



Eating the Flowers of Paradise: One Man's Journey Through Ethiopia and Yemen

Kevin Rushby

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Ethiopia in eastern Africa and Yemen on the Arabian peninsula remain as two of the most inviting outposts for travelers seeking the exotic, the exciting and, occasionally, the dangerous. In these two places Qat is just one name given to a green leafy plant that is cultivated there. When chewed, the leaves of this plant release two pharmacologically-active substances that produce a hypnotic, reverential "high" similar to marijuana, but distinctive in the thoughtful state it induces. Kevin Rushby traveled to Ethiopia and Yemen and discovered that the use of Qat is more than the casual use of a mild narcotic. He found that it is a way of life. Qat plays a pivotal role in all facets of the culture influencing everything from architecture to television schedules. Tracing the historic trade routes of Qat the author travels from the heart of Ethiopia over the Red Sea and into Arabia. Written with an exceptional combination of grace, wit and insight, Kevin Rushby proves himself to be a worthy successor to Paul Theroux, Bruce Chatwin and Jan Morris. From Addis Abbaba to Djibouti to Dire Dawa and on to San'a, Rushby discovers the soul of these places while meeting characters one might call "interesting" and avoiding situations one might call "life-threatening." *Eating the Flowers of Paradise* is a powerful and entertaining journey through exotic lands by one of the best new writers to emerge in recent years.

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