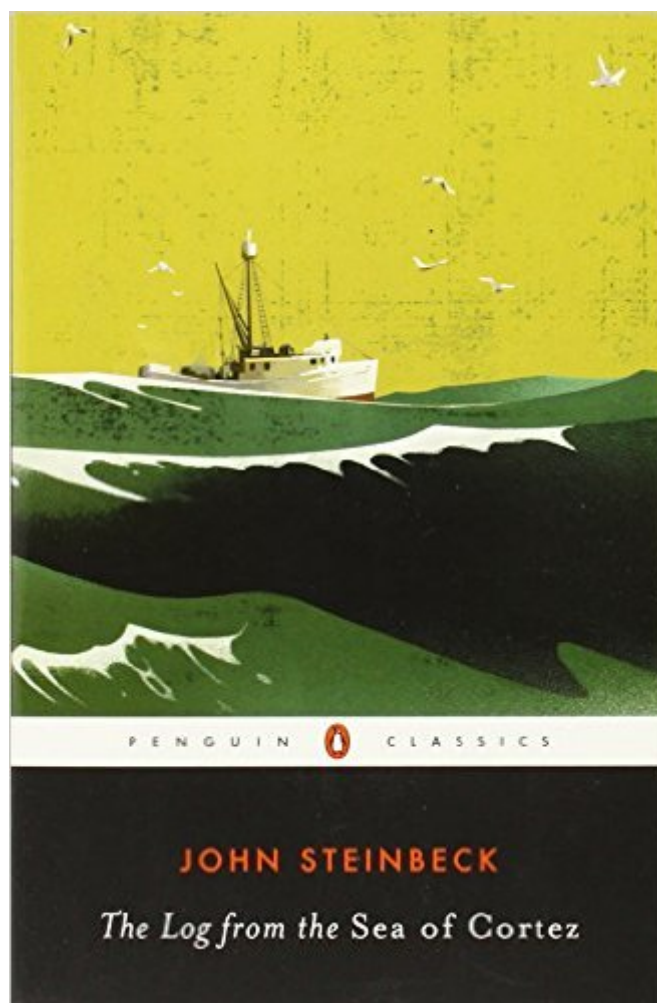


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The Log From The Sea Of Cortez (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

In the two years after the 1939 publication of Steinbeck's masterful *The Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck and his novel increasingly became the center of intense controversy and censorship. In search of a respite from the national stage, Steinbeck and his close friend, biologist Ed Ricketts, embarked on a month long marine specimen-collecting expedition in the Gulf of California, which resulted in their collaboration on the *Sea of Cortez*. In 1951, after Ricketts's death, Steinbeck reissued his narrative portion of the work in memory of his friend and the inspiration for *Cannery Row*'s Doc. This exciting day-by-day account of their journey together is a rare blend of science, philosophy, and high-spirited adventure. This edition features an introduction by Richard Astro. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

John Steinbeck had a high interest in marine biology, one that helped forge an extraordinary friendship with Ed Ricketts in the 1930s. Ricketts, the model for Doc in *CANNERY ROW*, was a professional biologist living in Monterey. He proposed an exploration of the Gulf of California and in the spring of 1940 he and Steinbeck set sail on a rented boat with a colorful crew that should have

suggested a sea novel along the lines of CANNERY ROW and TORTILLA FLAT. The original result from this trip was the book THE SEA OF CORTEZ, which included the "log" fashioned by Steinbeck and an extensive inventory of the scientific information collected. It was published in the fall of 1941 and promptly forgotten when Pearl Harbor was struck. A decade later, the scientific catalogue was removed and Steinbeck added another section, a moving and often hilarious appreciation of his friend Ed Ricketts. The title became THE LOG FROM THE SEA OF CORTEZ and that's what we have here. This is a great book for the beach, where I read it. It is filled with the imagery of a warm coastal area. It is several things, really: a book filled with the wonder and scientific knowledge of marine life, a how-to (and sometimes how-not-to) guide for collecting specimens, a travelogue that captures the wilderness communities of Baja California in its time, and an often hilarious account of staying amused at sea with the likes of a crew with names like Tony, Tex, Sparky and Tiny. Steinbeck also takes the occasion to explore his own philosophy as inspired by their studies. Especially interesting is his Easter Day entry, in which he defines and explores at length what he calls "teleological" and "non-teleological" thinking. He gives us much to think about, and does so in clear, fluent prose.

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