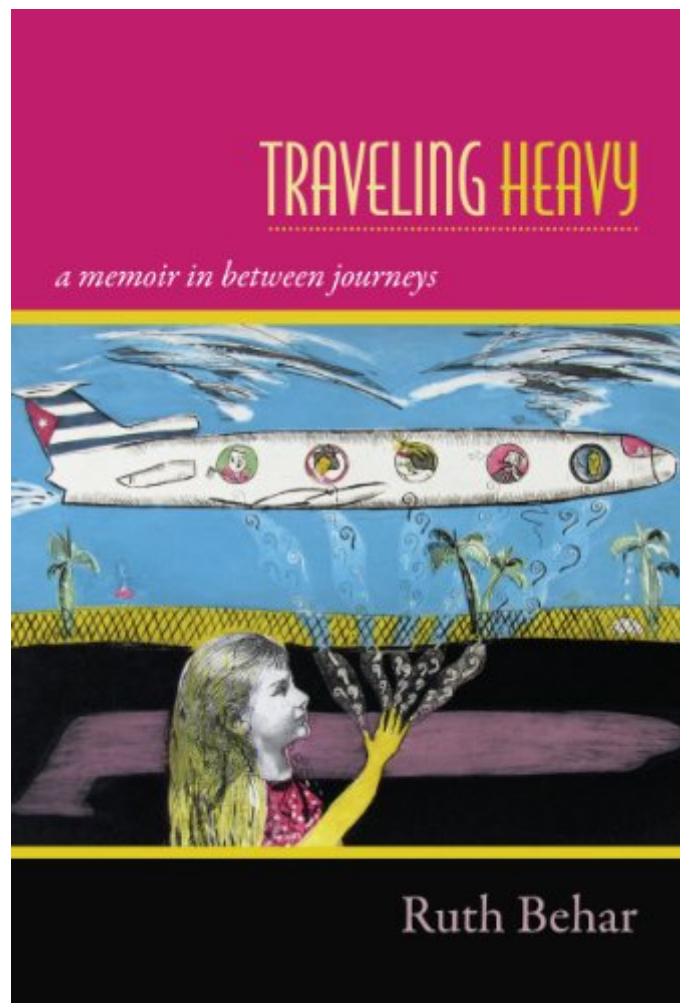




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Traveling Heavy: A Memoir In Between Journeys



Synopsis

Traveling Heavy is a deeply moving, unconventional memoir by the master storyteller and cultural anthropologist Ruth Behar. Through evocative stories, she portrays her life as an immigrant child and later, as an adult woman who loves to travel but is terrified of boarding a plane. With an open heart, she writes about her Yiddish-Sephardic-Cuban-American family, as well as the strangers who show her kindness as she makes her way through the world. Compassionate, curious, and unafraid to reveal her failings, Behar embraces the unexpected insights and adventures of travel, whether those be learning that she longed to become a mother after being accused of giving the evil eye to a baby in rural Mexico, or going on a zany pilgrimage to the Behar World Summit in the Spanish town of BÃ©jar. Behar calls herself an anthropologist who specializes in homesickness. Repeatedly returning to her homeland of Cuba, unwilling to utter her last goodbye, she is obsessed by the question of why we leave home to find home. For those of us who travel heavy with our own baggage, Behar is an indispensable guide, full of grace and hope, in the perpetual search for connection that defines our humanity.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A personal emotional quest. Very easy to read, the work flows like the mind wanders. Engaging book easy to read,

Weaving personal history and anthropology together, Ruth Behar captures the essence of cubanismo. It was a pleasure to read this book.

Behar left Cuba at the age of four and a half and grew to be an "una nina vieja " (old little girl) academic; an anthropologist specializing in homesickness. Her book is a memoir that attempts to reconcile the ghosts of a commandeered past with frequent travels to worlds that spoke to her Jewish roots and Spanish tongue. I enjoyed the black-and-white photographs that graced the beginning of each new chapter; of the author as a young girl, her family members, and other people of a shared past. As I explore summer travel destinations, Behar has me considering Cuba, raising my curiosity to witness a place absent of the seemingly ubiquitous Pizza Huts and Kentucky Fried Chicken!

I was swept away by the stories of Behar's life as she formed homes throughout her travels and shared with us poignant and vivid images of the people she met and the lessons learned. Cuba, Miami, Israel, Spain, Mexico, the Jewish Diaspora are all part of her experiences that add to the wondrous heaviness of her luggage. Traveling Heavy presents an immigrant/refuge story made timely right now.

The history was very interesting. I generally don't read memoirs. The personal story was slow. The Jewish history was very enlightening.

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