



Mediterranean Homesick Blues: A Diary of Life-affirming Disasters on the Cote D'Azur

Ben Chatfield

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The year is 1994 and longtime Francophile, undergraduate and hapless romantic Ben Chatfield spends a year split between teaching English to rowdy teenagers in Cannes and taking drinks orders from their topless mums on a beach in St. Tropez. Mediterranean Homesick Blues is The Catcher in The Rye set in Coventry and the Côte d'Azur - written from the point of view of a repressed and charmingly naive Englishman. A diary of life-affirming disasters against a backdrop of the glamour and grime of the French Riviera, it chronicles one man's attempts to love and understand the French, acts of serial romanticism, the use of the subjunctive mood as well as the quest for the ultimate sandwich. It is a year in the life of someone you've never heard of. The humorous diary of a year-long odyssey into both manhood and the French way of life, it's also a savvy and refreshingly different kind of guidebook - you won't find a top ten list of restaurants anywhere, but you will find a list of the most boring French literary classics. Mediterranean Homesick Blues is the inside track on truly understanding (and loving) the French, looking at the more esoteric, impenetrable and non-clichéd parts of their culture: Johnny Hallyday, bronzage à l'integral, existentialist footballers, why French women are mad as trees but as enticing as cold lager, the importance of the redundant 'ne' and exactly how the Cannes police like to extract confessions. "My year abroad was one of the happiest and most formative of my life and Ben Chatfield's witty and insightful book brought a lot of those memories flooding back." Alistair Campbell, former Labour party Director of Communications and Ex-Language Assistant "Very funny and deeply touching... like if "I" had dumped Withnail and headed South instead of North." Anthony Hines, writer 'Da Ali G Show', 'Borat', 'Bruno'

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