer!

Singapore Salvation is a wonderfully descriptive and insightful book. It is not only a insider guide to travel in Asia, but also a heartfelt narrative of a marriage tested by the strains of employment and international moves. I found myself constantly looking up the places that Jennifer describes traveling to because of the awe inspiring stories. A must read for any world traveler or stay at home dreamer.

Having thoroughly enjoyed the authors debut book "The Devil Wears Clogs", I was again keen to pick up the story of our intrepid explorer as she traded in the backdrop of Europe for the relatively unknown (for most readers at least) Far East. The excellent writing and pace witnessed in the first book continues here unabated and serves as a direct continuation of the time line for her adventures in international business as well as personal growth. Whilst the author continues to deliver tremendous insights into the cultural landscape through her career endeavors and free time explorations, this book feels entirely more personal. As well as the highs and there are many of them, we can feel some of the despairing lows the author confronts as her challenges differ from those faced in Europe. Her rich use of language allows you to almost feel exactly what she felt as she attended interviews, delivered training to a challenging audience, navigated the transport network etc. but it also allows you to envisage yourself following in her footsteps as she seeks spiritual enlightenment at a yoga retreat or sleeps overnight on the great wall of china! I really hope there is a third book from this very talented author.

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.

If you have been working abroad and lived amongst different cultures yourself ÂfÂ¢Â ª this is a must read. Jennifer manages to carry the reader closely with her, watching sometimes seemingly ordinary situations which often turn out to be a well reflected character of a cultural distinctiveness. Through JenniferÂfÂ¢Â ªÂs eyes you get the chance to learn so much more about a country than you would ever get from a travel guide. Often you canÂfÂ¢Â ªÂot help but think ÂfÂ¢Â ªÂ“ThatÂfÂ¢Â ªÂs exactly what IÂfÂ¢Â ªÂve experienced myselfÂfÂ¢Â ªÂ•, like not knowing how to fill your days after relocation, not knowing how to get back into business or to be simply overwhelmed by other ExpatÂfÂ¢Â ªÂs attitudes. A truly gripping story. It is always fun to follow JenniferÂfÂ¢Â ªÂs trips and her insightful travel tips. I wonder what she is writing about after Australia.

Just when you think the challenges of living and working in Europe described with such intensity in "The Devil Wears Clogs" will be left behind and Asia will bring calm and clarity of purpose you will realize it will not be so. Rather the apparent calm of Asia is an illusion and the new opportunity involves the adventure of self reflection stripped to the core. Cultural differences, the work it takes to define a good marriage and the excitement of travel await in this terrific book.

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