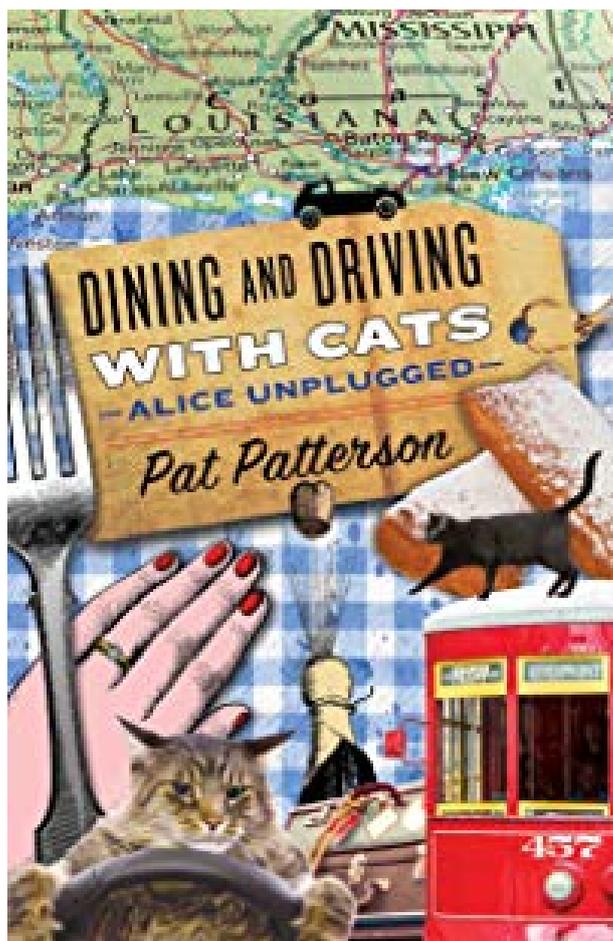


Dining and Driving with Cats - Alice Unplugged



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Dining and Driving With Cats - Alice Unplugged is a heartwarming and beguiling adventure of a couple who shares a love that most of us only imagine. Pat Patterson is a born storyteller and makes readers feel as if they are part of the road trip. This book is as much a story of sweet devotion as it is an exquisite example of discovering life's hidden joys in the smallest of everyday experiences.

Not since Michael Ondaatje's hypnotic voice in *The English Patient* has a book spoken with such an allure for the reader. You might even spot a bit of Irish in the author and his spouse's detailed arguments comparing a dish from one restaurant to the same of another restaurant. They, along with the cats, dine frequently during a sometimes hilarious but always romantic auto trip across the South. As the miles flip the odometer, we are given insight into how this unusual relationship between the couple came to be, evolved, and gradually, at the end revealed in a secret you didn't see coming. What, you say? There is a twist in a dining dialogue? Yes! And you'll just have to read it for yourself—no spoilers here. Dialogue is so natural between the two; you'll swear he recorded the entire trip. Alice is revealed in the first pages as a real life brainy, successful business woman enjoying life in San Miguel de Allende a small cathedral town high in the Central Mexican foothills. For over thirty years she lived in Washington D.C.. When she was fresh out of grad school and managing her firm's

D.C. office she captured the heart of a young man who came in from the rain. He fell hard. He pursued her. She said no –she told him she had cats.

What she didn't tell him was that she also had a secret. Over thirty years have passed since Alice revealed her secret. The young man is no longer young but he still pursues her. She calls him hubby. This is their story of a shared love for travel and history, for food and for their sweet and wily cats Munchie and Tuffy. You might also say the book is unusual in that it totally engages the reader from the first page without a hint of violence, bloodshed, graphic sex, drugs or language. The author's main character (besides the two cats) Alice, does say "you bastards" once.

Alice is supremely self-confident and comfortable in her own skin as we learn early on when she promises the author a vehicle of his dreams if he will join her in a multi-state road trip from Mexico across the South and help wrangle two cats into restaurants, diners, cafes and hotels. He expects to find a Suburban or maybe an Escalade in the drive. Alice surprises with a Japanese sub-compact - a Honda Fit. She says it's "flexible".

They drive - Scott La. & the Boudin War. They dine - New Orleans at Gautreau's, Clancy's, and Herbsaint. They laugh - the Carousel Bar. They cry - tragic death.

If you come along on this moveable feast you will find yourself caught up in a romantic love story that involves the Other Woman and a secret that Alice cannot keep. You will dine on scrumptious creations from America's most acclaimed chefs from Austin and New Orleans to the Procope and Odeon Relais at Buci Market in Paris. Along the way you will laugh at cats stuck in boxes, fight with a Pirate, terrify a US Vice-President, discover cat smuggling, and learn how the Other Woman persuaded Alice to accept the author's ring. So what's keeping you? Hop in 'cause these cats don't bite.

Besides, "The Get In Here and Eat" pop-up food truck is waiting just up the Austin highway.