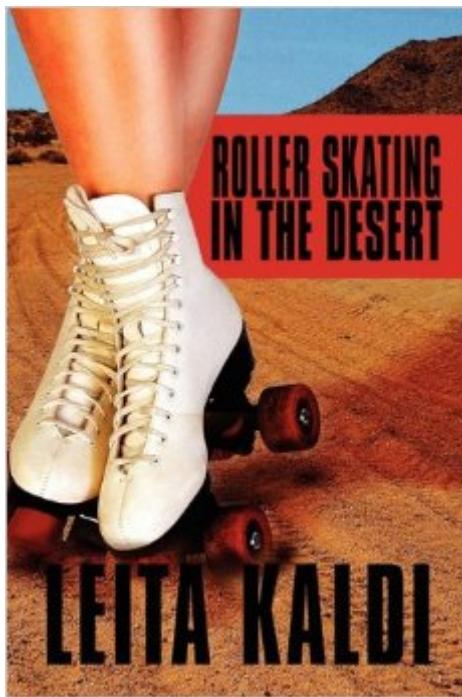


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Roller Skating In The Desert



Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Readers will find themselves on roller skates, careening through amazing true stories from Leita Kaldi's three years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Senegal. In this honest, provocative memoir, Kaldi hones in on the cultural differences that pose obstacles for North Americans who try to adjust to life in a nation where poverty is ubiquitous. Although the author writes of the people of Senegal and the cultural norms there, much of life that may be attributable to poverty is cross-cultural. Mothers die in childbirth; infants die of malnutrition-related diseases; lives are lost because clinics are inaccessible; clean water, now considered a human right, is a luxury. So this is not just a book about Senegal, it's a book about the the human spirit that survives and even prevails under crushing conditions. Although Kaldi spends time on such hardships, she focuses on the indomitable spirit of the Senegalese--their courage in the face of want, their humor, generosity, and resilience. Having left a modern, Miami Beach apartment for a hut in west Africa, Leita Kaldi, beset by self-doubt in those early months of Peace Corps life, becomes a respected member of her community, despite her whiteness and her attention-grabbing white hair (plucked from her head for good luck charms). At 55, she leaves a comfortable life and the sons she adores for an unknown world. Ms Kaldi's role was that of facilitating small business development among the folk in the rural area where she lived. She assisted Senegalese women in the marketing of their unique baskets, for example.

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