

= Thrilling Cities =

Thrilling Cities is the title of a travelogue by the James Bond author and The Sunday Times journalist Ian Fleming . The book was first published in the UK in November 1963 by Jonathan Cape . The cities covered by Fleming were Hong Kong , Macau , Tokyo , Honolulu , Los Angeles , Las Vegas , Chicago , New York , Hamburg , Berlin , Vienna , Geneva , Naples and Monte Carlo .

Thrilling Cities was initially a series of articles Fleming wrote for The Sunday Times , based on two trips he took . The first trip was in 1959 , in which he travelled around the world , and the second was in 1960 , in which he drove around Europe . The first trip was at the behest of The Sunday Times 's features editor Leonard Russell ; the paper 's chairman , Roy Thomson , enjoyed the series so much he requested Fleming undertake a second trip . The book version includes material edited out of the original articles , as well as photographs of the various cities .

= = Synopsis = =

Thrilling Cities is Ian Fleming 's view of thirteen cities he visited in two trips in 1959 and 1960 . The cities covered are : Hong Kong , Macau , Tokyo , Honolulu , Los Angeles and Las Vegas (the two cities are examined in one chapter) , Chicago , New York , Hamburg , Berlin , Vienna , Geneva , Naples and Monte Carlo . Fleming 's account is highly personal and deals with his visit and his experiences and impressions . Each chapter closes with what Fleming called " Incidental Intelligence " , dealing with the hotels , restaurants , food and night life .

= = Background = =

In 1959 the features editor of the The Sunday Times , Leonard Russell , suggested to Ian Fleming that he take a five @-@ week , all @-@ expenses @-@ paid trip around the world for a series of features for the paper . Fleming declined , saying he was a terrible tourist who " often advocated the provision of roller @-@ skates at the door of museums and art galleries " . Russell persuaded him , pointing out that Fleming could also get some material for the Bond books in the process . Fleming took £ 500 (£ 9 @,@ 442 in 2016 pounds) of travellers cheques for expenses and flew BOAC to his first stop , Hong Kong . He was guided around the city by his friend Richard Hughes , the Australian correspondent for The Sunday Times ; Hughes was later the model for the character Dikko Henderson in You Only Live Twice , as well as for " Old Crow " in John le Carré 's The Honourable Schoolboy . Fleming stayed just three days in Hong Kong , before he and Hughes flew to Tokyo where they were joined by Torao Saito ? also known as " Tiger " ? a journalist with the Asahi Shimbun newspaper group . Saito later became the model for the character Tiger Tanaka in You Only Live Twice . Fleming spent three days in Tokyo and decided there would be " no politicians , museums , temples , Imperial palaces or Noh plays , let alone tea ceremonies " on his itinerary ; he instead visited a judo academy , a Japanese soothsayer and the Kodokan , a local gymnasium .

Fleming left Tokyo on Friday the 13th to fly to Hawaii ; 2 @,@ 000 miles into the Pacific one of the Douglas DC @-@ 6 's engines caught fire and the plane nearly crashed , although it managed to make an emergency landing on Wake Island . After Honolulu , Fleming moved on to Los Angeles , where he visited a number of places he had been before , including the Los Angeles Police Intelligence headquarters , where he again met Captain James Hamilton , much as he had done during his research for Diamonds Are Forever . By the time Fleming got to New York he was fed up with travelling and his biographer , Andrew Lycett notes that " his sour mood transferred to the city and indeed the country he had once loved " . The series opened in The Sunday Times on 24 January 1960 , with an introduction from Fleming , followed by the article on Hong Kong the following week . The series finished on 28 February 1960 with the article about Chicago and New York .

Roy Thomson , the chairman of The Sunday Times , enjoyed Fleming 's articles and suggested a number of other cities , including Rio de Janeiro , Buenos Aires , Havana , New Orleans and

Montreal . Others , such as The Sunday Times editor Harry Hodson , were less enthusiastic ; Hodson considered that " more serious readers have tut @-@ tutted a bit about missing the really important things " .

Fleming planned to drive most of his second tour of cities , which concentrated on places he wanted to visit in Europe . For the trip he took his own car , a Ford Thunderbird convertible , crossing the channel and journeying through Ostend , Antwerp and Bremen before arriving at his first destination : Hamburg . He stayed only briefly in the city , praising the sex industry by writing " how very different from the prudish and hypocritical manner in which we so disgracefully mismanage these things in England " . Fleming moved on to Berlin , where he was shown round the city by The Sunday Times correspondent Anthony Terry and his wife Rachel . Terry took Fleming into East Berlin and told him many of the details about Operation Stopwatch , the Anglo @-@ American attempt to tunnel into the Soviet @-@ occupied zone to tap into landline communication of the Soviet Army headquarters . In comparison to Hamburg , Fleming thought Berlin was " sinister " .

Fleming moved on to Vienna and found the city boring , calling it " clean , tidy , God @-@ fearing " , before travelling into Geneva . He met Ingrid Etler , a journalist and old girlfriend , who was resident in the city and who provided him with much of his background material . Fleming then travelled to Les Avants , the villa near Montreux of his close friend Noël Coward , where Coward introduced Fleming to Charlie Chaplin . Fleming had asked Coward to set up the meeting as Chaplin was writing his memoirs and Leonard Russell had asked Fleming to secure the rights for the paper ; Fleming was successful in his approach and the memoirs were later serialised in the paper .

Fleming 's wife Ann had joined him in Les Avants and the couple then moved on to Naples , where Fleming interviewed Lucky Luciano , finding him " a neat , quiet , grey @-@ haired man with a tired good @-@ looking face . " After Naples , the Flemings moved to Monte Carlo , the final stop on Fleming 's journey ; Despite spending time at the casino , Fleming thought Monte Carlo somewhat seedy . The second series of articles started on 31 July 1960 with Fleming 's trip to Hamburg , and finished with his visit to Monte Carlo . Overall the series was considered popular and successful .

= = Release and reception = =

Thrilling Cities was first published in the UK by Jonathan Cape , in November 1963 ; the book was 223 pages long and cost 30 shillings . The cover was designed by artist Paul Davis and shows " a surreal version of Monte Carlo " . For the US market , the book was released in June 1964 through New American Library and cost \$ 4 @.@ 95 . Fleming 's comments on New York were so cutting that when the book was published in the US , the American publishers asked if he could tone down the wording . Fleming refused , but instead wrote the short story " 007 in New York " to be included in the US version by way of recompense .

= = = Reviews = = =

The reviews for Thrilling Cities were broadly good . The critic for The Times thought that Fleming 's style was " no nonsense over fine writing " , and summed up the book as " Fleming 's smooth , sophisticated , personally conducted tours " , noting that the author " has a knack of enjoying himself " . John Raymond , in The Sunday Times , wrote that " Mr Fleming 's prose arouses the voyeur that lurks in all but the best of us " , and considered that the book remained " supremely readable " throughout . Writing for The Times Literary Supplement , Xan Fielding found the title of the book to be misleading , noting that apart from a very small win at the casinos of Las Vegas , " his personal experience of thrills seems to have been just as limited everywhere else on his itinerary . " Fielding considered that the cities Fleming visited had the potential for thrills , and hoped that the material gathered was used in Fleming 's literary works with thrills included .

Christopher Wordsworth , writing for The Listener , believed that Thrilling Cities was " a fascinating informative mock @-@ up , disarmingly snob @-@ ridden " . Writing for the Daily Express , Peter Grosvenor thought that Fleming ? a " tourist extraordinary " ? was " never afraid to record a controversial view " , citing Fleming 's views on the differences between oriental and western women

's approaches to men .

The critic for The Financial Times , James Bredin , declared that Thrilling Cities " can ? and will , compulsively ? be read at a sitting " , although he found that overall " it is an unsatisfying report " because of the brevity of the subject . Honor Tracy , providing the critique for The Guardian thought Fleming praiseworthy , as he " writes without any pretension at all " , while also managing to be " invariably entertaining and often funny " . Overall Tracy considered that Thrilling Cities was " a lively , enjoyable book , written from an unusual point of view and well illustrated . " Writing for The Observer , Francis Hope was surprised by Fleming 's written style , which he found to be " more flabby verbose than one expects of a thriller writer " , although this was redeemed by Fleming having " some interesting conversations with local experts on crime " .

The reviewer for the Los Angeles Times , Robert Kirsch , did not enjoy the book and considered Fleming to be " a second @-@ rate reporter , filled with the irritating prejudices and pomposities of a middle @-@ class English traveller . " For Kirsch , Fleming 's style was a combination of Sax Rohmer and James Fitzpatrick , although he also considered that " Fleming 's wit is provincial " . Writing the review for The Boston Globe , Marjory Adams thought Thrilling Cities to have " an acid gaiety in its descriptions " , which contributed to her overall summary of the book : " it is fun ! " .