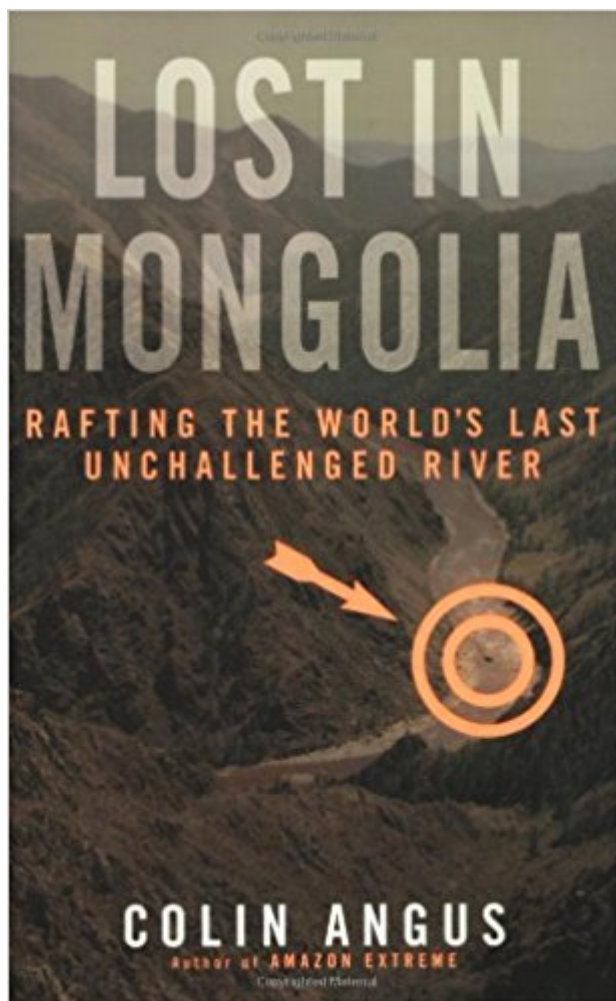


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# Lost In Mongolia: Rafting The World's Last Unchallenged River



## Synopsis

From the Yenisey's headwaters in the wild heart of central Asia to its mouth on the Arctic Ocean, Colin Angus and his fellow adventurers travel 5,500 kilometres of one of the world's most dangerous rivers through remotest Mongolia and Siberia, and live to tell about it. Exploration is Colin Angus's calling. It is not only the tug of excitement and challenge that keeps sending him on death-defying journeys down some of the world's most powerful waterways, it is a desire to know a place more intimately than you could from the window of a train, to feel the soul of a place. Angus emphasizes that rivers have always been key to the development of complex societies and the rise of civilizations, offering as they do irrigation, transportation, hydroelectric power, and food. But, as *Lost in Mongolia* captures with breathtaking detail, while they give plenty, the great rivers also take away in an instant. In *Lost in Mongolia*, Colin Angus takes readers through never-before-seen territory and his wonderful sense of adventure and humour come through on every page.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Angus didn't know the Yenisey River existed until he came across its name in a book while researching another trip. The Yenisey, he learned, is the world's fifth-longest river, flowing 5,500 kilometers (3,300 miles) from western Mongolia to the Arctic Circle, and had never been run from source to sea. That kind of challenge proved irresistible to the Canadian adventurer. In short order, Angus (Extreme) cobbled together three companions and (barely) enough sponsorship dollars to keep them afloat, and in spring 2001 set off for Mongolia. The quartet paddled through territory

covered by few travelers and even fewer writers. They dealt with financial difficulties, freezing temperatures, a kayak-swallowing maelstrom and more. The book is nearly a blow-by-blow account of the harrowing five-month journey, with trivial events reproduced as faithfully as extraordinary ones. Some sections read as though they were plucked unedited from Angus's journal (e.g., after mentioning fresh milk in one entry, he concludes, "The remaining liter of milk turned into yogurt overnight. I guess with unpasteurized milk, you don't need to stimulate the process. Still, it tasted great"). The characters Angus meets along the way—a kindly Mongolian army officer; a Russian mafia boss; and the indigenous people of the Arctic—are tantalizing, but Angus doesn't linger on them or on the three young men he's traveling with. Some readers may wish Angus had something more to say, in the end, than "we did it." Still, his book should please readers looking for a straightforward, uncomplicated adventure tale. Photos. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Asia's Yenisey River, the world's fifth longest (at 3,250 miles), had not been navigated until the author and his two companions made the five-month journey in a whitewater raft and two kayaks. Angus, a "full-time adventurer," describes the trip that began at the 13,000-foot summit of Otgon Tenger in Mongolia, which entailed treacherous rapids; extreme heat, cold, and snow; intense fog; and plagues of mosquitoes and blackflies. One of the most interesting sections details his being separated from his fellow travelers and of a run-in with Russian police. His journey took him through Siberia and into the Arctic Ocean, and Angus describes the people the trio encountered along the way, including shepherds in the Gobi Desert and the Nenets of the Arctic, who lived in reindeer-skin tepees. It's a trip that readers will relish—from the comfort of their homes. George Cohen Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

This wonderful adventure was hard to put down. I loved learning about the varied cultures along the Yenisei as well as the constant changing landscape and the challenges of the river itself.

The book is a great read, first few chapters are amazing . Kinda a little anticlimactic, but a great story.

Great read! Kept my attention . Pulled me into the kayaking/rafting world. The Russians came across as pretty cool people!

Awesome adventure story and what makes it better is it is all true!

I love river stories and this a great story and funny at the same time. It made me feel like I needed another adventure.

As an explorer, Collin Angus has a deep respect for the natural wonders of earth. In "Lost in Mongolia," he makes an attempt to give readers a sense of what it is to travel down a river at the mercy of nature and he provides an excellent description of how the river acts like a living being with a personality of its own. Through the discoveries readers make about the process of moving from source to mouth, as well as how the water affects surrounding life, he establishes for others the same appreciation that he has for the Yenisey River. The book also doubles as a documentary of the full length of the waterway that is as unique and surprising as the river itself. Collin has traveled the world on various expeditions since the age of nineteen and ever since has built up a thirst for exploration and adventure. He has rafted all of the world's major rivers including the Nile, , and Yangtze, with more adrenaline and fervor each time. Soon, adventure became a regular part of his life and would often turn out to be a priority. The Yenisey was the only major river that had not been fully explored by then, and Collin had become set on changing that fact. Angus has written books on most of his trips, and each one reveals more about his double life as a normal human being and an adventurer. Though his writing does not use spectacular literary techniques to form a connection with the reader, the amazing detail with which he describes each activity and event of almost every day of his voyage is what captures readers. It successfully reels the reader in, slowly but surely and with increasing intensity, by starting with the everyday and at times, escalating to points of rare or special encounters and events. Though some of the curiosities are rather small and may seem unimportant in the grand scheme of things, by the time the reader reaches the middle of the book, all the little foreign wonders of the journey start to break through and impact the reader with a whole new sense of culture and living in a region unfamiliar to the West. "Lost in Mongolia" is a relatively simple read for any teen or adult. Through simple writing and connections that are easily made, yet with more than enough individuality and detail to seem as if the memory of the expedition is just as much the reader's as it is Collin's, the documentary successfully leaves the reader with some sort of newfound knowledge of the region. Whether it is appreciation, thrill, or cultural wisdom, it will strike readers on a powerful, personal level that is definitely capable of providing insight much later in life.

Not knowing anything about Colin Angus and his past heroics, I picked up this book based on a

personal interest in Mongolia and the paucity of travel literature on the region. About seventy pages in, I was utterly exasperated by the author's gloating about his impending accomplishment of being with the first documented group of travelers to run the fifth longest river in the world. There's one stretch where he makes no fewer than five comments over a five page span about how he'd be with the "first Westerners to lay eyes on the landscape." In the opening pages, he shows exruciating attention to detail that is irrelevant to the larger story. What's more, he makes a point of documenting instances where he makes his friends laugh, and points out a friend's failed attempt at making him laugh. And then... his raft flips over, he loses track of his friends for a couple weeks, and as he slips out of self-absorption we actually see a remarkably humanistic portrayal of people in Mongolia and Siberia. There are some really colorful scenes... for example, playing charades and drawing pictures with rural Mongolians to explain his plight when he is lost; hearing about a doctor prescribing vodka for a leg wound; putting up with a babbling stranger who watches them repair a boat and warning them that they would never succeed. Ultimately, this is a heartwarming story, showing remarkable hospitality- warm meals and warm receptions in a cold climate. At one point a Russian sailor stalks him in his cabin as he is trying to write: "Write later. Drink now!" he insists. Angus embraces this hospitality, and as a result the strangers he encounters come to life in the book. The river journey itself is thrilling- at times the only way I could assure myself that the travelers would survive was the fact that I was holding a finished book in my hands. And it's clear from the reactions the group receives from the locals that their journey is a remarkable feat, and the travelers are goal-driven achievers. This is actually a very well-written book, and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend it. You just have to be patient at the start, and the story may win you over just as they were won over by the east Asian hospitality- and the river itself.

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