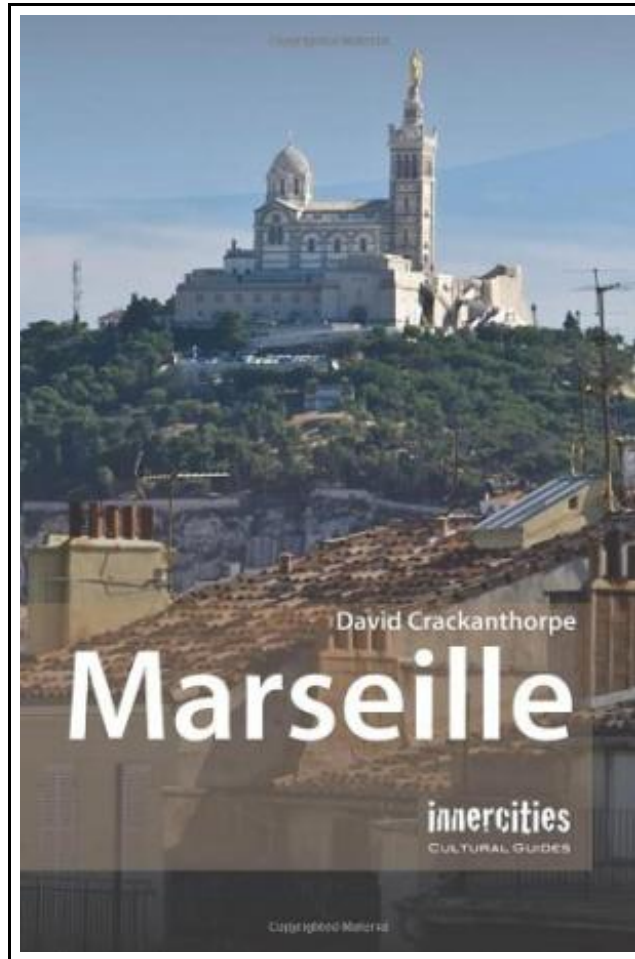


Marseille



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Reviews

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MARSEILLE



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Signal Books Ltd. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Marseille, David Crackanthorpe, The reality of Marseille, with its secret life and scarred beauty, has little in common with its sulphurous reputation. Its inhabitants, who like to keep themselves and their city's true character to themselves, prefer it that way. A taste for independence has been part of the city's nature and history from the beginnings 2,600 years ago; since then it has only been part of France for the past 600, and for much of that time unwillingly. Ringed on three sides by steep hills and by the sea on the fourth, Marseille resembles an island, and soon gives to incoming migrants a Marseillais identity, separating them both from their multiple origins and from the French of the surrounding mainland. Founded as a Greek trading station, the city has traded always, favouring the transit of goods by sea and land over industrialisation; as a result the twentieth-century recession of sea traffic and partial closure of the docks can make Marseille appear neglected, dishevelled, and under-employed as a great port and historical centre. The appearance is deceptive; Marseille is a ceaselessly changing and culturally ever-creative fusion of peoples--rich and poor, black, brown and white, a population, according to the novelist Blaise Cendrars, that remains 'insolent, happy to be alive, and more independent than ever'. The Vieux-Port into which the first Greek settlers rowed their fifty-oared ships is still the vital centre of the city and even if less vibrantly active than in the days of sail, it is here that the sense of the living Marseille can be grasped. Moreover, the Euromediterranee project and the naming of Marseille as cultural capital of Europe in 2013 have together brought in massive capital transfusions to a process of urban rehabilitation which is continuing....



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