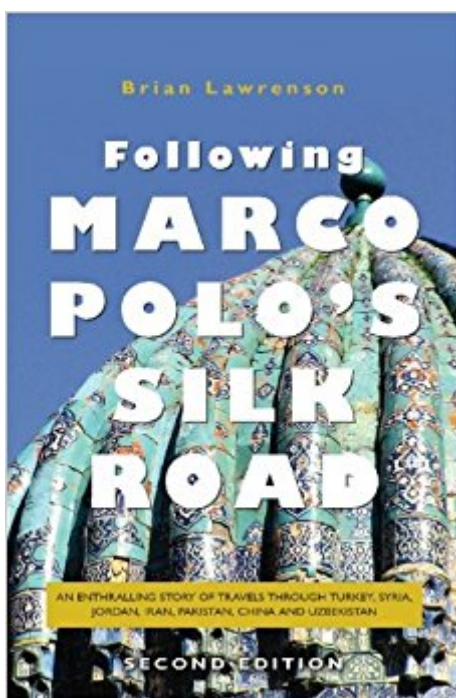


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# Following Marco Polo's Silk Road: An Enthralling Story Of Travels Through Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Iran, Pakistan, China And Uzbekistan (Second Edition)



## Synopsis

Following Marco Polo's Silk Road is Brian and Jill Lawrenson's personal account of their adventure-filled journey as they pursue the historical legend and the mythic hero Marco Polo. Beginning in Italy, Marco Polo's point of origin, they embark on a sometimes light-hearted, sometimes perilous journey along the celebrated Silk Road, named for the series of trade routes used to connect China to the Mediterranean world and North Africa during the 3rd Century and beyond. Along the way, Brian and Jill explore the modern peoples and cultures that have grown up in Marco Polo's footsteps and uncover the truths vs. the myths of the actual voyages of this famed Italian explorer. Told as part travelogue and part narrative quest, Following Marco Polo's Silk Road tells an intimate and thrilling tale of wanderlust, human diversity, and the love of pure adventure for adventure's sake. This book will please travel fans and anyone who loves the romance of history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Brian Lawrenson was born in Yorkshire, England and at age seven made his first journey of 7,000 miles to South Africa. After hitchhiking around the British Isles and Europe, he and his New Zealand born wife Jill married and migrated to Australia. Since then they have traveled through more than seventy countries. Brian is a Charter President of the Rotary Club of Breakfast Point, and was awarded a Paul Harris Fellow in 2005 by Rotary International for his work in the community. Brian retired, after a career in sales and marketing in computer technology, in 2000. Brian and Jill live in their favorite city "Sydney.

Brian Lawrenson takes readers on a journey on one of the most legendary roads in world history, the Silk Road. He interconnects his personal accounts with history, geography, culture, and travel to this vast landscape that covers the most enchanting and controversial parts of the world that the road covered from parts of the near East and far East. FOLLOWING MARCO POLO'S SILK ROAD is a unique book because it is an up-close coverage of Brian and Jill Lawrenson's experience and the people and places they encounter along the way. Indeed, the book is a travel log of the Lawrenson's excursion that took over twenty-five years to record. But it is more than that. Lawrenson provides great detail in his accounts, especially his observations in various settings that involve the culture of the people he associated with as well as befriended on his travels, and how those experiences drew parallels to what Marco Polo may have experienced; he literally ate, slept, conversed, and shared traditional rituals in the different communities. This is exemplified with the narrative, which intermingles the rich history of these regions and Lawrenson's present day accounts that occurred in Tibet, India, China, and parts of the Middle East. FOLLOWING MARCO POLO'S SILK ROAD will delight travel readers as well as history buffs. The reading list was interesting, but I would have liked to see a bibliography list as well. But for a self-published book, this is an insightful and impressive read that will be shared with others who would like to understand the significance of Marco Polo and Brian Lawrenson's journey back to one of the oldest roads in history.

Lawrenson has employed a keen eye and his obvious love for the world's peoples to tell a true story from a lifetime of travels. The author does a fine job of synthesizing and organizing a great deal of information without sensationalizing, and he is not at all condescending. For a self-published labor of love it is very clean and highly readable. I am ambivalent about the quality of the read itself, perhaps just for stylistic reasons. To me the book has an undesirable "slideshow effect". It is as though he showed one of his thousands of photographs at a time and then gave a few sentences of description and context to each before moving on to the next image. I hoped for broader images and more depth. For example, on page 373, "He was also an expert in both throat singing and in calligraphy. He called a neighbor over to join him in a rendition of the former art and we all agreed afterwards that it was indeed a remarkable performance." No further description and no indication of the exact quality of the singing that impressed him is given. Another example follows a few pages later while he is describing an art museum in Uzbekistan, "The collection was absolutely stunning. It was the best collection of art that I have ever seen- and I've seen the art in many of the collections

in the world. This view was shared by a number of our group." No specific pieces of art are described, but how the museum came into being is. I hoped to be transported into the gallery and to stare with him at a specific work or two and to learn exactly the way this experience moved him but he was moving on to the next slide already. I look for more impression and more intimacy in a book so that the imagination might have room to expand. The author's gift, however is other. If one disagrees with my reasons, I think this could be a thoroughly enjoyable read for what the author is quite good at: a whirlwind of factual bits succinctly and humanely organized for discovery's sake.

Following Marco Polo's Silk Road by Brian Lawrenson is a remarkable travelogue that really helps you to get a taste, flavor and feel like you have really been where he is writing about. You know that Uncle who shows you those 500 slides of South America from the fifties....this is NOT what I am talking about. Mr. Lawrenson captures the sights, sounds, tastes and colors in a way that makes you think you are walking beside him and his wife as they travel. Trains, churches, Mosques, food, shopping and touring seem so natural and having been to some of these places myself, I only wish I had read this book first, before I traveled so that I could experience the real flavor of each Country that I traveled to. If you are planning a trip, check out this series, it is well worth it to prepare yourself to relax and see the wonderful sights. I know I plan to purchase one of these before my next trip to Australia, hoping to not miss the wonderful local flavor. Note: In Istanbul, the details and mystery of Agatha Christie and the room keys had me wanting more, what a great story! Well Done Brian!

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