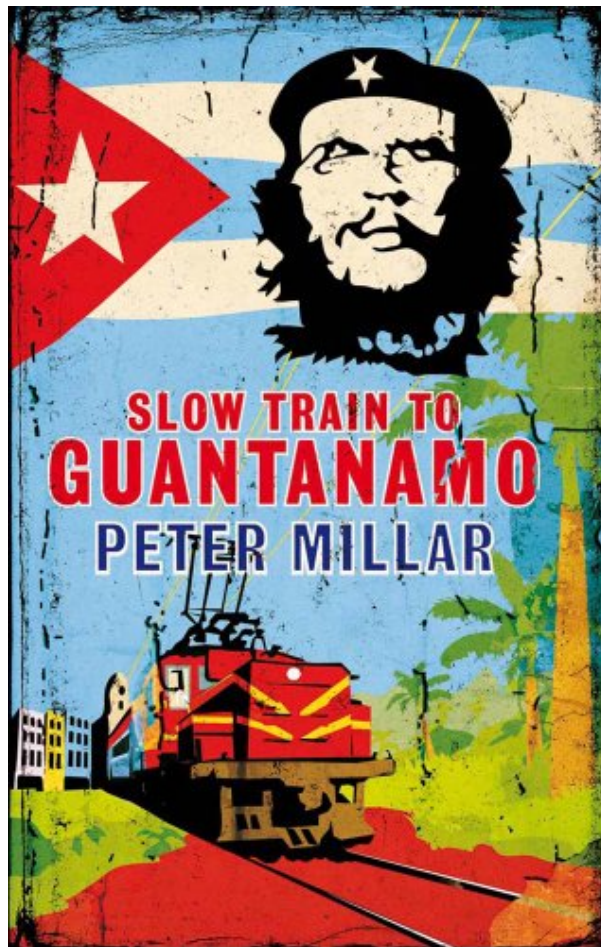
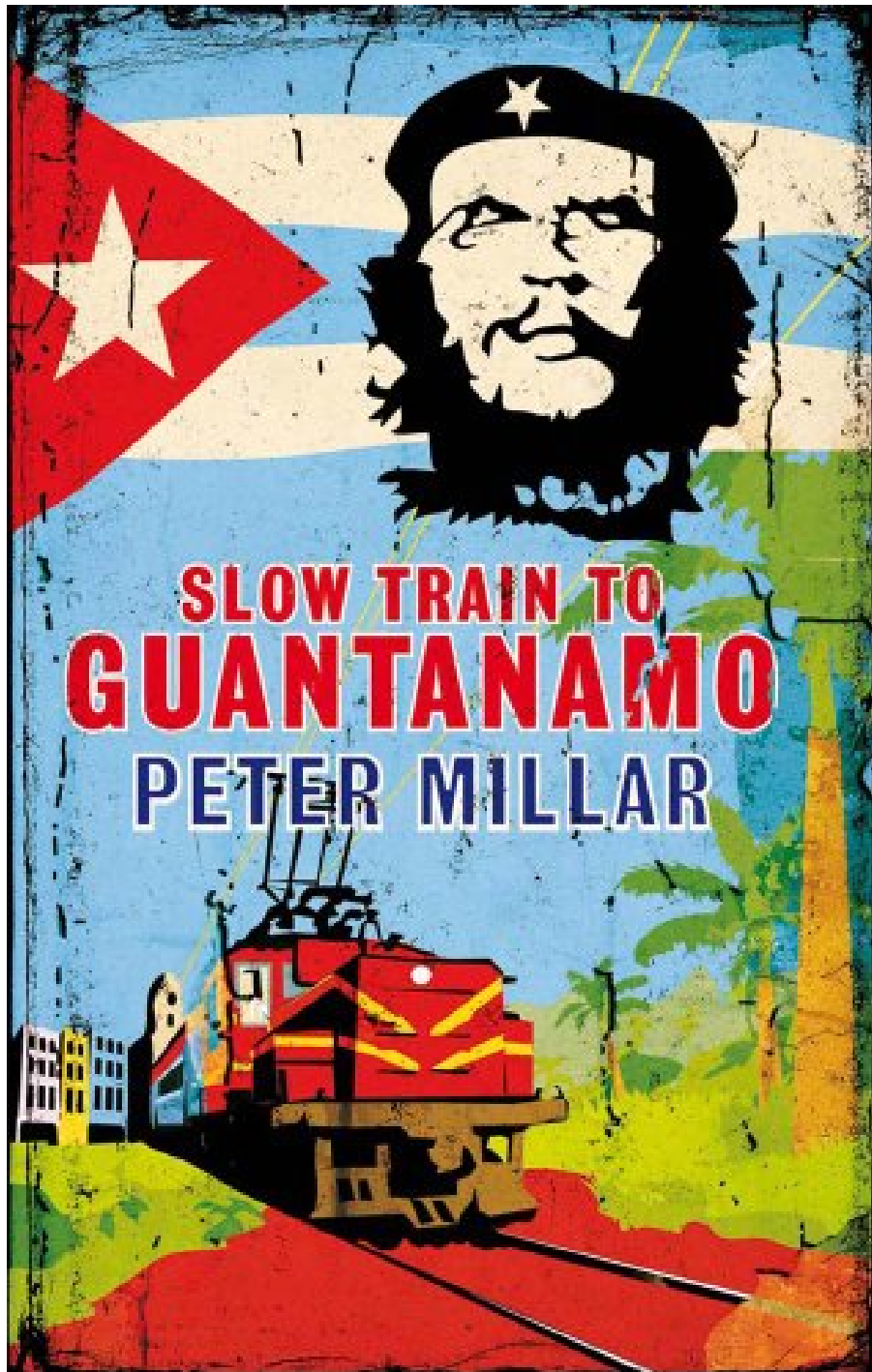


SLOW TRAIN TO GUANTANAMO: A RAIL ODYSSEY THROUGH CUBA IN THE LAST DAYS OF THE CASTROS BY PETER MILLAR



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From Booklist

As journalist and travel writer Millar puts it, Cuba beyond the Castros is already on the horizon. With that thought in mind, he recently took a train from Havana in the northwest to Guantánamo Bay in the southeast, stopping along the way to stay at bed- and-breakfast-type houses and interacting with ordinary Cuban citizens. The result is this charming, witty, but sometimes sad memoir that offers a portrait of a nation on the cusp of enormous change. The once great rail system, which was the most advanced in Latin America, is now a rusted, decrepit mess plagued by bureaucratic constipation. Millar also points out the grinding poverty faced by many Cubans as well as the class distinctions in a supposedly classless society. But this is no hatchet job on Cuba. Millar points to some of the real achievements under socialism, and he finds Cubans to be warm, welcoming, and not at all shy about expressing the shortcomings of their government. This is an enjoyable, informative glimpse at a Cuba seldom seen by Americans. --Jay Freeman

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Slow Train To Guantanamo: A Rail Odyssey Through Cuba In The Last Days Of The Castros By Peter Millar Just how can you alter your mind to be a lot more open? There several resources that could assist you to enhance your ideas. It can be from the various other experiences and also story from some individuals. Book *Slow Train To Guantanamo: A Rail Odyssey Through Cuba In The Last Days Of The Castros By Peter Millar* is one of the trusted resources to obtain. You can discover so many books that we share here in this website. And also now, we reveal you one of the very best, the *Slow Train To Guantanamo: A Rail Odyssey Through Cuba In The Last Days Of The Castros By Peter Millar*

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SLOW TRAIN TO GUANTANAMO: A RAIL ODYSSEY THROUGH CUBA IN THE LAST DAYS OF THE CASTROS BY PETER MILLAR PDF

In this rambling odyssey set in the later days of the Castro regime, Peter Millar jumps on board the Cuban railway system, once the pride of Latin America. Starting in the ramshackle but romantic capital of Havana, he travels with ordinary Cubans, sharing anecdotes, life stories, and political opinions. Millar may not have all the answers but he asks a lot of the right questions on an anarchic, entertaining, and often comic adventure. A journey everyone will want to read about but nobody in their right mind would want to emulate! "[A] charming, witty, but sometimes sad memoir that offers a portrait of a nation on the cusp of enormous change. . . An enjoyable, informative glimpse at a Cuba seldom seen by Americans."--Booklist Sept. 15, 2013

- Sales Rank: #2758135 in Books
- Published on: 2013-11-14
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x 5.25" w x .75" l, .64 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 272 pages

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The most interesting book on contemporary Cuba you will find.

By Brian McMaster

This is one of the best reads I have had all year. Peter Millar's journey through Cuba by train stands out

among contemporary travel and history books as an account which really opens the window on its subject from a fresh perspective that suddenly makes modern Cuba understandable. The author, who has spent many years as a journalist in eastern Europe, is uniquely qualified to describe how modern (or not so modern) Cuba became the way it is. Millar's breadth of historical facts and anecdotes is impressive, yet the book is remarkably free of judgement. The facts and the local color speak for themselves, and the reader is allowed to draw his or her own conclusions as they go. I certainly do not have the energy any more to take on the Cuban railway system, but I have to admit that reading about Peter Millar doing it is a lot of fun. The reviewer on the book's back cover says, 'This is a journey everyone will want to read about - but no one in their right mind would want to follow.' He has got that right. Do not even think about going to Cuba without first reading this important and at times very funny briefing. Even Fidel and Raul will want to read it. And they certainly need to.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Captures perfectly Cuba on cusp of change!

By L. G. Pulsifer

Peter Millar is an award-winning journalist, travel writer and novelist who was named Journalist of the Year for his coverage of the fall of the Berlin Wall for the Sunday Times. (Unusually for a western journalist, he was living in East Berlin at the time). His books include *The Black Madonna* and a previous train journey book, *All Gone to Look for America*. What distinguishes his writing, both the journalism and in his books, is his ability to make connections with people from all walks of life and hone in on the heart of the matter. *All Gone to Look for America* captured that country on the cusp of change, at the end of the Bush II era and *Slow Train to Guantanamo* is a journey around Cuba at the very last gasp of the Castro decades.

In *Slow Train*, as in *All Gone*, the author takes centre stage, not as swaggering hero but as a genuinely curious observer prepared to poke fun at himself. The trains he travels on are as dead as communism itself and it fact are relics from Beijing. They don't run to time or schedule - and the toilets can prove atrocious. But his is not merely a journey around this small Caribbean island long subject to American embargo, but a trip into its heart and soul. Millar is no ordinary tourist. By book end you kind of want to travel with the author yourself, given his sense of adventure and fun. It's a marvellous read.

Millar also makes pertinent points about America's shame: GUANTANAMO.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

CUBA by train and the missing consonants

By TripFiction

Above rusty nails sparks fly,
crimson flowers fade.

When will my train come (train-inspired Haiku penned by the author)

Ever dreamt of going to Cuba? Well, with the help of Peter Millar and *Slow Train to Guantanamo* you can! You can enjoy a travelogue via train right from the North to the South, with colourful stops along the way. This is a train line that stretches 1,200km and the average Cuban can travel the full length for the price of can of beer - it might take days in the decrepit carriages brought together from East Germany and Russia, but it is certainly value for money.

Cuba is by no means an easy country to navigate. Don't even think of trying Castilian Spanish. This is truly the land of dropped consonants. Cua e' Cua... Cuba is Cuba (the refrain when things don't go according to plan, which is, well, most of the time). Want to use the local currency, the Peso Nacional? No, as a foreigner to Cuba CUCs are what you need.

This is a wonderfully vivid evocation of a hot, in parts tropical country, where the infrastructure is teetering on its last legs. This doesn't stop the locals shimmying along in alluring attire, where women officials wear micro minis with fishnet stockings and the men burst through their T shirts with well-honed muscles. Yet, there is so much in everyday life that proves to be a real struggle, both for the locals; and for the traveller, who wants to explore something other than the gated hotel complexes, where most foreigners hole up. This is a country which once had a proud national railway, sugar cane plantations that seemed to feed the world (and mainly supplied their pals the Russians when Communism was flourishing) and a health care system that is free to everyone - but oftentimes the medication you might need simply isn't available. Mango juice and cigars galore; but fancy a bit more than the staple of Arroz Moros Y Cristianos (Black Beans with Rice)? Then, well, you either have to fork out (pardon the pun) and trade in CUCs, or black market your way to something a bit more scintillating. 'Meals in Cuba are seen as a necessity...' writes the author and he seems to spend his time careening between undercooked pork and overcooked fish and beef, with, of course the ubiquitous black beans and rice. "Cuba's gastronomic culture remains that of America circa 1959 when convenience food was considered the height of new age sophistication".

The hospitable locals all seem to take the rickety economy and lifestyle in their stride, indeed with great aplomb in the face of adversity it would seem, although always on the look-out to garner some CUCs or share a beer that is only available to foreigners. Cuba has a truly aspirational culture! And of course, the thread of music permeates the journey, a genre that has assimilated strands from many different cultures to make it what it is today.

Peter sees many parallels between his stint as a correspondent in Eastern Europe (pre 1989), the Balkan Wars and what he observes now: "There are whole swathes of central Cuba that more than anything resemble the aftermath of war, the general state of disrepair worn down and denigrated by the tropical climate". He captures the crumbling infrastructure depressingly well.

The book is so well written and peppered with interesting facts, which can only serve to enhance the reader's appreciation of this exhilarating, yet extremely frustrating journey. Explore Daiquiri (yes, it's a place as well as a cocktail) and observe the enclave that is Guanatamo at the southern tip of the island, whilst humming the melodic tune of Guantanamera (yes, that is originally a Cuban tune). Learn that 98% of the population can read (which beats many Western countries!) but understand that the Cubans are not free to read literature of their choice. Find out how Che got his name and discover more about the Hershey (chocolate) village, which mirrored what Bourneville was doing in the UK.

The cover (I cannot not mention it) absolutely reflects the content of the book, perfect choice from publishers Arcadia, with colour, vibrance, a hulking train, a balanced composition and of course, Che crowning the title.

This book is a true revelation. And as such one can overlook the proliferation of odd spelling errors that began to appear in our copy from the halfway point (different proofreader perhaps?), where one had to contend with 'or' when it should have been 'of', or where lack of commas made a sentence hard-going; or where (heaven forbid, but it happened in our copy) 'their' was used instead of 'there'. Plus there is an incidence on the train when the author is pee'ed on by a chicken. Er not, chickens can't pee, they can only poo out their pee (if you get my drift) - but the subject of chickens' digestive systems is perhaps for someone else to pick up elsewhere... If you are heading to Cuba this will serve as your guide! (You could even possibly ditch the guidebook! No, I don't mean it but you sure glean some insider information from this great travelogue that you probably wouldn't find in a typical guidebook). Vale! Felices viajes (of course this is bon voyage in Castilian Spanish, it will probably be very different in Cuban!)

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