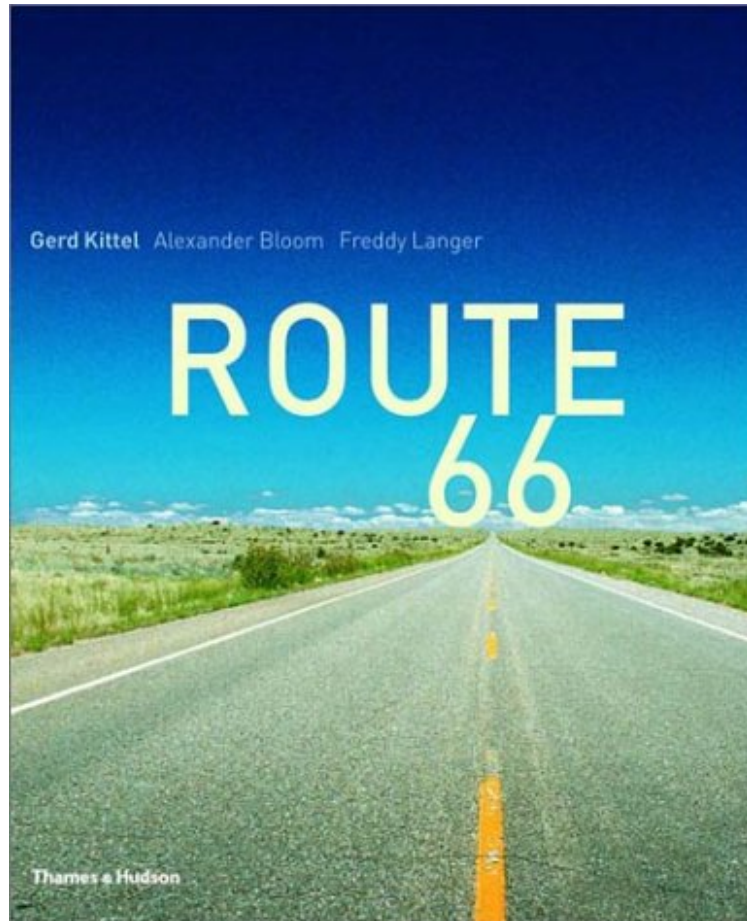


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From Thames Hudson : Route 66 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Route 66:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Get Your Kicks -- and Fine-tune Your Mind at the Same TimeBy Daniel G. SchaefferBack when I was a young 'un, in the late 60's, I spent several summers driving the highways with a buddy of mine, including the old 66, checking out the Burma Shave signs, the sunsets and rainstorms, the changes in topography, etc. Yep, it was all like Kerouac and Buz-and-Todd to the tune of Tom Rush and Canned Heat. I always told myself that before I retired I'd do it again, with a camera and typewriter. Now I don't have to.The photos are great. They're not kitsch at all; they really catch the loneliness and sleepiness of the small towns, the earnest tawdriness of the tourist traps, the dank sweatiness of Missouri summers with their constant din of insects in the grass, the cold wind of an Arizona desert dusk, the sense of disappointment when you realize how overcrowded and outright awful LA really is, etc.The essays say it all, too. The dream of freedom and fulfillment we all chase when we go on the road is exactly that, and one's best to take an ironic view of it. As the old joke goes, nostalgia isn't what it used to be. As Pirsig says in ZAMM, we're all chasing ghosts. More important, this huge continent was around for millions of years before

we got here, and it will last forever after we're all gone. It really doesn't need us. I'm glad I discovered this. It's a tourist book for the philosophically inclined. 7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Sixty-six in Kittel color. By Robin A super collection of color photos of America's Mother Road. I first came across Kittel's work in 1986 when I bought his 'Southwest USA' and the following year 'A New England Autumn'. As well as photographing the landscape he has an eye for capturing man-made America and as a foreigner that does not mean he searches out the ugly and the squalid. What I find so impressive about his work is the color and depth he manages to capture, you are really there looking at the scene as he saw it. The only other photographer I know of who also captures color in the same way is Stephen Shore in his 1982 book 'Uncommon Places'. Kittel's photo essay of Route 66, in eighty-three (well printed) images captures the sights he found along the way. It starts with a spread of the morning rush-hour on a corner of Jackson Boulevard and Michigan Avenue in Chicago and ends with a picture of Santa Monica Boulevard and Ocean Avenue in California, the photos in-between show motels, gas stations, shops and frequently the people who run them, road signs, landscapes and more. Actually just the sort of photos that you would expect to see in a book about Route 66 but not until now with this quality and beauty. Some of these images are quite stunning, page sixty-one shows the Munger Moss motel in Labanon, Missouri, with its huge neon sign, page sixty-four has a near dusk image of the Boots Motel in Carthage, Missouri, the neon strips creating a glow on the sidewalk, page 157 shows a street corner in Barstow, with at least ten commercial signs disappearing into the distance to the left of the photo. In five sections between the photos author Freddy Langer's words cover the history of the highway in one paragraph decorative blocks. I think you can read better histories elsewhere and fortunately the text pages don't take up too much space. There are several general books about Route 66 but I got one recently that I feel is an excellent complement to Gerd Kittel's book, check out 'Travelling Route 66' by Nick Freeth. The publishers had the great idea of making it small (about the size of a postcard) but with four hundred, all color pages. It is a travelogue, state by state, with maps, of what you can see and do if you drive the whole 2,250 miles of America's most famous road. So get out there and get your kicks. ***FOR AN INSIDE LOOK click 'customer images' under the cover.

The road that became known as Route 66 holds a unique place in American popular culture. Unlike any other road in world history, this modest two-lane highway took on cult status, bound up with American nostalgia for a recent past in which life was far less complex and mechanized than it has now become. Inaugurated by a group of businessmen in the 1920s, at a time when the automobile was first asserting itself as one of the main preferences for family holiday travel, its life-span was short - less than fifty years - but its mythology goes on and on. While Freddy Langer's text tells the curious story of Route 66 in some detail, it is Gerd Kittel's extraordinary photographs that tell the story of the road as it is now. Wistful, brutal and beautiful at the same time, these documents of today show what has become a once powerful symbol of American hopes and pleasures: the wrecks of abandoned automobiles, the deserted diners and souvenir shops; the battered remnants of failed silos and warehouses; derelict towns; surviving personalities and buildings, as well as some of the views the road offers as it passes through seven states between Chicago and the Pacific Ocean. Before the advent of interstate superhighways, that was the main attraction of the road - its appeal to the American drive towards the West, where opportunity and success were believed to be waiting.

From Library Journal The mystique and memory of Route 66 have spawned an industry based on adventure, the open road, and the great expanse of America between Chicago and Santa Monica, CA. This reviewer confesses to searching out obscure parts of Route 66, "The Mother Road" (Steinbeck's name for it), in the California desert. Such a search should be led by Kittel, a German photographer with special observation skills and an exquisite talent for composition. In a volume that moves from the flat Midwest to the astonishing Southwest, Kittel is careful to let changing topography serve only as a tantalizing backdrop to what people built and preserved or abandoned beside the asphalt of Route 66. Each photograph deserves a few minutes of the viewer's time while its story becomes clear or, just as often, resonates as perfectly absurd in cafes and souvenir-shop interiors, reminding us that this roadway runs through a land of individuals. Unfortunately, this friendly appreciation is marred by the leaden clichés of Bloom (history, Wheaton Coll.), who must be more effective in the classroom than as a hitchhiker offering a useless text on Kittel's journey. Equally clumsy prose comes from Langer, photo and travel editor of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, whose writing here is translated into English. Otherwise, this glorious American book about a road and its endless (visual) possibilities is recommended. David Bryant, New Canaan Lib., CT Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. [O]ne of the better books about America's 'mother road'.... enough to make you weep for lost time and lost loves. -- San Francisco Chronicle, 12 May 2002 Language Notes Text: English (translation) Original Language: German