



My Invented Country: A Memoir

By Isabel Allende

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Isabel Allende evokes the magnificent landscapes of her country; a charming, idiosyncratic Chilean people with a violent history and an indomitable spirit; and the politics, religion, myth, and magic of her homeland that she carries with her even today.

The book circles around two life-changing moments. The assassination of her uncle Salvador Allende Gossens on September 11, 1973, sent her into exile and transformed her into a literary writer. And the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, on her adopted homeland, the United States, brought forth an overdue acknowledgment that Allende had indeed left home. *My Invented Country*, mimicking the workings of memory itself, ranges back and forth across that distance between past and present lives. It speaks compellingly to immigrants and to all of us who try to retain a coherent inner life in a world full of contradictions.

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My Invented Country: A Memoir By Isabel Allende Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #664957 in Books
- Published on: 2004-04-27
- Released on: 2004-04-27
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .56" w x 5.31" l, .59 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 199 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

"Nostalgia is my vice," admits Isabel Allende in *My Invented Country*. A question about nostalgia propels an exploration of her past, including the complicated history and politics of Chile, where she spent the better part of her childhood. Despite her strong connection to Chile, Allende says she has "been an outsider nearly all my life." Her stepfather was a diplomat, so her family moved quite frequently. In her travel diary, Allende compares everything to Chile, her "one eternal reference" point.

"From saying goodbye so often my roots have dried up," she notes. She successfully reclaims them, however, through two channels. Allende relays anecdotes about what she calls her untraditional family--whom she has based some of her novels upon, including *The House of the Spirits*. Like a few of her novels, though, her own story is lost in heavy policy analysis. Interspersed among her ancestors' tales is an all-too-exhaustive report of Chile: the terrain, its people, customs, language, its heroes and villains, and the government.

Allende fled Chile after the military coup on September 11, 1973. Twenty-eight years later, and now living in the United States, this date haunts her when terrorists attack New York City and Washington, D.C. Allende admits that the place she is homesick for may have never existed. In spite of that, Allende asserts that she can live and write anywhere: "I don't belong to one land, but to several, or perhaps only to the ambit of the fiction I write." The irony is that she steadfastly has "one foot in Chile and another here." --*C.J. Carrillo*

From Publishers Weekly

Allende's novels--*The House of the Spirits*; *Eva Luna*; *Daughter of Fortune*; etc.--are of the sweeping epic variety, often historical and romantic, weaving in elements of North and South American culture. As with most fiction writers, Allende's work is inspired by personal experiences, and in this memoir-cum-study of her "home ground," the author delves into the history, social mores and idiosyncrasies of Chile, where she was raised, showing, in the process, how that land has served as her muse. Allende was born in Peru in 1942, but spent much of her childhood--and a significant portion of her adulthood--in Santiago (she now lives in California). She ruminates on Chilean women (their "attraction lies in a blend of strength and flirtatiousness that few men can resist"); the country's class system ("our society is like a phyllo pastry, a thousand layers, each person in his place"); and Chile's turbulent history ("the political pendulum has swung from one extreme to another; we have tested every system of government that exists, and we have suffered the consequences"). She readily admits her view is subjective--to be sure, she is not the average Chilean (her stepfather was a diplomat; her uncle, Salvador Allende, was Chile's president from 1970 until his assassination in 1973). And at times, her assessments transcend Chile, especially when it comes to comments on memory and nostalgia. This is a reflective book, lacking the pull of Allende's fiction but unearthing intriguing elements of the author's captivating history.

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From [Booklist](#)

Allende was inspired to write this glimmering and audacious memoir of her life as a traveler, exile, and immigrant by an eerie overlaying of dates. She lost a country, she writes, on Tuesday, September 11, 1973, when a military coup brought down Chile's democratic government, then headed by Salvador Allende, a

cousin of her father's. And she gained a country on Tuesday, September 11, 2001, when the terrorist attacks induced her to recognize her deep allegiance to the U.S., her adopted land. Drawing on the profoundly fluent storytelling skills and canniness that make her fiction so scintillating and her memoirs so powerful, Allende retraces her circuitous path from Santiago circa 1940 to today's San Francisco, remembering her family and critiquing her country with equal measures of nostalgia and pain, fury and humor. She observes curtly that in her eccentric family "happiness was irrelevant," but she saves her sharpest remarks for her dissection of the Chilean sensibility, zestfully analyzing Chile's obsession with class, all-out machismo, habitual hypocrisy, intolerance, conservatism, clannishness, and gloominess. She claims that Chileans love bureaucracy, "states of emergency," funerals, and soap operas, and that, in the Chile of her youth, "intellectual scorn for women was absolute." Allende's conjuring of her "invented," or imaginatively remembered, country is riveting in its frankness and compassion, and her account of why and how she became a writer is profoundly moving.

Donna Seaman

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Users Review

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Do you one among people who can't read gratifying if the sentence chained inside the straightway, hold on guys this kind of aren't like that. This *My Invented Country: A Memoir* book is readable by simply you who hate the perfect word style. You will find the details here are arrange for enjoyable reading experience without leaving even decrease the knowledge that want to supply to you. The writer involving *My Invented Country: A Memoir* content conveys the idea easily to understand by many individuals. The printed and e-book are not different in the information but it just different by means of it. So , do you nevertheless thinking *My Invented Country: A Memoir* is not loveable to be your top record reading book?

Jason Faria:

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