

# Yemen



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Yemen is arguably the most fascinating and least known country in the Arab world. Classical geography described it as a fabulous land where flying serpents guarded incense groves. Medieval Arab visitors told of disappearing islands and menstruating mountains. Our current ideas of this country at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula have been overrun by images of the desert, by oil, by the Gulf War-but there is another Arabia. Writing with an intimacy and a depth of knowledge gained through thirteen years among the Yemenis, Mackintosh-Smith is a traveling companion of the best sort-erudite, witty, and eccentric. Crossing mountain, desert, ocean, and three millennia of history, he reveals a land that, in the words of a contemporary poet, has become the dictionary of its people. In *Yemen: The Unknown Arabia* we witness the extraordinary in the ordinary. Yemen is a part of Arabia, but it is like no place on earth, and Yemen is a book in which every page is filled-like the land it describes-with the marvelous.

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