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Zen Baggage: A Pilgrimage to China

Bill Porter

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In the spring of 2006, Bill Porter traveled through the heart of China, from Beijing to Hong Kong, on a pilgrimage to sites associated with the first six patriarchs of Zen. In *Zen Baggage*, Porter takes readers to places few Westerners have ever ventured, weaving together historical background, interviews, and translations of the earliest known records of Zen along with personal vignettes into a fascinating tale of discovery.

Porter's account captures the transformations taking place at religious centers in China but also the legacy they have somehow managed to preserve. Porter brings wisdom and humor to every situation, whether visiting ancient caves containing the most complete collection of Buddhist texts ever uncovered, enduring a six-hour Buddhist ceremony, or meeting the abbess of China's first Zen nunnery.

Porter's *Road to Heaven: Encounters with Hermits* has become recommended reading at Zen centers and universities throughout America and even in China (in its Chinese translation), and *Zen Baggage* is sure to follow suit.

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