



Oil Safari: In Search of the Source of America's Fuel

Paul F. Salopek

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Would Americans pay more attention to their sources of petroleum—the lifeblood of their car-centric society—if gasoline came with a price tag tallying the explicit human costs of each fill-up? What untold stories of war, poverty and corruption get burned up and expelled from millions of U.S. tailpipes every day? And do false industry assurances that fuel can never be traced from local service stations back to its origins in troubled foreign oil patches help absolve us of responsibility for the wages of our energy addiction?

Two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Paul F. Salopek, a *Chicago Tribune* foreign correspondent, tackles these questions that are at the heart of *Oil Safari: In Search of the Source of America's Fuel*. Taken from Salopek's four-part narrative travelogue published in 2006, this book debunks the well-tended industry myth that global oil flows are too complex and fungible to tease apart at a retail outlet.

Salopek describes the gripping stories of a diverse cast of characters who are touched by a typical shipment of oil that ends up in the U.S. There is the oil rig worker in the Gulf of Mexico, an Iraqi security consultant, a Nigerian fisherman whose homeland is threatened by drilling, and an indigenous Venezuelan elder who benefits from the country's oil reserves (which are used to fund social programs).

Energy policy is at the heart of American politics now more than ever, between the troubling aftermath of the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the burgeoning American surplus of natural gas, and the Obama administration's continued emphasis on renewable energy sources. *Oil Safari* brings human narratives to the foreground of our energy policy debates and own personal consumption habits.

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