



Road Trip: Roadside America, From Custard's Last Stand to the Wigwam Restaurant

Richard Longstreth

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Unseen photographs of the late '60s and early '70s from the American road offer a compelling portrait of a fanciful landscape, now all but gone. Expectation, anticipation, discovery—each of these is a facet of an American institution, the road trip. With a focus on vernacular roadside architecture built between 1920 and the late 1960s, the golden age of the American road, Road Trip is a time capsule, a snapshot taken primarily in the early 1970s, of an extraordinary era and its roadside buildings, restaurants, gas stations, motels, and places of amusement, most of which are now long since gone. Built in an age of unbridled imagination, these structures speak to the fancies of their original owners and builders as much as to the purposes for which they were built: a gas station whose pumps are covered by a canopy in the form of a fully realized B-29 bomber; a hot dog stand named Frank 'n' Stein, whose diners are met by a colossal Frankenstein bearing in one hand a mustard-covered dog and in the other a mug of foaming beer. With more than 200 previously unpublished full-color photographs of the iconic imagery of the American highway and richly descriptive text, Road Trip will delight and engage both the armchair traveler, the enthusiast of Americana, the architectural enthusiast, and all those longing for the romance of the road.

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