

**ALDER**

*Cortez*

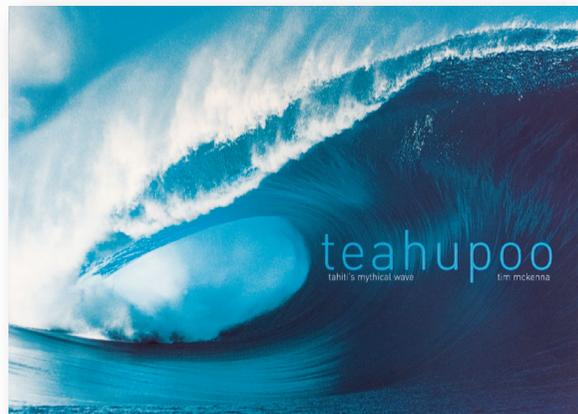


**Cortez**

**READING**

P062

THE LATEST BOOKS REVIEWED BY KAT DAWES



**TEAHUPOO**  
TAHITI'S MYTHICAL WAVE

by Tim McKenna and Guillaume Dufau

Photographer Tim McKenna has lived in Tahiti for best part of a decade and he's captured Teahupoo - the world's most photogenic wave - from every possible angle: front on, side on, from below, from above, from behind and from inside. This book is a collection of the best of those shots, and seen together they are simply incredible.

Like the wave itself, the book is thick and heavy. It's not something to prop up and have a little read of in bed; it demands your full attention.

The pictures showcase the relentless perfection of this machine of a wave. The colours are blue, blue and more blue with a touch of white foam - everything else is swallowed by the power and dominance of the water breaking on this awesome reef.

Teahupoo has had huge amounts of coverage in the world's surfing press, but the book shows it from every angle, and in every one of its many moods, something that's never been done before. You see everything from underwater shots and helicopter views to panoramas of the local mountains, the floating village of boats in the channel during the Billabong Pro, and the memorial ceremony for local hero Malik Joyeux.

All the major events are here, from the history of the reef to its first surfers, the publicity that followed, the first competition held, and all the landmark sessions. It includes all the waves and riders who have made history here, like Laird Hamilton, Manoa Drollet, Malik Joyeux, Slater, Irons and Dorian.

"It was a very short ride but I had to dig deep into my physical and emotional resources," says Laird, talking about the epic 'Millennium Wave' he rode in 2000. "I was on a knife-edge, at the limit of my capacities. Every time that I speak about that wave or see the film or the photos, my veins fill with energy and my pulse beats more strongly. It took me two weeks to get over it. Perhaps I will never get over it completely."

The book also teaches you a bit of Tahitian culture via an exposition of the origins

of the reef's name and vignettes of the important Tahitian surfers, including Vetea 'Poto' David and Raimana Van Bastolaer. The essays are short and to the point, and

as such leave the focus on the silent pictures, each one worth much, much more than a thousand words.

I only have one tiny gripe, and that's about the captions, which could be likened to little fish darting about the reef, hidden by the explosions of whitewater above them...in other words, too many of them are maddeningly small and faint.

Overall though, this book is a truly magnificent tribute to a truly magnificent wave. If you've got a birthday coming up, start dropping heavy hints now!

-KD



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