



The Hedonism Handbook: Mastering The Lost Arts Of Leisure And Pleasure

By Michael Flocker

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In the age of Oprah, Dr. Phil, and countless other self-help disciplinarians, indulging in any kind of pleasurable pastime is on the brink of extinction. But it's not too late to revive those lost pleasures that make life worth living. The Hedonism Handbook can help put the three-martini lunch, the baguette with real butter, the deep tan, the unfiltered cigarette, or the simple act of lying in a hammock under the stars back within our grasp. A tongue-in-cheek, satirical guide to the "good" life, The Hedonism Handbook will help us reclaim it all. With his characteristic wit, author Michael Flocker combines humorous reviews of historical excesses, suggestions for everyday indulgences, lists of hedonistic icons with famous quotes and earnest warnings about the perils of structured living. Made up of ten worldly wise chapters arranged to form a journey for the reader—a path from the straight-and-narrow into wide-open fields of frivolity—The Hedonism Handbook will help readers master the lost arts of leisure and pleasure. It provides an entertaining, yet (if you're not careful), life-changing read.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Built around the notion that a new wave of self-help puritanism—abetted by the good ol' American drive toward success and eternal youth—is stifling the nation with "tedious" ideals, Flocker's campy little volume aims to redirect readers toward a more lofty goal: the pursuit of pleasure. Fans of Flocker's previous book, the bestselling *Metrosexual Guide to Style*, will appreciate his clever lists and section titles: e.g. "Top Ten Reasons Big Rats Abandon the Race" and "Looking Good—Buy the Outfit, Screw the Phone Bill." The pages are delightfully laid out, with amusing marginalia and wonderful Victorian-era illustrations, and there are plenty of barbs to keep readers chuckling. For example, writing of May-December relationships, Flocker quips: "The trick, on both sides of the fence, is to feign serious interest." But the book nonetheless feels a bit too weakly espoused. For one, Flocker's ideas and examples appear grasped-at rather than pondered-on. For another, he's constantly hedging his argument, always calling for caution and balance in the indulgences he espouses, as though afraid of a backlash from the very forces that he mocks. Flocker's first book was notable for its dissection of an existing trend; it seems unlikely that his second will spark a new one. That said, this little red book does have its moments of wit, joy and even profundity and, as a novelty gift, it could make a charming nudge to one's partner in crime.

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Review

"A refreshing change from earnest self-help books." -- *Chicago Tribune* 11/21/04

"After this quirky and very fun read, am I a hedonist? Yes I am...The feeling is all good." -- *Playgirl* January 2005

"Flocker urges us to get out there and party hearty...Bravo!" -- *Toronto Star* 1/2/05

"I would be hard-pressed to name an era in which such a book was more necessary...Hedonism is for everyone." -- *Nerve.com* 1/6/05

"It's a simple message, but a good one." -- *New York Post* 10/31/04

"It's hard to stop turning the pages." -- *Brentwood Magazine* November 2004

"Now, gluttonous heathens have their own pocket-sized bible to live by...as easy to swallow as a slice of comfort-food." -- *Philadelphia City Paper* 11/18/04

"Offers a colorful history of debauchery." -- *New City Chicago* 12/14/04

"We're sure George W. Bush will keep a copy of this book next to his Bible. It's a must buy." -- *Instinct Magazine* October 2004

The Awards: Grooviest History -- *Esquire* January 2005

About the Author

The author of the best-selling *The Metrosexual Guide to Style*, *The Hedonism Handbook*, and *The Fame Game*, **Michael Flocker** lives in New York City.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mary Alexander:

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