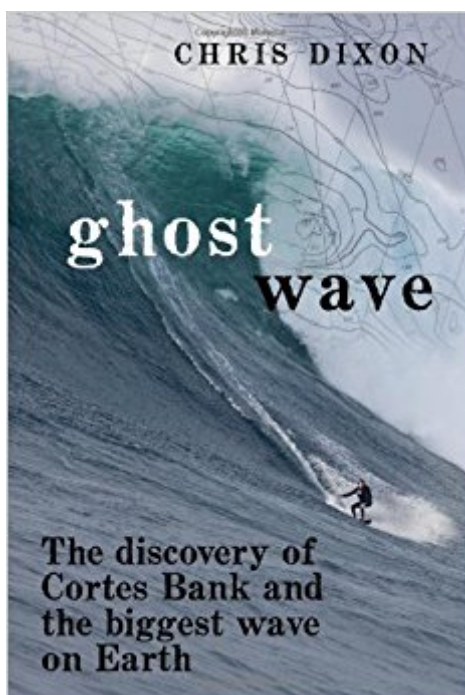


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Ghost Wave: The Discovery Of Cortes Bank And The Biggest Wave On Earth



Synopsis

Rising from the depths of the North Pacific lies a fabled island, now submerged just 15 feet below the surface of the ocean. Rumors and warnings about Cortes Bank abound, but among big wave surfers, this legendary rock is famous for one simple (and massive) reason: this is the home of the biggest rideable wave on the face of the earth. In this dramatic work of narrative non-fiction, journalist Chris Dixon unlocks the secrets of Cortes Bank and pulls readers into the harrowing world of big wave surfing and high seas adventure above the most enigmatic and dangerous rock in the sea. The true story of this Everest of the sea will thrill anyone with an abiding curiosity of and respect for mother ocean.

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Customer Reviews

1. "Ghost Wave takes us to a place of almost mythic power and tells a story that unfolds like a long ride on a killer wave. I can't imagine doing what those surfers are doing out there on Cortes-and I can't imagine a finer book about them. This is a beautifully researched and compellingly written book. I read it straight through from the first page. Terrifying."- Sebastian Junger, author of The Perfect Storm 2. "A terrific, deeply researched tale about a truly wild place. You couldn't make up Cortes Bank, or the characters who've tried to make it theirs. Chris Dixon takes us out there. He gets us amongst it."--William Finnegan, author of Barbarian Days: A Surfing Life. 3. "Ghost Wave is a first-rate account of an amazing phenomenon and the people who tried to conquer and exploit it. A great read."-Winston Groom, author of Forrest Gump 4. "After reading Chris' most excellent account of the monstrous waves of the mysterious Cortes Bank-the Bermuda Triangle of the Pacific-I never

thought I would ever consider riding a wave like this. But after surviving a five foot, head first fall from the stage earlier this year, I think I might be ready."-Jimmy Buffett 5. Mystery-shrouded, invisible from shore, riddled with hazards real and imagined, the Cortes Bank is a sort of Rubicon. Only a handful of surfers have crossed to the other side. In *Ghost Wave*, Chris Dixon traces the Bank's maritime history, the fanciful civilization of Abalonia, and absolute madmen who chase shifting peaks in the open ocean. " - Scott Hulet, Editor, *The Surfer's Journal* 6. "...fascinating and expertly researched...the heart of the book is surfing, told in a manner satisfying to both hard-core practitioners and curious outsiders." -Bruce Jenkins, *The San Francisco Chronicle* 7. "You approach *Ghost Wave* expecting a story about a wave. What you leave with is a new, perhaps previously unknown fascination with indigenous peoples, and natural sciences, addiction psychology and crackpot entrepreneurialism.all presented with a positively Melvillean wrath to emphatically measure the true Everest of the Pacific against all other bathymetric monsters." - *Surfline.com* 8. "Journalist Dixon, founding editor of *Surfermag.com*, has written an engaging, multifaceted story of an obscure locale off the California coast that draws the most daring big-wave surfers in the world...his insider knowledge brings the allure and danger of this turbulent locale to life." - *Publisher's Weekly* 9. "This is an outstanding and riveting work that is not to be missed, and easily one of if not the best book of its kind." -*Eastern Surf* 10. "excellent...an expansive history of a submerged island 100 miles off the southern coast of California, as well as an in-depth study of big wave surfing and some of its most extreme practitioners." -*Charleston City paper* 11. "It's hard to say which is more interesting here, the stories of the surfers, explorers, divers, and sailors drawn to Cortes Bank or the history of the bank itself. Either way, terrific reading." - *Booklist* 12. "If you are looking for a great read that tells a story of utter devotion to the ocean, its mysteries, and its dangers, then *Ghost Wave*...is definitely the book for you... This is definitely a book for anyone wanting to get a grasp on the unpredictable oceans and see into the terrifying yet exhilarating lives of big wave surfers." -*PlanetSave* 13. "4 out of 5 stars" - *The Waterman's Library* 14. "*Ghost Wave* is an information-packed homage to those who dare to try." - *American Way magazine*

Chris Dixon's work has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *New York Times Magazine*, *Outside*, *Men's Journal*, *Surfer*, and *Surfer's Journal*. He lives in Charleston, South Carolina.

I just finished reading *Ghost wave* and I must tell you that I am disappointed.that it's FINISHED. What the hell am I to do now? I certainly don't expect a *Ghost Wave 2* in 3D. I was absolutely

riveted and this is the only time I was content when the doctor or dentist was late for my appointment. I carried that book everywhere and in the mornings often almost spooned mouthfuls of cereal into my ear. I shed tears in front of my family when I read out loud of Pete Davi's tragic and last paddled into shore. We cracked up from the ranting of Long and Twiggs as they bobbed among 60 to 70 ft waves, "I say this is my ski and you can get #\$\$#@. I paused literally spooked to turn the page as you gave a spectacular account of the January 4th Cortez session. My eyes were wide open from Captain Mac Rae's maritime journeys to page 242. You brought me close to the awesomeness Mr. Dixon. The Awesomeness of nature's deep power and the power of Eömen. I won't say you should be proud because I know you are. and you should be. THANK YOU CHRIS DIXON for the wonderful work of creative insight. PS. If you ever write about K2 or Everest or anything else that is watery I WILL READ IT.

History, Science, Psychology, and Sport; Chris Dixon's obsession to document the story of the world's biggest waves and the men compelled to surf them is clearly detailed on every remarkable page of this well researched book. One of the things this author does better than most is to explore the reasons why these athletes are driven to chase what most of us would consider to be completely incomprehensible risk. Dixon's obvious access and established trust with these modern day Ahab's helps reveal the complexity of their motivations that cannot easily be dismissed as simply adrenaline fueled insanity. Chris gets beyond the superficial bravado typically expressed by extreme athletes and shares the genuine fear and concerns created by their passion.

I was brought to this book as a surfer but it weaves a tale that is very interesting to non-surfers as well. I knew about the Bank from the exploits of Snips, Gerr, Greg Long and others but the nation of Abalonia and the sinking of the Jalisco was new to me. Dixon is a great writer, he is a surfer who can speak the language while being able to convey the same to nonsurfers

My first real exposure to Cortes Bank came courtesy of Dana Brown's movie, Step Into Liquid, showing Mike Parsons endlessly dropping into a ridiculously large wave. I had heard of the Bank before that, but nothing really captured the dynamic nature of the place like that clip. Over the past decade, there have been articles here and there about the Bank and that session in particular, but it's Chris Dixon's new book, Ghost Wave, that really pulls the wave and its history into clear relief.

Dixon's book is a well-written, engaging history of the Bank from its possible early Native American "discovery", to its role in the sinking of ships, and on through to its performance in some of the most exciting water theater around. Readers not interested in some of the book's drier history would do well to at least pick up the book at the point where, in 1965, a couple of audacious, and slightly nutty, entrepreneurs attempt to scuttle a boat and establish a new nation named Abalonia on top of the Bank. Moving past that bit of hilarity, Dixon begins chronicling the Bank's recent surfing history, and the book's pace and intensity accelerate. In particular, Dixon does a great job delving into the psyche and motivation of the surfers who ride the Bank. In fact, unlike in Susan Casey's book *The Wave* where the surfers are described ad nauseum as fearless, almost godlike, hellmen, Dixon's approach is much more honest, portraying the surfers` in stark HD, capturing their glory along with all their warts....and there are plenty of warts to go around. Whereas I couldn't see Casey's book appealing to surfers or scientists, I can say with a high degree of confidence that Dixon's fine book is one that all surfers will enjoy. More reviews at [The Waterman's Library](#).

All my life I've been a student of surf culture and related topics. I've picked up every book I could find on the topic and made a few piss poor attempts at mastering the longboard, (Think bear on a bike in the circus) needless to say, there's a reason why I'm landlocked in West Virginia. Big Wave surfing has always been a interest of mine and up until a few years ago, printed subject matter was a bit hard to come by. *Ghost Wave* by Chris Dixon is without a doubt, the best big wave book I've read yet. It captured me on three levels, surfing, the science of rogue waves and it was character written so well, I felt as though I was there with everyone mentioned in the book. *Ghost Wave* would make an incredible documentary film or even an action film based on these events. This book will stay in your personal library. You will want to re-read it over and over. You may, as I did, research the events and people in the book to entertain and educate yourself on the topic of Big Waves. I look forward to Chris Dixon's next book whatever it maybe, I'll buy it. The guy can write!! I hope you enjoy *Ghost Wave* as much as I have. Money well spent and reading time enriched. Beau Smith
The Flying Fist Ranch

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