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Scraping Heaven : A Family's Journey Along the Continental Divide

Cindy Ross

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Cindy Ross : Scraping Heaven : A Family's Journey Along the Continental Divide before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Scraping Heaven : A Family's Journey Along the Continental Divide:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. True GritBy Janelle HumphreysInteresting book, I've read many trail books, but this is the first with children and Llamas in tow. How on earth she the had the stamina and determination to continue is beyond me. That she is able to write in her journal after hiking all day with kids, unpredictable weather and livestock is amazing.She is very honest in portraying her thoughts and feelings, a very difficult thing to do knowing that some of the reading public will criticize her.I enjoyed the book. The only thing I had issue with was when she

didn't correct her son for poking people with sticks, it was funny but in my mind disrespectful. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Worth a read
By C Westbrook I really enjoyed reading about their journey and the uniqueness of taking llamas and young children on such a long trail. I did not mind her writing about her relationship with her husband like some people. Doing anything that strenuous and with 24/7 togetherness will strain the best of relationships. I do wonder how many friends and family she offended when she wrote about their visits on the trail. If it is such a bother, don't invite them!
There are two things that really bugged me. When I read a travel journal I like enough details about where they are so I can follow along with a map. Many times I could not figure out where they were. "We just entered the such and such wilderness area" was a little vague and that sort of lack of detail was not uncommon. The other thing that bugged me were the chapters on the northern and southern Colorado sections. These are some of the most outstanding sections of the whole trail yet she just skimmed through them with just a few pages. They were at the end of their trip and the end of the book. I got the feeling she was just getting the writing over with. Most other sections had much greater detail and some were sections that weren't nearly as interesting to read about.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. You don't have to leave your reading chair to go on a family wilderness trip, but you should
By Ken Pulvino Cindy Ross takes you along on high mountain trails for an incredible journal of hiking in North America along the Continental Divide. That would be enough. But there is so much more here for the reader. She does it with llamas as pack haulers, her husband as Trail Boss, their two young children (one still in diapers) with several intermittent visits from friends during their long hike and a flair for such exciting narration honesty that you think you could reach out and touch them as they pass through mountain passes and meadows. My favorite chapter is the Grand Teton section. It starts with a Samuel Johnson quote (did I mention that Cindy weaves literary references, domestic tensions, wildlife visitations, geographical observations, cultural encounters, extreme weather interventions and, well, so much more)- "There is only one world, the world pressing against you right this minute." Then it leaps to hearing screaming sounds uttered while her family is still asleep. After a moment of silent anticipation it carries over into the beautiful recognition of wild elk bugling across the meadow from their tent in the middle of the night. After you read it, please consider taking the time to get your whole family to a National Park or suitable wilderness to savor the same joys yourself.

Praise for Cindy Ross's *A Woman's Journey*: "Ross lets readers into her heart." Publishers Weekly "A beautiful book, a wonderfully fascinating narrative."
Annie Dillard A true account of a family's five-year adventure in the untamed wilderness of the American Rockies The Continental Divide Trail, a rugged, 3,100-mile footpath running along the crest of the Rocky Mountains from Canada to Mexico, is infamous for its tricky mountain passes and snowy traverses. In 1993, Cindy Ross, her husband, and their two toddlers, ages one and three, set out together on the Trail. Using llamas as kid-carriers and packers, they successfully hiked the entire Trail over the next five summers, covering the last 700 miles on tandem mountain bikes in 1998. In *Scraping Heaven*, Cindy Ross the author of four critically acclaimed books deftly interweaves evocative descriptions of the landscape with dramatic accounts of sudden snowstorms, gale winds, and wildlife encounters. Through it all, her intimate reflections on marriage, family, and children provide contrapuntal depth and interest far beyond the high Rocky Mountain peaks.

From Publishers Weekly Helen Keller said, "Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all." And it is with this in mind that seasoned trekkers Todd and Cindy Ross set out to hike along the 3,100-mile Continental Divide Trail from Canada to Mexico with their two toddlers, Sierra and Bryce, and a string of four llamas. When Ross (*A Woman's Journey*) and her husband first met, two of the main loves they shared were of hiking and the outdoors. But when their children arrived, they were afraid they would have to wait years to return to the wilderness-until hearing of the docile nature and great versatility of the llama as a pack animal. And so they began in the summer of 1993, hiking through the Colorado Rockies, learning the habits of llamas, inventing more efficient ways to wash diapers on the trail and keeping two toddlers entertained, warm and healthy while trying to stay sane and absorb the vast beauty of the trail that drew them. After two months, more than 300 miles, bags of candy, wet and smelly socks, lightning storms and temper tantrums, what their friends and family thought would end early in disaster was completed with success and the desire to do it all over again. That summer in 1993 ends five years later as the Ross family returns summer after summer to the Continental Divide Trail in their quest to grow closer and be one with nature. Not only are readers given the opportunity to experience the sheer beauty and at times frightening dangers of the trail, but they also watch two children grow and learn to call the trail their home. Well written, captivating and incredibly educational, this adventure is a lesson in the simplicity of life and the beauty of accomplishment. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Well written, captivating and incredibly educational, this adventure is a lesson in life's simplicity and the beauty of accomplishment." -- Publisher's Weekly; September 2, 2002
From the Back Cover On the high Rocky Mountain slopes the line between heaven and disaster is razor thin, yet it was there that Cindy Ross and her husband were irresistibly drawn with their two small children. This is the story of their five-summer, 3,100-mile trek over the rooftop of North America--a rousing adventure with a powerful message for parents. "This is both an epic adventure of the first order and the heartwarming story of the family who accomplished it."--John Flinn, travel editor, San Francisco

Chronicle "A magnificent and determined family adventure that, in its unfolding, celebrates the vast landscape of the human spirit. Scraping Heaven bears witness to the power of the land and its ability to sow relationships that will last a lifetime."--Steve Zikman, author, *The Power of Travel: A Passport to Adventure, Discovery, and Growth*, and coauthor, *Chicken Soup for the Traveler's Soul* and *Chicken Soup for the Outdoor Soul* "Sure to strike home with anyone who loves the outdoors, thanks to its coverage of topics that range from the controversial to the personal . . . An inspirational read."--Brian Fiske, senior editor, *Mountain Bike* magazine "A heartwarming tale."--Bruce Ward, Continental Divide Trail Alliance "Cindy's indomitable drive and unbounded love carry her and her family along this high-altitude footpath . . . A precarious and incredible balancing act."--Anne LaBastille, author, the *Woodswoman Trilogy*, *Women and Wilderness*, and *Jaguar Totem* When Cindy Ross first met Todd Gladfelter, in 1980, they were both already avid long-distance hikers. By their eighth wedding anniversary they had trekked many thousands of miles together on the Appalachian Trail, the Pacific Crest Trail, and beyond. Their family would soon include two young children, but their shared passion for the long haul never diminished, taking them even farther than they ever had gone before. *Scraping Heaven* is the warm and heartfelt account of their incredible adventure in a wilderness few will ever explore. Running along the crest of the Rocky Mountains from Canada to Mexico, the 3,100-mile Continental Divide Trail (CDT) divides the waters of the North American continent. To the native people of the West it is the backbone of the world, and to walk it is to scrape heaven. Remote and still unfinished, the CDT is the "big league" of hiking, a vast and challenging terrain. Over five summers, from 1993 to 1998, Cindy and Todd hiked the entire trail with their children. For a couple whose love for hiking was a life force, the chance to share the joy of an extended mountain trip with their young son and daughter, ages one and three, was both an indescribable thrill and a decision of enormous magnitude. It was a challenge that would involve the addition of llamas as kid-carriers and pack animals, the participation of numerous individuals and sponsors, and incredible planning. And then there was the fear to contend with: fear of injury, violent electrical storms, mountain lions, and the unknown. Their journey compounded the ordinary challenges of marriage, parenting, and family life with snowy traverses, winds strong enough to lift a child, fatigue, ornery animals, steep mountain crossings, and the countless other trials of a harsh but stunningly beautiful environment. But it taught their children more about self-reliance, trust, interdependence, and self-determination than anything else could have done. Evocative and dramatic, this incredible story of real-life adventure is sure to entertain and inspire. Ross is a keenly observant and witty storyteller with a profound message to share about parenting in a cocooned society.