

GALLIVANT

A TRAVELOGUE

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SiiM's debut memoir sweeps readers into her nearly year-long, 1990s globetrotting adventure. A tribute to her late father, who disappeared at sea when she was just seven years old, SiiM's trip—taken from her hometown of Kingston, Jamaica in her early 20s—is an echo of the “ethereal and transient nature of our lives on this planet,” a gradual awakening to the freedom and self-awareness of directionless wandering. Through snippets of her journals, emails to family and friends, photographs, and personal sketches, SiiM captures vivid cultural snapshots that linger: hushed moments with the animals at Singapore's Night Zoo; Hong Kong's unbridled atmosphere of frenzy and connection; the hissing fireworks during Mekong River festivals.

Travel devotees will relish SiiM's vivid recollections of small villages in Southeast Asia, the desolate beauty of Australia, and the idling rhythms of Laos's waters. Throughout her writing, she shares recipes (illustrated by Noor Adnan) linking readers to her experiences and driving home the power of food to spark bold emotion: jerk pork lettuce wraps fuse her Jamaican heritage with the beauty of Asian cuisine, sticky rice with coconut evokes the supple richness of Thailand, and cornbread “teaches you to pay attention” in the Australian outback. In each place she visits, SiiM immerses herself in the culture and history, sharing her conversations with strangers, observations of the locals at work, and the journey's most important lessons.

The entire trip, of course, isn't perfect, and SiiM details her struggles as well, including budgeting for such an extended adventure. She tenderly addresses homesickness, reverting to comfort food from Jamaica and pinpointing simple ways to overcome loneliness, all while maintaining her deep connection with friends and family. Articulate, entertaining, and always perceptive, SiiM's memoir transforms both herself and readers, leaving them “peering into life's headwind, listening keenly to decipher trending whispers on capricious breezes, and adjusting [their] sails to meet the surging tides” of the future.

Takeaway: Adventure, beauty, and introspection shape this intuitive memoir.

Comparable Titles: Alice Morrison's *Walking With Nomads*, Pam Mandel's *The Same River Twice*.



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