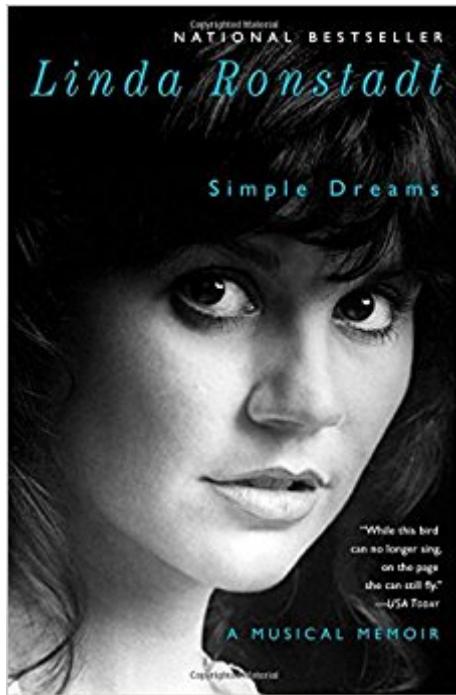


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Simple Dreams: A Musical Memoir



Synopsis

In this memoir, iconic singer Linda Ronstadt weaves together a captivating story of her origins in Tucson, Arizona, and her rise to stardom in the Southern California music scene of the 1960s and '70s. Tracing the timeline of her remarkable life, Linda Ronstadt, whose forty-five year career has encompassed a wide array of musical styles, weaves together a captivating story of her origins in Tucson, Arizona, and her rise to stardom in the Southern California music scene of the 1960s and '70s. Linda Ronstadt was born into a musical family, and her childhood was filled with everything from Gilbert and Sullivan to Mexican folk music to jazz and opera. Her artistic curiosity blossomed early, and she and her siblings began performing their own music for anyone who would listen. Now, in this beautifully crafted memoir, Ronstadt tells the story of her wide-ranging and utterly unique musical journey. Ronstadt arrived in Los Angeles just as the folkrock movement was beginning to bloom, setting the stage for the development of country-rock. As part of the coterie of like-minded artists who played at the famed Troubadour club in West Hollywood, she helped define the musical style that dominated American music in the 1970s. One of her early backup bands went on to become the Eagles, and Linda went on to become the most successful female artist of the decade. In *Simple Dreams*, Ronstadt reveals the eclectic and fascinating journey that led to her long-lasting success, including stories behind many of her beloved songs. And she describes it all in a voice as beautiful as the one that sang "Heart Like a Wheel" — longing, graceful, and authentic.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I can't help but think that the many positive reviews I read here are written by people who have confused their admiration for Linda as a performer and as a person with the quality of her memoir. I am about as enthusiastic Linda Ronstadt fan as you'll find, but this book is frankly awful. The main problem is that it is just shallow and strangely silent about the music during Linda's peak popularity in the mid 1970s. John Lennon once complained that George Harrison wrote a memoir (*I Me Mine*) that never mentioned him once. This book is like that. It is as though she intentionally ignores the very aspect of her career that made her so successful. Interested in Andrew Gold's collaboration with Linda? Go elsewhere. He is mentioned in passing only a couple of times. How about Linda's recordings of Karla Bonhoff tunes? Nope. She is mentioned once or twice, again only in passing. In fact the book skips from her last Capital record--and the album that made her a star--Heart Like a Wheel to her wanting to work in *Pirates of Penzance*. *Prisoner in Disguise*, *Hasten Down the Wind*, *Simple Dreams*, *Living in the USA*, and *Mad Love* (all platinum, some multiple platinum) are simply ignored as though they never existed. Just look at the (chronological) chapters:10. Heart Like a Wheel11. Malibu12. Getting Restless13. Meeting Joe PappHeart Like a Wheel is 3 pages long. Three pages! You'd get more detail in a Rolling Stone article. Malibu is about moving to the beach after having financial security for the first time. Getting Restless (six pages!) is about the boredom she felt on tour playing large venues. That's about all she has to say about the years from 1974-1978.

I've been in love with Linda Ronstadt's voice since I first heard her belt out "You're No Good" through the earpiece of my transistor radio back in junior high. After reading this memoir, I've fallen in love with Linda as a person. What a gracious, level-headed, gentle, modest lady she is. And if she didn't already have enough talents, we can now add writing to her list of creative abilities. The entire book has a mellow vibe. Even the unpleasant events are related with equanimity and with generosity toward those who wronged her. The subtitle of the book is "a musical memoir," and she does limit what she shares about her personal life. This is not an autobiography in the traditional sense of the word. After the opening chapters about her upbringing in Arizona, the rest of her story stays focused on the evolution of her musical career. Linda doesn't dish a lot about the people who have shared her life. There are only two brief mentions of Jerry Brown, with whom she had a highly publicized relationship. Likewise, there are only a few sentences about her children, and she never uses their names. Everything else is about the music, but there are plenty of entertaining and unsettling stories to keep things lively. The seeds of Linda's musical versatility are rooted in her

childhood, where the various generations of her family enjoyed everything from classical to mariachi music. Her huge success came from a combination of talent, flexibility, and being in all the right places in an era when country, rock, and folk music were merging and evolving into something new. She always returned to her roots when deciding on a new musical project. From Pirates of Penzance to great American standards to songs in Spanish, she writes "the music I heard..."

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