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Lighthouses Of France: The Monuments And Their Keepers



Synopsis

Lighthouses are an icon of a simpler, more romantic era, which partly explains why they are so wellloved today. Unlike many other countries, France has resisted the trend toward total automation, and in many small ports and seaside towns, the lighthouse keeper is still a wellknown and respected figure. World renowned lighthouse photographer Jean Guichard's famously dramatic photographs of storms at sea illustrate only too well the perilous working conditions the lighthouse keepers face, and the text by Rene Gast provides a fascinating glimpse into the daily lives of these men and women, whose determination and nerves of steel have saved countless lives over the centuries. Even the workmen who built these technological marvels risked their lives with every wave, and had to be strapped bellydown on the rock to avoid being washed away. Today, the job still requires a great deal of nerve, shown in the many photographs of the lighthouses where keepers are still winched down to the deck of the relief boat by hand, dangling from ropes over crashing seas. The book also contains reproductions of a number of historical documents about lighthouses: vintage photographs and etchings, extracts from logbooks, and architectural drawings detailing the development in lighthouse and navigational engineering. Lighthouses of France is a wonderfully romantic photographic tribute to lighthouses and to the bravery and dedication of their keepers. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

This massive hardcover book is the perfect compliment to it's big brother (North Atlantic

Lighthouses. Both these books are the collective works of the world's best lighthouse photographer (Jean Guichard). This is the man who uses analogue techniques and is not a Photoshop convert. (He's the man who brought you the famous photo of the lighthouse keeper who nearly gets hit by the wave.) The difference between this book and "North Atlantic Lighthouses" is that North Atlantic deals with the... ..North Atlantic (USA, Canada, Iceland, Scotland, England and Wales, Ireland, and France) while "Lighthouses of France" deals with... ..French lighthouses only. BUT, if you like me then the French lighthouses are the most attractive, alluring and charming lighthouses in the world. Lighthouses such as the famous La Jument (the mare), Le Four (the oven), Pierres Noires (Black Rocks). The book displays historic pictures which you won't see elsewhere (e.g. shots of relief of the keepers at Ar-Men.) You will also get the entire sequence of the wave and the keeper at La Jument. (Including the shot that everyone wants to see, "the aftermath", this is the shot that shows the keeper's fate. It's located on page 92, my tip is take a close look at the doorway. Generally lighthouse books such as this have text accompanying it explaining the various lighthouses. Most books are very factual giving details such as tower height, beacon type/colour, signal time, etc... (this is what happens in the other book North Atlantic Lighthouses, where the text is by Ken Trethewey). The information in that book is generally very interesting although it comes up a very distant second to the magnificent photos. Well in Lighthouses of France the text (by Rene Gast) is no distant second.

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