

To the Spice Islands and Beyond: Travels in Eastern Indonesia (Oxford in Asia Paperbacks)



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The fabled Spice islands and other areas of Eastern Indonesia have had a special attraction for those prepared to venture to this diverse, scientifically rich, but decidedly remote region. The names of Clebes, Ambon, Banda, Komodo, Timor, Flores, and the New Guinea among others, conjure up secluded islands with unique cultures, fascinating histories, and divergent geographies. From the time of the discovery of the route to the Spice islands in 1513, European adventurers have been recording their travel to and through the disporate areas of Indonesia's sprawling eastern archipelago. This anthology brings together twenty-eight extracts from among the best of these accounts. Spanning a period of 450 years, they cover a wide variety of writing and reflect the different motives and reactions of travellers ranging from the European spice traders in the sixteenth century to the Australian journalist who visited East Timor in 1990 and courted danger in the island's troubled interior. While the times and the impressions of the travellers may have changed, there is asimilarity in many of the experiences engendered by the very remoteness of the region.

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