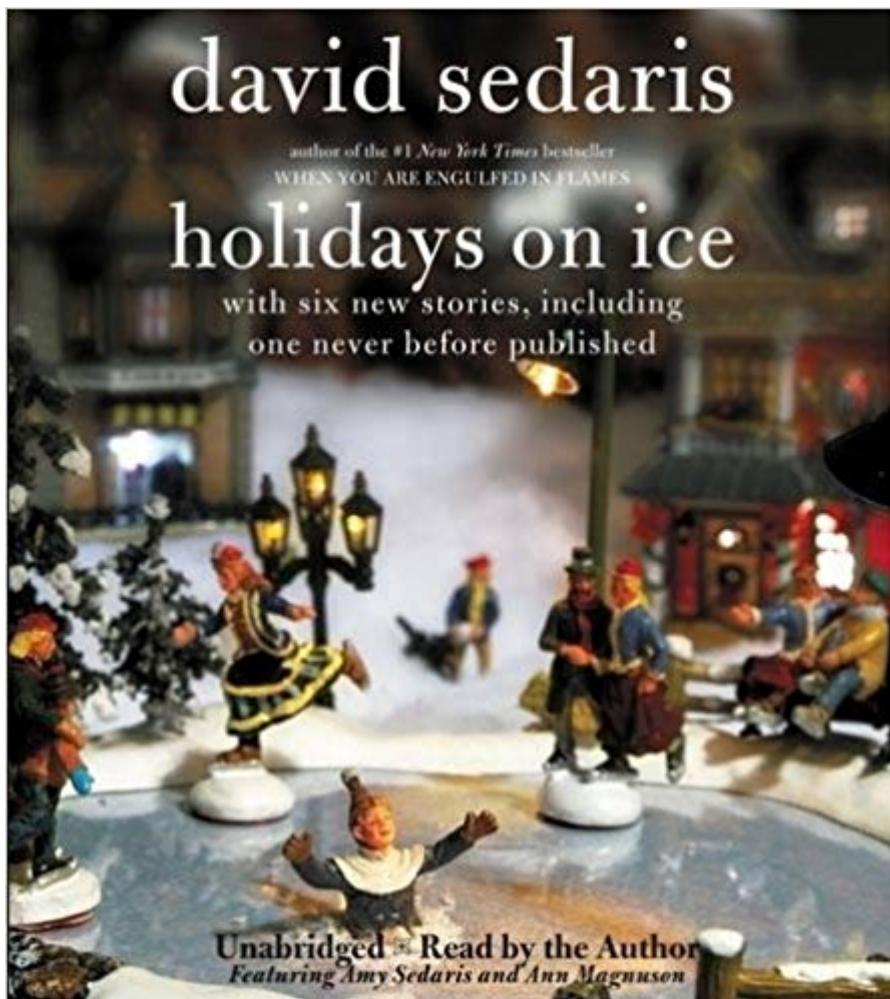


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Holidays On Ice



Synopsis

David Sedaris's beloved holiday collection is new again with six more pieces, including a never before published story. Along with such favorites as the diaries of a Macy's elf and the annals of two very competitive families, are Sedaris's tales of tardy trick-or-treaters ("Us and Them"); the difficulties of explaining the Easter Bunny to the French ("Jesus Shaves"); what to do when you've been locked out in a snowstorm ("Let It Snow"); the puzzling Christmas traditions of other nations ("Six to Eight Black Men"); what Halloween at the medical examiner's looks like ("The Monster Mash"); and a barnyard secret Santa scheme gone awry ("Cow and Turkey"). No matter what your favorite holiday, you won't want to miss celebrating it with the author who has been called "one of the funniest writers alive" (Economist).

Book Information

Audio CD: 4 pages

Publisher: Grand Central Publishing; Unabridged edition (October 8, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1600244874

ISBN-13: 978-1600244872

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.9 x 5.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 623 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,052,115 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #94 in Books > Books on CD > Literature & Fiction > Short Stories #105 in Books > Books on CD > Humor #848 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Humor & Satire > Dark Humor

Customer Reviews

Holidays on Ice is a collection of three previously published stories matched with three newer ones, all, of course, on a Christmas theme. David Sedaris's darkly playful humor is another common thread through the book, worming its way through "Seasons Greetings to Our Friends and Family!!!" a chipper suburban Christmas letter that spirals dizzily out of control, and "Front Row Center with Thaddeus Bristol," a vicious theatrical review of children's Christmas pageants. As always, Sedaris's best work is his sharply observed nonfiction, notably in "Dinah, the Christmas Whore," the tale of a memorable Christmas during which the young Sedaris learns to see his family in a new light. Worth the price of the book alone is the hilarious "SantaLand Diaries," Sedaris's chronicle of his time working as an elf at Macy's, covering everything from the preliminary group lectures ("You

are not a dancer. If you were a real dancer you wouldn't be here. You're an elf and you're going to wear panties like an elf.") to the perils of inter-elf flirtation. Along the way, he paints a funny and sad portrait of the way the countless parents who pass through SantaLand are too busy creating an Experience to really pay attention to their children. In a sly way, it carries a holiday message all its own. Read it aloud to the adults after the kids have gone to bed. --Ali Davis --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

For those dreading the holiday season, bestseller Sedaris (*When You Are Engulfed in Flames*) makes life a little easier with this re-release of his uproarious essay collection, newly expanded from the original 1997 edition. Sedaris gets the most mileage out of Christmas, from his stint as a Macy's elf in "Santaland Diaries," to comparing American and Dutch holiday traditions in "Six to Eight Black Men." In "Jesus Shaves," Sedaris recalls a French class in which students try to explain to each other, in broken French, the concept of Easter: "On the Easter we be sad because somebody makes Jesus dead today." This updated version includes "The Monster Mash," poached from *When You Are Engulfed*, in which Sedaris spends Halloween at the morgue; and "The Cow and the Turkey," a new story featuring the Secret Santa woes of barnyard animals. Longtime fans will be happy to have all Sedaris's holiday stories in one volume, and those who've managed to miss the literary funny-man couldn't get a better gift. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The stories in this book have all been previously published, so if you're a fan of the author, they won't be new to you. I don't usually seek out "humor" books, since many of them seem to take the business of being funny way too seriously. So I've been seeing references to Sedaris for years, but never read any of his stuff. My loss. If these stories are typical, he's both funny and thoughtful, which is a nice combination. The opening story "SantaLand Diaries" is the story that put this author on the map when it was read on NPR. It's the sort of "autobiographical fiction" (i.e. based on his life, but exaggerated for comic effect) that Sedaris does so beautifully. It's a classic. Sedaris admits to some exaggeration, so maybe writing stories about holidays is a natural fit for his talents. Americans take their celebrations very seriously indeed, with the result that observing behavior during holidays is even more entertaining than observing behavior the rest of the time. Holidays bring out the crazy in all of us. Ask any cop or ER nurse or Mall Santa. Even normal people go whack-o. I loved the Christmas letters that spiral out of control. I howled at the critiques of children's holiday productions.

Naturally, your own offspring (or grandchildren, nieces, nephews, etc) are charming, talented, and delightful, but who the hell thought we'd want to watch those other boring brats? But my favorites were "Dinah the Christmas Whore" and "Let It Snow" because of the glimpses into the strange family that shaped this author's twisted outlook on life. His family may have been "Southern by the Grace of Greyhound" but they fit right in. Anyone who grew up in a dysfunctional family will recognize the characters and situations. Those of you who grew up in a normal family don't know what you missed. I think most of these stories are ones I would enjoy re-reading and the collection is a great introduction to this author's writing. After all, this is a man who's been called "one of the funniest writers alive." By The Economist. And if people who write about the economy don't know great humor when they see, I can't imagine who does.

I love David Sedaris. I bought this book so that I would have a hard-copy to get signed when we saw him at a reading in York, PA. Imagine my surprise when I get this book in the mail and it had already been signed by David to someone named Christine. Well, I'm not Christine but yahoo! a book for less than a buck that is already signed? SIGN ME UP!!! The great thing about Holidays on Ice is FIRST listening to him read it. THEN read it yourself. And you can hear his voice in your head reading it. That's what I do. I imagine his voice reading it and it makes it that much more funny. Funnier? I took it to the reading, and he re-signed it. I love him. He's so wee. You just want to wrap him up and take him home and make him tell you funny things.

I like David Sedaris. His off-beat humor matches up with what I think is funny. I don't like it so much when he ventures into fiction, although I have to admit his Six to Eight Black Men and The Cow and the Turkey were spot on. The Monster Mash just didn't click with me, but the SantaLand Diaries was worth the price of the book. Sedaris is meant to be heard, and I can hear his voice reading these short stories as I read them. His unique speaking voice and writing voice are unmistakable. Nobody sounds just like David Sedaris. Funny and poignant, both voices combine into a reading experience like none other.

As someone who gets depressed this time of year, and I know I'm not alone in this - this is my antidepressant! How can I be sad at all the signs of Christmas while I'm laughing my butt off with David Sedaris as an elf with me? Best to listen to it read by Sedaris himself, (he reads his work SO well!) but I have heard it so many times that when I read it I can almost hear him speaking in my head. I used to listen to it on the car between Thanksgiving and New Year's, and it really helped.

Buy it for the people you know who get sad or just don't like this time of year!!! I do have a complaint with though - my copy, shipped along with another book, arrived bent! I'll try weighing it down with a stack of heavy books to weigh it down and hopefully straighten it out, but they should have shipped it differently - maybe between 2 sheets of heavy cardboard or something. But I highly recommend the book - one of the funniest I've ever read!!!!

I have never read any by this author before but have heard about him for years. With the Christmas season in full swing and a bit overloaded with "sweet" holiday reads, this seemed the perfect tonic. A collection of stories that is largely entertaining, I didn't find them to be absolutely hilarious as others have but I did find them interesting and enjoyable. The first story appears to be the most widely known and relates the experience of working in retail as an elf during the holidays. Anyone who has worked in the retail industry will appreciate it. While I enjoyed most of them tremendously, there was one story that turned my stomach and I wish I had skipped it. The story starts out innocently enough as a parody of the typical, annual Christmas letter distributed by many but it slowly decends into ugly and then takes a turn that was repulsive to me. I wish it had not been included since it spoiled an otherwise good collection of stories. Definitely worth a read with that one exception.

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