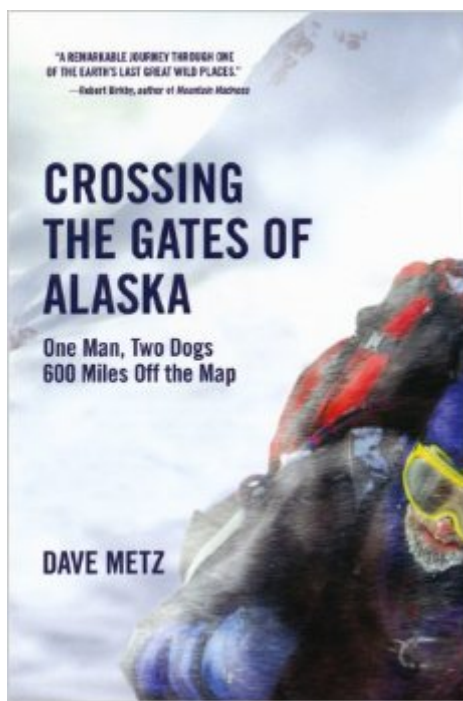


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# Crossing The Gates Of Alaska



## Synopsis

The snow forms the beginning of a near vertical chute that falls at least a thousand feet. My feet, shaking, manage to hug the thin edge of solid rock. I feel my heart creep to my throat and warm sweat drip down my back, defying the subzero Arctic air. Somehow I reach a plateau and think the worst is behind me. I couldn't be more wrong. This is the story of Dave Metz's death-defying, breathtaking, and passionate journey through the Arctic outback. Driven by his lifetime reverence for the outdoors, Dave, with the help of his two beloved Airedale terrier dogs, embarks on a three-month epic of survival and astonishing determination that rivals the most daring world-class explorations. I find myself on a gigantic trench hemmed in on both sides by peaks that look like ice-daggers from another world. The idea that I'm at the mercy of the wild sinks in. . . and I desperately want out of this endless, icebound maze. Skiing up frozen rivers, enduring bitter nights at twenty below zero, and staggering across vast reaches of barren tundra and scrub woodlands, Metz's unprecedented 600-mile trek took him to the remotest regions of the untamed North. In frightening and stunning detail, he shows us an unwavering spirit and a compelling sense of adventure that can only be satisfied when truly free. . . Dave Metz has been to Alaska over a dozen times in the last twenty years. He's kayaked across Alaska twice, once with his beloved dog Jonny riding in the bow, and lived there for two years in remote locations. He's also kayaked and trekked in Peru, Brazil, Canada, and Borneo, and has hiked across most of Oregon and Washington. Despite his forays away from home, he managed to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree in English literature from Portland State University, where he also did course work in zoology. He currently works for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife as a seasonal fish biologist. In addition to studying mammals and the preservation of indigenous cultures in rain forest regions, he continues zealously to embark on wilderness survival and exploration adventures, cycling, and hiking trips. He lives Philomath, Oregon.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Unless one has been in Alaska or a real wilderness you can not imagine the vastness and emptiness. Many will read 'Crossing the Gates of Alaska' and ask why. Why would you struggle and face near death and definite symptoms of starvation just to cross a wilderness? One of the first thoughts many will have as they read the cover of the book; "one man, two dogs" will be to picture Huskies, but Dave Metz has his 2 Airedale terriers to help and keep him company on his journey. Metz's way of describing his journey can let you picture the wildness he travels through - its' beauty and its' danger. If you have ever had a wonderful dog, a dog that is as good as another human being, if not better, you will understand his connection with his two. His dream and love of the wilderness shows through on his day by day account of his journey across Alaska. There is some moralizing done concerning most people's disregard for the natural life and care of the earth and the philosophy of why eat locally when you can have Swiss chocolate. It's hard to understand his statement, "hunting is a nasty little act of my journey", when that is a part of the natural process of surviving. But that shouldn't turn you away from reading a captivating account of a man's test of himself and what can be a discovery for the reader of an incredible place on this planet.

The editorial review is great. There are plenty of these heavy deep adventure guy books out there. Most of them are not that good. Either written from a pretentious perspective or from some awkward angle. Some are good. Coming across as honest and written in an interesting manner. And a few are fantastic. Hard hitting breath taking and beautifully written. Take 'Into Thin Air' for example. Well here we have just such a thrilling spellbinding adventure book. From the beginning the reader sits frowncased turning pages in tremorous anticipation of whats gonna happen next. Not only are the hair-raising adventures unbelievable but his experience as a whole is amazing. Guys love to read this kinda stuff imagining that they are part of the adventure. Well you'd have to be one tough wilderness man to walk in Metz's shoes. Come to think of it. Metz probably doesn't even own 'shoes'. Granite boots is more like it. Bottom line: this is one great adventure book. Well written. Very interesting.

"Crossing the Gates of Alaska" is a gripping true-life adventure I could not put down! Dave Metz and his two Airedale terriers (brothers) ski and walk across the entire state from west to east through the Brooks Range. What a feat! I have to wonder how few souls have made that trip. Dave, Will and Jimmy start the trip crossing a section of frozen ocean in a near white out with almost no visibility. Skiing across frozen ocean, he and his dogs follow periodic posts marking the way. From there they travel up into the Brooks Range, often skiing on frozen rivers and streams...but there are no posts or markers here so he relies on his excellent orienteering skills developed over many treks in Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Borneo, Peru, Canada and Brazil. Metz and his dogs carry and pull all their gear and food on sleds mile after mile. His dogs provide levity and inspiration for him and for me. I often laughed out loud reading about Will and Jimmy's antics. Few are brave enough to plan, execute and complete a 600 mile trek. Metz shows endurance, determination and a deep connection with and love for the wilds of Alaska. I often think about that trip and it motivates me to get out of my chair. I can relate to his need to connect with nature. As I walk through my neighborhood I watch and listen to the birds and the frogs and feel renewed. It's certainly not a wilderness, but at least I have a chance to engage more fully with my world. Inspiration comes from many places. I get inspiration from this book. I think you will too.

I saw this pop up as a Kindle freebie and decided to take the chance. I'm glad I did, but have some serious reservations about the book as a whole. First the bad: Nothing really happens. Metz skis, hikes, nearly freezes, nearly starves, nearly gets eaten by wolves, nearly kills his dogs and after all is said and done he has only moved from point A to point B. The journey was pointless and seemed to be done just to prove it can be done. Not that any sane person would want to do it, but there it is. Kind of reminded me of Helge Pederson's "motorcycle tour" through the Darien Gap in "Ten Years on Two Wheels". Why? The Gap is not made for motorcycles the same as the Brooks Range is not made for human foot traffic. In the overall scheme of things it was a monumentally stupid adventure. Now the good: The best part for me about reading this book was that it helped a little in understanding one of my oldest friends who has the same drive towards the wilderness. A few years ago he chucked it all and went to the woods to live in a hand built cabin. I gained an appreciation for Airedales (might even adopt one this Summer), learned a lot about how to stay warm in horrendous conditions, got an insight into what kind of people live in the wilds of Alaska and got a feel for what people are capable of when driven by a singular desire to accomplish a goal no matter how worthy it may be.

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