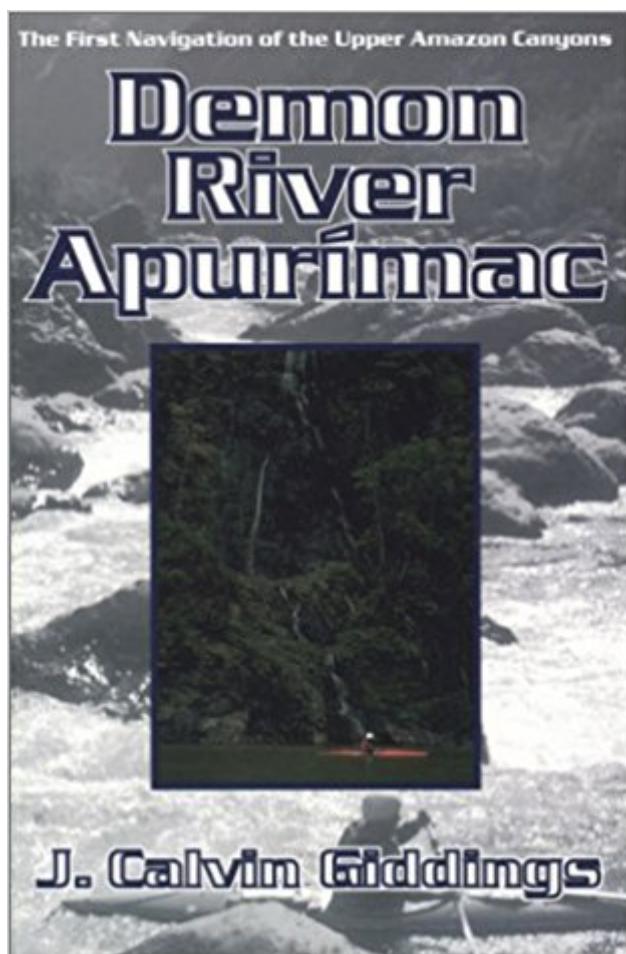


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Demon River Apurimac: The First Navigation Of Upper Canyons



Synopsis

Book by Giddings, J. Calvin

Book Information

Paperback: 290 pages

Publisher: Univ of Utah Pr (T); English Language edition (September 1996)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0874805252

ISBN-13: 978-0874805253

Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 6.2 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #3,216,772 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #9 in Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Field Guides > Regional #141 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Outdoor Recreation > Kayaking > Whitewater Kayaking #381 in Books > Travel > South America > Peru

Customer Reviews

Book by Giddings, J. Calvin

I ran all the whitewater on the in the late 1990's, early 2000's (in several stages obviously). We brought along extracts from this book for the section from below the source to where the commercial rafting runs start. The book is so accurate I was able to tell the water level we experienced was about 6 inches lower than theirs. I wish I had read it before we had ran the other sections, especially The Abyss (OMG).I've read the 'popular' book on paddling the Apurimac/ and consider it a fun fiction read.Demon River is well written, entertaining, and accurate. I couldn't put it down. These paddlers deserve every respect for their latre 1970's accomplishment, with fiberglass kayaks and at a time when kayak techniques were rudimentary.

This just the type of book I like to read at night before going to sleep. The exploits are of a kind I would never attempt, and just the contemplation of them makes me at once weary and exhilarated.In the early seventies the author resolved to kayak down one of the most forbidding rivers in the world: the Apurimac in Peru. In two trips, in 1974 and 1975, he did just that. The Apurimac is the longest tributary and hence considered the source of, the (River). It is forbidding

due to the extreme ferocity of its cataracts, and also due to the fact that in many places along its course climbing out of its canyon or going back upstream would be impossible. Thus, the discovery by Giddings and his companions of a scenic forty or fifty foot waterfall on the unexplored sections could well have been a death sentence. While all the kayakers did make it out alive, things were not always hunky-dory between them. Giddings comments frequently on his team's lack of teamwork and his submerged tensions. Reading this a quarter century later, I felt he could be right or maybe wrong, but I had almost nothing by which to draw any conclusions. The author gives only the most cursory description of the other members of his party (5 besides himself), then launches into the chronicle. This information deficit is never cured. We are not told the age, the religion, the education, the job, the background, the biases--nothing of any of these five other men on the journey, which makes it impossible to become involved as a reader in the psycho-drama that seems to have played out on the river. One cannot even attempt some judgement based solely on appearance because although the book has many photos, it lacks a portrait of the group, which one would think basic in a work of this kind. The reader can only glimpse three of the five members in individual pictures. So the question remains. Were they really a band of males of the stand-up comedy stereotype: egotistical, enamored of tools and technological playthings, but unable to talk about their feelings round the campfire or work together as a unit on the river? Were they even aware of any potential for their expedition to turn into a disaster of the kind portrayed in the movie Deliverance (a hit of that era) or the more recent catastrophes on Everest? Or is there another side to the story that Giddings chose for one reason or another not to reveal?

This is a true "sleeper" book. Well written, fascinating and real. A pure joy to read for any whitewater enthusiast and anyone who loves adventure. It is too bad that it is out of print. I think that with proper marketing this could be a great bestseller! Highly recommended!

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