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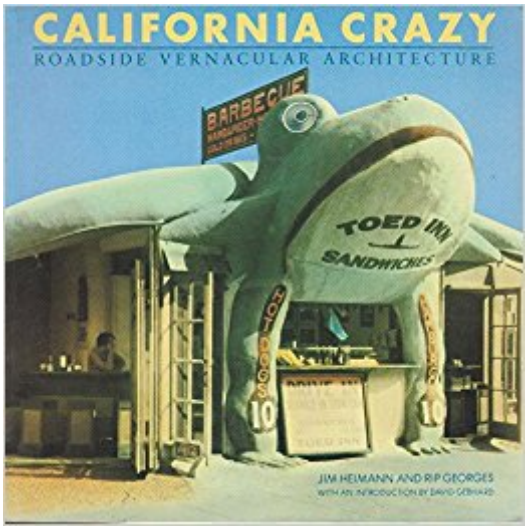
California Crazy: Roadside Vernacular Architecture



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Synopsis

Shows gas stations, cafes, businesses, and roadside stands in California designed to look like giant animals, machinery, and objects, as well as foreign architecture.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Interesting book that I ordered for a relative. I noticed that there were 2 versions of this book and I ordered both. This one has far better photographs than the new version. However, there’s updated information in the 2001 book that isn’t in this one. Both books are enjoyable. And, I ordered a used copy on this one. It had signs of wear, worn edges. However, I’ve ordered books with a "good" or "like new" ranking on them and this book with it’s "used" rating outranked some of those books!

This book on architecture in the vernacular is a great way to look back at the creative design processes of past eras when times were a bit different and this type of architecture was just as respected and utilitarian as the neighboring tall office buildings.

Great book to look at beautiful, whimsical, and intersting architecture! Nostalgia at its best and so much more intreagueing than todays towers of glass and steel.

My husband and I grew up in Los Angeles and remember many of the buildings photographed for this delightful book. Many of the most whimsical are long gone and can be remembered only through a work like this one. We remember the camera, the hot-dog, the red piano, the donut, the

ocean liner, and even the bulldog on West Washington Blvd. (Some of these buildings still exist today.) The Brown Derby restaurant certainly still exists, but does the derby? The earliest buildings speak of an important time in Southland history--the early thirties when the movie industry was new. They were built to charm the stars who lived in them or worked near them, and the craze caught on. Many of these buildings are imaginative and whimsical. It's hard to imagine a sandwich shop today with the whimsy of "Toed In." And the large, excessively ornate buildings of the "Neo-Mayan" style were very impressive. We were delighted when the Samson Tyre Works building in the city of Commerce, later a Goodyear tire building, was restored to its former crenelated glory as The Citadel, a shopping center easily visible from Freeway 5. Yes, some of these structures were tacky. But so what? What's wrong with a little craziness and fun? They are/were wonderful for kids and for the kid in all of us. And this book documents and preserves the fun and craziness. On a more serious note, there is an excellent introduction by David Gebhard who was the director of the University of California Art Museum in Santa Barbara at the time of the first publication of this book in 1980. I look forward to the new updated, hardcover edition of this work to be published in 2001. I've purchased several copies of this book at a time to keep for the odd gift. Everybody who has received it has loved it. For those who grew up in the Southland, it's a trip down memory lane.

It's not enough that they almost encourage vandalism-they feel the need to fascilitate trespasing.Goofy belaboured humour is only really practical when youre a kid-this book tries too hard and achieves to little.

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