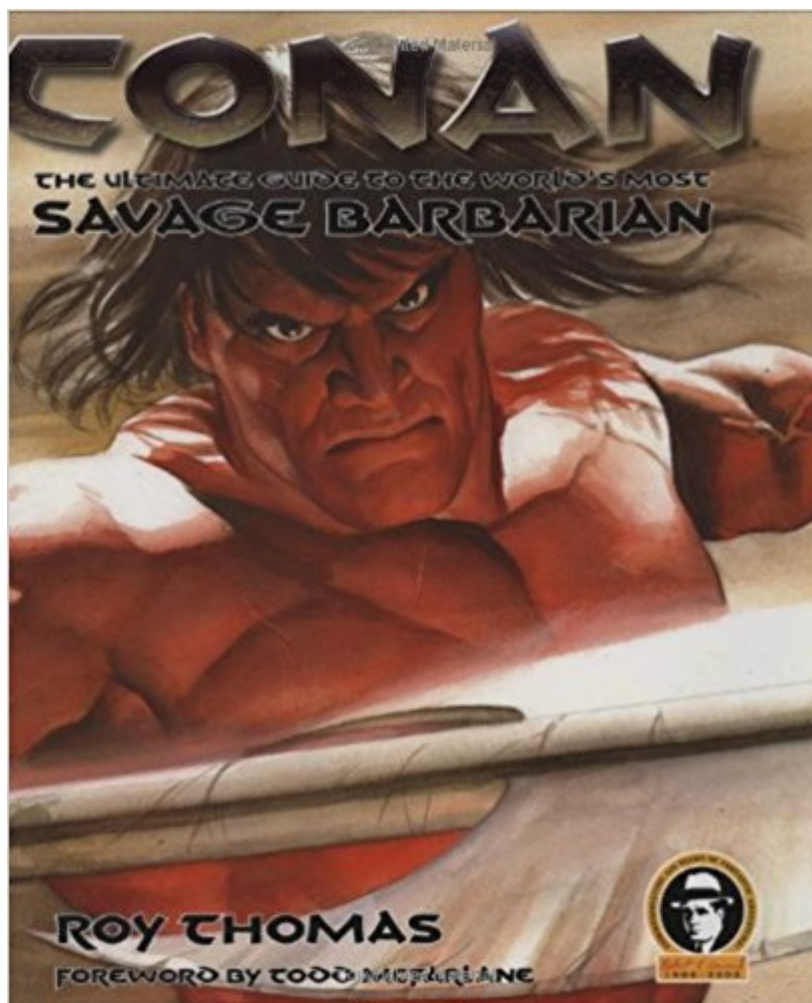


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# Conan: The Ultimate Guide To The World's Most Savage Barbarian



## Synopsis

For more than 70 years, fantasy fans have followed the exploits of Conan through novels, comic books, and movies. This book, the first-ever illustrated guide to Robert E. Howard's most beloved character, is a genuine treasure chest of Conan lore, following Conan through the ages, through his different careers, as he meets friends and foes and travels across the Hyborian continent. Includes a foreword by Todd McFarlane. Created in full cooperation with Conan Properties International, LLC. Features character profiles, maps, art from original paperbacks, comic books, video games, and more. "Conan of Cimmeria remains as vital today as he did when he first emerged from the pages of *Weird Tales* three quarters of a century ago to trample the jeweled crowns of earth under his sandaled feet. This gorgeous new volume, lavishly and beautifully illustrated, is a testament to his enduring popularity, a treasure for fans of Robert E. Howard, and a splendid introduction to the Hyborian Age for new readers. If you don't know Conan, you don't know fantasy." --GEORGE R.R. MARTIN, author of #1 New York Times bestseller *A Feast for Crows* "Robert E. Howard dreamed Conan the Cimmerian for himself, and set him free to roam the world of his own Hyborian soul; but first in his years at Marvel Comics and now with this encyclopedic culmination, Roy Thomas dreamed him for all of us, and made that world come vividly to life within our own." --MICHAEL CHABON, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* and *Wonder Boys* "No one has done more to popularize Robert E. Howard's Conan the Barbarian than Roy Thomas, whose thrilling stories and brilliant editing propelled the world's favorite barbarian to the list of Marvel Comics' best-sellers for more than a decade. And now Roy has brought his knowledge and skills to bear in this ultimate guide, a fan's dream come true." --STAN LEE, creator of *The Amazing Spider-Man* and *The Fantastic Four*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Written by none other than Roy Thomas of Marvel Comics fame, expect nothing less than an exciting tale, with art from some of the foremost Conan portrayers ever: Frank Frazetta, Mark Schultz, Gary Gianni, John Buscema, Cary Nord, and more.

For those who enjoy their Conan the Barbarian in lurid graphic-novel or vintage comic-book form, "Conan: The Ultimate Guide" is nearly as irresistible as an evening's visit to the royal seraglio of Khorshemish and as addictive as a sackful of black-lotus leaf. The emphasis here is on visual impact, employing illustrations largely from Marvel's run of Conan titles in the 1970s and 1980s as well as a series Dark Horse Comics began publishing shortly before this book's 2006 release. Maps showcasing various sections of the Hyborian world are also presented, according to the order in which Conan's life journey took him there. Roy Thomas, the original writer for Marvel's Conan, commentates on various periods in the life of history's most famous Cimmerian, from his birth to his mysterious end and many points between. The result is a pleasure for those like me who came to Conan via the comics and appreciate an effort to lend some order and context to what was always the catch-as-catch-can enterprise of telling the Conan story chronologically. Thomas breaks down Conan's life into distinct periods; for example when he was a thief, a freebooter, or a chieftain of marauding tribesmen; then details individual stories taken from each period. "In one sense, Conan was always a soldier of fortune, fighting for no cause but one he chose for himself," begins a chapter on Conan's period as a hired swordsman. "If even half the legends are reliable, Conan and his savage sword had some strange employers." The stories by Conan's creator, pulp-fiction artist Robert E. Howard, take pride of place in this collection. His stories are presented as canon, taken from the "Nemedian Chronicles" (a fictional document detailing Conan's Hyborian Age which Howard "quoted from" on occasion) and thus part of the official record. These canon stories get the most pages, and the most lavish illustrations, the eye-bulging kind featuring ferocious monsters menacing bare-bodied women as Conan muscles in at the fatal moment. Other tales presented here are described as being "legends," these being stories written by other hands, including Thomas himself. Thomas takes a good-humored poke or two at several of these secondary stories and their dubious nature. Of one, which I think he wrote himself, Thomas writes: "But some feel the scribe who recorded this cycle of legends was unduly influenced by the fumes of the black lotus when he

committed it to parchment."The main drawback for "Ultimate Guide" as I see it rests with this casual approach. Instead of telling you where a story comes from so you can hunt it down, Thomas presents everything in a vague and hazy way. He avoids committing as to what was true and what was not. Much of the Marvel Conan product published after Thomas's time there is not referenced at all; his way perhaps of suggesting they be disregarded. But odds and ends from that era do pop up, like the nasty pirate captain Bor'aqh Sharaq, leaving matters less clear than they should be. An authoritative appendix would have been sweet. Ultimately, the book's glory rests on its graphics, the fruit of many years' work by such illustrators as John Buscema, Barry Windsor-Smith, and Cary Nord; as well as the famous paperback covers by Frank Frazetta which predate comic-book Conan. Even the woman who illustrated Howard's stories when they first appeared in the pulps back in the 1930s, Margaret Brundage, is sampled. The result is a kind of highlight reel of Conan in action and at play which is a pleasure to thumb through and, for those who remember when the comics were new, recollect that first sense of excitement one had touching upon Conan's brutish-but-beautiful world. With the generously-colored maps as a bonus, the "Ultimate Guide" offers Conan lovers a book they can pore over for hours.

I've grown up loving Conan. It started with the comics when I was a kid. Then the movie came out (the good one with Arnold) and I remember getting my mom to take me to see it at least a couple of times. That which does not kill you, makes you stronger. This book tells the real story of Conan. I didn't even know half of the things that I know now about my childhood hero thanks to this book. It's very informative. It's also a really nice artbook! I will not go on and on about it too much because I believe that if you're a fan of Conan it's safe to say that you will like this book. That and you can read the other reviews that have already gone into great detail about it. I'll just give you a video.

A unique (literally) overview and guide to Robert E. Howard's Conan saga, which has kept my interest since my first reading at age thirteen, I am now seventy-seven. My other teen-age heroes were those created by Edgar Rice Burroughs (Tarzan, John Carter, etc.). Burroughs does not stand up to adult reading (mine at least). Burroughs is not appealing to an adult.

I really like this book. It's a perfect companion to the Wandering Star/Del Rey editions. If you're a fan, then you probably know all of the stories already. This book is really all about the art. Each and every page is chock full of beautiful artwork by Mark Schultz, Gary Gianni, Gregory Manches, John Buscema, and Barry Smith, among others. It even features artwork from perhaps the greatest

Conan artist of all, Frank Frazetta, although it does not feature his best painting, the one from "Conan the Adventurer". Additionally, I would have welcomed more Margaret Brundage artwork, and its completely missing art from Boris Valejo. While I think John Buscema was a gifted artist, he always had a tendency to draw Conan wearing a loincloth instead of the clothes that REH actually described him as wearing, which in most cases was completely implausible. Belit's outfit is ridiculous. REH had her nude from the waist up, and I understand that Marvel Comics couldn't possibly depict her that way, but a fur bathing suit??? It would have been nice to include at least one painting that actually depicts Belit exactly as Howard described her (other than the Shultz painting, which shows her completely nude)...but these are minor complaints. The primary focus is on the official REH Conan stories, although it does cover some pastiches as well. In these cases, Roy Thomas calls these "unconfirmed myths and legends". The book completely ignores the two Conan movies, and (thankfully) the horrendous TV series. Its been so long, I forgot what a gifted Conan writer that Roy Thomas was. In my opinion, his original stories (especially the Belit story arc) were consistently way better and more imaginative than anything L. Sprague de Camp or Robert Jordan were doing at the same time. This book is obviously a labor of love. If you're a REH or a Conan fan, then you MUST have this as part of your collection. Highly recommended!

big conan fan

First of all id like to say that the delivery of this product was on time and in perfect condition. Having that said, now about the book. I have been a Conan enthusiast and lover since i was a little boy when i first saw "Conan The Barbarian". Since then i have picked up numerous "new" conan stories written by numerous authors, every Conan DarkHorse comic up to date, and the McFarlane toys that were released. I must say that the new release paperbacks of Robert E. Howards original Conan stories are utterly amazing and should be read by all lovers of this fantastic Barbarian. As i was browsing through s book section i stumbled across this, encyclopedia if you will, and HAD to have it. As of now I cant put the book down. This book has everything ever mentioned in the books, comics and lore of Conan as well as pictures and descriptions of gods that have been talked about in his stories. If you want a serious inside look of the Age of Conan then you MUST pick up this book.

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