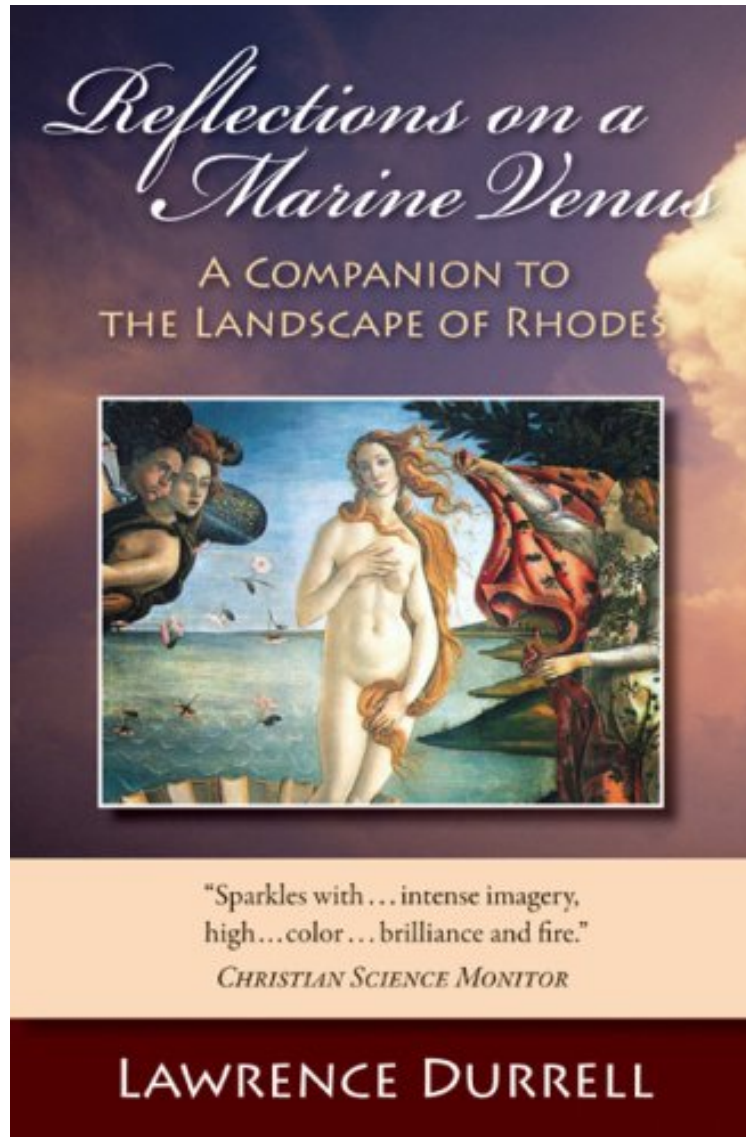


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Reflections on a Marine Venus: A Companion to the Landscape of Rhodes

Lawrence Durrell

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Lawrence Durrell : Reflections on a Marine Venus: A Companion to the Landscape of Rhodes before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Reflections on a Marine Venus: A Companion to the Landscape of Rhodes:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Dazzling, many-layered vision of Rhodes, and other Greek

IslandsBy ealovittThe 'marine Venus' of the title is a statue which was found by sailors in their nets at the bottom of Rhodes harbor and which much appealed to Durrell, who thought of her as the 'presiding genius' of the place. He began this book while assigned to Rhodes as an information officer in 1945, and finally finished it in Belgrade in 1952 while working as a press attach for the British Embassy. Before publication, it was chopped almost in half by his editor, Anne Ridler. She excised most of the passages dealing with the recent war, and "left the descriptions of the landscape and people....She oriented the book to sunlight, blue skies, and clear sea." [quoted from the introduction David Roessel]. War still clings like a gray film to the bright fabric of 'Venus.' Durrell writes intense, brilliant descriptions of Mediterranean skies and dazzling Greek villages, but as in all of his works that I've read, there is also a submerged longing for past love, past history, past glory. Some of his most beautiful passages, both in this book, in "Prospero's Cell," and in the books of "The Alexandria Quartet" take place under water. Here, the author goes for a midnight swim in the final chapter of "Reflections on a Marine Venus"---"The [moon]light filters down a full fathom or more to where, on the dark blackboard of weed, broken here and there by dazzling areas of milk-white sand, the fish float as if dazed by their own violet shadows which follow them back and forth, sprawling across the sea's floor." Bright surfaces. Submerged longings. There is even a ghost story floating just below the surface of a trip to the Island of Patmos. This chapter has some of the most powerful and eerie descriptions in the book. It brings together the storms of the 'little summer of Saint Demetrius', a lost, lingering voice from the war, and an Abbot who presides over a monastery where St. John was said to have composed the Books of the Apocalypse. "Reflections on a Marine Venus" is one of a series of travelogues that Durrell wrote about his pre- and post-war experiences in and around the Mediterranean. The other books in this series are "Prospero's Cell", "Spirit of Place," "Bitter Lemons," and "Sicilian Carousel." Ultimately, these books defy the description 'travelogue'. Durrell wrote about the peculiar genius of a place, not bound by any moment in time, but for all time. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book made me fall in love with DurrellBy kylie quebedeauxThis book made me fall in love with Durrell. It is simply wonderful. Combining elements of old and new Greek travel writing, this paints a wonderful picture of life in Greece. He does his best to show the rich history of Rhodes, a city of mysticism for its colossus. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Masterpiece on Rhodes islandBy Kindle CustomerWonderful evocative poetic prose. Durrell surpassed himself. Even now it still inspires one to visit and experience Rhodes, and Greece.

Reflections on a Marine Venus explores life on a magical and enchanting island (Rhodes) right after World War II. It is about Greece when it was a demi-paradise. But it is also about the distillation of life and experience, the savoring of all the exquisite pleasures, physical, sensual and intellectual, available on one lovely island at one time.

About the AuthorBorn in Jalandhar, British India, in 1912 to Indian-born British colonials, Lawrence Durrell was a critically hailed and beloved novelist, poet, humorist, and travel writer best known for the Alexandria Quartet novels, which were ranked by the Modern Library as among the greatest works of English literature in the twentieth century. A passionate and dedicated writer from an early age, Durrell's prolific career also included the groundbreaking Avignon Quintet, whose first novel, "Monsieur " (1974), won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, and whose third novel, "Constance " (1982), was nominated for the Booker Prize. He also penned the celebrated travel memoir "Bitter Lemons of Cyprus " (1957), which won the Duff Cooper Prize. Durrell corresponded with author Henry Miller for forty-five years, and Miller influenced much of his early work, including a provocative and controversial novel, "The Black Book " (1938). Durrell died in France in 1990.