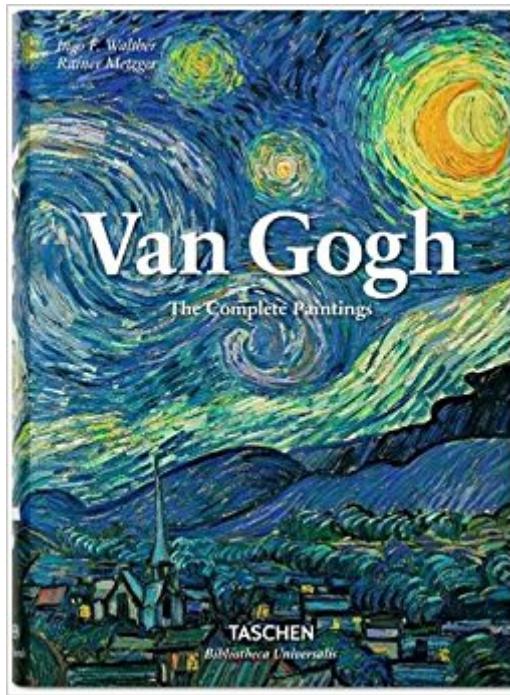


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# Van Gogh



## Synopsis

Tortured talent: The genius and the angst of an Expressionist master – Vincent van Gogh's story is one of the most ironic in art history. Today, he is celebrated the world over as one of the most important painters of all time, recognized with sell-out shows, feted museums, and record prices of tens of millions of dollars at auction. Yet as he was painting the canvases that would subsequently become these sell-out modern masterpieces, van Gogh was battling not only the disinterest of his contemporary audiences but also devastating bouts of mental illness, with episodes of depression and paralyzing anxiety which would eventually claim his life in 1890, when he committed suicide shortly after his 37th birthday. This comprehensive study of Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) pairs a detailed monograph on his life and art with a complete catalogue of his 871 paintings.

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## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

First off, I must point out that I did not read the English version of this, but the French one; since it's a translation, it should basically be the same. Taschen has the nice habit of making great books for comparatively very cheap prices; and that is once again the case with this collection of all Van Gogh

paintings. The paper is top quality (glazed is it? I forget how it's called, but it's the same as you find in every other taschen publication) and the size of the book ensures a good view on the paintings. I had read 2 books relating Vincent's life, so when it came to read another text on him and his work, I already knew most of the bulk of that artist's life; however, this wasn't redundant at all. The authors have interesting things to say and usually do so in ways that won't kill you with boredom (even if I sometimes don't agree with the theories proposed). Substantial citations from Van Gogh's letters are used there, which is good, since Vincent wrote a lot. The book does a good work of setting Vincent Van Gogh in context, letting us know what authors he read, and what kind of human being he was. And Vincent was a particularly wonderful human being in my opinion, something this book does not fail to show. Now as to the pictures of the paintings, what can I say? If you like Van Gogh's art, you'll like them. And even though you may not like everything he's ever done, it's worthwhile to have the whole thing to see the evolution of his art from a very dark and gloomy universe to a violently colourful one. I definitely recommend this book for everyone interested in knowing more about Van Gogh than the basics. The book is a beautiful object as well, pretty heavy, but very classy.

I spotted this book and, having been impressed by the Van Gogh exhibit at the National Gallery last year, decided to check it out. (That being said, I know very little about art and seldom read about it, so this review should be taken in that light.) Van Gogh was an amazingly prolific painter. His artistic career lasted scarcely ten years, but in that time he created enough paintings to decorate nearly every page of this 250-page book - and those aren't even all of them. The book itself is a combination of a biography and an analysis of his paintings. This flows smoothly, perhaps because Van Gogh put so much of himself into his art: his moods are clear from what he depicted and how he depicted it. The biographical portion makes for interesting reading in and of itself. Van Gogh actually came rather late to art after failing at other occupations, including that of a minister. Once he turns to art, he is almost immediately remarkably capable. Later on, he attempts to set up an artistic community in his famous "yellow house," with the help of Gaugain. It's a collaboration that fails disastrously, with Gaugain leaving and Van Gogh cutting off his earlobe. Van Gogh has a difficult time psychologically for a few years, then, when it seems he has finally turned things around, goes out and shoots himself. The authors suggest it's due to his belief that a dead artist is more valued than a live one, a strange but possibly true premise. The analysis of the paintings, comfortably intertwined with the biographical information, are interesting as well, at least to someone like me who only barely understands painting. While the analysis occasionally descends

into what is to me artsy gobbledegook, by and large the comments are incisive and point out the distinctive qualities of each painting and how it relates to his other work. The tone is positive and descriptive, which I liked. I could easily have imagined a much more critical approach or a tone that indicated this is the way to look at this painting. But the authors fall into neither trap. So this artistic novice, at least, found this to be an excellent book about a great artist. Recommended for all those with an interest in the subject.

I bought this book when I needed to reference Van Gogh's works for a replication project I had back in high school. I found it to be very informative and wonderfully done. I picked it out of a pile of others that I had assembled in Barnes & Noble, finding that this one was the most informative and had the better color variation. I've noticed that almost every review here complains about the colorings. I think that's extremely ridiculous and should not take away any value from the book overall. You are never going to find a book that has the paintings EXACTLY as they are in real life (which have been faded over the years anyway). I've seen many of Van Gogh's works in person and can assure any potential buyer of this book that the difference is not as great as these other melodramatic reviewers have suggested. Basically, I strongly recommend this book if you are a lover of Van Gogh, need it for research, or whatever you'd like it for. Don't let the other reviews scare you.

All things considered, this is a very nice set: two volumes, in a nice box, printed in Italy, featuring virtually all Van Gogh's paintings in color. The reproductions are not glossy, but the photography is so clear that one can see the paint textures and even the canvas under the paint. Someone has noted that the colors are somewhat "off," but we must hasten to add that one wouldn't know it at all unless there were another color reproduction with which to compare. So, all in all, the reproductions are quite good. The monochrome photos represent paintings destroyed in WW2, or those which were denied full color reproduction by the owners. Can hardly go wrong with this set.

I purchased this book not being aware of the complete painting book but if I knew about the other one ( complete painting ) I probably would have chose that book for sure ! Anyway, as a second choise this is a great value book . The picture are beautfull and the text is full of detail about Van Gogh's life that is exceeded only by the Letter to Theo book published by Penguin. Well, now that you know my opinion, order this book if you are tight with money; other wise you may consider the complete painting if the quality of the picture and the text is as good as this book. Ciao

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