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The Beach: The History of Paradise on Earth

Lena Lencek, Gideon Bosker

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Blue-green surf, pillowy white sand, and a warm salty breeze--when it comes to restoring body and soul, no place in the world can compete with the beach. Nature's most potent antidepressant, the seashore is today--but wasn't always--everyone's favorite getaway spot. With an entertaining historical account as its narrative framework, this elegantly designed volume charts the evolution of the seaside from a wasteland at the margins of civilization--remote, terror filled, and exotic--to its present role as the central staging ground for diversions of all sorts: escape, re-creation, and congregation. A marvelous selection of images evokes the beach's hypnotic appeal--everything from impressionist paintings and fascinating lithographs to archival photographs and quirky advertising art--as the text explores the histories of sexuality, fashion, and sport; the rise of great resorts from Coney Island to Cap d'Antibes; and the evolution of leisure itself. Also included is an appendix of the world's most beautiful, luxurious, and unspoiled beaches. The Beach will be a pleasure to any reader who loves to settle down on the sand with a great--and fascinating--book.

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