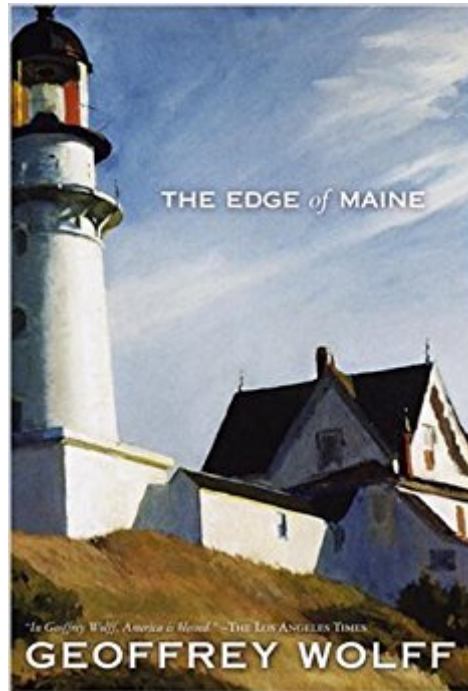




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# Edge Of Maine (Directions)



## Synopsis

Novelist and biographer Geoffrey Wolff has spent many summers in Maine—sailing its coastal waters, climbing its rocky peaks, and communing with its natives. Now, with the voice of a passionate insider, he brings readers into the heart of this striking region and explains what makes it unique. Starting with a gripping tale about being lost offshore in the fog with inadequate navigational aids, Wolff goes on to describe the coast's geological history and discovery by Europeans. He then turns a keen eye towards Mainers, their mores and peculiarities, and to the summer rusticators who for generations have invaded the stunning waterfronts. A section on boat building celebrates the extraordinary rescue of Maine's foremost craft; another on lobsters tells the rich story of the custom, taste, commerce, environmental conflict, and scientific mystery surrounding these critical crustaceans. Here is a true feast—travel literature at its best.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Novelist and biographer Wolff is ultimately apologetic about this patchy little travelogue, confessing that, really, he covers only part of one edge of a state with at least three. He ignores Maine's borders with New Hampshire and two Canadian provinces, writing about only the middle of Maine's famously rock-bound seaboard, which is what he knows from years of coasting along it. No apology is necessary. Sure, he skips from history to memoir to reportage so abruptly that it nearly causes whiplash. On the other hand, this is all good stuff: the story of Maine's first, failed colony, founded in 1607; Wolff and his young family's frightening night at sea in deep fog; the ways of Maine's best

boat restorer and proprietor of its most fabulous boatyard; the legends of the greatest potential environmental disasters averted in Maine since 1970; the seemingly perennial clashes between poor year-round Mainers and wealthy, often officious "rusticators" (e.g., the Cabots, John Travolta) from elsewhere. One wishes only that the book were even more chock-full of interest. Ray Olson

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Geoffrey Wolff is the author of the acclaimed biography *Black Sun*, *The Duke of Deception*, and *The Art of Burning Bridges*. His novels include *Providence* and *The Age of Consent*. Currently he is the director of the graduate fiction program at the University of California at Irvine and splits his time between Los Angeles, California and Maine.

An amazing book; I keep reading it over and over. Excellent writing.

Mr. Wolff does a wonderful job of describing certain historical snapshots and present-day cultural aspects of coastal Maine. His description of being lost at sea in a horribly thick Maine fog is worth the book itself. Mr. Wolff does not attempt to depict all facets of my home state, but does a commendable job in his usual eloquent manner. In this brief work, he made me laugh, reflect and ultimately, reaffirm the true beauty of Maine and why I'll always live here. Do yourself a favor and read this pleasant and realistic tribute.

Never having read his other stuff, I know Geoffrey Wolff only by reputation. I know the coast of Maine as anyone "from away" might - from many visits for many reasons over the years (though very few upon the water itself). I know the National Geographic Directions series from previous positive encounters (Oliver Sacks on Oaxaca and Robert Hughes on Barcelona). So with that background may I recommend to you *The Edge of Maine*. It is a fine, brief travelogue that never bores and frequently enlightens. It is very much in the spirit of the series, which enlists noted writers to tell their story of a place that they know and love. There is no plot, no narrative, no grand theory - just a series of vignettes (many first-person, many third-party sourced) about history, culture, nature, and everyday experience for those who come to visit and those who have always been there. Fog, feuds, families, "from away" - the variety is considerable. And there's a nice map at the beginning to keep you oriented as you contend with the myriad names of islands and rivers and points and bays. I'll give *The Edge of Maine* four stars. It is not great literature, but anyone with more than a passing interest in Maine and the desire to spend a few hours immersed in a well-written travelogue

should grab it.

I sent this to a sick friend in Maine. She loved it, her husband loved it, and now they are sharing it with others, but only with the promise they will get it back. I will have to get on the list to borrow it.

Oft told and hackneyed tales from Downeast by this erstwhile sailor, who obviously hasn't seen or read "The Beans of Egypt." Maine is beautiful, and there are lots of good folks downeast, but idyllic it's not.

I appreciate Geoffrey Wolff's wry and subtle sense of humor and also the tremendous variety of topics and predicaments accounted. I read *The Edge of Maine* as my companion on a recent first time visit because I did not want to view this region through the lens of tourist magazines, and appreciated the author's candor and breadth of topics, offering me more of an insider's view on some of Maine's more obscure perhaps, but no less important "Edges".

Best investment ever at a great price my husband think it is amazing , good quality with low price. OK . the best seller.

A fascinating account of a foggy time off the coast of Maine.

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