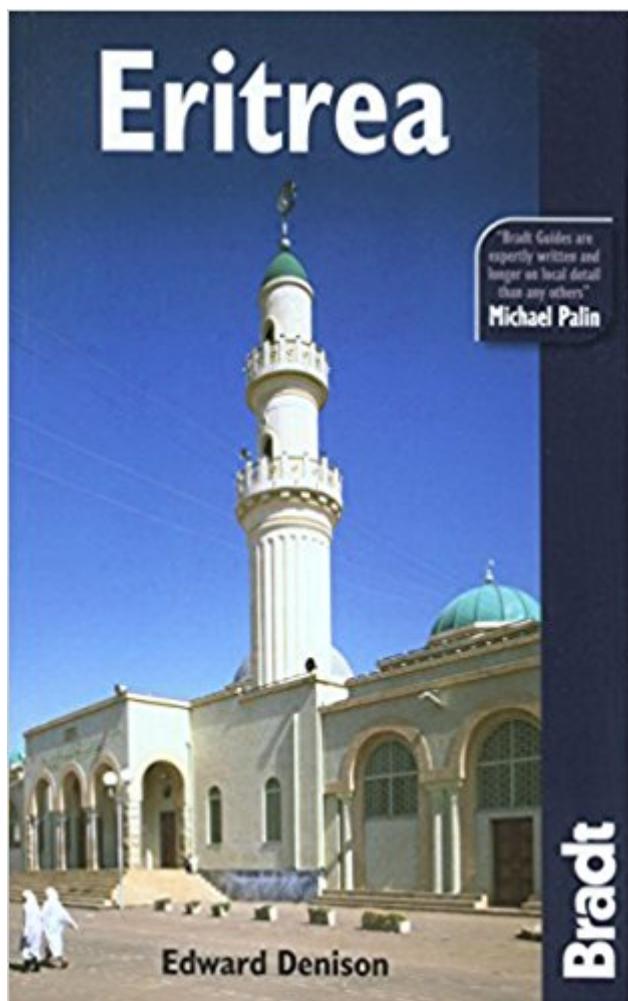


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Eritrea, 4th (Bradt Travel Guide)



Synopsis

A new edition of the essential guide for independent travelers to this unusual and remarkable African country, which is emerging from its war-torn past to welcome tourists. In addition to the charms of the capital Asmara, with its broad avenues, markets and Roman Catholic cathedral, the interior – rich in historical remains – is well worth visiting.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"I was greatly helped by [this] guide." - George Mandel, Israel (consumer)

Edward Denison originally visited the country as a student of architecture. Edward Paice is a full-time author with interests in history, natural history and Africa.

This is one of the poorest guidebooks I have ever used! In strong contrast to Bradt's excellent guide to neighbouring Ethiopia, this guide to Eritrea is so poor it is nearly useless. Even before departure, I found that the book just failed to make Eritrea sound exciting - it made it sound dull. The very weakest points are its maps! Can you believe that a full page regional map of say, Western Eritrea, can have a grand total of four (yes, FOUR!) places in that region marked on it, fewer than are marked on the much smaller map for the entire country, and failing to show even the places that are described in the relevant section of the guide??? The city map for Asmara is a joke (I've uploaded a scanned image of it to see for yourself), with no names marked for most streets, and most of those that are marked being old names that were changed years ago. Things to see & do? Very few

described, very poorly. History & politics? These chapters look as if they had been contributed by the propaganda department of the Eritrean government, with glorifying accounts of the heroic fight for freedom and no mentioning of the disgraceful present. Flora & fauna? The author's knowledge seems to end at distinguishing a mammal from a bird - maybe. The bottom line is that until Bradt gets a new author to rewrite this guide completely, you are far better off reading the shorter but much better chapter on this wonderful country in Lonely Planet's Ethiopia & Eritrea guide than wasting your money, like I did, on ordering this book. The 2 stars were only given as an acknowledgement for the publisher's effort to put out a separate guide to this unusual destination, not for the actual value of this book which is closer to zero.

To my knowledge this is the only guidebook in English devoted solely to Eritrea. The closest comparator is the Lonely Planet guide which covers both Ethiopia and Eritrea. As one might expect in a volume devoted purely to Eritrea, this volume has more information and detail (more maps of specific towns, for example) and the historical discussion of the origins of the independence movement is informative. As another reviewer mentioned, successive political regimes have changed the names of streets in downtown Asmara; in my experience, local people are familiar with both the "traditional" and the "official" names, and the use of the maps in this guide was not problematic. The one aspect in which the Lonely Planet guide tops this book is in that book's walking tours which I found quite useful.

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