



## Into India

*John Keay*

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# Into India

John Keay

## **Into India** John Keay

India challenges the visitor like no other country. Vast, ancient, and impossibly demanding, it is never just a holiday or an assignment. Advertisements call it an experience; it changes people in unexpected ways. To comprehend and enjoy this experience, there is no better introduction to the traditions and inhibitions of the world's most complex society than *Into India*.

The product of tireless travel rather than of academic scholarship, this book prepares the visitor for India and greatly enriches later recollection. Amidst chaos it finds logic and from frustration reaps reward. In identifying and illuminating the role of Rajputs, Brahmins, Sikhs, Marathas, Kashmiris, Tamils, and a dozen other communities, it makes penetrable and intelligible the past glories and the present problems as well as the passions and the politics of an otherwise bewildering society.

Traveling from Kashmir to Kerala, from Gujarat to Assam, Keay cheerfully succumbed to the pull which draws the visitor deeper and deeper "into India"--from the cities to the villages, from the hotels to the ashrams, and from the sweeping first impressions to the ever-deepening insights. "Dust and distance become constant companions . . . punctuated by moments of such intense and arresting beauty that all else, poverty, heat and sickness, are forgotten."

Written in the 1970s, *Into India* achieved classic status and remained in print for twenty years. John Keay has since written more specialized studies of India and elsewhere, including a major new history of the subcontinent. But this reissue of his first book, with a new introductory chapter setting it in the context of the present, will be enthusiastically greeted by all to whom India appeals.

John Keay has been visiting India for thirty years. His other books on India-related subjects include two books on nineteenth-century exploration recently reissued as *The Explorers of the Western Himalayas, India Discovered* about scholarship under the British raj, and *The Honorable Company*, an acclaimed history of the English East India Company.

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