



On Island Time: Kayaking the Caribbean

Scott B. Williams

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Tourists visit popular islands of the Caribbean by the planeload. What they don't see from their resort hotels are the hundreds of out-of-the-way, uninhabited islands sprinkled along the West Indies from Florida to South America. This alluring archipelago, strung with beaches accessible only by boat but spaced temptingly close together, led Mississippi adventurer Scott B. Williams to embark upon an open-ended quest to see how far south he could go in a seventeen-foot sea kayak.

No one was willing to accompany him. He spent months working his way down the west coast of Florida, through the Bahamas, and on to Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. *On Island Time: Kayaking the Caribbean*, his narrative of this journey of a lifetime, describes the wonders of discovery as he makes landfall on pristine cays. Relentless headwinds, dangerous surf, countless beaches declared off-limits to trespassing, and aggressive sharks that ram his kayak and snap him out of his musing remind the adventurer that this paradise is far from perfect. Every day of the journey required constant vigilance.

With no one to depend on and often no one even knowing where he was for weeks at a time, Williams learned what it means to be self-reliant and to adjust to "island time." With just a simple craft and the few belongings that would fit in it, Williams explores an almost boundless frontier and a powerful natural stretch of the Caribbean rarely, if ever, accessed by the island tourist.

A woodworker and boat carpenter, Scott B. Williams, Brandon, Mississippi, has published in such periodicals as Sea Kayaker, Mississippi Outdoors, and South Mississippi Outdoors and Recreation.



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