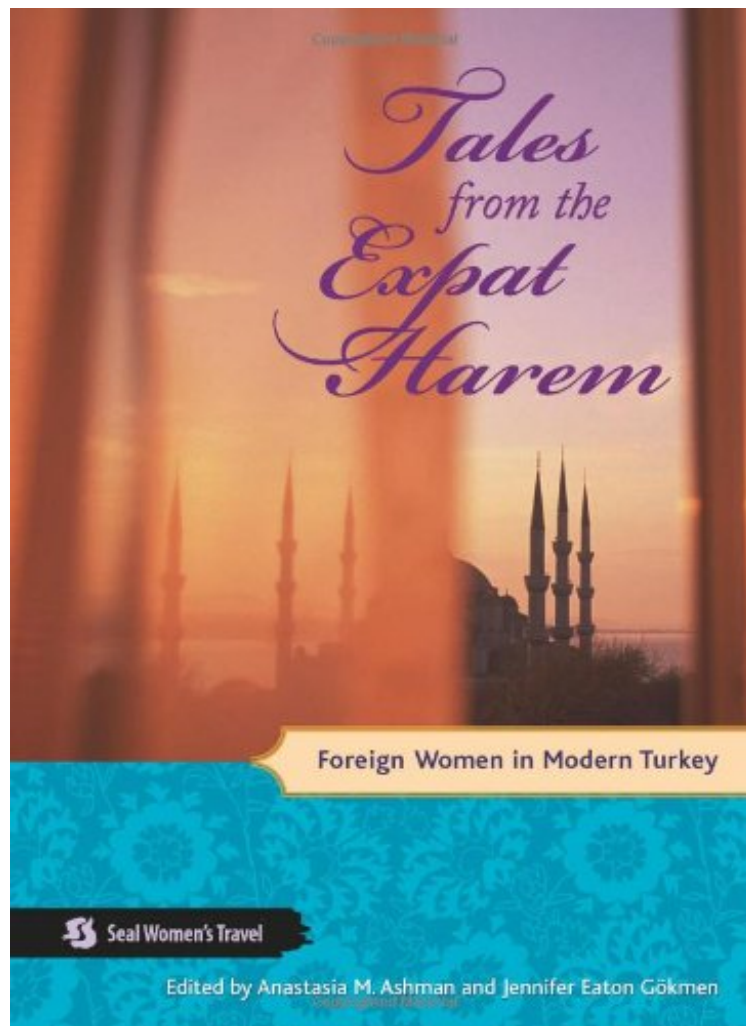


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Tales from the Expat Harem: Foreign Women in Modern Turkey (Seal Women's Travel)

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From Brand: Seal Press : Tales from the Expat Harem: Foreign Women in Modern Turkey (Seal Women's Travel) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Tales from the Expat Harem: Foreign Women in Modern Turkey (Seal Women's Travel):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I laughed, I cried. Made me want to travel to Turkey. By KiiiksI absolutely loved this book! Non-fiction, short stories that had me both laughing and crying, absolutely captivated. Each story provided insight to the particular author's thoughts and emotions, as well as insight into various aspects of Turkish culture. I never knew Turkey was a place I wanted to visit until I read this book! Would highly recommend to

any woman who has travelled to or lived in Turkey, or is just interested in the culture. I would even recommend this to any woman who loves travel in general and experiencing other cultures. One of my favorite books, it has a permanent place on my bookshelf. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Fresh, feminine perspectives on an ancient culture. By S. Wells-Mongiovi. The selection of women writers was varied enough to get glimpses of both urban and village life, and in both the East and West of Turkey, which I learned from this book are very different areas. I didn't care for all of the stories - which is fine with me; I don't expect to identify with every female on the planet. The writing quality varies. While I presume the editor(s) did a bunch of cleaning up, they did not take away the different voices, which is a good thing. If you are curious about what a modern, Muslim-dominated society looks like, especially from a female (and usually feminist), non-Turkish point of view, this is a great place to start. I suspect readers will be pleasantly surprised. I certainly was. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A very interesting and enlightening story told from the standpoint ... By Gerard T. Mc Kenna. A very interesting and enlightening story told from the standpoint of very independent women. If this is a problem for the reader then stop now. These stories tell of the excitement of being an independent person, of taking chances, of not being afraid of what lies ahead, of looking at challenges as well as opportunities as a way toward growth and fulfillment. This is a story about the women of today who are not afraid to accept challenges.

As the Western world struggles to comprehend the paradoxes of modern Turkey, *Tales from the Expat Harem* reveals its most personal nuances. This illuminating anthology provides a window into the country from the perspective of thirty-two expatriates from seven different nations: artists, entrepreneurs, Peace Corps volunteers, archaeologists, missionaries, and others who established lives in Turkey for work, love, or adventure. Through narrative essays covering the last four decades, these diverse women unveil the mystique of the Orient, describe religious conflict, embrace cultural discovery, and maneuver familial traditions, customs, and responsibilities. Poignant, humorous, and transcendent, the essays take readers to weddings and workplaces, down cobbled Byzantine streets, into boisterous bazaars along the Silk Road, and deep into the feminine stronghold of steamy Ottoman bathhouses. The outcome is a stunning collection of voices from women suspended between two homes as they redefine their identities and reshape their worldviews.

"Absolutely riveting. These memoirs offer much more than glimpses of domestic Turkey. Men should read them and be informed." -- Tim Severin, world explorer, author and filmmaker who has followed in the footsteps of historic adventurers like Marco Polo and Sinbad the Sailor, and a regular contributor to *National Geographic*. "Absorbing personal adventures reveal Turkey with depth, sincerity and delight. I've been waiting a long time for this book!" -- Tom Brosnahan, veteran guidebook author for Berlitz, Frommers and Lonely Planet, originator of Lonely Planet Turkey, founder of the Turkey Travel Planner website and author of travel memoir *Turkey: Bright Sun, Strong Tea*. "An excellent holiday read." -- Lonely Planet Turkey (2007). "Closely observed, finely wrought. Vividly depicts invaluable life lessons when people are obliged to cope in an alien world." -- Craig Storti, director of the cross-cultural training firm *Communicating Across Cultures*, and best-selling author of *The Art of Crossing Cultures*. "Impressive. [These women] lead the way in reconciling the many conflicts and misunderstandings between east and west." -- *Publishing Trends*, June 2005, an intelligence newsletter for the American publishing industry. "The beauty of *Tales* is that each story paints Turkey as the narrator experiences it, and, together, the stories construct a portrait of a people and their place." -- *National Geographic Traveler*, July/August 2006. "Transcends cultural stereotypes deeply-embedded in the perceptions of the Eastern harem; probes the limitlessness of female venture and portable homelands." -- Elif Shafak, professor of Middle Eastern studies, University of Arizona, and award-winning Turkish author of *The Bastard of Istanbul*. "Transcends cultural stereotypes deeply-embedded in the perceptions of the Eastern harem; probes the limitlessness of female venture and portable homelands." -- Elif Shafak, professor of Middle Eastern studies, University of Arizona, and award-winning Turkish author of *The Saint of Incipient Insanities*. "[A] wonderful book; beautifully written, thought-provoking and inspiring. Every essay is spot on, literary and insightful.... Be ready to book a flight to Istanbul afterwards." -- *Daily Telegraph* (UK), January 31, 2007. "[T]he stories... entertain and inform. Read about navigating male-female relationships and one woman's really close shave in a Turkish hamam." -- *International Herald Tribune*, December 13, 2006. About the Author: Anastasia M. Ashman is a career essayist specializing in personal tales of cultural adventure. She has spent ten years working for literary agents and producers of film, television, and Broadway theater. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Excerpt from Introduction. If there were ever a place tailor-made to play host to wanderers, travelers and those pursuing lives outside their original territory, surely Turkey is that place. The perpetual evolution that travel and cultural assimilation visits upon the foreign born women in this collection echoes the continuous transformation that envelops the entire country. Threshold to worlds East or West depending on which way one faces, Turkey is itself a unique metaphor for transition. Forming a geographic bridge between the continents of Europe and Asia and a philosophical link between the spheres of Occident and Orient, Turkey is neither one of the places it connects. Similarly, foreign women on Turkish soil are neither what nor who they used to be, yet not fully transformed by their brush with Turkey. Our Expat Harem women

are on the brink of reclassifying themselves, challenged to redefine their lives, to rethink their definitions of spirituality, femininity, sensuality and self. Aligned in their ever-shifting contexts, both Turkey and the expatriate share a bond of constant metamorphosis. Delirious with influenza, a friendless Australian realizes the value of misafirlik, traditional Turkish hospitality, when she's rescued from her freezing rental by unknown Anatolian neighbors bearing food and medicinal tea; a pregnant and introverted Irishwoman faces the challenge of finding her place in a large Black Sea family; a Peace Corps volunteer in remote Eastern Turkey realizes how the taboos of her own culture color her perceptions; and a liberated New York single questions the gallant rules of engagement on the Istanbul dating scene, wondering whether being treated like a lady makes her less a feminist. These are among the Tales from the Expat Harem. The titillating, anachronistic title acknowledges erroneous yet prevalent Western stereotypes about Asia Minor and the entire Muslim world, while also declaring that our storytellers share a common bond with the denizens of a traditional Turkish harem. Much like the imported brides of the Seraglio, Istanbul's 15th century palatial seat of the Ottoman sultanate, our writers are inextricably wedded to Turkish culture, embedded in it even, yet forever alien.