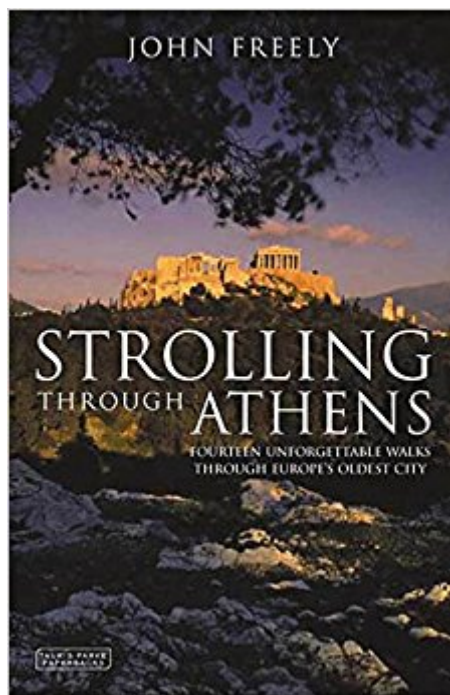




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Strolling Through Athens: Fourteen Unforgettable Walks Through Europe's Oldest City (Tauris Parke Paperbacks)



Synopsis

Athens, city of the gods, birthplace of modern democracy, artistic and cultural center of the ancient world, is steeped in myth and legend. Now, in this newly reissued book publishing just in time for the 2004 Olympics being held in Athens, travel writer John Freely guides readers on a series of walks to the city's most vibrant and historic areas, from the magnificent Parthenon, center of Athens for four thousand years, to the winding streets of Plaka, the crumbling ruins of the Agora and the color and bustle of Monastiraki. We are led to the theatre of Dionysus, scene of the tragic plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles and to the spot where Phidippides ended his legendary run from Marathon. Vivid descriptions of Athens' most famous monuments and archeological sites are interwoven with mythology and anecdote; secret gems are discovered and the past resurrected with every step. This guide, more than any other available, reveals how the heart of ancient Athens still beats beneath the living, modern city.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Books of the Week", Sunday Times: "magnificent walking guide to the city...His knowledge is encyclopaedic... he brings the millenniums of history alive... If you want a cultural guide to the ancient city, this is the one for you." Times Literary Supplement: "...Freely compels us to sense the sacred antiquity of the ground beneath...there is something in Freely's style that is peculiarly reminiscent, and perhaps deliberately so, of antiquity's most renowned travel writer, Pausanias..." Anglo-Hellenic Review: "packed with useful information, well supported by quotations and

references."

John Freely (1926 - 2017) was born in New York and joined the US Navy at the age of seventeen, serving during the last two years of World War II. He had a PhD in physics from New York University and did post-doctoral studies in the history of science at Oxford. He was for many years professor of physics at Bosphorus University in Istanbul, where he taught physics and the history of science. He wrote more than forty books, including *Light from the East: How the Science of Medieval Islam Helped Shape the Western World* (I.B.Tauris, 2010), *The Grand Turk*, *Storm on Horseback*, *Children of Achilles*, *The Cyclades*, *The Ionian Islands* (all I.B.Tauris), *Crete*, *The Western Shores of Turkey*, *Strolling through Athens*, *Strolling through Venice* and the bestselling *Strolling through Istanbul* (all Tauris Parke Paperbacks).

A bit dated, but still one of the best guide books for visit in Athens. If you are looking for more detail than is to be found in standard guide books from Lonely Planet, Rough Guides etc. I used it together with Hans Rupprecht Goette's *Athens, Attika and Megarid* and spent really interesting two weeks exploring the capital of Greece.

This is a lovely book and such a refreshing change. Aimed not at the sightseer, but at those who have a bit more time, who want to stroll (the title is aptly chosen) through the city and to understand what they see. The walks are well-described with useful maps, but the prescription is to explore, discover, appreciate and enjoy. The text is enriched with historical explanations, and the quotations from Pausanias, Herodotus and others are well-chosen. Indeed rather like Pausanias, the author leaves most minor practicalities to the reader's initiative. A first-time visitor would perhaps be better served by a more conventional guide, but for anyone who enjoys Athens and who knows that there is always much more to learn, this is an ideal companion for any return visit.

I am planning a trip to Athens next spring. I love to walk. What could be better than a book of 14 walks through Athens? Not this book. The few maps that are included are of poor quality and hard to read. There is no correlation between the maps and the text portion of the book. There is no information on how to get around modern Athens. This book would be perfect for an armchair traveler. This book would not be helpful for someone who expected to use this book as a reference while actually strolling through Athens.

a unique guide to athens for those with an especial love of architecture - in the same vein as his 'strolling through istanbul'...erudite and well done.

I had a wonderful time with this book when I spent a week in Athens. Yes, it's light on opening hours and "turn right at the lamp post" directions, but it is loaded with amusing anecdotal material, ancient and modern. Reading about the American-born countess whose will called for the daily delivery of roses to her grave by a handsome shepherd was actually more fun than visiting her former palace (now the Byzantine Museum). The history and background is thorough and useful, especially if one's experience of Athens has generally been, "See the Acropolis, eat in the Plaka, get out of town." Lots of good weird stories about little girls who went down into a cave and wove garments for Athena; what happened to the pigs during the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries; why women who want to get pregnant still slide down the rocks above the Cave of Pan. The book gave me the impetus to wander further than I had before in Athens, and I really enjoyed it.

This book may have some use for some history anorak, but if you are looking for a book that guides you through fourteen walks in Athens then look elsewhere. There are few, microscopic, maps, and most of the rambling prose that goes on for pages on end is not relevant to the walk itself, but historical digressions and anecdotes. The author didn't think it useful to put summary sections at the beginning of each walk specifying how to get there by public transport, how long the walk is, how long it takes, difficulty, accessibility, nothing. The book has no structure to speak of except for the chapters, so do not think for a minute to skim-read it *as* you are taking the walk, unless your goal is to read a book and not walking.

Great alternative to a generic travel guide; rich with literary references, both ancient and recent. The walks were nice. Didn't do them all, but sometimes would sit down on a nice perch and read about the interesting tidbits whether we visited the the next street over or not.

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