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Swell: A Year Of Waves



Synopsis

Wave watchers around the world know that no two waves are the same. Yet each and every wave that rises, peaks, and crashes onto the beach is generated by a much larger force originating thousands of miles away. Surf journalist team Evan Slater and Peter Taras capture the essence of waves and the swells that produce them in this breathtaking collection of wave photography. Slater characterizes four distinct swells from different corners of the globe and traces their journeys throughout the year from storm to seashore. His reflective, informative essays amplify these powerful images of hundreds of waves frozen in time, beautiful, simple, universal, yet wholly unique—and the best thing to watch on the planet.

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Customer Reviews

Here is something else I don't know a thing about: surfing. I have never tried it, even body surfing, and at this point I guess I am unlikely to. That doesn't keep me from enjoying waves; I don't get to the beach often, but I don't know anyone who is indifferent to the fascinating movement and sounds of swells of water approaching shore. The experts on surfing will admire at a higher level than I did Swell: A Year of Waves (Chronicle Books), but this is a picture book that anyone ought to admire. It has a short text by Evan Slater, who is a big wave surfer and the former editor of Surfing magazine. He starts his introduction, "For a long time, I considered myself an expert on waves," but then he describes going out deliberately to meet a wave breaking on an underwater shoal in the open ocean, and finding that whatever his expertise, it avails him nothing. He met a 45-foot

avalanche of water that "was a force beyond my comprehension." So there is a lot he doesn't know about waves, and a lot scientists do not know. But we know something: "It's been only twenty-five years since predicting wave events became an inexact but semireliable science." Surfers, and others who are interested in waves, can get forecasts of what to expect and where, up to two weeks in advance. I suppose that such predictions are fraught with the same degree of error as any weather forecast, but there are general characteristics of waves at particular times in particular places. Four of those wave sites form the four sections of photographs here. The photographs are the show. They are edited for the book by Peter Taras, who is the photo editor for _Surfing_ magazine.

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