



The Book of Tiki

Sven A. Kirsten

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After World War II, US soldiers stationed in the South Pacific returned home with tales of trees loaded with exotic fruits, sleepy lagoons, white-sand beaches, and gorgeous people wearing grass and feathers as they danced half-naked during all-night orgies of food and music. The American imagination seized on this exotic version of island culture, and it exerted a massive influence on Fashion, pop music, eating and drinking, and even architecture. Everything from bars to bowling alleys adopted elements of Polynesian design. Tikis, the carved wooden and stone statues from across the Pacific, found their way into every hotel lounge and suburban living room. But as the fad was reaching its peak, the big generation gap of the late 60s put a sudden end to Polynesian escapism as the children of the Tiki revellers decided to seek their own Nirvana in sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll. The 90s have seen a revitalised interest in this kitsch anomaly of post-war America -- lounge bars and the sound of ""exotica"" are back in. This enlightening and hilarious guide casts the reader as an ""urban archaeologist"" exploring the lost remnants of Tiki culture across the States -- discovering relics from this forgotten civilisation in thrift stores, yard sales, and used book and record emporia. A combination of nostalgia and fascinating pop cultural study, this volume is a long overdue investigation into the cult of the Tiki.

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