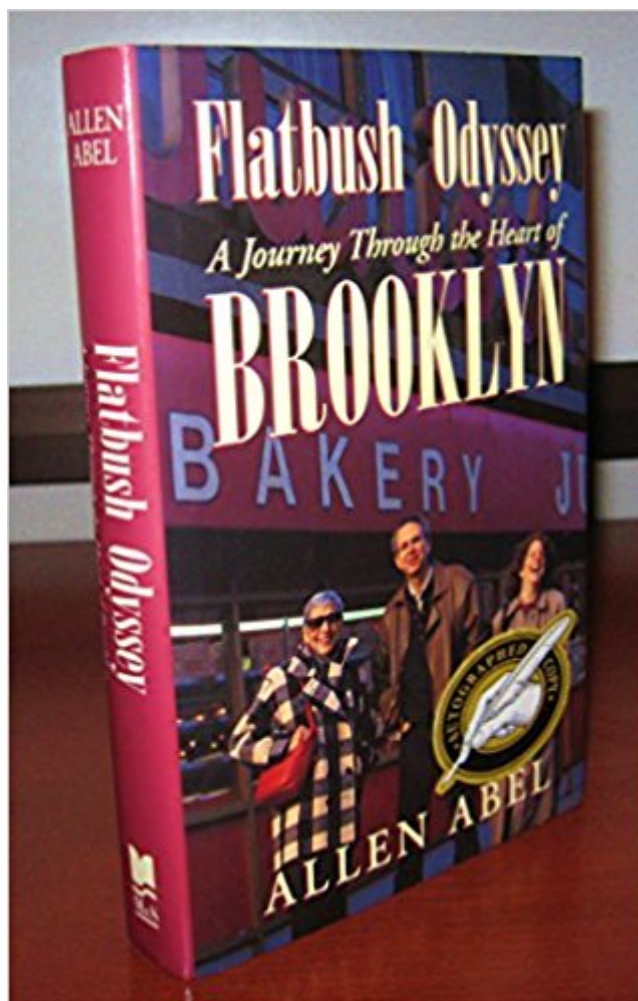


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# Flatbush Odyssey: A Journey Through The Heart Of Brooklyn



## Synopsis

At the age of 43, writer Allen Abel decided to move home to Brooklyn, stay with his mother (in the same apartment in which he grew up), and explore and write about the borough of his birth. For several months he wandered along Flatbush Avenue, the thoroughfare that runs like a spine through Brooklyn. The result is a delightful family memoir and exploration of a unique place. He hobnobs with Mohawk high-steel workers, tries to learn voodoo secrets from Haitian immigrants, commiserates with policemen detailed to the subway, and chats with an ex-zookeeper in Prospect Park. He revisits the scenes of his childhood, samples social life in distant Flatlands, and hunts for horseshoe crabs on the shoreline. Flatbush Odyssey is a revelation, and in it Allen Abel has produced a marvellous piece of storytelling.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 368 pages

Publisher: McClelland & Stewart (April 22, 1995)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0771007035

ISBN-13: 978-0771007033

Product Dimensions: 9.3 x 6.3 x 1.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,430,440 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #61 inÂ Books > Travel > United States > New York > Brooklyn #77 inÂ Books > Travel > United States > New York > New York City #1000 inÂ Books > Humor & Entertainment > Puzzles & Games > Poker

## Customer Reviews

Abel, a middle-aged TV reporter in Toronto, returned to his boyhood home to traverse Flatbush Avenue, the main boulevard through "renowned, hilarious, homely, devastated, bucolic, seething Brooklyn." His episodic report?insightful, entertaining and troubling?is interspersed with mostly amusing scenes involving his redoubtable mother, retaining her rent-controlled apartment in the once-Jewish neighborhood of Flatbush now populated by Caribbean immigrants, and his fellow-touring sister, aka "Little Debbie." Though Abel, a reporter turned urban Dante, exhibits a bit too much white middle-class paranoia, he has great sympathy for a benighted borough of two million, lacking hotels and interstate train service, its downtown shopping bazaar that could be "Sarawak or Panama City." He deftly captures several scenes: a tour with wary transit cops;

inspecting an abandoned, formerly opulent movie palace; visiting an adult class for "Correcting Your Accent." And he meets interesting folk: the sole black Lubavitcher Jew; the Guyanese woman whose bakery/restaurant symbolizes the resilience of the Flatbush neighborhood; an Afghan immigrant happily wed to a Dominican. Photos not seen by PW. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

In the heart of Brooklyn, occupying a ten-mile stretch running north to south, one will find Flatbush Avenue. Abel takes readers on a nostalgic journey as he reminisces and rediscovers the area where he was born and raised. Spending ten weeks collecting research material, he rides public transportation and tours schools, churches, and abandoned theaters, all the while experiencing the Flatbush of the Nineties. The result is an in-depth examination of the changes the area has undergone based on personal and historic research. Abel's point of view, as well as interviews with both new and longtime residents, provides an insightful commentary on urban growth, moderation, wide-ranging socioeconomic levels, and transitions in the urban center as a whole. The coverage is well balanced and the book well written; unfortunately, the subject matter is such that it may have a limited appeal and the humor quite subtle. Recommended especially for New York City and area libraries. Jo-Anne Mary Benson, Osgoode, Ontario, Canada Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

It was a terrific way to go back to Flatbush. A must read for anyone who lived, loved and laughed in the the old neighborhood. Ben was a great guy and his son followed in his footsteps. Do read the book from cover to cover.

Wonderful super fast shipment, and a fun book to read, especially if you grew up in Brooklyn.

I quite enjoy this product. I like to collect kitchen utensils but usually shell out for pots and pans and buy my knives at thrift stores. For the price, this product has been super useful. it is very fast delivery. love it . i will purchase it from you next time. give my parents ,

Thoroughly enjoyable and informative reading. At first I couldn't understand how someone could take the time to research and write about what I assumed was a fairly narrow subject. Then I was surprised at how well it was written. Getting deeper into the book I realized that Allen Abel was a professional writer and it all made some more sense. The historical information gave more depth,

insight and appreciation to my growing up in Brooklyn. His humor and contemporary characters were delightful. I have forwarded this book on to friends who were most appreciative.

Great trip down Flatbush---I enjoyed this enough to recommend to friends. But what a cheapeskate! Besides trying to mooch drinks and snacks off merchants, the guy moves in with his for months ---- and when her 75th birthday arrives the loving son and daughter say Peter Luger's is too expensive. They take her to Jerry's Ribs instead, for crissakes! If you can get past this guy's tendency to be a tightwad you'll enjoy Flatbush Odyssey.

A wonderful, readable book, and a must for anyone who grew up in Brooklyn. The author walks the entire length of Flatbush Avenue, from Dumbo to the ocean, chronicling the changes he sees. I have read this book twice, and thumb through it often. I loved it!

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