



The Great Psychedelic Armadillo Picnic: A "Walk" in Austin

Kinky Friedman

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Kinky Friedman, the original Texas Jewboy, takes us on a rollicking, rock-and-rolling tour of his favorite city: Austin.

Maybe you want to know which restaurant President Bush rates as his favorite Austin burger joint. Or maybe you want a glimpse of Willie Nelson's home life (hint: Willie plays a lot of golf). Perhaps you want to get the best view of the Mexican free-tail bats as they make their nightly flights to and from the Congress Avenue Bridge. Or maybe you're itching to learn the history of a city that birthed Janis Joplin, Stevie Ray Vaughan, and countless other music legends. It's all here in "The Great Psychedelic Armadillo Picnic," the slightly insane, amazingly practical, and totally kick-ass guide to the coolest city in Texas by none other than Kinky Friedman.

This ain't no ordinary travel guide, neither. "Like most other busy cities these days, Austin is not very effectively traversed by foot," Kinky explains. "You must understand that 'a walk in Austin' is primarily a spiritual sort of thing." As might be expected from this politically incorrect country-singer-turned-bestselling-mystery-author, the Kinkster's tour includes a bunch of stuff you won't find in a Frommer's guide, from descriptions of Austin's notable trees and directions to skinny-dipping sites to lists of haunted places and quizzes and puzzles. So put on your cowboy hat and your brontosaurus-foreskin boots and head down south with the only book you need to get to the big heart of this great city.

The Great Psychedelic Armadillo Picnic: A "Walk" in Austin Details

Date : Published October 5th 2004 by Crown Publishers (first published 1996)

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Author : Kinky Friedman

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Sherry (sethurner) says

I listened to this one on CD, read by Mr. Friedman himself. His deadpan Texas drawl made it for me. Basically this is a tour of Austin, complete with juicy bits of history and side trips to watering holes and music halls. Lots of fun.

Mintymedley says

I know it is difficult to get in to travel books that don't have handy maps or any photos but I would recommend this one to anyone thinking about heading to Austin Tx for any amount of time. The author has a sarcastic humor that keeps you going through all the descriptions.

Susan says

Great read if you plan to go to Austin, or even if you have been there or live there. I love learning about a town I'm going to visit, especially one like Austin! This book was entertaining in and of itself; the history explained and the recommendations given were the icing on the cake! The information holds up, even if the book is 14 years old right now. P.S. I LOVED Austin!!

Fox says

This was a short, enjoyable read that never left me bored. The Kinkster's writing style was the main appeal of the book; jokes and questionable statements came far out of left field and left you wondering exactly what you had read at times.

The highlights of the book included his theory of Eagle Scout's all become mass-murderers, the fact you should never trust a man named either Charles or Wayne, and his various rants on Willie Nelson.

As a travel book it was light and informative. I'd really like to take him up on the offers that were presented in this book. Night Hawks in particular seemed like a great place to go and I guarantee that when I plan my own trip to Texas I'll plan it with his recommendations of Austin in mind.

So, all in all, four stars to this one. It would've been five stars, but I wish it had been longer. I look forward to reading more of the Kinkster's books.

Monica says

A little ditty which just goes on to confirm why I loved the Kinkster so much... he is from Austin! This is a little guide to some of his favourite things in the city though it's probably dated by now, written over 10 years ago. I wouldn't call it a "book" with any sort of structure or depth but fun nevertheless and something to have in the pocket for a future trip!

Karla says

Our son has lived in Austin for a few years now and we visit at least annually. I decided to read this book as a travel guide and was pleasantly surprised by the stories and humor the author adds to a city he obviously loves.

Helen says

Picked this book up from the donation pile at the library because of the title (think The Electric Kool Aid Acid Test) and the fact that I had never read anything by him. And it was only 140 pages. It turned out to be a guide book of sorts to Austin, the Austin of the author's liking, circa 2004. I found some interesting facts, especially about Austin's Moonlight Towers. He did cover the basics. His colorful language was only mildly amusing and in general, reading it in 2017 found it to be dated. That, I suppose, is the fate of any book in this genre.

Anetq says

Might have been more interesting if I was more into Kinky Friedman, as it was as much about him as about Austin. However at times it was also a fun tour of Austin, and I will have to check out some of the eating advice next time I'm in Austin.

David says

Picked this up at the library, just because it was set out as a recommended book and it had a funky title. Looked interesting, and for some reason I got it in my head that it was a different kind of book. Lots of history and personal insights into a unique city from a Texas legend...but it's really a travel and restaurant guide. As I'm not heading to Austin any time soon, I really didn't. um...need a travel guide.

Still managed to get about halfway through it, thanks to Friedman's entertaining style.

Should have read the inside cover. Doh.

Mike Vines says

Kinky's Travel Guide to Austin, with inappropriate highlights and tips.

Heidi says

Loved it! Covers things like famous Austin landmarks, celebrities and scatters in some history and recommendations of places to go. Music is a constant as Friedman talks about his friends & famous Austin musicians. Willy Nelson is quoted heavily.

Short enjoyable audiobook worth it for anyone going to Austin or newly moved to Austin. Listened to through the Overdrive app & Austin Public Library...

Roisin says

A very funny, honest, amusing and enlightening short guide to Austin Kinkster style. He talks about history, fable, places, music, clothes, food with an enthusiasm and joy. Some of his politics, and mingling with a George Bush? Pass! Mr Friedman equates the legalisation of guns with the reduction of crime. Evidence please? Yet he champions independent and feminist book stores, counter culture, the unusual and the just plain weird.

There is even a glossary, word search and 'Are You New Austin Or Old Austin?' test. Enjoy the Ride!

Warren Gossett says

I read this book in one day. It is only 138 pages but it held my interest enough to keep me reading and reading till I finished. It is a book of humour written 10 years ago by Richard "Kinky" Friedman. It is styled as a guide to his adopted city of Austin, Texas. I lived in America for 30 years before moving to Australia but never experienced the mystique of Texas except for a week at a mystical religious convention. Of course, Friedman is best known as the songwriter and singer of Kinky Friedman and the Texas Jewboys. His Jewish professor father objected to this name giving Friedman even more reason to use it. His breakthrough song in 1973 was the satirical "Get Your Biscuits in Oven (and Your Buns in Bed)" He has tried to atone for his sins with a string of writings as a Cowboy satirist. He even ran for governor of the state of Texas in 2006, getting 12 percent of the vote, finishing 4th of 6. If you like comedy and tongue in cheek humour this book takes you on a nice short ride.

Kay says

Enjoyed what I read of it (about half) but then got sidetracked when I returned from Austin and never had a compelling reason to finish it. I'll go back to it before my next trip to Austin, which will probably be in October (2011). Friedman is one of a kind, a genu-wine character.

Marsha says

This is a wonderful travel guide to Austin. Now that I've been living in Austin for almost a year, I particularly enjoy the author's tips and inside reflections about the city and the people who live here. For instance, he wrote, "Be sure you have a favorite football team. Be sure it is the Texas Longhorns." This is the University of Texas football team and people who live here are diehard fans. Friedman wrote, "Practice saying that you are going to Austin for vacation, rather than Texas. Austinites know there's a difference." People who live here are from all over the country and so often I do not hear "Texas" accents. This is also the most liberal part of this state. He writes about the Capitol Building and other landmarks, some history, and the parks and lakes. I recommend this book for people living in Austin to read and those planning a visit.
