



J. Maarten Troost: Bio

J. Maarten Troost was born in Groningen, the Netherlands. He is of mixed Dutch-Czech descent and began traveling as a small child, spending many a summer in Prague during the height of the Cold War. His mother, the author would like it to be known, was formerly a Young Pioneer and the winner of multiple grenade-throwing competitions. Today, she is a Republican.

At the age of five, the author moved to Toronto, Canada, which is why even now he talks a little funny. According to him, he became an awesome hockey player though this could not be independently verified. He spent his winters cultivating maple trees, trapping beavers, and building igloos. In the summers, he traveled to Holland where he ate cheese, rode bicycles, fixed dykes, and wore wooden shoes, which would lead to bunion problems later in life.

He moved to the United States at the age of fourteen, settling in the Washington D.C. area. He attended high school but has no recollection of those years. When he was released, he hopped on a Greyhound bus and made his way to Cape Cod, where he found work selling hot dogs on the beach in Provincetown. To parents of seventeen-year old boys, he does not recommend allowing this.

Troost enrolled at Boston University, where he studied International Relations, and because he is a deeply practical person, Philosophy. He obtained valuable work experience in the food services industry, eventually rising to the Monday lunch shift, and in the ferociously competitive field of house-painting, where he suffered a near career-ender when he accidentally painted a client's Dalmatian green.

In 1992, the author moved to Prague and became a correspondent for The Prague Post. He has now become one of those insufferable Gen-Xers who make people's eyes glaze over whenever he speaks of Prague in the Nineties. He traveled widely, spending time in Russia, which he described as "cold," and the Balkans, in particular war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina, an experience he referred to as "scary," demonstrating his flare for evocative description.

He returned to the United States in 1994 and attended graduate school at George Washington University. Believing that the internet was just a passing fad, he obtained a Master's Degree in International Relations, having concluded that what was really important was a certain expertise in the decline and fall of the Ottoman Empire. He put his degree to work and began an exciting career as an office temp.

One day, while the author was extremely busy rearranging paper clips according to size, color, and function, his girlfriend called and asked whether he'd be inclined to move to a small atoll in the equatorial Pacific. The author spent a very long three seconds gazing upward at the soft, clinical glare of fluorescent lights, and decided that, yes, come to think of it, he would prefer to live on a tropical isle in the South Seas. The two years that he spent living in the remote islands of Kiribati became the subject matter of *The Sex Lives of Cannibals*, which Publishers Weekly called "a comic masterwork of travel

writing.” The book has been optioned by Hollywood approximately 106 times and is now available as a high school musical. Interested parties should contact his agent.

Upon his return to Washington D.C., the author was hired as a consultant to the World Bank, where he specialized in infrastructure finance. The author has no explanation for this and attributes it to a terrible misunderstanding. He would like to extend his apologies to the good people of Lesotho. He was just kind of making things up as he went along.

Troost returned to the South Pacific in 2000, settling in Vanuatu and subsequently, Fiji. After the Lesotho debacle, he decided to devote himself fulltime to writing. He used his experiences in Melanesia to write *Getting Stoned with Savages*, which John in Arizona called “pretty good.”

The author eventually settled in California, spending a couple of years in Sacramento before moving to Monterey. He decided to use his quasi-expertise in the world’s smallest nations by turning his attention to... China. After all, how hard could it be? He spent months traveling the roads and rails of China and developed a fondness for spicy donkey intestines and live squid. He has since made a substantial contribution to PETA. The book that came out of his experiences was called *Lost on Planet China*, which was an Amazon Best of the Month book. It too is available as a high school musical.

Shockingly, the author of *Getting Stoned with Savages* eventually developed a substance abuse problem, which required a stay in rehab. While institutionalized, Troost led Team Wet Brain (the alcoholics) to glorious triumph over Team Pin Cushion (the heroin addicts) in an epic multi-day Ping-Pong

tournament. Once he sobered up, Troost immersed himself in the world of Robert Louis Stevenson. He decided to follow Stevenson's journey through the South Seas, a trip that took him to the Marquesas, the Tuamotus, Tahiti, Samoa, and back to his erstwhile home, Kiribati. You can read about his latest (mis)adventures in *Headhunters on My Doorstep*. When asked about his feelings upon completing his South Pacific trilogy, Troost is reputed to have said: "Now I feel like a real man."

The author currently lives with his wife and two sons in the Washington D.C. area. He would like to relocate and invites readers' suggestions for good places to move to.