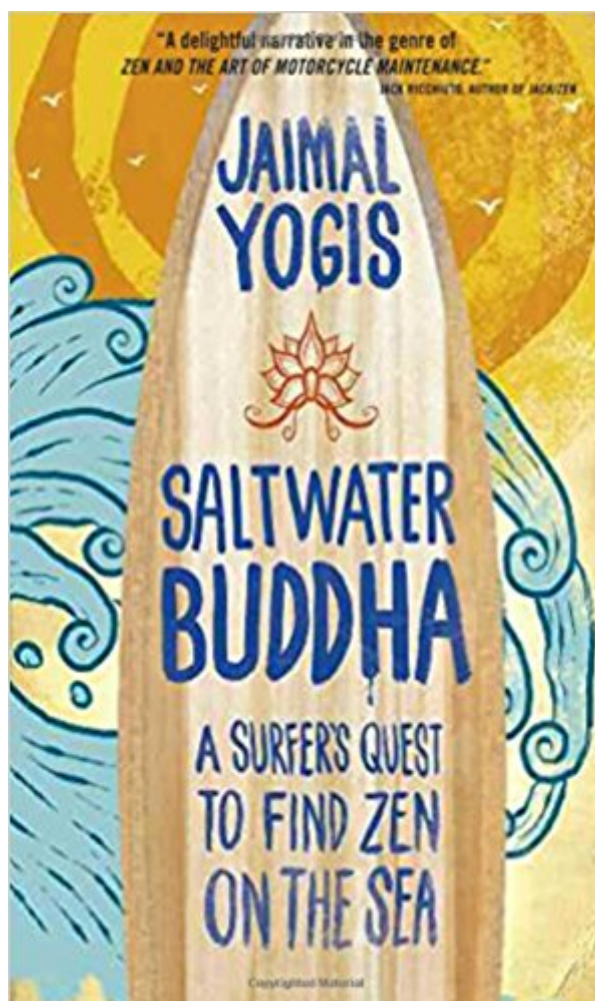


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# Saltwater Buddha: A Surfer's Quest To Find Zen On The Sea



## Synopsis

Fed up with teenage life in the suburbs, Jaimal Yogis ran off to Hawaii with little more than a copy of Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* and enough cash for a surfboard. His journey is a coming-of-age saga that takes him from communes to monasteries, from the warm Pacific to the icy New York shore. Equal parts spiritual memoir and surfer's tale, this is a chronicle of finding meditative focus in the barrel of a wave and eternal truth in the great salty blue.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A journalist, photographer, surfer and Zen Master, Yogis began the life of a roving seeker his junior year of high school, when he ran away from his Sacramento, Calif. home to learn how to surf in Hawaii. His subsequent travels include a handful of prime surfing spots, but Yogis's more arresting journey is spiritual, taking him to monasteries in France and Berkley, Calif., and deep into the living tradition of Zen Buddhism. Captured here in short chapters and wonderful, visual prose, Yogis's coming-of-age odyssey also takes readers into the culture of indigenous Hawaiians, who believe the gods were surfers. Yogis's long-time surfing mentor Rom provides insight into the science of surfing, ocean swells, the bathymetry of the continental shelf, deep water canyons and sea mounts. Even land lovers will find Yogis's lessons resonant and entertaining, but surfers will find this a quick, surprisingly deep tribute to the quest for surf and serenity. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"Jaimal's story is, in part, an adventure story in which the sea is a powerful antagonist, at once the

siren and the ogre, irresistible and terrifying in its sheer, monstrous power. For this author, it's a voracious and demanding lover, and he is skilled at summoning its ever-changing presence." (The Huffington Post)"A journalist, photographer, and surfer, Yogis began the life of a roving seeker his junior year of high school, when he ran away from his Sacramento, Calif. home to learn how to surf in Hawaii. His subsequent travels include a handful of prime surfing spots, but Yogis's more arresting journey is spiritual, taking him to monasteries in France and Berkley, Calif., and deep into the living tradition of Zen Buddhism. Captured here in short chapters and wonderful, visual prose, Yogis's coming-of-age odyssey also takes readers into the culture of indigenous Hawaiians, who believe the gods were surfers. Yogis's long-time surfing mentor Rom provides insight into the science of surfing, ocean swells, the bathymetry of the continental shelf, deep water canyons and sea mounts. Even land lovers will find Yogis's lessons resonant and entertaining, but surfers will find this a quick, surprisingly deep tribute to the quest for surf and serenity." (Publishers Weekly)

I've never been a surfer but have always had a love for the ocean. Combine that with my new found discovery of meditation and Jaimal Yogis book seemed to be the perfect summer read. Saltwater Buddha is much more than just a love letter to surfing or an examination of Zen it captures the eternal struggle we all have to find our bliss and how we manage to find ways to get in the way of it. Written in an extremely readable style that flows though out the book Saltwater Buddha is the kind of book you won't want rush your way through. The end came all too quickly for me when I read it and I plan on revisiting the book again sometime soon. However your journey got you to this book, odds are the next step is to read it. It's a beautiful and exceptional book, one that deserves all the accolades it receives.

I bought this book before taking a vacation to a cottage on the ocean in Paia on Maui, not knowing that the beginning of Jaimal's journey to the "saltwater life" also took place in Paia, so it was great to actually be there and have the feel for that place while reading this book. Great "coming of age" story. Very well written. I learned more about the Buddhist faith as well as was able to live the "saltwater life" vicariously through the author's writing. It brought back many memories of my own summers on the beaches of central California as a child and teenager.

Just began reading the book and love it. The only thing about I don't like is the constant quoting of other people or from other sources. I'm more interested in the writer's experiences and thoughts than about knowing something is really true or whatever just because some famous person said it.

At times it feels like he's name dropping although they probably isn't the writer's intent. Anyways very enjoyable and unexpected read thus far..

Terra firma. Soil. Streets. This is where most of us spend our lives, save for the occasional dip in a pool, river, or ocean. Surf? On a board? Ha. The lucky few who are geographically blessed and fearless enough to take on the moniker 'Surfer', are a small but esteemed lot. There is a mystique surrounding the word itself, hearkening a free-spirited lifestyle, casual perspective, and of course, a little attitude. How can you not have some attitude rolling through Brooklyn on the subway mid-winter with a surfboard in tow? Or enter the challenging coves of Pohoiki, Hawaii as an inexperienced Ha-ole? In Jaimal Yogis' book, *Saltwater Buddha*, this mystique is amply propelled and diminished within its chapters. 'Attitude' and 'Zen' don't exactly seem to share a common ground. Most images of Buddha are sedate, peaceful, and jovial glimpses of a well-rounded (in more ways than one) soul. Attitude? Hard to have attitude in a bathrobe. Therein lies the paradox so present within Eastern philosophies. 'Zen Attitude' is an unlikely pairing but fits the bill. Hard to catch a wave being complacent, it'll pass you right by. *Saltwater Buddha* explores the classic paradigms and modern approaches to the assimilation of ancient teachings. It finds Yogis approaching life from both a humble seeker and inadvertent teacher's perspective, full of curiosity, gall, courage, rebellion, mystification, reverence, respect, naivety, and fervor. The pages of *Saltwater Buddha* reflect the thoughts of a master. A master of his own vision, own path, and personal sovereignty. Jaimal adeptly communicates that the target of enlightenment is always moving, the brass ring, once grabbed, appears yet again on the next go-round. The search for a moment, a wave, a friend, a reason...and god-forbid, even a job. The pages echo the the pursuit of other mere mortals - the Land-lubber Buddha, the Business Man Buddha, the Blue Collar Buddha, the Trust-fund Buddha. They surf metaphorical waves but share the same perils. The winds we all face and the hidden dangers that hide beneath the surface of daily life require adept navigation. Duck-dives, balance, foresight, patience. Jaimal Yogis weaves together an entertaining and insightful series of his own thoughts and experiences, and relates them back to the master teachers and his monastic and scholarly lessons. All together, it is an accessible and clear illumination of an often esoteric and intimidating philosophy. You can't read this book without walking away with a new perspective or the inclination to consider the impact of Yogis's experiences on your own life. What it comes down to in part, and what Jaimal skillfully points out through his salty, romantic, honest, coming-of-age stories, is that although the quest of Buddhism is oriented towards finding enlightenment, the truth is that Zen practice evolves between where you are now and where you think you want (or need) to be. In

a one hour surfing session, there can be 50 minutes of waiting for a swell and 10 minutes of actual surfing. Our lives are dominated by the 'in-between'. We'll all find ecstatic moments of fulfillment, be it on the inside edge of a right break that curls into a ferocious saltwater tube, a quiet moment of meditation, looking into the eyes of baby, or just feeling present and content. Yogis truly nails it with his insight that 'in between', where discontent dwells, is the oh-so-important concept of paddling...the space between those moments when it really matters how you cope with the world. Where life happens and we make decisions. Experience it through the eye's of the teller and drift with him through the unique journey of a true Saltwater Buddha.

The title sounds flakey but the book most definitely is not! Writing about spirituality is not easy, neither is writing about surfing, but Yogis manages to do both with a great deal of wit and heart. Considering the nature of the book, an author might be tempted to embellish his story or make himself sound better. But Yogis does not. My bulls\*\*\* detector did not move once during this story. Highly recommended.

Guess I thought somebody could touch the essence of Zen through the surfing experience. This is a charming little story but, when opportunities for deep contemplation on Zen arose, the author chose to only put his tip toe into the ocean. This does not make it a bad book, I quite enjoyed the honest and open (and interesting) tales but Saltwater Buddha.....I think not. Happy i read it.

I usually don't read books that are "stories." It's all business or eastern philosophy. I had been meaning to read this book for some time so I picked it up before I headed down to Nicaragua for a Surf Trip nonetheless. Well I read the book from cover to cover in the flight down from Charleston...that's never happened to me (the reading cover to cover that is). And the added fact that while I am still vacationing in Nicaragua, exhausted after a double surf session, I am writing a review of this book has to tell you something. This book rocks. I apologize for lack of a more articulate review. But I promise you will enjoy his story and really begin to understand the surfer's love of water and the struggle to experience, however fleeting, the ecstasy of total connection to the source of all things. Thanks Jaimal.ChrisP.S. I handed it to my mother and she read it and loved as well (and she's just a beginner, haha).

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