



Amazon Extreme: Three Ordinary Guys, One Rubber Raft and the Most Dangerous River on Earth

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The true story of three enthusiastic (but inexperienced) adventurers who attempt to become the first team to raft the entire length of the Amazon River—all 4,007 miles--and (barely) live to tell about it.

To a trio of twenty-something adrenaline junkies, it sounded like an irresistible challenge: tackle the Amazon with nothing more than a rubber raft between them and fate. But when Colin Angus, Ben Kozel, and Scott Borthwick embarked on their fantastic voyage in September 1999, just climbing to the river's source nearly killed them.

Beginning with the dehydration that nearly did the adventurers in as they hiked the Andes to the river's source, *Amazon Extreme* is a breathtaking account of the daily challenges, dangers, and triumphs experienced over the course of this five-month expedition. With no money to speak of and inaccurate, fifty-year-old maps to guide them, this intrepid trio manages to persevere through violent rapids, guerilla gunfire, mosquito-infested drinking water, and numerous bouts of sickness. But in spite of several near-death experiences, including one particularly terrifying moment when their raft is toppled in the raging white water, Angus's crew finds a reverence for the compelling beauty that makes this region so renowned. Amidst the hardship are moments of pure pleasure, from graceful dolphins and lush forests to the intriguing, gracious people who've made their homes along the riverbank.

An inspiring tale of courage and exploration, this is the story of three guys who truly went off the deep end, and one who came back to write a riveting recollection of it.

From the Hardcover edition.

Amazon Extreme: Three Ordinary Guys, One Rubber Raft and the Most Dangerous River on Earth Details

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From Reader Review Amazon Extreme: Three Ordinary Guys, One Rubber Raft and the Most Dangerous River on Earth for online ebook

Patrick Gibson says

Three adrenaline junkies in their mid-twenties came up with a plan to cross South America from West to East via hiking, extreme white watering, then paddling the Amazon. It seems hard to believe, but in 2001, there were sections of the Amazon in Peru that had not been descended by boat. Even the maps of the area were fifty years old.

On a limited budget, funded by odd jobs, without the use of GPS or even Google Earth, Colin, Ben and Scott (Canada, Australia, and South Africa) met in British Columbia for a few weeks of white water training then flew to Lima. Only a handful of people knew where they were going or what they were attempting. They didn't have a satellite phone and no plans of checking in with anyone for at least three months (it took five). It was probably one of the most reckless adventures conceivable, and in their own words they were 'woefully unprepared.'

Each had essentially one reason—the thrill of it. No one wanted to be in the record books. No one sought fame in any way. Scott took a video camera and Colin kept a diary which became the essence of the book.

From the moment they put their feet in Pacific on a crud littered Peru beach, their adventure became a series of misadventures, blunders, and wrong decisions leading to near death experiences from starvation, dehydration, drowning, bullets, freezing, diarrhea and poisonous insects, reptiles and food. Even getting their feet wet lead to ferocious blisters at the end of their first day.

The idea to hike across the Andes to the headwaters of the Amazon seems like an odd idea but for this foolhardy trio it was a purity of concept, and some of the most harrowing experiences occur in the first few weeks before they even reach the Amazon.

It is not all goof-ups and Indiana Jones escapes. There are moments of sheer beauty, laughable culture clashes (none spoke Spanish or Portuguese) and exhilarating descriptions of the land and waterscapes. Nothing beats the imagery of the Class V and VI rapids of the upper Amazon. I can't even imagine what a nine foot standing wave would do to my bladder control.

There were times the writing was straightforward—so much so, I thought it might be written for teens but the content is certainly adult. I guess it was the author's attempt at limiting hyperbole and all those descriptive adjectives I love so much. Devoid of the usual bravado you might expect on this type story, the sheer brutality these guys inflicted on their bodies combined with exploit euphoria is engrossing and entertaining.

I think about how excited I get running a Class IV—I can't imagine the thrill when faced with roaring water off the scale. I think I will probably never run with the big dogs—but that's okay.

Nick says

Interesting premise and exciting story, but it kind of drags in places. These guys definitely did a bunch of

stuff that probably should have gotten them killed. If you like outdoor adventures, camping, hiking and white water, you'll be interested in this book. You'll also thank yourself that you never tried to do what these guys did.

Matt says

Classic!

This shows book shows you how far you can get with a 'can do' attitude!

At times their bravado is borderline insanity but this makes for a very entertaining adventure, I found it easy to imagine myself in their shoes.

Greg Jones says

Excellent tale of adventure in South America. Candid retelling of a plan for three friends to make their way from the Pacific to the Atlantic under their own power. Definite read for the adventurer in all of us!

David Traver Adolphus says

With Colin and Julie Angus expecting a baby, I'm going back and re-reading some of his greatest hits. Fantastic.

truenorth says

This book was a very interesting travel/adventure story. Although possibly I've read more descriptive travel books, it is an enjoyable read into this great adventure.

Tinae Goodell says

Wow!! I love books that are true like this one!! Very interesting story, very gripping!! It makes me almost want to take an adventure like this but yet I would rather read about it, so many things can and do go wrong! If you like true stories about adventures, pick this one up!

Lucy says

Three guys in a rubber raft traveling the length of the Amazon - perfect reading for those of us who are armchair travelers. Beginning the trip at the source of the Amazon wasn't enough for these adventurers; they started out on foot from the Pacific Ocean. For me, some of the best parts of the book were the descriptions

of what they went through while crossing the desert on their way to the Amazon. The thrills continue as they launch their raft at the start of the river. But as the trip continues the excitement slowly wanes. By the end of the book and the trip, both the author and this reader were ready for it to be over.

Jean says

Well, maybe a 3.75 would be more accurate. Not great writing, but a true adventure! Disappointed in the ending....

Jean

Melissa says

When you combine three adrenaline junkies, one raft, and the world's most dangerous river what do you get? A five month endurance test full of raging rapids, lack of adequate drinking water and food, and interesting encounters with the locals! Angus includes factoids and historical descriptions of the Amazon's people and landscape in his account of the trip.

Joaquin Garza says

Creo que ya recordé porqué antes consideraba la literatura de no ficción de aventuras como aquella donde se contaban hazañas emocionantes de la manera más aburrida posible. Dentro de sus pares, esta narración está en niveles claramente reprobatorios. Colin Angus y sus amigos Ben y Scott deciden cruzar Sudamérica de pacífico a atlántico ascendiendo primero los andes y luego siguiendo el Amazonas desde su nacimiento hasta su desembocadura. Cosa que por supuesto no es menor, considerando que la parte neurálgica del recorrido consistió en navegar rápidos clase V y VI con sus consiguientes roces mortales.

El tema es que tal proeza se cuenta de la manera más insípida posible. Su nivel de prosa es similar al de los reporteros de la revista México Desconocido (nuestro equivalente a Outside): 'hicimos esto, esto, esto y esto. Bajamos esto. Se sintió así. Las cosas eran así' sin el mínimo intento de hacer no ficción creativa. Nada de querer meter cadencia, evocaciones poéticas, digresiones ágiles. Vaya... ni siquiera una caracterización decente: los tres amigos sólo quieren emprender su viaje por una pulsión 'malloreana' ('Porque está ahí') y el Sr. Angus y su escritor fantasma a duras penas se esfuerzan por caracterizar a los otros dos miembros de la expedición con las manías personales usadas por lo general por todo escritor de no ficción de exteriores. Al final, el aventurero de sillón trata de preguntarse qué es lo que lleva a estos locos a arrojararse sin más a empresas que, terminen bien o mal siempre acaban siendo un libro. Compárese por ejemplo con The Emerald Mile: The Epic Story of the Fastest Ride in History Through the Heart of the Grand Canyon, libro que trata del mismo deporte y veremos por qué no queda bien parada pese a que la hazaña es más sorprendente.

Debe haber maneras un poquito más poéticas de narrar esta historia.

Jose says

I always want to read this book, but unfortunately the copies that the books stores have is paper back and especially shining laminated , which I despise but browsing in value village I found a 2001 hard copy which I bought it right away, if this book is not a classic of travel adventure should be right there at the top with one of the best , is a book that you want to be thousands of pages and sit down and read and read . Keep you glue to the pages to see what going to happened next , very entertaining .

Karen says

Interesting journey these guys had. Can't believe they did it. It seemed to end a little abruptly, especially seeing as how their trip had garnered a lot of publicity. I would have liked to read about about their experience afterwards.

Nellie says

Although the writing wasn't stellar, it was an interesting and quick read about a 3 guys who rafted the entire length of the Amazon River, with some nail biting parts that compelled me to read on to find out if they would survive or kill themselves. Probably better if you had some experience in rafting as there was alot of discussion about the different rapids and how they managed to get through them.

Missy Tanja says

Hard core and great adventure.
