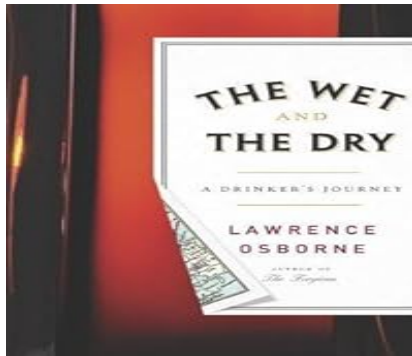


## The Wet and the Dry: A Drinker's Journey By Lawrence Osborne

Lawrence Osborne is the author of seven critically acclaimed novels including *The Forgiven* (now a major motion picture starring Ralph Fiennes and Jessica Chastain) and *Only to Sleep: A Philip Marlowe Novel* a New York Times Notable Book and nominated for an Edgar Award as well as six books of nonfiction including *Bangkok Days*. In his wide-ranging travels Lawrence Osborne—a veritable connoisseur himself—has witnessed opposing views of alcohol across cultures worldwide compelling him to wonder: is drinking alcohol a sign of civilization and sanity or the very reverse? Where do societies fall on the spectrum between indulgence and restraint? An immersing controversial and often irreverent travel narrative *The Wet and the Dry* offers provocative sometimes unsettling insights into the deeply embedded conflicts between East and West and the surprising influence of drinking on the contemporary world today. *The Wet and the Dry: A Drinker's Journey* (nb: I received an advance review copy of this title from the publisher via Edelweiss) During my drinking days (daze?) my home bar was a little sports bar called Gamble's. It only sold beer and wine but several times during a long Friday or Saturday night five or six of us would walk down the strip mall to a full liquor oyster bar named Dirty Moe's and we'd throw back a couple shots of Rumpelstiltskin or Monte Alban's Mezcal. Equally compelling are the chapters wherein he delves into his history with alcohol from being a teenager drinking vodka pilfered from his parents' liquor cabinet and playing drunk and dangerous games with his friends to descriptions of his favorite bar when he lived in Brooklyn. In the chapter "My Sweet Islamabad"—an award-winning essay originally published in *Playboy*—he describes not only that desolate basement pub but a trip to rural Pakistan to visit the large brewery and distillery there. Osborne! Plus his ruminating about the differences between wet and dry cultures although sometimes a bit far-fetched struck this reader born as I was in a very dry culture as exceedingly interesting. No what I find troubling albeit not surprising is Osborne's portrayal of the changes that have been taking place over his twenty or so years of traveling with regard to drinking in such places as Istanbul Cairo Beirut Thailand villages along the Malaysian border etc. In all these regions the move is definitely toward the dry sometimes in ways that are very intimidating to those of us in search of a glass of wine or some other alcoholic beverage. Since this book focuses largely on the Islamic world and has little to say about such fascinating wet cultures like China and Japan or relatively dry cultures like several that exist here in America it could be retitled: *An Increasingly Frustrated Alcoholic's Search for a Drink in the Islamic World and What It Represents*. Fiction Travel O fi tentația de-a face lucruri interzise? O fi gustul mai bun al chestiilor pe care le faci pe-ascuns? Ce a vrut să spună autorul? Plăcerile vinovate există au ba? Nu de alta dar am citit păreri conform căroră dacă ne place să facem un lucru această plăcere nu poate fi vinovată decât dacă avem anumite complexe inoculate de către societate. Iar consumul băuturilor alcoolice o fi sau nu păcat în cazul în care le consumăm pentru plăcerea gustului nu spre tulburarea minții? Lawrence Osborne pleacă într-o călătorie în jurul lumii încercând să găsească oaze în deșert. eu cu cine votez neicușorule? Votez pentru Osborne pentru perspectiva istorică și culturală asupra locurilor oamenilor și tipurilor de băuturi cu care acesta se-ntâlnește votez pentru umorul și ironia cu care Osborne descrie anumite situații și-i ofer câte un Alka Seltzer virtual (sau o stăcană cu zeamă de varză ca să dau dovadă de patriotism) pentru diminețile-n care mahmur și buhăit pornea câținel cu pas legănat spre următoarea destinație. Fiction Travel "The Wet and the Dry: a Drinker's Journey" which I received through Goodreads First Reads is a travelogue that examines the effects positive and negative of alcohol on both societies and individuals. I was initially turned off by Lawrence Osborne's book which in the first few chapters comes across as being a chronicle of a somewhat pretentious Englishman's bar hopping experiences in the Middle East. Through visits to countries such as Pakistan Egypt and southern Thailand (which has an active Islamic insurgency) with varying degrees of Sharia law Osborne effectively argues that the bar is an institution that promotes openness and intermingling in society. There's a lot of interesting information here (Islay whiskey was legal during prohibition due to the high iodine content) though you will run into sections which are the typical Man I'm so drunk here's all the 'deep' philosophical

stuff I've suddenly realized. The book's conclusion is something most of us already know: If you're in the right position/are the right person it's possible to drink in any country no matter how restrictive the laws. Fiction Travel Travel narrative mostly centered around the theme of the role of alcohol in Islamic states with a fair amount of memoir also; the latter aspect is actually fairly well integrated into the book. Osborne tells stories about alcohol generally excessive drinking from around the world--US Indian reservations the death of his talented father-in-law from incredibly excessive drinking drinking in Muslim countries. He has led a nomadic life living in Paris New York Mexico and Istanbul and he currently resides in Bangkok, Drinking alcohol: a beloved tradition a dangerous addiction even "a sickness of the soul" (as once described by a group of young Muslim men in Bali). Thus fortified we'd be back off to Gamble's to drink beer, I knew the people the whole disparate cast of fellow nightly drinkers: We were an odd sort of family although we rarely did anything together outside Gamble's and certainly nothing that didn't involve drinking: Lawrence Osborne's new book "The Wet and the Dry" is primarily an alcoholic travelogue of bars across the world. He remembers too relatives who died early from alcohol abuse. Most of "The Wet and the Dry" is devoted to Osborne trying to find a decent drink in far-flung parts of our planet: In other countries bars are secret and rare places hidden deep in the bowels of hotel basements. There is definitely an odd disconnect here—a thriving brewery and distillery in an officially dry country. Osborne is surprised to find that their best whiskey holds its own with any other and that their dubious-sounding new strawberry gin packs a tasty wallop. His other discovery is that not surprisingly the ban on alcohol does not extend to the wealthy, He attends a party with Islamabad's elite and there is a room where drinks flow freely: Osborne visits an Egyptian vineyard whose owners predict they'll be out of business within five years due to the increasingly conservative religious culture, Osborne travels to Thailand and plenty of other exotic locales. Each chapter in "The Wet and the Dry" details a separate adventure, Sometimes he finds numerous bars full of fellow drinkers; other times it's impossible to get a drink anywhere. I was hoping for more of a global perspective I guess perhaps comparing a dry country like Pakistan to a country known for its fervent drinking: This is a minor complaint but a bit more variety would have enhanced the reading experience, What struck me most was the tenacity and patience it must take to be a travel writer, Except for "New Years in Muscat" where his girlfriend joins him on a nerve-wracking attempt to find a decent bottle of champagne Osborne is on his own. He gets to a new city has to generate contacts conduct searches hire cars or motorbikes to investigate tips and occasionally his life could be at risk: At no point in "The Wet and the Dry" is Osborne sitting in a Hawaiian tiki bar a Seattle metal bar or even a hole-in-the-wall St. Petersburg Florida sports pub—this is not a journey of safe places. It is however a fascinating journey one travel fans—or fellow libation aficionados—will enjoy, After all his travels and adventures somebody needs to buy Lawrence Osborne a drink, Recommended Fiction Travel The Wet and the Dry is a troubling book. Unlike some readers I am not troubled by the fact that it is virtually soaked in alcohol, Yes if this book portrays him honestly the author drinks far too much, But I can tip a glass or two myself and enjoyed learning more about the drinks I enjoy albeit in much greater moderation than Mr. Were it not that such a movement reflects lost freedoms in general I would be less troubled, A se înlocui oaze cu alcool iar deșert cu locuri unde consumul de alcool e interzis: El caută răspunsuri și le primește dar ce te faci când același produs e clasificat de unii drept elixir iar de alții drept otravă? Vorba e. Fiction Travel Foarte faină carte! Ca multe dintre cele din seria Narator (Editura Publica), O călătorie plină de umor și ironie dar cu ocolișuri culturale pline de farmec și miez. Nu lipsesc nici popasurile melancolice așa cum se întâmplă în viața oricărui băutor de cursă lungă, Happily the book improves significantly from there with deeply personal accounts of the author's own struggles with drink and of his mother's alcoholism, These negative portrayals of the effect of excessive alcohol use on individuals are contrasted with the positive effects of alcohol and bars on societies as a whole. Overall I found the book to be beautifully written (albeit a bit slow to start) insightful and enjoyable – especially with a drink: Fiction Travel



Alcohol is his muse and there's a lot that is captivating about his prose: Very introspective at times Osborne goes into the belly of the beast and relishes drinking where it's forbidden in the Islamic world: We visit Brooklyn Thailand Abu Dhabi Oman Lebanon Egypt Turkey and Pakistan as well as the England of his youth and Scotland, He discusses beer wine and spirits and their appeal as well as the history and mythology of alcohol, There are some great lines that will leave you chuckling and others that will make you pause and think, hoping in some dark way that I might eventually stumble across the most delightful phenomenon a Muslim alcoholic. ( I had a soft spot not just for Muslim alcoholics but for the very idea of them. A Muslim alcoholic gives me hope that the human race can be saved: ) Fiction Travel This book is about drinking in places where it's harder to find alcohol or the relationship to alcohol is changing/complex: Most of the chapters are spent in the Middle East though he also revisits particularly meaningful watering holes and the drinking culture in his home country England. Osborne also visits his childhood periodically and the relationship each of his parents had with drinking. However I would say that he didn't write enough about those things to warrant including them in this book: They somewhat go against the grain of the rest of the book's stated theme (though perhaps I've just become cranky in wanting a memoir to be a memoir and nothing else), It's not a bad little book but it does not hold to it's stated theme very well: It's a drinking-travel memoir while trying to impart a lot of factual information and I don't think quite the right balance was found. The author also slides into misogyny very quickly and easily. I have been poking through it from time to time for 9 months now knowing I should review it. It seems to be a kind of memoir without an overriding story arc, Fiction Travel No me ha gustado el enfoque Fiction Travel.

. Mostly his travels are to Muslim lands. In Beirut drinking is acceptable for non-Muslims. There is a certain sameness in many of his chapters. He goes to a Muslim country. It's hard to find a drink. He finally finds a drink etc. Australia maybe. The man's earned it. That is really what the book is mostly about. Some will be offended. It's like Paul Theroux went on a bender. Here's a good one from page 8. Definitely recommended. Fiction Travel I won this book through a goodreads giveaway. It turned out to not be a book I could get into. Almost every story was depressing but kind of detached. I finally decided to stop. Perhaps in my skipping around I missed the good parts. I'll let you hunt for them. I've had enough