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A Treasury Of Mermaids: Mermaid Tales From Around The World



Synopsis

Enter the mermaid's realm, where brightly colored fish dart through strands of seaweed and noble octopi guard the gates of underwater palaces. From the ice floes of Alaska to the islands of the Mediterranean Sea to the reefs of New Zealand, the power of a magical water maiden is matched only by her unpredictability. For who can guess what may happen when a mermaid finds herself face-to-face with a human? Gathered from the diverse cultures, the stories in this collection tell of mortals who strive to capture mermaids--and mermen--as well as those who seek to rescue them from peril; mortals who entice mermaids to live on dry land, and those who dare follow mermaids under the waves. And here, too, are the fates of those fortunate--or foolish--enough to listen to the mermaid's appealing song. Renowned author and folklorist Shirley Climo presents tales of mystical merfolk from around the globe. Accompanied by stunning illustrations from Jean and Mou-sien Tseng, the stories are woven together with threads of international mermaid lore, presenting a world of watery enchantment. A catch of international mermaids, from a Japanese ningyo and a Swiss nix to an Irish merrow and an Alaskan nuquot, swim through the pages of this elegant gift volume. Drawing on the folklore of diverse cultures, renowned author Shirley Climo presents a multi-faceted view of merfolk, exploring the promises and perils of meeting these creatures. Accompanied by stunning paintings from the brushes of Jean and Mou-sien Tseng, the stories in this collection are woven together with insightful introductions comparing and contrasting the myths of many lands. Lavishly designed and illustrated, this beautiful book is the definitive collection of mermaid lore. A catch of international mermaids, from a Japanese ningyo and a Swiss nix to an Irish merrow and an Alaskan nuquot, swim through the pages of this elegant gift volume. Drawing on the folklore of diverse cultures, renowned author Shirley Climo presents a multi-faceted view of merfolk, exploring the promises and perils of meeting these creatures. Accompanied by stunning paintings from the brushes of Jean and Mou-sien Tseng, the stories in this collection are woven together with insightful introductions comparing and contrasting the myths of many lands. Lavishly designed and illustrated, this beautiful book is the definitive collection of mermaid lore.

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Customer Reviews

Grade 4-7. Climo has selected eight highly readable folktales from countries as far apart as Iceland and New Zealand and from cultures as diverse as Scotland and Japan. She includes both the familiar, such as "Odysseus and the Sirens," and the unusual, such as "Hansi and the Nix," with moods ranging from the humorous "Mrs. Fitzgerald the Merrow" to the heartrending "Pania of the Reef." Each tale begins with a one-page description of the story's motif and its place in the world of mermaid lore. The selections are approximately six pages each in length and are told in flowing language that is both easy to read and pleasant to hear. The plot lines are logical and the characters are clearly delineated within their cultural parameters. Words such as "ukpik" (Alaskan for "owl") and "kopu" (Maori for "morning star") are italicized and explained in context, while an appendix gives pertinent source notes. The Tsengs' full-page watercolors capture the subtle colors of the creatures' watery environs while including details of both the settings and the tales' cultural backgrounds. Smaller and simpler pen-and-ink drawings focus on critical moments within each story. As with the author's *A Treasury of Princesses* (HarperCollins, 1996), this collection does a fine job of gathering a variety of tales into one place, and it is sure to satisfy young mermaid fans and add greatly to their knowledge of the lore (and lure) of these mythical creatures. Nancy Menaldi-Scanlan, LaSalle Academy, Providence, RI

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Mermaids haunt the waters of the world from the Lake of Zug in Switzerland to the reefs of Hawke Bay on the North Island of New Zealand. In a companion to *A Treasury of Princesses* (1996, not reviewed), Climo gathers eight representative tales of these beguiling aquatic creatures who know charms, cast spells, shift shapes, and wreak havoc, both undersea and above ground. Climo's compendium features an oceanic Snow Whitelike Scottish selkie story, a disagreeable Icelandic merman trickster tale, and a Japanese shape-shifting snapper who comprehends the language of

the birds. The spectrum of mermaids appears here: powerful magicians filling the nets of fishermen, seductive voices luring sailors to their watery graves, or simply fish out of water, attempting misguided lives among humans. An eerily enchanting watercolor panel launches each mer-tale, followed by a pen-and-ink detail inserted in the story. Many of the stories adapted and collected here can be readily found in other sources, such as Mary Pope Osborne's *Mermaid Tales from Around the World* (1993). While the introduction to each tale demonstrates prodigious research, it becomes confusing in the inclusion of countries and of the various names of mermaids, until readers may feel awash in information. A section of story notes completes the collection. (Folklore. 6-10) -- Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

My sister loves mermaids, so I thought she would like this book. I haven't read it personally but she said she loved it, and thought it to very interesting.

Great stories and great pictures!

My parents purchased me this book when I was about seven years old. It easily became my favorite. I had been obsessed with mermaids since I was about three years old, and the elaborate stories and beautiful illustrations left me aesthetically satisfied. I would say it is effective enough if it has stuck with my memory for ten years. I highly recommend this for any child with an avid interest in mermaids.

The cover of this book is beautiful, but like the old saying: "Don't judge a book by its cover." I was disappointed that the book told of tales of "sea" related entities not just "mermaids". This book lacked the visual effect that I was hoping to obtain from a "fantasy" book. Unlike the exhilarating book, "Mermaids: Nymph of the Sea", A Treasury of Mermaid was lacking in graphics and story.

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