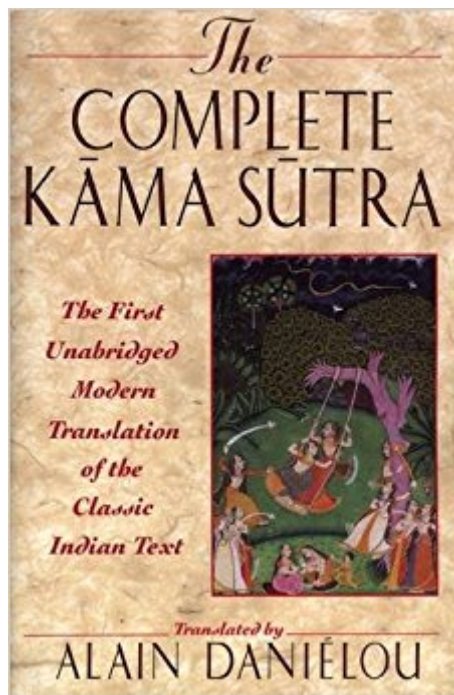




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The Complete Kama Sutra: The First Unabridged Modern Translation Of The Classic Indian Text



Synopsis

The world's oldest and most widely read guide to the pleasures and techniques of sex, the Kama Sutra was compiled in the fourth century A.D. by a Brahmin and religious scholar name Vatsyayana, who worked from texts dating back to the fourth century B.C. Until the present, the only English translation of his Hindu love classic was that of the famous English explorer Sir Richard Burton, published in 1883. Unlike Burton's version, Alain Daniélou's new translation preserves the numbered verse divisions of the original and includes two essential commentaries: the Fayamangala commentary, written in Sanskrit by Yashodhara during the Middle Ages, and a modern Hindi commentary by Devadatta Shastri. Whereas Burton's Victorian reluctance to translate certain terms obscured our understanding of the philosophy and techniques of the Kama Sutra, Daniélou has preserved the full explicitness of the original, dealing with everything from the art of scratching to relations with the wives of others. Realistic and pragmatic in its approach, the Kama Sutra deals without ambiguity or hypocrisy with all aspects of sexual life--including marriage, adultery, prostitution, group sex, sadomasochism, male and female homosexuality, and transvestism. The text paints a fascinating portrait of an India whose openness to sexuality gave rise to a highly developed expression of the erotic.

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Customer Reviews

The galaxy of pleasures in Alain Daniélou's translation of the Kama Sutra takes you back to an India where sexuality was an integral part of life and an avenue to spiritual bliss. As Devadatta

Shastri says in his commentary: "At the moment when the peak of bliss is attained, the internal and external world vanish. The man and woman cease to be separate entities and lose themselves in the beatitudes of being." Danielou's elegant rendering includes not only the entire sutra, much of which is excluded in other versions, but two essential commentaries as well. More than just a pillow book, the Kama Sutra is a guide to the labyrinth of sexual etiquette, from how to bathe before meeting a lover to how lovers should entertain each other after making love. Admittedly, the text is dated and culture bound in places; it can be chauvinistic, bizarre, and even violent. The commentators are careful to point out, however, that the work is an overview of all sexual practices, some of which are not recommended. Take from this encyclopedia of amour what you will and let it keep you moving down the path of spiritual practice. --Brian Bruya

Long dismissed as a sort of Sanskrit Joy of Sex, the Kama Sutra, composed by Vatsyayana in the fourth century B.C., explores sexuality as an integral part of human existence. Arguing that happiness and moral duty (dharma) depend on elaborate social ritual to satisfy the essential needs of life, the Kama Sutra describes the practices, rituals, and lore of the erotic (kama) in human relations, both heterosexual and homosexual. Noted Indologist Danielou provides a fluent and literal translation of the entire Sanskrit original with interpolated extracts from the 12th-century commentary by Yashodara and the modern Hindi commentary by Devadatta Shastri. This is an important advance over Burton's Victorian abridgment. - T.L. Cooksey, Armstrong State Coll., Savannah, Ga. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is a good work but has one section, that is morally reprehensible, and is about seducing other men's wives. Albeit the author explains not to do so, but how it is done. There is some great advice, and also a lot of humor in the work. It is worth reading more than once.

This is a great book! People often assume Kama Sutra is a dirty book that's full of sex positions. It does have a good bit of that. But it treats sex almost like a ritual rather than just a quick fix that means nothing to anyone. It has all these "instructions" that teach you everything from flirting, to foreplay, to the final act itself. Yes, it does talk of various techniques and toys and all. Very boldly. Bits of it made me raise my eyebrow ("how to seduce another's wife"/"relationships with concubines") but they amused me more than they offended me. It's the perfect book on sex. You have to understand that according to Hindu scriptures, sex is one of the four main parts of life and

thus, must be treated accordingly. We need to admit its importance instead of treating it as taboo. I think people should read Kama Sutra in order to gain a better understanding of the importance of sex. It's necessary to learn to respect physical intimacy and this book gives it the attention it deserves. I don't know about the translation; this is the only translation I've read and it was perfectly adequate. I bought one for a close friend for her birthday and I plan on having my siblings read it when they're older as well.

You need to be very wordy for this book. In other words...no pictures. Only an extremely detailed text.

"During the first three periods of his life, a man must realize himself on three interdependent levels, which are virtue [dharma], wealth [artha] and love [kama], harmonizing them in such a way that none of them is prejudicial to the others."- from the Jayamangala commentary, by Yashodhara to the Kama Sutra of Vatsayana. This translation by premier philosopher and Sanskrit scholar Alain Danielou is a long-overdue replacement to the very Victorian and censored version of Sir Richard Burton. It includes the Sutra itself, the aforementioned commentary of Yashodhara and a 19th century commentary in Hindi by Davadatta Shashtra. As a translation, it's limp, lucid and at times, quite poetic. This is no mean feat, as Sanskrit is notoriously difficult to render into modern languages, something that Westerners have been quietly grumbling about since the days of F. Max Muller. I lead this little review off with the quote from Yashodhara because it illuminates a core belief within the myriad flavors of Hinduism. Those who know nothing much of Hinduism are likely to dismiss it as a religion with literally millions of gods and little else. So much for ignorance. If you read the quote carefully, are you not struck by its absolute common sense? Said over in English, it tells us to work at being good people [dharma], keeping the money coming in [artha] and to know what you're doing in bed. Westerners might readily comprehend the first two about being good and making money, if albeit from a perverted Puritan viewpoint, but the last? Alas, said Puritan ethic cannot bear sexual pleasure; and it is only tolerated in monogamous heterosexual marriage - it is never embraced. No culture in the West has anything like the erotic temple-sculptures of Khajurhah, which features couples, threesomes and piles of happy lovers entwined, a la deSade's engravings for his 120 Days of Sodom; most Western Parents would do their best to keep their kids from deSade, but the temple at Khurajhao is almost a place that a Hindi entrepreneur, seeking to emulate Walt Disney, opens for whole families to come enjoy the precincts. And that, dearly beloved, is a crucial difference between East and West.

great book, wished it had pictures

well the book itself isn't a book about sex itself, it's about the rules and regulations of sex. but it's is a pretty dated text by today's sex standards also it's based on a male dominated culture. if you're just here for a how to guide for sex it isn't for you. but if you want an intuitive background on a different times sex culture this is for you. just be prepared as it does get violent and offensive after part 2. but the book itself is pretty good just on certain explanations it breezes through them I'm not entirely sure if it is the text or translators fault so that is why I give it a 4 out of 5 and oh P.S. it does help a little with certain positions just thought you should know ;)

This is a great book. If you are looking for the FULL Kama Sutra (Not just sex positions), I would recommend this. It has no pictures which is a downside and makes it not ideal if you are just looking for a book on positions in which case there are a lot of better books. But for everything else including biting, kissing, fighting and getting the Indian perspective on sex, this book is a great read. I have since gotten a few other books on the Kama Sutra and this one is by far the best.

I loved it and reading it was fun. Not a lot of people know that this book is actually a rather detailed history book. It's the "Book of Love" so to speak and goes over a variety of matters that are not limited only to sex. It includes various aspects of love and ways to obtain the girl (Of course it's both Indian and rather dated so it's not up with current times in America) though some aspects can be applied. It's really an interesting read and I learned stuff about myself just from reading it. Definitely something that everyone could learn from in more ways than one.

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