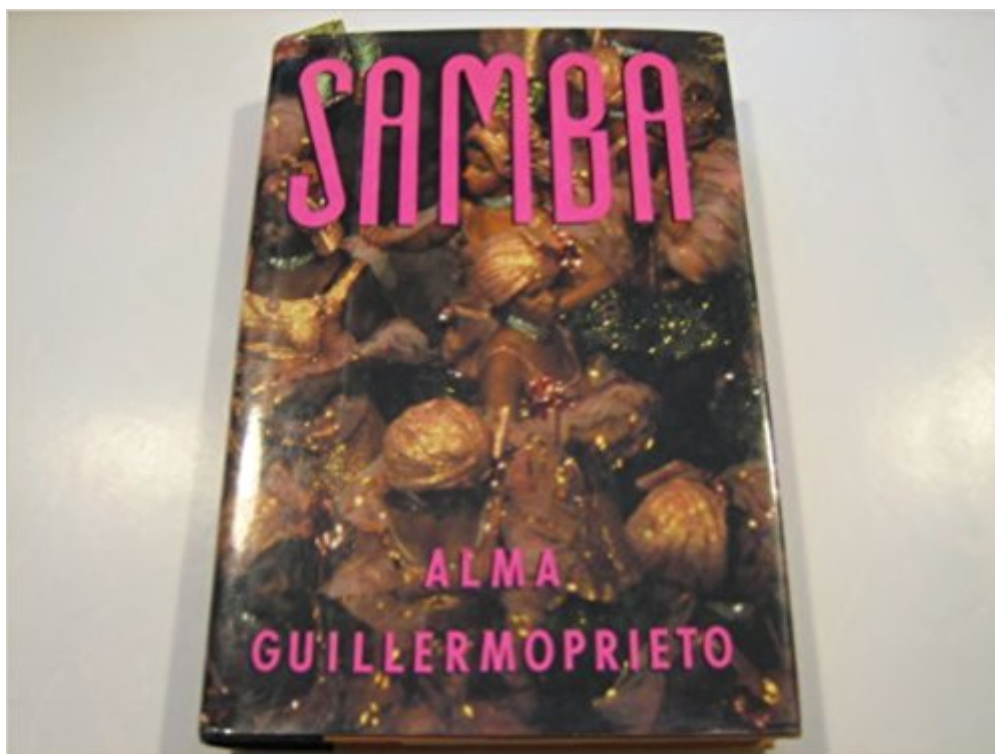


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Samba: The Making Of Brazilian Carnival



Synopsis

For one year, Alma Guillermoprieto lived in Manguiera, a village near Rio de Janeiro, to learn the ritual of samba--the sensuous song and dance marked by a rapturous beat--and to take part in Rio's renowned carnivals parade. From the Trade Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Black Orpheus springs to life in this description of Rio de Janeiro's annual carnival. Viewers of the famous foreign film will recall the thousands of costumed dancers and musicians who plan, design and practice for the lengthy displays in carnival parades. In depicting the slum people of Rio who prepare for the annual samba competition, Guillermoprieto, formerly Newsweek's South American bureau chief, vividly presents the individual stories of principal participants, analyzes the feelings they express in their music and dance, describes the contributions of the various samba schools and offers his interpretation of black Brazilian history and culture. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Every year the favela (poor sections on the hills of the city) of Rio organize teams of Samba dancers to compete in the yearly carnival. The author follows the preparations from the perspective of the champion Manguiera team, 5000 strong, and finds a serious community project to which all contribute despite their poverty and the high cost of costumes. The Manguiera team honors its African roots in its themes. Tempers and emotions escalate, leading to inevitable disasters which last for months, until finally all collapse into a black and white mass of unfettered sensualism at

carnival. This delightful book gives a glimpse into a culture of poverty and its art form, about which too little has been written in English. Photographs would have added to the fun of reading; nevertheless, this will be popular with general readers.-Louise Leonard, Univ. of Florida Lib., Gainesville Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc.

It took me all these years to review this book, but it recently came to mind (I anticipate traveling to stay with a branch of my family tree I've never met before) and suddenly Samba is on my must re-read list. It's fabulous - even now I get chills thinking about it, and I haven't read it for years. But now that I've brought it to mind, you can bet it's on my re-read list. The most amazing thing is Guillermoprieto's kicker - what writers call it when you've got just the perfect anecdote or quote or image or whatever it is that leaves readers slack-jawed. Because by the end she was already writing at such a fever pitch that I couldn't see how she could possibly out-do herself. But she did. Meanwhile, no need for me to repeat the (positive) insights of other reviewers - they're right-on.

I love reading about Brazil and Samba and I really enjoyed this book.

Great.

I like samba

This is a good book written by a journalist who consistently produces some of the most insightful work on Latin America in the U.S. print media. Writing from a journalist's perspective about her own experiences as a white Mexican living in Brazil it's a great read. I was captivated when I read it. Other reviewers are correct, there are better studies of all the subjects she covers, and as a Latin American historian, lusophile, and student of Capoeira I could find flaws to; here historical sections are simplistic, etc. But why bother? She did live there and join a Samba school, she freely admits her limitations, concerns, and desires, and she writes like a dream. That is hard to find and worth reading.

Love this book. Read it MANY years ago when Dona Zica was still alive. I'm a VERY active member of the Mangueira samba school and work with and talk to many of the people she talks about in this book. They said they remember her living in Mangueira and writing this book. I've looked for a

Portuguese translation to give to them, but can't find any. Does ANYONE know if this book has ever been published in Portuguese? I am thinking about translating parts of it where they are mentioned so they can read what was written about them. Especially Dona Neuma's daughters, Chininha and Guezinha.... What a tribute to them and their mother!

The title of the book "Samba" (either picked by the author or by the publisher for marketing purposes) is misleading. The book has nothing significant about Samba, music or dance. (For example, one of the very few Samba dance descriptions is of a couple coming from an affluent beach neighborhood to a rehearsal, where the male dancer kept rubbing his neck against the female dancer c...). However, the book presents realistic life in a Rio favela and centered on preparations of one of the most famous samba schools for the carnival, from the point of view of a high class Mexican (American comparable) talented journalist. The author moved to live in a favela for short periods, with a luxury apartment and maid in the rich part of the city to escape to frequently. The result is one of a few books that describe life of the lowest Brazilian class in a Rio favela. The misery, drug culture, fatalism, lawlessness, male dominance, and the joy of the preparations for the few happy days of the year during the carnival, which the author followed through, until the last minute before the climax, the parade that she could only see briefly from afar but not participate, due to what appears to be a nervous breakdown.

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