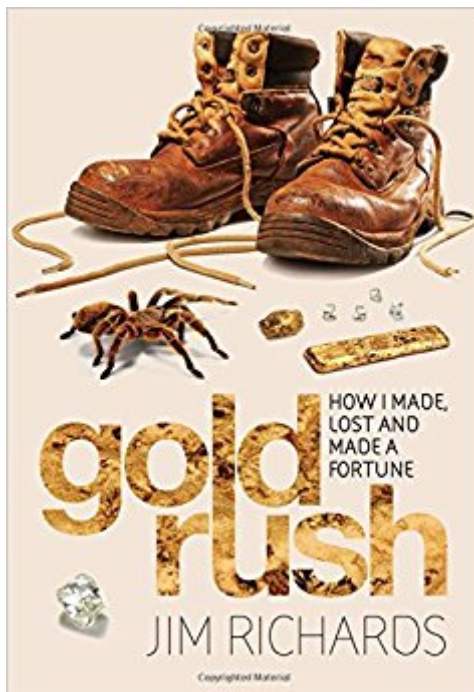


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Gold Rush



Synopsis

When Jim Richards left home to make his fortune in a gold rush, he had no language skills, no money and no real plan. But when he found diamond-filled pot holes in the remote rivers of Guyana, his problems really began. Chasing gold and diamond rushes around the world, Richards worked with local miners in some of the maddest, baddest and most dangerous places on earth. His dramatic journey ranges from the piranha-infested rivers of South America to the blazing deserts of Australia, from the world's biggest mining scam in Indonesia to the war-torn jungles of Laos. To find the gold, first Jim had to find himself. He learned to dig deep and discover the resilience and fortitude needed to overcome isolation, disease, equipment disasters and gun-toting criminals to come out on top. Gold Rush is a blood-and-guts treasure hunt, the ultimate adventure story from somebody with the authority and experience to dish out the dirt.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'This blood and guts treasure hunt of a memoir is a rollicking, funny read with shades of Wilbur Smith.' The Bookseller, UK
'A former soldier's odyssey in search of the precious metal is now a riveting old-fashioned adventure yarn.' Courier Mail, Brisbane
'Richards has prospected and mined in some of the maddest, most dangerous places on earth...' The West Australian
'His is a life lived - and nearly ended - ten times over...' The Daily Telegraph, UK
'Richards set off for South America with only the clothes he was wearing, his military severance pay and a sawn-off toothbrush (to save

weight). There he fumbled his way to gold and diamond riches before losing the lot, then stumbling upon his millions in WA. This is a Boy's Own read. Ineptitude, snakes and bent secret police are a staple... Sunday Territorian, NT

I wrote this book partly because I was tired of reading books about the mining industry written by journalists, that weren't funny. This is a first hand account of what it feels like when you put everything on the line to chase gold and diamond rushes around the world. Lots of tips and tricks from grass roots prospecting to corporate greed and boardroom intrigue, with all of the nightmare people you meet along the way.

This is the autobiography of one geologist - Welshman Jim Richards - lifelong quest to pursue a dream: to make money doing something one loves to do; in this case, primarily prospecting for gold and diamonds at various places throughout the world as an exploration geologist. There are also some short stints in oil and iron ore, the latter in which he eventually strikes it rich, finding a rich iron ore deposit in the back of the Australian desert right in the middle of the peak of Australia's mining boom in the first decade of the 2000's. As is often the case in the mining industry, being in the right place at the right time is when most fortunes are made. The story starts studying geology at university in the UK (where he states not one person in his final year got a job in the resources industry after graduating), followed by a brief period in the army, before his real quest starts - much to his friends' disbelief and dismay - digging for diamonds in remote river beds in Guatemala, followed by more diamond and gold prospecting in Guyana, then Western Australia (gold), Pakistan (oil), Laos (gold), Indonesia (gold), and then back to Western Australia again (gold, diamonds, and finally, iron ore). It is a thoroughly entertaining story which captures the essential nature of the mineral exploration profession, with its adventure, boom and bust employment and financial cycles (he lost a good deal of money himself in gold stocks when a major gold scandal hit the Indonesian mining industry in the 1990s, with which the recent film 'Gold' is based), difficulties with isolation and personal relationships, occasional issues regarding corruption - particularly in the developing world, and the rare rich strike. As a fellow geologist who has also worked in several countries in gold exploration, I can relate to much of the story. From jungle snakes, scorpions, and malarial mosquitoes; harsh remote deserts, to scam artists and difficult officials and governments, it's a good yarn which captures the basic nature of the profession. The life of a mineral exploration geologist can be very hard, but the rewards can also be there. Some interesting

stories include finding diamonds in potholes in a remote riverbed in Guyana, panning gold in remote mountain streams in Laos and triggering a local rush, cutting and pasting another company's prospectus to obtain funding- simply because he didn't know how or what else to do to get a company off the ground in Australia, and finding a very rich gold vein only 80 yards from an exploration office in the back of Western Australia. It is perhaps revealing that the corporate world of Sydney and iron ore is where he ultimately makes the big money (selling an iron ore deposit to BHP), as many geologists struggle just to make ends meet in the field. That is, the real money is often far from the remote jungles and deserts, in air conditioned offices and with people who often have never seen a gold pan or a diamond-bearing pothole, provided you can adjust to the corporate culture and system, where a bit of luck and inside knowledge doesn't go astray either. A good read and a true story, the kind of which doesn't get much 'air time' in the modern world of urban lifestyles, environmental emphasis and modern social media, but nevertheless the kind of rags-to-riches story that has been going on for thousands of years, and in all likelihood will continue for thousands more.

A captivating read, Gold Rush is a thrilling account of Richards' personal quest for gold and diamonds. Courage and dogged will-power lead Richards on his many risky ventures across several continents and decades. Fascinating historical anecdotes of gold and diamond rushes of previous centuries are interwoven with tales of the colourful peoples Richards encounters. Undaunted by overwhelming odds Richards is always ready for the next turn of fortune. Dreams and action, success and failure, but most of all perseverance, are all themes that pulse throughout this book. Richards is also not afraid to address the moral and environmental issues that are involved with mankind's love affair with the treasures of the earth. The purity of native gold and the secretive gleam of diamonds lure Richards, and now his readers, on this riveting journey. Jordan Maendel Science Teacher Kent UK

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Loved it, it's good in many ways, as a fascinating tale of hunting for gold and diamonds, a well told biography of the authors life, a history of gold rushes, and a travel guide to off the track places around the world. An unusual, well written book.

This is a great read for those people that dream of hard work leading to success. An exciting true account of success, setbacks, failure, hard work, persistence and some luck. Everyone dreams of elevating themselves from their current situation and no way does it better than the rags to riches of mining.

Great memoir of how chasing your dreams and what really interests you can pay off. Jim writes with a great storytelling style that grabs hold and keeps you on board until the end. Highly recommended read.

A very captivating read. It captured my interest and was so good I couldn't put it down. Really recommend worth every penny.

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