



Q & A

with Allan Karl, author of FORKS

Three years is a long time to be away from home. What was the reaction of your friends and family?

As I prepared for my journey many warned me not to go. My friends and family were convinced I would get sick, hurt, ripped off, kidnapped, or killed.

I thought differently. I imagined a world of friendly people as eager as I am to learn, share, and connect. I hoped to, and did, prove them wrong. My quest was to explore; to discover the beauty of our world and its humanity. To uncover truths about them both and to find and learn more about myself.

Your new book is hard cover, full of color photography, and beyond your adventure stories you've added elements of a cookbook. Why not simply write a travelog or memoir?

Great question, and I am working on another book that will go into more depth about the travel story and adventure. But I first wanted to share my journey the way I experienced it; to share what I saw through photographs and what I tasted through food and drink.

I never set out to write about food or a cookbook. Yet, when I returned home, I struggled to find the best way to share my journey with others. It finally hit me over a dinner with friends: I remembered the connections I had made with new friends over the meals and stories we had shared—together.

As I traveled, it occurred to me how important the ritual of sharing food is and how much we learn when we take the time to connect and share a meal with strangers or good friends.

This book brings the world to our tables. This is the best way to share and experience the world—as I did again and again during my journey—spending moments and making memories with good friends over real food and conversation.

Your broke your leg in the middle of nowhere in Bolivia. How did this accident change your trip?

On my way to the largest salt flat in the world, the Salar de Uyuni in Bolivia, I slipped in some mud and my bike landed on top of my leg and crushed it. It was a three-day and three-flight ordeal, but I returned home for surgery, leaving my bike in Bolivia. Many bet I would never return, but months later I flew back to Bolivia, picked up my bike, and rode on. It's important to me to do as I say, follow my dream, and accomplish my goals.

As a solo traveler, did you ever get lonely?

Of the many lessons I learned over the three years of my travels, perhaps the most important is that, even though I set off on this journey alone, I was never alone. Whenever I found myself lost, lonely, or hungry, I would just turn around and find somebody was always there. I'm amazed at our capacity to connect with people—with humanity. That's where truth shines.

Who do you think will read this book, resonate with your stories, and enjoy the photos and food most?

This book will appeal to most anyone at any age. I think anyone who has dreamed of traveling the world will find this book interesting. Adventure travelers, anyone who likes to cook, motorcyclists, cyclists, or anyone with a bike, motorcycle, or scooter will love this adventure. It also has something for those interested in history and different cultures, or for travelers who prefer to hike or trek. Even for those who would like to travel the world vicariously, this is a great read.

See the world, experience the people, and taste the culture. It's great.