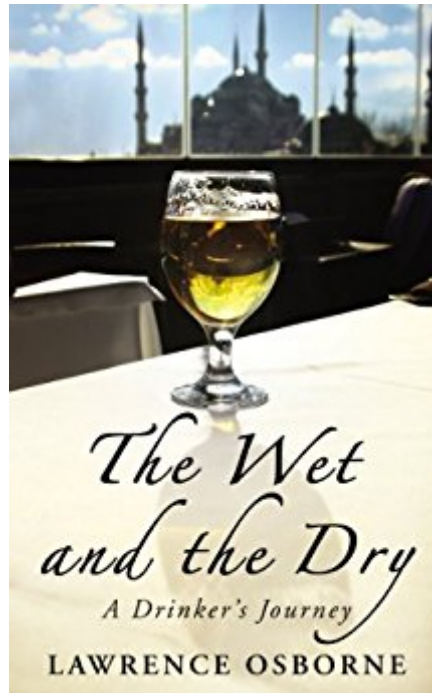




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# **The Wet And The Dry: A Drinker's Journey**



## Synopsis

“I am taking a few months off to travel and wander, drinking my way across the Islamic world to see whether I can dry myself out, cure myself of a bout of alcoholic excess. It is a personal crisis, a private curiosity.” I am curious to see how non-drinkers live. Perhaps they have something to teach me. Booze is mankind’s premier drug of choice, the most popular mind-altering substance ever devised, and it plays a furtive, celebrated and subversive role in nearly every culture on earth. In *The Wet and the Dry*, Lawrence Osborne explores the culture of permission, particularly in the West, and the opposing culture of prohibition, notably in the Islamic East. Osborne’s globe-trotting odyssey takes him from the luxurious bars of Milan to the vineyards of Lebanon, threatened by Hezbollah; from Swedish vodka to Pakistani strawberry gin; from the Nellie Dean pub in Soho to the dangerous brothels and drinking dens on the Malaysian border; from the boutique scotch produced on Islay to the liquor destroying Native American reservations; and from the only brewery in the dry country of Pakistan to the search for a bottle of New Year’s champagne in Oman. All the while, Osborne’s own Irish family history of terrifying alcoholism fails to deter him from seeking out a drink wherever he can.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Perhaps I'm being a little too generous with five stars, but this book is about guilty pleasures. The author indulges with bittersweet regrets, and so too, I read knowing I'm taking a little too much pleasure in the descriptions of wines and liquors from someone headed for an early death from cirrhosis, or more likely a misadventure while intoxicated. I've already started his *Accidental Connoisseur*. I suppose I'm addicted to his writing now, and why not? Life is short and we must take pleasure where we can.

A witty and thought provoking read. Osborne is unpretentious, and gloriously unapologetic about his knowledge and devotion to the joys (and struggles) of alcohol. Lawrence knows gin& tonic. And he doesn't give a hoot about what we think of him. He likes booze. Not to be missed by the intelligent, cultured devotee of vodka, gin and travel. In that order. A suggestion--read this book in tandem with Bukowski's "Factotum". One of the best 'one-two' combo reads ever.

For those who appreciate a seamless mix of liquor, history, culture, and storytelling, this is a fantastic read. Insights to far off places in the world where most travelers only dream to go. Plus, it's not just about 1 type of liquor, it weaves between several, inserting notes of trends, relationships, geography, history, some politics. You could read this and it could make you think, or you could read it for the sheer enjoyment of reading. Either way, well done!

At times frenetic, this book nevertheless is filled with amusing anecdotes about finding places to drink in cultures where drinking is prohibited. Along the way Osbourne muses about what it means to be a drinker and what different types of alcohol say about the different cultures he visits. This is also part-memoir, part-essays about the state of alcohol in the Middle East, a cultural experience that could see be obliterated all together. Recommended for those interested in Middle Eastern cultures, or serious drinkers. Either way you won't be disappointed.

Osborne's fiction is stunning, biting portayals of people, places and their relationships. This book is no different. I read it in one sitting - almost as a long essay. It is as much travelogue as cultural critique as personal reflection. His erudition is engaging, never dull or pretentiously drawn. His view of the places-cultures through which he travels or lives is stinging, but beautiful and almost forgiving. His personal reflection is bold, precise and kind. To find such writing is a luxury.

This was a fantastic book that really explored Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. I had no idea Egyptians had such a complex view on wine! Yet, beer is considered to be the national drink.

Best to read this in the sun, on your Mediterranean holiday. The author muses on the origins of beer and wine, how they were enjoyed in the Mediterranean lands (beer was part of the staple diet in Egypt) long before Muslim prohibitions. He loves his drinks, describes lyrically the process of wine making, distillation and brewing. Recommended for anyone who enjoys philosophical travel writing.

celebrates the beauty of the ephemeral- Osborne doesn't shy away from the ravages of alcohol but considers it in context, celebrating the ways different people in different cultures seek to find and lose themselves. A fine piece of writing.

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success!

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