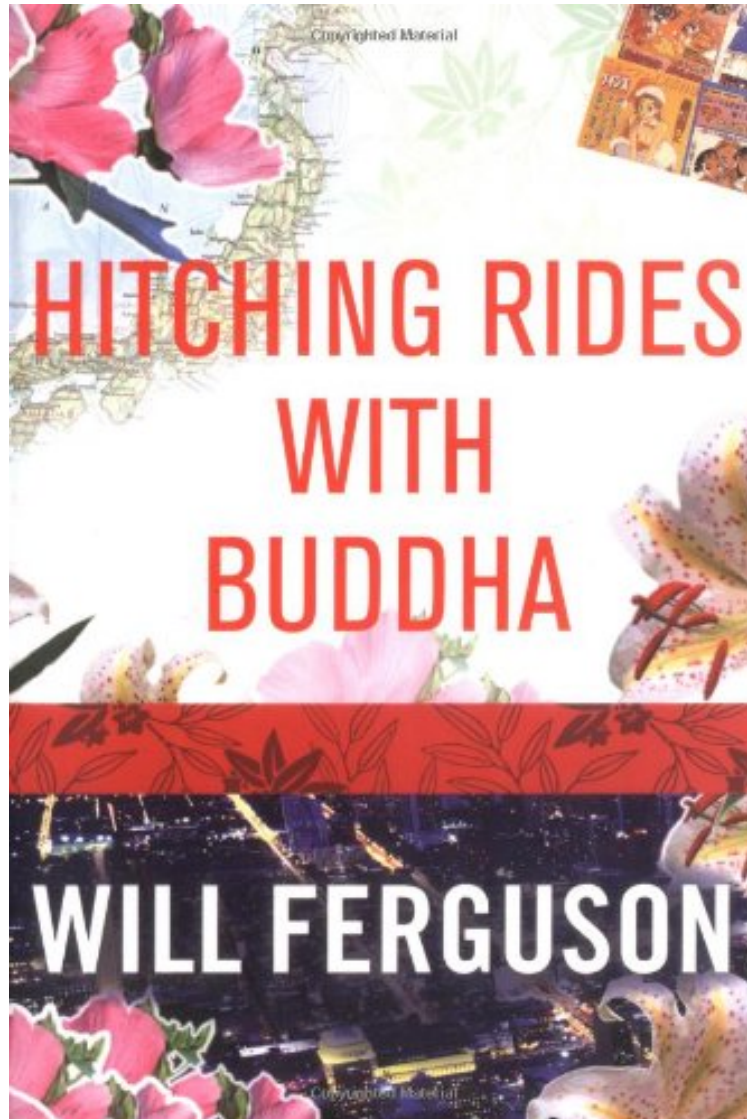


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Hitching Rides with Buddha

Will Ferguson

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Will Ferguson : Hitching Rides with Buddha before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hitching Rides with Buddha:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Laughing out loud By Felicia Demos Read this in the travel-book club I'm in and it made me want to go back to Japan! I thought at first it would get old hearing all the stories, but each one was different in its own way. I literally laughed at loud at many parts! I wish the book had been available on Kindle, but I did enjoy reading it a lot! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Following The Cherry Blossom Front... By Michael Valdivielso Will Ferguson one day decided to hitchhike from Cape Sata to Cape Soya,

following the Cherry Blossom Front. Of course he can't remember saying that but everybody who was at the party said he said it. Maybe he was too drunk to remember. Maybe they were all lies and his friends were pulling his leg. But he went anyway, following the Cherry Blossoms as they went north. He met friends, made enemies and drank. A lot. Also ate a lot of food, which he really didn't like, and hit on women who didn't really like him. Kind of reminded me of Alan Booth's *The Roads to Sata*. But more whining. A journey with no real goal. The author isn't searching for anything, which is always good, because they rarely found what they were looking for and then the ending feels forced as they try to pretend that they found world peace and Buddha and love. And they didn't, but they have to sell the book, so they say they did. There is humor, some sadness and a few scenes in which the author just went nuts, because of the weather or the way he was treated. Funny, you could think a Canadian would control his temper more? In the end we just learn a lot of stuff about the Japanese people. And one author. I gave this book a 5 out of 5 because it is a good book. I wanted to take points away. I really did. For example, the author seemed to hate museums. I work at a museum so I took some offense to that. But why take it out on such a nice book? It's not the book's fault. Also the author sexually harassed a Japanese woman - he rubbed his leg against her thigh. See page 332. She smiled at him, but once at the bar sat as far away as she could. Gee, no, really? Maybe she did not stop her thigh from touching your leg because the CAR was crowded? They have enough trouble on the trains with Japanese men without non-Japanese men adding to it outside the train, thank you. But is that the book's fault? Once again, no, so why blame the book? Oh, and just a reminder this is a reprint of an earlier book under a new title. *Hokkaido Highway Blues* was the old title. So if you have that book don't get this one. Otherwise get this one, but don't think it will give you the Answer to Life, the Universe and Everything. Maybe a few insights, like don't eat pizza toast. Oh, and remember it was published in the late 90s, so very outdated by now - don't use it as a tour guide. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A side of Japan not normally read about. By Anna Will Ferguson really delivers on his point of why he hitchhiked through Japan and shows you the side of Japan not normally shown (back roads, the people's nuances, how it feels to be a foreigner there). He also has a really great way of blending history, reporting on what he's seen, and his own opinions and feelings. Mr. Ferguson sounds like a cool guy to hang out, cracking jokes and making light of bad situations, but he also has great insight. As well, the ending to the book took me by surprise. Overall, good 'travel' book which gave me ideas of places to visit, but an even better story about self-discovery and Japan.

Take a humorist from the Great White North one part Bob and Doug McKenzie, the other Bill Bryson feed him lots of sake, and set him loose hitchhiking his way through polite Japanese society. The result is one of the warmest and funniest travelogues you've read. It had never been done before. Not in four thousand years of Japanese recorded history had anyone followed the Cherry Blossom Front from one end of the country to the other. Nor had anyone hitchhiked the length of Japan. And, as Ferguson learns, it illustrates that to travel is better than to arrive.

Praise for "Hitching Rides with Buddha: "The road book of the year. . . A warm-hearted account with a generous helping of satire."--"The Daily Telegraph "A mild stroke of genius. . . Savagely hilarious."--"Sunday Herald "You trust both his humour and his insights. . . An admirable pair of eyes through which to see contemporary Japan."--"The Observer "I enjoyed Hitching Rides with Buddha immensely. Will Ferguson is a very gifted writer."--Bill Bryson
Praise for "Beauty Tips from Moose Jaw: "Ferguson's strength does not lie in whether he writes funny or not. His strength is that he writes so well."--"Times Colonist (Victoria) "Yet another masterfully entertaining examination of Canuckishness penned by the Calgary author. . . Ferguson's fascination with Canadiana is infectious."--"Calgary Herald "Full of surprises . . . and idiosyncratic charms. . . Travel writers don't always get to climb Everest or visit the Taj Mahal, and they can be judged best by what they come up with on a slow day. Ferguson is good when he's sipping a handful of icy water out of Hudson Bay; he's better eating pancakes in a Finnish restaurant in Thunder Bay."--"National Post "Lively storytelling . . . Artful descriptions of the Canadian landscape."--"The Globe and Mail "Will Ferguson is a talent. He writes refreshingly, provocatively and eloquently. . . He looks for the essence and his search brings out some smashingly insightful stuff."--"Ottawa Citizen
From the Inside Flap
Originally published as *Hokkaido Highway Blues*, with limited distribution in Canada, Will Ferguson's classic book about Japan, for all fans of the bestselling *Beauty Tips from Moose Jaw*. With the same fervour they have for outlandish game shows and tiny gadgets, the Japanese go nuts each spring when the cherry blossoms sweep from island to island towards the country's northerly tip. Will Ferguson was celebrating the event in the standard fashion. And after way too much sake he announced he would be the first person in recorded history to follow the blossom's progress end to end. To make it a challenge worth doing, he'd hitchhike all the way: relying on the kindness of some very weird and wonderful strangers. Mixing his penchant for biting observation with wicked humour, Ferguson starts at the southernmost tip of Cape Sata and heads north for distant Hokkaido. Whether he is doing the forbidden and not knowing it, or holding "conversations by non sequitur," it is a journey full of misadventures and revelations. The resulting travelogue is one of the funniest and most illuminating books ever written about Japan. "To make matters worse, I decided to hitchhike. Striking a heroic stance, I declared my intention to my Japanese friends to become the first person ever to hitchhike the length of Japan, end-to-end, cape-to-cape, sea-to-sea. This did not impress them as much as I had hoped. "Why would you want

to do that?" they asked, genuinely puzzled. "There is no reason to hitchhike. That's why we built the Bullet Train." Others worried about my safety. "But," I would argue, "Japan is a very safe country, is it not?" "Oh, yes. Very safe. Safest in the world." "So why shouldn't I hitchhike?" "Because Japan is dangerous." And so on. Now, I will admit that mooching rides across Japan is not a major achievement -- I mean, it's not like I paddled up the or discovered insulin or anything -- but I am the first person ever to do this, so allow me my hubris. When I left my home in Minamata City aboard a southbound train, I felt suitably bold with my backpack and muscular thumb. "I'm going to hitchhike the length of Japan," I told the man beside me. He smiled and nodded. "I'm going to follow the cherry blossoms." He nodded. "All the way to Russia," I said. He smiled again, and soon after changed seats.--from *Hitching Rides with Buddha*

About the Author
The author/co-author of 8 books of non-fiction and one novel, Will Ferguson is one of Canada's bestselling writers. *How to Be a Canadian*, co-authored with his brother Ian, spent over 80 weeks on the *Globe and Mail* bestseller list. His first novel, *Happiness*, won the 2002 Leacock Medal for Humour and the 2002 Canadian Authors Association Award for Fiction. *Beauty Tips from Moose Jaw* won the 2004 Leacock Medal for Humour. Will lives in Calgary.