



Coasting: A Private Voyage

Jonathan Raban

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Put Jonathan Raban on a boat and the results will be fascinating, and never more so than when he's sailing around the serpentine, 2,000-mile coast of his native England. In this acutely perceived and beautifully written book, the bestselling author of **Bad Land** turns that voyage—which coincided with the Falklands war of 1982—into an occasion for meditations on his country, his childhood, and the elusive notion of home.

Whether he's chatting with bored tax exiles on the Isle of Man, wrestling down a mainsail during a titanic gale, or crashing a Scottish house party where the kilted guests turn out to be Americans, Raban is alert to the slightest nuance of meaning. One can read **Coasting** for his precise naturalistic descriptions or his mordant comments on the new England, where the principal industry seems to be the marketing of Englishness. But one always reads it with pleasure.

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