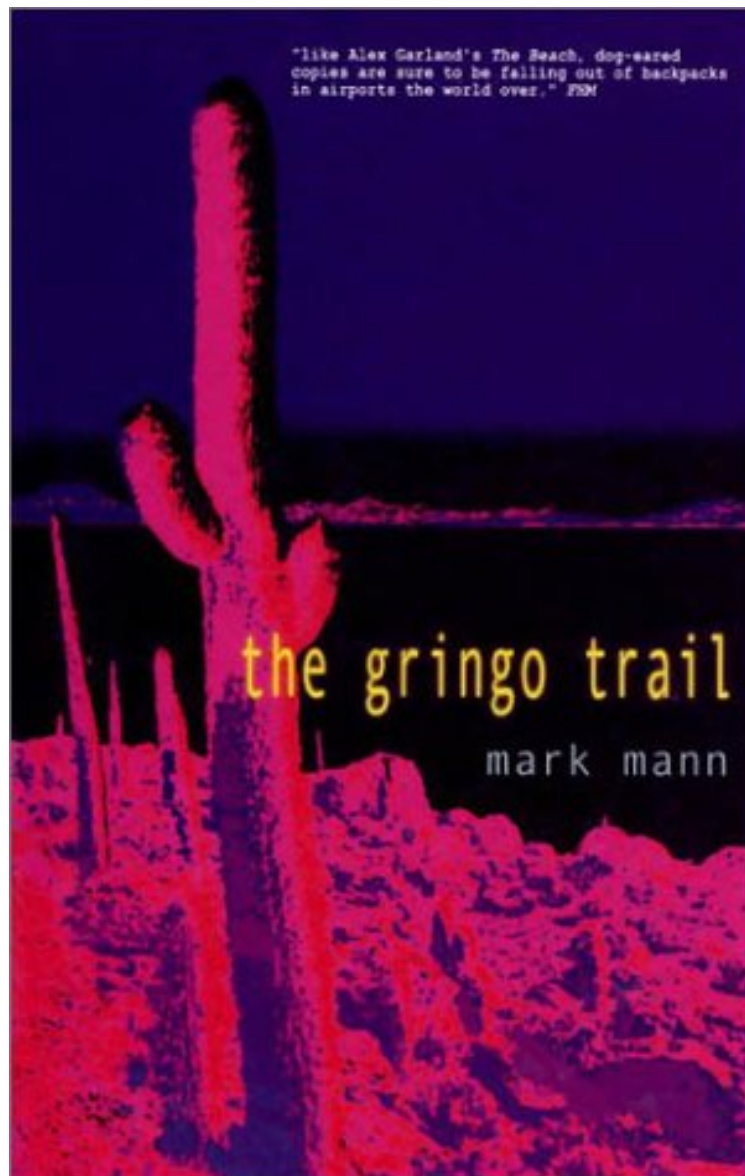


(Library ebook) The Gringo Trail

The Gringo Trail

Mark Mann

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#File Name: 1931160104280 pages | File size: 17.Mb

Mark Mann : The Gringo Trail before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Gringo Trail:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The worst book I've ever readBy Nicole JacobsonThe author is a whiny, elitist who spends more time complaining and taking drugs than actually talking to locals or having interesting experiences. It was the most uninspiring travel book I've ever read, painting a portrait of South America that is

dangerous, poor and completely unappealing to visit. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Revoltingly hypocritical and boring
By Matt W. This book is trash. I bought *The Gringo Trail* after seeing it referenced favorably in a negative review of Roosh's *A Dead Bat in Paraguay*. I don't know why I took the opinion of some anonymous feminist seriously, but there you go. A decade ago, when this book was originally published, *The Gringo Trail* might have been passable. Now? It's not simply a crummy, solipsistic, poorly-written dirge, it's revolting in its hypocrisy. The premise of the memoir is that it's about three English hippies who hit the fabled gringo trail in South America to party, do drugs and visit tourist traps. There's the narrator, who goes unnamed Fight Club-style but I'll simply call Dick, his half-Chinese delinquent girlfriend Melissa, and Mark (presumably not Mark Mann himself), a hard-partying layabout who is constantly mooching off his friends. No, seriously; Dick has to give him a loan so he can even afford the trip. The immediate problem with *The Gringo Trail* is Mann's awful writing style. His prose washes over you like flatulence in an elevator: rancid, suffocating and forgettable all at once. Dick, Melissa and Mark journey all over northwestern South America, from Ecuador to Bolivia and back up to Colombia, but the sights and sounds of their journey are almost unreadable due to his run-on sentences and clichéd descriptions. I don't know how he managed to make backpacking through dangerous cliffs, desperado-infested jungles and more as uninteresting as a day at the office, but he pulled it off. But what really hacked me off about Mann is his nauseating priggishness. In an attempt to add historical context to his pointless wanderings, Mann frequently quotes from that dreaded ur-text of ethnic studies, *Open Veins of Latin America*. In fact, he quotes that book so often that Eduardo Galeano really ought to sue him for copyright infringement. Every other page, there's a whiny digression on how awful it is that Latin America has been so cruelly exploited by foreign imperialists over the centuries, from the Spanish to the Americans. Uh Marky boy, aren't you forgetting something? Like the entire 19th century, where it was YOUR country that was abusing Latin America for profit? Don't lie to me that you don't know; I read *Open Veins of Latin America* when I was a kid and Galeano details exactly how Britain took advantage of the end of Spanish hegemony in Latin America to pillage the place. From turning Uruguay into a glorified satrapy to manipulating Peru and Chile into the War of the Pacific to nearly exterminating the Paraguayans in one of the most destructive wars in history, Britain's bloody history south of the border should merit SOME kind of mention. For all his hand-wringing about exploitation, Mann doesn't mention Britain's imperialism in Latin America ONCE. This is why I despise British leftists, more so than leftists from anywhere else. Robert Fisk, George Galloway, Christopher Hitchens, Joe Strummer: all of them morally bankrupt, craven, disgusting hypocrites. These hatchet men love to wax pious about the sins of America, Germany, Russia or whoever, but they never apply that same standard to their own country. Limeys in general have a collective amnesia about the horrors they've inflicted on the world, but the Tories at least have an excuse. Brit lefties wag their fingers at the U.S. for our treatment of Indians, at the French for their treatment of Algerians, at Belgians for the Congo, but they will never talk about how Victorian Britain conducted a mini-genocide on native Sri Lankans. They'll never mention how Britain invaded Tibet out of boredom, casually slaughtering natives who were armed with swords and century-old matchlock muskets. They'll never bring up the Boer War, where the British used concentration camps as a means to combat the Boer insurgency, where a full quarter of Boer women and children died from starvation and disease. And they will never in a million years acknowledge Ireland. Want a nice, dark lesson in human nature? Try getting any Brit leftist or otherwise to admit that the Irish potato famine was an intentional genocide. Because it was. The Anglo-Puritan claim that the famine just sort of happened is a complete lie. If you want to fight me on this, you better be prepared to explain why even during the worst years of the famine, Ireland was still a net exporter of food. Answer: the Irish starved by the thousands because London let them. The British have and will always view the Irish as less than human. Filthy, dirty Papists, worshipping Mary and getting drunk all the time. Who cares? When the famine struck, the government specifically refused to extend any aid to the Irish because they wanted to thin the herd. Fewer Catholics, fewer mouths to feed, more riches for us was their logic. Forget reparations, forget apologies: to this day the British won't even acknowledge the Irish genocide, let alone the Cromwellian conquest or the other atrocities they afflicted on that long-suffering land. Were it not for the Irish diaspora to America, it's doubtful that anyone would remember the potato famine at all. I don't know why I was expecting introspection from this Mark Mann idiot, considering that the guy's petulance would prevent him from comprehending this post even if I were to print it out and staple gun it to his forehead. In another chapter, he whines about how the Thatcherite ascendancy kept him from getting the cushy government job he always wanted. The guy is wealthy enough to spend six months dropping acid in Colombia and traipsing around the jungle and all he can do is complain. This poor-little-rich-boy cant informs the entire book. That's the entirety of *The Gringo Trail*: sloppily written descriptions of Dick's adventures interspaced with crybaby rants and hypocritical hand-wringing. The nicest thing I can say about the book is that Mark dies at the end; not Mark Mann unfortunately, though a man can dream. Yep, the obnoxious little sponge Mark drowns at sea and has his body mutilated by sharks. I admit I got a few chuckles out of the Kafka-esque process it took for Dick to report his death to the Colombian police, but it doesn't make the remaining 300 pages any more readable. *The Gringo Trail* is the mainstream, watered-down version of adventure writing. It has no bite, no gravitas and no honesty. If you want a tale of debauchery, exploration and masculinity, read Roosh's *A Dead Bat in Paraguay* instead; it is everything that *The Gringo Trail* isn't. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Read some bad reviews and was hesitant to order

thisBy JASON MOONRead some bad reviews and was hesitant to order this. I found it to be a great and very interesting. Glad I ordered it!!

With little more than backpacks and desire for adventure, Mark Mann and two friends set out on an expedition through Ecuador, Bolivia, and Colombia, submerging themselves in Latin culture. Through dense forests, daunting mountains, and pristine beaches, the trio makes its way in a drug-induced haze. Soon the drugs become an all-consuming addiction that changes the lives of Mann and his friends forever. This is an engaging travelogue and frank memoir evokes the magical realism of South American literature. Darkly comic, ultimately shocking, and packed with astute observations. Geographical