Diaries 1969-1979: The Python Years (Michael Palin Diaries)

By Michael Palin

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The amazingly insightful, funny and brilliant record of Michael Palin's prime years as a member of the famed comedic group, Monty Python.
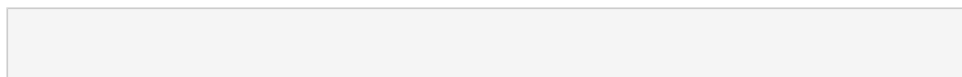
Michael Palin has kept a diary since newly married in the late 1960s. This volume of his diaries reveals how Python emerged and triumphed, how he, John Cleese, Graham Chapman, the two Terrys---Jones and Gilliam---and Eric Idle came together and changed the face of British comedy.

But this is but only part of Palin's story. Here is his growing family, his home in a north London Victorian terrace, which grows as he buys the house next door and then a second at the bottom of the garden; here, too, is his solo effort---as an actor, in *Three Men in a Boat,* his writing endeavours (often in partnership with Terry Jones) that produces *Ripping Yarns* and even a pantomime.

Meanwhile Monty Python refuses to go away: the hugely successful movies that follow the TV (his account of the making of both *The Holy Grail* and the *Life of Brian* movies are page-turners), the at times extraordinary goings-on of the many powerful personalities who coalesced to form the Python team, the fight to prevent an American TV network from bleeping out the best jokes on U.S. transmission, and much more---all this makes for funny and riveting reading.

The birth and childhood of his three children, his father's growing disability, learning to cope as a young man with celebrity, his friendship with George Harrison, and all the trials of a peripatetic life are also essential ingredients of these diaries. A perceptive and funny chronicle, the diaries are a rich portrait of a fascinating period.

"A wealth of fascinating stuff about Monty Python."
---*The Independent* (UK)

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
As one of the six Pythons to have assembled back in the late 1960s, Palin provides insights into the group's dynamics during the decade that brought the Monty Python troupe to international acclaim. This abridgment can be satiating and frustrating, often simultaneously. At face value, it provides many behind-the-scenes moments and explores how and why the comedy troupe went about its business. Yet the mere knowledge that it's an abridgment will have listeners yearning to hear more—especially Python-quoting fans. The short, occasionally abrupt entries feel authentic, as journal entries can often be a mere few sentences. But listeners may constantly question how much has been trimmed. Occasionally, the journal entries read as a mere chronological list of events. As narrator, Palin proves adept at adding life and emotion in his mild-mannered voice to the more pedantic lulls in the audiobook. But given the audiobook's shortcomings, a bonus interview or some other material might have improved the overall enjoyment for listeners.
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Review
His showbiz observations are so absorbing ... Palin is an elegant and engaging writer GUARDIAN Accomplished ... If Palin's comic genius is a given, this is a more rounded portrait of the decade which saw the Pythons become icons. Our favourite TV explorer shows us the workings of an unstoppable machine DAILY EXPRESS Palin's style is so fluid, and his sincerity so palpable, that it is often easy to underestimate just how talented he is as a comedian, broadcaster and a writer ... [the diaries] are just too good and he is too modest SUNDAY EXPRESS Delightful and often extraordinarily funny ... An entertaining and at times deeply moving read MAIL ON SUNDAY If anyone writes a diary purely for the joy of it, it is Michael Palin ... This combination of niceness, with his natural volubility, creates Palin's expansiveness THE TIMES Palin's steady eye, contemplative bent and instinct for honest appraisal make him the perfect chronicler of a frequently insane period which saw the Monty Python team become the most celebrated comedians in the world TIME OUT A real delight to read SAGA MAGAZINE A slow burn, revealing its pleasures only gradually, and allowing readers the warm glow of hindsight denied its writer ... This book will make the perfect present for those comedy obsessives of a certain age, who will know exactly what it is long before they have unwrapped it SPECTATOR

About the Author
Michael Palin established his reputation with MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS and RIPPING YARNS. His work also includes several films with Monty Python, as well as THE MISSIONARY, A PRIVATE FUNCTION, an award-winning performance as the hapless Ken in A FISH CALLED WANDA and, more recently, AMERICAN FRIENDS and FIERCE CREATURES. His television credits include two films for the BBC's GREAT RAILWAY JOURNEYS, the plays EAST OF IPSWICH and NUMBER 27, and Alan Bleasdale's GBH. He has written books to accompany his six very successful travel series, AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS, POLE TO POLE, FULL CIRCLE, HEMINGWAY ADVENTURE, SAHARA and HIMALAYA. He is also the author of a number of children's stories, the play THE WEEKEND and the novel HEMINGWAY'S CHAIR. Visit the website for more information www.palinstravels.co.uk

Users Review

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