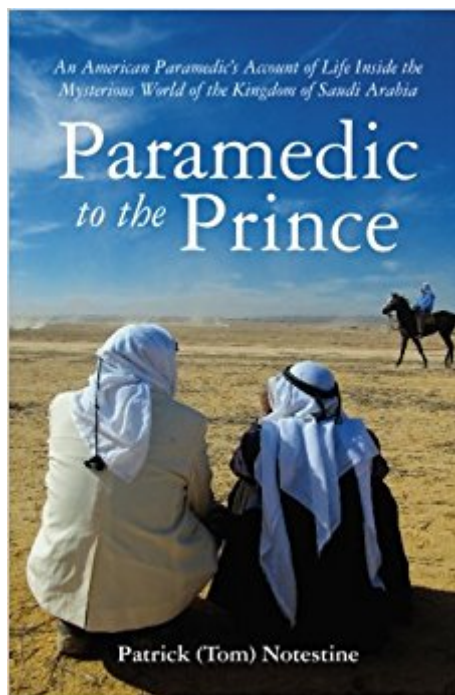




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Paramedic To The Prince: An American Paramedic's Account Of Life Inside The Mysterious World Of The Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia



Synopsis

A Californian paramedic answers an advertisement for contract work at a military hospital in Saudi Arabia. So his adventure begins. This is a riveting, factual account of his ten years inside a country seldom seen by the outside world. Working on the private medical staff of King Abdullah, no western writer has ever been this close to the "House of Saud". The author takes you on a journey from the desert camps of the Bedouin to the highest echelons of the Saudi royal family. From meetings between King Abdullah and Yasser Arafat to the death of Edi Amin the author documents it all. Themes explored include the contrast of cultures and the rise of terrorism in a post 9/11 world. The author's unique and often humorous perspective provides a view of Saudi society that has never before been documented by any other book in this genre. The author gives an important insight to events that continue to affect the world today.

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Customer Reviews

Patrick Notestine was born in California. He drifted from job to job after leaving high school, working as a gas station attendant and farm laborer amongst other things. At the age of 23, he took a long hard look at the direction his life was going. At the back of his mind was an interest in science and medicine. Becoming an Emergency Medical Technician seemed a good option, so he enrolled on a course at his local college. Graduating in March 1983, he started working on an ambulance. He attended UCLA School for Pre-hospital Care and graduated as a paramedic in 1986. He found work on primary response ambulances and eventually moved on to helicopter and air medical evacuation. In 1993, the author answered an advertisement to work at a hospital in Saudi Arabia. Working on the private medical staff of King Abdullah, he enjoyed unprecedented access to the

"House of Saud". The Middle East is never far from the author's heart, he has worked in Oman, Qatar and Iraq after completing his service in Saudi Arabia. He is currently working on his second book

I decided to buy this book after reading the review by Jean Sasson (author of the Princess series). I have read many books about Saudi Arabia, mostly written by western expatriates who spend a year or two there, and then write a book professing to understand a country as unique as it is complex. This book stands out from the rest. The author is a Californian Paramedic who spent over ten years working at all levels of Saudi Society. Including being on the medical staff of King Abdullah. His passion and commitment to his work comes across, from the blood and carnage of treating Bedouin children in the emergency room, to treating the royal family of the House of Saud. The book grabs you by the throat from the very first page and never lets you go. It is about so much more than paramedicine. It delves into contrasting social issues and the rise in terrorism, in one of the most fundamentalist Islamic countries in the world. Amid the serious nature of the book, there are many lighter moments such as the pet Baboon that Notestine bought from the local animal market, which escaped and ended up riding the employee bus to the hospital. This book is truly a must read for anyone interested in the Middle East or just true life adventure. As a journalist and observer of the human condition I find the author highly perceptive. A book that should not be missed.

If you are planning to go work in Saudi Arabia (or for that matter, any of the oil-rich Gulf Arab states like UAE, Qatar, Oman, etc) then this book is an absolute must-read. If you are merely curious about the people and culture, it's an absolute must-read. For Saudi Arabia is truly a separate reality, a whole other planet---its neighboring petro-states do have many similar egregious and surreal characteristics in cultural, economic, and political organization, but none of them can rival the comic extremities of the Saudis which this book details so brilliantly. Keep in mind that this is not meant as some rigorous scholarly or journalistic work, but simply a journal-like collection of personal anecdotes by an ordinary American who comes and spends a few years living and working in Saudi. It's light reading, no doubt...but yields a very accurate feel for the place and is quite balanced in its overall tone and attitude towards the Magic Kingdom (an ironic but not unaffectionate nickname for Saudi Arabia given by expats). Notestine does not romanticize the Saudis, nor does he condemn them...this relative lack of soap-box judgement is one of the strengths of his book.

As an RN I was looking initially for the medical references and how healthcare compared to the US system. What interested me was the culture and day to day lives of the Saudis' as described by the author. As a Westerner working for the Prince, this young man was able to visit places off limits to non-Muslims and over time, see a different vantage point of the terrorism which impacted the US through 2004. Very interesting read.

Sometimes redundant and boring. But overall interesting read. I wish more people would read books like this to learn that this culture is not compatible with our way of life, religion or no religion. Their treatment of women and others who are not Muslim or a Saudi is deplorable. I'd never go to Saudi Arabia or any of those Muslim countries where they treat women the way they do.

It was an eye opening narrative about Saudi Arabia! Their way of life is so contrary to our way of life that it is hard to believe it is true. I realize that this book is true and I do recommend that it should be read!

I enjoyed this book for so many reasons. The "insider" tidbits are fascinating, and often mind-boggling. I believe the Authors love of Saudi Arabia, and it's people, keeps this account from being biased or skewed. This is truly an eye opener and although I still may not accept some of the Saudi ways or their process of thinking, I can now see where it originates from. As for technical features ... It played well on Text-to-Speech. But was difficult to leave a review at close on Kindle due to the length of Authors description. I had to manually delete, delete, delete and rearrange until an acceptable amount of characters were left. So I was not able to send my own opinion to FaceBook or Twitter. Not a big deal, but something for the Author to consider. I would have like a little Epilogue at the end to say what the Author is doing now, but maybe he's incognito?

This is a fascinating peek at life inside Saudi Arabia through the eyes of a compassionate and earnest western expatriot. Tom Notestine is a wonderful storyteller, and I found myself on page 100 before I even looked up at the clock. His ability to describe the people and the culture absolutely sucks you in and you find yourself thinking about what he reveals and applying it to what is going on in the Middle East today. Many of the cultural and religious practices that he explains help a reader understand numerous events in today's world events. I love reading accounts like this. I'll never live in Saudi Arabia, and chances are I won't even ever visit there. Thanks to Tom's engaging story of his own experience, I believe I have a little better understanding of what life is like there for both the

common resident and members of the royal family.

I call this book unbiased though that is not true. The author loved Saudi Arabia...the country and it's people. At the same time he hated the lack of motivation, the dishonesty of people, and the lack of understanding of the value of hard work and a striving for excellence. More than any book I have read to date about Saudi Arabia this author provides a balanced view. Perhaps that is a better word than unbiased...balanced. He had access to things that female authors did not. And he took great pains to understand the people, something that I highly value. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in a better understanding of this country, it's people, culture, customs and religion.

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