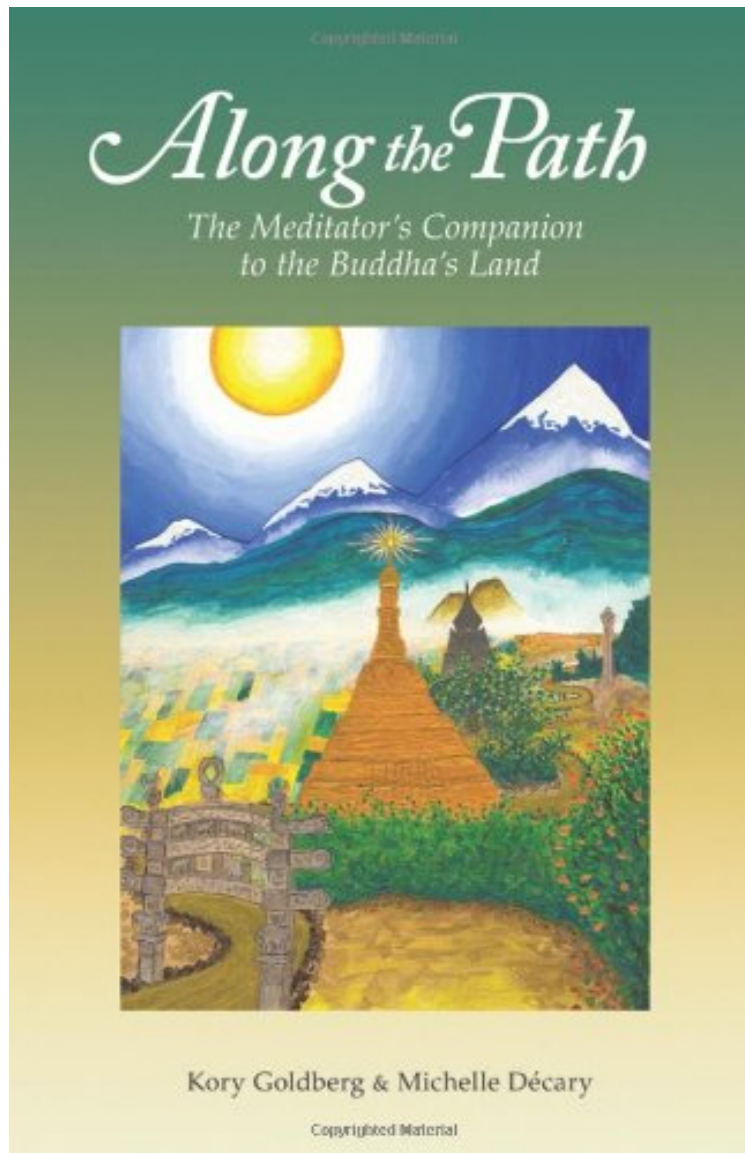


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Along the Path: The Meditator's Companion to the Buddha's Land

Kory Goldberg, Michelle Dcary
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Kory Goldberg, Michelle Dcary : Along the Path: The Meditator's Companion to the Buddha's Land before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Along the Path: The Meditator's Companion to the Buddha's Land:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. well-recommended work and well-recommended pilgrimage By Brad4dI recently returned from a 3 week guided tour of the Pilgrimage Sites, using this charming book as my primary text. A pilgrimage is such a wonderful experience and this book can solidly help both your pre-trip planning and your

pilgrimage experience, although if you are an armchair pilgrim who might never visit the sites, you will nevertheless find great enjoyment and value in this work. This book was selected by our trip leader, who is a prominent Buddhist scholar. On the positive side: 1. The authors provided accurate previews of the pilgrimage sites, IMHO. They not only list the four major ones, they nicely describe many smaller, endearing, out-of-the-way places (like Savatthi and Vesali) which are far less commercialized and surely far more authentic than the more famous places, but which take more planning to visit. You can use this book to budget your time so you can experience what are your personal must-see points. 2. The authors provide useful sections from the suttas associated with the areas they discuss. You will surely find the suttas "come alive" after you have visited the sites, so these sections are highly valued. 3. The authors are long-time practitioners, with perspective, experience, and enthusiasm. As fellow pilgrims, they understand these sites are more than just experiences for the tourist. They also list some practice sites, volunteer opportunities, etc. 4. You won't find many other books on pilgrimage touring in India (speaking of which, unless you have a great deal of "Indian street-smarts," unless you are a truly natural or experienced traveler, or unless you have gobs of time, I would strongly urge considering a group pilgrimage tour like ones you will find advertised in Buddhist journals). The positive sides far outweigh the negative ones, but no book is immune to some criticism: 1. The book is relatively large. You'll find some of the bulk includes info about topics other than Buddhist sites, and although useful, such information may quickly become out of date and can better be found in websites or other guidebooks like LP (if you are weight-conscious, you can simply remove these sections from the book). Rev. Dhammika's text *Middle Land Middle Way* is more compact but lacks the sutta translations, and those are especially nice to have. 2. Preparing for a successful pilgrimage should include some introduction to "pilgrim culture shock" and the vast array of current events and conditions in India, and the book seemed a bit short here. I would certainly recommend providing a few blogs or websites, like timesofindia.com. UPDATE: The authors have provided a blogsite which can be accessed at pariyatti.org. Thanks. 3. I think the book underestimated the travel times/frustrations you may encounter. Roads are bumpy and congested, unexpected delays are frequent, and bureaucracy can be interesting, so you will be quite lucky to average 30 mph between most sites and may arrive behind schedule and pretty frazzled. On the other hand, the patience and equanimity of nearly all drivers I encountered are something Americans should envy, and the trip was well worth it! 4. The authors ignored the World Buddhist Center in Delhi, which was a good bargain for pilgrims and a relatively quiet and reverent place to get over jet lag (alas, after arrival in India you may need to stay in Delhi for a while to make travel connections). Along with some research on modern Indian conditions, this is a fine book to help plan and conduct a pilgrimage. I found this book so valuable I do not hesitate to give it five stars. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book provided much support, guidance and entertainment ~By lynne dinneras we travelled through the Bihar Province of India. The book provides the reader with information, helpful hints and personal anecdotes about the author's experiences. It is a wonderful guide for the traveller as well as for someone wanting to learn more about the life and history of Buddhism.

This unique guidebook provides practical and inspiring information for meditators who plan to visit the sacred sites where the Buddha lived and taught in India and Nepal. The book offers a rich anthology of stories relating to each of the pilgrimage sites connected to the Buddha's life and teaching, as well as helpful maps, creative artwork, and spiritual narratives from experienced travelers. Each site entry includes insider information and tips with detailed descriptions of transportation, accommodation, and local cuisine; suggested excursions and activities in the vicinity; and highlights of established Vipassana meditation centers best suited to accommodate visiting meditators.

Kory Goldberg and Michelle Decary have written an up-to-date tour guide to Buddhist sites throughout the subcontinent. They describe in detail a plethora of locations where the world of the Buddha and of his early followers can be contacted and correlated both with ancient Pali texts and also with contemporary meaning for modern meditators. The historical sites are more than that they are repositories of India's spiritual wealth. Dr. Paul R. Fleischman, author, *An Ancient Path, Cultivating Inner Peace*, and Karma Chaos. About the Author Kory Goldberg is a humanities professor who has been practicing Vipassana meditation since the late 1990s. Michelle Decary is a freelance writer, yoga teacher, and organic gardener. They both live in Sutton, Quebec.