

A Russian Journal (Classic, 20th-Century, Penguin)

By John Steinbeck

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Steinbeck and Capa's account of their journey through Cold War Russia is a classic piece of reportage and travel writing.

Just after the Iron Curtain fell on Eastern Europe, Pulitzer Prize-winning author John Steinbeck and acclaimed war photographer Robert Capa ventured into the Soviet Union to report for the *New York Herald Tribune*. This rare opportunity took the famous travelers not only to Moscow and Stalingrad – now Volgograd – but through the countryside of the Ukraine and the Caucasus. Hailed by the *New York Times* as "superb" when it first appeared in 1948, **A Russian Journal** is the distillation of their journey and remains a remarkable memoir and unique historical document.

What they saw and movingly recorded in words and on film was what Steinbeck called "the great other side there ... the private life of the Russian people." Unlike other Western reporting about Russia at the time, **A Russian Journal** is free of ideological obsessions. Rather, Steinbeck and Capa recorded the grim realities of factory workers, government clerks, and peasants, as they emerged from the rubble of World War II—represented here in Capa's stirring photographs alongside Steinbeck's masterful prose. Through it all, we are given intimate glimpses of two artists at the height of their powers, answering their need to document human struggle. This edition features an introduction by Steinbeck scholar Susan Shillinglaw.

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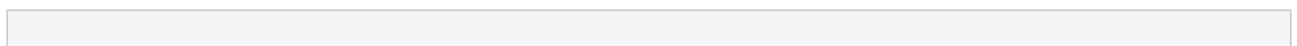
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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

After the Iron Curtain was established following World War II, Steinbeck, along with photographer Bob Capa, ventured into the Soviet Union on behalf of the New York Herald Tribune. This 1948 volume collects the full run of his reports with numerous pictures.

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From the Back Cover

Steinbeck and Capa's account of their journey through Cold War Russia is a classic piece of reportage and travel writing

Just after the Iron Curtain fell on Eastern Europe, Pulitzer Prize -- winning author John Steinbeck and acclaimed war photographer Robert Capa ventured into the Soviet Union to report for the New York Herald Tribune. This rare opportunity took the famous travelers not only to Moscow and Stalingrad -- now Volgograd -- but through the countryside of the Ukraine and the Caucasus. Hailed by the New York Times as "superb" when it first appeared in 1948, *A Russian Journal* is the distillation of their journey and remains a remarkable memoir and unique historical document.

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About the Author

John Steinbeck, born in Salinas, California, in 1902, grew up in a fertile agricultural valley, about twenty-five miles from the Pacific Coast. Both the valley and the coast would serve as settings for some of his best fiction. In 1919 he went to Stanford University, where he intermittently enrolled in literature and writing courses until he left in 1925 without taking a degree. During the next five years he supported himself as a laborer and journalist in New York City, all the time working on his first novel, *Cup of Gold* (1929).

After marriage and a move to Pacific Grove, he published two California books, *The Pastures of Heaven* (1932) and *To a God Unknown* (1933), and worked on short stories later collected in *The Long Valley* (1938). Popular success and financial security came only with *Tortilla Flat* (1935), stories about Monterey's paisanos. A ceaseless experimenter throughout his career, Steinbeck changed courses regularly. Three powerful novels of the late 1930s focused on the California laboring class: *In Dubious Battle* (1936), *Of Mice and Men* (1937), and the book considered by many his finest, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). *The Grapes of Wrath* won both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize in 1939.

Early in the 1940s, Steinbeck became a filmmaker with *The Forgotten Village* (1941) and a serious student of marine biology with *Sea of Cortez* (1941). He devoted his services to the war, writing *Bombs Away* (1942) and the controversial play-novelette *The Moon is Down* (1942). *Cannery Row* (1945), *The Wayward Bus* (1948), another experimental drama, *Burning Bright* (1950), and *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* (1951) preceded publication of the monumental *East of Eden* (1952), an ambitious saga of the Salinas Valley and

his own family's history.

The last decades of his life were spent in New York City and Sag Harbor with his third wife, with whom he traveled widely. Later books include *Sweet Thursday* (1954), *The Short Reign of Pippin IV: A Fabrication* (1957), *Once There Was a War* (1958), *The Winter of Our Discontent* (1961), *Travels with Charley in Search of America* (1962), *America and Americans* (1966), and the posthumously published *Journal of a Novel: The East of Eden Letters* (1969), *Viva Zapata!* (1975), *The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights* (1976), and *Working Days: The Journals of The Grapes of Wrath* (1989).

Steinbeck received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1962, and, in 1964, he was presented with the United States Medal of Freedom by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Steinbeck died in New York in 1968. Today, more than thirty years after his death, he remains one of America's greatest writers and cultural figures.

Susan Shillinglaw is a professor of English San Jose State University. She is the author of *On Reading the Grapes of Wrath* and *Carol and John Steinbeck: Portrait of a Marriage*.

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