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# Paw Prints In Oman: Dogs, Mogs And Me



## Synopsis

**\*\*New York Times bestseller\*\*** When Charlotte's husband is offered a job in Oman, he persuades her to leave comfortable, rural England and join him. But playing tennis, avoiding coffee mornings and being a perfect wife and mother in the Middle East is not enough. Charlotte convinces a local veterinary clinic to employ her and throws herself into assisting the vets, overcoming her fear of birds and rehoming hundreds of stray cats and dogs. Cyclones, earthquakes, transvestites, unwanted paramours, cultural differences, tears and laughter follow as seven years flash by. Will Charlotte stay, or gather up the motley crew of pets she has collected and head for home?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This delightful and well-written memoir tells the story of a woman, English born and bred, never straying very far from her home village, who found herself suddenly uprooted and transported to the Sultanate of Oman. When Charlotte Smith agreed to follow her husband in the wake of a new job,

she knew that she and her family would encounter a world radically different from the one they had always known, but she was not quite prepared for how different it would be. She did, however, know that it was a Muslim country, and that did concern her greatly, though not for reasons of religion or ideology. No, her concerns were much more practical--where was she going to buy wine, and, perhaps more importantly, as an animal lover, how was she possibly going to survive without pets? After all, the Quran requires all strict Muslims to abstain from alcohol and to revile dogs as unclean creatures. Fortunately, when she arrives in Oman she discovers the Sultanate to be much more progressive than its backwards neighbors. Sure, homosexuality is still illegal (3 years in the pokey if you are not discreet, but better than death) and don't go around dissing either the Prophet or the Sultan, but it is possible to get a permit to buy booze and no one minds if you responsibly keep a pet. After Smith receives her liquor-purchase permit from the government, she discovers that liquor stores in Muscat (the capital) are very much like sex shops used to be--windows shuttered against prying eyes and doors tightly closed, but inside containing a wonderland of adult pleasure. As for dogs and cats (mogs or moggy), she ends up not only owning wonderful companions, but actually working in a Muscat veterinarian's office and running a pet adoption service for strays and abandoned animals. Once Smith moves beyond the confines of her own family and the problems of running a household in a foreign land and enters the world of dogs and mogs, we are presented with some of the most heart-warming, and heart-breaking, stories you'll ever read about our animal friends. At one point in the memoir, the veterinarian in charge declares angrily: "I love animals, it's people I can't stand!" It's something that I (along with Mark Twain and James Thurber) have known for a long time, but, through Smith's clear and impassioned writing, you, too, might find yourself drifting to that point of view. Smith's memoir begins in the early 21st Century and concludes in the middle of 2013, a period of great change and turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa. Since some of the political and economic events do affect the lives of her family, they are referenced now and then, but only tangentially. She rightly keeps her focus on the small picture, the lives of her friends and family, and, especially, the dogs and mogs she meets and is sometimes able to help. This book will appeal to those who enjoy biographies, memoirs or accounts of travel in foreign lands. But I think the real appeal will be for dog and cat fanciers, especially those who think that any effort made to make the lives of dogs and cats better is never a wasted effort.

Some times you come across a book that just makes you take pause and think, "Could I have done this?" "Paw Prints in Oman: Dogs, Mogs and Me" is a book that did that for me. Like Charlotte, I am a huge animal lover... only I can't personally handle when they are hurt or dying. It just rips my guts

to shreds. This is why I have so much respect for those able to pull up everything inside of them and help. Brought both smiles and tears to me, but I enjoyed it from start to finish. Charlotte you truly inspire me. Great book.

While this book certainly was a travelogue for Oman and the middle east, I wouldn't call it much of an animal story. Yes, she does work in a vets office, and has some rescues of her own, but it seemed largely about the culture and her friendships. Perhaps I should have read more reviews and I would have known this. Not the authors fault. I just saw the dog on the cover and figured it was a dog book. She does a very good job in describing the locale and peoples of Oman. However 2 things I could have done without; one the language of her friend in the clinic (if you don't like the f word you may want to skip past anything this lady says) and two her constant references to drinking. Wow, they drink a lot over there! Overall an engaging story, keeping in mind it happened 10 yrs ago. I imagine the culture has changed a good deal since then.

Eventually entertaining, but I did feel it took way too long to get to the animals. I was impressed with the caring people at her clinic and how hard they all worked and how dedicated they were to finding good homes for the animals there. Oman does seem to be a difficult place to live, but Mrs. Smith seemed to enjoy her life there so much I was surprised when she seemed anxious to leave. Yes, this is a story of a very privileged family, but it's a hard working family and who can resent a woman who gives so much of her self and her time to innocent animals who need her? I am looking forward to the next book that takes place in Spain. It doesn't seem to be available yet.

As an animal lover of rescued pets, I enjoyed the international view of issue. Seeing the British view and terminology in itself was enlightening, and seeing the diverse practices in Oman and its multicultural population in regard to the treatment of pets and strays touched me. Thank you, Mrs. Smith for your work with animals and sharing your experiences. Any animal lover will benefit from this well written memoir.

I enjoyed reading Paw Prints in Oman. It is a book to read when you don't want to have to think too much. The author did a good job of writing and telling her story. I would recommend Paw Prints in Oman to readers who like: a memoir, stories about animals and living in Oman.

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